

POW/MIA ACCOUNTING

Volume I
*Searching for America's Missing
Servicemen in the Soviet Union*

PAUL M. COLE



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Volume I – Searching for America’s Missing
Servicemen in the Soviet Union

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Paul M. Cole
Nashville, TN, USA

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PREFACE

POW/MIA Accounting, which focuses on the US government's efforts to account for American prisoners of war (POW) and missing in action (MIA) who became "unaccounted for" as a result of three of America's four historic conflicts (World War II, the Korean War, and the Cold War era), consists of two volumes:

Volume I: Searching for America's Missing Servicemen in the Soviet Union describes three research projects that were sponsored between 1991–1994 by the Department of Defense (DoD). The purpose of the three projects, each of which was focused on archives located in the former Soviet Union, was to search for any evidence that American citizens in general, and service members¹ in particular, had been transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union and held there against their will. DoD did not include the Vietnam War, America's fourth historic conflict, in the statement of work for these projects. The first two projects were administered by the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, California, the third by DFI International Inc., in Washington, DC.

*Volume II: J*P*A*C and The Politics of Human Skeletal Identification* is an insider's account of the activities and events that occurred within the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and Central Identification Laboratory, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, during the years 2010–2014.

Both volumes are intended to create a single first-person narrative, from the perspective of a participant who was in the program for seven years, that describes in detail how the accounting program operated.

* * *

Volume I, which opens with the origins of and authorization for America's POW/MIA accounting program, sets the scene for the broader socio-political context within which the accounting program operates. This context includes the definition of the term "accounted for," the consequences of regulatory capture, as well as a description of the intense competition for administrative control of the science of human skeletal identification. Examples of how America's missing service members have been exploited by those in and out of the government, including the President of the United States, are included.

In order to be able to make a meaningful evaluation of the accounting program, one must have an understanding of the program's origins, socio-political context, terminology, statistics, jargon, and acronyms. One is also advised to become familiar with the names of the agencies, people (such as lobbyists and politicians), and organizations in and out of the government that influence or in some cases control considerable aspects of the accounting program.

For example, the most important term in the accounting program is the definition of "accounted for." Despite wishful thinking to the contrary, the definition that binds the Accounting Community derives from Congressional authorization. This definition, which is amended periodically in response to shifting political and technological circumstances, is always associated with a corresponding set of "accounting methods" that are authorized by Congress through the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

"Historic conflicts" are currently defined by Congress as World War II, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, as well as losses that occurred during the Cold War era beyond the Korean and Vietnam combat zones.

These issues as well as the basic elements of the accounting program are discussed in Chapters one through four. An awareness of these issues and related concepts is essential in order to understand how and why the program to account for missing American servicemen exists as well as why the program was extended into the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

After the historical, legislative, and socio-political context is established, the narrative turns to the accounting program itself. This narrative addresses the program on two levels: First, the declaratory, which is what was said about the program. Second is the operational level, which is the empirical record of events that occurred within the program. Without a proper awareness and appreciation of both the declaratory rhetoric and operational record, any understanding of the accounting program will be superficial as well as incomplete.

Both declaratory and operational levels of the accounting program deserve equal attention, yet the focus is almost always disproportionate. Far more attention is paid to the declaratory aspect, viz., what is said about the program, rather than what occurs within it. This imbalance is due, in part, to the fact that the rhetoric, which is comparatively easy to produce, can be expressed in simple terms that the general public and members of Congress are able to understand. In contrast, the rhetoric of the physical sciences, including forensic anthropology, odontology, and battlefield archaeology, which is intrinsically complex, is far more difficult for members of Congress, the media and the general public to comprehend. The lack of in-depth, competent reporting by the media on the scientific track record of the accounting program is also directly attributable to the DoD's improper efforts to discourage or prevent participants from releasing technical information associated with operational activities. Oversight of political rhetoric is easy. Oversight of scientific activities, which requires in-depth subject matter expertise, is both time consuming as well as impossible for those who lack subject matter expertise. The overwhelming majority of DoD officials responsible for management and oversight of the accounting program have been scientifically illiterate. In addition, no candidate for Congress has a constituency that votes on the basis of which candidate has the stronger position on the accounting program. This political reality explains why the meager amount of oversight applied by Congress is often led by the scientifically illiterate in pursuit of political objectives or an agenda determined by regulatory capture.

As a result of the superficial and often unrealistic rhetoric used over many years by prominent American politicians, military leaders, and others, the accounting program is often described as exceptional, a unique program, simultaneously secular and hallowed, that is carried out by "handpicked" military elites and altruistic civil servants on behalf of a grateful nation. For example, the accounting program was characterized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) as the "most humanitarian of all humanitarian missions."² Less than a decade after the end of the Vietnam War, President Reagan elevated the accounting program to the level of the "nation's highest national priority." Presidents Obama and Trump and countless military leaders have referred to the accounting program as a "sacred" mission.

The consequence of this ostentatious rhetoric has been to enshroud the accounting program with myth. The point of this study is not to refute myth with fact, for the two have little to do with one another. Nor is the intent to destroy the myth, primarily due to the fact that "once born, [myths] carry on independent lives."³ As long as people choose to believe

that it is so, the accounting program will continue to be a “sacred,” “humanitarian” mission that is the “highest national priority” regardless of the underlying reality or the facts.

Sunlight, however, is the most effective disinfectant. After the rhetoric is peeled back, the empirical record of the accounting program bears scant resemblance to a “sacred mission” of the “highest national priority” that has been carried out by a handpicked group of elite humanitarians. This is not altogether surprising. The probability that any program, regardless of the competence or dedication of the participants and regardless of the resources dedicated to it, could possibly fulfill an advance billing that was both extraordinarily optimistic as well as embellished beyond all reasonable expectations was remote, even in the most optimal of circumstances. If sprinkling the pixie dust of the word “sacred” would ensure the success of a government program, Congress and the president would designate every program as “sacred.” Eventually, as every theocracy learns sooner or later, sacred missions have a tendency to run aground on the shoals of reality. When these shipwrecks occur, the prime directive shifts to concealing the cause of the catastrophe from the general public.

The narrow slice of the empirical narrative of the accounting program described herein derives from three projects sponsored by DoD. The first, which began in 1991, was administered by the RAND Corporation. The origin of the first project derived from DoD’s obligation to respond to a two-sentence amendment to the FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act that passed the House without objection. At the end of the day, however, the statement of work as authorized and funded bore little, if any, relationship with the reporting obligation created by that legislation. The first project quickly evolved from a domestic archive research project into the search for missing American service members in the Soviet Union. This astonishing metamorphosis was typical of the mission creep that is allowed to flourish in the accounting program. Congress funded the accounting program year after year, yet consistently failed to rein in mission creep through any meaningful oversight. In the absence of operational oversight, funds allocated for one purpose can be easily and routinely re-directed for another.

The scope of work (SoW) of the second project administered by RAND, which was an extension of the first, was expanded to search for evidence that American service members who had gone missing during the Korean War as well as any other American citizens had been transported to the territory of the Soviet Union (USSR) against their will. RAND management determined one and one half full-time equivalent (FTE) researchers would be sufficient to carry out this project.

In addition to such an ambitious scope, the SoW drafted by DoD and approved by RAND included a task to investigate the assertion that at the end of WWII, over 23,000 US and more than 30,000 British and Commonwealth POWs liberated from German POW camps had been transferred to but never repatriated from the Soviet Gulag. RAND management should have never agreed to include this task in the SoW. The allegation that General Eisenhower had colluded with Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin to condemn over 50,000 Allied and American POWs to the Soviet Gulag was preposterous. A casual review of the publications that touted this nonsense would have drawn attention to the misuse of evidence and undergraduate-level analysis required to produce such an irresponsible and unfounded assertion. If this accusation had been submitted by a constituent, any self-respecting member of Congress would have consigned it to the “Sad File,” unworthy of a reply.

Instead RAND management, which stated repeatedly that RAND neither “answered the mail” nor felt obligated to respond to requests for the DoD or Congress, agreed to include this task in an otherwise serious research project. The inclusion of this task, which degraded the importance of the accounting program, granted validity to a specious argument raised by people described as “crackpots.” The inclusion of this task confirmed that within the DoD bureaucracy, attention paid to the nation’s “highest national priority” occurred at a remarkably low epistemological level. In this environment, conspiracy theories, scientific conclusions and legitimate scholarship were regarded as opinions of equal validity. This bogus issue could have and should have been screened out by competent management in the earliest phase of negotiations between DoD and RAND on the solid grounds that this had nothing to do with the two-sentence amendment to the FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act. The inclusion of this issue in the SoW explains why significant time, resources, and attention were diverted from questions that were far more relevant and, more importantly, worthy of examination by one of the most prominent research institutions in the world.

The endorsement of the first two projects by the US Secretary of Defense and the Soviet Union’s Minister of Defense enabled research to be conducted on an unprecedented scale in archives controlled first by the Soviet Union, then after the dissolution of the USSR by the Commonwealth of Independent States and finally by the Russian Federation. The archives accessed included Soviet military intelligence records located in Moscow. Red Army intelligence officers who had first-hand experience with US POWs during the Korean War were interviewed, as were the chairman and deputy chairman of the KGB and other intelligence officers who had knowledge of these events.

In 1993 the third project, which was sponsored by the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Office (DPMO),⁴ was administered by DFI International Inc. in Washington, DC. It is important to distinguish the purpose of from the motivation for the third project. The purpose of the third project was to continue searching for any evidence that American service members who went missing during any of America's historic conflicts had been transported across, confined, or resettled in territory controlled by the USSR or any of its allies. The motivation for the project was the fact that the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs (USRJC) was faltering due to inadequate leadership on the US side as well as the inability and unwillingness to perform on the Russian side.

In the third project's statement of work, DPMO expanded the scope of the previous projects in two salient respects:

- First, in contrast to the two previous projects that focused on research in Moscow, DPMO required us to achieve access to and conduct research in archives and other records found in the KGB headquarter buildings located in four of the former Soviet republics, namely, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Ukraine.
- Second, DPMO required us to carry out research in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR). This included research in various archive holdings, including military intelligence as well as the records of the Ministry for State Security (*Ministerium für Staatssicherheit*), East Germany's secret police known by the acronym "Stasi."

Interviews were an integral part of the third project. Our research teams in the former Soviet republics interviewed Soviet military veterans who had engaged in combat against US forces and others who had first-hand knowledge about and in some cases direct contact with US POWs, including face-to-face interrogations. Some of the Soviet veterans described how American POWs had been transferred to the USSR. An American deserter who had been relocated to East Germany by Soviet forces revealed in an interview that American POWs and other deserters had been relocated to or transferred to East Germany during the Korean and Cold Wars.

DPMO terminated the interview effort while the third project was on-going.

With regard to the issue of taking notes, when we began work in Moscow in 1991, laptop computers were rare, bulky, and expensive, the Internet and email were unavailable, cell phones did not exist, and international telephone service was both unreliable and extremely expensive. The fax machine, which at the time was an awe-inspiring, cutting-edge technology, relied on “thermal paper.” If a fax message were exposed to direct sunlight, the text on thermal paper would vanish like magic. When a fax machine jammed, which would occur with alarming regularity, the machine would burst into flames. Video cameras, which were the size of a carry-on bag, were unavailable in the USSR. A microcassette audio-only tape recorder, handwritten notes, and a photocopy machine (when we could find one that worked) were the only reliable means available to create a written record or to tape interviews (Fig. 1).

In addition to archive material and interviews, the other primary source for *Volume I* is the author’s personal journal, a page from which follows (Fig. 2).

The journal entries are reproduced with only minor editing for clarity such as to correct spellings or to clear up the vague antecedent of a relative pronoun.

* * *

With regard to the perspective, details have been added whenever possible, but not with the intent to lard the narrative; rather, the objective is to provide a comprehensive, empirical record of events that includes insights that could only be provided by a participant. This is not, therefore, a detached tale related from a perspective high above government institutions. Instead, this story is told, whenever the evidence allows, from within the room where the events occurred, at the level of individuals. Due to the fact that the narrative is structured thematically, there is at times a disruption of the chronological flow of events and some unavoidable redundancy that every effort has been made to keep to a minimum.

In addition to many honest, competent, dedicated professionals and family members searching for answers they most assuredly deserve, the accounting program also attracts an astonishingly diverse rogue’s gallery of villains. These miscreants, who are responsible for an appalling list of abhorrent activities, have been described by members of Congress and others as “cruel frauds,” “scoundrels,” “marginal employees,” “crackpots,” and “evil creeps.” The explanation for why the accounting program appeals to a broad range of con artists, the scientifically illiterate, lobbyists, and incompetents who describe themselves as “activists” exceeds the scope

Fig. 1 Microcassette recorder (Photo: Public Domain)



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April 16, 1994 - Vilnius, Lithuania (Saturday)

Yesterday was unexpectedly eventful. He started w/ a late breakfast followed by an 11:00 meeting w/ Gediminas Kirkilas, a member of Parliament who met us last December. He explained to him the problems we face here -- e.g., the research guy we thought we hired in Dec '93 simply disappeared. So we told GK the sob story about how next month I have to report to the DoD and I have nothing to say about Lithuania. No one needs to know about the work Rom M. has done for us with the archive material he photocopied here two years ago. So GK phoned the head of the Lithuanian state archive -- the guy's first name is Gediminas -- everyone here is named Gediminas -- so we went immediately to his office w/ GK's car. The only problem was the driver took us to the police headquarters! He walked

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Fig. 2 Sample page of Dr. Paul M. Cole's journal

of the present study. These “evil creeps,” who plague the accounting program like bloodsucking deer flies at a lakeside summer camp, have refused do the honorable thing, which would be to go away and never be heard from again. The role played by the “evil creeps” is therefore an integral part of the story of the accounting program.

The “cruel frauds,” who derive money and extract pleasure from exploiting vulnerable family members, receive the fame they desperately crave from fawning journalists and gullible members of Congress. “Crackpots” and bombastic idiots are routinely referred to as “experts.” Demonstrably fabricated statements concocted by “marginal employees” are treated with reverence as valid “opinions.” “Scoundrels” and their false narratives have become a familiar malignancy so deeply embedded within the accounting program that it would be irresponsible to pretend otherwise. Names of the honorable and capable, the indifferent and incompetent, as well as the “cruel frauds” and “evil creeps,” therefore, are included in this narrative whenever the issue is salient, the evidence is both sufficient and credible, and the reference to individuals by name contributes to the integrity and comprehensiveness of the narrative. Like a history of the church, the story of America’s “sacred” mission includes both saints and sinners. Pretending the latter do not exist unjustly diminishes the contributions of the former.

With regard to ambition and scope, this study is not intended to be a comprehensive history of either the accounting program or the POW/MIA Accounting Community.

That important task is left to more capable hands.

* * *

Nashville, TN, USA

Paul M. Cole

NOTES

1. Members of the United States Armed Forces, regardless of gender, who went missing during America’s historic conflicts are collectively referred to as “servicemen” or “service members.”
2. POW/MIA Recognition Day statement, September 19, 2014 <http://www.pow-miafamilies.org/recognition-day.html>
3. “Myths about science...and belief in the paranormal,” Milton Rothman, *Skeptical Inquirer* (Vol. 14, No. 1, Fall 1989), pp. 25–34.
4. The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Office subsequently became the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The activities described in *Volume I* are the product of extraordinary contributions by many people. Few of the events described herein, however, would have been possible without the leadership, assistance, and friendship of Sergei Zamascikov. Any progress that was made as a result of these projects to account for missing American service members may be attributed to Sergei whose dedication to his adopted country was often a thing to behold.

The suggestion to write this book was first made by Dr. John Byrd, who along with Dr. Miemie Byrd offered inexhaustible encouragement.

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The colleagues who assisted Sergei and me in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Germany, and Moscow in the early 1990s emerged from the communist era with their dignity and professionalism intact. This book, which is an inadequate expression of our appreciation, is a small indication that the contributions you made all of those years ago still resonate. Assistance of particular importance in the Baltic countries was provided by Dr. Romuald Misiunis.

This book was written in the Aiea, Mililani, and Kaimuki in Hawaii, Chicago, Nashville, Maryland, Maine, Singapore, and Shanghai. Without the support from everyone, particularly during times that were less than encouraging, this book would not have been possible.

Thank you. I owe each of you a debt that will be difficult to repay.

The responsibility for any errors or deficiencies in this book is mine.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAAS	American Association for the Advancement of Science
ABFA	American Board of Forensic Anthropology
ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
AEFNR	American Expeditionary Force North Russia
AFDIL	Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory
AFIRB	Armed Forces Identification Review Board
AGRC	American Graves Registration Command
AGRS	American Graves Registration Service
AMEMB	American Embassy
APC	Armored Personnel Carrier
AQG	Army Quartermaster General
ARPANET	Advanced Research Projects Agency Network
ASCLD-LAB	American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors- Laboratory Accreditation Board
ASGRO	Armed Services Graves Registration Office
AWOL	Absent Without Leave
BFF	Best Friend Forever
BND	West German Intelligence Service, <i>Bundesnachrichtendienst</i>
BNR	Body Not Recovered
BTB	Believed to Be
CBD	Commerce Business Daily
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIL	Central Identification Laboratory
CILHI	Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii

CIL-THAI	Central Identification Laboratory-Thailand
CINCUNC	Commander in Chief, United Nations Command
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CIU	Central Identification Unit
CODEL	Congressional Delegation
COLA	Cost of Living Allowance
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CRM	Corporate Research Manager
DASD	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
DDCI	Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
DFI	Defense Forecasts, Inc.
DIA	Defense Intelligence Agency
DMZ	De-Militarized Zone
DoD	Department of Defense
DoDD	Department of Defense Directive
DoDI	Department of Defense Instruction
DoS	Department of State
DPAA	Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
DPMO	Defense POW/MIA Office, later Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
E3	Private First Class
E. O.	Executive Order
ESSR	Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic
FFRDC	Federally Funded Research and Development Center
FLABS	Folklore and Bullshit
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FRS	Family Reference Sample
FRUS	Foreign Relations of the United States
FSB	Federal Security Service, successor of the KGB
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GAO	General Accounting Office, later Government Accountability Office
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GRS	Graves Registration Service
GRU	Soviet military intelligence
GS	Government Service

HR	House Resolution
HUMINT	Human Intelligence
ICHV	International Center for Human Values
IDPF	Individual Deceased Personnel File
ISA	International Security Affairs
JAG	Judge Advocate General
JCRC	Joint Casualty Resolution Center
JCSD	Joint Commission Support Directorate
JFA	Joint Field Activity
JPAC	Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command
JTF-FA	Joint Task Force-Full Accounting
KGB	Committee for State Security of the USSR
KIA	Killed in Action
KIA/BNR	Killed in Action/Body Not Recovered
KWWG	Korean War Working Group
LBJ	Lyndon Baines Johnson
LMA	Ladies' Memorial Association
LSEL	Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory of the Air Force
LSSR	Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic
MIA	Missing in Action
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MVD	Ministry of Internal Affairs, precursor of the KGB
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NDRI	National Defense Research Institute
NIE	National Intelligence Estimate
NMCP	National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific
NNSC	Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission
NPRC	National Personnel Records Center
NVA	East German Army, <i>Nationale Volksarmee</i>
OIG	Office of the Inspector General
OMPF	Official Military Personnel Files
OPLAN	Operations Plan
OPM	Other People's Money
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSI	Office of Special Intelligence
OTR	Off the Rack

PACOM	Pacific Command
PADD	Person Authorized to Direct Disposition of Human Remains
PAF	Project Air Force
PFC	Private First Class (E3)
PNOK	Primary Next of Kin
POC	Point of Contact
POW	Prisoner of War
PRO	Public Record Office
PSD	Political Science Department
RSR	RAND-Supported Research
SA-2	C-75 Surface-to-Air missile
SAIC	Science Applications, Inc.
SALT I	Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I
SCO	Service Casualty Office
SEP	Socialist Unity Party, <i>Sozialistische Einheitspartei</i>
SES	Senior Executive Service
SIS	Special Intelligence Service
SNIE	Special National Intelligence Estimate
SoW	Statement of Work
SP4	Specialist 4th Class
SSC	Senate Select Committee
Stasi	East German Secret Police, <i>Ministerium für Staatssicherheit</i>
TDY	Tour of Duty
TFR	Task Force Russia
TFR-M	Task Force Russia-Moscow
TSN	Tan Son Nhut
UNCMAC	United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission
USAF	United States Air Force
USAFSS	United States Air Force Security Service
USARVIS	US Army Vietnam Installation Stockade
USC	United States Code
USCINCPAC	US Commander in Chief Pacific Command
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness)
USD(P)	Under Secretary of Defense (Policy)
USN	United States Navy
USPACOM	United States Pacific Command

USRJC	US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars
WWI	World War I
WWII	World War II

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CHAPTER 1

Authorization, Policy, Implementation, and Oversight

ORIGINS

Since its beginning in the nineteenth century, the primary purpose of the US government's inchoate accounting program has been to secure the live return of service members whose casualty status was prisoner of war (POW) or missing in action (MIA).

In cases when live return did not occur, if no evidence of life was produced over a period of one year and one day after the date of the loss event, a presumptive finding of death could be made under the terms of the Missing Persons Act. Congress has designated all service members and civilians who have been declared dead, regardless of any previous casualty status, as missing persons.

In 2010, Congress created a second accounting program. The legacy program to resolve missing person cases associated with recent or concurrent conflicts was re-authorized *status quo ante*. A second program was specifically authorized to account for missing persons associated with America's historic conflicts, aka "pre-enactment" cases. The purpose of the second accounting program is to "account for" missing persons in a four-step process: locate, recover, identify the remains of missing persons, and then return the remains to the next of kin. No time limit, deadline, sunset clause, or definition of success was imposed by Congress on either of the accounting programs.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the origins of the accounting program. Particular attention is focused on the policies intended to implement the program authorized to account for service members who went missing during America's historic conflicts.

* * *

AUTHORIZATION AND POLICY

The US government's program to account for service members who went missing during America's historic conflicts consists of politics, authorization, policy, and an implementation plan, all of which are subject to Congressional oversight. Authority to carry out the accounting program cascades through the federal government in the following manner:

- Politics is the process by which opposing individuals and groups compete to exert control over the federal government.
 - The composition of the Congress, that is, the distribution of the party affiliations of the members of the House and Senate, reflects the balance of national political power at any given time.
 - Congress is empowered by the Constitution to make and amend policies that apply to the federal agencies, such as the DoD, that provide services in support of the accounting program.
- Authorization for the accounting program is expressed by Congress primarily through the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).
 - The NDAA, which authorizes federal agencies to provide services described in the Act, defines terms, sets objectives, establishes priorities, and states the results the federal agencies are expected to produce. For example:
- Congress, which assigned DoD the authority to account for servicemen who went missing during America's historic conflicts, defined the term "historic conflicts."
- Congress defined the term "accounted for" in the NDAA. The definition includes the criteria and methods authorized to "account for" the missing that are binding on the federal government.
 - Congress creates allocation authority required to fund the activities authorized by the NDAA through an appropriations bill.

If there is no appropriations bill, aka a “budget,” the government may be funded through a continuing resolution, aka a “CR.”

- Policy is a government agency’s high-level course of action as well as a statement of the principles that guide a particular program.
 - DoD’s policy for the accounting program is promulgated by the Secretary of Defense through the DoD Issuances Program.¹
 - The president has the authority to create policy for the Executive Branch by issuing Executive Orders or signing Executive Agreements that apply to the entire government.
 - The appearance of policy may be created by statements by senior officials.
 - When agencies fail to create policy in an environment of weak or non-existent Congressional oversight, *de facto* policy can be created through “regulatory capture.”
- An implementation plan, that is, the “how to” part, explains the process and procedures and assigns responsibility within the DoD to achieve the objectives described in the agency’s policy.
 - DoD is responsible for the formulation and execution of the implementation plan to account for servicemen who went missing during America’s historic conflicts.
 - Congress is responsible for the oversight of DoD’s performance, which includes the review, monitoring, and supervision of the programs, activities, and results of the implementation plan undertaken by DoD.
 - Congress exerts its oversight authority through the committee and subcommittee system. In the case of the accounting program, oversight is usually the responsibility of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees.

A policy that is implemented without effective oversight can go off the rails quickly. Without proper oversight, the program intended to implement the policy inevitably falls victim to “mission creep.” Mission creep occurs when superfluous and unnecessary tasks are added to a project. If this goes on long enough, a bloated policy begins to appear normal, simply because everyone has forgotten what was authorized to implement the original policy in the first place. From time to time, mission creep causes the project to spiral so far out of control that even Congress notices.

In addition to the authority to establish, modify, or terminate the accounting program, Congress has the authority to create the Accounting

Community and to define its members. The Accounting Community is significant because its participants are the only organizations authorized by Congress to participate in the accounting program.

* * *

After Congress passes the annual National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), the Department of Defense (DoD) implements Congressional intent through two documents. The first is a DoD Directive (DoDD) that establishes DoD policy on a general level. The nitty-gritty details that describe who is responsible to do what to achieve the objectives included in a DoDD are presented in a DoD Instruction (DoDI). (For every DoDD there is at least one and in some cases multiple DoDI's.)

DoD policy has been silent on the issue of how to recover physical and biological evidence in order to fulfill the Congressional definition of “accounted for.”

DoDD 5110.10, *DEFENSE PRISONER OF WAR/MISSING
IN ACTION OFFICE (DPMO)*

Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Office (DPMO) (Issued July 16, 1993, updated September 21, 2005) contains no implementation plan or guidance.

DoDI 2310.05, *ACCOUNTING FOR MISSING PERSONS—
BOARDS OF INQUIRY*

Accounting for Missing Persons Boards of Inquiry (Issued January 31, 2000, updated March 14, 2008) establishes policy for the “review of new information that may change the status of or significantly contribute to resolving the fate of a person who is unaccounted for from the Korean conflict, the Cold War, or the Indochina War era.” Enclosure 8, which establishes policy for these cases, deals entirely with information and document management. This DoDI contains no guidance or regulations concerning how the information and documents are to be obtained or who is responsible for producing the information and documents. Instead, DoDI 2310.05 establishes policies on how to convene a “Pre-Enactment Case Board” if information that is new and credible is received. DoDI 2301.05 does not contain the term “fullest possible accounting.”

DoDD 3002.01, *PERSONNEL RECOVERY*
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Personnel Recovery in the Department of Defense (December 22, 2013), which replaced DoDD 2310.2 (2000), contains no policy concerning how to locate or recover the remains of missing servicemen.

DoDD 5110.10, *DEFENSE POW/MIA ACCOUNTING*
AGENCY (DPAA)

Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) (January 13, 2017) created a “Past Conflict Personnel Accounting Program” that “under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P),” the Director, DPAA “Establishes policies and procedures to account for DoD personnel who had been reported in a missing status, as prescribed by DoDI 1300.18 or other contemporary Military Department regulation, from past conflicts and other designated conflicts, including locating, recovering and identifying remains after hostilities have ceased.” DoDD 5110.10 authorizes DPAA to establish “procedures” to account for the missing but more importantly establishes political not scientific control and oversight over the science of human skeletal identification as well as political authority over the forensic science required to locate and recover remains. There is no reference to federal policy, and the term “fullest possible accounting” does not appear in DoDD 5110.10. The DoDD does not include any quantitative measures by which the progress of the accounting program could be assessed.

In 2017, the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Agency (DPAA) stated:

Our vision: A world-class workforce fulfills our nation’s obligation by maximizing the number of missing personnel accounted for while ensuring timely, accurate information is provided to their families.

Our mission: Provide the fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and the nation.

The DoD Directive 5110.10 that created DPAA does not assign DPAA the mission to “provide fullest possible accounting for our missing personnel to their families and the nation.” The term “fullest possible accounting” is not defined by federal law, policy, or regulation, and DPAA does not define the term either in any publication.

The fact that DPAA was permitted to create its own mission with no defined goal or quantifiable objectives is a textbook example of mission

creep that was made possible by the absence of Congressional oversight. This was not the only unusual feature of the US government's approach to accounting for missing American service members.

* * *

INHERENT RESPONSIBILITY OR MAN-MADE OBLIGATION

If the requirement to account for combatants who went missing during wartime by recovering human remains is an inherent obligation of the government, the practice should be found in a variety of countries around the world. The majority of nations that have been involved in major wars that resulted in tens of thousands of casualties, however, do not account for the missing by searching for human remains. In Aristotelian terms, it is not in the nature of a state, which exists to achieve the highest good, to engage in an endless search for the remains of missing servicemen after the cessation of hostilities. In addition, the overwhelming majority of governments that do not recognize an inherent responsibility to search for the remains of the missing do not create such an obligation through policy.

Examples of how different societies have dealt with missing persons reveal a consistent pattern that is inconsistent with the American concept of the state's "highest good." Examples from modern history are sufficient to make this point. During World War I, the magnitude of the dead among America's allies dwarfed US losses. In contrast to the 116,516 American dead from all causes, the British lost over 700,000, while the French losses exceeded 1,357,000. After WWI, the French government refused to participate in the recovery of the remains of missing soldiers.

French leaders...envisioned ghoulish trains packed with bodies crisscrossing their countryside. Arguing that France had to concentrate on rebuilding, they banned removal of bodies for three years.²

Instead of recovering, identifying, and returning the dead, French authorities simply collected, then stored the remains. Ossuaries containing the remains of World War I casualties still stand in France. The Douaumont Ossuary and Necropolis is located on the site of the Battle of Verdun. German General Erich von Falkenhayn convinced Kaiser Wilhelm II that the only way to win the war was to force the French Army to "bleed to death" by inflicting massive casualties. Operation Gericht, meaning judgment or place of execution, was designed to lure French forces into a killing zone of a massive scale. The selection of Verdun was no accident, as the

fortress had significant strategic and symbolic value. The fortress of Verdun had been one of the last objectives to fall during the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871. In addition, the Treaty of Verdun in CE 843 created the border of the inchoate German state by establishing the east–west divide of the Carolingian Empire. The amalgam of nostalgia, pride, and strategic importance would prove to be lethal to both sides on an unprecedented scale.

The Battle of Verdun, which raged between February and December 1916, resulted in the death of more than 300,000 French and German soldiers in addition to over 500,000 wounded. The bodies over 160,000 of the 300,000 dead were not identified. The towns and villages of Beaumont, Bezonvaux, Cumières, Fleury, Haumont, Louvemont, Ornes, Vaux, and Douaumont were obliterated.

The Douaumont Necropolis, which contains the graves of 16,142 known French soldiers, also shelters the bones of 130,000 unidentified French and German soldiers (Fig. 1.1).

Of the approximately 60,000 Australian soldiers who died in World War I, more than 20,000 were reported as “missing.” The debate in Australia concerned whether these cases should be referred to as “missing in action” or “no known grave,”³ which was the equivalent of declaring the missing as “inaccessible corpses.” The Australian government did not create a US-style accounting program for those with “no known grave.”

Other nations dealt with the “no known grave” problem without turning to an American-style open-ended search for human remains. In Britain following World War I, memorials and days of remembrance were established to commemorate the missing dead, but no actions were taken to recover the remains. During WWII, Japanese kamikaze pilots would cut their hair and fingernails before going into battle. The trimmings were sent home to the family after the death of the kamikaze because there was no corpse to return for cremation in a traditional funeral service. In Angola in



Fig. 1.1 Douaumont Ossuary and Necropolis (Photos: (L) Reuters (R) Jean-Christophe Verhagen/AFP/Getty Images)

times of war, it is believed that when a corpse goes missing, the spirits of the dead will come with the wind to join their kin for the funeral ceremony.⁴ France signed an agreement with North Vietnam in August 1986 to repatriate the remains of over 25,000 French soldiers killed and buried in North Vietnam during the First Indochina War. Nonetheless, France has yet to receive an accounting for the nation's servicemen who went missing in Algeria or Indochina. Neither Angola, France, Britain, nor Australia maintains an accounting program focused on the recovery of skeletalized remains of servicemen who went missing during historic conflicts. None of these countries share the American view that the government has an "obligation of care" to "account for" missing service members by recovering bones.

In light of the Missing Persons Act, the US government's obligation is not to prisoners of war or the MIA; rather, the obligation is to account for "missing persons." If within one year and one day of a loss incident a serviceman does not return to US military control, or if there is no indication that the person is alive, a review board may declare the person juridically dead. According to federal law, all of the juridically dead are designated as "missing persons." This is why the purpose of the accounting program is not to account for POWs or MIAs; rather, the accounting program is authorized to account for missing persons. As lobbyists and other pressure groups have discovered, an accounting program dedicated to finding POWs is much more difficult for Congress to control or terminate than a program intended to account for missing persons.

The US government's recognition of an "obligation of care" for missing persons is idiosyncratic. The recovery and identification of civilians murdered by the junta in Argentina and the thousands slaughtered by Serbian forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina were criminal investigations. In contrast to the international norm, Congress has authorized the DoD to account for missing persons whose loss incident occurred in wartime as far back as 76 years ago. In contrast to criminal investigations, Congress has not imposed a sunset clause and a statute of limitations or established any criteria by which one could determine that the accounting program had achieved its objectives and thus should come to an end. No government of any other country shares the US position.

* * *

If it is not in the nature of a state to search for the skeletalized remains of missing combatants, what would motivate a state to do something contrary to its nature? This question may be answered by examining the following related questions and issues:

- What is the origin of and when was the US government’s “obligation of care” extended to the remains of the missing?
- What is the US government’s obligation to “account for” the missing?
- On what basis did it become the US government’s obligation to locate, recover, identify, and return the remains of the missing?
- What are the scope and limits of the US government’s responsibility?

In the United States, the accounting program is an amalgam of civil religion, tradition, myth, and an unwritten social contract of uncertain origin, all of which are subordinate to political control. The program is based on the belief that “locating, naming, and burying” the remains of the missing constitutes an “obligation of care” the government must carry out “with its scientific, legal, and military institutions.”⁵ The origins of this responsibility are, at best, vague and at worse, a social contract that has been invented for the sake of convenience. For example, without any reference to regulation, law, or policy, a Congressional report stated matter-of-factly:

Another responsibility of the military to the missing servicemen and their next of kin was the recovery, identification and repatriation of remains.⁶

This single, short sentence raises far more questions than it answers. The Congressional report, which is silent on authority as well as the important issue of the origins of the responsibility, simply states “the military” is responsible yet includes no terms, conditions or timeframe.

The same Congressional report, which was focused solely on “Americans missing in Southeast Asia,” recognized the disparity between producing a corpse and reaching a finding of death based on anecdotal information, often obtained from third parties. The remarkable aspect of US policy was that the onus to provide a “full accounting” was imposed on the government of North Vietnam, not the US government. The conclusion of the report emphasized the importance that human remains played in the accounting program.

There are no examples in world history to compare with the accounting now being requested. The unique circumstances, therefore, make it necessary to clarify the ways in which an accounting can be made, legal tests that may or may not be satisfied, minimal and optimal expectations, and prospects for achieving the end results required.

A satisfactory accounting would require identifiable remains and a report of known circumstances of loss. [T]hat kind of report is unlikely in the majority of losses. [...] Will the Department of Defense in many cases endorse mere reports on our MIA’s without remains and will that be acceptable to the next of kin?⁷

This Congressional report, which raised the crucial point that human remains provide the only basis for *prima facie* identification of the missing, also raised but did not answer an equally important question. What was to be done about the missing whose remains could not be recovered? The CIA addressed the same issue a decade later:

Unfortunately, in the final analysis, because of such factors as the circumstances of loss and the passage of time, many missing US personnel will never be accounted for, regardless of the level of cooperation by the Indochinese governments.⁸

The remains of the missing that had not been or could not be recovered became the “inaccessible corpses.”

What evidence or standards should be required to account for the “inaccessible corpse” cases? How many years was Congress prepared to allocate funds to search for “MIAs without remains”?

No answers to these fundamental questions appear in any Congressional report, federal regulation, law, or DoD policy. Instead of a rational policy codified in law and built on a solid foundation of forensic science, the accounting program has been controlled through “regulatory capture” by lobbyists, heavily influenced by purveyors of Folklore and Bullshit (FLABS) and justified by scientifically illiterate lobbyists who have no more credibility than urban myths.

To restate Aristotle in modern political terms, the reason for a state’s decision to act contrary to the “greatest good” is the work of lobbyists.

* * *

For the bulk of American history there has been no statutory requirement to search for the remains of missing servicemen. Instead, over time an informal social contract emerged. A fungible informal social contract, which contemporary jargonists would refer to as social “mission creep,” is created when citizens cede certain rights to the government in exchange for the government promising to provide reciprocal services that serve the interests of the population. The social contract between the government and the military implied that if the state sent the soldier to fight abroad and if the soldier were killed, the state would recover, identify, and bury the remains, with return to the next of kin as an option. In the United States instead of a contract with the state, the social contract was gradually made between the soldier and the individual service branch to which the serviceman belonged.

This is what Aristotle meant when he observed that the state is composed of smaller communities that may or may not share the interest of the state. Yet even at the level of the military community, the social contract to recover and identify the remains of the missing has been, at best, ambiguous.

A variation of this social contract has been inculcated throughout the US military. For example, the US Army Ranger Creed states, “I will never leave a fallen comrade to fall into the hands of the enemy.”⁹ The concept of “leave no one behind” makes sense when applied to care of the wounded or for the recovery of corpses during hostilities. The social contract created by the Ranger Creed is silent on the Army’s responsibility to search for and recover of the remains of the missing decades after the loss event.

The Marine Corps indoctrinates its recruits from Day One in boot camp that Marines never leave their dead or wounded on the battlefield. The fact that an untold number of Marines were killed or wounded in Vietnam as a result of this practice is rarely highlighted, except by the enemy. During the siege of Hue in 1968, for example, Marines who exposed themselves to enemy fire to retrieve wounded and dead Marines were themselves cut down. The enemy was well aware that where there was a Marine casualty, another Marine would appear, regardless of the risk. The North Vietnamese soldiers waited for the Marines to re-appear so that they could kill them as well.

As in the case of the Army Ranger Creed, the Marine Corps made no explicit assurance that the recovery and identification of the remains of the missing was included in its written contract with recruits. Social contracts, which are never written, reviewed, or signed by the parties, are always open to reinterpretation on the fly.

The problem of inaccessible corpses had to be addressed not by the individual services; rather, it was an issue that required policy attention first at the level of the DoD, then by Congress. Once again, however, the problem of how to deal with inaccessible corpses was neither new nor unique, nor without precedent in other nations.

Accounting for the missing differs fundamentally from the recovery and identification of corpses. Corpse loss as a result of warfare and accidents may have been as common in ancient and early historic times as during America’s historic conflicts (e.g. corpse loss at sea).¹⁰

Not every society, however, considers the presence of the corpse to be equally important to the mourning process or essential to “account for” a missing person. “Negative emotional responses to the absence of corpses are not universal. In addition, the reasons for corpse loss come into play.” The issue is as relevant in modern times as it was in the ancient world.

Ancient Athens dealt with the issue of inaccessible corpses nearly 3000 years ago. The manner in which the ancient Greeks accounted for their war dead more than 24 centuries ago is consistent with modern nations where there is no obligation to account for the missing by recovering remains. In *The Peloponnesian War*, which concerns wars between Greek city-states that occurred between BCE 460 and 399, general-turned-historian Thucydides describes the procedures that were followed during Athen's state-funded funerals for casualties of war.

In Athens, the collection and disposition of the remains of the war dead was guided by secular and religious traditions. Thucydides reported that with the exception of the remains of those who had been buried where they fell for the purpose of glorification, state funerals involved the bones of the dead. The presence of bones meant that the state funeral occurred a year or more after the battle.

Three days before the funeral in Athens, the bones of the war dead were placed in a tent provided by the state so that friends and relatives could bring offerings and grieve. The day of the interment (or cremation), the bones were placed in cypress coffins designated for each tribe. One empty coffin was decorated to commemorate the "inaccessible corpses," the dead whose remains had not been or could not be recovered. No further effort was made to account for the missing.

The Athenian solution was almost identical to the manner in which countries such as Britain, France, and Australia dealt with the issue of the missing person. In contrast to the Athenian tradition, the US government's accounting program was given the task to recover and identify the remains of the missing, wherever they may be found around the world.

* * *

The US government's obligation to account for those who went missing during America's historic conflicts has several important caveats and exceptions. For example, jurisdiction over servicemen who deserted to the Sino-Soviet bloc was transferred from the accounting program to the Judge Advocate General (JAG) for criminal prosecution. During the Vietnam War, medical records of suspected deserters were retained by law enforcement agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, not the Central Identification Laboratory (CIL).

One of the major exceptions to the accounting program is that it has never applied to US intelligence officers lost during intelligence operations, even if these operations occurred during wartime. As Colonel R said to Ashenden, the British agent, "There's just one thing I think you ought

to know before you take on this job. And don't forget it. If you do well you'll get no thanks and if you get into trouble you'll get no help."¹¹ This instruction, though fictional, was an accurate portrayal of the fact that in the intelligence service the "no one left behind" mantra of the US Armed Forces has never applied, then or now.

Another important exception concerns suicide. In common law, suicide often negates a contract such as a life insurance policy. Does suicide terminate the US government's obligation to account for a missing person by recovering human remains? The answer is, "It depends." Self-inflicted wounds are discouraged in the US military. American servicemen, who are held accountable for causing self-inflicted wounds, are discouraged from committing suicide. Intelligence agents that the US government does not expect to recover alive, on the other hand, are supplied with poison or weapons and encouraged if not expected to commit suicide to avoid capture. For example, after Captain Francis Gary Powers, a US Air Force (USAF) fighter pilot during the Korean War, became a U-2 pilot. During the "sheep dipping" process that converted Powers from a service member to a spook, the CIA gave him as standard equipment a suicide pin tipped with a shellfish-derived saxitoxin that was concealed within a silver dollar. Captain Powers described during his CIA debriefing how he concealed the pin during the descent after he bailed out of his U-2 that had been crippled by a Soviet C-75 (SA-2) surface-to-air missile on May 1, 1962.

Powers: There was this coin – I thought of that. I reached in my pocket – I took my gloves off – reached in my pocket, got the coin out, unscrewed the ring that the – that the chain is usually attached to – you know how one of these coins are made to hang on a chain – it has a little loop in the top – well, that screwed out, and I poured the needle out in my hand and threw the coin away and put the needle in, I think, the right pocket of my flying suit. I'm pretty sure it was.

Interr: This was just the pin and the sheath, the scabbard –

Powers: Yes, the sheath and the pin.

Interr: So you got rid of the coin?

Powers: I got rid of the coin, and I dropped the pin in my pocket. I don't know – I just assumed that the coin was too obvious and I couldn't keep it but maybe just the pin in the pocket would be less noticeable.¹²

With the suicide pin came the obligation to use it. According to the CIA, many people believed that Captain Powers should have "made use of

his poison pin,”¹³ as if he were some sort of American kamikaze. “It took Powers’ family many years to refute the allegation that the pilot had a duty to kill himself.”¹⁴ After he returned to the United States, Captain Powers was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and the POW medal.

There is no equivalent in American history of another American POW who was criticized for failing to kill himself; rather, it was just the opposite. According to the Code of Conduct, US POWs were expected to do whatever it took to survive by resisting to one’s utmost capability. Criticism was reserved for prisoners who killed themselves. Suicide was a common cause of death among the US POWs captured during the Korean War who died due to the “give-up-itis” syndrome.

Men who developed this syndrome were observed to abstain gradually from physical activity. They remained supine within the confines of their prison hut. With the passage of time, they withdrew more and more from all contacts and became mute and motionless. They refused to eat unless given large amounts of cold water. Eventually, they completely refused to eat and developed what amounted to an obsession for cold water. Finally, they “turned their faces to the wall” and died. From the onset of first symptom to demise took a period of 3 weeks, “almost to the day.”

In units with poor morale and poor unit identification, this condition was responsible for a large number of deaths. “Give-up-it is” alone was considered the primary cause of 25 to 50 percent of all the prison camp deaths. In conjunction with exposure, “give-up-it is” accounted for 75 percent of the deaths, while in almost 100 percent of the cases a combination of “give-up-itis,” exposure, and malnutrition was considered the cause of death. The condition was most prevalent amongst single, young, immature enlisted men from broken homes. It was rarely noted amongst noncommissioned officers or officers. In the 25–35-year-old age group regardless of rank, the condition was uncommon. It was rare amongst psychopaths. The syndrome is said to have been nonexistent amongst other Allied prisoners of war.

The death of an intelligence officer or agent by suicide terminates the government’s obligation of care. The death of a serviceman by suicide does not terminate the government’s obligation of care. This arbitrary distinction is another example of the capricious nature of the US government’s accounting program.

There is also no record of death benefits being denied to the next of kin of a Korean War POW who committed suicide through the “give-up-itis” syndrome. In contrast, the accounting program for intelligence officers and agents included the provision if not the expectation that the officer

would commit suicide prior to or during captivity. A suicide under these circumstances resulted in the closure of the officer's account including a death benefit paid to the beneficiary which terminated the US government's obligation to the next of kin.

No effort has ever been made to recover the remains of missing intelligence agents, including those who may have committed suicide in enemy custody.

In contrast, hundreds of American POWs who committed suicide via "give-up-itis" or any other method are included in the accounting program.

* * *

THE "ACCOUNTING COMMUNITY"

Accounting for missing American servicemen is a political act; thus it should come as no surprise the members of the "Accounting Community" are selected by Congress for political reasons.

Congress assigns responsibility to various governmental organizations and agencies to carry out the policy to account for missing American servicemen. The authorized participants, which are collectively defined as the Accounting Community, are named in the NDAA, as amended. In FY2010, for example, the definition of the Accounting Community included the following agencies, elements, and offices:

- The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO).
- The Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC).
- The Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory (AFDIL).
- The Life Sciences Equipment Laboratory of the Air Force (LSEL).
- The casualty and mortuary affairs offices of the military departments.
- Any other elements of the DoD whose mission (as designated by the Secretary of Defense) involves the accounting for and recovery of members of the armed forces who are MIA, prisoners of war, or unaccounted for.¹⁵

The Accounting Community does not include outside organizations and people, such as a paid lobbyist, pressure groups, family organizations, or any other non-governmental entities. This did not prevent these groups, individuals, and people a member of Congress described as "evil creeps" from insinuating themselves into the accounting program.

* * *

IMPLEMENTATION

A policy is a government's statement of intent to achieve a particular outcome. A policy that lacks a clear objective, is without a detailed implementation plan, or has no quantitative measures by which success can be measured is doomed to fail. A program intended to account for the missing from America's historic conflicts, therefore, requires at a minimum the following components:

- A clear political authorization for the objectives and scope of the program,
- A declaratory policy that describes the purpose,
- A definition of the meaning of the term "accounted for" that is applied throughout the accounting program, and
- An implementation plan that coordinates and focuses on the government's efforts and activities intended to achieve the desired results.

The key to the success or failure of the accounting program is the legislation passed by Congress that defines two critical terms: First, what is the meaning of "accounted for"; and second, what are the methods authorized by Congress to account for the missing?

Declaratory policy for the accounting program may be promulgated by the Secretary of Defense who also has the responsibility to create and implement an accounting program to achieve the objectives as defined by Congress. Authorization may be thought of as the "why," while the implementation program is the "how to." (As discussed below, statements by US government officials routinely give the appearance of policies that do not exist.)

Declaratory policy may also be issued by the president of the United States through an E. O. or an Executive Agreement. Examples of Executive Orders, through which the president acting as CEO instructs the Executive Branch of his policy, include Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, Roosevelt's order authorizing the detention of Japanese-Americans, and Truman's order to desegregate the armed forces. Some Executive Orders have more gravitas than others. President Hoover, for example, signed E. O. 5658, the greatest Executive Order of all time, on June 24, 1931. Entitled "Form, Style, and Safeguarding of Executive Orders and Proclamations," E. O. 5658 decreed:

The typewritten drafts shall be double-spaced, on paper 8 by 12 ½ inches, and shall have a left-hand margin of 2 inches.

E. O. 5658 was, of course, an Executive Order about Executive Orders. Though the courts and Congress recognize that the president is entitled to establish policies for the Executive Branch through an Executive Order, an Executive Order can be reviewed or canceled in three ways:

- The president can revoke, modify, or supersede any Executive Order.
- Congress has the power to revoke, modify, or supersede an Executive Order if the president was acting under authority granted by Congress.
- Courts can declare an Executive Order to be illegal or unconstitutional.

If the president's intent is to establish policy for the entire government, this can be achieved through legislation or an Executive Agreement. An example of an Executive Agreement, which is a political agreement between two heads of state, was the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty I (SALT I). SALT I consisted of two parts. The first part was the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty that required Senate ratification. The second part was the Interim Agreement and Protocol on Limitation of Strategic Offensive Weapons (Interim Agreement), which was an Executive Agreement between US President Richard Nixon and Soviet General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev. The legal status of an Executive Agreement, which does not require Senate ratification, is equivalent to a ratified treaty.

A serious problem occurs when the illusion of official policy is created. This transpires when a prominent member of the government, such as a member of the Cabinet, makes a pronouncement or an offhand public statement that appears to be the official policy of the US government when, in fact, the official's statements lacked proper authority. Such incidents, which are a common feature of American history, can have serious consequences.

General Douglas MacArthur, for example, was responsible for several unauthorized statements. In March 1949, General MacArthur stated that the US defense perimeter in the Far East ran from the Philippines through Okinawa to Japan, then on to the Aleutian Islands and Alaska. General MacArthur neglected to include China and Korea in his definition of the nation's defense perimeter.

On January 12, 1950, during a National Press Club briefing, Secretary of State Dean Acheson described an American defense perimeter that did not include the defense of South Korea. On January 30, 1950,

Soviet Premier Josef Stalin informed North Korean dictator Kim Il-sung that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was prepared to support North Korea's plan to "unify" the peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), aka North Korea attacked the South on June 25, 1950, secure in the opinion that South Korea lay beyond the US "defense perimeter." The impression given by General MacArthur and Secretary Dulles, however, was incorrect. Two days after the invasion, President Truman mobilized US forces in Japan, and the United Nations voted to intervene militarily on behalf of South Korea. On June 29, 18 United States Air Force (USAF) B-26 bombers struck targets in Pyongyang.

Regardless of source, the most problematic and potentially dangerous type of declaratory policy is the one that lacks credibility. Mao Zedong correctly concluded that President Eisenhower's policy of "massive retaliation," which Mao referred to as a "paper tiger," lacked credibility. The people of East Berlin in 1953 and Hungary in 1956, who rose up against Soviet occupation in the belief that America's "rollback" policy meant that the United States would come to their assistance, were brutally suppressed by Soviet military forces that were set loose on civilians secure in the conclusion that the United States lacked the will to comply with its own declared policy. The Soviet government was correct and the people of East Berlin and Hungary suffered the consequences.

* * *

"REGULATORY CAPTURE"

A successful, cost-effective federal program is an amalgam of four components:

- Ten percent appropriate authorization,
- 25 percent well-conceived policy,
- 60 percent successful implementation, and
- Five percent effective Congressional oversight.

The key to the government maintaining control over the accounting program depends on each part performing well. If one of the parts fails, however, several outcomes could occur. Failed policy can be replaced or improved. Failed implementation can be exposed and fixed. The danger

occurs when failed policies are not replaced or a failed implementation plan is not exposed.

The key to success, therefore, is five percent of Congressional oversight. If Congressional oversight is missing and weak or simply fails, both the policy and implementation will eventually collapse. Without effective oversight, there are only three possible outcomes. First, the accounting program could simply bumble along, consuming taxpayer money but producing nothing. Second, the lack of oversight could allow the accounting program to be hijacked by pressure groups and lobbyists who answer to no one but themselves.

The institutional structure of the accounting program, which has been exceptionally weak, made the program vulnerable to outside interests. Control of the accounting program could be achieved by leveraging the agencies responsible for policy, implementation, and oversight. The paid lobbyist and her pressure group obtained political control of accounting program through the use of a standard tactic in bureaucratic politics known as “regulatory capture.”

The third outcome was therefore achieved. The accounting program was captured by pressure groups whose interest was to see the program bumble along, due to the fact that control of the program, not progress, was the prime motivation.

* * *

“Regulatory capture” is a form of government failure that occurs when an agency, created to act in the public interest, instead advances the interests of a small group. Regulatory capture occurs after the gamekeeper has turned into a poacher. In other words, the interests the agency set out to protect are ignored in favor of the squeaky wheel. Government agencies suffering from regulatory capture are called “captured agencies.”¹⁶ Regulatory capture allows policy concerning the accounting program to be made by organizations and individuals who are neither part of the federal government nor authorized members of the Accounting Community.

Instead of insulating the accounting program from politics, Congress encouraged regulatory capture of the accounting program. Instead of insisting on regulatory independence, Congress sat on its hands, while the DoD agencies responsible for regulatory oversight of the accounting program were “captured” by lobbyists. Members of Congress facilitated the regulatory capture they were responsible for preventing by failing to provide meaningful oversight.

Regulatory capture is facilitated when those who are regulated are on the side of those doing the capturing. The concern was that an official had begun to act in the interest of a paid lobbyist instead on behalf of the public interest.

GAO addressed this concern as early as 1992:

Over time, critics of CILHI have questioned the lengthy tenure of the CILHI commander [Mr. Johnie E. Webb, Jr.] and have alleged that he has exerted undue pressure in influencing or altering identification decisions. The current commander, an Army lieutenant colonel, has been at CILHI since July 1982.¹⁷

In his role as commander, Mr. Webb played a decisive role in scientific decisions, including a politically motivated decision concerning the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Mr. Webb, who earned a BA in business administration, was not a scientist of any kind. Mr. Webb made no secret of his close relationship with a paid lobbyist, Mrs. Ann Mills-Griffiths. For over 25 years, Mr. Webb had been in a position of authority from where he could make decisions that favored the paid lobbyist and support her organization's agenda. Over time, JTF-FA, CILHI, JPAC, and then DPAA acted as agents for a pressure organization rather than the general public.

Regulatory capture occurs when special interests co-opt policymakers and agencies to further their own ends. A stark example of how a "captured agency" behaves was revealed by JPAC Commanding Officer Admiral Donna Crisp during a Congressional hearing. In 2008, the JPAC Operations Plan (OPLAN) assigned a majority of investigative and recovery teams to Southeast Asia, despite the fact that between 2004 and 2008, 64 percent of recoveries and identifications were from WWII and the Korean War. Admiral Crisp justified this misallocation of resources in political terms:

As a practical matter, allocating [investigation and recovery] teams based solely on the rate of remains recovered per team in a given country would like result in focusing chiefly on multi-crew World War II aircraft losses. In fact, as long as we are not operating in North Korea, a decision made solely on this criterion would mean that we ceased all Korean War, Vietnam War, and Cold War accounting operations.

A shift toward ‘rate of remains recovered per team’ would focus recovery operations on World War II and potentially Cold War losses dropping the priority for Korean War and Vietnam War accounting operations.¹⁸

Admiral Crisp’s comments confirmed the fact that “regulatory capture” was achieved as a result of intense, prolonged pressure by the National League of POW/MIA Families and other pro-Vietnam War lobbyists. As a direct consequence of “regulatory capture,” JPAC spent on average 75 percent of the operations budget on investigation and recovery operations in Southeast Asia, despite the fact that 75 percent of the operations spend produced at best between five and ten identifications per year and those remains had been located by third parties unrelated to any JPAC program.

DASD Robert “Newbs” Newberry, the head of DPMO, the agency responsible for the DoD’s oversight of the accounting program, also confirmed that his agency had been “captured” by a paid lobbyist. DASD Newberry wrote in a 2009 memorandum:

Identifying the remains of unknowns already recovered and buried with honor in U.S. national cemeteries at home and abroad must take a lower priority [than recovering Americans] that still lie in the foreign countries in which they fell.¹⁹

Newberry’s policy was a mirror image of the paid lobbyist’s organization’s stated position. In addition to the fact that DPMO was the willing victim of “regulatory capture,” DASD Newberry’s position revealed a near complete lack of understanding of a fundamental issue that underpinned the entire accounting program. The remains of the missing buried as unknowns were still missing until they were identified. After an unknown was identified, no resources were required to search for those servicemen “in foreign countries.”

DASD Newberry also eliminated any doubt that the science of human skeletal identification was subordinate to a political agenda that was decisively influenced by a paid lobbyist. The concern, that the disinterment of unknowns for the purpose of identification would divert resources from Southeast Asia operations, was a page out of the paid lobbyist’s book. According to the paid lobbyist, all missing servicemen were not equal. Instead, the missing from the Vietnam War deserved preferential treatment.

Ms. Ann Mills-Griffiths, the paid lobbyist who headed the National League, made it crystal clear that Vietnam War cases took precedence over all other missing person cases:

[The paid lobbyist] says some think it doesn't make sense to dig up World War II graves when Vietnam families have been waiting a long time to find their missing.

"Some of the families think, 'Wait a minute – stand in line. You didn't start this; you didn't create it. And all of a sudden you think yours should have priority over everybody else's? No, I don't think so,'" Mills-Griffiths says.²⁰

The lobbyist added in 2017, "Our mission is to make sure they don't increase WWII and Korean War recoveries by decreasing the effort on Vietnam War accounting." "Regulatory capture" of DPMO and JPAC by a paid lobbyist was confirmed by many examples of deference and favoritism provided by DoD and the White House. During the Nixon administration, in June 1970 a "special White house telephone WATS²¹ link, linking the League to the White House, was installed in the" National League of Families office. In other words, the taxpayer paid for the lobbyist's phone calls. This wasn't the only favor extended to the paid lobbyist that was not offered to other family groups.

Robert P. Odell, the financial director for the Republican National Committee, planned for the League to use the committee's mailing lists to raise money for League travel, advertising, and publicity expenses. Joan M. Vinson, then the national coordinator of the RNC, had written the League's board members that "most importantly, no one will know that we are using the lists owned by the Republican National Committee." But the arrangement began to come undone when Representative Les Aspin had the details printed in *The Congressional Record*.²²

In an unusual move, in 1979 a paid lobbyist, who was the Executive Director of the National League of Families, "was given access to POW/MIA classified information"²³ that was not made available to other family groups. On December 8, 1981, Congressman Robert K. Dornan (R-CA) attempted to include Ms. Griffiths in a "closed" briefing presented by the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence (DDCI) that meant "that only Members and cleared staff would be present."²⁴ In 1985, National Security Council staffer Mr. Richard Childress described in a memo for the DDCI the preferential treatment provided to the paid lobbyist Ms. Griffiths:

Because the families are central to the issue, our strategy called for the close cooperation with the National League Of Families. Their Executive Director, Ann Griffiths, has classified access, is a member of the interagency group and acted as an intermediary to set up my trip to Hanoi, the Armitage delegation and my original four-hour dinner with Foreign Minister Thach in New York.²⁵

One observer reported that the National League of Families “and the Reagan administration were so close that there had been persistent speculation that Ann Mills-Griffiths was sleeping with Dick Childress.”²⁶ Under President Bush, Ms. Ann Mills-Griffiths sat “on the administration’s PoW policy group.”²⁷ According to a participant, during conference calls with family groups, the paid lobbyist participated with Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel while the two were together at Secretary Hagel’s home in the Washington, DC, area. Ms. Mills-Griffiths received government documents, including FOUO and classified information, that was denied to other family groups. For example, JPAC provided FOUO material to this paid lobbyist, yet when other family groups requested the same material, JPAC required them to submit a FOIA request that was then denied. The paid lobbyist highlighted the preferential treatment she received from the US government when she stated under oath on July 1, 1992, “I have been on all of the delegations with U.S. policy officials since 1982 to Vietnam, other than one, I believe, including the most recent one with Mr. Solomon.”²⁸

No other lobbyist or representative of any family group received such favorable treatment from the government.

On February 2, 1991, Colonel Millard Peck, the Chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency’s (DIA) Special Office for POWs and MIA, confirmed that that regulatory capture had been achieved by the paid lobbyist Ms. Mills-Griffiths:

The Director of the National League of Families occupies an interesting and questionable position in the whole process.

Although assiduously “churning” the account to give a tawdry illusion of progress, she is adamantly opposed to any initiative to actually get to the heart of the problem, and, more importantly, interferes in or actively sabotages POW-MIA analyses or investigations. She insists on rewriting or editing all significant documents produced by [this] Office, then touted as the DIA position. She apparently has access to top secret, codeword message traffic, for which she is supposedly not cleared, and she received it well ahead of the DIA intelligence analysts. Her influence in “jerking around” everyone and everything involved in the issue goes far beyond the “war and MIA

protester gone straight” scenario. She was brought from the “outside,” into the center of the imbroglio, and then, cloaked in a mantle of santimony, routinely impeded real progress and insidiously “muddles up” the issue. One wonders who she really is and where she came from.

A more salient summary of regulatory capture can hardly be imagined.

A business school looking for a case study of “regulatory capture” would be hard-pressed to find a case that would elucidate the issue in a more first-hand and illustrative manner.

* * *

Nothing is inevitable until it happens. The corrosive effects of “regulatory capture” could have been avoided. First, Congress could have exercised meaningful oversight, but did not. Second, DoD could have replaced the supine leadership of the captured agencies, but did not. Third, Congress and DoD could have formulated and then implemented strong, effective policies that would have freed the captured agencies and curtailed the inappropriate political influence over the science of human skeletal identification, but did not. None of these steps were taken, in part, due to the fact that a weak, wishy-washy regulatory environment favored the interests of the paid lobbyist, her organization, and its acolytes within the federal government.

The US government’s accounting policy has been indifferent, incoherent, and ineffective for three principal reasons. First, neither Congress nor the DoD has established or implemented a coherent policy to account for servicemen who went missing during America’s historic conflicts. Second, as a direct consequence of “regulatory capture” that resulted in the disproportionate influence of pressure groups that went unchecked by any form of political oversight, the definition of “accounted for” has become hopelessly mired in politics. Third, the science of human skeletal identification has been subjected to arbitrary political control.

Creating a coherent policy would have required discipline to be imposed on the Accounting Community. With regard to the term “POW,” a series of inquiries by Congress and others have repeatedly demonstrated that there are no “POWs” to be liberated. Despite the fact that all POW/MIAs have been declared to be “missing persons,” lobbyists rarely use that term.

This is due, in large measure, to the fact that not only is the accounting effort an exercise in uncertainty, “the POW/MIA lobby exploits this uncertainty for all it’s worth.”²⁹ The lobbyists distorted and degraded the ability of the US government to achieve the primary goal of the POW/



Fig. 1.2 POW/MIA flag (Photo: Public Domain)

MIA Accounting Community, which is to locate, recover, identify, and return to the next of kin the remains of American servicemen who went missing during America's historic conflicts and wars.

The *modus operandi* of the POW/MIA lobbyists and pressure groups has been remarkably consistent. For the paid lobbyist and her acolytes, for example, the accounting program was not the “nation’s highest national priority” unless it followed a narrow set of objectives approved by that organization. The “POW/MIA” lobbyists, who are responsible for the vague and open-ended nature of “fullest possible accounting” standard, are the same people who convinced Congress to require that a black flag with a silhouette of a dejected prisoner with the words “POW MIA You Are Not Forgotten” must fly under the American flag on public flagpoles across the country (Fig. 1.2).³⁰

The grim black-and-white “POW/MIA” flag, which is a quintessential condensation symbol, confirms that the accounting program’s policy and implementation plan are decisively influenced by external organizations that had obtained power and influence through “regulatory capture.”

The black “POW/MIA” flag on state and federal flagpoles confirms that the accounting program has been captured and is controlled by a small group of lobbyists and influence peddlers.

“ACCOUNTED FOR”

The key to understanding the accounting program is the definition of one essential term, namely, “accounted for.”

Congress has the authority to define the term “accounted for”; thus the definition is determined by politics, not science. The definition establishes the political criteria that must be met in order to conclude that a missing American service member has been “accounted for.” The definition or amended definition that appears in the annual NDAA is codified in the US Code (USC).

Throughout American history, the definition of “accounted for” has required the location and recovery of biological evidence, aka human remains, and whenever possible related physical evidence. For many of the “inaccessible corpse” cases, however, there are no remains to recover. In these cases, Congress has struggled with the question of whether the next of kin would accept an explanation of the loss event as a substitute for remains.

Declarations of death and the knowledge about the approximate whereabouts of the dead are not always sufficient substitutes for corpses.³¹

In other words, could a “compelling story” based on circumstantial or disputed evidence ever become an acceptable substitute for remains?

The compelling story approach, sometimes referred to as the “third method” of accounting, was facilitated by the fact that in a majority of missing person cases, a great deal is known about the circumstances of the loss event. Loss information is contained in the missing person’s Individual Deceased Personnel File (IDPF), which consists of two main parts: first, a juridical finding of death that includes a board finding, and second, reports and other documentation generated by the missing person’s branch of service. The board finding, reports, and the insurance and salary payouts to the next of kin required by the Missing Persons Act were intended to determine the missing person was “accounted for.” After a missing person had been “accounted for,” this was to be the conclusion of the federal government’s “duty of care” for the missing person.

The problem was that accounting for a person on the basis of a compelling story was regarded as less satisfactory or incomplete, particularly when compared to cases resolved by the recovery and identification of remains.

This contrast highlighted the difference between historical information defined by DoD as “contested” and biological evidence defined by DoD as “forensic factual.”

In contrast to a “compelling story,” the families of those whose remains had been recovered and identified received physical and biological evidence (e.g., identification media, bits of uniform, fragments of equipment, and, most importantly, bones). For many families of the inaccessible corpses, a compelling story was regarded not only as both less satisfactory as well as a fig leaf that covered up the government’s unwillingness or inability to recover the remains of the missing. Due to this disparity, the program to account for the missing appeared to have two unequal tiers.

In order to bring clarity and uniformity to the accounting program, Congress eliminated the “compelling story” standard. Congress settled the meaning of “accounted for” by defining the authorized accounting methods through an amendment of title 10 of the US Code §1503:

(3) The term “accounted for”, with respect to a person in a missing status, means that—

- (A) the person is returned to United States control alive;
- (B) the remains of the person are recovered to the extent practicable and, if not identifiable through visual means as those of the missing person, are identified as those of the missing person by a practitioner of an appropriate forensic science; or
- (C) credible evidence exists to support another determination of the person’s status.

These three options, which were the only accounting methods authorized for use by the Accounting Community for several years, were not compatible with a program focused on the location, recovery, and identification of American service members who had gone missing during America’s historic conflicts. This fundamental change was possible due to the fact that Congress concluded, with specific reference to America’s historic conflicts, that there were no American living service members held against their will, nor could skeletalized remains be identified by “visual means.”

In NDAA FY2010, for the purpose of America’s historic conflicts only, Congress eliminated (A) and (C), two of the three accounting methods, with this amending language: “(A) The term ‘accounted for’ has the meaning given such term in section 1513(3)(B) of title 10, United States Code.”³² For the purpose of America’s historic conflicts only, Congress restricted the definition of “accounted for” to a single authorized method:

1513(3)(B) the remains of the person are recovered to the extent practicable and, if not identifiable through visual means as those of the missing person, are identified as those of the missing person by a practitioner of an appropriate forensic science.

In 2010, this single definition was applied by Congress to missing person cases that occurred as a result of America's historic conflicts (WWII, Korean War, Vietnam War, Cold War era).

The elimination of two of the three authorized accounting methods sent shockwaves through the Accounting Community. The sole accounting method that was authorized by Congress to "account for" a missing person from America's historic conflicts required the remains of the missing person to be identified by a practitioner of an appropriate forensic science. The Armed Services Committee professional staff referred to this amendment as the "biological solution." A narrative or story, regardless of how compelling, was no longer an authorized accounting method. Storytelling could no longer be used by the federal government to account for missing American service members. In other words, Congress wrote all of the social scientists, the storytellers, and the scientifically illiterate out of the script. The balance of power within the Accounting Community has been transferred by law to the CIL and the AFDIL.

The effort to overturn this amendment as well as to re-exert political control over the scientific integrity of the identification process began before NDAA FY2010 had been signed by the president.

The ambitions of the lobbyists and storytellers were not limited to exerting control of the accounting program's finances, priorities, and operations. The science of human identification had to be subordinated to politics as well. This meant that to maintain control over the accounting program, politicians, lobbyists, and federal employees had to exert control over battlefield archaeology, forensic anthropology, radiographic comparison, odontology, DNA analysis, and every other technical or scientific aspect of the accounting program.

Political interference with the science of human identification became a standard feature of the program to account for servicemen missing from America's historic conflicts.

Through the use of "regulatory capture," lobbyists and others had the ability to amend not only the declaratory definition of the term "accounted for" but the operational understanding of the term. "Regulatory capture" allowed the pressure groups to create a fuzzy, open-ended definition that

ensured that a well-funded program that served the interests of the lobbyists would remain open-ended.

As a direct consequence of the absence of effective Congressional oversight and regulatory capture, inept management within the various agencies of the Accounting Community was able to ignore the authorized definition of “accounted for” with impunity. The definition of “accounted for” was gradually replaced with an undefined “condensation symbol” known as “fullest possible accounting.”

* * *

“FULLEST POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING”

While the dour black-and-white POW/MIA flag is the most visible example of “regulatory capture,” the term “fullest possible accounting” is the most salient example of the “regulatory capture.” The term, which has no fixed definition, is the functional equivalent of moveable goalposts that are shifted by lobbyists, pressure groups, and politicians whenever it suits their interest to do so.

Despite the fact that “fullest possible accounting” has been inexorably associated with the accounting program for decades, Congress has never defined or authorized the term as an accounting method. The participants in the program have been allowed, due to an absence of meaningful oversight, to create their own standard by which the program should be evaluated. The problem with this approach is revealed in one axiom, namely, the analyst should never be allowed to create the world that is analyzed nor the standard by which the analysis is evaluated.

The fact that the accounting program has been permitted to create both the world and the standard has resulted in a logic loop that is repetitious, unproductive, extremely expensive, yet produces the one thing those who are responsible for the regulatory capture cherish above all else, namely, the appearance of progress.

For these and other reasons about to be made apparent, the term “fullest possible accounting” and the corrosive effect on the accounting program caused by those who promote it as policy is an example of the empty, corrosive rhetoric that needs to be stripped away from the accounting program.

* * *

“Fullest possible accounting,” and its corollary “until they are home,” is a fundamentally flawed concept, in part, because it cannot be achieved and fails to deal with the “inaccessible corpse” dilemma.

Practically and politically speaking, [bringing them all home] creates an enormous pressure to positively identify remains recovered in Southeast Asia. Since the accounting protocol is ultimately based on nameable, identifiable bodies, identification must eliminate the uncertainty contained in the phrase “fullest possible accounting” by providing absolute certainty of the identity of those soldiers whose remains are recovered. This is all the more important given the relationship between the (possibly) live body and its definitely dead counterpart.³³

The “uncertainty contained in the phrase ‘fullest possible accounting’” became associated with the accounting program due to the fact that through “regulatory capture,” the term became a “condensation symbol” that was allowed to expand into the void created by the failure of Congress to provide effective oversight and DoD’s protracted indifference and incompetent management.

A “condensation symbol” is a term consisting of a few words or a short catchphrase that represents a convoluted political issue, a complex business process, or a complicated social condition. Condensation symbols, also known as “buzzwords,” are used as reference points for concepts such as “American dream,” “drinking the Kool-Aid,” “a chicken in every pot,” “trickle-down economics,” and “Catch-22.” Condensation symbols, which can be legitimate timesavers, may also be used to mislead or conceal the true meaning of a concept.

A “buzzword” is a subspecies of condensation symbol defined as “an important-sounding, usually technical word or phrase often of little meaning used chiefly to impress laymen.” This type of condensation symbol, which is used to create a false sense of gravitas, gives the impression that there is a deeper meaning when in fact there is none. Examples of buzzwords that became vacuous condensation symbols intended to astound the uninitiated include “user-generated content,” “datafication,” “paralysis by analysis,” “Bloom’s taxonomy,” and “enterprise service bus.”

Within the US government, buzzwords such as “the US national interest” and “strategic,” the most abused adjective in the English language, are thrown about so indiscriminately and appear in such diverse contexts that they have lost all common understanding. Boilerplate, bizspeak,

buzzwords, and condensation symbols “may seem like a convenient shorthand, but it suggests to readers that you’re on autopilot, thoughtlessly using boilerplate phrases that they’ve heard over and over.”³⁴

Condensation symbols are easily ridiculed due to the fact that their meanings are like refrigerator magnet words that can be switched around and replaced without anyone noticing the difference. For some people, buzzwords and condensation symbols “become part of the lexicon, a way of sounding important or, at the very least, in-the-know. But for others, they serve only to obfuscate.”³⁵ When misused, buzzwords and condensation symbols can easily undermine the effectiveness of an organization. Buzzwords can be disruptive due to the fact that an argument over the condensation symbol is not an argument over the substantive nature of the business. Organizations that pursue “total quality management” or create “tiger teams” to “obtain staff buy-in on how to create a bleeding edge swim lane where we can put on our big boy pants to facilitate a 30,000 feet view of an open kimono that facilitates a deep drill-down into our client-facing systems that capture mission critical low-hanging fruit” have lost their grasp of the value the organization was created to produce in the first place.

Condensation symbols, which have the power to evoke vivid impressions that can arouse someone for mental or physical action, are not always benign. Examples of dangerous buzzwords include “ethnic cleansing,” “border modification,” “Lebensraum,” “Manifest Destiny,” “stateless cosmopolitan,” and “pacification program.”

When people respond strongly and uniformly to the appeals of condensation symbols, “the symbols become Pavlovian cues: the audience reacts automatically to the cue, rather than to the facts of the situation.”³⁶ The purpose of a nefarious condensation symbol is to create a mental image that motivates action. When a dictator exhorts that “stateless cosmopolitans” must be removed from “our Lebensraum,” or that “ethnic cleansing” requires “border modifications,” there is no need to fill in the blanks.

George Orwell understood how condensation symbols could be deliberately misused for political purposes. To paraphrase Orwell, buzzwords are dangerous because they encourage intellectual laziness and deception.

Words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way. That is, the person who uses them has his own private definition, but allows his hearer to think he means something quite different. [...] Language can also corrupt thought. A bad usage can spread by tradition and imitation even among people who should and do know better.³⁷

Orwell created what is probably the most enduring condensation symbol of all time. “Big Brother Is Watching.” Everyone knows what that means.

* * *

“Fullest possible accounting” is a condensation symbol of the worst sort, a thoroughly dishonest buzzword, “spread by tradition and imitation” that deliberately distorts meaning in order to divert attention from the “facts of the situation.”

“Fullest possible accounting” is not and has never been an accounting method; instead, it is a “Pavlovian cue” that gives the impression that there is a meaningful distinction between “accounted for” and “fullest possible accounting.” No one knows what “fullest possible accounting” means; thus it cannot be recognized and regulated and, perhaps most importantly, cannot be achieved.

A small group composed of benighted officials, single-issue pressure groups, and the scientifically illiterate successfully used the term “fullest possible accounting” as a condensation symbol to create an image of the accounting program that was demonstrably artificial. While attention is focused on a semantic debate, policymaking by regulatory capture runs in the background, undetected and unopposed.

The damage caused by the irresponsible misrepresentation of “fullest possible accounting” as an authorized accounting method has been so comprehensive over such an extended period of time that an in-depth examination of the origin, failure, and consequences of what has become an unofficial policy is required.

* * *

As H. L. Mencken observed, “There is always a well-known solution for every complex problem. A solution that is neat, plausible and wrong.” “Fullest possible accounting,” a condensation symbol that was neat, plausible, and wrong, is a textbook example of what the Germans call a *verschlimmbesserung*—a solution that makes things worse.

Government officials, lobbyists, pressure groups, and others who should have known better have repeatedly spread the condensation symbol “fullest possible accounting” by “tradition and imitation” as if it were both feasible and authorized policy. The inability to define the term as well as the willingness to misrepresent “fullest possible accounting” as an authorized policy has been bipartisan for over 40 years.

Though the first use of the phrase may have occurred earlier, on July 24, 1976, President Ford stated in remarks to a family group, “I will not rest until the fullest possible accounting of your loved ones has been made.”³⁸ The president did not elaborate on the meaning of the term. Inattention to trivial matters such as the definition of the most important term in the accounting program has been bipartisan. During the 1976 presidential campaign, the Democrats called for the “fullest possible accounting of MIAs” but neglected to define the term.³⁹

In 1976, the House Select Committee on Missing Americans in Southeast Asia heard testimony from dozens of former US government officials, including President Gerald Ford, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, all of whom held office or served in government at the highest levels during the closing days of the Vietnam War.⁴⁰ Not one of these officials mentioned “fullest possible accounting” in any context.

In December 1976, the final report of the 15-month investigation by the House Select Committee was released. In Chap. 9 entitled “An Accounting,” the term “fullest possible accounting” does not appear. In a remarkable turn of events, instead of the US government’s responsibility for the accounting program, the Subcommittee concluded that the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) was responsible for providing something referred to as an “accounting.”⁴¹ According to the Select Committee’s report, the DRV’s government bore the responsibility to produce an “accounting” that consisted of remains and documentation of the circumstances of loss for every serviceman who went missing during the Indochina conflict.

By 1976:

[A] downsizing of U.S. forces in Thailand classified CIL-THAI and JCRC personnel as military, rather than humanitarian. As a result, the operations were forced to relocate. Hawaii was chosen as the new home, and the lab name thus changed to CILHI.⁴²

If one expected a task force responsible for “full accounting” to define the term, one would be disappointed. Neither “full accounting” nor “fullest possible accounting” was defined by CILHI nor in JTF-FA’s charter or in any of its reports.

After 1976, over 100 bills and non-binding resolutions concerning the POW/MIA issue were submitted by dozens of members of Congress. The purpose of the bills and resolutions was to resolve a problem that was assumed to exist. For example, dozens of sense of Congress resolutions,

which cannot create law, included the condensation symbol “fullest possible accounting.” For example, House Concurrent Resolution No. 82, introduced by Representative Benjamin Gilman on January 26, 1977, had the exhaustive title:

Concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress that the President should establish a Presidential task force to achieve the fullest possible accounting of prisoners of war and other individuals missing in Southeast Asia as a result of the Vietnam conflict.

Representative Gilman’s resolution, which had several co-sponsors, did not define “fullest possible accounting.” In other words, the Congressman’s resolution called upon the president to appoint a commission to produce something that no one would be able to recognize even if it were achieved, because the something the commission was supposed to produce was never defined or described.

In 1977 the presidential task force appointed in response to Representative Gilman’s resolution, which was headed by United Automobile Workers President Leonard Woodcock, was a Pavlovian response to a powerful condensation symbol. The results, however, were pathetically predictable. The task force operated without any authorized definition of either “accounted for” or “fullest possible accounting.” Mr. Woodcock’s report was generally dismissed due to stifling restraints placed on the investigation by the government of North Vietnam. It was also rejected by the extremists who asserted that “fullest possible accounting” meant that it was the responsibility of the government of the DRV had to release live captives and produce the remains of and document the circumstances of loss for every missing American serviceman. This was another example of how a condensation symbol could be used to create a diversion and undermine the substantive components of the accounting program.

The Woodcock commission’s findings and recommendations were subjected to additional criticism due to the allegation that the Vietnamese government had linked progress on the POW/MIA issue to postwar US economic aid. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger observed:

The North Vietnamese believe they can blackmail us by using the remains of Americans to extort economic and other aid...we will not be blackmailed... we will not attach any conditions to the missing in action.⁴³

According to Secretary Kissinger, the US obligation to pay reparations to North Vietnam had been negated by the north’s violations of the Paris

Peace Accords. Over time, however, the US policy evolved to the point where the US government paid the North Vietnamese government tens of millions of dollars in exchange for access to battlefields on Vietnamese territory for the purpose of achieving “fullest possible accounting”—and everyone knew what that meant.

The fact that “fullest possible accounting” was meaningless as a scientific concept has been known for decades. Dr. William R. Maples, Distinguished Service Professor of Forensic Anthropology at the University of Florida, was one of the consultants whose report helped stimulate the reforms of the Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii (CILHI) in the 1980s. Dr. Maples stated that “fullest possible accounting,” which was “an utter impossibility,” was also an “unreachable standard.”⁴⁴ There was no basis in any forensic science for “fullest possible accounting,” but that did not matter. Condensation symbols rarely have the remotest connection to science of any kind. This explains why “fullest possible accounting” is always included in a political, not a scientific, context by American officials.

In 1989, President George H. W. Bush alleged that the Soviet Union shared America’s fuzzy accounting policy:

I am pleased to report that Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev recently made a humanitarian appeal for our help in obtaining the fullest possible accounting for Soviet citizens still prisoner and missing in Afghanistan.⁴⁵

The Russian government has never released a definition of the term “fullest possible accounting.” It is not out of the question that this is what US official thought the Russians were requesting despite the fact that there is no record of such request in these terms.

The condensation symbol drifted along unopposed and undefined into the 1990s and beyond.

In September 1991, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney established the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for POW/MIA Affairs. Mr. Alan Ptak, the first DASD/DPMO, testified that the creation of the new office was “part of the secretary’s personal attention given the POW/MIA issue.”⁴⁶ The charter for the office was silent on the meaning of “fullest possible accounting.”

On January 8, 1992, Secretary of Defense Cheney approved US Commander in Chief Pacific Command (USCINCPAC) Operation Order 91-1 that expanded “POW/MIA Operations in Southeast Asia-Operation Full Accounting.” In January 22, 1992, the Commander in Chief, US Pacific Command (USPACOM), activated Joint Task Force-Full

Accounting (JTF-FA), which was an amalgam of the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) located in Thailand that had been created in 1973 and the Central Identification Laboratory in Thailand (CIL-THAI). JTF-FA superseded the JCRC.⁴⁷ JTF-FA's mission was to achieve the "fullest possible accounting of Americans missing from the Vietnam War."⁴⁸ USPACOM's command history noted:

Concurrent with the establishment of JTF-FA as a USCINCPAC unit, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA was established within the Department of Defense (DOD), the POW/MIA staff of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) was expanded, and the manpower assets at the Army's Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) nearly tripled. These developments markedly increased the amount of POW/MIA staff effort at Headquarters USCINCPAC, which included the establishment of a J30-M deputate as the principal advisor for POW/MIA matters to both the CINC and the Director for Operations.⁴⁹

This expansion, which occurred without any reference to "fullest possible accounting," lacked any operational guidance other than vague references to "accounting." Instead, PACOM described JTF-FA's activities as "investigation," "survey," and "excavation."

On July 22, 1992, President George H. W. Bush signed Executive Order 12812, *Declassification and Release of Materials Pertaining to Prisoners of War and Missing in Action*.⁵⁰ E. O. 12812, which created neither law nor policy and was not an implementation plan, offered no definition or any guidance as to the meaning of "fullest possible accounting." Once again, "fullest possible accounting" was allowed to mean whatever anyone wanted it to mean. E. O. 12812, which applied exclusively to "all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to American POWs and MIAs lost in Southeast Asia," is another example of "regulatory capture" by the paid lobbyist and single-issue pressure groups. E. O. 12812 does not mention any other American conflict.

In October 1992, the General Accounting Office (GAO) released a "Report to the Chairman and Vice Chairman, Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, U.S. Senate," entitled *POW/MIA Affairs: Issues Related to the Identification of Human Remains from the Vietnam Conflict*.⁵¹ The GAO report makes one reference to "fullest possible accounting."

The Army, in conjunction with the JTF-FA, is attempting to not only recover more remains through search and recovery missions in Southeast Asia, but also to obtain additional information on remains that are in a pending status at CILHI. These efforts contribute to JTF-FA's mission to obtain the fullest possible accounting of personnel missing in Southeast Asia.

Once more, the term was not defined, and the report confirmed that JTF-FA was a single-issue organization that had been captured by the Vietnam War lobby.

On January 13, 1993, the Senate Select Committee On POW/MIA Affairs (SSC) released its final report that referred to an activity called the "quest for the fullest possible accounting." This report did not define the term or set any conditions or quantitative measures that would allow anyone to realize that the "quest" had been completed. This nebulous conclusion was another example of "regulatory capture" by a faction of extremists who refused to accept that the Vietnam War had ended on April 30, 1975. As long as the quest for "fullest possible accounting" was on-going, so was the war.

In July 1993, the DPMO, re-named as the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office in NDAA FY1996, replaced the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs. DPMO's responsibilities included the following:

§371.5(a)(5) Provide DoD participation in the conduct of negotiations in efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting of missing American service members.

"Fullest possible accounting" was not defined in DPMO's charter. What DoD was saying, therefore, was that DPMO's mission was to provide something that has never been defined by regulation or in law, could not be measured by any known method or technique, and would not be recognizable if it were produced.

On July 16, 1993, DPMO was upgraded to a "DoD Field Activity."⁵² DoD assigned DPMO the responsibility to:

5.1.5 Provide DoD participation in the conduct of negotiations with officials of foreign governments in efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting of missing American Service members.

The salient difference between the mandate for DPMO the office and DPMO the field activity was the addition of the words “with officials of foreign governments in efforts” and the capitalization of “Service.” Despite this attention to detail, the DoD Directive that promoted DPMO to a field activity did not define “fullest possible accounting.”

In August 1995, the DoD Office of the Inspector General (OIG) released a report entitled *White Paper: The Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Office*. The “paper was prepared to assist the DPMO in defining its mission, structuring the organization, and establishing a planning process.” The White Paper does not define “fullest possible accounting,” despite the fact that achieving this objective was the purpose for which DPMO was created.

On November 13, 1995, the DoD OIG released a report entitled, *Inspection of the Defense Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Office*.⁵³ The purpose of the audit was stated as follows:

The goal of the inspection was to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of the administrative processes and mechanisms used by the DPMO. The project was requested by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/MIA Affairs.

In this report, despite the fact that it appears four times, the term “fullest possible accounting” is not defined once. Though not in these terms, the OIG report also confirms that DPMO was subject to “regulatory capture” by the Southeast Asia lobby.

The 1996 NDAA directed DoD to establish the Office for Missing Personnel. Sections 1501–1509 of the Act, which detailed procedures for determining and updating the status of missing persons and for maintaining MIA personnel files, did not mention “fullest possible accounting.” Section 1510, “Definitions,” which does not include “fullest possible accounting,” instead stated:

- (3) The term ‘accounted for’, with respect to a person in a missing status, means that—
- (A) the person is returned to the United States control alive;
 - (B) the remains of the person are identified by competent authority; or
 - (C) credible evidence exists to support another determination of the person’s status.

This definition of “accounted for,” which applied equally to concurrent deaths as well as to the skeletalized remains of servicemen missing from America’s historic conflicts, was binding on all agencies in the Accounting Community. The third method §1510(3)(C), which is not related to any type of science, was not defined as “fullest possible accounting.” Those who presented “fullest possible accounting” as official policy for the accounting program did so without any basis in law or Congressional authorization.

On February 19, 1997, the DoD OIG released a report entitled, *Evaluation of DoD Control Over Resources Used to Account for Missing U.S. Personnel*.⁵⁴ The report was circulated to the Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) (USD(P)), the DoD Comptroller, the Commander in Chief of the USPACOM, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller), and the Auditor General of the Department of the Army. The purpose of the report was described as follows:

This evaluation responds to two congressional requests to investigate allegations of DoD negligence in accounting for resources used to achieve full accounting for U.S. Service personnel identified as prisoners of war or missing in action (POW/MIA) as a result of the Vietnam war.⁵⁵

The OIG report, which does not define “to achieve full accounting,” refers to “fullest possible accounting” once on page five:

The JTF-FA was designed to conduct the wide range of operations necessary to obtain the fullest possible accounting in Southeast Asia.

The difference between the two terms is not explained. In the same report, a section entitled “Full Accounting for Missing U.S. Personnel” states:

The JTF-FA mission is to resolve, through investigations, archival research, and remains recovery programs, the cases of Americans still unaccounted for as a result of the Southeast Asia conflict.⁵⁶

A description of the process is not the same as a definition of the product. Neither Congress nor the DoD provided any guidance to determine when investigations, archival research, and remains recovery programs had produced sufficient results. Instead, this was recipe for repetitive, unproductive, open-ended activities that were fully funded by the US taxpayer.

The 1997 OIG report, which does not define “fullest possible accounting,” is also another example of “regulatory capture.” The OIG’s investigation focused on “the management controls at the DPMO, headquarters, USPACOM, and headquarters JTF-FA, that are associated with the recovery of missing U.S. personnel in Southeast Asia.” The single-issue pressure groups such as the paid lobbyist and her supporters successfully fenced off government funds and resources to serve their own agenda.

In 1999, JTF-FA produced a video entitled “Fullest Possible Accounting.” This video is a prime example of how the lack of any meaningful oversight allowed a single agency to perpetuate “fullest possible accounting” as if it were official policy. In almost any other context, the act of concocting a video that misrepresented a government program would be labeled “propaganda.” Instead, individual agencies and government employees were allowed to run amok, which comes as no surprise when considered in the context that the guidance provided by senior US administration officials was vague, incoherent, and contradictory.

In June 1999, after concluding that it was highly unlikely that remains will ever again be interred in the crypt of the Vietnam Unknown, Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen stated:

The federal government and the department of defense will continue to strive for the fullest possible accounting for all our servicemen who fought for our nation in that conflict and did not return.⁵⁷

Secretary Cohen, a former senator (R-ME), should have known that Congress had never authorized or defined the term “fullest possible accounting.”

On November 18, 2000, Ambassador to Vietnam Douglas “Pete” Peterson held a press conference at the Hilton Hanoi Opera Hotel in Hanoi. During this news conference, which included the most detailed discussion of “fullest possible accounting” presented by any administration, the incoherence of the condensation symbol was on full display. Ambassador Peterson stated:

The decision of fullest possible accounting – and that is difficult to define, because there is no written word on that – it has to be defined by the American people, and most assuredly by America’s veterans and the families of those who were lost here. Fullest possible accounting is a great descriptive, but it’s incredibly difficult to define. And it has to be defined ultimately, in my view, by those who served here and by those whose lives were most deeply touched by our engagement here.⁵⁸

This attempt to define “fullest possible accounting” was like trying to pick up a blob of mercury with a fork. You could stab it as many times as you liked, but you could never lift it. According to this Clinton administration official, “fullest possible accounting,” which was “incredibly difficult to define,” had neither been defined nor put into “written word[s]” by the government. According to Ambassador Peterson, “fullest possible accounting” should be defined in at least four different ways by a variety of groups including “the American people,” “America’s veterans,” “the families,” and by “those who served here.” This was a textbook example of a condensation symbol at work. People were motivated to move yet had no earthly idea which way to go.

The Clinton administration could apply this haphazard, incoherent condensation symbol on Vietnam, because applying a fatally flawed policy on Vietnam was nothing new. The ambassador’s garbled description of “fullest possible accounting” compounded the disastrous course of five decades of US policy toward Vietnam that had been ill-advised, culturally tone-deaf, strategically wrong, scientifically illiterate, and contrary to the interests of the American people in general and the US military in particular. But this wasn’t sufficient.

Retired USAF Colonel Mr. Phillip J. “P. J.” Crowley, special assistant to the president for National Security Affairs and White House National Security spokesman, made matters worse by expanding the condensation symbol’s global footprint and historic reach. Mr. Crowley added the following comments following Ambassador Peterson’s news conference:

Just to add one point before closing on the issue of fullest possible accounting, that is not a policy that is specific to Vietnam alone. As with the fall of the Soviet Union, we are getting access to and now learning more about the fate of prisoners of war during the Second World War. We are trying to build a relationship with China that might lead to excavations or further information. We just had a successful excavation in North Korea, for example, and last week I think welcomed 15 remains from the Korean War back to the United States.

This has been basically a pledge that the American people provide to those men and women in uniform and that effort will continue, just as long as we think there is information that may lead to the fullest possible accounting from any war that the United States has participated in. This is an effort that is obviously focused on Vietnam right now, but continues in other conflicts, as well.

According to Mr. Crowley, a rambling set of words masquerading as a policy applied to all of America's historic conflicts. A more irresponsible, self-inflicted wound on the Accounting Community can hardly be imagined. This is why the promotion of "fullest possible accounting" can only be accurately understood for the condensation symbol it was, namely, preemptive surrender and total capitulation to the paid lobbyist and other special interests whose main objective was to control every aspect of the Accounting Community.

Congress never authorized "fullest possible accounting" as an accounting method, and the DoD did not find it necessary to produce a definition. Therefore, the authority for and meaning of the concept had to be found elsewhere. This is a polite way of saying the source of authority could be made up, simply invented on the spot, which is precisely what Mr. Crowley did.

Mr. Crowley stated that "fullest possible accounting" was "a pledge that the American people provide to those men and women in uniform." Setting aside for the moment the fact that he was not authorized to speak on behalf of "the American people," Mr. Crowley's comments were simply a restatement of an imaginary social contract that was built on a foundation of "social truth." If enough people believe a thing to be true or restate faith in its existence, the validity of the thing has been confirmed by social truth; for example, "everyone is doing it," or "we all know what that means."

The myth of "fullest possible accounting" was perpetuated by presidents into the twenty-first century. In 2001, President George W. Bush issued a Presidential Determination that concluded:

[T]he central, guiding principle of my Vietnam policy is to achieve the fullest possible accounting of our prisoners of war and missing in action.⁵⁹

Once again, however, the Determination did not define or describe the term "fullest possible accounting."

In October 2003, the merger between JTF-FA and CILHI that was approved by the Deputy Secretary of Defense created the JPAC. The terms of the merger, which were detailed in the *Transition Plan* that became JPAC's charter, did not include a definition of "fullest possible accounting." One of my memos submitted to the House Armed Services Committee stated:

[The Transition Plan] is silent on a key measure in any merger, which is to define the product and to set expectations for the level of production.⁶⁰

The “product” in this case was an accounting for a missing serviceman, and the “level of production” was the number of identifications produced per year. Neither of these vital terms was defined or even described in the *Transition Plan*.

As recently as March 2018, DoD’s definitive guidance on the definition of the terms “account for, accounted for, or accounting for” does not include any reference to “fullest possible accounting.”⁶¹ In addition, the DoD’s revised and updated *Past Conflict Personnel Accounting Policy* does not recognize or define “fullest possible accounting” in any way, shape, or form.⁶²

The US government has used the term “fullest possible accounting” for over 40 years without providing a definition or authorizing the term as an accounting method. There is no parallel in US history of another zombie-like policy that has both never lived and never dies.

* * *

The socio-political environment in which the accounting program operated was characterized by the following factors:

- First, Congress has neither defined nor authorized the use of “fullest possible accounting” to “account for” missing American servicemen.
 - A definition of “fullest possible accounting” has never appeared in the DoD *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* or in any other publications produced by DoD or the federal government.
- Second, “fullest possible accounting” is neither a standard nor a method; rather, it is a condensation symbol. Everyone and every organization are entitled to concoct a particular definition of “fullest possible accounting.” The result has been chaos in the accounting program. One person’s idea of “fullest possible accounting” was as valid as that of anyone else regardless of how far-fetched, nefarious, or crackpot.
- Third, “fullest possible accounting” is neither empirical nor quantifiable. As such, there is no way to determine whether progress is being made. The inevitable consequence was a massive, uncoordinated program that was and continues to be extraordinarily expensive as well as inherently inefficient.

- Fourth, “fullest possible accounting” became an excuse, a cover story, as well as a justification for POW/MIA Accounting Community employees in the federal government to do whatever they wanted to do as long as it was undertaken in the name of “fullest possible accounting.”
- Fifth, “fullest possible accounting” was not a goal; instead, it was a shopworn political tactic familiar to every inside-the-Beltway influence peddler. Special interest groups whose agenda is to shape US foreign policy in their own image are always on the lookout for a single issue powerful enough to hold the US national interest hostage. The key to sustaining political leverage in Washington is to formulate a demand that can never be satisfied. The special interests equipped “fullest possible accounting” with mobile goalposts that could be easily shifted, re-defined, and maneuvered at will whenever anyone came too close to fulfilling the previous set of demands.
- Sixth, “fullest possible accounting” was not about the forensic science of human skeletal identification; instead it was a condensation symbol for political power. The fact of the matter was that “fullest possible accounting” was a rhetorical gimmick, empty buzzwords that played directly into the hands of those who believed that “the absent body constitutes a continuation of the Vietnam War hostilities.”⁶³
- Seventh, “fullest possible accounting,” which was a political expression that resonated in speeches and public relations presentations, has not and cannot provide any substantive or scientific basis on which to “account for” missing persons.

Without a definition, authorization, or oversight, the declaratory policy of “fullest possible accounting” meant everything as well as nothing.

As a condensation symbol, “fullest possible accounting” had been interpreted by extremists to mean that until the remains of every serviceman who went missing during the Vietnam War had been located, recovered, identified, and returned to the next of kin, the war was not over. The *Missing Service Personnel Act of 1995* was interpreted by the anti-Vietnam normalization crowd to mean that the Vietnam government’s “requirement to produce a body” was absolute. In the view of a paid lobbyist and other extremists who held this position, no progress on the normalization of political, economic or diplomatic relations between the United States and Vietnam could be made until every single inaccessible corpse had been

recovered, identified, and returned to the next of kin. Instead of stating what they meant, which would have exposed their position as unreasonable and unobtainable, the extremists relied on buzzwords. Theirs was an impossible standard, the extremists knew it, and the condensation symbol was the perfect means to propagate their fanatical policy without sounding like a fanatic.

No member of Congress had either the interest or the political courage to take on the government officials, lobbyists, and pressure groups that perpetuated the myth of “fullest possible accounting,” even though members were well aware that the condensation symbol was transparently bogus. The 1976 House Select Committee, which recognized that “fullest possible accounting” was an impossible standard, concluded, “It must be recognized at the outset that many of the missing men cannot be accounted for.” The Select Committee’s report went on to describe several loss events, for example, high-speed air crashes, losses over water, and losses that resulted in “disintegration,” from which identifiable remains could not be expected to be recovered. The report then summarized a half-dozen cases “in which it is abundantly clear that no remains can be recovered and no accounting from the Indochinese may be expected.”⁶⁴ These were important admissions. The Select Committee’s statement contradicts the unachievable goal of “fullest possible accounting.” Yet member after member of Congress, administration after administration, official after official, and lobbyist after lobbyist present “fullest possible accounting” as if it were a practical policy.

Due to the lack of a definition of a single term, the task assigned to the accounting program could not be measured or assessed in an empirical manner nor evaluated with quantitative data in any meaningful way. The lack of Congressional oversight ensured there few rules and even fewer limitations. The federal agencies in the “Accounting Community” were free to set their own agendas, to establish their own priorities, to engage in mission creep, as well as to undertake an extraordinarily wide range of activities, many of which did nothing to advance the accounting mission. In light of the fact that a condensation symbol can mean anything to anybody, idiosyncratic versions of the declaratory policy were produced by individual agencies.

* * *

These were and in large measure continue to be the principal characteristics of the socio-political environment in which the accounting program operated.

The pursuit of “fullest possible accounting,” which was repeatedly presented as the *raison d’être* for the accounting program, has created a safe haven where the scientifically illiterate joined forces with the self-serving to prevent forensic science from interfering with what had become an open-ended, well-funded government entitlement program. “Fullest possible accounting” undertaken in pursuit of the “nation’s highest national priority” formed a formidable amalgam that undermined the effectiveness of the accounting program.

The option for Congress was binary: Define “fullest possible accounting” and designate it as an authorized accounting method, or replace it with an authorized accounting method that is applied throughout the accounting program and then evaluated through effective oversight.

Congress chose neither of these options nor engaged in any meaningful oversight of the program intended to locate, recovery, identify, and return the remains of American service members who had gone missing during America’s historic conflicts.

* * *

Congressional Oversight

A Congressional hearing is not always Congressional oversight.

The Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress defines and describes oversight in the following terms:

Congressional oversight refers to the review, monitoring, and supervision of federal agencies, programs, activities, and policy implementation. Congress exercises this power largely through its standing committee system. However, oversight, which dates to the earliest days of the Republic, also occurs in a wide variety of congressional activities and contexts. These include authorization, appropriations, investigative, and legislative hearings by standing committees; specialized investigations by select committees; and reviews and studies by congressional support agencies and staff.

Congress’s oversight authority derives from its “implied” powers in the Constitution, public laws, and House and Senate rules. It is an integral part of the American system of checks and balances.⁶⁵

As illustrated by the following partial list, there has been no shortage of Congressional hearings into the POW/MIA issue.

Oversight of the accounting program is the responsibility of the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, specifically the Subcommittee on Military Personnel. Due to the nature of the House and Senate rules, however, any member of Congress, particularly a ranking member who is persistent enough, can hold a hearing through almost any subcommittee regardless of the subcommittee's substantive responsibility. As shown in the following list of hearings, jurisdiction is never an issue.

- Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments held hearings over a four-year period concerning POW/MIA issues in the Vietnam War, 1969–1973.
- House Select Committee on Missing Americans in Southeast Asia, 1976 and 1977.
- Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, 1992.
- Committee on National Security, Military Personnel Subcommittee, “Status of POW/MIA Negotiations with North Korea,” June 20, 1996.
- Committee on National Security, Military Personnel Subcommittee, “Accounting for POW/MIA’s from the Korean War and the Vietnam War,” September 17, 1996.
- Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Military Personnel, “Oversight and status hearing of POW/MIA activities,” 2008.

A hearing into the POW/MIA issue is not the same as oversight of the program to locate, recover, identify, and return the remains of servicemen who went missing during America’s historic conflicts.

Congress excels in holding hearings that review the same issues again and again. The repetitive nature of these hearing reveals many important insights, including the fact that Congress’s institutional memory is extraordinarily short-term. A freshman congressman or junior senator who has “discovered” an issue is permitted to convene a hearing as if it were the first time the issue had ever been brought before Congress. With regard to Congressional hearings into the POW/MIA issue, the doctrine is “first time, every time.”

The history of hearings into the accounting program reveals an interest bordering on an obsession with the same issues, namely, live POWs, communist malfeasance, fact-finding junkets to exotic foreign lands, funding for fruitless investigations, a review of diplomatic initiatives, and the plight of the next of kin, and from time to time the midway is opened to allow the conspiracy theorists and “evil creeps” to perform.

Conspicuous by its absence has been Congressional oversight of the science of the accounting program. No Congressional committee or subcommittee has ever held a hearing into fields that produce forensic factual information such as battlefield archaeology, anthropology, odontology, morphology, taphonomy, and so on. Every attack on the CIL by members of Congress has focused on political and policy issues, never on the science of human skeletal identification. The reason for this is that Congress lacks the in-house expertise to deal with scientific issues as science. If members of Congress simply ignored the scientific issues that would be preferable to allowing personal and committee staff, all of whom are routinely scientifically illiterate, to treat Bayesian statistical analysis as nothing more than someone's personal opinion.

Without sufficient in-house scientific expertise and competence, members of Congress are at the mercy of external consultants and lobbyists due to the fact that neither the member nor the staff has the expertise required to assess the scientific advice they receive. Some members of Congress compound the problem by treating their scientific illiteracy as an asset that encourages personal and committee staff to ignore science altogether. Dependence on external consultants and lobbyists is the equivalent of exposing an open Petri dish to the elements. Contamination is inevitable, but without the ability to recognize contamination, the contamination is allowed to flourish.

The incoherence of the "fullest possible accounting" standard is confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt by the equally incoherently wide range of Congressional committees and subcommittees that have attempted to exert their version of oversight over the accounting program. The lack of discipline explains why the Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, the same committee once chaired by Senator Joseph McCarthy (R-WI), is allowed to meddle at will in the accounting program.

It was not until 2014 that Congress attempted to limit the committees and subcommittees that exerted oversight of the accounting program. This was done by defining the term "appropriate committees of Congress" to include the House and Senate Armed Services Committees and the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.⁶⁶ This measure, which did nothing to inhibit political interference with the science of human skeletal identification, confirmed the jurisdiction of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, the same subcommittee that

once removed a member, Senator Margaret Chase Smith of Maine, for issuing a “Declaration of Conscience” that “repudiated those who made unfounded charges and used character assassination against their political opponents.”⁶⁷ The Permanent Committee on Investigations was specifically authorized by Congress to have oversight over the science of human skeletal identification. A more salient example of the political control of science can hardly be imagined.

The repetitive and insoluble nature of “fullest possible accounting” serves the interests of organizations such as the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia that owe their existence to their ability to exploit ambiguity and to control the accounting program through regulatory capture. The longer “fullest possible accounting” remains the ambiguous, unfulfillable standard, the better for such organizations that benefit from the sub-optimal performance of the accounting program.

* * *

The bottom line is that over a period of many years, Congressional oversight of the accounting program in general and the scientific aspects of the program in particular has been an unmitigated, comprehensive failure.

Congress has never convened a hearing that examined the scientific aspects of DoD’s implementation plan to account for the missing from America’s historic conflicts, nor has Congress investigated DoD’s solution to place the science of human skeletal identification under political control.

Political control of the forensic science segment of the accounting program, which has been achieved through “regulatory capture,” has been made possible by the complete absence of meaningful Congressional oversight.

* * *

NOTES

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CHAPTER 2

The Accounting Program: Locate, Recover, Identify, and Return

America's missing person accounting program consists of four co-dependent but separate elements—locate, recover, identify, and return. The issues of unrecovered remains, unidentified remains buried as unknowns in America's national cemeteries, as well as recovered remains that cannot be identified using current scientific techniques are covered by these four elements.

The first and foremost of these four elements is the program intended to locate the remains of missing American service members. If the service member could not be recovered alive, the accounting program included policies and procedures for the recovery of physical and biological evidence, the latter being the remains of the missing person. The remains of those missing from America's historic conflicts consist of bone without probative flesh. This is why the concurrent loss accounting program is led by a medical examiner who is able to make a visual identification. In contrast, the identification of the skeletalized remains of the missing from America's historic conflicts, or any skeletalized remains for that matter, requires the skill sets of a forensic anthropologist.

The failure of the program responsible for locating remains is the single point of failure in the accounting program. When the effort to locate remains fails, the negative effect ripples through the entire program. If the accounting program fails to locate skeletalized human remains, there are

no remains to recover. With no remains to recover, the CIL cannot identify what it doesn't have. When no remains are identified, there is nothing to return to the next of kin.

* * *

LOCATE

After WWII the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), which was administered by the Army's Quartermaster Corps, carried out a systematic search of battlefields in Europe and Asia in a coordinated effort to locate the remains of American servicemen, often with great success. The ability of the AGRS to recover and identify the missing after WWII on territory controlled by the Sino-Soviet bloc, however, was gradually curtailed. By 1951, access was stopped altogether as Moscow and Beijing consolidated their political control over the WWII battlefields. Moscow was not about to permit what they perceived as US agents to collect intelligence as they roamed around the Soviet bloc under the cover of searching for war dead. In addition, Soviet leaders scoffed at the idea that the US government would make such an effort to recover a few thousand Americans when the Red Army's roster of the dead and missing was in the tens of millions.

By 1952, the US government's ability to search for the missing on territory controlled by communist countries in Europe was limited to filing inquiries and making the occasional *démarche* (protest) through diplomatic channels. The AGRS, which did not give up the effort, created the "Deferred Search List" to help guide future researchers when (and if) access to territory under Soviet control would be allowed. More importantly, the AGRS had recovered over two thousand sets of remains, the majority of which were partial, broken, burned, or commingled, that were meticulously assessed and curated. Due to the fact that the AGRS lacked the scientific method, namely, DNA, required to identify skeletalized human remains consisting of shattered fragments of bone or remains without teeth or long bones, the only option was to bury them as unknowns in America's national cemeteries. In doing so, the AGRS preserved the remains as well as eliminated the location uncertainty for thousands of missing American servicemen. This collection of remains was a treasure trove waiting to be opened by forensic scientists four decades later.

Given the extraordinary importance of the role played by those responsible for the effort to locate the remains of missing American servicemen, one would think that those selected for this task would be handpicked

from among the elite of America's battlefield archaeologists, forensic scientists, and analysts. Therefore, a search for a missing individual must be carefully organized and large in scope to have any chance of success.¹ The empirical record of the program reveals that DoD's solution was, if anything, the polar opposite of what was required.

Instead of a well-organized group of experts with established credentials and experience in battlefield archaeology or board-certified forensic anthropologists, DoD turned over the control of the mission to locate skeletalized human remains to historians. The historians, who tended to be scientifically illiterate, often lacked any training in military history whatsoever. After the historians owned the mission, the number of remains located in the field fell precipitously.

Had it not been for an unlikely source, the failure to locate the skeletalized remains of missing American servicemen would have caused the accounting program to collapse.

* * *

Decomposed remains are found by accident by civilians due to the fact that Mother Nature tends to conceal the location of human remains, particularly those that were buried. Fortunately for the accounting program, despite the extravagant incompetence of those responsible for the task to locate the remains of the missing, various groups stepped forward that proved to be exceptionally capable of locating human remains. This unorganized group of volunteers, without whose efforts hundreds of identified cases would still be lying in the field, was dedicated to bird-watching, a skill that proved to be critical to the success of the accounting program.

With few exceptions, since the late 1980s the remains of a majority of American service members who went missing during America's historic conflicts that have been recovered and identified, particularly from WWII and the Vietnam War, were located in the field by third parties unrelated to any US government program.

Remains located by third parties are referred to as unilateral turnovers. A unilateral turnover means that someone unrelated to the US government or any of its programs located the remains, then either advised the US government of the location of the remains or collected and delivered the remains to either a third party, such as the police, or directly to someone associated with the US government, such as a diplomat or even a politician. The fact that amateurs and others unrelated to any US government program have been responsible for locating the remains of missing

American servicemen is part of the empirical record. Each identification memorandum includes the source of the remains, meaning who located them and when it occurred. Hundreds of these memos, that include the source of the remains and who found them, have been posted by DoD on the Internet for nearly two decades.

Athenians located the remains of their soldiers on their own. The US government's accounting program relies on the efforts of bird-watchers, hikers, foreign governments, construction companies, and other third parties to locate the remains of American service members who went missing during America's historic conflicts.

Over the past two decades, of the half-dozen or so Vietnam War identifications produced by the CIL each year, with few exceptions, the remains were located by the Vietnamese, not by US "investigative teams." The taxpayer-funded investigative program to locate remains in Southeast Asia became so unproductive over such a prolonged period of time that the extravagant and often pointless international travel undertaken by the "investigative teams" was referred to by a JPAC commander as "military tourism." Due to the influence exerted by a paid lobbyist and other pressure groups, each year DoD pumps over 75 percent of the field investigation budget into Southeast Asia which produces, on a good year, fewer than ten identifications. Neither science nor success rates have anything to do with the decision to prioritize unproductive efforts in Southeast Asia that are carried out for political purposes only.

There is one significant exception to the rule that decomposed human remains are "nearly always found by accident." These are the remains of the missing that were located and recovered by the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS), then buried as unknowns in US national cemeteries at home and abroad. Due to the lack of competent oversight, however, after the remains exhumed from a US national cemetery are identified, the identification is lumped together with the meager number of identifications produced by field recoveries. The total number of identifications attributable to disinterments and unilateral transfers dwarfs the tiny number of identifications attributable to "investigative team" research. The total number of identifications, which is presented with no differentiation, gives the false impression that the identifications were produced by locating the remains in the field, when the truth is nothing of the kind.

Were it not for the efforts of bird watchers and the GRS in the 1940s and 1950s, and the development of DNA analysis, the accounting program would have run out of remains to identify a long time ago.

The fact that nearly all of the missing persons identified by the CIL derived from remains that had been located in the field and in some cases collected by third parties unrelated to any DoD program, or from cemeteries or existing inventory in the CIL is not a feature of the accounting program that the DoD chooses to highlight in its annual reports to Congress.

Without any meaningful oversight, Congress was not about to learn about this failure on its own.

* * *

RECOVER

After remains of the dead are located, the next step is recovery. The methods used to recover the remains of battle casualties during on-going conflicts differ from the methods required to recover the remains of the missing from historic conflicts. In addition, the recovery program prioritizes the recovery of remains from the Vietnam War; thus any declaratory policy that suggests all missing American servicemen are equal is inconsistent with the operational record of the program.

The government's program to recover remains has evolved over time. For contemporary Americans, the concept of the US military's obligation to recover and return the remains of American servicemen killed in combat is so fundamental and second nature that it is difficult to envisage a time when the situation might have been otherwise.

Whether to recover and return the remains of the war dead or bury them on the battlefield has been an issue for millennia. Thucydides recorded that as an expression of special honor, the Greeks who died at Marathon in BCE 490 were cremated then buried in a mound near to the place where they fell instead of being interred in Kerameikos, the main cemetery of Athens (Fig. 2.1).

Throughout much of America's history, however, there were neither regulations nor procedures that required the government to recover the nation's war dead. The origins of the modern program to recover the remains of American servicemen may be traced back to the nineteenth century. The Civil War (1861–1865) became a turning point in the management of American war dead.

In the aftermath of a Civil War battle, survivors often shoveled the dead into open pits as they would have disposed of farm animals, "in bunches,



Fig. 2.1 Burial mound at Marathon (Photo: Public Domain)

just like dead chickens.”² The Confederate dead were more often than not left where they died without even the pretense of a burial.

In July 1862, during the midst of the Civil War, Congress authorized a national cemetery system. The responsibility to operate the national cemetery system was assigned to the Army Quartermaster General (AQG).³ One of the first national cemeteries was established on Confederate Commander General Robert E. Lee’s estate, which is now Arlington National Cemetery. The AQG was also assigned the responsibility to be the War Department’s⁴ executive agent⁵ for mortuary affairs, a role the AQG continues to play to this day.⁶ The AQG’s responsibility during the Civil War did not go beyond managing various cemeteries. What Congress overlooked was the responsibility to locate, recover, identify, bury, or return the remains of fallen soldiers. After the end of the war and until 1870, the US Burial Corps had re-interred over 300,000 Union dead in 73 national cemeteries. During and after the war, Confederate dead were recovered by women volunteers, such as the Ladies’ Memorial Association (LMA) of

Richmond, Virginia, who acted after determining that the Confederate government was not going to make an effort to do so. The women's volunteer groups were credited with the recovery and burial of approximately 72,000 Confederate dead.

The US government's responsibility to recover America's war dead developed slowly over time. During the Spanish-American War in 1887, the AQG developed and implemented improved procedures for recovering America's war dead. This effort was motivated by President McKinley, a Civil War veteran who had fought at Antietam during the Civil War when he was 19 years old. On Cuban and Puerto Rican battlefields, the dead were identified as quickly as possible, then buried in temporary cemeteries together with a bottle that contained identification documentation. The bodies were subsequently exhumed then transferred to the United States for final dispensation. The proposal to require each soldier to wear an identification tag that became known as the "dog tag" was made during the Spanish-American War.

The notion that the US government was *obliged* to recover the remains of service members and return the remains to the next of kin developed gradually in response to the wars of the twentieth century.⁷ During the Philippine-American War (1901–1902), the US Army Morgue and Office of Identification in Manila developed procedures and techniques that were the beginnings of the modern era of battle casualty management. Congress eventually codified the obligation to recover and return remains into law in a process that responded to additional wartime experience.

The Great War broke out on July 28, 1914, after which the United States remained neutral for nearly three years. The United States declared war first on Germany until April 6, 1917, then on the Austro-Hungarian Empire on December 7, 1917. The issue of whether to return or bury the remains of American dead in foreign cemeteries continued throughout the US involvement in World War I. The first American "dough boys" to die were buried in the trench where they had been killed by Germans. Former president Theodore Roosevelt's youngest son Quentin, a fighter pilot, was shot down and killed on Bastille Day, July 14, 1918, five months before the armistice took effect on November 11, 1918. The former president and his wife Edith objected to the proposal to return their son's remains to US territory. They issued the following statement:

To us it is painful and harrowing long after death to move the poor body from which the soul has fled. We greatly prefer that Quentin shall continue to lie on the spot where he fell in battle and where the foeman buried him.⁸

The crash site and the initial burial plot are shown in the following photographs (Figs. 2.2 and 2.3).

The burial of LT Roosevelt was consistent with the policy established by US Army Commander General Jack Pershing who believed that the American dead should be buried where they died.

What was not consistent with international norms occurred when the German government issued a postcard featuring LT Quentin Roosevelt's corpse but quickly withdrew it. The German public, which respected former president Theodore Roosevelt, noted that Kaiser Wilhelm II's children were nowhere near the fighting. There were limits to the exploitation of the casualties of war for political purposes.

There was no concurrent repatriation policy for US dead during WWI. Public and political pressure changed the US repatriation policy after the armistice. Beginning in October 1919, the War Department gave the



Fig. 2.2 Crash site (Photo: earlyaeroplanes.com)



Fig. 2.3 Grave site of LT Quentin Roosevelt (Photo: earlyaeroplanes.com)

next of kin of the dead the option to repatriate the remains or bury them in American permanent military cemeteries established in Europe for this purpose. As a result of this policy change, many of the American WWI dead were exhumed then re-buried three times or more. Approximately 80,000 US dead had been buried in temporary battlefield graves, then in formal US cemeteries in Europe. Of the 80,000, ca. 46,000 (roughly 62 percent) were exhumed, transferred, and then reburied in permanent graves located in the United States. The remaining 34,000 (38 percent) were buried in US military cemeteries established in Europe for that purpose. The repatriation program was estimated to cost in excess of \$430 million (2017 dollars).⁹

The experience of WWI established a precedent for America's mortuary policy during WWII. The approximately 360,000 US war dead were first buried in temporary cemeteries, then in formal cemeteries, after which the next of kin were given the option to repatriate the remains or bury them in permanent cemeteries created for that purpose in Europe. Between 1947 and 1951, at the direction of the next of kin, approximately 125,000 (approximately 35 percent) of the dead were exhumed then repatriated for permanent burial in the United States.



Fig. 2.4 Graves Registration during the Korean War (Photo: Public Domain)

Recovering the remains of the war dead continued to be an issue for the families of servicemen who were killed in combat or accidents or died of disease in Korea and Vietnam. The AGRS (1942–1945) then the American Graves Registration Command (AGRC, 1945–1951) provided mortuary affairs services during WWII¹⁰ and the Korean War (Fig. 2.4).

In the previous photograph, a corporal from the 114th Graves Registration Company fills out a Form 52B regarding a deceased American soldier at the UN Cemetery at Daegu, South Korea. From left to right is the corporal, a cross, an unidentified corpse marker (triangular), and a small bottle containing Form 1042 that was buried with the remains.

For the first five months of the Korean War, all American dead were buried in UN cemeteries spread throughout the Korean peninsula. This policy was abruptly changed after LT General Walton H. Walker (posthumously promoted to full general) was killed in a jeep accident on

December 23, 1950, near Uijeongbu. After the general's remains were returned to the United States a little more than a week later on January 2, 1951, escorted by his son Sam Sims Walker who was a battalion commander in Korea, a public outcry ensued. If a general's body could be returned within a week of his death, "What about my son?" From that point, America's Korean War dead were repatriated rather than buried in Korea. The remains of hundreds of American dead, however, were lost after the UN cemeteries in which they had been buried were overrun by North Korean and Chinese forces. Despite the fact that the identities of the dead buried in UN cemeteries were known, because the remains were not repatriated, these casualties were categorized by the DoD first as "missing in action," then as part of the 8000 Korean War "missing."

In contrast, all of the recovered dead from the Vietnam War were repatriated. No American dead were buried in cemeteries in Vietnam. While vast US cemeteries exist throughout western Europe, there are no American national cemeteries in Asia other than the WWII Manila American Cemetery located in Fort Bonifacio, formerly known as Fort William McKinley.

* * *

The terms "missing" and "MIA" give the impression that little is known about the fate of a missing soldier or circumstances of loss. In fact, the opposite is true. The fates and circumstances of loss for the overwhelming majority of servicemen missing from America's historic conflicts are well established. The size of an IDPF for each missing person may range from a half-dozen to hundreds of pages. In the majority of cases, the IDPF contains a great deal of detailed information concerning the loss event, the circumstances, as well as the efforts undertaken to locate the missing serviceman.

The location of thousands of the missing from WWII and the Korean War is an established fact. Of the approximately 78,000 missing persons from WWII, over 5000 are either in the CIL undergoing testing or are buried as unknowns in America's national cemeteries. At least 60 percent (ca. 47,000) were lost in deep water incidents at sea including sunken ships, aircraft crashes, and submarine losses. After the cases with a recovery probability of near zero are subtracted, the number of missing cases with a recovery probability greater than zero is estimated to be ca. 25,000.

In other words, the remains of more than 20 percent of the recoverable WWII missing, which have already been recovered, are undergoing testing or are within walking distance of the CILHI.

The ca. 8000 Korean War missing include over 800 buried as unknowns in the Punchbowl plus over 400 unidentified remains included in the K208 assemblage. Hundreds of recovered remains of the K208 assemblage are undergoing forensic testing in the CIL, which has produced dozens of identifications from this program. Of the total number of missing from the Korean War, less than half have a recovery probability greater than zero. The location of more than ca. 1200 (30 percent) of the ca. 4000 missing from the Korean War with a recovery probability of greater than zero is known. In other words, the remains of more than 30 percent of the recoverable Korean War missing are undergoing testing or are within walking distance of the CILHI.

A great deal is also known about the remains of the missing buried as unknowns in America's national cemeteries at home and abroad. For every unknown case, there is a corresponding "X file," the "X" being a placeholder for the identity of the person. The "X" file contains a great deal of data and information. There is a summary of where and how the remains were located and recovered. The remains of each unknown case were examined by a physical anthropologist who produced a skeletal inventory chart that is a record of the bones that are present. The "X" file also contains a description of the condition of the bones (i.e., taphonomy), for example, burned, oil-covered, fractured, shattered, exposed to the elements. Due to the comprehensive and detailed information created by GRS prior to the burial in the 1940s and 1950s, a contemporary anthropologist is able to draw important probative conclusions concerning the remains prior to an exhumation. There is no evidence that the GRS deliberately created these detailed biological records with the intent to assist future anthropologists, but these unique and extraordinarily useful records serve that purpose nonetheless.

An important point that merits particular emphasis is the fact that the missing buried as unknowns in American national cemeteries in the United States and abroad are a subset of the total number of missing servicemen. The remains of thousands of missing service members who were recovered but not identified are located in America's national cemeteries, not in the battlefields where they fell. The remains of servicemen lost in Papua New

Guinea, for example, may be buried as unknowns in the Fort McKinley Cemetery in Manila. The remains of some of the missing servicemen who died in North Korea are located in National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (NMCP) in Hawaii. The point is that some of the remains of the missing may not lie in the field any longer; rather, they may be buried as unknowns in an American national cemetery. Identifying the remains of the missing buried as unknowns is the only way to prove that those cases are not located in a distant battlefield. This fundamental fact is often blurred, obscured, or ignored by DoD officials and various lobbying organizations. DoD officials and others have asserted that searching for a missing person overseas is preferable to disinterring the same missing person from a national cemetery. Politics, not forensic science, is responsible for this sort of thinking that is macabre as well as misguided.

The precise location has been established for thousands of missing American servicemen recovered by the AGRS during WWII and the Korean War. These missing are buried as unknowns in America's national cemeteries or recovered and are undergoing forensic testing in the CIL. In these cases, the "where" is known; thus the task is to determine the "who." With regard to the missing whose remains have not been recovered, the names of the missing are known; thus the "who" has been determined, but not the "where."

Despite legislation to the contrary, within the Accounting Community, all missing persons are not and have not been treated as being equal. For decades, pressure by a paid lobbyist and other organizations on the DoD and Congress ensured that Vietnam War missing persons received preferential treatment by the accounting program. This is another example of how the absence of meaningful Congressional oversight allows certain segments of the accounting program to ignore federal law and Congressional intent with absolute impunity.

A disinterment program for the purpose of identification does not require search teams to be sent abroad on investigative missions that are astonishingly expensive as well as stunningly unproductive and demonstrably inefficient. This is precisely why some within the Accounting Community, as well as outsiders such as a paid lobbyist and her pressure organization, resisted the development of a large-scale program of disinterment for the purpose of identification. Any activity, even one that produces identifications of WWII and Korean War unknowns, that diverted real or imagined resources or attention from extensive, expensive, and

unproductive field operations in Southeast Asia has been opposed by lobbyists, federal employees, and officials in the Accounting Community.

* * *

In sum, the remains of American service members who went missing during America's historic conflicts are located, recovered, identified, and returned to the primary next of kin (PNOK) in the following manner:

- The remains of America's missing servicemen are invariably located by third parties unrelated to any Accounting Community program.
- Remains and physical evidence are recovered either by third parties or by recovery missions led by forensic scientists from the CIL.
- Remains are identified as a result of the testing performed by forensic scientists at the CIL. The authority to sign an identification memorandum was reserved for the scientific director.
- Identified remains are returned to the PNOK by the Service Casualty Office (SCO) corresponding to the branch of the military the serviceman was in at the time of death.

The US government has also spent hundreds of millions of dollars on "investigation missions," primarily focused on Southeast Asia, as well as bilateral efforts with the Russian government that have been an underwhelming, unproductive failure.

One important problem is the fact, as the Athenians learned at Marathon, that it is not possible to recover the remains of every casualty.

* * *

UNRECOVERED

Within the outermost perimeter of the understanding of the term "fullest possible accounting," there are no "unrecoverable remains." Instead, under this extreme interpretation of "fullest possible accounting," there are only "unrecovered" remains that the government had not yet managed to locate, recover, identify, and return. The distinction is important for several reasons.

The striking implication of this extremist interpretation is that the remains of all of the missing are out there, somewhere, waiting to be located and recovered. This maximum position, which does not have even a tenuous connection to the reality of the situation, has been frequently perpetuated by the media and Members of Congress. This was one of the origins of the most common, yet utterly fatuous, statements that at a rate of 200 identifications per year, it will take 390 years to identify the remains of 78,000 WWII missing. The fact that more than 60 percent of the remains of the WWII missing no longer exist, thus would never be recovered, had to be downplayed or simply ignored.

Since the Civil War, the production of remains had gradually become an integral feature of the US government's accounting program. Remains that were not recovered or had been determined to be "unrecoverable," referred to in the jargon of the Accounting Community as "no further pursuit" cases, created the "inaccessible corpse" problem.

In societies where it is considered important to have a corpse in order to hold a funeral, missing corpses may deprive survivors of rituals which help them through the mourning process.¹¹

The emotional and psychological importance of the "inaccessible corpse" issue for the next of kin was leveraged for political purposes. The extremists, who would settle for nothing less than total control of the Accounting Community, consistently exploited the pain and suffering of the families of the missing to achieve their political goals.

The extremist position asserted that unless and until the remains of all of the missing had been recovered and identified, there could be no end to the government-sponsored accounting program. Without missing remains, the extremists would have no influence; thus it was imperative to raise the definition of "accounted for" so high that it could never be realized for all of the missing. This explains the extremist assertion that all "inaccessible corpses" were actually "accessible," regardless of the facts, evidence, and "opinions" of so-called scientists that concluded the opposite.

The argument that the success rate of the recovery effort depended on resources, not efficiency, was used primarily by the Vietnam War lobbyists and pressure groups to ensure Congress provided funding to the DoD to sustain the accounting program regardless of the outcome. After tens of millions spent year in and year out on locating remains in Southeast Asia produced few if any results, the reaction of the Vietnam War pressure

groups was to blame the incompetence of certain nefarious elements within the government while simultaneously insisting on increased spending on the search effort. The extremist pressure groups, such as one led by a paid lobbyist, promoted the counterintuitive position that the solution to the lack of production in Southeast Asia was to double down and replace those who had found nothing with incompetents who happened to be allies of the extremists. This is one important way that political control over the Accounting Community was achieved.

Political machinations aside, the salient questions were, first, had the government carried out its “obligation of care” to locate and recover “unrecovered” cases with sufficient effort and competence and, second, were any of the remains of the missing “unrecoverable”?

* * *

Certain elements within the POW/MIA accounting community, in its broadest sense, have raised the concern that the “unrecovered” were not “unrecoverable.” According to various assertions, many of the servicemen who went missing during America’s historic conflicts were alleged to be alive or had been alive for unspecified lengths of time, perhaps even in enemy custody.

The record concerning the missing who had been declared dead by administrative decision is consistent and clear. A Congressional Select Committee concluded after 15 months of investigation:

There is no case on record in previous wars in which an individual having been presumed deceased later returned alive.¹²

As the GAO reported, however, there was one exception.

In one case, a soldier who had been declared dead by the mortuary in DaNang, Vietnam, was returned as a released POW during Operation Homecoming in 1973.¹³

With the exception of one case from the Vietnam War, were any of the “unrecovered” and “unrecoverable” alive at any point following the juridical finding of death? The government’s position was “no.”

The government’s finding was categorically rejected by many family members, “activists,” and lobbying organizations. The rationale for their conclusion was based on the logic of the “argument from ignorance.”

Evidence that something has not occurred in the past is not evidence that outcome cannot occur in the future, no matter how unlikely that outcome might appear to be. For those who shared an extreme interpretation of “fullest possible accounting,” the conclusion that all of the missing were dead because there was no evidence that any of the missing were alive was nothing more than the government abdicating its responsibility to recover the missing person alive or to prove the missing person was dead by recovering and identifying the remains. On one extreme “fullest possible accounting” meant that a missing person might be alive. On the other extreme was the idea that there was an “inaccessible corpse” that could be recovered.

This extreme interpretation appears to be a problem with two mutually exclusive solutions. Instead, this interpretation of “fullest possible accounting” is an example of a problem the premise of which has been stated poorly. The two proposed solutions, which are actually not solutions, confirmed the axiom that it is better to be vaguely right than precisely wrong. The vaguely correct solution to “fullest possible accounting” problem is that there is no longer a living person and the remains of others may not be recoverable.

* * *

“Inaccessible corpse” cases understandably open the floodgates of desperate speculation. Without a corpse to identify, mourn, and bury, the survivors and relatives of the missing could only wonder about what happened. The suspicion or belief that some of the missing designated as “unrecovered” or “unrecoverable” were, in fact, not dead, is a recurring theme.

Relatives are forever left with nagging questions and uncertainties regarding the final fate of the deceased. Some may even contemplate a person’s survival unless a dead body turns up.¹⁴

The question that could not be resolved with credible evidence was “What if some of the ‘missing’ were still alive?” Several possibilities could produce such a result. A serviceman could have been captured by the enemy but not released. Service members who desert often do not want to be found. Identification media, such as dog tags, could be switched, resulting in a misidentification. Or the missing serviceman could be alive but intellectually impaired.

* * *

A common thread in “inaccessible corpse” cases deriving from America’s historic conflicts is the grieving party’s inability to move beyond denial and bargaining, which are the first and third stages of grieving.¹⁵ A classic example of bargaining, that the intervention of the living could bring the dead back to life, is the basis of the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice. Orpheus, whose beautiful singing voice caused trees to uproot themselves to follow him, descended into Hades where he used his musical skills to persuade the King of the Dead to allow him to retrieve his beloved Eurydice and bring her home.¹⁶

Relatives of the missing often hold out hope that their loved one will return or like Eurydice will be found alive in a distant place. There are many examples in the archives of America’s historic conflicts of mothers who kept a photograph of a missing son on the mantel for decades and families whose dinner table included an extra place setting with an empty chair for a missing son who was expected to walk in at any minute. These informal totemic settings did not end with the passing of the parents. In many cases the vigil was carried on by sibling or other relatives.

Others who refused to accept that a missing person was dead bargained that the soldier had been knocked unconscious or was in fact wandering around in a state of amnesia. In these cases, desperate parents were convinced that if they could only see their son, a face-to-face encounter would cause the boy to snap out of it and return to life as it had been. After WWII, one desperate mother obtained permission to enter Eastern Europe where she traveled about nailing photographs of her missing son onto trees in the area where the Army concluded the son had gone missing.

The sister of a serviceman who went missing during the Korean War was convinced that he had been rendered unconscious by a Chinese “stun grenade,” captured then sent to the Soviet Gulag where he had been imprisoned for over four decades. A family in Seattle was convinced that an Army private who went missing during the Korean War was alive in a Soviet Gulag camp where he was pretending not to speak English in order to prevent the guards from realizing he was an American. The fact that the man in question was identified by Soviet dissident Mr. Anaoli Sharansky, who was a prisoner in the same camp, to be someone named “Shagan” from Ukraine meant nothing. The family concluded Mr. Sharansky was lying.

Since 2010, however, the only method authorized by Congress to account for the missing from America’s historic conflicts is to recover and identify skeletalized remains.

IDENTIFY

Recovering remains does not end the US government's duty of care for American servicemen who went missing during America's historic conflicts. Identification is the penultimate step in the accounting program. In its current configuration, the teleology of the US government's accounting program is to identify remains so that the individual may be returned to the Primary Next of Kin (PNOK).

Identification of the skeletalized remains of a missing person from America's historic conflicts requires two sets of biological evidence: ante-mortem (pre-death) and post-mortem (after death). The two data sets are examined by the CIL scientific director who acts as the trier of fact. The "preponderance of evidence" standard used by the CIL, a standard that applies in a civil trial, requires more than 50 percent of the evidence to support a single conclusion. In contrast, the "beyond a reasonable doubt" standard, which is used in criminal cases, states that no other reasonable conclusion may be derived from the evidence. Fictional representations of the process of human skeletal identification often assert that the goal is to presume an identity then prove that the remains are those of the presumed person. Instead, the purpose is to exclude every other possibility, leaving one individual as the most probable person because all others had been excluded.

This is why the CIL Scientific Director's memorandum that identifies a set of remains states that after assessing the evidence and excluding every alternative, the trier of fact concludes that after excluding the alternatives, the remains of X-1 are most probably those of Person A.¹⁷

The scientific director is authorized to identify a set of remains, but that does not complete the identification process. DoD policy states that in some cases a missing person must be carried on the list of the missing *after* the remains have identified by a practitioner of an appropriate forensic science.¹⁸

Remains are ultimately determined to be identified, thus "accounted for," only after an agency under the control of USD(P), not by the forensic scientists in the CIL, certifies the identification. In the DoD system, human remains are not identified until scientifically illiterate political appointees such as the USD(P) staff are satisfied.

The GAO attempted to relieve the CIL of this type of interference by recommending that authority concerning scientific matters be shifted away from the military commander of CILHI and the integrity of the

identification process insulated from political control by placing the CIL under an agency competent in scientific matters. In 1992, the GAO recommended:

1. Give the laboratory director equal status with the military commander of CILHI, and assign the laboratory director the final authority to make operational decisions about the scientific aspects of the laboratory.
2. Allow the laboratory director to report directly to the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs on all scientific issues. This would administratively situate CILHI outside of the [Casualty and Memorial Affairs Operations Center] system[.]¹⁹

CIL management attempted to exert its authority on scientific matters. After the CIL's laboratory director Dr. Kim Schneider and the senior odontologist resigned from the CIL, Army LTC Jimmie Schmidt was made the acting laboratory director. There was really no other choice. Mr. Bruce Anderson, Mr. Robert Mann, and Dr. Thomas Holland had come on board in February, April, and June 1992, respectively, and thus were too inexperienced and junior to head the CIL. Also, Mr. Mann and Mr. Anderson only had MAs at the time, and politically, that would not satisfy the requirement that the CIL director be a qualified anthropologist. LTC Schmidt had served at the CIL for two years and had experience running dental clinics. Not insignificantly, all of the identifications were based on dental records at that time. LTC Schmidt, who was regarded as having done a good job as CIL director, was rotated in late 1993 or early 1994. At that point, Dr. Holland was named acting lab director. Approximately one year later in late 1994 or early 1995, Dr. Holland, who was appointed as the laboratory director, was given the chance to pick a title. Dr. Holland changed the title from laboratory director to scientific director to emphasize that the director of the world's largest skeletal identification laboratory should have some say in scientific matters outside the laboratory, such as how recovery operations should be planned, prioritized, and conducted.

Despite the GAO's recommendations, DoD did not "situate CILHI" outside of political control. Political control over lab operations was exerted through the Army until 2003 when control was shifted to the Pacific Command (PACOM). Between 2003 and 2015, DPMO repeat-

edly attempted to exert political control over the CIL. In 2015 political control of the science of human skeletal identification was formalized when the CIL was placed under the authority and control of the USD(P), a non-scientific position filled by a scientifically illiterate political appointee.

* * *

After politics, the greatest threat to the probability that remains can be identified is time.

The longer the interval between death and recovery, the more difficult it becomes to identify human remains. The probability that remains can be identified is largely a function of two factors: first, the condition of the remains and, second, the percentage and type of body parts that are present. The impact of these two factors on the identification process was summarized by a House Select Committee in the following terms:

Identification depends on the type and extent of remains and the ability to correlate the scientific analysis of those remains with biographic and anatomic data associated with the individual. Identification includes blood typing, dental comparison, study of body construction and individual characteristics, and may include craniofacial photographic superimposition evaluation. Depending on the specific bones recovered, positive identification may be made with as little as 10% of the skeletal structure, if the dental portion is recovered or if a uniquely characteristic bone exists. In other cases, a minimum of 65% of the skeleton accompanied by acceptable information on the incident of loss may be needed to establish the identity.²⁰

In another example of the supremacy of politics over science, the probability that the previous paragraph was written by a forensic scientist is exceptionally remote.

The most troubling aspect of the Committee's report is that there was no hint of any awareness that one of the methods in use at the CIL in the late 1970's and 1980s was indistinguishable from junk science. This should have been a fundamental task for a Congressional oversight committee.

Imagine a documentary film in which a paleontologist takes a fragment of bone the size of a postage stamp then embeds it into a complete plaster skull, with the bone fragment sort of floating in the middle of the plaster dinosaur's forehead. Further imagine that 99 percent of the creature's

“bone” is made of plaster of Paris with two or three tiny bits of fossilized bone fragments stuck into the plaster as if one were making a mosaic. This is what was happening at the CIL under the direction of Mr. Tadao Furue. Using the “morphological approximation” approach, bone fragments pulled from ashes were placed into a plaster mold that approximated the shape of a similar bone from which the fragments were imagined to have belonged. The method was both unreliable as well as unscientific. The way it worked in the era of “morphological approximation” was that if no one challenged an identification, then the identification was “good” and accepted.

When power coozies up to junk science, disaster inevitably strikes. The CIL’s house of cards was allowed to carry on until the first complaint challenged the legitimacy of “morphological approximation” as a human skeletal identification method. Instead of regurgitating the line that “morphological approximation” was science, the House Subcommittee should have been carrying out its oversight responsibilities. Neither the Members of the Subcommittee nor any of the staff had the skill sets, experience, or inclination to evaluate the legitimacy of “morphological approximation” as science.

Another indication that the Congressional report had not been written by a competent scientist was the use of the term “positive identification.” Identifications are not positive, negative, or conditional. There is no partial or sort-of identification. The product is binary. Either the remains are identified or they are not identified. There is no “half-pregnant” status in forensic science of human skeletal identification. In addition, whoever cobbled together the Subcommittee’s report revealed a fundamental lack of understanding of the process of human skeletal identification.

The term “presumptive identification” could mean a preliminary identification proposed by the scientific staff, or it could mean that bias has been introduced into the analysis. A conditional identification, such as a “presumptive identification,” could mean that instead of working “in the blind,” the analyst was advised of the possible identity of the remains, either by name or through a short list of possible names. Pursuing a “positive identification” based on a “presumptive identification” can result in confirmation bias, in which evidence is interpreted to confirm an existing belief. Instead of trying to prove that the remains can be no other than

Person X, a “presumptive identification” can become an effort to prove that the identity is Person X. The distinction is crucial to understanding the process of human skeletal identification.

History is filled with many cases where the “presumptive identification” turned out to be mistaken. For example, in one case from Vietnam, CIL analysts were expecting to identify the remains of a pilot of a single-seat jet fighter that was shot down. After extensive laboratory testing, the remains turned out to be two individuals, both pilots of the same type of jet aircraft that crashed in the same spot in two separate incidents, one atop the other. In one WWII case, the remains of a pilot of a single seat fighter were determined to have a minimum number of individuals (MNI) of two, one male, the other female. The pilot had been giving a nurse a ride when the accident occurred. “Presumptive identification” errors are minimized by working in the blind.

* * *

Identification of human remains requires the “systematic recovery of physical and biological evidence in the field, rigorous scientific analysis in the laboratory, and protection of the integrity of the evidence.”²¹ If one were to conclude that the scientific integrity of the process used to identify the remains of missing American servicemen was immune or protected from political interference, one would be wrong.

The scientific process used to identify the skeletalized remains of American servicemen who went missing during America’s historic conflicts is intensely politicized. Political interference has been exerted over every step in the identification process, beginning with preferential treatment for Vietnam War losses, prioritizing search efforts in Southeast Asia, how cases are selected for forensic testing, through to the meaning of an identification, and everything in between. Ubiquitous political interference was a fact of life in the business of death.

* * *

Until DNA analysis became available in the mid-1990’s no accredited analytical technique was available that could be used to produce reliable identifications of skeletalized remains in general. Reliable identifications of small fragments of bone, commingled remains, and partial skeletons were out of the question. In practice, this meant that a small handful of bone

shards recovered from an aircraft crash site in the 1970s, for example, had to be stored in the CIL until an appropriate forensic science technique was developed to deal with such cases. One exception occurred in the mid-1970s when two identifications were made from incinerated remains.

Identification of ashes is extremely difficult and, without some bone fragments in the ashes, may be impossible. The ashes themselves will not reveal blood type, but, if the right blood-producing bone fragments are present, blood type and structure may be determined within reasonable limits.

Human ashes returned by the Chinese in 1975 were reported to be that of two American flyers shot down over China. The ashes in one case contained sufficient fragments to substantiate the identification.²²

Once again, this description was probably written by a staffer working for a Member of Congress or for the Subcommittee. It was definitely not written by a competent scientist. Bones do not produce blood. Blood cells and platelets are produced by bone marrow, the soft fatty tissue found within a bone. Bone marrow is easily destroyed by fire. In 1975, no accredited forensic science analytical technique could establish a reliable “structure” of a bone from small, burned “fragments.” Creating the structure of a human skeleton from fragments was out of the question. In the pre-DNA era, an identification based on bone fragments found in human ashes was more likely than not the product of confirmation bias. The analysts were aware that the ashes recovered by Chinese were allegedly the remains of two American flyers; thus it was not surprising that the analysts produced an identification of one of them.

The only exception of the utility of small pieces of bone was forensic odontology that could associate a missing person’s dental chart with remains containing teeth. Identifying a skull using dental comparison, however, created another problem. No accredited technique existed that would allow the anthropologist to associate commingled disarticulated post-cranial parts with an identified skull.

Support for the effort to identify the remains of missing American servicemen has not been unanimous or unconditional within the Accounting Community.

Despite the fact that the Department of the Army through the AQG is the statutory next of kin for administrative purposes of all of the remains of the missing buried as unknowns, various DoD agencies, lobbyists, and other organizations have attempted to prevent efforts to recover or identify

the remains of missing American servicemen. The Department of the Navy repeatedly claimed that the Sunken Military Craft Act of 2004 prohibits the recovery of remains from sunken vessels, despite the fact the technology exists to do so. The Department of the Navy cited the Sunken Military Craft Act of 2004 as the reason why the CIL should be prevented from exhuming the remains of missing American sailors and marines buried in the NMCP.

The Department of the Navy also proposed to disinter the remains of the missing from the attack on Pearl Harbor then permanently entomb the remains in what was referred to as a “monument” in order to prohibit the remains from being examined by forensic scientists for the purpose of identification.

A DoD employee objected to the disinterment for the purpose of identification program in order to support her effort to prevent the CIL from producing the Congressionally mandated 200 identifications per year. Paid lobbyist Mrs. Ann Mills-Griffiths and her single-issue interest group applied pressure on DoD to stop the disinterment for the purpose of identification program. This paid lobbyist was convinced, yet never produced a shred of evidence, that a productive disinterment program would divert resources from investigation efforts in Southeast Asia that produced only a few identifications per year, none of which derived from leads generated by any DoD program.

DPMO DASD Robert “Newbs” Newberry objected to the identification of disinterred remains for two reasons. First, he asserted that because the remains of the unknowns had been buried with “full military honors,” they did not deserve to be exhumed and identified until all other remains in the field had been located, recovered, and identified. Second, he advised attendees during a Family Update session in Nashville, Tennessee, that disinterment for the purpose of identification should be banned because, in his view, disinterring and identifying unknown remains was “grave robbing.”²³

Opposition to the disinterment for the purpose of identification program was another in a long series of examples of how political control of science was misused to shape the accounting effort to accommodate the interests of a handful of biased individuals, most of whom were scientifically illiterate.

As a result of the procedures developed during America's historic conflicts, the percentage of recovered remains that were identified increased dramatically.²⁴

<i>Percent of recovered</i>	
<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Dead identified</i>
US Civil War	57.50
Spanish-American War ^a	87.00
WWI	97.80
WWII ^b	97.96
Korean War ^c	98.50
Vietnam War ^d	100.00

^a“The beginnings of the Quartermaster Graves Registration Service,” by Dr. Leo P Hirrel, July 8, 2014. www.army.mil <http://www.army.mil/article/128693>

^bThe initial number of WWII unknowns shortly after the war was 10,009. Thus, of the 281,000 recovered dead, the identification rate was 96.4 percent. Taking into account the 4286 unknowns subsequently identified (leaving 5723 unknowns), the identification rate rises to 97.96 percent. “Manila American Cemetery and Memorial,” http://www.peleliu1944.com/ml_pict.pdf

^cKorean War dead from all causes totaled 54,246, 36,914 attributed to combat. The number of Korean War unknowns buried in the NMCP was originally 867. The identification rate of all deaths, therefore, was originally 98.40 percent. After taking into account the approximately 30 Korean War unknowns that have been subsequently identified, the identification rate rises to 98.5 percent (<http://www.americanwarlibrary.com/allwars.htm>). A definitive identification rate is impossible to calculate until all Korean War unknowns have been exhumed and submitted for forensic testing. The minimum number of individuals (MNI) represented in a single coffin may be greater than one (>1.0) due to commingling

^dThere are no unknowns from the Vietnam War. In other words, all of the dead recovered during the Vietnam War have been identified. This includes the remains of USAF First Lieutenant Michael J. Blassie whose remains were exhumed from the Tomb of the Unknowns Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery on May 14, 1998, then identified through the use of mitochondrial DNA analysis as a line of evidence (<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Tomb-of-the-Unknown-Soldier>)

In the era of modern forensic analytical techniques, particularly forensic odontology (dental), radiographic (aka “X-ray”) comparison and DNA analysis, the probability that after being recovered a serviceman’s body will be identified is as close to a certainty as statistically possible. Thus in the age of modern forensic science, the main problem is not the identification of the dead; rather, the issue is how to effectively and efficiently locate and recover those, in the case of WWII, for example, who went missing nearly 80 years ago.

UNKNOWN

Recovery did not guarantee that remains could be identified.

Throughout American history, the concept that human remains that could not be identified were determined to be “unknown” or “unidentified” was not alien to the American psyche. The unknown and unidentified have been memorialized since colonial days. Philadelphia’s Tomb of the Unknowns from the Revolutionary War was established in 1866, though the contemporary monument was not built until 1954. After an unknown soldier in a Revolutionary War uniform was found buried in an ammunition box in Alexandria, Virginia, a small monument to the unknowns was established on the site. There is also a monument at Valley Forge raised in honor of those who could not be identified (Fig. 2.5).



Fig. 2.5 Monument to the unknowns, Valley Forge (Photo: Public Domain)

The text of the Valley Forge monument reads “In Memory Of Unknown Soldiers Buried At Valley Forge, 1777–1778.”

As a consequence of the ad hoc approach to managing the dead during the Civil War, no more than 60 percent (204,000) of the approximately 340,000 Union Army soldiers who died on the battlefield or in hospitals were identified.²⁵ So many of the Union Army dead went unrecovered that between 1866 and 1870 search parties continued to scour the battlefields for the remains of Union Army soldiers. Due to the time interval between death and the recovery effort, the recovered remains were usually too decomposed to be identified; thus the majority were buried as unknowns (Fig. 2.6).

There are dozens of monuments to Civil War unknowns, including one in Arlington National Cemetery that commemorates 2111 unidentified soldiers (Fig. 2.7).

Thousands of WWII and Korean War graves in America’s national military cemeteries are marked with a simple headstone with a pragmatic notation such as the following (Fig. 2.8).



Fig. 2.6 Remains of Civil War dead (Photo: nlm.nih.gov)

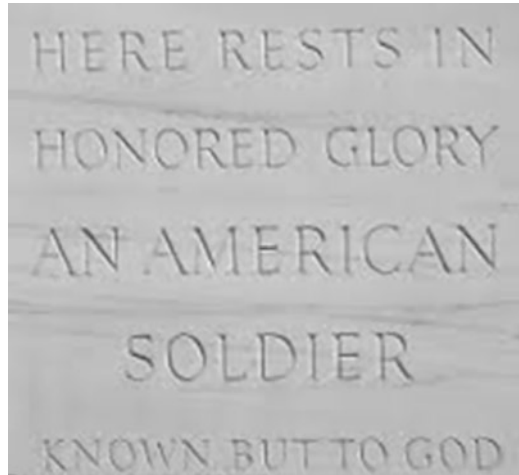


Fig. 2.7 Civil War monument to the unknowns (Photo: arlingtoncemetery.mil)



Fig. 2.8 National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific unknowns (Photo: PM Cole) and WWII USS Oklahoma unknown (Photo: Public Domain)

Fig. 2.9 Tomb of the Unknowns (Photo: arlingtoncemetery.mil)



The pragmatic acceptance that some human remains were “unidentified” was tempered by the inclusion of the restorative that the identity of the unknown was “known only to God.” An untold number of monuments raised in honor of the unidentified have included a variation of this palliative. Prominent among these totemic monuments is the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery that carries a similar inscription (Fig. 2.9).

The belief that God alone knew the identity of the person whose bones were in the coffin provided solace, reassurance, if not closure to some. If God herself were the only one capable of figuring out the identity of the remains, who were mere mortals to try? Without an appropriate analytical technique coupled with God’s reluctance to reveal the identities of the unknowns, the distinction between “identified” and “unknown/unidentified” settled in as a fact of life.

As the Executive Agent for Mortuary Affairs, the AQG became the juridical next of kin for remains whose identity was determined to be “unknown.” All decisions relating to the transfer or burial of an unknown were taken by the AQG that acted on behalf of the unknowns “by administrative decision.”

* * *

MISSING

“Missing” is catch-all casualty status defined by DoD’s *Dictionary of Military Terms and Acronyms* as follows:

A casualty status for which the United States Code provides statutory guidance concerning missing members of the Military Services. Excluded are personnel who are in an absent without leave, deserter, or dropped-from-rolls status. A person declared missing is categorized as follows:

- (a) **Beleaguered** – The casualty is a member of an organized element that has been surrounded by a hostile force to prevent escape of its members.
- (b) **Captured** – The casualty has been seized as the result of action of an unfriendly military or paramilitary force in a foreign country.
- (c) **Detained** – The casualty is prevented from proceeding or is restrained in custody for alleged violation of international law or other reason claimed by the government or group under which the person is being held.
- (d) **Interned** – The casualty is definitely known to have been taken custody of a nonbelligerent foreign power as the result of and for reasons arising out of any armed conflict in which the Armed Forces of the United States are engaged.
- (e) **Missing** – The casualty is not present at his or her duty location due to apparent involuntarily reasons and whose location is unknown.
- (f) **Missing-In-Action** – The casualty is a hostile casualty, other than the victim of a terrorist activity, who is not present at his or her duty location due to apparent involuntary reasons and whose location is unknown. Also called MIA.²⁶

The US government’s obligation to recover, identify, and return the remains of the war dead was established in the 1860s. The origins of the US government’s responsibility to “account for” MIAs and the missing, however, are another matter entirely.

The “MIA” and “missing” issue is confusing due to a semantic problem that is part language and part logic. As Confucius allegedly said, “When language is misused, what is said is not meant.” By law, all “MIA” cases from America’s historic conflicts are “missing persons.” But not all “missing persons” were ever categorized as “MIA.” “Missing” and “MIA” include cases where the remains have not been recovered or have been recovered and declared to be unknown or unidentified. Remains

that have been recovered then determined to be “unknown” or buried in America’s national cemeteries as “unknown” are referred to as “MIA,” as if nothing were known about the fate of the individual.

The issue is further complicated due to the fact that “MIA” was never intended to be a permanent casualty status. Despite the fact that MIA cases that have been converted to “missing” status should no longer be referred to as “MIA,” the Accounting Community continues to refer to the “unaccounted for” as “MIA.” The distinction is neither superficial nor without consequences. DoD, for example, institutionalizes the confusion by referring to the agency responsible for accounting for the missing from America’s historic conflicts as the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command “JPAC” or “Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency.” By law, all of the “POW” and “MIA” cases were converted to “missing persons” decades ago. Multiple investigations have determined that there are no living POWs in captivity in foreign countries. In order to reflect and comply with federal law, the agency responsible to “account for” service members who went missing during America’s historic conflicts should be referred to as the “Historic Conflict Missing Person Accounting Agency.” The chances of this happening are remote due to the continued excessive influence that the POW/MIA lobby exerts through regulatory capture and the failure of Congress to apply any meaningful oversight.

The matter is muddled even more by the fact that the “MIA” casualty status was habitually misapplied by military commanders during America’s historic conflicts. This disingenuous “pencil whipping” was done for several reasons, not the least of which was compassion for the next of kin. Personnel who eyewitnesses reported as killed in action (body not recovered) (KIA(BNR)) were routinely listed by their commanders as MIA. In the case of pilots killed during air combat in Korea, for example, the Air Force regularly distorted the official record in two ways. First, if the crash occurred north of the Yalu River in China where the Air Force was forbidden to fly, the crash location was altered to somewhere on the territory of North Korea safely south of the Yalu. Second, if a pilot were reported as MIA rather than KIA, the pilot’s family would be allowed to continue living on a military base and collecting pay until the case was resolved or the casualty status changed, which could take years.

This type of “pencil whipping,” which was no less fraudulent because it was motivated by compassion, was consistent with the US military’s corporate culture of dishonesty that was repeated hundreds of times during the Vietnam War. For example, DoD “sometimes concealed actual loss sites during the ‘secret war in Laos.’”²⁷ An untold number of KIA(BNR) cases, including hundreds whose remains could not be recovered, were deliberately and improperly designated as MIA. After the end of the Vietnam War, the JCRC conducted:

an exhaustive study to identify and isolate those cases in which recovery of remains is not possible. As a result of that study, it was determined that 436 bodies were not recoverable due to location or circumstances of loss. Unfortunately, in all cases, the names, location of loss, and other pertinent data are included on the data processing lists that were given to the DRV and PRG²⁸ by the Four-Party Joint Military Team during 1973–75 and for whom we have requested an accounting.

In other words, DoD officials concluded 436 bodies were “unrecoverable,” yet they presented these cases to the Vietnamese government as “MIA” cases. After accounting for the 436 as “unrecoverable,” DoD then asked the Vietnamese government to provide an accounting.

The 436 cases that DoD treated in this way included the following. On May 17, 1967, a US Army armored personnel carrier (APC) hit a 250-pound mine while crossing a bridge. As the platoon commander lay pinned under the inverted APC, the fuel tanks ruptured and burst into flames that caused the ammunition aboard the vehicle to explode as the magnesium parts of the APC burned in the intense heat. The only thing left of the platoon commander was the “outline of a body, formed by human ashes” on the concrete bridge. The wreckage and the human ashes were bulldozed into the creek below the bridge. A determination of death was made within a month of the incident. Despite all of this, the “individual’s name was still on the list provided the DRV/PRG despite the fact that no further accounting is possible.” In other words, DoD demanded that the Vietnamese government provide either a corpse or provide documents and other evidence that would account for the fate of this serviceman. Congress recognized that this type of pencil whipping undermined the integrity of the accounting program while simultaneously degrading the US side’s negotiating leverage.

Listing such cases for which no accounting can be expected [as missing in action] erodes the credibility of the United States data base. Surely the Vietnamese must be confused. Worse, it may appear to the Indochinese leaders that the United States has deliberately requested information which they cannot furnish in order to embarrass them or to prevent meaningful talks.²⁹

During the Korean and Vietnam Wars, KIA(BNR) cases were re-designated as MIA or even as personnel last seen alive as prisoners of the enemy. The House Select Committee on Americans Missing in Southeast Asia referred to this practice as “the optimistic and sometimes incomprehensible use of the MIA classification.”

Deliberate misclassification of KIA(BNR) personnel as MIA, which created false hope, understandably led the next of kin to speculate that the missing had survived and would eventually return alive. The House Select Committee on Americans Missing in Southeast Asia concluded:

Regardless of how grim the circumstances of loss might be and how strongly those circumstances point to the death of a member, next of kin cannot help but hope that their service member is alive rather than dead. Commanding officers who erroneously or optimistically classified their subordinates MIA did not render a favor to their next of kin; **instead they did a cruel misservice.**³⁰

As an analytical issue, the humanitarian intention that motivated commanders to deliberately falsify personnel records by labeling hundreds, perhaps thousands, of KIA(BNR) cases as MIA is irrelevant. The fact of the matter is that the systematic misrepresentation of KIA(BNR) cases as MIA, which introduced a massive element of dishonesty into the casualty statistics, created a massive administrative problem as well. Records that are faked are incredibly difficult to unfake. Administrative and evidentiary requirements make a change of casualty status incredibly problematic as well.

Compassionate “pencil whipping” also created institutionalized wild goose chases that distorted the historic record for decades, if not permanently. Investigations undertaken to locate the remains of a pilot that US military records state was last seen alive in North Korea, for example, were a waste of time in light of the fact that the pilot had died in a crash somewhere in China, perhaps hundreds of miles away from the actual crash site.

Analysis of military operations, particularly those that occurred a half-century or more ago, is in itself a daunting task. Sorting out fact from fiction in US military records is a monumental task in the best of circumstances. Institutionalized deception compounded the accounting problem many times over. When analyzing the records of personnel categorized as “missing” and “MIA,” therefore, things are not always as they seem to appear, particularly if the information was produced by US military “pencil whippers.”

* * *

America’s “inaccessible corpse” cases were addressed by Congress. In 1942, the Department of the Navy urged Congress to enact legislation designed to assist the families of the increasing number of servicemen reported missing in the Asia-Pacific and European combat zones. In response, on March 7, 1942, Congress passed the landmark Missing Persons Act that covered servicemen determined to be missing, MIA, interned in a neutral country, captured by an enemy, or beleaguered or besieged by enemy forces.³¹

Congress continued to amend the Missing Persons Act, in many instances broadening its scope to accommodate particular conflicts, such as those in Korea and Vietnam. For example, as a result of United States involvement in Korea, Congress amended the act by substituting the phrase ‘hostile force’ for ‘enemy,’ and deleting the phrase ‘interned in a neutral country’ and substituting ‘interned in a foreign country against his will.’ Congress also (belatedly) amended the act that year to specifically include members of the Air Force.³²

More than two years after passage of the initial legislation, the House Committee on Naval Affairs recommended certain amendments to the law dealing with pay, allotments, and administration pertaining to war casualties. The amendments provided, among other things, that the Act should be referred to as the “Missing Persons Act.”

Under the authority of the Missing Persons Act, a determination of death of a missing person could be established in one of two ways:

- An official report of death
- A finding of death

According to the Missing Persons Act of 1942 (as amended), each Service Secretary was required to convene a board of inquiry prior to the 12-month anniversary of the date of initial determination of the serviceman's missing status. The board of inquiry's options were to continue the person's missing status, determine that the person could reasonably be presumed to be still alive, or make a presumptive finding of death. The essential factor as described by Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal was that "missing" status was concerned less with determining the whereabouts of the person and more concerned as to whether he "is alive or dead." The Secretary referred to "a lapse of time without information" in anticipation that many missing servicemen who disappeared without a trace would never be heard from again. The Boards of Inquiry's track record is impressive. With just one exception out of tens of thousands of cases, no American serviceman who went missing during America's historic conflicts who was declared dead by administrative decision has ever re-emerged alive.

The "lapse of time without information" standard did not satisfy or substitute for the American cultural requirement that in order to declare a person dead, a corpse must be produced. Nevertheless, after one year and one day, absent any evidence to the contrary, a missing person was determined to be dead.

A key provision of the Act required the board of inquiry to provide a date when the missing person's death was presumed to have occurred. In the majority of cases, the presumed date of death was one year and one day following the putative date of the loss event. In the decades following WWII, this approach created a great deal of confusion, as even DoD's official databases often present the presumptive death date as if it were the actual date of the loss event.

As a matter of logic, the opposite of the Board of Inquiry's conclusion could have been drawn with equal validity. Using the same logic as the "argument from ignorance," the conclusion made by skeptics that the absence of evidence that the missing were alive and thus they were alive was as valid as DoD's conclusion that the absence of evidence meant that they were dead. This is one reason why skeptics of the presumptive finding of death due to the "lapse of time without information" standard claim that the DoD's policy was nothing more than cynical abandonment of the living. The "lapse of time without information" standard, however, has a

serious weakness—evidence. According to DoD policy, a presumptive finding of death could only be overturned by information that was determined to be both “new and credible,” such as locating the remains or if the missing person returned alive.

The presumptive death date was essential for administrative measures such as calculating the amount of pay, insurance, and other benefits that were paid to the PNOK. In contrast to other countries, in the United States one of the most important factors in the making a finding of death for personnel in “missing” status was financial. In §555 of title 37, the Secretarial review stated, *inter alia*:

(b) When a finding of death is made under subsection (a) of this section, it shall include the date of death is presumed to have occurred for the purpose of – (1) ending the crediting of pay and allowances; (2) settlement of accounts; and (3) payment of death gratuities. That dates is – (A) the day after the day on which the 12-month period in a missing status ends[.]

In addition to the moral dimensions, the question of when to end the state’s duty of care for the missing has an economic dimension as well. Congress made it clear that the payment of benefits to the families of the missing were not open-ended:

Recipients of survivor benefits are entitled to them and deserving of them.

This is not to say, however, that benefits should be paid indefinitely, particularly when the provisions of public law make it clear that an individual status should be examined when there is a reasonable basis for changing that status.³³

This personnel policy carried over into the Korean War.

The geopolitical implications of the Korean War (1950–1953) were significant enough to resonate in the 1990s. Contemporary political problems with North Korea derive in large measure from the loose ends created by the inconclusive manner in which the kinetic part of the Korean conflict sputtered to a stop.

After the armistice came into effect on July 27, 1953, United Nations POWs, including Americans, were released by the North Koreans and Chinese in exchange for Chinese and North Korean prisoners. During the earliest phases of the Big and Little Switch prisoner exchanges, it was

abundantly clear to US authorities that hundreds of Americans last seen or believed to have been alive in communist custody had not been returned or accounted for satisfactorily. Collectively, the men (there were no missing female armed service members) who did not return were referred to as prisoners of war (POW) or MIA.³⁴ The difference was a POW was known or believed to have been captured by the enemy. Soldiers in a combat zone who failed to appear at morning muster for whatever reason were first categorized as missing, then eventually grouped together as MIA's. The blanket reference to unaccounted-for cases as "MIA," however, created the unfortunate perception that all missing persons had gone missing during combat operations and were therefore assigned the casualty status of MIA.

The accounting problem was far more nuanced and vastly more complex than the one-size-fits-all category "MIA" could explain.

* * *

The meaning of US law and understanding of Congressional intent were beyond reasonable dispute. All missing persons from America's historic conflicts have been declared dead by administrative decision. According to the Missing Persons Act, every American serviceman whose last known status was POW but was not repatriated or MIA is a "missing person." Nonetheless, to this day the DoD continues to refer to missing American servicemen from historic conflicts as POWs and MIAs, as reflected in the "Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency."

This is another example of how the enforcement of laws and regulations that apply to the Accounting Community has been capricious, arbitrary, or completely ignored.

The bottom line is that in the United States neither the beginning nor the ending of the "missing" casualty status is determined by forensic science. Instead, the "missing" status rests on two factors: (1) "A lapse of time without information" and (2) "Ending the crediting of pay and allowances."

* * *

The number of missing US servicemen, the number of missing buried as unknowns in American national cemeteries, and percent of unknowns as a percentage of the missing varies by conflict:

<i>Conflict</i>	<i>Missing/unknown</i>
WWII missing	ca. 78,000
Unknowns	ca. 8500 ^a
Unknowns as percent of missing	7.4%
Korean War missing	ca. 8000
Unknowns	ca. 830 ^b
Unknowns as percent of missing	10.4%
Vietnam War missing	ca. 1929 ^c
Unknowns	0.00
Unknowns as percent of missing	0.00%

^aThis includes National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (aka Punchbowl) 2079 WWII unknowns and Manila American Cemetery and Memorial 3644 WWII unknowns. This number changes as remains are disinterred and identified

^bAll Korean War unknowns are buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, Honolulu, Hawaii. Due to the ongoing program of disinterment for the purpose of identification, the number of unknowns is reduced over time

^c1220 missing in action, 118 due to non-combat causes and 591 prisoners of war. Another 1118 were determined to be "killed in action/body not recovered" (KIA/BNR). This number changes as remains are recovered and identified

These statistics change as the casualty status of the missing are reclassified and the remains are recovered and identified.

* * *

RETURN

The procedures used to account for the missing differ from the disposition of the remains of the dead who had been recovered and identified. In these cases, the identification was not in dispute. The issue for the family concerned the decision whether to bury the remains in a US national cemetery abroad or in a domestic cemetery of the family's choosing.

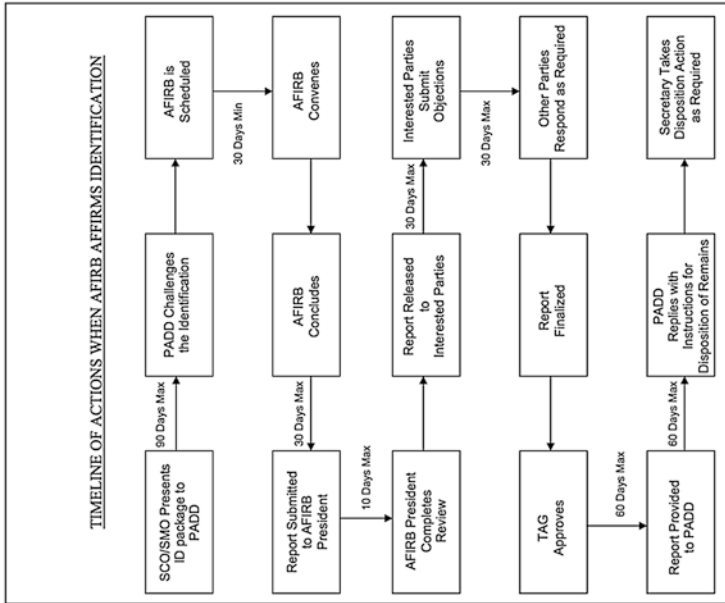
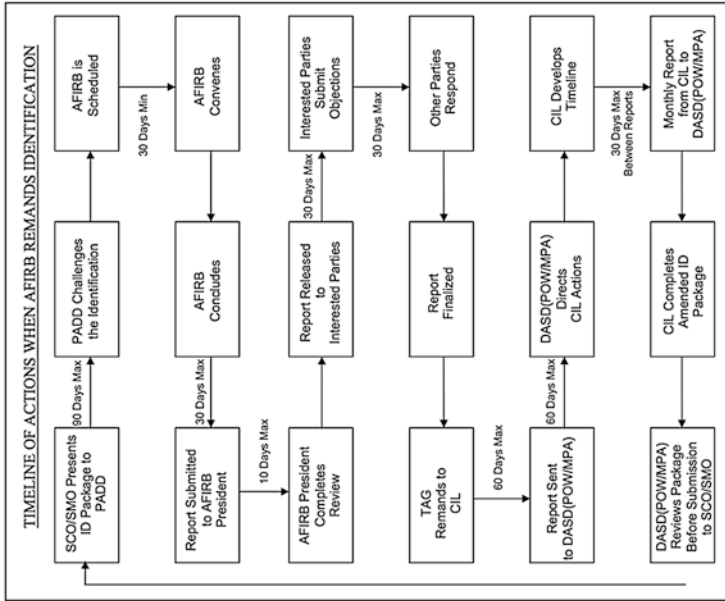
According to Congressional authorization, the purpose of the accounting program for the missing is to resolve the inaccessible corpse dilemma.

A satisfactory accounting would require identifiable remains and a report of known circumstances of loss.³⁵

The method authorized by Congress to achieve this objective is to locate, recover, identify then return the remains of missing American servicemen to the PNOK also known as the “person authorized to direct disposition of human remains” (PADD). The procedures used to return remains to the PNOK and the PNOK’s rights, which have changed over time, were described by DoDI 3001.03, *Accounting for Personnel Lost in Past Conflicts—The Armed Forces Identification Review Board (AFIRB)*.³⁶

The general outline for resolving missing person cases after the remains have been identified by a practitioner of an appropriate science required the SCO representing the branch of the military to which the missing person was assigned to contact the PADD. After being offered the identified remains, the PADD had three options:

1. Accept the identification and the remains, followed by an instruction as to where the remains would be buried at the government’s expense.
2. Express indifference, meaning the PADD wanted nothing to do with the case. The remains would then be buried at the government’s expense in a location determined by administrative decision.
3. Challenge the validity of the identification. In this case, AFIRB would either confirm the identification or remand the remains back to the laboratory that made the original identification. The expense of the reexamination would be covered by the DoD. If the laboratory confirmed the identification, then the PADD was presented once again with Options 1 or 2 (above). If the PADD wished to challenge the laboratory’s second finding, the costs relating to any further forensic testing would be the responsibility of the PADD, though the US government would pay transportation costs for the remains to and from the private laboratory selected by the PADD. During the review, the PADD would be permitted to introduce new information should any be available.



If an identification were challenged, the case would be returned to the same laboratory that made the identification being questioned. The DoD procedures for this process as shown in the flowcharts on the previous page³⁷:

The number of identifications that have been rejected or challenged is miniscule compared to the hundreds that were accepted by grateful PADDs and PNOs.

A more difficult and unsettling question concerns the possibility that in the pseudoscience era of the 1970s and 1980s, when military control of the identification process was unquestioned and before DNA analysis was available, an unknown and ultimately an unknowable number of misidentifications might have been made.

* * *

NOTES

1. *Ten Basic Points Concerning Human Remains Scenes (OR, Why the Police Need Anthropologists)*, Stephen P. Nawrocki, Ph.D., D.A.B.F.A, University of Indianapolis Archaeology & Forensic Laboratory, 1999, updated June 27, 2006, p. 1. <http://archlab.uindy.edu/documents/TenPoints.pdf>. Used with permission.
2. *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, Drew Gilpin Faust (New York: Knopf Publishers, 2008), from the preface, "The Work of Death."
3. An excellent, perhaps the best, description of the origins of the US government's commitment to recover and identify America's war dead is *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*, op. cit.
4. The War Department, which was created in 1789, was replaced by the Department of Defense (DoD) in 1947.
5. A DoD Executive Agent is a DoD Component that has been assigned specific responsibilities, functions, and authorities to provide support, services, or other designated activities to two or more DoD Components.
6. A contemporary description of DoD's mortuary affairs program is found in Department of Defense Directive 1300.22, *Mortuary Affairs Policy*, October 30, 2015. <http://www.dtic.mil/whs/directives/corres/pdf/130022p.pdf>
7. "A Curious Trade: The Recovery and Repatriation of U.S. Missing In Action from the Vietnam War," Sarah Wagner, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 2015, p. 168.

8. “Rest in Peace? Bringing Home U.S. War Dead,” Drew Lindsay, [history.net](http://www.historynet.com/rest-in-peace-bringing-home-u-s-war-dead.htm), September 18, 2012. <http://www.historynet.com/rest-in-peace-bringing-home-u-s-war-dead.htm>
9. “Rest in Peace? Bringing Home U.S. War Dead,” op. cit.
10. A US Army film of Graves Registration Service activities in WWII is found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1mmCIWQKjC4>
11. “The Unburied Dead” Estella Weiss-Krejci, in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Death and Burial*, edited by Sarah Tarlow and Liv Nilsson Stutz (Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 289.
12. House Hearing Report, December 13, 1976, p. 168.
13. *POW/MIA Affairs: Issues Related to the Identification of Human Remains From the Vietnam Conflict*, (Washington, DC: Government Accountability Office, NSIAD 93-7, October 1992), p. 58.
14. “The Unburied Dead,” op. cit., p. 289.
15. According to the Kübler-Ross model, the five states of grief are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.
16. The King of the Dead allowed Orpheus to retrieve Eurydice on the condition that Orpheus would not look at Eurydice’s face before returning to the land of the living. At the mouth of the cave, mere steps away from the surface, Orpheus turned to look at Eurydice which caused him to lose her forever.
17. In contrast to another popular myth, there is no such thing as a “positive” identification. An identification is absolute, not conditional. “Believed to be” is not a form of identification. In the US military, the term “positive identification” is used in the context of determining whether an aircraft is a friend or foe.
18. DPMO, the agency responsible for compiling the official lists of the missing, carries an identified case as missing until the PNOK accepts the identification. DPMO’s policy, which is a variation of Schrödinger’s cat, allows an American serviceman to be simultaneously identified and missing. Note that changes to this policy may have occurred after this chapter was written.
19. *POW/MIA Affairs: Issues Related to the Identification of Human Remains From the Vietnam Conflict*, op. cit., p. 56.
20. House Select Committee on Missing Persons in Southeast Asia, *The Vietnam-Era Prisoner-of-War/Missing-in-Action Database*, Final Report, December 13, 1976, pp. 209–210.
21. “Skeleton Keys: How Forensic Anthropologists Identify Victims and Solve Crimes,” Heather Walsh-Haney, *Science*, June 7, 2002. <http://www.sciencemag.org/careers/2002/06/skeleton-keys-how-forensic-anthropologists-identify-victims-and-solve-crimes>

22. House Select Committee, Final Report, December 13, 1976, op. cit., p. 170.
23. Disinterment for the purpose of identification is, at worst, grave desecration, not grave robbing. Desecration is the destruction of the grave, which is inherent to archaeological digs. Grave robbing is the act of stealing the corpse and other items of value from the grave. Opposition to the disinterment for the purpose of identification program is discussed in detail in Volume II of this book.
24. “National Cemeteries and Memorials in Global Conflict,” Edward Steere, *Quartermaster Review*, November–December 1953 (http://www.qmfound.com/national_cemeteries_and_memorials_in_global_conflict.htm). This article contains the identification rates for the US Civil War, the Spanish-American War, WWI, and WWII.
25. Due to a lack of documentation, a similar estimate of the number of Confederate dead who were not identified cannot be made with any meaningful accuracy.
26. U.S. Department of Defense (Skyhorse Publishing), December 13, 2013. The updated version of the DoD dictionary, *Joint Publication 1-02*, November 8, 2010 (as amended through June 15, 2015), does not include a definition of “missing” or “missing in action.”
27. House Select Committee, final report, December 13, 1976, op. cit., p. 240.
28. Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Vietnam.
29. House Select Committee, Final Report, December 13, 1976, op. cit., pp. 198–9.
30. House Select Committee, Final Report, December 13, 1976, op. cit., p. 233. Emphasis added.
31. The provisions of the Missing Persons Act did not apply to servicemen determined to be AWOL.
32. *The New Law On Department of Defense Personnel Missing As A Result of Hostile Action*, Major Pamela M Stahl, US Army Judge Advocate General’s Corps, A Thesis Presented to the Judge Advocate General’s School, April 1996, pp. 50–51. <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a444429.pdf>
33. House Select Committee, Final Report, December 13, 1976, op. cit., p. 168.
34. The National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2010 converted all unresolved POW and MIA cases into “missing persons.”
35. House Select Committee Hearing, Final Report, op. cit., December 13, 1976, p. 209.
36. March 14, 2008.
37. DoDI 3001.03, op. cit., p. Enclosure 5, pp. 19–20.



CHAPTER 3

Political Interference with Science

In order to understand how the remains of missing American servicemen are located, recovered, identified, and returned to the next of kin, one must have a basic grasp of forensic science. In addition, one must accept the fact that since the program's inception the practitioners of the forensic sciences in the accounting program have been required to operate under the control of scientifically illiterate leadership.

In the Accounting Community, whenever a dispute between politics and science arose, politics prevails every time. One may point to numerous incidents in which politics overruled science, yet there is not a single example of a dispute in which science has prevailed over politics. Imagine if the opposite were true. Imagine the public's reaction if the Defense Forensic Enterprise were put in charge of the DoD's chaplain program, or the apoplectic, all-consuming outrage that would ensue if the National Council of Churches were placed under the jurisdiction of the National Science Foundation.

These examples are products of *reductio ad absurdum*, yet whenever the *forensic science* of human skeletal identification required to account for missing American servicemen was subjected to *political control*, not one member of Congress has ever registered a complaint or made the slightest objection of any kind. In fact, the opposite has been the case. Members of Congress and senior DoD officials openly supported the political control of forensic science. Whenever a paid lobbyist and a union organizer put pressure on the

DoD to allow them to determine the leadership of the CIL and direct the laboratory's scientific operations, the Secretary of Defense consistently supported those efforts.

In the United States, politics and policy control of the science of the DoD's human skeletal identification program is a continuation of a pattern of interference that began in the earliest days of the nation's colonial past and continues to this day.

POLITICAL INTERFERENCE WITH SCIENCE IN AMERICAN HISTORY

Interference with science, regardless of its secular or religious motivation, has been a standard feature of human conduct for centuries. In 1600, 33 years before the intimidation of Galileo, Friar Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake for expressing the counter-Ptolemaic belief that the sun, not the earth, lay at the center of the solar system. The number of incidents of political, religious, and ideological interference with science that occurred after the watershed event in 1633 when the Catholic Inquisition showed Galileo the instruments in order to compel him to recant his heretical telescopic observations is far too long to recount. The point is twofold: First, the effort to exert political or ideological control over science reaches as far back into the mists of time as one is able to see. Second, political and ideological control over science is inextricably intertwined with US history.

The political control of science flourished across the political spectrum. Three centuries after the trial of Galileo, a group of scientifically illiterates in the Soviet Union was led by Trofim Denisovich Lysenko, who was described by his contemporary, the Columbia University and University of California Davis Professor Theodosius Dobzhansky, as being an "old moron and madman at the same time."¹ Lysenko and his gaggle of rank amateurs were promoted by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) into positions of authority where science was subordinate to politics. These heroic proletarians convinced Stalin that genetics was a bourgeois science, promoted by western "saboteurs." The study of genetics became a political offense in the USSR, a place where political offenses were often a one-way ticket to the gulag. "Deviation" was a crime punishable by loss of a job, exile to Siberia, a single pistol shot to the back of the

neck, or all of the above. Consistent with the CPSU's post-WWII campaign of anti-intellectualism and anti-cosmopolitanism, the spark set by Lysenko soon raged out of control. The anti-science wildfire within the Soviet Union, started by the "old moron and madman," burned furiously for over four decades (Fig. 3.1).

"Lysenkoism" became synonymous with politically-sanctioned pseudo-science regardless of the country where it occurred.

Communists held no monopoly over the ideological control of science. In the 1930s the German Nazis wrote off Einstein's theories as "Jewish science." Italy's fascist government either murdered or drove into exile some of the world's leading figures in theoretical mathematics and physics, most notably Enrico Fermi.

Political, religious, and ideological interference in science, which is neither a rare nor isolated event in the United States, is a recurring theme throughout American history. A brief history of political interference in science in the United States helps explain why one should not be surprised by the appearance of the same phenomenon in the accounting program.

Fig. 3.1 Trofim Denisovich Lysenko (Photo: Public Domain)



In the seventeenth century, secular judges in Salem, Massachusetts, concluded that demonically inspired witches walked among the pious members of the community. The Salem witches were convicted in a secular court of law on the basis of “spectral evidence” that included descriptions of dreams and visions. By the spring of 1693, 19 witches had been hanged while several others perished in custody. In good Biblical fashion Giles Corey was stoned to death because he refused to enter a plea. Secular society was in the firm grasp of religion.

In the eighteenth century during the Age of Enlightenment, between 1740 and 1790 a wave of religious revival known as the Great Awakening swept through the colonies. Religion influenced every significant aspect of colonial life. The immensely influential colonial preacher Cotton Mather, who concluded that it was not unreasonable to think that angels caused the *aurora borealis* (northern lights), was known to spend his evenings peering at misshapen vegetables in an attempt to predict the future. Horoscopes, palmistry, and metoposcopy, the art of telling a person’s personality and fate by considering the lines on the forehead, abounded. No scientist was immune from religious criticism. Benjamin Franklin’s experiments with electricity were condemned by religious figures due to the belief that lightning was a sign of God’s anger; thus it was impious to use lightning rods to send the electrical charge into the ground.

In the nineteenth century, the authority of the Bible was frequently used by Americans to justify the “peculiar institution” of slavery. Christians who believed that the descendants of Ham and Canaan were Africans concluded that dark-skinned humans were destined by God to be the “servants of servants.” God revealed to the Mormons that black people were descendants of Cain who had been marked by God to be reviled and enslaved. Leviticus 25:44–46, which was even better than the Curse of Canaan as a justification for slavery, fulfilled every Christian slaveholder’s wish list:

44. Your male and female slaves are to come from the nations around you; from them you may buy slaves. 45. You may also buy some of the temporary residents living among you and members of their clans born in your country, and they will become your property. 46. You can bequeath them to your children as inherited property and can make them slaves for life, but you must not rule over your fellow Israelites ruthlessly.

Eugenics, the “science” of racial superiority, went hand in hand with the religious justification for slavery in America as well.

In the twentieth century, according to a 1926 speech by Edwin Linton, the vice president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science's (AAAS) zoology section, a wave of anti-science sentiment was sweeping the United States. Linton, who described himself as a "religionist," nonetheless:

[C]haracterized the leading opponents of science as antisocial eccentrics, citing as an example the anti-vaccinationists, who opposed smallpox vaccinations. In the face of clear evidence of a reduction in the illness, they remained unconvinced because they were in-convincible.²

The religiously inspired anti-science faction acted as America's Inquisitors whose objective was to exert legislative control over teaching. Three-time Democratic Party presidential nominee William Jennings Bryan's campaign called out theory of evolution, which Bryan claimed was "causing moral decay in the nation's youth by undermining the authority of the Bible."³ The Scopes "Monkey Trial" (1925) in Dayton, Tennessee, provoked an epic test to determine whether religion expressed through secular legislation should be allowed to govern science. Judge John T. Raulston, the magistrate who presided over the Scopes Trial:

[A]rgued that there was no justification for accusing Tennesseans of being yokels or ignoramuses, but that if learning would cause loss of faith, they would be better left in a state of ignorance.⁴

Richard Hofstadter summed up the damage the Monkey Trial inflicted on the US national interest in the following way:

The evolution controversy and the Scopes trial greatly quickened the pulse of anti-intellectualism. For the first time in the twentieth century, intellectuals and experts were denounced as enemies by leaders of a large segment of the public.⁵

Darwin's concept was treated, not as the "theory" or the "science" of evolution but as the "politics of evolution."⁶ The title of Maynard Shipley's classic study released in 1927 revealed everything one needed to know about the political dominance of science in the United States: *The War On Modern Science: A Short History Of The Fundamentalist Attacks On Evolution And Modernism*.⁷ Clarence Darrow's review of Shipley's masterpiece stated:

That such an onslaught against science could made headway in the twentieth century shows how completely an active, aggressive and ignorant body, when organized and moved by fanaticism, can influence the world.⁸

Taking advantage of the opportunity to use the political process to impose religious ideology over science, the Christian Scientists demanded that all references to antibiotics be removed from school texts and that cancer be described not as destruction of tissue but as something called “an error.”

Only intellectuals are concerned about anti-intellectualism, until something bad happens. In the United States in the 1950s, many people were more concerned about a specialist’s politics and loyalty than his knowledge until Sputnik demonstrated that anti-intellectualism was, in fact, a threat to US national security. Despite the fact that Pope Pius XII rejected the “Biblical literalism” of creation, Bible-based attacks on science in general and biology in particular flourished throughout the 1950s.

In the 1960s, a movement demanding that creationism be taught in public schools surfaced in several states, motivated by organizations such as the Institute for Creation Research. Between 1960 and the 1980s, court after court rejected the forced teaching of creationism as a violation of the separation of church and state. Creationism was a form of religious teaching, the courts found. Not to be outdone, creationist thinking evolved into something called “intelligent design,” which was simply a creationist wolf wearing a scientific sheepskin. By the late 1990s, less than half of the US population accepted evolution as a fact, which was the lowest acceptance rate of evolution in the industrialized world.

No discussion of interference with science in twentieth-century America would be complete without including the ideologically motivated opposition to the introduction of fluoride into drinking water. Fluoridation was condemned as a communist plot to undermine the health of Americans. As shown in the following leaflet, opposition to a scientific proposition was framed in political terms (Fig. 3.2).

During the 1970s, opposition to science was so widespread that one scholar referred to it as a “movement.”⁹ Skepticism of nuclear power was expressed in popular culture through films such as *The China Syndrome*. The 1970s were also characterized by a critique, mainly from the left, that science had a de-humanizing effect on the world, as if the purpose of science was to invent jobs that were boring, dangerous, and repetitive.

At the Sign of THE UNHOLY THREE

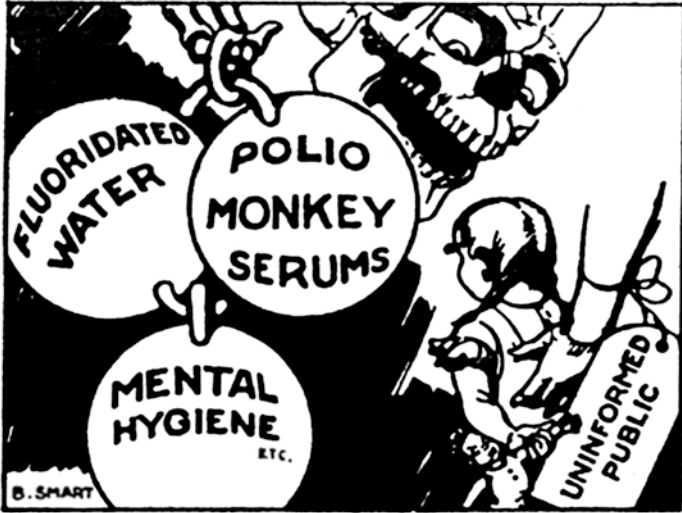


Fig. 3.2 Keep America Foundation leaflet (1955) (Source: Public Domain)

In the 1980s, President Reagan led the conservative backlash against the environmental movement. The backlash, however, was not always based on science or empirical evidence. Mr. James Watt, Reagan’s secretary of the interior, “called the environmental movement a ‘left-wing cult’ and said his job was to ‘follow the Scriptures, which call upon us to occupy the land until Jesus returns.’”¹⁰

The Union of Concerned Scientists collated a list over 100 examples of “interference, suppression of facts, muzzling of scientists, the well-traveled ‘revolving door’ between industry and public service, and the stacking of scientific advisory boards” that occurred in the twenty-first century.¹¹

Who needs to argue whether “phyletic gradualism” was more accurate than “periods of stasis punctuated by geologically brief spurts of speciation,” when all it takes, according to Congressman Paul Broun (R-GA) in 2012, is to condemn evolution and the big bang theory as “lies straight from the pit of hell”? Representative Broun, a medical doctor, concluded,

“It’s lies to try to keep me and all the folks who were taught that from understanding that they need a savior.” This outburst could have been excused as the ravings of a crazed sterno bum wandering through the subway system were it not for the fact that Congressman Broun was a high-ranking member of the House Science Committee. Broun was reelected in 2012 with over 200,000 votes. In contrast a write-in candidate, a certain Mr. Charles Darwin, received around 4000 votes.

In the United States, religion and secular ideology alike have deeply corroded basic research into syphilis, evolution, climate change, stem cell research, and other issues concerning the nature of the physical universe. “Intelligent design,” the illegitimate spawn of astrology and first cousin of creationism, has become the modern alchemy. For the contemporary alchemists, the nature of the physical universe is not determined by falsifiable research; rather, it is a mystery embedded in ancient texts that must be deciphered or decoded. Disputes over evidence are resolved by which opinion is able to shout down the other alternatives.

In light of the American public’s uneven history with science, it is easier to understand how political control of the science of human skeletal identification, which became a fact of life in the accounting program, was achieved with remarkable ease.

* * *

“PENCIL WHIPPING” AND “ETHICAL FADING”

Ideological control of science has been part of America’s history since the earliest days of the colonial era. Amendment 1 to the US Constitution has been invoked repeatedly to allow Christian Scientist parents to subject a child to a long, agonizing death that could have been avoided easily through the administration of antibiotics. Of America’s 50 states, 47 allow parents to “opt out” of vaccinating their children on religious grounds or based on nothing more than “philosophical exemptions for those who object to immunization because of personal, moral or other beliefs.”¹² In other words, all of the work of Dr. Jonas Salk that resulted in an effective polio vaccine could be overturned, but not with competing evidence or laboratory trials. In the United States, any scientific finding, regardless of its importance for public safety and health, may be overturned by four little words, “I don’t believe it.”

In light of the vulnerability of science in America to ideologically motivated interference, it should come as no surprise that the science of human skeletal identification was subjected to political control. The greater astonishment would have resulted if forensic science had somehow been exempted from political meddling. Political control, however, means little without the muscle to enforce it, otherwise known as an “implementation plan.”

Political control of science was achieved in totalitarian states such as Stalin’s Russia, Ceaușescu’s Romania, or the early years of the PRC under Mao, through arrest, imprisonment, and murder. In the United States, the process was much more benign. The extraordinary thing was that political control of science was achieved with remarkably little effort or fanfare. The problem was not that members of the anti-science lobby started pounding on the gates of the CIL. Instead, the problem was that the scientifically illiterates who were in positions of authority within the accounting program, the same people responsible for protecting the integrity of the identification process, pre-emptively surrendered.

In totalitarian states, the administrative power to keep science under political control flowed from the barrel of a gun. In the United States, the problem was solved by subjecting all of the civilian scientists and staff members of the CIL to the military chain of command. In the Soviet Union, scientists were forced to report to an “old moron and madman” such as Comrade Lysenko. In the United States, scientists were forced to report to someone civilians were required to refer to as “commander.” In the accounting program, a PhD, board-certified forensic anthropologist was compelled to defer to a “commander” who might be a major trained in the art of canned fruit inventory management, a two-star general whose previous assignment had been to provide liaison services in conflicted inter-agency administrative settings, or a general officer brought out of retirement whose job was “to bring the CIL down a notch.”

A significant problem with this arrangement was that the military officers who were suddenly placed in command of a forensic science laboratory staffed by civilians was that the officers brought with them a culture of dishonesty and deceit that was comprehensibly incompatible with the scientific method. The only way political control could be applied by the military was to ensure that the corporate culture of the accounting program would be based on dishonesty, deceit, and “ethical fading.”

Bernard Brodie, one of America's greatest analysts of national security, expressed concern over what he identified as the US military's "consistent and endless distortion of events on the side of optimism."¹³ In contemporary US military jargon, the "endless distortion of events" is referred to as "pencil whipping." The Army War College study concluded:

Sadly, much of the deception that occurs in the profession of arms is encouraged and sanctioned by the military institution as subordinates are forced to prioritize which requirements will actually be done to standard and which will only be reported as done to standard. As a result, untruthfulness is surprisingly common in the U.S. military though members of the profession are loath to admit it. [...]

The Army profession rests upon a bedrock of trust. This monograph attempts to bolster that trust by calling attention to the deleterious culture the Army has inadvertently created.

[I]t is this duplicity that allows leaders to "feed the beast" bogus information while maintaining a self-identity of someone who does not lie, cheat, or steal.¹⁴

Constant exposure to a corporate culture in which dishonesty and deceit was considered to be normal resulted in "ethical fading" which enabled "individuals to convince themselves that their honor and integrity are intact despite ethical compromise."¹⁵ An Army War College study described how deeply "ethical fading" affected the Army's corporate culture.

[M]ost U.S. Army officers routinely lie. [...]

"White" lies and "innocent" mistruths have become so commonplace in the U.S. Army that there is often no ethical angst, no deep soul-searching, and no righteous outrage when examples of routine dishonesty are encountered. Mutually agreed deception exists in the Army because many decisions to lie, cheat, or steal are simply no longer viewed as ethical choices. [...]

Ethical fading allows Army officers to transform morally wrong behavior into socially acceptable conduct by dimming the glare and guilt of the ethical spotlight.

One factor that encourages ethical fading in the Army is the use of euphemisms and obscure phrases to disguise the ethical principles involved in decisions. Phrases such as **checking the box** and **giving them what they want** abound and focus attention on the Army's annoying administrative demands rather than dwelling on the implications of dishonesty in official reports. [...]

Ethical fading is also influenced by the psychological distance from an individual to the actual point of dishonesty or deception. Lying, cheating, and stealing become easier to choose when there are more steps between an officer and the dishonest act – the greater the distance, the greater the chance for ethical fading.

Two other rationalizations are often used as justifications for dishonesty – mission accomplishment and supporting the troops. With these rationalizations, the use of deceit or submitting inaccurate information is viewed as an altruistic gesture carried out to benefit a unit or its soldiers.

Disregarding the pervasive dishonesty throughout the Army leads to the eventual conclusion that nothing and no one can be trusted.¹⁶

Political control of a human skeletal identification laboratory administered by an organization predicated on the need to squash the slightest sign of independence or deviation from the chain of command that tolerated and even encouraged a culture of dishonesty and deceit was a toxic amalgam of note.

Those who objected to “pencil whipping” or refused to play along with “ethical fading” did so at their own peril. A corporate culture in which “pencil whipping,” “ethical fading,” dishonesty, and deceit were commonplace and mutually accepted functioned as long as everyone involved was complicit.

The CIL staff refused to play along. Instead of answering to political authority represented through the military commander of the CIL, the CIL management and staff answered to a higher authority: the integrity of the scientific method and the ethical standards of forensic science all of which was included in a Standard Operating Procedure.

The bylaws of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences state:

Article II. CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT

SECTION 1 - THE CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT: As a means to promote the highest quality of professional and personal conduct of its members and affiliates, the following constitutes the Code of Ethics and Conduct which is endorsed by all members and affiliates of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences:

- (a) Every member and affiliate of the Academy shall refrain from exercising professional or personal conduct adverse to the best interests and objectives of the Academy.

- (b) No member or affiliate of the Academy shall materially misrepresent his or her education, training, experience, area of expertise, or membership status within the Academy.
- (c) No member or affiliate of the Academy shall materially misrepresent data or scientific principles upon which his or her conclusion or professional opinion is based.¹⁷

The Code of Ethics of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists states:

III. Research

In both proposing and carrying out research, anthropological researchers must be open about the purpose(s), potential impacts, and source(s) of support for research projects with funders, colleagues, persons studied or providing information, and with relevant parties affected by the research. [...] Research fulfilling these expectations is ethical, regardless of the source of funding (public or private) or purpose (i.e., “applied,” “basic,” “pure,” or “proprietary”).

Anthropological researchers should be alert to the danger of compromising anthropological ethics as a condition to engage in research, yet also be alert to proper demands of good citizenship or host-guest relations. [...] Similar principles hold for anthropological researchers employed or otherwise affiliated with non-anthropological institutions, public institutions, or private enterprises.¹⁸

The “Code of Ethics and Conduct” of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology, Inc., states that Diplomates of the American Board of Forensic Anthropology (ABFA) shall:

- Refrain from exercising professional or personal conduct adverse to the best interests and purposes of the ABFA.
- Refrain from providing any material misrepresentation of data upon which an expert opinion or conclusion is based. Diplomates shall render opinions and conclusions strictly in accordance with the evidence in the case (hypothetical or real) and only to the extent justified by the evidence.
- Act at all times in a completely impartial manner by employing scientific methodology to reach logical, unbiased conclusions and by reporting all findings in a clear, concise manner.¹⁹

None of these codes of professional conduct require forensic or physical anthropologists to compromise scientific integrity to conform with political conditions or expectations. Forensic anthropologists who violated these codes of ethics would be exposed to discipline, including decertification, by their peers.

The autonomy of the CIL was protected, in part, by the fact that the position of scientific director was filled by a civilian who could say no to a military commander's order to engage in "pencil whipping" or "ethical fading." A civilian scientific director could say no at the risk of receiving a negative annual performance review. By filling the scientific director billet with an active duty officer, the only barrier between ethical forensic science and the Army's culture of dishonesty and deceit would be breached.

The science of human skeletal identification could be achieved by replacing the civilian scientific director with a military officer who would be subject to the military chain of command and also would have a line authority over the scientists.

A second way to undermine the independence and integrity of the CIL would be to create a parallel organization staffed with scientists who for various reasons were prepared to comply with political directives. It didn't matter whether the scientists were marginal employees, people who had committed ethical violations, or people who lacked any scientific training of any kind. In America, where scientific expertise was given the same status as personal opinion, it was not difficult to find people willing to apply their negligible scientific capabilities in the service of "pencil whipping."

* * *

There was no objective reason why the practitioners of the science of human skeletal identification should have been spared the effects of the scientifically illiterate policy wonks who exerted control over the accounting program. From its beginnings in the post-WWII era, the accounting program operated in obscurity in which the national command authorities were either indifferent, ignored, or openly opposed the science of the matter. As late as 1992, the US Army controlled the priorities, conduct, and scientific conclusions of the CIL. By then, however, the problem was not the junk science and dubious methods that had been eliminated by the CIL scientific staff with the assistance of external consultants. Instead, the concern was political. The GAO stated in 1992:

We are concerned with the apparent lack of authority possessed by the laboratory director at CILHI.²⁰

Civilian control of the military is fundamental to democracy in America. Military control of the science of human skeletal identification, however, was bad for science as well as detrimental for democracy. Subjecting the laboratory director to the military chain of command served no legitimate scientific purpose, which was exactly the point. Whenever scientists chafed at political control, the military was there through the chain of command to issue a gag order, to intimidate through the threat of an unfavorable annual performance review, or simply to order the scientists to conform.

Under the Army's control a military officer, not an archaeologist or anthropologist, had the authority to conclude that a recovery site should be closed, whether remains were present or not. The military chain of command had the authority to overturn an identification that had been produced by forensic scientists, confirmed by the scientific director and reviewed by three external consulting scientists.

This arrangement was nothing new in the 1990's. The Army's control of science of human skeletal identification had been in place since the 1940's.

ARMY INTERFERED WITH FORENSIC SCIENCE

The battle between the scientific integrity of human skeletal identification and the pressure exerted by the military, politicians, and lobbyists to "produce identifications" is a matter of record. The narrative of the resistance to the pressure exerted by the US military on the scientific staff to haphazardly identify the victims of the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, who had been designated as "unknown," is the story of the courage and competence of one woman.

Dr. Mildred Trotter (1899–1991), a noted anatomist and anthropologist, received her doctorate in anatomy from the Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1924.²¹ In 1946, Dr. Trotter was promoted to professor of Gross Anatomy, "becoming the first woman to hold that rank at the University of Washington University School of Medicine (Fig. 3.3)."

In 1947, the CIL of the American Graves Registration Service (AGRS) was established at the Schofield Barracks at Wahiawa on Oahu, Hawaii. Dr. Charles Snow, a professor of Physical Anthropology at the University



Fig. 3.3 Dr. Mildred Trotter (Photo: Washington University St. Louis)

of Kentucky, served as the laboratory anthropologist from 1947 to 1948. This was the first time that a physical anthropologist had been assigned to a permanent position in the US military's identification process.

Following Dr. Snow's departure, in 1948–1949 Dr. Trotter took a leave of absence from the Washington University to serve as the chief anthropologist at the Hawaii laboratory.²² “Though her primary responsibility was to use her expertise to identify the skeletal remains of war dead in the Pacific Zone, Trotter also undertook research to study the skeletal remains of known war dead. Her aim was to improve stature estimates made for Americans from the lengths of long limb bones – the research resulted in new formulas for the estimation of stature that are

still used today in forensic medicine.” Dr. Trotter also served as an anthropologist at the American Cemetery located at Fort McKinley in the Philippines in 1951.

The CIL was located in Mausoleum 2 at the Schofield Barracks. Dr. Trotter produced a report on the Hawaii CIL’s operations that contained a detailed description of the procedures used to identify America’s war dead. In addition, she described the “anthropological examination” that produced a record of the physical data for each set of remains that had been determined to be “unidentified.” By 1949, Dr. Trotter and her team had identified approximately 7000 individuals. Those who could not be identified were first designated as “unknowns” and then ultimately buried in the NMCP, aka the “Punchbowl” in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Dr. Trotter’s report documented the detailed examination of unknown remains that produced the empirical record that is still in use today. Dr. Trotter wrote:

More than 99% of the remains which are brought to the C.I.L. are skeletal. In general, it may be said that they come under three categories: a single burial, a small group burial (2 – 15) and a large group burial. (The largest at C.I.L. has been 434 which were recoverable remains from 2 common graves on the Island of Formosa)

First, I shall describe what is involved in processing a single burial. The unknown is assigned to a pair of embalmers who lay the remains out on a sheet-covered table, the bones in anatomical arrangement. It may be necessary to brush the bones or sometimes even to wash them in order that definite criteria may be seen. At no time, however, are any soft parts, which might remain on the bones, removed. If the bones are broken, pieces are matched and held together with scotch tape, if possible. The remaining contents of the temporary casket are carefully examined (often fluoroscoped) for missing teeth, personal effects, I.D. tags, etc. The embalmers have been trained by the anthropologist, who is the roving consultant in the laboratory. (I haven’t been able to get away from the student-teacher relationship.)

The bones are examined for evidence of healed fractures, mastoidectomy, pathology (arthritic lipping of vertebrae and of long bones), variations, such as torus palatinus, supracondyloid process, retroverted tibial heads, saber-shaped tibiae, third trochanter of the femur, squatting facets, wormian or sutural bones of the skull, perforation of olecranon fossa of sternum, etc.

The bones are then appraised for race: Pure racial strains are relatively easy and the skull gives the best evidence. Where the race is not pure, the various characters must be weighed.

The Negro has a very long, narrow cranium with a markedly sloping forehead and a low vault in contrast to the Mongoloid with a rounded outline, erect forehead and rather high vault. The pattern of the sutures gives a clue – the more tortuous suggesting White and the relatively simple Mongoloid or Negroid. The White skull is probably the most variable but stands between the two extremes. The browridges are best marked on the White skull. The nasal opening is wide and its lower margin “troughed” or “guttered” in the Negroid, narrow and dull and somewhat guttered in the Mongoloid, and sharp in the White. Prognathism or protrusion of the mouth parts, which are large with a receding chin indicates a Negro, whereas large but relatively straight mouth parts and chin are Mongoloid and for the White, the mouth parts are smaller, frequently with a pinched effect and with a protruding chin. The palate is indicative of race because of size and height. The teeth also show racial characteristics; large and complete sets with little sign of caries indicate the Negroid, large and rather square showing extreme wear, the Mongoloid – and in both, but more often in Mongoloid, the lingual surface of the incisors may be shovel-shaped, i.e., there is a ridge or piling up around a concavity on the lingual surface which if the tooth were held in the horizontal position is sufficiently marked to hold a drop or two of water. The general impression of a Mongoloid skull is large, smooth and rounded; of a Negroid, massive, smooth, elongate and a somewhat constricted oval, and of the White, any combination of these characters but, in general, somewhat rugged, i.e., better marked browridges, areas of muscle attachments, larger mastoid processes and external occipital protuberance, etc.

Certain characteristics of the post-cranial skeleton may be looked for in settling the question of race, although not many characters have been studied for all three races: the length of the tibia in relation to femur is greater in the Negro than White, likewise the radius to the humerus, and the upper limbs to the lower limbs. The lateral third of the clavicle is flatter and smoother in the Negro than White (based on work done by Dr. R. J. Terry). Often there are present on the tibia and talus of the Mongoloid “squatting” facets, less often in the Negroid and only rarely in the White.

Although I have not seen a record of it, I have been impressed with the fact that the distal extremity (or 1/3) of the shaft of the humerus bows somewhat anteriorly; the cubital area is neither concave nor straight but rather convex. This may be seen in the living.

Sex differentiation is not too difficult and almost never needed. Since I have been at Schofield, no female remains has been brought to the laboratory. The characteristics of the pelvis are (according to Dr. W.M. Krogman) 98% accurate. The true pelvis of the female is not only relatively but actually broader than the male, the subpubic angle more rounded, the greater sciatic notch, rounded and shallow, whereas in the male it is deep and narrow. The sacrum, the symphysis, the iliac wings, etc. all have sex characters. In addition, the bones of the entire skeleton of the female are smaller and smoother with less well-marked muscle attachment areas, and almost no browridges.

Age:

The older the individual the more difficult it becomes to determine age from the skeleton. The age distribution of those in military service was as follows: 10% between 18 and 20 years, 60% were between 20 and 30 years, 27% between 30 and 40 years and only 3% over 40 years of age. Un-united epiphyses constitute the best guide up to the early or middle twenties. The proximal epiphysis of the humerus is the last one of the long bones to unite and may be expected to be tight at 20-1/2 years. The clavicular epiphysis at the medial extremity may become tight anywhere from 25 to 28 years.

The speno-occipital synchondrosis has become a synostosis by 20 years of age. Suture closure begins at 22 years in the sagittal suture in the region of the parietal foramina; in another two years at the lower portions of the coronal suture and shortly thereafter in the lambdoid. During the late twenties closure progresses rapidly and then slows up so that by the late thirties or early forties it is complete. In the progressive stage the degree of closure ecto- and endo-cranially may not agree. It is believed that the evidence on the endocranial surface is more accurate, so we therefore make the examination with the aid of a little flashlight through the foramen magnum.

The topography of the symphyseal surface of the Pubic bone has been studied very carefully from the standpoint of age by the late T. Wingate Todd of Western Reserve. The margins become well demarcated by the late twenties and the articular surface quite flat by the early thirties, following which there is a roughening of a less defined pattern than in the early twenties.

Stature estimates:

The height estimate is derived from either tables or formulae in conjunction with the length of the long bones. In 1888, Rollet, a Frenchman, made the original tables based on measurements of 100 of his countrymen, 50 men

and 50 women. Later, re-evaluations of Rollet's original measurements were presented by Monauvriier and by Pearson. The only other work on this subject available to us was done by Breitingger in 1938 on Scandinavians and Krogman has suggested that possibly Breitingger's formulae will give greater accuracy for tall Americans.

The variations in results of these four methods applied to a given individual may be as much as five inches. It is hoped that measurements of long bones of known remains may be accumulated in sufficient quantity for study and that better methods of height estimates of Americans may be secured. Because of the many different stocks in our country producing both extremes and all gradations between in stature such a study would require availability of the physical data records taken at the time of induction into the service of the man whose identified remains have been measured.

Weight:

The estimated weight of the individual is taken from tables set up by Dr. Helen Pryor of California in conjunction with height, age and greatest width between the outer borders of the iliac crests. The spread for a given set of criteria is approximately 20 lbs.

Group Burials:


The approach to the segregation of individuals whose remains have become intermingled due, for example, to the type of accident at the time of death (plane crash), is first, a survey of bones present. In most cases certain bones, especially some vertebrae, are missing so that a continuous skeletal arrangement can not be set up. First, duplication of bones is looked for in order to determine the number of individuals represented. (I recall one case in which it was said that the partial remains of five men were present. Examination produced nine left talus bones). Then the bones are separated according to articulation, size, color, morphology and/or texture. When there are several individuals who are approximately the same age it is difficult to know how to associate the skull with the post-cranial remains, particularly, if the vertebral column is not complete. But, if "Form 371" is available which is a record of the dental chart, the dates of birth and death, and the height and weight at the time of induction the remains can usually be segregated with security.

Our report for an individual is submitted on a standard form consisting of four pages. On page one are given pertinent data of the cemetery; a summary of the race, age, weight, height and color of hair; a description of any official identification found with the remains; whether the body was burned or mangled; evidence of healed fractures and bone malformations, and a list of clothing and other personal effects in as much detail as possible.

On page two is the dental chart on which are indicated locations of teeth missing after death, teeth extracted before death, drift as the result of an adjacent extraction, cavities, and type of extent of fillings.

On page three is an outline of the skeleton on which the parts missing from the remains are blacked out; a brief description of the probable appearance of the man; the estimated height according to three authorities and a note concerning the fluoroscopic examination and tooth chart.

19. BLACK OUT PARTS OF BODY NOT RECOVERED



20. MASS BURIAL CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE)
(Wherein segregation in whole or parts is impossible)

I CERTIFY THAT THE GROUP REMAINS CONSIST OF PARTS OF _____ DECEDENTS BASED ON THE PRESENCE OF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ANATOMICAL PARTS: _____ NUMBER

No extra parts.

/s/ Paul L. Cravenor
Paul L. Cravenor SIGNATURE OF MEDICAL OFFICER Lab Supervisor

21. REMARKS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Picture a medium height, fairly muscular man of 24 to 26 years of age. The skull is small in size and a broad oval in outline. The backhead is moderately projecting and has a small external protuberance. The forehead is relatively broad. The browridge glabella region is large. The facial proportions are fairly narrow with the sides rather flat. The nose was rather long and narrow. The mouth parts project with some alveolar prognathism. The chin is deep, narrow, pointed and has a bilateral eminence. The palate is high and average in size.

Fluoroscopical examination unnecessary. Teeth charted.

On page four is the bone list which corresponds with the skeleton outline picture, and, in addition, are recorded the measurements of the individual bones.

These papers are prepared in triplicate, of which two are sent to a Board of Review who studies them with the purpose of matching the record with the data known of the individual. In addition to the physical data there are usually available both cemetery and casualty listings and flight listings (missing air crew reports) of the number and names in a particular tank crew. If the two lists of physical evidence are sufficiently uniform, the papers are sent on to Washington for scrutiny by another Board of Review before the identification is considered to be certain.

Dr. Trotter's methods, some of which have been overtaken by advances in forensic anthropology over the past 70 years, nonetheless reveal a dedication to science as it was understood at the time. The inventory of the physical characteristics of the unknowns created by Dr. Trotter and her colleagues in the late 1940s created a vital source of forensic factual information used by the CIL a half-century later to motivate the exhumation of WWII unknowns for the purpose of identification. A similar set of records created by the CIL in Kokura, Japan, provided the forensic factual foundation that contributed to the exhumation of Korean War unknowns for the purpose of identification.

Public records²³ showed that over 20 of the USS *Oklahoma* missing buried as unknowns in the Punchbowl cemetery in Hawaii were identified in the 1940s, using dental comparison. The problem is, only the cranium was identified. The post-cranial parts (everything neck down) were too intensively commingled to be matched with the corresponding cranium.²⁴ The post-cranial parts are so intensively commingled that unless all of the USS *Oklahoma* missing are exhumed and treated as a single collection, it would be impossible to reassemble the entire skeleton. One individual may be distributed throughout all of the caskets containing the remains of the USS *Oklahoma* missing (Fig. 3.4).

The CIL staff, including Dr. Trotter, reported to two Army supervisors, one major and one captain, neither of whom was a forensic scientist of any kind.

Dr. Trotter's AQQ supervisors instructed her to associate random bones with skulls that had been identified through forensic odontology (dental comparison). After the remains were cobbled together, the Army proposed to present the skeletons that had been combined together out of random parts to the families, as if all of the parts were those of the individual represented by the skull. Dr. Trotter refused to sign off on the proposed



Fig. 3.4 Remains of the USS Oklahoma missing, CIL, Schofield Barracks, Oahu (Photo: Washington University of St. Louis)

identifications on the grounds that the remains were “arbitrary assemblages.”²⁵ The Army’s reaction was to try to fire Dr. Trotter so that the Army could replace her with someone who would sign off on the identification of the arbitrary assemblages. The Army’s effort was unsuccessful.

The Army’s solution was to re-bury the identified skulls along with all of the post-cranial remains, marked as “unknown.”

Once all of the Pearl Harbor unknowns were buried, along with over two dozen skulls that had been identified, the CILHI was closed in 1949. The lab re-emerged as the CIL-THAI in 1973. After the end of the Vietnam War, CIL-THAI was moved to Hawaii in 1976, re-designated CIL-HI, and given an expanded mission to account for missing servicemen from all of America’s historic conflicts.

An important thread that links all of the various incarnations of the CIL is that until 2003, the CIL was under the control of the Department of the Army through the Office of the AQG acting as DoD’s “Executive Agent” for mortuary affairs. The laboratory’s name, when it was established in Hawaii in 1976, was the “US Army Central Identification

Laboratory.” In this arrangement, even the laboratory’s scientific director reported to an Army officer who had no subject matter expertise in the science of human skeletal identification.

The corrupting influence of military control of the science of human skeletal identification, which resulted in the pressure to produce “arbitrary assemblages” that ended with the burial of skulls that had been identified, would re-emerge in the 1970s, 1980s and in 2014.

* * *

JUNK SCIENCE, PSEUDOSCIENCE, AND MILITARY CONTROL

The basis of science and the scientific method is prediction, falsifiability, and replication. Falsifiability is the line of demarcation that separates science from everything else. An example of science is the field of physics. Einstein’s general theory of relativity could be tested and falsified. Freud’s theories of the subconscious could not be falsified. Forensic anthropology is the analysis of human remains for the medicolegal purpose of establishing identity. Traditionally, the forensic anthropologist has dealt exclusively with human skeletal remains.

Junk science includes claims that are based on a combination of the following: absence of an open-source description of the method, false or missing data, selective data that only support the findings, failure to cite references, and lack of peer review. Examples of junk science include phrenology, palmistry, and homeopathy. In short, junk science is faulty data and analysis, posing as scientific data and analysis, used to advance special interests and hidden agendas.

Pseudoscience is a set of theories or assertions concerning the natural world that appear to be scientific but, in fact, are not. Pseudoscience seeks confirmation, while science seeks falsification. Pseudoscience, which may or may not be associated with a deliberate attempt to deceive, causes other forms of damage to science. As Michael Shermer noted:

I call creationism “pseudoscience” not because its proponents are doing bad science—they are not doing science at all—but because they threaten science education in America, they breach the wall separating church and state, and they confuse the public about the nature of evolutionary theory and how science is conducted. [...]

[D]oes the revolutionary new idea generate any interest on the part of working scientists for adoption in their research programs, produce any new lines of research, lead to any new discoveries, or influence any existing hypotheses, models, paradigms or worldviews? If not, chances are it is pseudoscience.²⁶

Astronomy is a science. Astrology is pseudoscience. Other examples of pseudoscience include dowsing, numerology, psychoanalysis, and cryptozoology (i.e. the search for bigfoot).

* * *

In the 1970s and 1980s, a method that was indistinguishable from junk science that may have been pseudoscience was used routinely in the identification process at the CILHI.

The trail of that junk science led from the battlefields in Korea, Vietnam, and Laos, through CILHI, from there to the White House, then all the way to the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery.

From the 1950s to the 1970s, Mr. Tadao Furue, a Japanese citizen, worked for the Army's Central Identification Unit (CIU) that had been established during the Korean War in 1951 in Kokura, Japan. (The Kokura CIU was closed by the Army in 1956.) In 1977, Mr. Furue and his family immigrated to Hawaii where Mr. Furue became an anthropologist at the CILHI that had opened in 1976.

Mr. Furue, who claimed to have a master's degree from a Japanese university that in his opinion was the equivalent of a PhD from an American university, did not object when he was referred to as Dr. Furue. According to people who knew him, however, Mr. Furue was largely an autodidact. Despite the fact that he had "no formal schooling"²⁷ in anthropology, Mr. Furue eventually became the CILHI's chief physical anthropologist.

Mr. Furue was described by people who met and worked with him as a dedicated professional who often toiled in near isolation in Hawaii thousands of miles from the US mainland or Asia. In the ill-equipped and understaffed CIL, Mr. Furue not only provided his own camera, he purchased the film and paid to have it developed out of his own pocket.

Working on his own created certain liabilities. In his splendid isolation, Mr. Furue developed an idiosyncratic analytical technique.

Tadao Furue, chief physical anthropologist at the Hawaii facility, began identifying Korean War casualties in 1951. In cases with little to go on, Furue, now deceased, would attempt to calculate age, height and other characteristics from bone fragments — a controversial technique he developed called ‘morphological approximation.’ Results were then compared with medical records to establish identity.²⁸

According to the General Accounting Office:

“Morphological approximation” in an anthropological context is a technique used for determining the length or shape of a fragment of bone by comparing the structure and form of that fragment to those of a sample of bones that is representative of the human population. CILHI’s laboratory director told us that a past laboratory supervisor [Mr. Furue] had inappropriately applied this technique by using the bone fragment estimates in a stature formula. Thus, the calculated stature estimates were not scientifically acceptable for making identifications.²⁹

According to CIL consultant Dr. William R. Maples, Mr. Furue developed his “morphological approximation” technique partly due to his strong desire to identify every case and in part due to the fact that he had few colleagues and no students off of whom to bounce ideas.

Using his “morphological approximation” method, Mr. Furue believed he could make reliable age and stature estimates based on nothing more than a single fragment of bone, several of which could fit easily into the palm of an average person’s hand. Mr. Furue applied the “morphological approximation” method in the following manner. For example, Mr. Furue would take a fragment of what he believed to be a femur from an unknown case, then measure the fragment’s cortex (the outer shell of a bone). He would then compare the fragment to intact femora (thigh bones) in the laboratory. When he found an intact femur with a cortex of similar dimensions, he concluded that the fragment of bone must have come from a femur of similar size and age. Mr. Furue would measure the length of the intact femur, then use that measurement as an estimate of the stature of the person associated with the bone fragment.

The Army praised “morphological approximation,” referring to it as one of “the latest in analytical techniques.” The Army’s enthusiasm for junk science was not shared by subject matter experts.

After subject matter experts from the outside world became aware of Mr. Furue's "morphological approximation" technique, they didn't like what they saw.

Dr. Samuel Dunlap, an anthropologist who worked at CILHI in the 1980s under Mr. Furue, stated that Mr. Furue's "morphological approximation" method was "completely worthless. He would take a bone fragment a couple of inches long and estimate the guy's height. That's impossible." During a Congressional hearing, Mr. Furue's "morphological approximation" method was dismissed by several forensic experts, with one witness calling it "not a correct or logical technique."³⁰

"Morphological approximation," which was junk science, nonetheless played a central role in the CIL's identification process in the late 1970s through the mid-1980s. Dozens of identifications were made using "morphological approximation" as a line of evidence.

Like all junk science, however, morphological approximation's days were numbered. Sooner or later junk science is exposed, usually when junk science goes too far and someone with subject matter expertise in a position of authority finally notices.

* * *

A review of the analytical techniques used by the CIL was motivated by the desire to increase the number of identifications. The inquiry was also motivated by a series of questionable identifications.

In 1972, a C-130 gunship crashed in the Laotian village of Pakse, killing 13 of the 15 crewmen. The ammunition on board continued to cook off for hours after the crash, which increased the size of the crater and heaped soil and debris on top of the wreckage and bodies. The remains were recovered by a JCRC recovery team in 1983.

The teams retrieved about 50,000 bone fragments, which were flown to the Army's Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii. A report later issued by the lab – which attempts to identify combat victims of World War II as well as the Korean and Vietnam wars – said the evidence consisted of "extremely broken, fragmented and shattered skeletal segments...The size of the fragments range from powder to the largest, which is 13 cm (5.1 inches) long. The majority of them are approximately equal to the size of a dime."³¹

Mr. Furue and the CIL staff startled everyone with the announcement that they had identified all 13 men who died in the Pakse incident.

In 1985, negotiations with the Vietnamese government indicated that improving relations could result in the recovery of an increasing number of remains of US servicemen. As a result, the Army retained several of America's leading forensic scientists to undertake a study of the CILHI to determine whether the lab had the capacity to handle the anticipated workload. The consultants were also asked to review the identifications the CIL had produced from the Pakse case.

The survey team included Dr. Lowell Levine, a forensic odontologist from New York, and two forensic anthropologists, Dr. Ellis R. Kerley who was then with the University of Maryland and Dr. William R. Maples of Gainesville, Florida, then vice president of the American Academy of Forensic Science.

At approximately the same time the consultants were retained, Dr. Michael Charney, who was the director of the Center of Human Identification at Colorado State University, was retained by LT Colonel Hart's widow Mrs. Anne Hart to review what Mr. Furue concluded were the remains of her husband LT Colonel Thomas Hart III.

Dr. Charney determined that none of the seven bone fragments Mr. Furue had associated with LT Colonel Hart was longer than six inches, the smallest being less than one inch. But on the basis of those fragments, the Army's CIL had estimated that the victim was a male Caucasian, 30–35 years old, 69 inches (175 cm) tall (with a variance of 1.6 inches (4 cm)), and with a slightly larger-than-average build. By comparing those findings with the known characteristics of the men on board the C-130, Mr. Furue concluded that the fragments were those of LT Colonel Hart.

Dr. Charney stated, "I was horrified. The fragments were so minute, there was no way they could be identified as Lt. Colonel Hart. The things Furue claimed to detect from the bones – age, sex, race – were just not possible. It was incompetence of the worst sort."³²

Dr. Charney advised LT Colonel Hart's widow, "Mrs. Hart, I could weep."

Mr. Donald Parker, the nephew of Command Sergeant James R. Fuller, who had been a flight engineer on the C-130, examined the remains that the CIL had identified as his uncle. "The total amount of remains could have fit in the palm of one hand, the largest fragment being the size of

your thumb. We saw no teeth, no joint bones. There was nothing that you could look at and say, ‘This was a human being.’”

In contrast to the 13 identifications produced by the CIL in the Pakse case, the consultants stated that “only two could be identified by us with confidence.” Dr. Maples stated, “I was alarmed with the Pakse case. I think all of us were totally disheartened.” In subsequent Congressional testimony, Dr. Maples stated that it was not possible to conclude that 13 individuals had been on board the C-130 at the time of the crash.

With regard to the “morphological approximation” technique, Dr. Maples stated that the technique may have been useful for “very, very broad estimates, but nothing like a complete identification. Based on the evidence, there is no technique known to science or even suggested to science that could have identified...those individuals.”

A disconcerting pattern of events developed. Congress, which only pays attention to the accounting program after something has appeared to have gone wrong, piled on. As long as what was really going wrong was kept quiet, Congress stayed out of the accounting program, abdicating its oversight responsibility. Stepping in to fight against the appearance of malfeasance, however, was much easier than doing the heavy lifting meaningful oversight required. In 1986 and 1987, hearings, one more superficial than the other, were held by the House Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs.

Each of the three consultants submitted a separate report on CILHI to the Army. Dr. Maples described the consultants’ visit to CILHI:

We had only two and a half days in the laboratory so we had to work quickly. We naturally focused on the Pakse case as a kind of convenient benchmark, a recent example of the laboratory’s methods. This was, after all, the case that had aroused official concern because of the inquiries by Lieutenant Colonel Hart’s widow. As the hours passed and the three of us sat around the table looking at files and notebooks, a feeling of dread gradually took hold and spread among us. We were being pushed inexorably toward a painful conclusion: some of Furue’s identifications of the Pakse remains simply would not hold water. [...]

As we looked at his photographs, we began to see that many of the identifications were made on distressingly little evidence indeed, based on an examination of the scantiest of remains. Even when more complete skeletal remains were available, there were still some grave difficulties. [...]

The sum total of one set of remains was a single fragment of the shoulder area. Any identification based on such meager remains, with no additional evidence such as DNA test results, was bound to be based on wishful thinking, not science.³³

The consultants' reports were released to the media in January 1986. ABC evening news ran a story about the problems at CILHI which caused an uproar in the DoD. Dr. Maples described what happened to the consultants as the Army sought to re-impose command control of the science of the identification process.

Blaming the bearer of bad tidings is only human nature. Everyone who has been in uniform knows how unpleasantness tends to roll downhill in the armed forces.

Our immediate reward for being so frank about CILHI was to be subjected to a loud, private harangue by a member of the White House's national security advisors – an officer who was one of Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North's associates, and whose name I have no wish to recall. This unforgettable, high-decibel tirade occurred well after I thought the whole CILHI affair had been laid to rest. It lasted four weary hours one evening and took place in the Executive Office Building next door to the White House, in a room adjacent to that in which the Iran Contra papers were so assiduously shredded into long confetti.

The officer loudly protested our findings. We had opened a Pandora's box of endless mischief! I was accused of ruining Tadao's life, of having robbed him of the will to live, even of causing the liver cancer from which he now suffered! I have seen many disturbing sights in the autopsy room, but the spectacle of this enraged colonel, sitting a few hundred yards from the very pinnacle of power, disturbed me more than a ghastly corpse. Were such illogical men really in charge of our national security? I emerged shaken and angry from this ordeal.

Happily, the angry colonel's views were not shared by others in the military.³⁴

Motivated by the consultants' reports, the Secretary of the Army ordered the CIL to discontinue the use of "morphological approximation."³⁵ DoD relied on the power of the chain of command and regulation, not science, to overrule junk science.

The Tadao Furue era of junk science at CILHI had drawn to an end. The imperative task was to re-establish and protect the scientific integrity of the identification process.

Political pressure, which had no place in the identification process, was used to manipulate science. Dr. Dunlap stated that there was constant pressure to close cases by altering the findings in lab reports.

Consistent with the asymmetry rule, undoing the damage inflicted on the scientific integrity of the identification process by the tolerance and in many cases encouragement of junk science such as “morphological approximation” took many more years to correct than it did to cause.

The damage could be measured in two important ways: first, the number of dubious and false identifications, and second, the amalgam of the lack of effective oversight and the deterioration of scientific competence in Congress gradually produced an environment in which scientific findings of fact were treated as the equivalent of expressions of opinion, both of which having equal validity.

In order to re-establish confidence in the integrity of the identification process, the toxic amalgam of junk science and political interference had to be squeezed out and the CIL protected from any attempt to re-introduce junk science in the future.

It took new CIL management and a team of external consultants nearly 20 years to repair the damage to the credibility of the Accounting Community caused by political interference mixed with the improper use of an unaccredited, unvalidated, junk science called “morphological approximation.” Barriers that would detect and prevent junk science from being used were put in place through a combination of skilled staff and management, accreditation, external consultants and a comprehensive Standard Operating Procedure.

In 1988, Dr. Ellis R. Kerley was hired as the scientific director of CILHI. One of his main tasks was to improve the scientific credibility of the laboratory.

The consultants’ reports recommended that the CIL’s facilities should be improved and expanded. With regard to the scientific staff, the consultants concluded that the lab should be led by an internationally recognized forensic scientist who would have supervisory authority over all of the scientists, including Mr. Furue.

Dr. Ellis Kerley, who was appointed as the first scientific director of CILHI in 1988, served in that capacity until 1991.

Under Ellis Kerley’s direction, the CILHI instituted a process requiring peer reviews of all of the case reports that were completed in association with remains identification. This process was structured in such a way that

each case report was reviewed by other CIL anthropologists prior to submission to the Scientific Director. The Scientific Director would then provide a final review of the case report. Kerley also began the process of bringing in outside consultants to review the finalized case reports. This began the process of surety and reliability among the anthropologists at the CIL.³⁶

In 1991, Dr. Kerley was replaced by Dr. Kim Schneider who continued the effort to improve and protect the scientific integrity of the identification process.

Principal DASD (International Security Affairs) Carl Ford testified during a classified session of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, “No other forensic laboratory in the world has as many independent procedural safeguards as has the Central Identification Laboratory.”³⁷ By 1992, the Government Accounting Office concluded that the techniques and methodologies used at the CIL were “consistent with or even exceeded those employed in other forensic laboratories.”³⁸ The “independent procedural safeguards,” which posed a significant barrier against external interference, were constantly challenged by those who sought to impose political control over the science of human skeletal identification. Without political “top cover” powerful enough to hold the meddlers at bay, modern techniques and methodologies meant nothing to the scientific illiterates who waged bureaucratic warfare.

On August 3, 1991, Dr. Schneider, who had also been deposed by the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs (SSC), participated in a CILHI briefing for a House Congressional Delegation (CODEL) that was on a fact finding mission to Southeast Asia. The CODEL included Representatives Douglas “Pete” Peterson (D-FL), Thomas R. Carper (D-DE), James Kolbe (R-AZ), John Rhodes (R-AZ), David Skaggs (D-CO), and Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD), all of whom had served in the US military in Vietnam. This was further evidence of the fact that Congressional oversight of the accounting program depended heavily on the personal interest of members of Congress.

Of the seven CILHI participants, only two were scientists: Dr. Schneider (anthropologist) and Major Jimmie Schmidt (odontologist). The House CODEL allocated one hour for the laboratory briefing,³⁹ which was the only session devoted to science during the entire mission to Southeast Asia.

On September 18, 1992, Dr. Schneider resigned from CILHI, followed in October 1992 by the resignation of the CIL’s senior anthropologist. The GAO investigated to determine “whether any of their concerns involved problems that had a detrimental effect on the scientific nature of the identification process.”⁴⁰ If there had been an attempt to apply

pressure, Dr. Schneider would not have been an easy target. One of her colleagues advised me, “I can’t speak for Kim, but knowing her the little I did, I’d be surprised if she could be pressured into anything.”

Dr. Schneider, who expressed concern to the GAO that the laboratory was pressured by the military to accelerate the pace of identifications, advised me that one of the most troubling and discouraging aspects of the accounting program was the lack of respect among politicians and functionaries for the science of human skeletal identification. One incident she found particularly troubling was when a scientifically illiterate member of Congress questioned her statement concerning the temperature required to cause char or scorch marks to appear on the human bone.

The scientific integrity of the identification process was shielded by the fact that after the revelation of the extent that junk science had been allowed to penetrate the CIL in the 1980s, a rigorous consultant program had been put in place. No ID could be made until at least three consultants signed off on it. Bad or weak identifications would have been rejected by the consultants and then referred back to the CIL. In addition to reviewing the identification memorandum, the consultants also offered suggestions on how to improve the analytical work. The point is that in the early 1990s, in the aftermath of the 1980s scandal, the external consultants watched identifications like hawks. The risk of political or military interference with the integrity of the identification process was minimized as long as the system of external consultants was in place.

The GAO, which expressed concern over the problem of the military’s control of the CIL in 1992, proposed a remedy.

CILHI is a forensic scientific investigative agency whose primary responsibility is to identify human remains. Impartiality and the ability to make objective, scientific identifications without even the appearance of outside interference are essential prerequisites in an agency of this type. In those cases where coordinating the interpretation of forensic science findings with the circumstances of death or maintenance of chain of custody are relevant considerations, the agency’s case handling responsibilities and their medico-legal ramifications are akin to those of a medical examiner’s office. To ensure impartiality and objectivity, **we strongly recommend** (emphasis added) that operational responsibilities at CILHI be separated into a scientific and military component. All scientific personnel (in the laboratory and in the field) should be civilians, who report directly to the laboratory director.⁴¹

The GAO issued the unambiguous, strong recommendation that “CILHI’s scientific staff should be disassociated from the military chain of command.” This recommendation was not only ignored, the military’s control of the scientific staff intensified. For example, the scientific staff were required to attend military events, rise in the presence of the commander, and stand at attention with military personnel. In addition, active duty officers were added to the CIL scientific staff. Eventually the civilian scientific director was replaced by an active duty military officer.

One important change was made that weakened the military’s control over the science of the accounting program. Military control of recovery sites was replaced by scientific authority. Under the direction of Dr. Thomas Holland, who became the CIL’s scientific director in 1994, the authority of the forensic scientists had been increased to that of “recovery leader,” meaning that for the first time a scientist, not a military member, was in charge of the recovery site. This meant that a scientist, not a military officer, determined when a recovery site should be declared closed.

In 2003, the JPAC CIL became the first skeletal identification laboratory to be accredited by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors-Laboratory Accreditation Board (ASCLD-LAB). In 2008, the accreditation was expanded to include crime scene and trace evidence, for which the CIL obtained a perfect evaluation. In 2013, the accreditation was further expanded to include “forensic biology,” which covered DNA sampling.

Those seeking to exert political control over the science of human skeletal identification expressed intense opposition to ASCLD-LAB accreditation in addition to any measure that shielded the CIL from external interference. This included undermining, removing, or even threatening to file suit against the external consultants who reviewed the identification memorandum for each identification.

* * *

The extent of the harm done to the scientific integrity of the identification process in the 1970s and 1980s by amateurs, crackpots, as well as by the scientifically illiterate purveyors of junk science who should never have been taken seriously is impossible to estimate with any precision. It is safe to say, however, that the damage caused by practitioners of the philosophy of ignorance and the scientific illiterates was not only extensive, it warped the intellectual context of the accounting program.

Due to junk science and the support for it from people who were in a position to stop it but did not, the scientific integrity of the identification process had become subordinated first to military control, then politics. For the opponents of an independent skeletal identification laboratory, the structures that protected the CIL from politically inspired meddling had been weakened if not completely flattened. The only way to place the CIL under political control was to crush the CIL's independence which meant that the scientific integrity of the identification process had to be made subordinate to politics. To complete the process of regulatory capture, politics, which makes no contribution to the science of human skeletal identification, had to control science.

The scientific integrity of the identification process was under siege, betrayed by the very people who were responsible for its defense. For example, the CIL was accused of using ASCLAD-LAB accreditation as a weapon to fend off efforts to exert political control over the CIL's management and operations. As a result of regulatory capture and the tolerance for interference in the science of human skeletal identification by lobbyists, federal employees, and politicians, a nefarious cycle was established within the accounting program: The longer indifference was tolerated, the greater the threat from junk and pseudoscience.

Lysenkoism, which was the imposition of pseudoscience on the scientific community by political authorities, was alive and flourishing in the accounting program.

* * *

FIELD GUIDE TO POLITICAL CONTROL OF SCIENCE

Political control of science is not achieved by one pseudoscientist who declares domination over a particular branch of science. Instead, political control over science requires coordinated efforts by pseudoscientists who questioned forensic factual information, scientifically illiterate media acolytes who describe the assault by pseudoscience as a "debate," unlimited financing, oversight that is either non-existent or incompetent, combined with political muscle provided by naïve politicians willing to suppress proponents of legitimate science for personal gain.

The effort to control the science of human skeletal identification was never waged on the battlefield of science, where statistics, peer review, and

the scientific method ruled. Regulatory capture of the CIL, which was never a scientific issue, had become completely political.

* * *

An audit of the way in which political control of science was established over the accounting program reveals seven noteworthy features.

First is the government's overt expression of political control of science. One needs to go no further than to observe the fact that the accounting program, which is responsible for human skeletal identification, was controlled first by the AQG until 2003, then by the US Pacific Command (PACOM) in 2003, and since 2015 by the USD(P). None of these agencies is a scientific organization in any sense of the word. The AQG, PACOM, and USD(P) are all creatures of politics.

Second is the power and influence of lobbyists. Lobbyists, pressure groups, and a variety of "family" organizations, each with its own set of priorities, compete with one another to control the accounting program.

Third was the corrosive effect of the US military's corporate culture of deceit. Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel became so alarmed over the pervasive nature of dishonesty in the US military that he commissioned a study by the Army War College. The result was a report entitled *Lying to Ourselves: Dishonesty in the Army Profession* that documented a culture of dishonesty, "pencil whipping," "ethical fading," and the tolerance of dishonorable conduct that permeates the US military at all levels.⁴² "[U]ntruthfulness is surprisingly common in the U.S. military even though members of the profession are loath to admit it."

Fourth, the accounting program is plagued by the activities of a group of benighted, self-appointed people including federal employees, members of the military, and civilians. This includes totally unqualified ex-military staff who are hired on the basis of nepotism and cronyism, not competence.

Fifth, the overwhelming majority of members of Congress pay no attention to the effort to account for servicemen missing from America's historic conflicts until something that appears to have gone wrong in the accounting program is made public. After something, even if nothing had gone wrong is publicized, like political ambulance chasers, these members of Congress squeeze every ounce of political

advantage out of the alleged problem, whether the problem had any merits or not.

Sixth, the accounting program is plagued by quackery, incompetence, chicanery, hucksters, con men, and others described by one member of Congress as “evil creeps.” This sordid history of the influence of “evil creeps” can be traced from WWII to the present.

Seventh, the end of the Cold War presented an unprecedented opportunity of historic proportions, the uniqueness of which cannot be exaggerated, to make progress on resolving some of the most difficult, vexing POW/MIA cases. The Soviet Union had dissolved. The new Russian government was open to extraordinary cooperation with the US government to account for missing American servicemen. For the first time in nearly a half-century, the US government had access to WWII battlefields in Eastern Europe. The only question was whether these new opportunities, including relations with Russia, could be managed productively.

There have been many decent, competent, dedicated people involved in the Accounting Community. Unfortunately, in the mathematics of the accounting program, the competent were the numerator, while the denominator was composed of a vastly greater number of incompetents. The larger the denominator grew, the more marginalized those in the numerator became. The ability to create what the US intelligence community calls FLABS⁴³ and junk science is exponential. The time required to refute FLABS and junk science is mathematical. Defense of fact and truth within the accounting program was a losing proposition.

* * *

NOTES

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CHAPTER 4

Exploitation of the Missing

In contrast to the blunt-edged weapons used to exert political control over science, exploitation of missing American servicemen for political purposes is more nuanced. Since ancient times, combatants and non-combatants captured during war have been converted into economic advantage and political assets by their captors. Political exploitation of POWs held by foreign nations is one thing. Political exploitation of the missing by US politicians, lobbyists, and “evil creeps,” however, is a modern phenomenon without any parallel in history. The use of missing service members for political purposes, which is a key feature of the accounting program, has affected the entire POW/MIA Accounting Community.

EXPLOITATION OF POWs IN ANCIENT TIMES

The practice of deriving economic value from prisoners of war was common throughout the ancient world across a wide spectrum of cultures. Scythians, Persians, Romans, Aztecs, Gauls, and the Germanic tribes, who were infamous for torturing and then executing captives, converted humans into economic benefit by enslaving their captives. Etruscans, for example, derived entertainment value by lashing a corpse to a living prisoner who was then left to die in the “embrace of death.” Romans sent prisoners to the arena to fight as gladiators as a part of the emperor’s program of “bread and circuses.”

Prisoners were the primary source of slaves, without which the economies of many ancient societies would have collapsed. In ancient Greece,

the standard operating procedure in war was to execute foreign prisoners (i.e., non-Hellenic), then ransom fellow Greeks for economic gain.¹ In short, in the Hellenic world if there were profit or entertainment value to be had, prisoners were first spared, then ransomed. If there were no such value to be had, however, they were summarily executed which ended any recurring costs of maintaining inventory.

Methods used to exploit prisoners were not entirely arbitrary. The ancients did not suffer from a shortage of authoritative advice, some of which was divinely inspired. As shown in the following example, there were instructions on how or when to slaughter combatants and civilians alike or under what conditions to keep them alive in order to optimize their economic value.

In the Old Testament (Torah), the armed assaults God (Yahweh) commanded his people to undertake in which “you shall not let a soul remain alive” are too numerous to mention. One of the less ambiguous instructions from the Lord was:

Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. (I Samuel 15:3)

Smiting and slaying every living thing including the farm animals, which may have satiated the blood lust of the Lord, deprived the victors of economic value. Killing for the sake of killing was the work of a homicidal maniac, not a statesman responsible for the economic well-being of his people. Even the butcher kills for an economic purpose.

In a compromise of genius between the need to fulfill God’s murderous mandate and the benefits of commerce, David satisfied God’s blood lust by murdering two-thirds of his captives and then preserving the lucky survivors for enslavement (2 Samuel 8:1–2). David simply followed God’s instruction.

David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he was commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.² (1 Kings 15:5)

David’s rule of thumb, which was to kill two-thirds and then enslave the rest, was a recipe for converting prisoners into economic advantage. The Bible contains specific guidance not only for how to traffic in slaves,

it establishes rules for how to extract maximum economic value from prisoners taken during armed raids or kidnapping excursions.

In addition to establishing rules for how to convert human beings into slave labor, the Old Testament includes instructions on how to capture non-combatant women for sexual purposes.

When you take the field against your enemies and Adonai your God delivers them into your power and you take some of them captive, and you see among the captives a beautiful woman and you desire her and would take her to wife, you shall bring her into your house, and she shall trim her hair, pare her nails, and discard her captive's garb. She shall spend a month's time in your house lamenting her father and mother; after that you may come to her and possess her, and she shall be your wife. Then, should you no longer want her, you must release her outright. You must not sell her for money: since you had your will of her, you must not enslave her. (Deuteronomy 21: 10–15)

The differences between the Biblical recommendations for how to treat captured women and the treatment provided by contemporary organizations such as al-Shabaab, the Lord's Resistance Army, ISIS, or al-Qaeda are marginal.

The Quran (47: 4–5) also includes convenient instructions concerning the economic exploitation of the captured and kidnapped.

When you meet unbelievers in the battlefield strike off their heads and, when you have laid them low, bind your captives firmly. Then grant them their freedom or take a ransom from them, until War shall lay down her burdens.³

Over time and with much practical experience, the three Abrahamic religions appeared to settle on ransom as the optimal way to extract economic value from prisoners of war.

Moving ahead more than 1000 years, by the time the term “prisoner of war” (*prisonnier de guerre/prisonarius de guerra*) first appeared in the fifteenth century during the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453), the practice of ransoming prisoners was both widespread and firmly established.⁴ Prisoners had more economic value alive than dead.

During WWII, both the allies and the axis powers derived economic benefit from POWs, though the way it was done could not have had a greater contrast. The forced-labor methods used by the Germans and Japanese, for example, were based on unbridled savagery and inhumane barbarism.

In contrast, over 400,000 German prisoners who were transferred to the United States, however, lived in lightly guarded barracks and received a small wage for working in factories and mills in places such as Clinton, Iowa, and Murdock, Nebraska.⁵ In some locales Nazi prisoners were given privileges, such as the ability to enter the front door of a restaurant, that were denied to African-Americans, even those who were WWII veterans.

These examples share an important common characteristic. They concern the exploitation of prisoners for economic benefit. Deriving political value, however, was another thing entirely.

The use of POWs for political purposes differed from exploitation for economic purposes. Sometimes the political purpose was for the rulers to impress their subjects with displays of power.

Inhabitants and visitors to Rome witnessed the incessant display of POW's in daily life as slaves, in triumphs, in architecture, on coinage, and by other means to indoctrinate the next generation to the concept that Romans ruled an *imperium sine fine* (empire without end) because they were the master of the arts of war and peace.⁶

Deriving economic value from prisoners was common across the ages in many different civilizations. Deriving political value from the missing, however, was a uniquely American phenomenon. The most high-profile case of political exploitation of missing American servicemen whose remains had been recovered but not identified was carried out by President Reagan during his first term.

* * *

“HIGHEST NATIONAL PRIORITY”

After the Vietnam War, the program to account for servicemen missing from America's historic conflicts was well established. During the Reagan administration, however, it received a significant boost.

In January 1983, President Ronald Reagan made remarks during which he called for the recovery of “those still missing and the repatriation of remains of those who died serving our country.” President Reagan added:

The government bureaucracy now understands that these goals are the highest national priority and there is strong bipartisan support in the Congress. Those Americans who attempted to discharge government responsibilities through private efforts should now understand that the full resources of our government are now committed to these goals.⁷

The assertion that the president or the “government bureaucracy” understood the accounting program to be the America’s “highest national priority” has never been supported by any evidence. It was likewise ironic, if not cynical, that the same president who said repeatedly that the most frightening words in the English language were, “I’m from the government, and I’m here to help you,” now expected the families of the missing to look to the “full resources of our government” to help them, despite the fact that President Reagan emphasized during his first inaugural address that “Government is the problem.”

In another example of the primacy of rhetoric over substance, the claim that the “government bureaucracy understands” did nothing to actually make the accounting program the nation’s “highest national priority.” President Reagan, who signed 381 Executive Orders, could have established such a priority with a stroke of the pen yet never signed an Executive Order or signed any legislation to establish the accounting program as America’s “highest national priority.”

President Reagan, who repeatedly used the POW/MIA issue for political purposes, contributed little more than speeches and non-binding resolutions to the effort to account for service members missing from America’s historic conflicts. According to Machiavelli, the appearance of effort in politics is often more important than results.

For the great majority of mankind are satisfied with appearances, as though they were realities and are often more influenced by the things that seem than by those that are.

Instead of an Executive Order, in March 1983 President Reagan signed a proclamation that designated the third Friday in July as National POW/MIA Recognition Day.⁸ No one needed to tell the actor turned politician that “National Missing Person Recognition Day” did not deliver the same emotional impact. President Reagan’s March 1983 proclamation, which had no force of law, was silent on the definition of “accounted for,” as “locating, recovering and identifying missing persons through the use of forensic science” did not have the same political utility as perpetuating the myth that there were POWs and MIAs to be found. The president’s failure to elevate the accounting program to the nation’s “highest national priority” was not lost on those involved in the program.

On February 12, 1991, Colonel Millard A. Peck, the Chief of the DIA’s Special Office for Prisoners of War and Missing in Action, resigned. In his resignation letter, Colonel Peck stated that the DIA’s role in accounting program “is truly unfortunate.”

The POW-MIA Office has been cloistered for all practical purposes and left to its own fortunes. The POW Office is the lowest level in the Government ‘efforts’ to resolve the issue, and oddly for an intelligence organization, has become the ‘lightning rod’ for the entire establishment to the matter. [...]

Highest National Priority. That National leaders continue to address the prisoner of war and missing in action issue as the “highest national priority” is a travesty. [...] Progress consisted in frenetic activity, with little substance and no real results.

Colonel Peck concluded, “I have seen firsthand how ready and willing the policy people are to sacrifice or ‘abandon’ anyone who might be perceived as a political liability. It is quick and facile, and can be easily covered.”

In reality, the nation’s “highest national priority” was the responsibility of a small group of expendable people assigned to a small office within a marginal organization. According to Colonel Peck, the key to success in the accounting program was to defer to the pressure exerted by the lobbying organization the National League of Families while pretending to make progress.

UNIDENTIFIED REMAINS EXPLOITED FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES

In the United States charlatans, fraudsters, con men, and “evil creeps” have victimized families of the missing for more than 75 years. In addition to these predatory miscreants, all too frequently the emotive nature of the POW/MIA issue has been exploited by government employees and elected officials for political purposes.

In the post-Vietnam War era, political exploitation of the *missing* was more intensive than at any point in American history. Exploiting the remains of the missing that had been recovered and then designated as *unknown* for political purposes, however, was unheard of until the early 1980s.

Political exploitation of unidentified remains required two elements. First, there had to be a president willing to insinuate politics into the science of human skeletal identification. Second, the institutional structures that protected scientists from political interference had to be weak as well as responsive to intimidation.⁹

Toward the end of 1983, the White House turned its attention to promoting President Reagan's reelection campaign. As a part of the reelection effort, the White House began to pressure the DoD to provide an unknown from the Vietnam War to be inhumed in the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery. The problem was that in contrast to WWII and the Korean War, there were no missing persons from the Vietnam War buried as unknowns in American's national cemeteries. The efficiency of the recovery operations, the extensive amount of biological information in each serviceman's file—almost always including a radiograph, a description of skeletal anomalies, and a detailed, updated dental record—combined with the effectiveness of the mortuaries in Vietnam and the CIL that operated in Thailand from 1970 to 1975 and then in Hawaii ensured that every casualty that was recovered was identified sooner or later. (Whether some of the identifications were accurate is another matter.)

The paid lobbyist Ms. Ann Mills-Griffiths opposed the burial in the Tomb of the Unknowns on the preposterous grounds that after the entombment DoD would diminish or altogether stop the search for the missing in Vietnam. To its credit, in an astonishing display of courage the Reagan administration overruled the paid lobbyist. Unfortunately, both the paid lobbyist and the Reagan administration were both wrong, but for different reasons. A burial in the Tomb of the Unknowns, contrary to the paid lobbyist's unusual yet typically self-serving reasoning, would have neither brought closure to any next of kin nor stopped the search for American servicemen who had gone missing in Southeast Asia. The scientific reality for the Reagan White House was that the only way to exploit the missing for political purposes would be to inter identifiable remains in the Tomb of the Unknowns for eternity.

In order to realize this objective, science had to be sacrificed on the altar of political expediency.

The Reagan White House had the political will. The only problem was where to obtain a suitable corpse.

* * *

Not unlike a nineteenth-century surgeon in London, the Reagan White House had to send out its body snatchers to find human remains. Unlike the English anatomists, however, the White House was not

interested in scientific research. Instead, the purpose was to bury the unidentified remains amid great public pomp and circumstance in order to derive political benefit in an election year. The only place to find suitable human remains was at the Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii.

Unlike WWII and the Korean War from which thousands of missing were buried as unknowns in America's national cemeteries, no missing from the Vietnam War were buried as unknowns. Due to the aforementioned efficiency of the Army's Graves Registration, mortuary services, and laboratory expertise, in 1983, there were only six unidentified cases associated with the Vietnam War and all of them were located in the CIL. According to Public Law 93-43, the National Cemeteries Act (June 18, 1973), cases eligible for interment in the Tomb of the Unknowns had to satisfy all of the following conditions.

- US serviceman
- Died in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia
- Died between 1964 and 1973
- Not commingled
- (By Convention) 80 percent of the skeleton present

All of these conditions, which were arbitrary and political, had no basis in forensic science.

Of the six cases, forensic analysis concluded that one was non-American, and the second was a partial set of remains with no more than three percent of the skeleton present.

The four remaining cases were difficult due to the fact they are composed of small bone fragments, or without teeth. In the 1980s, a decade or more before DNA analysis became available, no accredited analytical technique was available that could reliably associate one small bone fragment with another from the same person, or with the missing from the Vietnam War. This is one important reason why the remains were unidentified for years after the remains had been recovered.

The scientific issue concerning the four cases remaining in the CIL pivots on the difference between the meaning of *unidentified* and *unidentifiable*. The distinction is crucial. The reason why some remains are *unidentified* may be due to missing or degraded biological material. Some cases might be missing teeth, or the teeth might be present, but there is

no antemortem dental record, or the service record might be missing altogether. In 1973, for example, a fire at the National Records Center in St. Louis destroyed between 16 and 18 million Official Military Personnel Files (OMPF). The fire destroyed 75 percent of Air Force personnel discharged between September 25, 1947, and January 1, 1964, as well an enormous amount of Army OMPF.

For the forensic scientist, no remains are *unidentifiable*; instead, these are *unidentified* cases that have insufficient evidence, or an appropriate analytical technique is not available. Additional research, the discovery of more biological material, or the development of a new analytical technique, such as DNA analysis, could overcome these problems and produce an important line of evidence that contributes to an identification. In other words, *unidentifiable* simply means that without additional evidence or a new analytical technique, the remains will be *unidentified* pending the discovery of information that according to DoD policy must satisfy two criteria: The information must be both “new” and “credible.” The intent of this regulation was to prevent an endlessly repetitive re-examination of existing information and evidence. This regulation, which was rarely enforced, was routinely ignored by the accounting program’s “policy” and “history” sections. The CIL did not have such a luxury.

Asking a forensic scientist to declare an *unidentified* case as *unidentifiable* is analogous to asking a pathologist to conclude that a disease is *incurable*, or demanding that a physicist declare that the nature of dark matter is *unknowable*. *Unidentifiable* is meaningless unless it is accompanied by the qualifier, “under the present conditions.” Only those such as politicians, religious leaders, quacks, and charlatans who believe that the present conditions are transcendent have the hubris to declare with metaphysical certainty that a disease is *incurable*, a force of nature *unknowable*, or that a set of *unidentified* remains is *unidentifiable*. This type of conclusion serves no scientific purpose, but the promotion of the science of human skeletal identification was not the purpose of this exercise. In fact, it was quite to the contrary.

In 1983, politics interfered with and undermined the science of human skeletal identification. This was not an isolated occurrence; rather, political interference with science became a standard feature of the effort to recover and identify the remains of missing American servicemen.

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S FIRST CHOICE FOR THE TOMB
OF THE UNKNOWNNS: A SUSPECTED DESERTER

In 1973, Congress passed Public Law 93-43 that authorized DoD to bury an unknown from the Vietnam War in the Tomb of the Unknowns. The Reagan administration was determined to inter an unknown from Vietnam in the Tomb of the Unknowns prior to the 1984 presidential election. To achieve this political objective, the Reagan administration began to ratchet up the political pressure on DoD to provide a suitable set of *unidentifiable* remains.

“Some very powerful people wanted a Vietnam Unknown buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns,” said Mr. John Marsh, Secretary of the Army at the time. “The president wanted it done. Congress had authorized it. And we had the assurance of the person in charge that the remains in Hawaii were unknown.”¹⁰ Once again, *unknown* is one thing, *unidentifiable* another thing entirely.

CBS News reported that throughout 1983 the Reagan White House placed enormous pressure on the Pentagon to produce an “unknown” from the Vietnam War for burial in the Tomb of the Unknowns on Memorial Day of the 1984 election year. The report stated that a set of remains had been selected for interment in the tomb.

The Reagan administration’s first selection was an unidentified case that had been designated as TSN 138-72 by the Tan Son Nhut (TSN) mortuary. This number indicated that it was the 138th case accessioned by the TSN mortuary in the year 1972. When TSN 138-72 was accessioned by the CIL in Hawaii, the case was re-designated as X-15. Unknown remains have no next of kin; thus by regulation the AQG is the next of kin “by administrative decision.” “X” is simply a substitute for the unknown’s real name.

In order to comply with the Reagan administrations’ political agenda, DoD gave CILHI commander Major Johnnie E. Webb Jr. an ultimatum. Identify X-15 within six months or sign a statement that X-15 was *unidentifiable*. The Pentagon’s implication was clear. “Sign the statement or identify the remains. Otherwise there will be a change of command at CILHI.”

Mr. Webb stated that, “The head of the task force, DoD official Rudy De Leon, told [me] in no uncertain terms, ‘We are going to place remains in the Tomb of the Unknowns and we want you to sign a certification,’”

which was a document affirming the remains were in fact unidentifiable.¹¹ If pressure had been exerted on Mr. Webb, Mr. de Leon could not have been the source. Mr. de Leon stated, “I played no role in the process to select a Vietnam War unknown for entombment in the Tomb of the Unknowns in 1983. I was working on the Hill at the time, not DoD.”¹² Some have speculated that the source of DoD’s pressure on CILHI was the Secretary of the Army, but no evidence of this in the form of a memo or written directive has been produced to support Mr. Webb’s version of events.

Shortly before the deadline to declare X-15 as “unidentifiable,” the Vietnamese government turned over remains, which was widely publicized news in those days. Following a nationally televised report concerning the turnover, a woman living in South Dakota who had watched the broadcast sent a letter to her Congressman asking whether her nephew Private First Class (PFC) (E3) Alan Keith Barton could be among the remains. PFC Barton had been reported killed in action (KIA) on July 28, 1970. (PFC Barton’s home of record was Saginaw, Michigan.) (Fig. 4.1)

The remains of X-15 were an excellent candidate for identification. As shown in the following skeletal chart, half of X-15’s teeth were present (Fig. 4.2).

An inquiry quickly revealed that CILHI did not have PFC Barton’s service records, thus no antemortem biological reference data such as a dental chart. Without PFC Barton’s antemortem records, it was impossible

Fig. 4.1 PFC Alan K. Barton (Photo: Public Domain)



RECORD OF IDENTIFICATION PROCESSING				21 January 1983	
TSN 0138-72 (X-15)				SKELETAL CHART	
LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL (or unknown number)			BLACK OUT PORTIONS NOT RECOVERED		
GRADE		SERVICE NUMBER			
NAME OF CEMETERY, EVACUATION NUMBER, OR SEARCH AND RECOVERY NUMBER UTM GC: BR 476 477, Camp Radcliff, AN KHE, Vietnam					
PLOT	ROW	GRAVE			
ESTIMATED AGE (Years)			ESTIMATED HEIGHT		
18 - 21 years			Fem + Tib: 69.6"		
SKELETAL MEASUREMENTS (Centimeters)					
SKELETAL MEMBER	METHOD	RIGHT	LEFT		
SKULL					
HUMERUS		-	-		
ULNA		-	-		
RADIUS		-	-		
FEMUR		47.6	-		
TIBIA		40.1	39.2		
FIBULA		-	-		
REMARKS OR STATEMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGIST (Continue on reverse if more space is required)					
Race: Caucasoid					
Sex: Male					
Age: 18 - 21					
Height: Fem + Tib: 69.6"					
Muscularity: Average					
Evidence of healed bone injury to frontal bone below right eminence.					
Evidence of healed fracture of nasal bones, slight deviation of nasal bridge to left.					
Evidence of deviation of nasal septum to right.					
THE PARTS PRESENT AS INDICATED ON THIS SKELETAL CHART REPRESENTS ONE AND THE SAME INDIVIDUAL					
PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGIST (Name)					
TADAO FURUE					
SIGNATURE		SYMBOLS			
		X MISSING B BURNED F FRACTURED S SNATTERED			
DD FORM 892		REPLACES GMC FORM 1046, 18 MAR 47, WHICH IS OBSOLETE.			
1 FEB 66		PPC-JAPAN			

Fig. 4.2 Skeletal chart for X-15. Darkened areas are missing (Image: Public Domain)

to make a comparative assessment against the X-15 remains. The question quickly became whether PFC Barton's records were stored elsewhere or had been destroyed or lost. The Army, through the CIL, sent letters to every conceivable government agency to determine whether anyone knew where PFC Barton's service record might be located.

As the deadline to sign a statement that the X-15 remains were *unidentifiable* approached, at the 11th hour the FBI advised CILHI that PFC Barton's service record had been located. The discovery of the file was due to the fact that the FBI held the service records of deserters. This explained why the FBI instead of the DoD had PFC Barton's record, who was alleged to be a deserter. The record included a dental chart which the FBI immediately shipped to the CIL by FedEx.

With the aid of PFC Barton's antemortem dental records, the CILHI scientific staff identified PFC Barton's remains on January 28, 1983. The remains were returned to his family and then buried in the Wildwood Cemetery in his hometown (Fig. 4.3).

In contrast to the headline, PFC Barton's remains had not been "misplaced"; rather, his service record with his dental records had been retained by the FBI, which hadn't bothered to inform the CIL of the fact. Had it not been for the fact that the FBI retained PFC Barton's service record without advising the CIL, Barton's remains could have been identified and sent home a decade earlier.

The only reason the remains had come close to being declared *unidentifiable* was due to political pressure from the Reagan administration. The only thing that prevented PFC Barton's remains from the Reagan administration's effort to permanently inter the remains in the Tomb of the Unknowns was the persistence of the CIL's scientific staff.

PFC Barton's family fought to have Barton's name cleared. The question of whether PFC Barton had been a deserter has never been officially resolved.¹³

As a direct result of intensive political pressure from the Reagan White House, the DoD nearly entombed the remains of PFC Barton, a Vietnam War casualty alleged to be a deserter.

Misplaced 11 years, area soldier's body due home next week

BY KEN KOLKER
News Staff Writer

For 13 years, Dorothy Vogelaar told the U.S. Army her son could not have deserted his unit in Vietnam.

The Army insisted she was wrong — until this week.

The Army found the remains of Saginaw native Pfc. Alan Keith Barton in Vietnam 11 years ago, two years after he was reported missing and listed as a deserter.

But nobody checked if the remains were his.

Instead, the bones were sent to a mortuary in Hawaii with other unidentified bodies. Since then, Barton's name has remained on the Army's deserter roster.

Mrs. Vogelaar, 55, Tuesday was told the body was identified as her son when the Army, after years of prodding from the family, ran a check of dental work and bone structure of remains in storage.

Next week, in a small cemetery near Chesaning, Barton, 18 when he died, will get a hero's burial.

"The suffering is over," Mrs. Vogelaar said Wednesday at her farmhouse in St. Charles Township. "He's coming back home. There'll



Pfc. Alan K. Barton

be a place for me to visit him. I'll know where he is."

"It's much better to know what happened than to wonder if he's dead or if he'll come walking through the door some day," said Barton's sister, Sherry Neison, 33, of Chesaning.

Still, family members are irate

that for 13 years the Army listed Barton as a deserter.

Barton volunteered to fight in Vietnam after serving a short time in Germany. His father served 20 years in the Army before his medical discharge in 1971. He died two years later, and Mrs. Vogelaar remarried.

"He was so devoted to the Army that when he was a little boy he thought Santa Claus was Uncle Sam," said Barton's aunt, Shirley Burgoyne, 50, an attorney who fought the Army to clear her nephew's name.

And, the family reasoned, Barton wouldn't have deserted just two days before payday.

Family members wonder why the Army didn't check earlier to determine whether Barton's body was among those stored at the Central Identification Laboratory at Honolulu.

Army spokesman Maj. George Stinnett, who contacted The News from his office in Washington, D.C., said the Army had tried only to identify the bodies of soldiers reported missing in action.

He said Barton's name is off the

Please see BARTON, Page A-2

Fig. 4.3 Newspaper article describing identification of PFC Barton, formerly X-15 (Image: Saginaw, Michigan, *News*, February 9, 1983)

The Reagan White House was not about to be denied the opportunity to derive political benefit from the unidentified remains of American servicemen killed in Vietnam.

One of the four eligible Vietnam War unidentified cases had been eliminated.

Only three remained.

* * *

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SECOND CHOICE FOR THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN: A KNOWN DESERTER

Of the three remaining unidentified cases, the White House selected X-32. The same political pressure was applied. DoD instructed CILHI to identify X-32 within six months or declare that the remains of X-32 were *unidentifiable*—or else.

The story of X-32 begins with a US Army soldier named Private William J. McRae who was arrested for being AWOL from his unit deployed in Vietnam.¹⁴ (AWOL turns into desertion after 30 days.) PVT McRae was held at the infamous US Army Vietnam Installation Stockade (USARVIS) at Long Binh, a prison where the military's criminals were confined. Soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines who were awaiting trial or had been convicted under the Uniform Code of Military Justice were either confined or served their terms at the Long Binh Jail, derogatorily nicknamed "Camp LBJ," or at the US Army Disciplinary Barracks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The Long Binh confinement area, composed of Conex shipping containers in which temperatures could easily exceed 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8° Celsius), "dramatically contributed to Camp LBJ's reputation as the worst place to be in Vietnam."¹⁵

After confinement in the USARVIS, PVT McRae was given the option to remain at Camp LBJ or to return to his unit to fight. In 1967, the US Army needed every available soldier, including criminals and deserters. PVT McRae, faced with the alternative of remaining at Camp LBJ, chose to return to his unit.

On August 9, 1967, at approximately 3:54 PM, shortly after takeoff from TSN airport, the helicopter transporting PVT McRae to the front lines collided with a F-101C "Voodoo" piloted by Major Jack Bond. Major Bond, who managed to eject, was severely injured when he landed on his back.

Major Bond's jet, which was being vectored to final approach at TSN AFB, collided with the left top side of the UH-1D helicopter. The collision, which disintegrated the helicopter's main rotor system, tore off the tail pylon. The helicopter, which fell in a southwest direction, nosed down and over, lost pieces of the airframe, then struck the ground in a nose-down inverted attitude, which completely destroyed the helicopter.¹⁶ A post-impact fire consumed most of the wreckage (Fig. 4.4).

All onboard the helicopter were killed. The four helicopter crewmembers, Major Charles R. Latta, First Lieutenant George F. Sodaitis, SP4 Gary R. Kooman, and SP4 Gerald L. Hopper, were identified, in part due



Fig. 4.4 Helicopter crash site (Photo: Public Domain)

to the fact that these victims were wearing insignia on their uniforms as well as dog tags.

A fifth burned body was recovered. As shown in the following anatomical chart, most of the skull, and more importantly all of the teeth, were missing (Fig. 4.5).

The remains were consistent with PVT McRae's gender, age (22), stature, and hair color. The body was wearing combat fatigues and boots with no insignia, which would have been consistent with a prisoner. Nonetheless, probably due to the fact that only five souls were on the helicopter's manifest, the examining official identified the remains as "McRae, William J." PVT McRae's remains were shipped to Boston and then on to his hometown of Somerville, Massachusetts, where the remains were buried as PVT William J. McRae.

The case appeared to be closed.

Shortly thereafter however, on December 30, 1967, a crew salvaging the crash site discovered a sixth set of remains. Found with the remains of the sixth victim was an identification card with PVT McRae's name, the same McRae who had been buried in Boston (Fig. 4.6).

RECORD OF IDENTIFICATION PROCESSING ANATOMICAL CHART						
6528-68 - 4444			GRADE Pvt	SERVICE NUMBER 75515 22283		
LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL (or unknown number) McRAE William J			PLOT	ROW	GRAVE	
NAME OF CEMETERY, EVACUATION NUMBER, OR SEARCH AND RECOVERY NO.						
				ESTIMATED AGE (Yrs)	ESTIMATED HEIGHT 70.7	
BLACK OUT PORTIONS NOT RECOVERED						
RIGHT			HAIR BROWN LEFT LEFT			RIGHT
ANTERIOR			<input type="checkbox"/> INTACT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DECOMPOSED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BURNED (Degree: <input type="checkbox"/> 1st <input type="checkbox"/> 2d <input type="checkbox"/> 3d)		
CONDITION OF REMAINS (Check pertinent blocks) <input type="checkbox"/> SEMI-SKELETAL <input type="checkbox"/> FLESH COVERED						
REMARKS (Continue on reverse if additional space is required) BODY: Incomplete: SEE ABOVE RACE: CAUCASIAN TABLE MEASUREMENTS: <u>RTA - ULNA 28.3CM = 70.7</u> FOOT MARKS: SEE ABOVE I.D. TAGS: NONE I.D. CARD: NONE CLOTHING: PIECES OF JUNGLE Fatigue Pants and Shirt <u>Wash Pants SEE RR</u>						
NAME OF PREPARING OFFICER (Print or Type) RAY MILLER			SIGNATURE <i>Ray Miller</i>			
DD FORM 1 FEB 54 893						

Fig. 4.5 Anatomical chart of remains identified as PVT William J. McRae (Image: Public Domain)

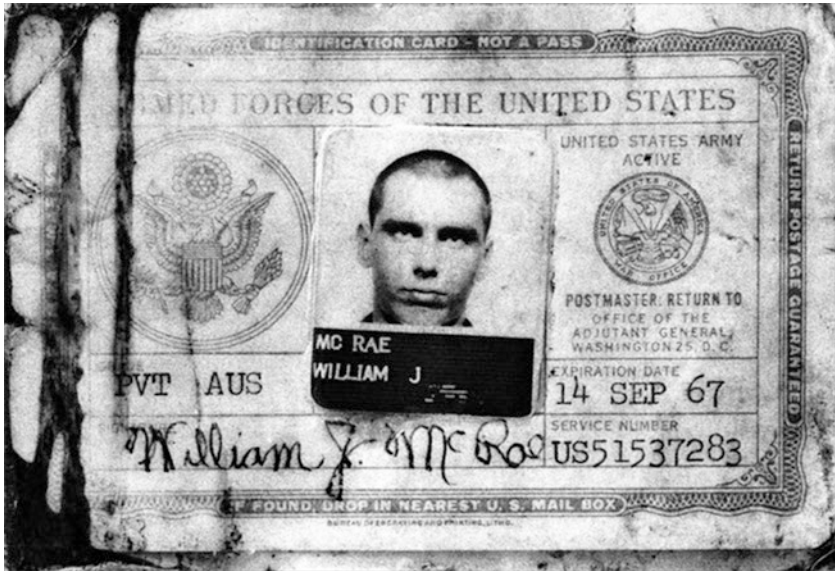


Fig. 4.6 PVT William J. McRae's military identification card (Image: Public Domain)

The remains of the sixth person recovered from the helicopter crash with PVT McRae's identification card, designated TSN 8878-67 by the TSN mortuary, were transferred to CILHI where they were re-designated as X-32. The following is the skeletal chart of the X-32 remains (Fig. 4.7).

The remains recovered with the identification card from the helicopter crash that had been designated as X-32 were identified as PVT William J. McRae.

Two of the four eligible Vietnam War unidentified cases had been eliminated.

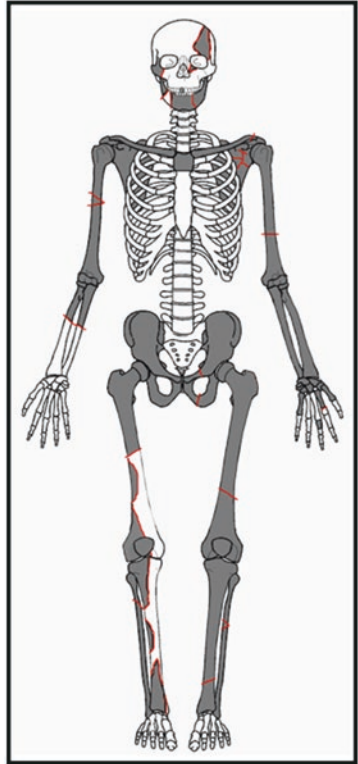
The identification of PVT McRae merely replaced one problem with another. Who was buried in McRae's grave in Boston?

The remains of the individual who had been erroneously identified as PVT McRae were exhumed on November 1, 1982, and then transferred to CILHI where the remains, re-designated as X-17, were informally referred to by lab staff as "Boston Billy." The remains were those of a male, 23–30 years old, approximately 60.2 inches (153 cm) tall. As shown in the following inventory, a large percentage of X-17's skeleton was not present (Fig. 4.8). (Darkened areas represent missing bones.)

MALE RECORD OF IDENTIFICATION PROCESSING SKELETAL CHART			
LAST NAME - FIRST NAME - MIDDLE INITIAL (of unknown number)		BLACK OUT PORTIONS NOT RECOVERED	
GRADE	SERVICE NUMBER		
NAME OF CEMETERY, EVACUATION NUMBER, OR SEARCH AND RECOVERY NUMBER TSN 8878-67			
PLOT	ROW	GRAVE	
ESTIMATED AGE (Years) 29 ± 3 Years		ESTIMATED HEIGHT 6'0" (-6'1")	
SKELETAL MEASUREMENTS (Centimeters)			
SKELETAL MEMBER	METHOD	RIGHT	LEFT
SKULL	Cranial B. Minimum Front	(Est.) 170mm (Est.) 106mm	
HUMERUS			
ULNA			
RADIUS			
FEMUR	Calculated; Max. Length	51.2	
TIBIA	Max. Length	42.5	
FIBULA	Max. Length	41.3	
REMARKS OR STATEMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGIST (Continue on reverse if more space is required)			
1. Caucasian: Crural Index = 83%, joint/shaft ratios, femoral bow. 2. Variation: (R) Humerus, supracondylar process (moderate). 3. (L) Pubis region sawed off. 4. Wedges of selected bones have been taken. REPORT FILED...REVERSE SIDE			
THE PARTS PRESENT AS INDICATED ON THIS SKELETAL CHART REPRESENTS ONE AND THE SAME INDIVIDUAL			
PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGIST (Name)			
Rodger Heglar, Ph.D.			
SIGNATURE		10-36-78	
DD FORM 1 FEB 64 892		REPLACES GMC FORM 1044, 18 MAR 47, WHICH IS OBSOLETE.	

Fig. 4.7 Skeletal chart of X-32. Darkened areas are missing (Image: Public Domain)

Fig. 4.8 Skeletal chart of X-17, aka “Boston Billy”
(Image: Public Domain)



The only thing known for certain about X-17 was that he had died in the helicopter crash on August 9, 1967. The problem was no missing American servicemen were associated with a helicopter crash on that date.

PRESIDENT REAGAN’S THIRD CHOICE FOR THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN: A CIVILIAN

The Reagan administration again pressured the Pentagon to instruct CILHI to identify X-17 within six months, or declare the remains to be *unidentifiable*—or else.

Mr. Jerry Degnan, who was a civilian who worked for Decca Navigation Systems in Saigon, installed the Decca Navigator System, a hyperbolic radio navigation system that was a precursor to the GPS system. He

Fig. 4.9 Mr. Jerry L. Degnan (Photo: Public Domain)



installed the equipment on helicopters and also trained pilots how to use it (Fig. 4.9). Technicians such as Mr. Degnan, who often wore military fatigues without insignia and combat boots, were not included on a flight manifest during a training “hop.”

During his time in Vietnam, Mr. Degnan sent an audiotape to his parents each month. The last tape and letter from Mr. Degnan were delivered to them in August 1967. His family in Youngstown, Ohio, which did not miss him until September, called the Decca HQ in Saigon only to receive a runaround. In mid-September the family called Decca again. Decca, which realized that no one had seen Mr. Degnan for over one month, filed a missing person report on September 20, 1967. Mr. Degnan’s family continued paying his life insurance premium. They were concerned that if and when he was declared dead, if the premiums were not up to date, there would be no payout.

US authorities in Vietnam were aware of Mr. Degnan’s disappearance, but did not notice until the end of August after which efforts were made to determine what had happened to him. According to REFNO 0816 dated April 19, 1976:

On 28 August 1967 Jerry L. Degnan disappeared from the Saigon area in the vicinity of grid coordinates XS 800 900. The US Embassy and investigative services conducted an investigation without success.

Details of the Degnan case were given to the Two-Party Joint Military Commission and to the Special Assistant to the Ambassador for field operations, US Embassy Saigon. These details were subsequently given to the

Mayor of Saigon, but neither PubCom nor investigation by the Vietnamese National Police (Special Branch) could generate additional information on this case. Go Vap District officials recovered a set of remains in October 1974 which were thought to be those of Mr. Degnan; however CILHI determined the remains to be Mongoloid.

In fact, Mr. Degnan had been killed on August 9, 1967, nearly three weeks prior to the date cited in the REFNO.

In 1971, Mr. Degnan’s family went to court in Ohio to have Degnan declared dead. During discovery, Decca produced a memo that Mr. Degnan had been last seen in Saigon with Mr. Joe O’Brian on August 25, 1967. Mr. O’Brian, who was a pilot, produced his logbook that proved he was not in Saigon on August 25, 1967. The family successfully obtained a finding of death in August 1974.

CILHI had not thought to associate X-17 with Mr. Degnan because the lab had been informed that he was alive as late as August 25, 1967, two weeks after the fatal helicopter crash. In an effort to resolve the discrepancy, CILHI contacted Mr. Degnan’s brother who advised that Mr. Degnan must

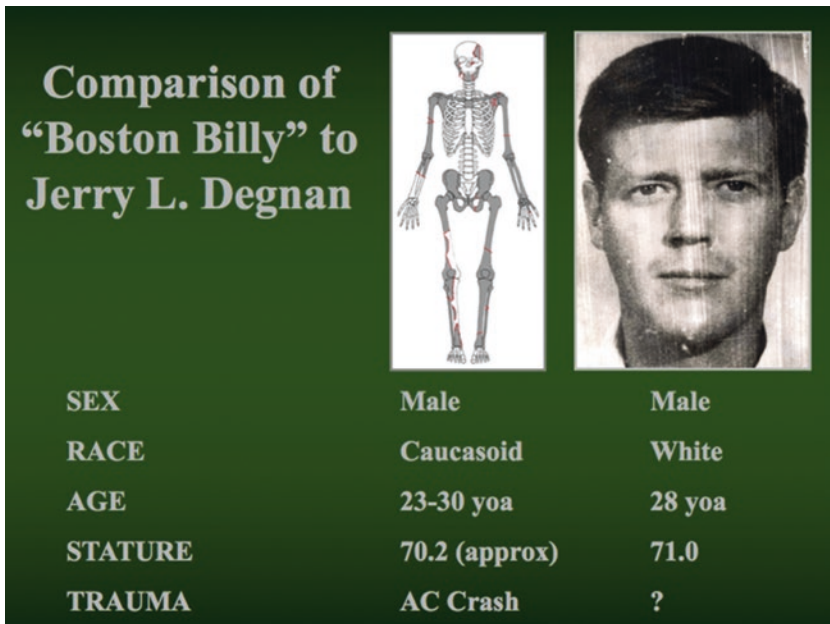


Fig. 4.10 Anatomical comparison of Jerry L. Degnan to “Boston Billy” aka X-17 (Image: Public Domain)

have disappeared much earlier than August 25. The CILHI casualty data section then examined all American losses, military and civilian, that occurred in Vietnam during the interval between August to September 1967.

All of the losses were eliminated except for Mr. Jerry L. Degnan, who was a civilian. Due to the fact that it was not possible to conclude that the remains designated as X-17 were the remains of a US serviceman who had been killed in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia, X-17 was eliminated from consideration for the Tomb of the Unknowns.

The remains X-17, aka “Boston Billy,” were exhumed from Boston, shipped to CILHI, and then compared to the biological information in Mr. Degnan’s antemortem records (Fig. 4.10).

Mr. Degnan was identified by Dr. Thomas Holland, Scientific Director of the CILHI, on February 28, 2001, using lines of evidence that included a chest radiograph comparison and a DNA match with his brother.

Mr. Degnan’s remains were returned to his family then buried in his hometown, this time with his own name on the headstone (Fig. 4.11).



Fig. 4.11 Grave of Mr. Jerry L. Degnan, formerly X-17 (Photo: Public Domain)

If the Reagan administration had gotten their way, Mr. Degnan's remains would have been permanently interred in the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Three of the four Vietnam War unknown cases had been eliminated. Only one case remained.

The Reagan administration was not deterred.

* * *

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S FOURTH CHOICE FOR THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN: AN IDENTIFIABLE CASE

Mr. Furue's "morphological approximation" technique had produced many dubious identifications. Tragically, the most egregious error of that era of junk science resulted from an identification that Mr. Furue did not make.

Of the four eligible unidentified cases, after the identifications of X-15 (Barton), X-32 (McRae) and X-17 (Degnan), the only unidentified case remaining in the CIL was X-26.

The evidence suggested that X-26 was not an unidentified case that deserved to be declared unidentifiable. X-26 had been recovered when a South Vietnamese patrol found skeletal remains close to the wreckage of an aircraft near An Loc on October 31, 1972. The remains were discovered nearby the wreckage, which suggested that the pilot had ejected, possibly when the aircraft was inverted, that is, upside down. A name was associated with the remains of X-26.

On October 31, 1972, five months after Michael Blassie's plane was shot down, a Vietnamese Army search party found a handful of bones – four ribs, two from the right side and two from the left; a pelvic bone; and the right humerus, the bone in the upper arm – and a few objects that seemed to belong to an airplane or its pilot. Listed as found were an airplane ejection seat, pieces of fabric from a flight suit and some from a parachute, a pistol holder, a one-man inflatable raft, two compasses, a flag, and a wallet with an identification card bearing Blassie's name.¹⁷

A wallet, which contained a photograph of Blassie's family, also contained an ID card which stated that Blassie was six feet (183 cm) tall, had dark hair and a mustache, and weighed 200 pounds (90.72 kg).

The location of the crash site was consistent with the recollection of another pilot who had seen Blassie's A-37 fall in flames in the same area on May 11, 1972. Ground fighting had prevented any search for the body by US forces or their South Vietnamese allies until the following autumn.

Colonel Bill Parcel, who was stationed at An Loc, stated, "I know it was Michael Joseph Blassie who we recovered."¹⁸ Four years after the remains were recovered, in 1976 the remains were transferred to the CILHI.

The remains, which were stored in the Army's CILHI for eight years, were originally designated TSN 063-72 "believed to be Michael Blassie." The flier's family was notified in May 1972 that he was missing and presumed dead, but according to Blassie's sister, the family had not been told that remains believed to be his had been found, nor that an identification card and other material evidence from the crash site had been recovered.¹⁹

In 1978, Mr. Tadao Furue examined the remains. In the pre-DNA analysis era and without teeth present, no accredited technique existed that could be used to identify the remains believed to be (BTB) those of Lieutenant Michael Blassie. Using his "morphological approximation" method that the Army has praised as a state-of-the-art technique, Mr. Furue concluded that the remains of:

BTB Blassie's remains did not match Michael Blassie's records. Instead, Furue suggested, the remains belonged to a man who was between thirty and forty years of age. Blassie was twenty-four. Furue guessed the height of his subject to be between five feet six inches and five feet eleven inches – a possible match, since Blassie stood between five feet eleven and six feet, but at the outer limit of the average. Finally, Mr. Furue discovered a small, light brown body hair on a fragment of the flight suit recovered from Blassie's crash; this miniscule clue yielded another piece of evidence, fixing the dead man's blood as type O. Blassie's was type A. Based on these three findings, Mr. Furue recommended, in a memorandum dated December 4, 1978, that the remains previously associated with Blassie be reclassified as unidentified and that the airman's name be stripped from the accompanying case file. Faced with this recommendation and the anthropological evidence before them, a military review board followed Furue's lead: on May 7, 1980, Blassie's remains were designated as unidentified and his Believed To Be status rescinded. His bones were assigned a new file name, TSN 0673-72.²⁰

The blood test was highly suspect. One of Blassie's leg hairs which was tested for blood type produced type O. Blassie was type A; thus he was

eliminated by Mr. Furue. Type O is simply the absence of either the A or B antigen. In other words, any blood that lacks the A or B antigen will be type O. This includes degraded blood for which no A or B antigen remains. Blassie's sample, which did not produce the A or B antigen, was therefore classified as type O by blood lab personnel who might not have understood that a test designed for use on fresh blood that is used on partially decomposed tissue will not produce reliable results.

On the basis of results produced by an unaccredited, even crackpot method called "morphological approximation" and a dubious blood test, Mr. Furue recommended that the "believed to be" remains be re-designated as "unknown."

The final stage in disaggregating the individual name from the remains occurred as the DoD sought to clear its docket of lingering unresolved cases. On 28 April 1980, Blassie's case, along with other unidentified remains underwent a review by the Armed Services Graves Registration Office (ASGRO) to evaluate its status. By that point, the initial compelling circumstantial evidence connecting Blassie to his bones had been so eroded by mismanaged material evidence and misread forensic data that the board (made up of military officers, not forensic experts) opted to delete the name association. The tie to identity now cut, the remains were no longer 'BTB' those of 1stLt Michael J. Blassie; rather, they had become an official unknown with an associated X-file.²¹

As a result of a scientific finding made by a board composed of scientifically illiterate military officers, in 1980 the remains of BTB Lieutenant Blassie were re-designated as "unknown." CILHI re-designated the unknown remains previously designated as TSN 0673-72 as X-26.

Mr. Furue concluded that the X-26 remains could not be identified within the six-month timeframe. What Mr. Furue also concluded, however, was that if additional remains could be recovered or a new analytical technique became available, there was a sufficient probability that the remains could be identified at some point in the future to exclude concluding that the remains were *unidentifiable*. The biggest problem was that no teeth were present with the X-26 remains. Despite the fact that in Mr. Furue's opinion the small amount of biological evidence present didn't match Blassie, he remained confident that designating X-26 to be *unidentifiable* was not justified.

The distinction between *could not be identified* using available evidence and current forensic techniques and *unidentifiable* was crucial. Mr. Furue and his colleagues could not rule out the possibility that the remains could

be identified in the future. The Reagan White House, however, was not about to allow the science of human skeletal identification to disrupt its political agenda.

By 1983, the identification card and the money found with X-26 had vanished, likely lost, or stolen between An Loc and a mortuary in Saigon or the CIL in Thailand.²² The manifest with the remains was the only evidence that the wallet and ID card had been recovered in the first place. Pilfering and theft in mortuary services was a common problem during the Vietnam War. Money recovered with a casualty was supposed to be forwarded to the next of kin. Sometimes the money recovered wasn't always the same money returned to the family. A common practice among the mortuary staff during the Vietnam War era was to switch valuable money recovered with less valuable money of the same face value. For example, if a silver dollar were recovered, the unscrupulous mortuary staff member would keep the silver dollar, and then the Treasury Department would send the family a paper check for one dollar.

The remains of X-26 were previously designated as BTB Lieutenant Michael Blassie. Nonetheless, the White House leaned on DoD to pressure CILHI with yet another politically motivated ultimatum.

The White House gave the DoD six months to identify X-26 or declare the remains to be unidentifiable, thus eligible for eternal interment in the Tomb of the Unknowns. In response to pressure from the White House, the Pentagon gave CILHI a familiar ultimatum: Identify X-26 within six months or sign a certificate stating that the X-26 remains were *unidentifiable*—or else.

Although he was reported to be “adamantly opposed” to the Arlington burial, Mr. Furue gave into the intense pressure from above. He signed the certificate that declared X-26 to be unidentifiable, then passed the document to the CILHI commander Major Johnie E. Webb Jr. for countersignature. On March 21, 1983, only two months before the Memorial Day ceremony, Major Webb, bowing to the pressure from the White House and DoD, reluctantly signed off. The X-26 remains, previously BTB Lieutenant Blassie, were officially determined to be *unidentifiable*.

On April 13, 1983, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger designated X-26 as the remains that would be buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns. Political interference with the science of human skeletal identification had paid off.

After remains were selected for burial in the Tomb of the Unknowns, the regulations required CILHI to destroy any and all records and evidence that could be used to identify the remains. This was to ensure that eternal inter-

ment meant just that. On April 4, 1983, Major Webb was ordered to remove and destroy any information in the X-26 file, including the crash site physical evidence that could be used to link Lieutenant Blassie to X-26.

Major Webb stopped following orders. Instead of destroying the files and material evidence, such as the life raft fragment that could be linked with Lieutenant Blassie's aircraft, Major Webb said he hid everything in a place where no one would look. "I put the evidence in the casket...with X-26."²³

The Reagan White House had its Vietnam War unknown. Now all they needed was a high-profile ceremony.

Army Secretary John Marsh recommended that the interment should take place on Veterans Day, November 11, 1984. Secretary Marsh was overruled by the White House due to the fact that Veterans Day fell after the presidential election. The ceremony was scheduled for Memorial Day 1984, six months before the general election.

During ceremonies at Pearl Harbor, on May 17, 1984, Sergeant Major Allan Kellogg, Jr., US Marine Corps, a Medal of Honor recipient during the Vietnam Conflict, placed a wreath before the casket, formally designating X-26 as the unknown from the Vietnam Conflict. X-26, which was placed aboard the USS *Brewton* for transport to the US mainland, arrived in Washington, DC on May 25, 1984, where X-26 lay in state for three days in the Capitol rotunda.

On May 28, 1984, a caisson bearing the remains of X-26 passed by more than a quarter million people, including Vietnam War veterans who lined Constitution Avenue leading to Arlington National Cemetery (Fig. 4.12).

Inventing stories to derive political advantage was a consistent theme in President Reagan's career. In the fall of 1983, President Ronald Reagan, who had flown a desk as a "movie set soldier" in Culver City, California, during WWII, told Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that he helped liberate the Auschwitz concentration camp. Like the prince regent who convinced himself that he had participated in the Battle of Waterloo, Reagan repeatedly claimed that he had made films of the liberation of Nazi concentration camps at Ohrdruf and Buchenwald. In December 1983 while addressing the Congressional Medal of Honor Society, President Reagan told a bogus story about B-17 commander who chose not to bail out of his crippled aircraft and instead took the hand of the wounded ball turret gunner and said, "Never mind, son, we'll ride it down together. Congressional Medal of Honor posthumously awarded."²⁴ The only thing these events had in common was that they were fake events concocted for



Fig. 4.12 Caisson with remains of X-26 arrive at Arlington National Cemetery (Photo: Public Domain)

political purposes. In the Reagan White House, not even the Tomb of the Unknowns was out of bounds for political theater.

President Reagan spoke at the interment ceremony (Fig. 4.13).

President Reagan's speech during the ceremony included these remarks. "Today, we pause to embrace him and all who served so well in a war whose end offered no parades, no flags, and so little thanks." President Reagan's voice then broke on cue. "About him we may well wonder, as others have – as a child, did he play on some street in a great American city? Did he work beside his father on a farm?"

Blurring the distinction between *unidentified* and *unidentifiable*, President Reagan then stated, "We will never know the answers to those questions about his life." Pentagon spokesman Major Robert Shields echoed the president's position when he stated, "The serviceman chosen to be placed in the Tomb of the Unknowns has remained unidentified and will now forever remain so." The only way that President Reagan's question would not be answered and the identity of X-26 concealed forever would be to prevent forensic scientists from doing their jobs.



Fig. 4.13 President Reagan (far right) at the interment of X-26 in the Tomb of the Unknowns. Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger is on the left (Photo: Public Domain)

The president addressed the paid lobbyist's concern by stating the accounting effort would continue. "We write no last chapters. We close no books. We put away no final memories." Yet that was exactly what the Reagan administration was trying to do. President Reagan had used political pressure to "close the book" on X-26. Politics had once again triumphed over science (Fig. 4.14). As usual, the political victory over science was short-lived.

As the president placed the Medal of Honor on the flag-draped casket, he said, "Thank you, dear son, and may God cradle you in his loving arms."



Fig. 4.14 X-26 is lowered into the Tomb of the Unknowns (Photo: Public Domain)

With that, as a result of junk science and the Reagan Administration's exploitation of the war dead for political purposes, X-26 was sealed for eternity into the tomb under several tons of granite.

God, however, who may or may not have cradled X-26 in her loving arms, had other plans.

* * *

DISENTOMBMENT AND IDENTIFICATION

Ten years after X-26 was buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns, a former Green Beret named Mr. Ted Sampley placed a telephone call to Captain Patricia Blassie, Lieutenant Blassie's sister. Mr. Sampley advised that he had published an article in the *U.S. Veteran Dispatch*, a Vietnam veterans' newsletter published by Mr. Sampley. In that article Mr. Sampley stated he could prove that her brother had been buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns.²⁵ Mr. Sampley's article stated:

The remnants which were found with the bone fragments [...] are important pieces of the puzzle. The piece of flight suit indicates that the Vietnam Unknown was an airman, and the evidence of the existence of a parachute rules out the possibility of a helicopter crew. [...] A one-man inflatable raft can be argued as a strong reason to rule out the crews of the C-130's, leaving only the pilot of the A-37, who would have been equipped with a one-man raft.

Mr. Sampley's article came to the attention of CBS reporter Mr. Vince Gonzales who in turn brought the story to the attention of senior editors. On January 19, 1998, CBS's Eric Engberg reported that the remains buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns were those of Lieutenant Michael Blassie. Mr. Engberg reported that the selection process had been conducted in secret in order to conceal the identity of the remains, which was not entirely correct. The selection process had been conducted in secret because of the political purpose as well as the facts that after failing to bury two deserters and a civilian in the Tomb of the Unknowns, X-32 was the last unidentified case available.

Lieutenant Blassie's sister, Ms. Patricia Blassie, replied perceptively, "If it is Michael, he's not unknown. He's not identified, but he isn't *unidentifiable*."

After a lengthy dispute that included a determination by the CIL that there was a "high probability" that Lieutenant Blassie's remains could be identified, the remains of X-26 were exhumed on May 7, 1998, from the Tomb of the Unknowns.

Mr. David Rankin, a CILHI anthropologist, supervised the opening of the tomb. In contrast to the political drama and presence of a military honor guard when X-26 was entombed, when the casket was disinterred:

Where military ritual left off, scientific protocol picked up. Padlocks and laboratory regulations safeguarded the remains from a different threat of contamination – any intrusion, physical or procedural, into the evidentiary chain of custody that ensured the legitimized production of scientific knowledge. [...]

The disinterment marked a significant break from the past: this time, it would be board-certified forensic experts, not military personnel or mortuary staff, who would evaluate the evidence[.]²⁶

The remains of X-26 had to be protected from the DoD's scientifically illiterate "pencil whippers" without whom the entombment would not have occurred in the first place.

The remains were transferred to Walter Reed Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland, in one hearse, closely followed by a second hearse. The Pentagon wanted to avoid the spectacle of the hearse transporting the remains stuck on the shoulder of Wisconsin Avenue with a flat tire.

Dr. Robert Mann, a CIL anthropologist and laboratory manager who was present when the casket was opened, stated:

I don't recall seeing any paper records in the casket, but there were several people involved in the opening and a couple of different things going on in the room at Walter Reed at the same time. My focus during the opening was looking for the human remains and not the material evidence. As best I can remember, there were two blankets pinned shut with large safety pins - I think one blanket held human remains and the other held material evidence.

David Rankin and I focused on the blanket containing the remains, although I think we helped open and spread out both blankets to see if there were remains in both of them or just one and to make sure we didn't leave anything inside the blankets. I recall seeing a piece or pieces of what appeared to me to be rubberized material that I thought were either life vest or life raft and I think there were a few other items, but I can't remember specifically what there was.

I don't recall seeing any paperwork, but if there was any it may have been removed and/or examined by someone else while Dave and I were focusing on the remains. I remember that someone was taking photos of what was going on inside the room at Walter Reed, the condition of the casket before and after opening and perhaps even the remains and material evidence at that time, so there may be photographs in the case packet at the CIL.

Wish I could be more specific or recall more about the material evidence, but it's been a long time. What I do remember are the human remains - if memory serves me well there were six bones consisting of right and left innominates, three ribs and a humerus that Dave cut for mtDNA.

I can recall the detail and condition of the remains much better than the material evidence.²⁷

Inside the coffin was the material evidence that Major Webb claimed he had placed there 14 years earlier. The following is a photograph of material evidence returned to the Blassie family (Fig. 4.15).

The hiding place for the paper records associated with the Blassie case, however, has never been established. A source close to the Blassie case is convinced Mr. Webb defied orders to destroy the paper records, just as he had disobeyed a direct order to destroy the material evidence, and instead hid the records in a filing cabinet in his office. How Webb avoided any punitive

Fig. 4.15 Blassie material evidence (Photo: Blassie family via nim.nih.gov)



action for disobeying a direct order remains a mystery. In the US military's corrupt corporate culture in which "pencil whipping" and ethical fading were routine, it is not surprising that there were no consequences.²⁸

Dr. Thomas Holland, who arrived at Bethesda Naval Hospital shortly after the coffin was opened, was the only person to have a key to the locked room where the coffin and remains were stored. He recalled seeing material evidence, including what he thought might be a part of a life raft, in the coffin. Dr. Holland stated that the "fragments of what appeared to be the life raft were the size of a large person's palm."

Questions and doubts remained, however, as to whether X-26 was actually Lieutenant Blassie.

Pentagon officials advised CBS News that they interviewed specialists involved in selecting the remains who believed "all along" that the remains were those of Lieutenant Blassie.²⁹ Two CILHI staff members, Major Johnie E. Webb Jr. and Mr. Rick Houston, however, were not initially convinced the remains were Lieutenant Blassie. According to one anthro-

pologist who was close to the case, the age and stature estimates made by Mr. Furue of the X-26 remains did not match Lieutenant Blassie. Instead, in his view, age and stature were closer to Captain Rodney L. Strobridge who also went missing on May 11, 1972, the same day and within a 25 mile radius of the location of LT Blassie's crash site (Fig. 4.16).

Using "morphological approximation," Mr. Furue had determined that the X-26 remains were those of a man who was shorter and older than LT Blassie. LT Blassie, who was 24 years old when he was shot down, was six feet (183 cm) tall and weighed 200 pounds (90.72 kg). CPT Strobridge was five feet nine (175.25 cm), 30 years old with type O blood.

Captain Strobridge, who was from Torrance, California, was flying as co-pilot in an AH-1G "Cobra" helicopter on a combat mission near the city of An Loc in Binh Long province, which was under attack by North Vietnamese forces during the so-called Spring Offensive. The helicopter was hit by what was thought to be a surface-to-air missile that separated the tail boom, causing the aircraft to go into a flat spin and crash. LT Blassie and CPT Strobridge were shot down approximately two miles (3.2 km) from one another.

The CIL obtained DNA reference samples from family members of the nine missing persons who disappeared during the same timeframe as LT Blassie and CPT Strobridge. The DNA reference sample from Captain Strobridge's family was compared to every unidentified case in the

Fig. 4.16 Captain Rodney L. Strobridge (Photo: Public Domain)



CIL including X-26, without a match. As of early 2018, Captain Strobridge's remains have not been recovered or identified. There was speculation that Captain Strobridge and the pilot Captain Robert J. Williams may have survived the crash, then were captured which could explain why no remains were found at the crash site. In addition, Captain Strobridge's family could not rule out the possibility that remains in the Tomb were his.

In 1998, President Clinton directed that the remains of X-26 be disinterred and then subjected to DNA analysis. Based on forensic testing of the remains including DNA analysis that yielded a unique DNA sequence, along with the lines of evidence produced by the material evidence, Dr. Thomas Holland identified X-26 as Lieutenant Michael Blassie. Three board-certified forensic anthropologists and an odontologist who peer-reviewed Dr. Holland's conclusions concurred.

The remains of Lieutenant Blassie were transferred to his family and then buried on July 11, 1968, close to the grave of his father in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in his home state of Missouri. The physical evidence present with Lieutenant Blassie's remains included a piece of a nylon flight suit, part of a pistol holster, a fragment of a parachute, and a one-man life raft.³⁰ The Medal of Honor that was bestowed upon X-26 by President Reagan was not transferred to Lieutenant Blassie following the identification of his remains (Fig. 4.17). DoD Under Secretary (Personnel and Readiness) Rudy de Leon advised LT Blassie's mother Ms. Jean Blassie that "the award is symbolic, not personal."³¹

Fig. 4.17 Lieutenant Michael Blassie, formerly X-26 (Photo: Public Domain)



The crypt that once held LT Blassie's remains has been re-named. The original inscription, "Vietnam," and the dates of the conflict have been changed to "Honoring and Keeping Faith with America's Missing Servicemen."

The closure that came to the Blassie family eluded Rodney Strobridge's widow.

The former Pat Mulligan, at the time an elementary school teacher in Monterrey, California, married Strobridge in the summer of 1970. Strobridge had already served a tour in Vietnam as an army pilot flying fixed-wing aircraft. In 1971, the army sent him to helicopter school. Shortly after Christmas of 1971, he left for a second tour in Vietnam. Pat Strobridge never saw her husband again. He was declared missing and presumed dead on Mother's Day, May 14, 1972. By the time the quest to identify the Vietnam unknown got underway, Pat Strobridge had remarried and was no longer considered next of kin. Notice that the remains were Blassie's was delivered to Strobridge's mother, Althea, in Perry, Iowa.

"He's still MIA," she said. "I don't know whether to cry or be happy."³²

The determination of the Blassie family, backed by the power of forensic science, reversed a politically motivated burial.

* * *

A critical lesson from the Blassie case was that the scientists responsible for human skeletal identification must be independent of political influence and free from the military chain of command. The political pressure and command leverage used by American officials to coerce the military commander of a skeletal identification laboratory into making an indiscriminate conclusion masquerading as science was no different from Soviet-style Lysenkoism.

The entombment of First Lieutenant Blassie's remains, which was the direct result of political influence over science, was abetted by the military's willingness to produce custom-made "pencil whipped" results on demand.

The set of remains designated as X-26 became the Vietnam Unknown because state officials in the Reagan administration foregrounded evidence of presumed unknowability while backgrounding glaring uncertainties and the potential for scientific advance. The decision to do so reflected not only the material limitations of forensic science at that moment but also the structural limitations of a laboratory beholden to military commanders rather than a broader scientific community.³³

The triumph of science over politics in the LT Blassie case was an important but short-lived victory. Measures were instituted to shield CIL scientists from the influence of the scientifically illiterate in order to protect the scientific integrity of the identification process. Unfortunately, however, scientific control of the CIL, which emerged Phoenix-like from the ruins of the Blassie case, was to be short-lived as well.

Those who used politics to interfere with the science of human identification were just warming up. Political pressure to re-instate political and military control of the science of human skeletal identification began to be applied by lobbyists and other pressure groups. Those who had been given the responsibility to protect the scientific integrity of the identification process stood idly by, looked the other way, or in some cases actively supported the effort to exert political control over science.

The great irony or perhaps final tragedy was that Lieutenant Blassie was from Missouri, the same state represented by Senator Claire McCaskill who would join forces with those who despised the independence of the CIL. This alliance of opportunistic politicians, the scientifically illiterate, jejune journalists, bureaucratic vultures, and self-serving lobbyists would combine to wreak politically motivated havoc on the scientific integrity of the identification process 15 years later.

NOTES

1. "Roman Soldiers Taken Prisoner of War," Gaius Stern, March 2007, SFSU Ancient War Lecturer Series 2007, p. 3. http://www.academia.edu/2439615/Rules_of_Greek_and_Roman_POWs_SFSU_Ancient_War_Lecture_Series_2007_
2. In the matter of Uriah the Hittite, while Uriah was off fighting for king David, the king impregnated Bathsheba, Uriah's wife. After Uriah returned from battle, David tried to get rid of him subtly. After subtle didn't work, David signed Uriah's death warrant. The moral of the story was twofold: People like Uriah who lived to high moral standards do not always receive blessings, and due to their close association with top management amoral manipulators like David sometimes get away with adultery and murder.
3. "The Treatment of Prisoners of War and Non-Combatants in the Quran," Brian Bertosa (undated), National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces. <http://www.journal.forces.gc.ca/vo8/nol/bertosa-eng.asp>
4. *Prisoners of War in the Hundred Years War: Ransom Culture in the Late Middle Ages*, Rémy Ambühl (Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 4–5.
5. "German POWs on the American Homefront," J. Malcolm Garcia, *Smithsonian Magazine*, September 15, 2009. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/german-pows-on-the-american-homefront-141009996/>

6. "Roman Soldiers Taken Prisoner of War," Gaius Stern, March 2007, SFSU Ancient War Lecturer Series 2007, pp. 3–4. http://www.academia.edu/2439615/Rules_of_Greek_and_Roman_POWs_SFSU_Ancient_War_Lecture_Series_2007_
7. *Remarks at a Meeting of the National League of Families of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia*, by President Ronald Reagan, January 28, 1983. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=40495>
8. *Proclamation 5031 – National P.O.W. – MIA Recognition Day, 1983*, March 14, 1983. <https://www.reaganlibrary.archives.gov/archives/speeches/1983/31483c.html>
9. "Joan Quigley, and 5 stories of astrology in the White House," Jaime Fuller, *Washington Post*, October 28, 2014. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2014/10/28/joan-quigley-and-5-stories-of-astrology-in-the-white-house/?utm_term=.cdabe71de737. Chief of Staff Donald Regan stated that the president and Mrs. Reagan consulted an astrologer to schedule Air Force One trip, speeches, and many other aspects of the presidency. "Virtually every major move and decision the Reagans made during my time as White House chief of staff was cleared in advance with a woman in San Francisco who drew up horoscopes to make certain that the planets were in favorable alignment for the enterprise." Mrs. Quigley, the president's astrologer, referred to herself as a "serious, scientific astrologer" and as a "political astrologer."
10. "Last soldier buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns wasn't unknown," Bill Thomas, *Washington Post Magazine*, November 8, 2012. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/last-soldier-buried-in-tomb-of-the-unknowns-wasnt-unknown/2012/11/06/5da3e7d6-0bdd-11e2-a310-2363842b7057_story.html?utm_term=.4f5a0fef0243
11. "The making and unmaking of an unknown soldier," Sarah Wagner, *Social Studies of Science*, 2013, p. 636.
12. Author's interview with Mr. Rudy de Leon, June 13, 2017.
13. PFC Barton's casualty status at the time his remains were considered for entombment was "deserter," which is why his service record was held by the FBI. If PFC Barton's family is correct and he was not, in fact, a deserter, that would only compound the family's suffering. DoD has a responsibility to determine whether PFC Barton was a deserter or merely another tragic figure from a war characterized by countless tragedies.
14. Desertions were not uncommon. The Pentagon reported that in 1970, nearly one out of every 12 (89,088) GIs in the Army deserted, a 300% increase since 1966. 228,797 others went AWOL. The Pentagon also confirmed there were 209 reported fraggings of officers and NCOs in Vietnam that year.
15. "Long Binh Jail Riot During The Vietnam War," *HistoryNet*, June 12, 2006. <http://www.historynet.com/long-binh-jail-riot-during-the-vietnam-war.htm>

16. "UH-1 Crews," http://www.armyaircrews.com/huey_nam_67.html
17. *Forensic Detective: How I Cracked the World's Toughest Cases*, Robert Mann with Miryam Williamson, (New York: Random House Group, January 20, 2007), pp. 95–96.
18. NBC News Correspondent Washington, April 24, 1998, by Jim Miklaszewski.
19. "Dispute on Tomb of Unknowns Pits Policy Against Heart," David Stout, *Washington Post*, February 15, 1988. <http://www.masshome.com/odevlin/unknown2.html>
20. *On Hallowed Ground: The Story of Arlington National Cemetery*, Robert M Poole, (Bloomsbury Publishing USA, October 26, 2010), pp. 237–8. <https://books.google.com/books?id=ec-mCAAQBAJ&pg=PA3338&lpg=PA3338&dq=Ted+Sampley+blassie&source=bl&cots=LIBuyLrI6g&sig=2Jguvr0ohWI1p9-qHAApAjCJiWQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjHs4OBvqPLAhUO-2MKHXZhc7UQ6AEITAI#v=onepage&q=Blassie&f=false>
21. "The making and unmaking of an unknown soldier," op. cit., p. 641.
22. "Dispute on Tomb of Unknowns Pits Policy Against Heart," op. cit.
23. "Dispute on Tomb of Unknowns Pits Policy Against Heart," op. cit.
24. A scene similar to President Reagan's story appeared in the 1944 feature film *Wing and a Prayer*, starring Don Ameche and Dana Andrews, Henry (sic) Morgan and Richard Jaeckel as "Beezy" Bessemer. The line from the movie was, "We'll bring this one down together."
25. "The Vietnam Unknown Soldier Can Be Identified," Theodore "Ted" Sampley, *U.S. Veteran Dispatch*, July 14, 1994.
26. "The making and unmaking of an unknown soldier," op. cit., p. 642.
27. Dr. Robert Mann, email to author, April 23, 2016.
28. Due to his ability to get away unscathed with actions that would have ruined another person, Mr. Webb's nickname was "Teflon Johnnie."
29. Transcript of *CBS Evening News*, January 20, 1998.
30. "Last soldier buried in the Tomb of the Unknowns was not unknown," op. cit. https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/magazine/last-soldier-buried-in-tomb-of-the-unknowns-wasnt-unknown/2012/11/06/5da3e7d6-0bdd-11e2-a310-2363842b7057_story.html?utm_term=.4f5a0fef0243
31. "Vietnam Unknown's Medal of Honor Transfer Denied," American Forces Press Service, *DoD News*, August 25, 1998. <http://web.archive.org/web/20150525182046/http://www.defense.gov/news/newsarticle.aspx?id=41850>
32. *Forensic Detective*, op. cit., p. 119.
33. "The making and unmaking of an unknown soldier," op. cit., p. 645.



CHAPTER 5

Accounting for the Korean War Missing

This chapter discusses the origins of and my role in a DoD-sponsored project administered by the RAND Corporation, the purpose of which was to determine the fates of more than 8000 American service members who went missing during the Korean War.¹

Of particular interest to the DoD was to locate any evidence that missing American servicemen had been transferred against their will to the territory of the Soviet Union.

* * *

RAND CORPORATION

My involvement in the POW/MIA accounting program came about as a result of a single amendment to FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act. The project landed in my lap after a circuitous journey through the DoD bureaucracy that ended at the RAND Corporation. In order to understand how I became involved in the effort to account for missing American service members, it is necessary to understand where RAND fit into the greater DoD organization.

RAND, which is believed to be an acronym for Research and National Defense, began as a think tank that primarily supported the USAF after it became a separate service on September 18, 1947. RAND eventually became a federally-funded research and development center (FFRDC).

In the early days, RAND was closely associated with innovative, path-breaking research into nuclear strategy, ICBM vulnerability, bomber basing, and other esoteric defense and national security issues such as mutual assured destruction. RAND's staff included a who's who of groundbreaking national security thinkers and analysts. RAND's people and early publications included *Preliminary Design of an Experimental World-Circling Spaceship* (1946), Herman Kahn (*On Thermonuclear War*), Roberta Wohlstetter (*Pearl Harbor: Warning and Deception*), Kenneth Arrow (the impossibility theorem), Barry Boehm (ARPANET, the precursor of the Internet), Thomas Schelling (*The Strategy of Conflict*), Bernard Brodie (*The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order*), and others. RAND's heyday was during the late 1940s and 1950s. In the 1970s, RAND surfaced in the media after staff member Dr. Daniel Ellsberg leaked the Pentagon Papers that were printed in *The New York Times*.

RAND's reputation for "thinking the unthinkable" was so entrenched that it received the ultimate accolade by being parodied in both *Dr. Strangelove* and by *The Simpsons* as well as being referred to by Pravda as "the academy of science and death." But these were not merely parodies of RAND, they were parodies of the Economics Department and Political Science Department (PSD).² These departments were where almost all of the interesting things happened in RAND's history.

In August 1990, I was the last person hired by RAND's PSD, just as the Cold War appeared to be winding down. The end of the Cold War eliminated a great deal of the intellectual challenge and much of the profound professional satisfaction associated with working on international relations and national security policy. In Los Angeles, for example, hardened FBI agents from the old school of counterintelligence were reassigned to anti-gang duty. Arresting Compton gangbangers was banality incarnate compared to chasing Soviet spies. By the early 1990s, many of RAND's top-shelf Cold War talent had died, retired, drifted away, or moved on, in some cases rather deliberately. RAND entered a phase during which "the place is 'too flabby,' and, like most mature and successful outfits, lacks a 'culture of self-analysis or reflection,'" and its "glory days are behind it."³

RAND maintained two offices, a small one in Washington and a large complex of buildings in Santa Monica, California. Santa Monica was considered to be the company's headquarters (Fig. 5.1).

The DC office was a small suite located near DuPont Circle. With few exceptions, all new PSD hires were required to move to California, which is how I ended up in the Santa Monica office, even though we were living in



Fig. 5.1 RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, California (Source: Public Domain)

the DC area in our own house at the time. The obligatory move was intended to inculcate new employees into the RAND corporate culture. It was classic indoctrination. Remove people from their familiar backgrounds, strip them of their familiar surroundings, then rebuild them in the company's image.

The most pronounced difference between the Washington and Santa Monica offices was the corporate culture. RAND staff in the DC office wore either the standard Washington-issue dark suit or a jacket and tie. The informal dress code among the research staff in Santa Monica required open collar shirts and casual slacks.

The corporate culture in the Santa Monica office emphasized conformity. Conforming with the non-conformist dress code, for example, was key to blending into RAND in Santa Monica. Due to the conformity found in the Santa Monica office, Dr. Richard Kugler, who worked in the RAND office in DC, referred to the staff in the Santa Monica office as the "Stepford Analysts." Others in the DC office referred to Santa Monica as "Moscow Centre," a place to which one never wanted to be summoned. The two offices were also known informally as the "he be's" and the "hey dudes." If you called the Washington office and asked to be connected to someone, the receptionist might say, "He be out." If you called the Santa Monica office, the person who answered the phone might say, "Hey, dude." He be's, hey dudes, Stepford Analysts, and Moscow Centre were all part of the RAND corporate culture.

* * *

People who have not worked in a government office often have an unrealistic view of what the inside of office space in a classified facility looks like. In the movies, the interior of the CIA is always portrayed as an ultra-modern, immaculate set of offices equipped with shiny stainless steel furniture, state-of-the-art computer systems, gigantic high-definition flat-screen displays, and colossal ventilation ducts large and clean enough for Tom Cruise to creep through in silence.

In the movie “Executive Decision,” a RAND-like institution is led by Dr. David Grant, a character played by Kurt Russell. In the movie, Dr. Grant is summoned to the Pentagon to sort out a terrorist hijacking. On the way out of the office, he barks to his staff, all of whom are huddled anxiously around large 1960s IBM-style computers with colossal reel-to-reel tape drives, “Keep it up people! They’re paying us to think!” Everyone energetically barked in return, “Yes, Sir!” As Dr. Grant disappears behind the large EXIT sign, the young, clean, trim, and mostly white staff begin typing at a fever pitch while staring at bright, modern computer monitors as multi-colored lights on a giant electronic map of the world flash maniacally. The staff mutters, gestures, and nods confidently at top speed.

At RAND, if a real-life “Dr. Grant” tried that, the last thing he would hear before the door clunked shut behind him would be a staffer muttering, “This coffee isn’t going to drink itself.”

The public’s perceptions of the interior of buildings in the intelligence community, of which RAND was distant third cousin, were always wildly divergent from the fact of the matter. No one would believe how mundane, if not downright tatty, a government research institution could be. RAND in Santa Monica consisted of three sets of buildings: a five-story building that stood at the head of the exit ramp where the Pacific Coast Highway turns into Highway 10, a set of single-story corridors arranged like a maze around a set of courtyards located across the street from the Santa Monica city hall, and a small number of trailers that served as temporary or overflow office space.

The five-story building located diagonally from Santa Monica Pier had been built with money provided by the Ford Foundation. As the story went, in order to hedge against the possibility that RAND might fold, Ford insisted that the building have dual-use capability designed into it. Thus, the five-story building’s primary function was to be a long-term care facility for chronically ill geriatrics. (Some wags suggested that’s exactly what happened when RAND moved in.) The elevators were large enough to accommodate a gurney, the hallway floors covered with

institutional green linoleum, the walls painted asylum gray, and the offices the size of single-bed hospital rooms. In sum, the interior of the five-story building resembled a post-junta Bolivian hat factory, minus the shrapnel damage and the overhead fans.

In order to work in the secure part of RAND, where PSD was located, one was required to obtain a “SECRET” clearance. A secret clearance, which was the lowest level of clearance available, allowed the holder to handle information that if improperly released could “possibly” do harm to US national interests. In practice, secret information was generally indistinguishable from information available in public sources such as the *New York Times*. In fact, *The Times* routinely published information obtained from classified sources, the most famous case being the TOP SECRET Pentagon Papers that had been removed from RAND’s Santa Monica office by Dr. Daniel Ellsberg. Nine times out of ten, the information itself did not require protection; rather, it was the source of the information or the method used to collect it that resulted in the secret classification.

Until my clearance came through, I was assigned to a little room in a drab gray-green single-wide trailer, as far away from the PSD as one could physically be without leaving the RAND campus. The trailer was called the “earthquake building” for reasons that had nothing to do with the San Andreas Fault or real earthquakes. Instead, the earthquake building’s name derived from the fact that the trailer’s main corridor was a long strip of unsupported metal. This meant that every time someone walked on it, the floor rebounded like a sheet metal trampoline that caused a deep, booming noise. The echo reverberated as if you were sitting in the middle of the percussion section as it rehearsed the tavern scene from the *Carmina Burana*. The noise made by walking down the corridor was similar to the thunder created on a movie set, so if you were taking a nap or goofing off, the *boom boom boom* that signaled someone was approaching gave one plenty of warning to start looking busy.

I was required to sit in the earthquake building for about six weeks until my security clearance came through. Without a clearance, I was not allowed to work on any projects, so my time was billed to overhead. In order to attend staff meetings, someone from PSD had to escort me through the guard station and stand in front of the door while I used the men’s room. I spent a lot of time reading or working on math problems. The office did not have a computer, and I had no code to charge in order to make long-distance calls. Sitting in that little room in the earthquake building, I was more cut off from the world than at any point in my professional life.

After six weeks, my SECRET clearance came through, which allowed me to move into a small office in the secure facility on the third floor of the five-story building. The view from my office window included the terminus of the west-bound portion of Highway 10 as well as an unobstructed view of the south side of the Santa Monica Holiday Inn. If I opened the window, stuck my head out then looked left, I could barely see the archway to the Santa Monica Pier on Ocean Avenue. Without any project work, I spent several more weeks in the new office solving multi-factor equations in an algebra refresher text and writing emails to friends in San Francisco and Boston, the only people I knew outside of RAND who had Internet addresses.

In the early pre-HTML days of the text-only Internet, we spent a lot of time sending text-only emails then calling each other to ask if the email had arrived.

* * *

At RAND the traditional management consultancy model had been turned on its head, if not inside out. As an FFRDC, RAND was a line item in the DoD budget; thus each year RAND received a direct allocation of about \$100 million from Congress. The Pentagon also allocated money to RAND from its own budget each year for additional projects. RAND therefore collected \$100 million in tax money plus some of the money Congress allocated to the DoD. On top of that, RAND competed against other research organizations and beltway bandits for a chunk of the \$25 million in Pentagon research money, which was also tax money. Money for RAND projects therefore came from public sources, provided by the taxpayer, yet RAND managers often acted as if they were simply entitled to it. This kind of thinking applied to the PSD. Other parts of RAND were more like universities or think tanks where faculty members were required to fund their research by writing competitive proposals and applying for grants and research money from government agencies or private foundations.

Each PSD project at RAND involving government money had a client, that is, the office, agency, or person in the government that authorized the funding. At RAND, however, clients were referred to as “sponsors,” as if PSD were “The Dick van Dyke Show” and DoD an antiperspirant company. The difference between a client and a sponsor was crucial in the understanding of how the RAND corporation operated. In a traditional management consultancy, a client did not just pay the bills; the client defined the problem to be addressed. A client could fire the consultant,

which in the private sector was a constant concern that tended to focus the consultant's mind. Consultants must, therefore, provide excellent service to the client and stay focused on at least giving the appearance of value for money, since the client determined if the invoices would be paid and, more importantly, whether there would be any additional work. Consultants are infamous for applying a rubber stamp at the end of every deliverable that states, "and of course, this requires additional work."

A sponsor, on the other hand, sees value in being associated with a celebrity. RAND managers saw themselves as Andre Agassi and the Pentagon as Nike. Nike was excited and proud to be associated with the tennis star. At RAND, the corporate attitude was that in contrast to a client, the sponsor should not influence the research product. At least that was the official line.

According to RAND management, responding to sponsor requests was referred to dismissively as "answering the mail." If a researcher had the temerity to say that the sponsor had expressed interest in a particular issue or preferred to have something done in a particular way, the RAND manager would sniff as he said, "We do not answer the mail." RAND took the sponsor's money, then told the sponsor what RAND thought the sponsor needed to hear, whether it wanted to hear it or not, or so the corporate mantra stated. The corporate culture dictated that RAND always understood the sponsor's needs better than the sponsor did. This was not always how things turned out, of course, but it sounded good at department meetings.

The prime directive that guided a PSD analyst who wanted to get ahead was to please RAND management rather than satisfy the sponsor of the project. Not surprisingly, once a project was sponsored (meaning funded), RAND management usually informed (in one way or another) the researcher what the RAND, as understood by the management, expected to be produced, which in turn was sometimes provided by the sponsor.

Occasionally RAND would accept a project with a pre-determined outcome, also known as a conclusion in search of a study. In those type of projects, by some miracle RAND's findings just happened to match the sponsor's expectations to a tee. Management denied that "play for pay" occurred, but like Captain Louis Renault, the staff was always shocked to discover there was gambling going on in the casino.

* * *

Within the PSD, which was organized like a university department, the staff reported to Dr. Jonathan Pollack, the department chairman, or to the

deputy chairman Dr. John van Oudenaren. Dr. Pollack, a heavy-set man with thinning hair and a short beard, had recently taken the position as chairman after the departure of Dr. Brian Jenkins. Dr. Pollack was a standard-issue academic of the type one would expect to find at a large state university or a small private college in the suburbs. Dr. van Oudenaren, who was younger than Dr. Pollack, had thick reddish hair and a heavy beard that made him look like Leif Ericsson. Dr. van Oudenaren was responsible for much of the department's administration, such as writing annual performance reviews and reading draft manuscripts. The department heads managed the research staff. This was not a good fit, in part due to the fact that people trained to be academics are notoriously ill-equipped to be effective managers.

Turning someone who earned a PhD in political science into a manager is the essence of the Peter Principle, which states that everyone is eventually promoted to their level of incompetence. The equivalent syllogism that explains the predicament is that in a think tank, all managers are academics, but not all academics are managers. In a typical university, however, a faculty member becomes a department head because the position rotates, eventually it becomes his or her turn. In such a "wait-around-ocracy," promotion to management is a function of time, not skill or experience. Dr. Pollack had been promoted from within after Dr. Jenkins left. The same pattern was repeated throughout the organization despite the fact that the majority of people who devote themselves to the life of the mind should not be allowed to manage anything more challenging than a child's birthday party.

The money for PSD projects generally came from one of RAND's permanent projects, such as Project Air Force (PAF). Dr. Charles T. "Charlie" Kelley Jr. was the head of the National Defense Research Institute (NDRI), a RAND program that received millions of dollars of DoD research money each year. NDRI received millions from Congress through the annual DoD Appropriations Act. Dr. Kelley, who managed PSD projects funded by NDRI, therefore factored into a lot of projects undertaken by PSD staff members.

Dr. Kelley was the type of RAND employee who concluded that because he had a job at RAND, he had to be smart. *Cogito cogito ergo cogito sum*—"I think that I think, therefore I think that I am." He was the genial corporate lifer, the sort of man, as George Smiley observed, who "measured professional competence in years of service and saw no fault in the habit." The more one got to know Dr. Kelley, the more one was reminded of Father Tommaso Caccini. Father Caccini, the man who denounced Galileo, was described by his brother as being "lighter than a leaf, and emptier than a pumpkin."

Dr. Kelley got ahead at RAND mainly because he followed the rules, often literally to the letter. When a dispute arose, Dr. Kelley would photocopy a page from the RAND management handbook, highlight a passage or two with a yellow marker, then send it via internal inter-office mail to the disputing parties.

In the early 1990s RAND's managers in Santa Monica were permitted to read all outgoing and incoming US mail addressed to RAND employees, regardless of whether it was personal or work-related. Mail surveillance was an echo of the supernova caused by the Dr. Daniel Ellsberg affair. The utility or benefit that could possibly have been derived by reading other people's letters because a RAND employee had leaked classified material to *The New York Times* 20 years before was never apparent.

It was not unusual for one to receive a photocopy of a letter that had been circulated to several "managers." A photocopy of the letter would be stapled to the original along with the envelope. Managers often wrote comments on the photocopy. All of this took place before the original made its way to the designated recipient. In the Washington office, outgoing mail was not read and incoming mail was never opened. If one worked in the Washington office, however, or from Santa Monica simply put outgoing mail in the overnight pouch to the DC office to be mailed from there, the outgoing letter was never perused, read, or circulated.

The first time a letter addressed to me was opened and read by an unknown number of people before I received it, I suspected that a crime had been committed. Surely tampering with the mail was a federal offense, I asked Dr. Kelley. In response Dr. Kelley, the consummate RAND "manager," sent me a page out of my employment contract. He had used a yellow marker to highlight the clause that stated RAND management was allowed to open and read employees' mail.

This was, therefore, more likely than not an illegal contract, since opening someone else's mail was a felony. Dr. Kelley noted that the authority to open and read other peoples' mail derived from the employment contract. From my days as a think tank manager, I was accustomed to going to see people, so I went to see Dr. Kelley in person to discuss what was clearly tampering with the US mail.

After pointing to the highlighted portions of the employment contract, I said, "One can't contract for illegal services in this country," I noted. "What if," I asked, "there was a slavery clause in the employment contract?"

In return, I received the first of many dull stares.

In summary, this was the institutional environment at RAND where my experience with the missing person accounting mission, the “nation’s highest national priority,” would take place.

* * *

A POLITICAL INITIATIVE WITH UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

The legislation that resulted in a multi-year archive research project in the Soviet Union was not, by any stretch of the imagination, intended to produce such an outcome. Consistent with the intensely political nature of the missing person accounting program, the Soviet archive research project was an unintended byproduct, not the purpose, of unrelated legislation passed by Congress for an entirely different purpose.

* * *

In 1991, Congressman John Miller (R-WA) introduced an amendment that required the Executive Branch to take measures that would assist families of American servicemen who had gone missing as a result of America’s historic conflicts. A summary of Miller’s House amendment stated:

An amendment to require all existing information on any POW or MIA serviceperson (since 1940) to be released to the nearest living relative, or if none is living, to the legal representative of the POW/MIA. The amendment also provides for a limitation on disclosure of information if national security would be threatened by release of such information.⁴

House Amendment 120, that amended HR-2038-9, the FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act, required the DoD to search archive holdings in order to locate, declassify, and release records concerning every servicemen who had gone missing since 1940. After the records were acquired, DoD was required to provide those records to the next of kin of the missing (Fig. 5.2).

After the FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act became Public Law 102-183, House Amendment 120 became law as well.

The law required DoD as the Executive Agent responsible for POW/MIA’s to produce “all existing information on any POW or MIA serviceperson (since 1940).” The question of which DoD agency would be

Fig. 5.2 (L)
Congressman John
Miller (R-WA) (Photo:
US Congress)



responsible for conducting the research required to respond to the requirements of Congressman Miller's amendment was raised within DoD.

Under Secretary of Defense (Policy) Paul Wolfowitz was responsible for organizing DoD's response to the Congressional mandate to conduct archive research on a massive scale. USD(P) Wolfowitz, through the authority of the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) assigned the task to the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). It didn't take long for the DIA to respond. On June 25, 1991, DIA rejected the assignment in no uncertain terms. DIA "made a finding" that:

DIA would limit its work to current intelligence gathering tasks and analysis concerning the Vietnam War only. DIA would focus exclusively on projects that required "active intelligence."

DIA defined the problem in the following terms:

[The DIA's] primary contribution to ISA, the IAD process, and ultimately to the POW/MIA families and next of kin will remain limited to support of the U.S. government's Vietnam War POW/MIA recovery effort. [...] The DIA feels that the U.S. government effort [concerning the Korean War and World War II] is now, and will likely remain, predominantly an archival research effort with very limited requirements for pure intelligence analysis.⁵

WWII and the Korean War, in DIA's view, were historical issues that required "archive research" but no "active intelligence." DIA would subsequently reverse its decision not to participate in an "archival research effort." It didn't take long.

Less than one week after DIA opted out of any "archival research" activities, on July 5, 1991, Executive Director of the DIA Mr. Dennis Nagy sent a memorandum to the Deputy Director for Operations, Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The subject of the memorandum was, "Request for Information: Defectors with Information Pertaining to U.S. Personnel Unaccounted-for as a Result of the Korean Conflict," marked SECRET.⁶ The memo stated, *inter alia*:

1. The Defense Intelligence Agency's Special Office for Prisoners of War and Missing in Action is tasked with providing the fullest possible accounting of Americans who became missing while serving their country during all military conflicts. One element of the Special Office is following up on unaccounted-for as a result of the Korean conflict.

All of the individuals and information the DIA requested were from the 1950 to 1955 time frame, which DIA had brushed off as an "archive research effort."

The issue that prompted DIA's renewed interest in the Korean War was the testimony provided by Major General Jan Sejna, who defected from Czechoslovakia to the United States in February 1968. General Sejna claimed that American POWs had been moved from Korea and Vietnam to the Soviet Union where they were subjected to medical experiments and then killed.

On March 26, 1992, Mr. Robert Sheetz, Chief of the DIA's Special Office for Prisoners of War and Missing in Action, requested permission to polygraph General Sejna. Though he had been debriefed after his defection in 1968 and worked as a contractor for DIA, General Sejna did not mention the issue of Soviet medical testing on US POWs from Korea until he was interviewed by DIA's Nick Eftimiades on May 7, 1991, at Building 4, Bolling Air Force Base. General Sejna's interview with Mr. Eftimiades was not classified.

DIA's Mr. Robert Sheetz interviewed General Sejna on November 10, 1992. The Sheetz interview, which covered the same information as the interview conducted by Mr. Eftimiades, was classified SECRET NOFORN.

A deposition under oath followed. General Sejna, who was deposed under oath by the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs on

November 19, 1992,⁷ was questioned by Mr. John Erickson, the Select Committee's Investigative Counsel; Mr. Douglas O. Bowman, on behalf of the CIA; and Mr. Fred Green, Special Counsel for POW/MIA Affairs for the DIA.

The motivation for DIA's decision to change its position on Korean War research has yet to be determined. The fact that DIA's position changed, however, is clearly presented in the July 5, 1991, memorandum. DIA attempted to conceal this shift from the public. As shown in the following versions of the memo, DIA's interest in the Korean War historic research was redacted, then revealed (Fig. 5.3).

Note that neither document was redacted using exemption source codes. In other words, whoever censored this memo did so without following the FOIA Act, for example.

The DIA wanted in on the Korean War archival research after all. The distinction between "archival research" and "pure intelligence analysis," however, was artificial. Locating documents and interviewing people who participated in historical events is research. "Pure intelligence analysis" and "archival research" are one and the same.

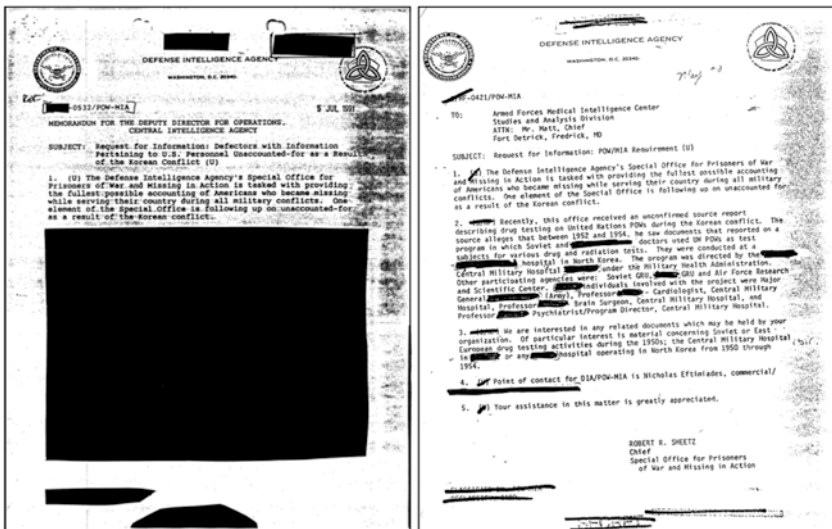


Fig. 5.3 DIA memorandum (Both versions of the DIA memorandum are available from the Black Vault <http://documents.theblackvault.com/documents/dod/readingroom/8/643.pdf>)

What DIA was avoiding was the responsibility to fulfill the requirements created by Public Law 102-183, Amendment 120. Interviewing defectors was more interesting than working in a windowless archive facility making photocopies for weeks on end.

* * *

DIA's finding that the activity required to fulfill Public Law 102-183, Amendment 120, was "predominantly an archival research effort" that DIA was unwilling and ill-prepared to conduct had two unintended consequences.

First, and by far the more important, DIA's refusal to conduct archive research kicked the responsibility to respond to the Smith amendment out of the DoD from where it landed at RAND.

Second, DIA's decision turned out to be decisive for my involvement in the program to account for servicemen who had gone missing during America's historic conflicts.

Due to DIA's position that the agency was unwilling to undertake what the DIA characterized as "archival research," the project was outsourced by OSD to RAND.⁸ Principal DASD/International Security Affairs (ISA) Carl Ford became the sponsor of the project. Within RAND, responsibility for and control of the project landed within the International Security and Defense Strategy Program of RAND's NDRI, a FFRDC supported by the OSD and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

After the project had been referred by OSD to RAND, the question raised within RAND was to determine whether there was a staff member capable of providing what DIA had characterized as "archive research." NDRI was headed by long-time RAND manager Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr., who asked the PSD, headed by Dr. Jonathan Pollack, to find a suitable analyst.

While working on my dissertation at the Johns Hopkins Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), due in large measure to the urging of my dissertation advisors Dr. Robert Osgood⁹ and subsequently Dr. Michael Vlahos, I had spent weeks in the US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the British Public Records Office (PRO, now called the British National Archives), and the Swedish National Archives (Riksarkivet).

Shortly after joining RAND, the PSD was reorganized as the International Policy Department. The chairman of the PSD, Dr. Jonathan

Pollack, became the Corporate Research Manager or CRM (pronounced *krim*) of the new IPD. As it turned out, no one else in the entire IPD had ever done archive research of any kind, anywhere. In the Kingdom of the Blind, the one-eyed man was king.

Dr. Pollack therefore referred Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. to me.

Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. called while I was on vacation in Kansas City. RAND staff were required to provide a contact number while on leave for reasons that were never quite clear. Using the KC contact number, Dr. Kelley called to inquire whether I was interested in an “archive project.” Dr. Kelley wasn’t specific, nor could he be as the outline of the proposed project was inchoate.

I was ready for project work of any kind. At the time, I was re-writing part of my dissertation into a RAND monograph. The work was supported by overhead, otherwise known as RAND-supported research (RSR). A draft of the monograph had been sent by DoD to an outside reviewer at the American Embassy (AMEMB) in Stockholm. The reviewer, who was the agricultural attaché, recommended that the draft should be classified SECRET if not TOP SECRET, for which I wasn’t cleared. In response to the review, I noted that my dissertation, which was based on unclassified material, was already in the public domain. The response was that if I made an issue of the review, the monograph would be classified TOP SECRET, which would be the end of the matter. I deleted the file from my computer, gathered up the draft and the notes, walked down to the classified shredder, and then fed the whole thing through the powerful chopping mechanism.

In response to the offer to do any type of archive research, I said, “of course,” or words to that effect, without having any clue about the project. We agreed to meet and discuss the details after I returned to Santa Monica.

This is how I became involved in the POW/MIA accounting program. As discussed below, the origins of my association with this project are relevant due to the fact that this reality differs markedly from accusations made by “evil creeps” that I had been handpicked by DoD officials to put my name on a report that had been prepared by or dictated to me by someone in the DoD.

* * *

DoD SPONSORS AN “ARCHIVAL RESEARCH” PROJECT

The sponsor of the initial POW/MIA project referred to RAND was the Office of the USD(P). I was assigned the task to write the first draft of the statement of work (SoW) that would then be sent through internal review and management approval prior to submission to OSD for comments, revisions, and approval.

The purpose of what became known as the RAND POW/MIA project was originally conceived to assist with DoD’s response to House Amendment 120. The initial SoW I drafted responded in a narrow way that focused on how to organize archive research required by the amendment that would have to be carried out on a colossal scale. Almost immediately, however, interest in the massive domestic photocopy-palooza project vanished as mission creep set in.

After the project was outsourced to RAND, DoD altered the scope and then expanded the SoW, well beyond what was required to respond to Congressman Smith’s amendment. Three significant changes were made that were only tangentially related to providing archive records to the next of kin of the missing.

First, the project’s scope of work was increased to provide policy support to U.S. diplomats for possible negotiations with the DPRK over the issue of recovering the remains of U.S. servicemen who had gone missing during the Korean War.

Second, DoD initiated the project in order to “document the U.S. government’s efforts to recover the remains of missing servicemen,” without touching on current or ongoing efforts, the “effectiveness of which could be compromised by untimely publication.”

Third, the project was also expected to create, update and augment DoD’s databases concerning the missing.

When the revised SoW was being circulated within DoD, someone at DIA or ISA added in pencil a single sentence, under the “Tasks” section. That sentence, which fundamentally changed the entire project, stated:

Determine if any US military personnel with specialized training lost during the Korean War were transported to the territory of the Sino-Soviet bloc and exploited.

This task had nothing to do with the domestic archive research project required by Public Law 102-183, Amendment 120. No one within RAND

management expressed any concern with such a dramatic expansion of the scope of the project.

As I read the handwritten amendment, I rocked back and forth in my gray government-issued office chair, ran my hand through my hair, and then stared out the window at the Holiday Inn. “How in the hell am I supposed to answer this question without going into the archives and interviewing people located on the territory of the Sino-Soviet bloc?”

Organizing an archive research project in the Soviet Union would be an enormous undertaking on its own, if it were even possible to gain authorization and access. I was fully aware from first-hand experience what Professor Lawrence Stone meant when he observed:

When you work in the archives you’re far from home, you’re bored, you’re in a hurry, you’re scribbling like crazy. You’re bound to make mistakes. I don’t believe any scholar in the Western World has impeccable footnotes. Archival research is a special case of the general messiness of life.¹⁰

The methodological and logistical problems associated with archive research were risks that could not be avoided. What was not apparent to me, however, were the social and political dangers associated with conducting research into POW/MIA issues in the United States.

I tapped the eraser of a number-two government-issued pencil against my lower lip, looked out the window at the Holiday Inn again, rocked a bit more, then said to myself, “OK. Let’s do this.”

With that decision, my life was about to undergo a fundamental change that was not necessarily for the better.

* * *

The scope of work for what became Phase I of the RAND project was formalized between RAND and OSD into six tasks:

First, establish what is known about the circumstances of loss for individuals who did not return from service in the Korean War.

Second, assess the probability that American servicemen with specialized military training or technical skills were transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union during the Korean War.

Third, present and assess the U.S. government’s POW/MIA policy and efforts to obtain the release of American citizens and to recover remains of U.S. servicemen from North Korea. Failing this, assemble as much information as possible on the circumstances of loss.

Fourth, document the evolution of U.S. policy on POW/MIA's and develop policy recommendations that if implemented could lead to a more effective remains recovery strategy.

Fifth, determine whether the Vietnamese government has taught the North Korean government how to extort money from the United States in return for the remains of missing American servicemen.

Sixth, assess the claims that approximately 23,000 American and British POW's had been sent to the Soviet Gulag after WWII and never repatriated.

The archive research required to respond to Congressman Miller's amendment had disappeared without a trace. DoD never complied with Public Law 102-183, Amendment 120. This was an example, that would be repeated with alarming regularity, of how those responsible for the accounting program could ignore a Congressional mandate and a public law with absolute impunity. The new project, which would have easily occupied a large team for a year or more, was formally assigned to me.

The SoW agreed to between DoD and RAND specifically excluded any work on the Vietnam War. DIA asserted that it had a monopoly within DoD on research and analysis regarding the Vietnam War. The only reporting obligation in the SoW was to pass along any information concerning Vietnam that might emerge during the course of the project.

* * *

The first part of Phase 1 of the RAND POW/MIA project was a three-month contract funded at \$150,000. Phase 1, which began in October 1991, was intended to run until April 1992.

Within DoD, project control was assigned to ISA's Principal DASD Carl Ford. Though I met with Mr. Ford from time to time, my direct report was to DASD Ford through his military aide, Rear Admiral Michael McDevitt. On a day-to-day basis, the point of contact (PoC) was Navy Commander John Kinczel, who reported directly to Admiral McDevitt (Fig. 5.4).

When the RAND project began, I was the only person in the entire DoD assigned to work full-time on Korean War POW/MIA issues.

No one could have imagined that three years later the Korean War casualty resolution effort would be one of the largest tasks occupying dozens of staff and analysts burning through tens of millions of dollars annually.

* * *



Fig. 5.4 Mr. Carl Ford; Admiral Michael McDevitt, USN (ret.); Captain John Kinzel, USN (ret.) (Photos: DoD, Public Domain, DoD)

After the SoW was finalized, I accepted the archive research assignment. The only precondition I expressed concerned classified material. I was cleared to SECRET and thus would not have access to any information above that level. Even so, storing SECRET records in an office safe and transferring classified documents require compliance with detailed protocols and rules. My one condition was that all of the classified material located in the archives and elsewhere, such as the RAND classified library, would be eligible for expedited review and declassification. No one at DoD raised any objection to the declassification condition. The procedure agreed to was that a classified document would be submitted to my department head who would route it to one of the several RAND military fellows who had the authority to declassify historical documents. In this way, the sometimes lengthy and time-consuming declassification process could be carried out in days rather than months. Declassification of Department of State (DoS) and CIA records had to be handled by those agencies, so there was no way around that hurdle.

The purpose of the declassification condition was to ensure that my report and all of the supporting analysis and records would be released to the public. Making the effort to locate meaningful information that remains locked away, out of sight, serves a purpose, for example, when dealing with intelligence sources and methods. In my view, there was no compelling reason to withhold information in the 1990s concerning events that had occurred in the 1940s and 1950s.

This approach saved a great deal of time.

* * *

After RAND received the project funding allocation from ISP, which meant the check had been cleared, Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. came to see me. This was unusual. The mountain rarely went to Mohammed at RAND.

Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. made infrequent rounds of the “researchers” from time to time in order to “manage” them, because this is what RAND managers did from time to time. Dr. Kelley congratulated me on the project, then said something that spoke volumes about his view of field research and RAND’s commitment to it.

Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. said, “Now that we have the money, try to keep as much of it at home as possible.” This statement confused me, in part because he was referring to RAND, where we were employed, as “home.”

I had been at RAND for less than four months. “Sorry, I don’t get it. Home? What do you mean? I’m supposed to work from home?”

Dr. Kelley shook his head like a stallion trying to throw a bit. “No, no. There’s a lot of travel money in the budget. Try to keep it here, at home, at RAND, our home. Spend it on salaries instead of travel. Stay at home as much as you can.”

“But...but,” I sputtered. “The whole point of the project is to go to various archives, archives that are in far away places, far from here. The whole point is to conduct research, in those far-away archives. How can I do the work there if I ‘keep the money here?’” I couldn’t bear to use the word “home” to describe my third-floor office in a re-purposed geriatric hospital.

“Well, there’s a lot of money for travel. My strong suggestion is that you minimize the travel and keep the rest here at *home* to use for salaries.”

“Minimize what? The proposal and budget respond to the statement of work that requires travel to various archives, far from ‘home’ as you have said. You guys negotiated the statement of work, not me. This doesn’t make any sense. Are you suggesting that you approved a proposal that included unnecessary travel just to inflate the budget?”

Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. was clearly irritated, but I was not playing dumb or trying to be difficult. Dr. Kelley rubbed his eyes, gasped for air, and then said, “Just try to keep the travel to a minimum, OK?” He clearly believed if you repeated nonsense enough times, it would convert to fact, just as vigorous churning eventually transforms cream into butter.

I replied, “If minimum means the minimum required to complete the research as planned, I agree.”

The response was another silent, dull stare, and not for the last time. Sensing that he had finished pro-actively managing all relevant issue areas

of the project, Dr. Charles T. Kelley, Jr. departed to provide pro-active issue-oriented management and guidance to somebody else.

This was only the beginning. Field research could not be explained to someone like Dr. Charles T. Kelley, Jr., who had never done it himself. Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr.'s concept of in-depth field research mirrored that of another one of RAND's managerial overlords whose idea of in-depth field research meant that one made an arduous, risk-filled journey to Paris (the risk being that business class might be fully booked), stayed at the "George Veev" (George V), and read the *International Herald Tribune* over a decaf cappuccino.

With regard to their general inability to conduct field research, Dr. Ben Lambeth often described RAND managers as Ottoman court eunuchs. "The eunuchs, who could watch, comment and criticize as the Sultan screwed his concubines, were unable to do it themselves."

Against this background, the project got underway.

* * *

There was no way of knowing in October 1991 that eight months later, President George H. W. Bush would sign Executive Order 12812, *Declassification and Release of Materials Pertaining to Prisoners of War and Missing in Action* on July 22, 1992.¹¹ The Executive Order stated:

WHEREAS, the Senate, by S. Res. 324 of July 2, 1992, has asked that I "expeditiously issue an Executive order requiring all executive branch departments and agencies to declassify and publicly release without compromising United States national security all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to POWs and MIAs" [...]

NOW, THEREFORE, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, I hereby order as follows:

Section 1. All executive departments and agencies shall expeditiously review all documents, files, and other materials pertaining to American POWs and MIAs lost in Southeast Asia for the purposes of declassification in accordance with the standards and procedures of Executive Order No. 12356.

Sec. 2. All executive departments and agencies shall make publicly available documents, files, and other materials declassified pursuant to section 1, except for those the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy of returnees, family members of POWs and MIAs, or other persons, or would impair the deliberative processes of the executive branch.

Compare President Bush's Executive Order with Congressman Miller's Amendment 120:

An amendment to require all existing information on any POW or MIA serviceperson (since 1940) to be released to the nearest living relative, or if none is living, to the legal representative of the POW/MIA. The amendment also provides for a limitation on disclosure of information if national security would be threatened by release of such information.¹²

The problem was that E. O. 12812 ordered the review and declassification of records dealing only with "American POWs and MIAs lost in Southeast Asia." Despite Congressman Miller's amendment, records from America's other historic conflicts—WWII, Korean War, and the Cold War era—were excluded.

This was another example of the pernicious effect of "regulatory capture" that had been successfully exerted by the paid lobbyist, the National League of Families, and other pressure groups that did not believe that all missing American servicemen should be treated equally. This institutional bias began to manifest itself in the RAND project.

"Regulatory capture," however, was about to join forces with the politicization of historic research to place unanticipated restraints on our research project.

At first there was no opposition or concern with the expedited declassification program. I would submit a document, and then a few days later, it would be returned properly declassified. As soon as we began to deal with documents retrieved from archives in the Soviet Union, however, DoD officials stepped in to prevent us from releasing Soviet document into the public domain.

* * *

The RAND project began in October 1991. The first task was to define the scope of the problem. The first step in that direction was to determine, using authoritative sources, how many servicemen had neither returned from nor been accounted for during the Korean War. I had no idea at the time that the "official" terminology was fundamentally flawed.

The subterranean classified RAND library, where a researcher's project was charged a fee for every hour spent there, permitted unrestricted access

to records. After one was behind the turnstile and the billable project was recorded, one had unlimited access. The RAND librarians could not have withheld anything if they wanted to. The idea that there was an all-knowing reference librarian who knew where everything was located was hatched by someone who has never done research in any legitimate library or archive, let alone in a classified facility.

One could not have anticipated at the time that conspiracy theorists and crackpots would subsequently accuse unnamed people at RAND of deliberately withholding previous RAND reports in order to skew the project's findings.

* * *

DoD asked RAND to investigate how the Soviets may have transferred American servicemen, if such a transfer occurred, to the Soviet Union. The first opportunity to make such an inquiry presented itself when an official from the Mongolian Foreign Ministry visited RAND. We had a long conversation about the possibility that Mongolia might have been used as a transit route or a place to relocate Americans. A few weeks after he returned to Ulaanbaatar, I received an official letter from the Mongolian Foreign Minister's office. The letter, which of course had been opened and read by several RAND managers, was signed by Mr. R. Bold, Executive Secretary, Center for Strategic Studies of Mongolia. Mr. Bold stated:

[There was no record] of any reasonable possibility that Mongolian territory was used by the Soviets to transfer U.S. POWs...There were other, more convenient ways to transfer the POWs to the Soviet Union from North Korea rather than via Mongolia.¹³

The question was, of course, whether the Mongolian government would admit that Americans had been transported across or relocated to Mongolia, if it had indeed happened. This was a decent first attempt, as the experience produce another piece of evidence.

The next stop was a research visit to the NARA which in those days was located at Suitland, Maryland.

* * *

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

At the National Archives, I was fortunate to work with archivist Mr. Richard Boylan. I had worked with Mr. Boylan during my dissertation research days; thus it was reassuring to re-acquaint with a familiar, competent archivist. In not only my opinion but that of many others, he was second only to the legendary and formidable Mr. John Taylor, who worked in the military archives from 1945 until shortly before his death in 2016. I had the privilege to work with Mr. Taylor during my dissertation research as well as on documentary projects for the BBC as well as Swedish television (Fig. 5.5).

In my opinion, aside from the enormous shadow cast by Mr. Taylor, who retired the master archivist trophy, Mr. Boylan was the foremost military archivist in the United States.

During my dissertation research days, Mr. Boylan's office was in the archive building on Pennsylvania Avenue in DC. One could not help but notice a photo and a cartoon pinned to his office wall (Fig. 5.6). The photo was of the front page of the British tabloid *Sunday Sport* April 24,



Fig. 5.5 Mr. John Taylor, NARA archivist (Photo: Public Domain)



Fig. 5.6 *Sunday Sport*

1988, edition's banner headline, "WORLD WAR II BOMBER FOUND ON MOON." (The other main front-page story was "SEX FOR SATAN – We expose the evils behind lust-crazed devil worshippers.")

On August 21, 1988, the *Sunday Sport* banner headline was "WORLD WAR 2 BOMBER FOUND ON MOON VANISHES."

The cartoon on Mr. Boylan's wall, clipped out of the *New Yorker* was a drawing of a man standing on a box at Speaker's Corner in Central Park. The man, who was addressing a small crowd, said, "And why won't the government give us the information? It's because they can't find it, that's why!"

I suspected that I had hooked up with the right archivist.

No one could have forecast that Mr. Boylan and I would interact on archive research more than a decade later.

* * *

At NARA, my first move was to apply Cole's First Law of Research, which states, "90% of what you want to do has already been done. Find that first, then focus 90% of your effort on the 10% that remains to be done."

The first effort was to tackle the Eighth Army records from the Korean War, which was a vast collection.

Using those records, one of the first products I produced was a detailed, quantitative description of how American servicemen went missing during the Korean War. Anyone who failed to appear at roll call was declared to be unaccounted for, pending further investigation leading to a determination of whether the loss would be attributed to, for example, killed in action, absent without leave, or missing in action.

I spent a great deal of time reading US Army JAG reports, particularly those that documented war crimes. From the earliest days of the war, it was obvious that the North Koreans were simply murdering captives taken on the battlefield. In addition to the fact that these were vicious atrocities, the random nature of the killings created insoluble problems for any effort to locate and recover remains. American POWs were killed or died during forced marches or in many documented cases thrown off steep cliffs by North Korean guards. As shown in the following chart, the first year of the war was the most dangerous time to be a prisoner of the communist forces (Fig. 5.7).

In the vast RAND library, I located a copy of the *Congressional Record* from the 1950s. A House hearing had resulted in the publication of the list of what was referred to as the Korean War "MIA." This was the first time the list of about 870 names had been made public. (The list of the 870 "MIA" names should not be confused with the 8140 Korean War missing. The names on the list of 870, who were alleged to be MIA, were a subset of the 8140 missing.)

The problem, as later determined, was that the House of Representatives had erroneously referred to the service members on the list as "MIA", as if all of these losses occurred during combat operations. In fact, the list included the names of servicemen who had been killed in action and buried in US military cemeteries in Korea that were subsequently overrun by the enemy. The remains had been recovered, identified, and buried by

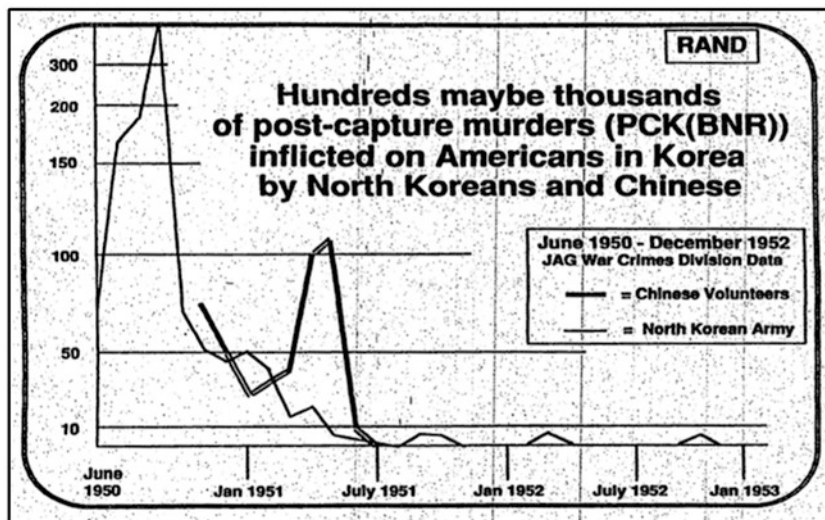


Fig. 5.7 Korean War post-capture American casualties (Source: Dr. Cole's Senate testimony)

the US AQG's GRS, then lost after the cemetery was re-taken by the enemy. Those men were missing, in the sense that the remains were not in US military custody, but not missing in action. The difference was an important distinction that was not generally appreciated.

This imprecise use of basic terminology was just the tip of an enormous iceberg of confusion concerning Korean War casualty data. For example, over time the names of the missing had been reorganized alphabetically. The problem with that was the war had been fought chronologically, not alphabetically. Re-associating over 8000 names with the temporal and geographic circumstances of loss was going to be a colossal task. The evidence and facts were abundant, but various interpretations and revisions of the evidence had created a vast Gordian knot. The task was to unravel the knot, or failing that, to apply the Alexandrian solution.

I began to build a database that would include the name of each of the 870 so-called Korean War "MIA." I asked my secretary Ms. Jean Williams whether she could use the scanner in the RAND computer center, in those days scanners were large and expensive, to scan the list of 870 names and serial numbers that appeared in the *Congressional Record*. As it turned out, the documents were too old, too blurred, and filled with too many specks,

spots, and creases to be scanned into alphanumeric text without creating hundreds of artifacts or errors. Mrs. Williams, whose nephew Mr. Scott Williams was a power forward on the Mr. Michael Jordan-era Chicago Bulls championship teams, stopped by my office to tell me she would have to re-type the document from scratch. We commiserated on how long it would take and what a tedious task it would be to type and proofread 870 names and serial numbers.

As she turned to leave, Mrs. Williams, who was always on the hunt for a husband, turned and said, "It is such a pity, all these men in their forties getting killed like that."

"Huh?" I said. "Most of them were in their twenties or thereabouts, as far as I know."

Mrs. Williams looked confused. "No. Look here." She showed me the list. "See? 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953. They're in their forties." (This conversation occurred in 1991.)

There was a long, awkward pause as this sunk in. "Jean, those are death dates, not birth dates."

An even longer, more awkward pause occurred. "Jean, the Korean War is not going on now, you know. It took place between 1950 and 1953."

Mrs. Williams' eyes flew wide open. She said, "I knew that!" Mrs. Williams turned and then zipped back to her office.

This was my first contribution to informing the general public on the history of the Forgotten War.

* * *

Working through the historical material available at RAND, it became clear immediately that a great deal of research had to be undertaken in the National Archives in Maryland. In order to determine whether any American servicemen ended up in the Sino-Soviet bloc against their will, archive research had to be organized in Soviet archives as well. After a discussion with DASD Ford, we agreed to give priority to the Soviet Union and defer work in China until after we finished the Soviet part.

There was no way around the fact that we had to get into the Soviet archives.

The only question was, how to do it?

* * *

OBTAINING ACCESS TO ARCHIVES OF THE SOVIET INTELLIGENCE SERVICES

In life, sometimes it's often better to be lucky than good. Fortunately for me, a RAND colleague emerged. After I explained what was going on, my RAND colleague Dr. Ben Lambeth introduced me to RAND researcher Sergei Zamascikov (Fig. 5.8).

This introduction changed the project for the better to an immeasurable degree.

Sergei, who defected from the Soviet Union in 1979, had planned his defection for five years. He had joined the communist youth league Komsomol because he knew this would eventually give him a chance to travel abroad. On his first visit to Milano, Sergei slipped away from his Soviet minders and made his way to Rome where asked for asylum at the AMEMB. The Americans required Sergei to have a face-to-face meeting with representatives of the Soviet Embassy. Sergei had left everything behind in Riga, Latvia, when he defected, including wife and daughter. He was sent to a refugee camp and eventually found his way to Los Angeles. A Soviet court sentenced him *in absentia* to hard labor in the gulag.

Sergei, who had attended UCLA, was working at RAND in the Soviet studies program.

After wandering around in the RAND labyrinth that was still unfamiliar to me, I found Sergei's office, introduced myself, and then discussed the

Fig. 5.8 Tovarishch
Sergei Zamascikov
(Photo: Open Source)



project with him. I asked him if he thought we could get into the Soviet archives. He said he would give it some thought. A couple of days later, Sergei came to see me. He said very simply and directly that getting into the Soviet archives “looked possible.” To me, the words “looked possible” had the impact of a physician telling me that curing my cancer “looked possible.” “Looked possible” was a hell of a lot more promising than “NFW.”

The key to getting into the Soviet archives, Sergei told me, was his friendship with “Georgi Ulyanov,” an Army colonel assigned to the Soviet General Staff.¹⁴ Sergei and Georgi had been friends since they were boys, which caused Georgi a bit of trouble after Sergei legged it.

My other team member included Mr. Ted Karasik, a part-time RAND employee who was a graduate student at UCLA. Mr. Karasik, who could speak and read Russian, did some excellent work on the Soviet *sharashka* prison camp system. The *sharashka* camps were where specialized units of the KGB exploited prisoners with advanced training or knowledge. German missile scientists captured during WWII were confined in a *sharashka* camp, for example.

Rounding out my team was senior RAND analyst Dr. Ben Lambeth, who was sometimes called the “Commodore” because he dressed like one from time to time (Fig. 5.9).

Dr. Lambeth was a Harvard PhD who had worked at the CIA on Soviet issues. One of RAND’s more thoughtful analysts and one of its most

Fig. 5.9 Dr. Benjamin Lambeth (Photo: Open Source)



prolific writers, Dr. Lambeth was not only a specialist on Soviet aircraft, he had flown in many of them. Dr. Lambeth was one of a handful of senior RAND specialists who always had time to listen to an analytical issue and then help a junior person like me to think it through.

In addition to his impressive CV, Dr. Lambeth was recognized for his command of jokes, the range and depth of which were prodigious.

* * *

“BLOW THE DOORS OFF OF THE SOVIET ARCHIVES”

In mid-November Sergei and I traveled from Santa Monica to Washington, DC, to introduce ourselves to the DoD project’s sponsor and to have discussions with DIA and ISA. From the outset, Admiral McDevitt was very supportive of our approach. When Sergei assured him that we could go to Moscow and obtain access to Soviet-era archives, Admiral McDevitt gave us one of the more memorable instructions either of us had ever received from a client.

Admiral McDevitt instructed us, “Go to Moscow and blow the doors off the Soviet archives.” We were encouraged by that instruction as well as by the confidence in us that it took to issue it, though we had to guess at the meaning. Apparently surface ship commanders, or “shoes” as they are called in the Navy, use the term “blow the doors off” as a euphemism for aggressive activity intended to produce success. The term derives from depth charge attacks on submarines that are intended to “blow the doors off” of the submarine.

We agreed to go to Moscow and blow the doors off of the Soviet archives.

Once back in Santa Monica, we began to organize our visit to Moscow. Neither of us had ever blown the doors off of the Soviet archives before, so we had to give the task some thought.

* * *

On November 25, 1991, the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs held a classified hearing. The CIA’s Deputy Director (DDCI) Richard James Kerr,¹⁵ the CIA’s Associate Deputy Director for Operations Ted Price, the Director of the DIA General James Clapper, and the National Security Agency’s Chief of Staff Donald Parsons appeared.¹⁶ The hearing was focused on POW/MIA issues from the Vietnam War only.

Sergei and I could have attended the closed hearing, which was classified SECRET, but no one thought to invite us. We quickly became familiar with being left out of DoD accounting program.

At the hearing, the CIA representatives stated that the Agency tracked issues such as “downing of U.S. aircraft, possible grave sites, sightings of U.S. servicemen, alleged discovery of remains and Hanoi’s position on U.S. MIA’s.” General Clapper’s talking points included the following:

DIA’s primary mission is live prisoner issue – Collecting (Stony Beach), analyzing and reporting on any Americans still held in captivity.

Secondary missions involve support to DC area policy officials and analytic support to CINCPAC/JCRC Fullest Possible Accounting efforts.

The report of the closed hearing included several points of interest, including the following:

QUESTION: Is there any intelligence reporting to indicate that possible presence of POW-MIA’s from the Indochina War being transferred to the Soviet Union or China?

We have neither substantive intelligence or [sic] fragmentary reporting which indicates that American POW’s were transferred to the Soviet Union or China during the war. We are in the process of querying the KGB on this issue.

No one bothered to note that ISA had just retained RAND to “blow the doors off of the Soviet archives.” In addition, the answer to the question, “Please explain why it is necessary to protect the sources of information on POW’s and MIA’s” included six and one-half pages that were completely redacted when the record was released by the CIA on June 14, 2010.

It would have been useful to know some of this information before we launched “downrange” into Moscow the following month.

* * *

NOTES

1. The description of the origins of the project and other information in this book are taken from my three-part RAND publication, *POW/MIA Issues* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 1994). *Volume I: The Korean War; Volume 2: World War II and Early Cold War; Volume 3: Appendices.*

2. The reference to RAND in *The Simpsons* (season 4, episode 10) occurred when Milhouse was trying to explain the relationship between the “saucer people, under the supervision of the reverse vampires” and the fact that married couples in Springfield who were drinking grandpa’s miracle elixir were finding excuses to spend time indoors during the day. In *Dr. Strangelove* the RAND reference takes place during a scene in the war room during which Dr. Strangelove refers to a doomsday machine study that he had commissioned from the “Bland Corporation.”
3. “America’s Think Tank: Politics warps a new history of the mysterious RAND Corporation,” Benjamin Schwarz, *Columbia Journalism Review*, May-June 2008. http://archives.cjr.org/review/americas_think_tank.php
4. <https://www.congress.gov/amendment/102nd-congress/house-amendment/120?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22H.+R.+83%22%5D%7D>
5. From: Dennis M. Nagy, Executive Director, Defense Intelligence Agency To: The Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs, OASD (ISA)), June 26, 1991.
6. <http://documents.theblackvault.com/documents/dod/readingroom/8/643.pdf>
7. *Stenographic Transcript of Hearings Before the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, Deposition of [General Jan Sejna]*, November 19, 1992 COMMITTEE CONFIDENTIAL. <http://www.theblackvault.com>
8. The RAND Corporation’s name was changed to RAND after RAND “management,” as a part of their effort to leap boldly into the twenty-first century, changed the name of the company to “RAND,” spending about \$200,000 of OPM in the process to make this bold decision.
9. Professor Osgood, who recruited me to the SAIS PhD program after I had spent three years in the government PhD program at Georgetown University, died of a heart attack shortly after Christmas 1986. Dr. Vlahos stepped in as my dissertation advisor.
10. *Historians in Trouble: Plagiarism, Fraud, and Politics in the Ivory Tower*, Jon Wiener (The New Press, 2012), p. 210.
11. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=59349>
12. <https://www.congress.gov/amendment/102nd-congress/house-amendment/120?q=%7B%22search%22%3A%5B%22H.+R.+83%22%5D%7D>
13. Letter from Mr. R. Bold, Executive Secretary, Center for Strategic Studies of Mongolia, to the author, January 10, 1992.
14. “Georgi Ulyanov” is not the colonel’s real name. By 2015, US-Russian relations had deteriorated so badly that “Georgi” asked me not to use his real name. Even though some of the events described in this book occurred over 25 years ago, “Georgi” was concerned that there would be negative consequences in Putin’s Russia today for assisting Americans a quarter century ago.

15. Deputy Director March 20, 1989, to March 2, 1992, Acting Director of Central Intelligence, September 1 to November 6, 1991. https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/directors-and-deputy-directors-of-central-intelligence/copy_of_kerr.html
16. Memorandum For: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence From: [Redacted] Subject: POW/MIA Closed Briefing November 25, 1991 SECRET, November 21, 1991. https://www.cia.gov/library/reading-room/docs/DOC_0005381571.pdf



CHAPTER 6

To Moscow via Stockholm and Helsinki

RAND management paid little attention to a project that supported what President Reagan had determined was America's "highest national priority," which was fine with us. In contrast, we received frequent inquiries as well as excellent support from the project sponsors in the Pentagon.

PREPARATION

Apprehension concerning the upcoming trip continued to grow. The scenes from Moscow on CNN and the network evening news were pretty grim. I went to the market in Los Angeles to buy gifts for the people we would meet in Moscow. The commodities included boxes of sugar cubes and bags of California pistachio nuts. I also gathered some RAND swag such as monogrammed pens and notepads.

My sole first-hand experience with Russia came from the time I went to Moscow for New Year's Eve in 1977 with a group of students from a Finnish technical university. This was not going to be a student union "booze cruise"; thus I relied on, trusted, and deferred to the judgment of my colleagues Dr. Lambeth and Sergei.

The only thing we knew for sure was that our necks, and perhaps other body parts, were on the block.

I journaled:

November 21, 1991 – RAND (Thurs)

I've arranged approval for Ben Lambeth, Sergei Zamascikov and me to head off to the Soviet Union next month. On television there are scenes of near food riots in Moscow. Great. Even when things were good there they were grim.

Dr. Lambeth and Sergei provided invaluable assistance and advice, without which the trip to Moscow might have occurred, but with a much greater risk of complete failure.

I journaled:

December 10, 1991 (Tues) – RAND

Preparations for my visit to Moscow have consumed all of my time. I was concerned, for example, that we would not get our visas. On Sunday evening the Soviet Union appeared to no longer exist. How can you get a visa for a country that no longer exists?

In fact, the USSR did not formally dissolve until January 1992. Uncertainty and opportunity are opposite sides of the same coin. The break-up of the Soviet Union, which created unprecedented chaos, also broke down barriers that had previously prevented the type of research we proposed to undertake. We had to prepare as best we could in order to increase the probability for success, as we were well aware that there would be no second chance.

ASSISTANCE FROM SWEDEN'S PRIME MINISTER

One task in the project's SoW was to collect and describe the US government's efforts to account for Korean War POW/MIAs. The case of 15 US POWs held as political prisoners by the PRC after the armistice came into effect in 1953 stood out in this context.

The Swedish government had provided a great deal of assistance to the US effort to secure the release of US POWs held by the Chinese government between 1953 and 1955. Following the exchange of prisoners after the Korean War armistice was signed in July 1953, China retained 15 US POWs, all of whom were USAF pilots or crewmembers, including 11 from Colonel Arnold's B-29,¹ and four F-86 pilots.²

China's objective by holding UN hostages was to leverage the POWs in order to compel the United States, which did not recognize the government of the People's Republic of China, into bilateral talks. The tactic was ultimately successful.

In early January of 1955, Chinese Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai took the opportunity during UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld's visit to China to express China's support for any effort to ease international tensions and asked Secretary General Hammarskjöld to help convey China's position and views to others who might care to hear them.³ Among "others who might care" was the government of the United States. One non-trivial aspect of this diplomatic tangle was the fact that the US government held some Chinese citizens as political detainees.

The U.S. Government declared a 'state of emergency' and prevented Chinese students and scholars with technical skills capable of aiding China from returning home. Of some 5,000 Chinese students in the United States in 1949, 105 were held for several years.⁴

This was not an isolated case of the US policy of trading Sino-Soviet bloc detainees for Americans. On May 1, 1960, a US U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance aircraft was shot down over Russia. On February 10, 1962, the Soviet government released Francis Gary Powers in exchange for Soviet Colonel Vilyam Fisher, aka Rudolf Abel, who had been convicted of espionage in the United States. The exchange took place on the infamous Glienicke Bridge "Of No Return" in Berlin. The US government traded a Soviet spy for Powers and at least 105 Chinese students for the 14 USAF hostages held by China. Taking, holding, and trading hostages was an integral part of the "sacred" accounting mission, the "most humanitarian of humanitarian" missions.

In addition to the UN channel, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs stated, "Through diplomatic channels, we sought and obtained the willing cooperation of various free-world nations having relations with the Chinese Communists – notably the United States and India – in making representations to Peiping."⁵ There were several reasons to conclude that Sweden was one of the "free-world nations" that had been consulted by the State Department. At the time, for example, three western nations—Sweden, Britain, and the Netherlands—maintained embassies in Beijing. Due to the fact that the United States had no

diplomatic relations with the DPRK, Sweden's embassy in Pyongyang represented US interests in North Korea.

In 1954, a UN resolution requested the Secretary General to seek the release of the "airmen and all other captured personnel of the United Nations Command still detained." Part of the Secretary General's agenda in Beijing was to seek the release of the 15 USAF prisoners captured during the Korean War, who had been held after the war in China as hostages (political prisoners) by the communist government of Mao Zedong.⁶

While in Beijing Secretary Hammarskjöld carried out UN business as well as acted in the interest of the United States. US support for the Secretary General was not a secret. The DoS stated that the US government had "full confidence" in the US government Secretary Hammarskjöld.⁷ The reasons for this confidence, however, were secret at the time. A CIA estimate in 1949 for the president concluded that Hammarskjöld was:

One of the most important and influential men in Sweden, exercising almost unquestioned authority over Swedish financial matters.

US officials were able to come to an agreement with Secretary Hammarskjöld on such an important matter because in the CIA's opinion he was "definitely pro-Western" as well as one of the few Swedish officials who would "lean over backwards to be fair in dealings with United States officials."⁸

Secretary General Hammarskjöld coordinated his visit to China with the US government. An American diplomat, Ambassador Marshall Green,⁹ described this coordination to me during my PhD dissertation research. Ambassador Green, while stationed as a First Secretary, Consular section at the AMEMB in Stockholm between 1950 and 1955, had been the AMEMB official responsible for the liaison with the Swedish government in support of Secretary Hammarskjöld's mission to Beijing.

Ambassador Green was not simply aware that the Swedish Foreign Ministry was supporting the Secretary General Hammarskjöld; he had first-hand knowledge of the information that the US government had provided to the Secretary General. In December 1954, Secretary General Hammarskjöld received a briefing that included a memorandum that had been "prepared by Mr. McConaughy of the DoS with the assistance of Messrs. Frank Wisner of CIA and William Godel of the Department of

Defense.” The memorandum was entitled “Suggested Paragraph for Inclusion in Briefing Book for Secretary General Hammarskjöld.”¹⁰

The research hypothesis was that if a paper trail of US assistance provided to Secretary General Hammarskjöld existed, perhaps it could be located in the Swedish archives. The expectation was that the paper trail would reveal what, if anything, General Secretary Hammarskjöld said to the Chinese authorities concerning the UN prisoners held in China. A secondary, but interesting, issue was to what extent the Swedish government had gone to assist the US effort to free the UN political prisoners held in China.

Sweden was not the only country that assisted the United States in the effort to free the USAF prisoners. Indian Prime Minister Nehru advised US Ambassador to India John S. Cooper on May 5, 1955, that:

He had written to Chou En-lai several weeks before the Bandung conference requesting the release of American airmen imprisoned in China. Nehru again raised the question when he and Chou met in Rangoon en route to Bandung, and Chou said Peiping would consider the matter further on his return.

The CIA commented:

This is the first indication that Nehru has actively urged the release of airmen in recent months. India took considerable pains to demonstrate its neutrality in arranging for the visit of UN secretary general Hammarskjöld to Peiping in this connection last January, and has been reported unwilling, because Hammarskjöld has failed thus far to achieve the release of the airmen, to make further approaches to China.¹¹

India, Britain, the United States, and Sweden were assisting Secretary General Hammarskjöld prior to his mission to Beijing in January 1955. The objective was to gain as much insight from Sweden’s contribution as possible concerning efforts to obtain the release of the American airmen.

* * *

Secretary General Hammarskjöld was prepared to discuss the 15 USAF POWs with the Chinese government and more. A 1957 Congressional hearing disclosed that:

When Mr. Hammarkjöld went to Peiping, he went not only to make strong representations on behalf of the flyers whom they had admitted holding, but also he carried with him a list of all the unaccounted-for personnel which was made up and given to him by the Department of Defense. [... The Chinese] would not even receive the list.¹²

Shortly after his visit to Beijing, Secretary General Hammarkjöld discussed in Tokyo his meeting with Zhou Enlai with American Ambassador to Japan John M. Allison and General John E. Hull, Commander of the US Far East Command. The Secretary General reported that he was “moderately optimistic” over the prospects for the release of the US airmen who had been imprisoned by the Chinese as “spies.” Hammarkjöld “got a definite impression” that Zhou Enlai did not want to “close the door to the settlement of the case” but made it clear the outcome might be favorable if the “release of prisoners could be divorced from ‘political overtones.’” Zhou emphasized that Beijing “could not be ‘intimidated’ into releasing the airmen, but that their release might be ‘reviewed.’” Hammarkjöld added that Zhou “did not discuss in any way such questions as China’s seat in the UN.” Finally, Beijing “might seek to stimulate negotiations by soon freeing some U.S. nationals not charged with espionage, such as the four fighter pilots accused only of air ‘violation.’”¹³

Secretary General Hammarkjöld’s visit to Peiping was followed closely by the US government. On January 13, 1955, the National Security Council’s agenda included a briefing for the Director of Central Intelligence entitled “Hammarkjöld (sic) Mission Outcome.”¹⁴ One day later, a CIA assessment of Hammarkjöld’s remarks to Ambassador Allison and General Hull concluded that Zhou Enlai wanted the General Secretary to believe that Zhou expressed two versions of events, one for domestic consumption and the other for foreigners. The CIA concluded that Zhou was not simply presenting two versions of the same event.

It suggests that Chou may have led Hammarkjöld (sic) to believe that Peiping would pursue a course of action – in regard to the airmen or any other issue discussed – which Chou in fact has no intention of pursuing.¹⁵

The CIA concluded that anything Zhou Enlai said to the General Secretary was part of “an extremely accomplished performance.” “The UN Secretary General is unaware or is only dimly aware that Chou is a specialist in performances of this type.”

On May 16, 1955, Secretary General Hammarskjöld sent a telegram to Zhou Enlai, advising him that the Secretary General had not received a reply to his “query of 23 April as to what he could do to facilitate the release of American airmen imprisoned in Communist China. The telegram emphasized the importance of early action on this matter.” Secretary General Hammarskjöld advised US Ambassador to the United Nations Henry Cabot Lodge that during the first week of May 1955, “he would soon tell Chou that, if there were no reply by 1 June, he would report to the UN that his mission had been a failure.”¹⁶

The Secretary General’s mission had also been facilitated by India’s Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru (1947–1964) who envisioned India as a neutral nation that could mediate between the Sino-Soviet bloc and the United States. As a result of the combined efforts of the UN and nations that acted on behalf of the US government, as Secretary General Hammarskjöld had suggested and just one day before his self-imposed deadline, the four fighter pilots held by the Chinese for air “violations” were released on May 31, 1955. The 11 B-29 crewmembers held as “spies” were released on August 4, 1955, three days after the US-China Ambassadorial Talks began on August 1, 1955.

The process that led to the release of the American prisoners had a profound effect on US-PRC bilateral relations. As a result of the negotiations for the release of the US prisoners, US and Chinese representatives met in Geneva during 1955–1957 then in Warsaw from 1958 to 1968 at the “Ambassadorial Talks” which were the first bilateral contact between the two countries at the ambassador level. The “Warsaw Talks,” as the process became known, was the only direct channel between the United States and the People’s Republic of China between 1955 and 1971. Eventually the agenda of the Warsaw Talks expanded beyond the single topic that motivated the process in the first place. The process took place in Beijing as well. The Ambassadorial Talks, which was the first direct bilateral contact between the US and the PRC, became the “principle form of contact between” the United States and the PRC for 16 years.¹⁷ By the time of the Nixon administration, the entire range of issues concerning the “fundamental principles of the relations” between the United States and PRC had been discussed at the Warsaw Talks. There is no question that Nixon’s historic visit to Beijing in 1972 was attributable, in large measure, to the Warsaw Talks.

The Ambassadorial Talk records were expected to shed significant light on the US government's efforts to account for US POWs held against their will in the Sino-Soviet bloc. With the assistance of Mr. Boylan, we made a great effort at NARA to find the minutes, memoranda of conversation, telegrams, or any other record of the Warsaw Talks, without success.

One of the key intermediaries between Beijing and Washington on the issue of the American POWs was the former Swedish government official and UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld. If the records of the Ambassadorial Talks could not be located, perhaps the Swedish archives could be a source of information about the efforts to free the American flyers. Obtaining the original or a copy of the briefing book that the Departments of State and Defense had provided to Secretary General Hammarskjöld or a copy of the list of US POWs that he tried to deliver to the Chinese government would provide an unprecedented insight into this effort.

* * *

US-Swedish relations could be traced to the earliest days of the Republic. Sweden, through the April 3, 1783, Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the United States, became the "first power in Europe which had voluntarily and without solicitation offered its friendship to the United States." Benjamin Franklin became America's first Minister Plenipotentiary to Sweden. The bilateral relationship had gone through some rough times in the 1960s and 1970s; however, the effects of which were still reverberating in 1991. US-Sweden relations began to fray in December 1968 after Education Minister Olof Palme marched in an anti-American parade in Stockholm side by side with the North Vietnamese ambassador (Fig. 6.1).

In 1972, US-Sweden diplomatic relations were strained, nearly to the breaking point, after Prime Minister Olof Palme (1969–1986) compared the US "Christmas Bombing" of Hanoi to the atrocities committed at Guernica, Katyn, Sharpeville, and Treblinka.

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger advised President Nixon that the Swedish government, which had collaborated with the Germany during WWII, was asking the wrong government to establish its anti-Nazi credentials. The incoming Swedish ambassador was denied *agrément* by the DoS, and the American ambassador was recalled without a replacement. Downgraded diplomatic relations were sustained during the period the Swedes refer to as *Frostens År* (the Years of Frost). Ambassadors would not be exchanged until May 1974.



Fig. 6.1 Education Minister Palme (Photo: Public Domain)

Prime Minister Palme was never invited to Washington by the US government, which was the US government's form of mild retaliation. The lack of an official invitation bothered Mr. Palme immensely, as the CIA concluded:

Despite these positions, Palme, who studied in the US as a young man, maintained that he had a basically positive view of the United States. On several occasions, though, he forcefully stated his disappointment at having never been invited to the US in an official capacity.¹⁸

The hangover from *Frostens År* was still influencing bilateral relations as late as 1991, despite the fact that Vice President George W. H. Bush had become friends and tennis partners with Sweden's ambassador and doyen of the DC diplomatic corps Count Wilhelm Wachtmeister.¹⁹

* * *

Against this background, in November 1991, I sent a request to the Prime Minister of Sweden Carl Bildt.²⁰ Mr. Bildt and I had become acquainted when he contributed to various CSIS publications in the 1980s, including a chapter for my co-edited book, *Northern Europe: Security Issues for the 1990's*.²¹ We had cooperated on a friendly basis; thus it was my hope that he would remember me and assess the request in that light.

The letter was sent to Mr. Bildt through the Swedish government's spokesperson, Mr. Lars Christiansson, a friend who had lived in Washington for a couple of years when he was the Washington correspondent for the Swedish national daily *Svenska Dagbladet*. The note to the PM respectfully requested the PM to instruct the Foreign Ministry to search its archives for any information concerning UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld's visit to Beijing (aka Peking or Peiping) in January 1955.

The letter did not reveal what was known about the support provided prior to General Secretary Hammarskjöld's mission to Beijing by the US government. It was important to see what the Swedish researchers would find on their own, rather than running the risk of confirmation bias if they were made aware of the information we had already collected prior to conducting their research.

The prime minister was also respectfully requested to instruct Sweden's ambassador to North Korea to look into the issue of whether the North Koreans were storing the remains of missing American servicemen. This request was not far-fetched, in light of the fact that as the "American interest section," the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang looked after American interests on a regular basis. The request was not out of bounds for another reason. Western diplomats in Pyongyang had very little to do. Sweden's ambassador, who was accredited to both Beijing and Pyongyang, rarely went to the North Korean capital, thus the embassy was run by the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) who welcomed any diversion from the gray, monotonous tedium of life in the Hermit Kingdom.

The question of whether the North Koreans stored human remains of missing Americans had been raised by Senator Robert Smith (R-NH) in 1992. Senator Smith reported that in 1987, "The U.S. government received information that a high-ranking North Korean diplomat is reported to have told a visiting Westerner in North Korea that his country was holding up to 2500 sets of remains of U.S. servicemen."²²

The purpose of the request to the Swedish prime minister was to obtain any information, preferably first-hand information from sources within North Korea concerning remains in storage, if that were indeed the case.

The response from the prime minister's office was positive.

Prime Minister Bildt authorized Swedish diplomat Göran Wide,²³ the deputy chief of mission (DCM) at the Swedish embassy in Pyongyang, North Korea, to investigate whether the North Koreans were storing the remains of Americans as the North Vietnamese were suspected of doing. DCM Wide was instructed by the prime minister to report his findings directly to me by letter, delivered by regular post (i.e. snail mail) that would be sent first by diplomatic pouch to Stockholm then to me in Santa Monica.

The prime minister's office also instructed the Foreign Ministry to conduct a search of the ministry's archives for any records relating to General Secretary Hammarskjöld's mission to Beijing in January 1955.

The only quid pro quo the Conservative government of Sweden requested, Mr. Hafström advised, was that in exchange for this assistance, I was asked to convey to the DoD the fact that the government of Sweden had "supported a DoD project."

As requested, I delivered the prime minister's message verbally during a meeting with DASD Ford, who instructed me to reply that the Swedish government's support had been "noted." I journaled:

Sunday, November 3, 1991 – 3775 Beethoven

[DASD Ford stated that] the US gov't will "note with interest" any cooperation given to me by a foreign government, in this case the Swedish government.

DASD Ford's position was forwarded to Mr. Hafström who in turn sent the message to the Swedish prime minister.

I journaled:

Sunday, November 3, 1991 – 3775 Beethoven

Got a call from Lars Christiansson on Thurs. He showed my letter to him to the Prime Minister, Carl Bildt. Carl has directed the Swedish Embassy in Pyongyang to take a look around on my behalf. He has also put some people to work in the Swedish archives to see if anything on Sweden's role in finding US POWs from the Korean War is to be found. The Prime Minister has informed the U.S. Ambassador to Sweden, Chuck Redman, who I briefed before he became ambassador, and has informed the Swedish Embassy in Washington.

Lars will phone me later to tell me whether there is any reason for me to go to Stockholm. Not every day one gets the PM of Sweden to act as one's research assistant.

I'm also supposed to get a letter from Sec of Def Cheney that says my work is private but the US gov't will "note with interest" any cooperation given to me by a foreign government.

Mr. Christiansson subsequently advised that it would be productive for me to meet the researchers who had been given the task to search the archives. This is why the itinerary to Moscow included a brief visit to Stockholm.

* * *

One of the motivations for Sweden's prime minister to support the DoD project was to send a modest signal to the US government that the government of Sweden was under new management. Support for this project was a tangible sign that in the view of the Conservative government, the Years of Frost had finally thawed.

The maximum impact of this exchange of messages concerning US-Sweden bilateral relations would have been marginal, at best. Less than three months later, however, Prime Minister Carl Bildt was invited by the Bush administration to make an "official working visit" to the White House that took place on February 19–22, 1992. Such an invitation had not been extended to Prime Minister Olof Palme.

* * *

There would not be much time to establish our bona fides once we arrived in in Moscow; thus we couldn't arrive empty handed. I had asked Commander Kinzel to try to get a letter of introduction from SecDef Cheney, but there was no guarantee we would get it, and if we did whether we would get it before we departed for Moscow. We knew it was important to demonstrate to our counterparts in Moscow that we had at least started our own archive research. I copied a few State Department messages from the 1950s concerning the POW/MIA issue that had been presented to the Soviet government. This was all we had in the early days of our research, so it would have to suffice.

The preparation for our first trip to Moscow appeared to be on track. I journaled:

November 6, 1991 – RAND SM

I orchestrated (to be modest) a free trip to Helsinki for Ben Lambeth via Pekka Aalto [Press Counselor at the Finnish Counsel General in Los Angeles].

I need to get Ben and Sergei to Moscow, so we're going via Finland. Nobody can accuse us of going on a boondoggle by voluntarily going to Moscow in December, particularly under the prevailing political conditions.

I have obtained cooperation from the Swedish Prime Minister, and perhaps now from the Finns. I feel pretty good as of now. Hopefully things will work out and I won't have to eat crow or whatever one eats...

Getting Dr. Lambeth's ticket paid for took quite a bit of pressure off of the bare bones project budget. The next step was to obtain approval from RAND management for the three of us to travel into the Soviet Union that was considered to be a "controlled" country. An important administrative box that had to be ticked was to obtain "country clearance" from the American Embassy in Moscow. This was essential, as the AMEMB's approval was required for any government employee or contractor to travel on official business to the USSR.

I journaled:

November 21, 1991 – RAND (Thurs)

I've arranged approval for Ben Lambeth, Sergei Zamascikov and me to head off to the Soviet Union next month. On television there are scenes of near food riots in Moscow. Great. Even when things were good there they were grim.

The plan was for Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, and me to rendezvous in Helsinki from where we would proceed together to Moscow.

* * *

STOCKHOLM BOUND

On December 11, 1992, things didn't start out very well at LAX for the flight to London. First, my luggage was mis-tagged by United Airlines. The agent who tagged my bag for London, rather than to my final destination, Stockholm, told me erroneously that LA passengers had to clear customs in London, when in fact I was a transit passenger. I walked away from the check-in counter slightly confused. As I sat drinking my ritual pre-flight beer at the little half-moon-shaped bar by the departure gate,

the more I thought about it, the more it dawned on me that this wasn't right. I returned to the United counter and tried to have my bag retrieved, re-tagged, and sorted out. The pleasant UA agent, who called the baggage handlers several times, assured me several times that it had been done. I kept telling her if that was so, United would have issued a new claim ticket. "Not to worry, Dr. Cole. There's nothing to worry about," the charming agent said repeatedly, which gave me even more reason to worry.

My real worries were yet to come.

One of the few perks from working at RAND was the ability to fly business class on international trips that exceeded five hours. I was sitting upstairs in business class on a UA 747, port side by the bulkhead at the top of the stairs as we took off west over the Pacific. As we banked over the shiny Pacific to head east, one could see Santa Monica, including our apartment building in Mar Vista.

About two hours out of LA, I began to sweat profusely. I felt terrible—couldn't eat, drink, sit, stand, or sleep. All I could do was sweat, swivel my bug-eyed head around, and sweat some more. My shirt was quickly drenched, my hair stuck to my water-logged scalp.

By the time we arrived in London 11 hours later, I was in a bad, bad state of affairs. I could barely stand up. My self-diagnosis was some sort of influenza.

I staggered to the SAS business lounge around 5:30 in the morning. After laying down on the chairs in the lounge, I hoped that the UA baggage handlers in LA had re-tagged my bag to Stockholm. Every time I staggered down the hall to men's room, I knew they hadn't. There was nothing I could do about it and not enough time to go through customs, then return through passport control which was notoriously time-consuming at Heathrow, then get back in time for the flight to Stockholm. On top of that, I couldn't stand in line without a men's room close at hand. It hadn't occurred to me to ask the SAS staff for assistance.

I journaled:

December 12, 1991 (Thurs)

London Heathrow. SAS lounge. Fast flight. I don't feel all that well.

07.54

After a couple of hours of sweating, diarrhea, and comatose sleep in the SAS lounge, I staggered to the SAS flight to Stockholm. The air cabin attendant knew I wasn't well, because I gave up my business seat and

proceeded directly to the back of the aircraft where I curled up in a fetal position in an empty row of the SAS MD-80, feet jammed under the arm rest on the aisle, and my head scissored under the other armrest by the window. The last row on the MD-80 was also the closest to the toilets. Profuse sweating became accompanied by intense shivering. I hadn't bothered to remove my suit jacket, which was soaked. A flight attendant came around, took one look, then without saying a word covered me with a blanket, as if I were a cadaver.

I wondered how I was going to get from Arlanda Airport to the Foreign Ministry, sit through the meeting with Mr. Jonas Hafström, special assistant to Prime Minister Bildt, meet my friend and prominent journalist Mr. Christer Larsson, then find the ferry to Helsinki without dying or infecting everyone along the way. Getting to Moscow was not on the top of my "to-do" list at the time.

After we landed in Sweden around 1:30 in the afternoon, I was in fine shape. I was dehydrated, puke-streaked, with hair sticking out like I'd stuck my finger in an electrical outlet. My feet were strangely swollen as if I had been spun headfirst in a NASA centrifuge for a couple of hours. After passport control, I stood around the baggage carousel long enough to verify that my bag hadn't arrived with me, nor should it have. No one at Heathrow had any idea where the bag should have been sent.

I journaled:

Stockholm. Sick – feel very nauseated. My bag didn't arrive.

After filing a lost bag report, I shuffled out of the terminal then crawled into the back seat of a taxi. We zipped through Stockholm, though two sudden stops were necessary. I recognized some things from my student days—the "No Loitering" signs, the subway shelters, shops selling designer rooftop luggage racks, and the ubiquitous "Hårvård" shops, which literally means "hair care" in Swedish, but that does not stop the alumni association from hitting them up for donations, no doubt.

The purpose of the stop in Stockholm was to meet with the staff who had been appointed to search in the Foreign Ministry files for any information concerning Secretary General Hammarskjöld's mission to Beijing. I was finally deposited outside Sweden's Foreign Ministry, located for the non-aficionado at *Gustav Adolfs Torg*, conveniently named after the college I attended in Minnesota. The guard pressed a button that made a whizzing sound as the heavy reinforced door opened. The guard said

in Swedish to his colleague, “Han ser fördjävligt ut” (“That guy looks like shit”). I was in no position to dispute the guard’s perceptive finding.

The meeting with Mr. Jonas Hafström and the two young department staff members didn’t take long. The two researchers advised that they had found nothing after a “thorough search of the archives.” The meeting was over. I gave Mr. Hafström a bag of California pistachios that I’d brought as a gift for him and left the building.

My visit to Stockholm and all the trouble I had gone through to get there had not been productive, but this was all a part of research. One must kiss a lot of frogs to find the prince. In light of what Ambassador Green had reported, I still don’t believe there wasn’t a single record in the Swedish archives concerning the Secretary General’s work in Peking on behalf of the UN prisoners held in China. They tried their best, without a doubt, but there are no guarantees in archive research. In retrospect, if the resources had been available and wisdom to do so, the UN’s archives in New York should have been searched, though access to UN archives is particularly difficult to obtain.

* * *

TO THE FINLAND STATION

My friend and journalist Christer Larsson picked me up outside the Foreign Ministry building at about 4:00 PM, just as the sun was setting. Mr. Larsson, who had done a great deal of research in Swedish military archives, had located records related to Sweden’s nuclear weapon program that he shared with me. After I got in his car, Christer turned to me and said, “Du ser fördjävligt ut.” “So I’ve been told,” I replied.

Christer drove me to the Värta harbor where the Finland ferries docked. We sat and chatted for a couple of hours in the harbor building restaurant. Christer left around seven. After arranging six empty plastic seats in a row, I had a lie-down until the ferry doors opened.

The Silja Line ferry departed at eight in the evening. It saved a lot of project money to use the ferry as a mobile hotel. The ferry had several restaurants, bars, and a disco. On this trip, however, all that was required was a long hot shower. I crawled into my single cabin berth and slept the sleep of the damned. The huge boat maneuvered through the Stockholm archipelago as we crossed the Baltic Sea on a freezing, pitch-black December night. Once the ship cleared the archipelago, the Baltic sea ice began to hammer against the hull which lulled one to sleep.

* * *

After 11 hours of dead-to-the-world sleep, I awoke as the ferry arrived in Helsinki ahead of schedule a few minutes before 8:00 AM. The vibrations as the ferry reversed into the quay were an unmistakable indication that we were on the other side of the Baltic Sea in the Gulf of Finland (Fig. 6.2).

After another long, hot shower, there was no razor so a shave was out of the question. I put on the same clothes, then joined the masses shuffling off of the ferry into the bitterly dry Finnish winter air.

Though the temperature was 2°Celsius (35.6° Fahrenheit) in both Stockholm and Helsinki, the weather in Helsinki always seemed much colder than in Stockholm. Helsinki in December is one of the coldest inhabited places on the planet, or so it's always seemed. As residents of cold climates say, there's no such thing as cold feet, just bad boots. A suit jacket, khaki trousers, tasseled loafers, and an unlined thin trench coat were hardly appropriate Arctic gear. Without proper winter clothes and given my emaciated state, I thought of myself as Dr. Zhivago as I stepped from the Silja Line ship into a long "TAKSI" queue flanked by remarkably shiny, new vehicles.

I checked in at the SAS Hotel Royal where the three of us were scheduled to rendezvous. Dr. Lambeth met me at the hotel. Through Mr. Pekka Aalto,

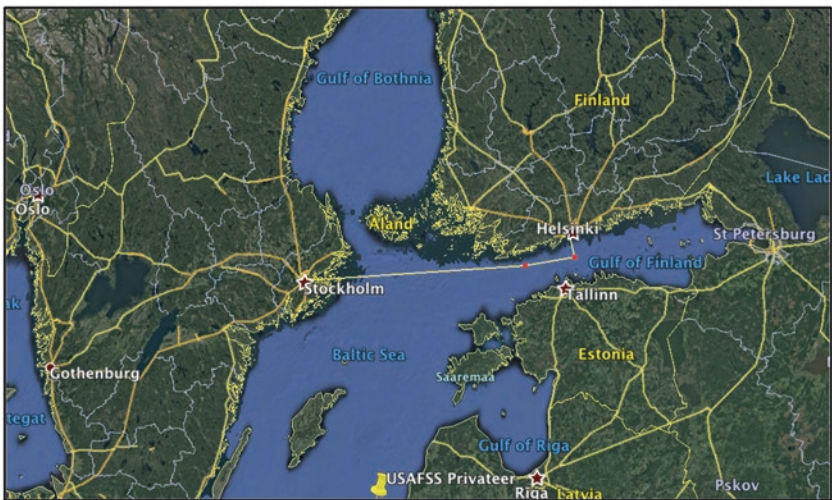


Fig. 6.2 Stockholm to Helsinki (Image: Google Earth)

the Finnish Counsel General in LA, I had arranged for Dr. Lambeth to precede me to Finland in order to fly with the Finnish Air Force for a couple of days. Dr. Lambeth kept pestering me to teach him how to say, “Check your six” in Finnish. As I walked into the reception area, Dr. Lambeth said, “You look like shit.” After complementing him on his acute power of perception, I made a beeline for my room.

I slept for a few hours and then joined Dr. Lambeth for a sauna in the hotel, which was just what the doctor ordered. An authentic sauna in Finland should be on every civilized person’s bucket list. I finally felt well enough to eat something. Dr. Lambeth, who had never been to Helsinki, was at my mercy, so I subjected him to lunch at the venerable Karl-Johan on Georgsgatan. Ravintola Karl-Johan Oy was the kind of place where one could order reindeer heart in a cognac cream sauce and morel soup. After an agreeable Finnish lunch, we returned to the hotel where I slept for another three hours.

In the afternoon, we went for a long walk around Helsinki. Dr. Lambeth loaned me a scarf, which was wrapped around my neck and over my head. I must have looked like a mad scientist or a refugee who was adjusting to life in a cold country. Due to a combination of the sauna, the freezing cold weather, a great lunch, a nap, and the brisk walk, I began to feel somewhat human again, though I was wandering around in the same clothes I had put on before I left for LAX two days before. We stopped in Stockmann’s where I bought gloves, a hat, and rubber overshoes.

That evening Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, and I were invited to dinner at “the most famous Russian restaurant,” Šašlick, which means skewer, brochette, kebab, satay, or sosatie in Russian. During the Cold War, some of the world’s finest Russian restaurants were located in Helsinki, Šašlick being one of them. Our hosts were Mr. Pentti Sadiemiemi, a reporter with *Helsingin Sanomat*, one of the largest newspapers in the Nordic region, and Mr. Kari Möttälä, a Foreign Ministry official who I had met several times in Washington. This dinner meeting had been arranged by Press Counselor Pekka Aalto, the Finnish diplomat assigned to the consulate general in LA.

The prices in Helsinki’s restaurants were mind altering. One beer cost 11 dollars (\$20 in 2017 dollars). Starters at Šašlick, such as blinis with smetana or borscht, began at 25 US dollars per person, while main courses such as Ivan’s Sword or potted bear meat en crouete à la Šašlick could set you back 60 dollars or more. Finns serve three kinds of coffee: Brutal Coffee (coffee without cognac), Normal Coffee (coffee with cognac), and

Paradise Coffee (cognac without coffee). After a round of Paradise Coffee, we thanked our hosts for the most enjoyable evening. It was a fortunate thing for our expense reports that the Finnish taxpayer or the newspaper picked up the tab. The evening was worth the effort. Great food and lively, interesting conversation, as well as excellent hosts.

Sergei hadn't shown up as planned, which concerned us. After we returned to the hotel, I phoned his girlfriend Irina in LA who advised that due to a snowstorm in southern England, Sergei's flight from LA to London had been diverted to Manchester. At that point Sergei and the rest of the passengers had been sitting on the aircraft at Manchester International for seven hours. Sergei didn't arrive in Helsinki until 2:30 in the morning. We were amazed that he made it at all.

The following afternoon our team, Dr. Ben Lambeth, Sergei Zamascikov, and I, met for a pre-flight meeting. We had no idea how we would be received in Moscow and could not even speculate as to what we might achieve.

We were headed to Moscow at an unprecedented time. President Gorbachev's policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* had changed everything. Even the Russians had begun to refer to the Soviet Union in the past tense.

I journaled:

December 15, 1991 – Hotel Royal, Helsinki

The whole political scene is changing. The end of the Soviet Union – if this indeed is what is happening, creates as many problems as it does opportunities.

Saw some scenes from Moscow on CNN. Things look rather grim. Sec State Baker is supposed to be there the same time we are. Maybe we can ride some coattails.

Ben and Sergei don't really know what we're in for – I certainly don't. At least we may see first hand how the Soviet Union disintegrates. We live in interesting times, as the Chinese curse goes.

All I could do was count on Sergei and Dr. Lambeth, two experienced specialists. They were confident they would do their jobs. We had one week, December 15–22, to see what we could be done. We headed to Helsinki International at around four in the afternoon in a light snow as the streetlights flickered to life.

* * *

MOSCOW

After we landed in Moscow and taxied to the gate, this being Russia, something had to go wrong, which it did on cue. At the terminal end of the jetway was a glass door. The glass, which was so grimy that it appeared to be made of a sheet of thin translucent brown wood veneer, was thoroughly cracked and so spidered that it should not have held together. As an introduction to Russia, the glass door was locked from inside the terminal. No one could get out of the jetway into the terminal. It took perhaps 30–45 minutes to find the guy with the key, so all of the passengers stood in the jetway or the aisle of the Finnair MD-80, heads down, shooting occasional helpless glances at one another.

The contrast between the well-lit, colorful, clean Finnair jet and the dingy, partially illuminated gloom and stench of the arrivals hall could not have been greater.

The sensory impression that Sheremetyevo International Airport created left no doubt that one was in the Soviet Union, aka the “Zone.” There was a Zone smell, which was a background stench composed of an amalgam of 50 years of cigarette smoke, grime, sweat, and the fumes of an industrial cleanser probably composed of radioactive pine sap. There was a Zone mentality and a Zone way of doing things.

The way of the Zone could only be learned through experience.

* * *

My luggage was still spinning around a baggage carousel at Heathrow. After we cleared immigration, we wanted to make arrangements to have my bag located, sent to Moscow, and delivered to the hotel, which seemed to be simple enough. Dr. Lambeth agreed to go through customs to meet our Russian counterparts and explain why Sergei and I would be a bit late. With Sergei along, the language barrier was resolved. Sergei, however, was convinced the task was a fool’s errand. I was not in the mood to allow my luggage to disappear without a fight.

A lot of Russians were by nature incompetent and deliberately inefficient, a mind-set that had been encouraged, amplified, and ultimately rewarded by the Soviet system. An American ambassador once said that the USSR was the only place on earth where incompetence was considered to be a virtue.

The problem was, many of the competent Russians who liked to take the initiative were thieves. The trick was how to get incompetent Russians

to find my bag and deliver it before the competent thieves helped themselves to all of my clean clothes, which were really needed at that point. Then there were the gifts such as boxes of sugar cubes, California pistachio nuts, and other things that were in short supply in Moscow. Looking around at the people in the arrivals hall, I began to think of my luggage as a survival kit.

A United Airlines bag tag was useless, as there was no United Airlines office at Sheremetyevo International. Since Heathrow had been the port of entry into Europe, we started with British Airways. Sergei and I found the BA office, knocked on the door, and were greeted by three fat Russians in heavy black sweaters, oily hair plastered to their foreheads. They were all chain-smoking in a little over-heated room. The BA “manager” actually spoke English, or a variant of it anyway. I asked him to tell BA in London to put my bag on the next flight to *Mockba* and deliver it to the hotel. Alarm bells went off with the Russians. Sergei said I had used the dreaded words, “I want you to do something.” Ivan the manager gave me a huge ration of gobbledygook about how he couldn’t accept liability for something he wasn’t going to do anyway. He shrugged his shoulders, held his palms toward the heavens, then said, “Eez im-pozzible.” Sergei and I gave up and left.

We stood in the gloomy corridor wondering what to do next. Sergei put his hands in his greatcoat and then said to me, “I don’t want to be pessimistic.” He looked down at the grimy linoleum, withdrew his hands, rubbed them together as if to warm to the task, and then said to me as if it were a confessional, “Tovarishch, you will never see your luggage again.” There, he said it. Sergei stuffed his hands back into his coat pockets and returned his stare to the floor.

“Why’s that?” I asked.

Sergei gave me the shrug, eyebrows pinched, both palms up, cheek drawn up on one side sort of gesture I was to see many more times. “This is Russia,” he said. That explained everything. “This is Russia” was the equivalent of saying, “Fuggidaboutid,” “No way José,” “Dream on,” “You’re doomed,” and a thousand equivalent curses. Or as the BA office manager had said, “Eez-eeem-pizz-i-bool.”

After wandering around in the gloom a bit more, we found the SAS office, but it was closed. It was approaching eight in the evening. We were aware that we were keeping everyone waiting, so as there appeared to be nothing more we could do, we decided to head back to the arrivals hall. The Russian group, which by then had been beaten into submission by

Dr. Lambeth's jokes, would be eager for us to appear. On the way out of the office part of the terminal, by sheer chance we stumbled upon the Finnair office. There was a light under the door, which meant either someone was still there or the staff had forgotten to turn off the lights, which would have been most un-Finn-like.

I stopped Sergei by grabbing at his coat and then said, "Look! We're in luck."

"Why is that?" he asked.

I pointed to the light under the door. "Finns are not only clever and competent, they like to solve problems," I said as I knocked on the door. "Particularly problems involving Russians. Maybe someone's still here." Before I could knock the second time, the door opened.

Inside the office were two young Finnish-looking men in suit jackets, each with a scarf around his neck, sitting at a little table playing cards. Unlike the British Air office, there was no booze, no cigarettes, and no sweaty hair.

Anyone who has listened to the pit crew speak to Kimi Räikkönen during a Formula One race would know that Finns are hardwired to ignore excess information. Räikkönen's statement to the pit crew during an Abu Dhabi F1 race said everything one needed to know about dealing with Finnish people. After the crew chief told him to do something over the team radio, Räikkönen replied, "Leave me alone. I know what I'm doing."

"What do you want?" said the first Finnair guy, matter-of-factly.

I explained the problem to them in English. The second Finnair fellow said, "Continue," again, matter-of-factly.

I gave the two Finnair guys all of the details. As I began to describe my effort at LAX to get the bag re-tagged to Stockholm, Finnair guy number one held out his hand, then said simply, "Give me your claim check and the address of your hotel." I gave him the tag, which he photocopied. Sergei wrote down the name and address of the hotel in Russian.

I said, "Kiitos, kiitos," which burned through about a third of my Finnish vocabulary. In contrast to Dr. Lambeth's belief, I could not say "check your six" in Finnish, but I could say "two beers," pronounce the middle name of the Finnish president, count to three, and say "thank you." The Finnair guys, who said nothing, nodded then closed the door.

In contrast to Sergei's belief borne out of a bitter experience that my luggage had joined the choir immortal, I placed my confidence in the people who fought the Russians to a standstill during the Winter War of 1939.

Maybe they would do it again.

After we emerged from immigration, we met up with the four Russians who had assembled to greet us. We all shook hands in the gloomy confines of the Sheremetyevo arrivals hall with the Russians who would become key players on our Moscow team.

Colonel Georgi Ulyanov, Sergei's boyhood friend, was on the Soviet army's general staff.²⁴ Colonel Ulyanov's position and contacts at the high-level of the Soviet military were essential to the success of our project.

Mr. Yuri Pankov was a reporter for the daily independent newspaper *Kommersant*. Mr. Pankov had been in the POW/MIA news due to a mis-translation of a story he had published recently. Mr. Pankov reported that he interviewed a man who said he saw an American in the gulag in the 1950s. The English translation in the American press gave the erroneous impression that the sighting occurred in the 1970s.

Major Vladimir Zolotukhin, who appeared in uniform, was in the Army as well as a member of the Supreme Soviet.

The fourth, but by no means the least, member of our team was a sociologist named Dr. Mikhail "Misha" Matskovsky, a very smart and unusual man. Dr. Matskovsky was one of the very few Jews who had been admitted as a member of the Soviet National Academy of Sciences. Dr. Matskovsky had created his own consulting firm, the Institute for Human Values, which was even more unusual. One of Dr. Matskovsky's first clients after he created his company was a group with the unlikely name of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago. Moody's interest in Russia, among other things, was to distribute free Bibles. Dr. Matskovsky tried to tell Moody that they had to take into account local customs, Russian Orthodox traditions, and Soviet circumstances, but he said they wouldn't listen.

To the average Russian, the Moody representatives had a big book that nobody read but constantly referred to, there was a leader who was probably dumber than most but enlightened in some mysterious way as to the content and meaning of the big book that nobody read. Each person attending a Moody meeting was compelled to stand and make a statement. These meetings were akin to Komsomol meetings, communist youth meetings with compulsory attendance, where everyone was compelled to stand and say something. The Russians became very good at speaking at a meeting for five minutes and saying absolutely nothing in order to check the participation box. In Komsomol and Moody Bible Institute meetings, you had to sit through the meeting before you got the free food. As a result, Dr. Matskovsky told me many Russians came to the conclusion that Christianity was a form of American communism, because the routines were so similar.

The Russians, followed by Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, and I, piled into a van for the ride downtown. Everyone was trying hard to be polite in several languages as we sat on each other's coats, dripping snowy overshoes on trousers. Not far from the airport, one could see in the gloom a small monument, a tank trap that marked the closest point the Germans got to Moscow during their 1941–1942 invasion.

Sergei had booked us into the Oktyabrskaya Hotel, which had been used primarily by the Central Committee of the CPSU. The hotel and the rooms were dark and uniformly worn out, but not cold. During the Soviet era, subsidized energy allowed hotels and apartment buildings to keep the heat cranked way up even during the worst of the winter. The room temperature was often far too hot. Every room had a little porthole in a double-pane window that was kept open all the time to let freezing air in; otherwise the room would have been unbearably hot.

Our hosts had organized a reception for us in a guest room in the Oktyabrskaya Hotel. The room was dim since the maximum output from the two light bulbs in the room amounted to the illumination equivalent to a child's night-light or a small fish tank.

In the gloom of the hotel room, the Americans and Russians stood around, sort of crowded together, playing "getting to know you." The Russians, who insisted on wearing their overshoes inside, made every effort to speak English. My Swedish, French, and pidgin German made no difference in this crowd. Fortunately, Dr. Matskovsky spoke fluent English, while Sergei and Dr. Lambeth, who spoke Russian, interpreted for me and the Russians as and when required.

Colonel Ulyanov said through Sergei's interpretation, "To the success of our cooperation!"

That, of course, required a massive toast, a gesture with which would become a familiar sight during the coming five days.

I journaled:

December 16, 1991 – Moscow Hotel Oktyabrskaya (Mon)

Quite a reception for us at the airport and hotel. The roads into town were wide, dimly lit, and full of uneven spots and holes. The van was sort of beat-up. The five guys who greeted us included a member of the Supreme Soviet.

Trash hasn't been collected – saw dumpsters overflowing. Not much snow. The new thing seems to be TV. There is MTV apparently. The Russians kept turning it on last night even though no one watched. Sort of American style. Russian champagne and vodka.

Spent the morning wandering around the Kremlin. Our guide is Natasha – how cliché. The system is breaking down. Everything is shabby. I guess it's always been that way.

After getting into my room around 11 o'clock, I turned on the television. The default channel was MTV, which caught my attention for a simple reason. The video playing was "California Dreaming," by the Mamas and the Papas.

They sang, "I'd be safe and warm/If I was in LA."

"No kidding," I replied.

* * *

My room in the Oktyabrskaya Hotel was an amalgam of an old fishing camp cabin in northern Michigan combined with the furniture in my great aunt's living room. Every flat surface had at least one gray doily, countless water rings and several deep scratches.

The room appeared to be furnished exactly as it had been in the 1950s when the hotel was built. The carpet on the floor, which once might have been brightly colored, was well worn, particularly in the middle of the room. The only colors that had survived 40 years of use were brown, gray, and grimy black. The chairs, which were made of heavy, dark wood, had upholstery that was the same color and as equally worn as the carpet. In front of the two heavy chairs was a low, round coffee table covered with a thick piece of glass obscured by decades of cigarette smoke. In the middle of the table stood on top of yet another doily in a dark blue vase was a bouquet of artificial flowers, composed of a man-made material unknown in the West. The artificial flowers, which at one time may have been red, yellow, or pink, were dull, bleached of all color, utterly lifeless. If the listless flowers could have spoken, the only words they could possibly speak would have been, "We are sad. Help us end this. Kill us."

Heavy, thick curtains hung on a large wooden dowel across the windows. The curtains appeared to be old carpets that had been recycled by being suspended from the wall. Due to the collection of goo, dust, fly shit, dried streaks of rain and bird droppings and quite possibly radioactive fallout from Chernobyl, the windows were semi-translucent as if they had been sandblasted. The windows were as blurred as the plastic cover of a headlight lens on a car that had been driven in snow-, slush-, and salt-covered roads for 20 years. Each window had the ubiquitous porthole one found in all external windows in Russia that allowed one to open the small

opening to obtain fresh air and ventilation, even in the middle of winter. An enormous garderobe made of dark wood that may at one time had actually been bright varnished wood stood against the wall on the other side of the thick wooden door. There were no coat hangers, which rendered the structure useless. The inside of the garderobe's long door was a full-length mirror that had become worn out on the inside reflective part that faced the door itself; thus most of the mirror didn't work. One's reflection was part face, part door. Near the door to the bathroom was a small armoire festooned with heavy ill-fitting drawers that were nearly impossible to draw out or, once out, could not be slid back in without a Herculean effort.

Stepping into the bathroom was like entering an exhibit in an ethnographic museum. The sink, toilet, and other fixtures were made of dense industrial-grade porcelain. Attached to the wall above the toilet was huge white porcelain tank from which a long, rusted chain with a porcelain handle dangled. The tank was connected to the toilet by a pipe covered with chipped paint and ding marks. How the pipe had become battered over the years was a mystery. Grasping the handle to the overhead tank, I laughed out loud as the old English Music Hall joke came to mind concerning an opera entitled "Il Lavatori by Pullchaini."

In the main room there was a bed of prodigious dimensions. In the corner of the room to the left of the bathroom door and to the right of the main door was a low, flat, short platform covered with a dense bedspread made of either wool or some ersatz industrial material. The pattern on the bedspread appeared at first glance to be identical to the pattern on the carpet, chairs, and curtain. The bed linens, on the other hand, were clean, white, and on the first night appeared to have been starched or even ironed by hand.

The air in the room, which didn't move, consisted of three distinct thermal layers. The first foot or so above the floor was always freezing. From mid-calf to waist high, the air was tepid. At the level of the head and above, it was constantly too hot, as if one were in a dry sauna.

A shower was out of the question as the water ranged from tepid to ice cold.

Once established between the starched sheets, I got the impression that I had laid down on a banquet table and pulled the formal table cloth over me. Each night the linens were a little softer, more wrinkled, and perfumed with the familiar scent of my own body. Neither the linens nor the

towels were changed, nor was the floor vacuumed, regardless of how many days we stayed.

Once in bed, after I had stopped shivering to warm up the linens, it was so quiet I could hear myself breathing. With the black-out curtains closed, it was pitch dark, not a light in the room. Before making an effort to go to sleep, I scanned black void, wondering where they had installed the microphones or hidden the cameras.

“Nite nite,” I said aloud into the darkness.

I journaled:

December 18, 1991 – Moscow (Wednesday)

Driving around Moscow one sees bread lines all over the place. Over lunch today a retired two-star general told me that to buy the vodka we drank he had to fight his way into a shop, pay, fight his way to a counter, then pull an empty bottle out of his bag. All of this and here we sit choosing from trout and lamb. The Mafia and the whores seem to be in control of the economy. I’m gaining weight in the midst of a famine of sorts.

Spent some time with the number two guy from the Soviet Ministry of Defense today. He has agreed to assist my project. The MoD is surrounded by terrible looking buildings. The top guy of the KGB and the top MoD guys are professionals. All together sophisticated.

Interviewed a guy who had been in Korea the same time as my Dad. Rather interesting.

Dinner tonight perhaps after we go to the Foreign Ministry with the number two guy to Yeltsin.

Apparently there was some sort of change in the government last night. We were at the Supreme Soviet, then it ceased to exist!

I fell asleep feeling strangely confident.

* * *

KGB CHAIRMAN’S CONFERENCE ROOM IN LUBYANKA

I approached our work in Moscow as I did in every foreign country where I didn’t know the language. The only way to make any progress was to develop an airtight relationship with the local specialists, partners, and participants. There was no other way. We were fortunate enough to have Sergei working with us. In the documentary film business, Sergei would be called a “fixer.” His job was to make things happen, which he did, consistently, professionally, and reliably.

Getting around Moscow was completely in Sergei's hands. Sergei arranged transport and meetings. We would discuss it in advance, set times, and so forth, and I didn't need to worry about anything, partly because there was nothing I could really do about it anyway.

A typical day in Moscow would go like this. I would awake, drink a liter of bottled water, then look out the window, wondering how cold it could be. Off to the shower that might or might not have any warm, tepid, or hot water. A cold water shower on a winter's day was not unknown. There was always water, but the volume, velocity, and temperature were unpredictable.

Dr. Lambeth and I would arrive in the lobby at 8:00 AM, briefcase in hand. Sergei would swoop down like Batman in his black wool great coat, and off we'd go. The car and driver Sergei had arranged would be waiting for us in front of the hotel.

Sometimes Sergei would explain to me on the way where we were headed. Sometimes Sergei would inform me of the outcome of the meeting that was going to take place later in the day. The results of meetings were almost always negotiated before the meeting took place.

We were, after all, in the land of Potemkin.²⁵

* * *

We had expected to find closed doors, gray, uncooperative Soviet bureaucrats and an oppressive atmosphere that would require us to work like hell for every inch of progress. Dr. Lambeth contributed to a research plan and carefully worded speeches that we hoped would encourage the Soviets to help us out. We also took the precaution of bringing a letter of introduction from the US Secretary of Defense, which Colonel Ulyanov gave us during the initial reception. He remarked that receiving a letter from the American Secretary of Defense on a secret General Staff fax machine had attracted some attention. Commander Kinzel, who had managed to get a letter of introduction signed by SecDef Cheney, had faxed it from the Pentagon to the number Ulyanov had given Sergei.

Our apprehensions were unfounded. We could not have been more mistaken about the reception we received. We were nearly overwhelmed with cooperation, offers of assistance, and goodwill.

The only exception was the KGB.

On Monday morning, our first full day in Moscow, our hosts organized a tour of Red Square and the Kremlin with our interpreter Mrs. Natasha

Kuznetsov acting as our guide. I was uneasy. In my view, taking a tour on the first day would send exactly the opposite signal we thought was required. I asked Sergei to politely but firmly advise our local partners that I didn't come to Moscow to play tourist. Instead of a full day wandering around Red Square, I was shown the prominent crypts in the Kremlin wall, the exterior of Lenin's tomb, and that was all I would tolerate. I was unaware that under the rubric of "cultural day," the US military routinely used official travel for the purpose of sightseeing, shopping, or playing golf.

From the Kremlin we went to lunch. In December 1991, the US dollar bought 76 rubles. At the one dollar to 76 ruble exchange rate, on the ruble economy we lived like potentates. I had about \$200 in single-dollar bills, which the locals desired more than their own currency. One dollar bought a taxi ride anywhere in Moscow. For two dollars, the cabbie would drive you around and wait outside no matter how long it took.

In contrast to Helsinki, where dinner for four cost nearly US\$500, lunch for Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, Colonel Ulyanov, and me cost a whopping \$1.75. Caviar cost \$0.38 per bowl for red and \$0.13 for black.

After lunch, we met with Major Zolotukhin at his office in the Supreme Soviet. With Sergei as my interpreter, I didn't need to say very much. All it took was to say to Sergei, "Tell him about the project and our objectives," then Sergei would take over. He knew the speech by heart. The main objective, which Sergei understood completely, was to establish an archive research project in Moscow, with access to both military and KGB records. The purpose of the research was to fulfill the terms of the SoW that RAND had negotiated with DoD ISA.

We were there to determine whether Americans had been transferred to and held against their will on the territory of the USSR. This was a humanitarian effort, nothing more. We would conduct the project following mutually agreed academic standards. We had no other agenda or interests. We showed Major Zolotukhin the project's SoW and the letter of introduction from Secretary Cheney, which Sergei translated for Major Zolotukhin.

The meeting went well. Major Zolotukhin said that he agreed with our proposal and assured us that he would assist us in his official capacity as a member of the Supreme Soviet. He added that he would also use his personal contacts with the KGB.

Sergei, Dr. Lambeth, and I returned to the hotel, where we held a pow-wow. We assumed that not just my room but all of the rooms were bugged, so we met in the large dining room where the TV was always on, with the

volume turned way up. We were astonished by the positive reception we had received. Dr. Lambeth, an old-school Soviet watcher, was speechless. My contribution to the assessment of events was to remind my team what Dr. Kissinger said when he was once asked how he had opened the door to China. Dr. Kissinger replied, “I didn’t open the door. My contribution was to recognize that the door was open. All I had to do was walk through it.”

“Let’s lay off the persuasion and focus on walking through the door.” I advised my team. “Agreed?” Dr. Lambeth and Sergei concurred, after which we all retired to our rooms. I had 20-minute power nap wearing the same clothes I’d put on in Los Angeles three days ago. The only advantage of jet lag is the deep, coma-like sleep that it causes.

Our day was not finished.

Around five in the early evening on our first day in Moscow, a white Toyota van appeared at the hotel. We got in. I wasn’t sure where we were going, but I always trusted my partners. We drove from the hotel to the KGB headquarters in the dreaded Lubyanka building at dusk, just as the streetlights, what there were of them, were sputtering to life. Moscow was a large pond of dirty slush. A few new snowflakes floated by.

We learned, after the fact, that the meeting we held at the Military Committee of the Supreme Soviet that preceded the KGB meeting had been crucial. We had no idea that because we passed that test, we would be whisked over to Lubyanka. At the conclusion of our Supreme Soviet meeting, Major Zolotukhin had made a short phone call. I did not know and could not have suspected that one moment I would be in the Supreme Soviet asking for cooperation, and within a couple of hours after that be ushered into the private seventh-floor conference room of the chairman of the KGB.

We made a turn in the roundabout called Dzerzhinsky Square.

It didn’t really matter what the square was called due to the fact that the statue of Felix Dzerzhinsky, the ruthless fanatic who headed Lenin’s terror police, had been pulled down in August 1991, leaving a strange looking stump, impotent, and gray in the gathering gloom. I pressed my forehead against the window of the van, enjoying the cold, but I was really looking at the lumps of bundled-up people slogging through the slush. The cold window also helped me deal with jet lag (Fig. 6.3).

The window below the lighted fixture on the top of the building is the chairman’s conference room.

I stared at the massive building, not believing that we were about to go inside. The *New York Times* Sunday Magazine’s cover story published just a few weeks before our arrival in Moscow described in unprecedented detail how the KGB was disintegrating and being dismantled.²⁶



Fig. 6.3 Dzerzhinsky Square and Lubyanka (Photo: Public Domain)

After we passed around a small circular driveway behind the massive KGB building, the van stopped in a well-shoveled parking bay by a brightly lit door, two things that were few and far between in Moscow. There were six in our delegation, three Americans and three Russians. What I also did not know at the time, however, was that one of the Americans was about to walk into KGB headquarters with a prison sentence hanging on his head. Sergei had been sentenced, *in absentia*, to an indefinite term in the gulag after he defected. He was standing there with us, the only thing standing between him and arrest was his American passport. I had no idea.

The well-lit door opened as we approached it. No need to knock (Fig. 6.4).

The door opened only one-fourth of the way, however, and that fourth was immediately filled with a very large human being. The man standing in the doorway, who was about six feet four inches (193 centimeters), was built like an NFL tight end and had short-cropped blonde hair, a Max Headroom square skull, and broad shoulders. Think of action star Dolph Lundgren on steroids. The doorman wore a dark, well-tailored suit.



Fig. 6.4 Entrance to Lubyanka (Photo: Public Domain)

I could see that he had enormous hands, the left that held a firm grip on the doorknob. His left arm braced him against the other door. With his left foot he blocked the door from opening any further. I wondered if KGB school included a seminar on how to open doors halfway, because this guy's technique was a particularly impressive way to do it. As the Head turned and scanned us, I noticed a lock-on between Major Zolotukhin and the Head. They nodded at one another with an ever-so-slight move of the head. The door swung open. The Head actually smiled, and I heard him say *davro bashjalovat* (Добро пожаловат), “welcome” in Russian, as in “Welcome to the KGB.” Never thought I’d hear that.

I journaled:

December 17, 1991 – Moscow (Tues)

We drove up to Lubyanka and were admitted with no ID. A real iron-faced killer type escorted us to the inner sanctum. The elevators were modern and all of the fixtures looked Western – a real contrast to the rest of this place.

We passed through a small room where two guards sat at a wooden table illuminated by a single table light. The first thing we noticed was that the place was pristinely clean. The walls were paneled with dark wood. A new, clean carpet the color of a red velvet cake was attached to the base of the wall by a bright brass floor runner that ran the length of the hallway. The interior was brightly illuminated, in contrast to the gloom that prevailed throughout Moscow, by a series of bright lights attached to the walls by shiny brass fixtures. One noticed immediately that the building didn't have the "zone" smell. If one did not know where one was, one could have reasonably concluded that one was in a recently renovated baroque hotel in Prague, maybe Budapest.

A man in a dark suit who appeared out of nowhere nodded to the Head to signal the handoff was complete. Number two led us to a hallway that led from the rear of the building to the front that faced Dzerzhinsky Square (Fig. 6.5).



Fig. 6.5 Lubyanka (Photo: Public Domain)

(Note the diagonal structure that connects the back to the front in the previous photograph.) When we reached what appeared to be the end of the hallway, we were directed into a small alcove where we found two elevators, each clearly marked with the West German manufacturer's name, Schindler. The mechanical specifications, in German, for each elevator were mounted on the wall on an aluminum plate. After we wedged ourselves into the two small elevator cars, man number two in the dark suit reached in, pressed number seven, withdrew his arm, then nodded to us as the doors closed. The seventh floor was where the KGB Chairman's office was located. From the outside, the large window in the Chairman's office surveilled Moscow like Sauron's eye.

We were going up, which was a relief as this was the correct direction. This was of vital importance in light of the fact that the infamous prison cells, torture chambers, and execution rooms were in the basement of Lubyanka.

After the door opened, we were greeted by man number three in a black suit, only this time he was quite a short, rather chubby fellow. He also spoke to us in fluent, flat-toned, unaccented American English, as if he had learned English from watching the evening news. Man number three, gesturing with his left arm, said, "Gentlemen, this way, please."

We were led down another hallway identical to the one we had just left. We had ascended seven stories, but one wouldn't know it, as the hallway on the seventh floor was indistinguishable from the hallway on the first floor. Man number three guided us into a room on the right side of the hallway that turned out to be a large garderobe. A flurry of action ensued as the six of us removed heavy coats, rolled scarves into balls that stuffed into the sleeves, hopped around on one leg as we removed the one galosh, then hopped around on the other leg as we removed the other. (The Russian word *galosh* (галoша) was a slang word for condom. Apparently the Russians were irritated that North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) designated the ABM system deployed to protect Moscow as the "galosh" system.)

We straightened ties, brushed down jacket lapels, ran a comb across what was by now some wicked bus head, and stood, gently coughing, looking at one another as if we were all about to get married, waiting nervously for the musical cue to walk up the aisle.

A large wooden door without any sort of doorknob on our side that appeared to me to be part of the wall opened silently. Man number four in yet another dark suit gestured for us to enter. We proceeded into the seventh-floor conference room of the Chairman of the KGB. The place was well-illuminated. After all of the gloom, brown, and Zone, the burst

of light and color in the conference room appeared to us as if we were Dorothy getting a first glimpse of the dazzling sites in Munchkin Land. The far wall was a large window that overlooked Dzerzhinsky Square. Nothing was done by accident or without careful consideration in that building. The bright lights and large windows were deliberate, so that passersby would have their gaze drawn to the windows of the seventh floor of Lubyanka, which was meant to create an atmosphere of apprehension and fear. One could not walk into the room itself very far, as it was dominated by an enormous open square, heavy table made of dark blonde wood, perhaps pine or oak. In any event, it was a massive table that was intended to impress or more probably intimidate visitors.

Four Russians, who were waiting for us, approached with extended hands, but no smiles. Man number four, a short dark-haired gentleman, sort of smiled, but it was more of a hotel *maitre d'* half grin or grimace, as if he were there on duty to fulfill an undesirable task and was not prepared to go a nanometer further. One of the four Russians was a 30-something man, had close cut black hair, and wore gray wool slacks and a dark blue or black wool sports coat with a pattern that must have been designed by Cuisinart. He was about 5'6" (167 centimeters) or so, kind of stocky. The other man seemed to be the most at ease, with gestures that suggested more of an English gentleman than a KGB thug. He wore a pin-striped suit and made a slight nod with his head, a semi-bow really, when he shook hands. We learned later he was the number three in command at the KGB.

The tallest of the four Russians was General Anatoli Aleksandrovich Aleinikov, the deputy chairman of the KGB. Sergei had anticipated that we might meet with Aleinikov, so he had prepared a short biography that he sent to me by fax at RAND. I had the bio in my briefcase. One difference between the CIA and KGB, in addition to the obvious facts, was that KGB officers had military-style ranks (major, colonel, general, etc.). A CIA officer is an officer, though officers are often mistakenly referred to as agents, even though in CIA-speak an agent is a foreigner recruited to spy for the United States. General Aleinikov was a serious no nonsense man, and his demeanor indicated that he wanted to ensure that we were to make no mistake about it. His gray hair, which matched his suit, was almost the color of his pasty, gray mid-winter Moscow skin. He was slim, with rather pointy features that included a sharp aquiline nose.

All of the handshaking and fumbling with business cards occurred in the space between the door and the corner of the massive table, so there were a few loose elbows and "pardon me" and "spa-see-ba" and "pleased

to meet you” and “hey, that’s my foot” going on. Once this particular Chinese fire drill was over, short dark suit man number four gestured, again with an extended left arm, that we should proceed all the way around the room to the opposite side of the massive open square table.

English-speaking man number four asked us to sit behind a collection of fake books and a strange bunch of old plastic flowers jammed into an oddly out of place vase made of thick, darkly colored blown glass that looked like it had been a KGB agent’s impulse purchase from a garage sale in Transylvania. I resisted the urge to tap one of the flowers while saying the oldest sound check joke in the world. “Testes, testes, one, two, three.” The table was set. General Aleinikov and his three colleagues sat across the empty space of the hollow square directly across from us. I was the furthest in on our side. To my left, as I leaned forward to make sure my team was there, were Sergei Zamascikov, Dr. Ben Lambeth, Major Vladimir “Volodya” Zolotukhin, Dr. Mikhail “Misha” Matskovsky, and Colonel Georgi Ulyanov of the Soviet General Staff. At least we outnumbered them, I thought.

General Aleinikov opened the meeting as enthusiastically as a Dred Scott having lunch with a bunch of Abe Lincolns. Sergei whisper interpreted. General Aleinikov first apologized that Chairman Vadim Bakatin could not be with us. We had no way of knowing that our meeting was taking place at the same time Chairman Bakatin was meeting with US Secretary of State James Baker in another part of the KGB headquarters. The Russians had concluded that the two visits were coordinated, though they were not in the least. Sometimes it’s better to be lucky than good.

General Aleinikov expressed the Chairman’s apologies and regards, which was about as close to “Mr. Nice Guy” as we were going to get from him. He made the distinct impression that he did not like carrying water for President Gorbachev’s reformist director Mr. Vadim Bakatin and certainly did not like to be seen to be going out of his way to help a bunch of Americans do anything.

As General Aleinikov reluctantly read the scripted apologies, which his demeanor indicated he was required to deliver, he launched into a terse opening tirade in which he said that “his organization” could not help, because there was nothing to find. His rant reminded me of the Russian saying, “It never happened, and besides, it was a long time ago.” (The variation on this aphorism is, “It never happened, and besides, it was your fault.”) Suddenly General Aleinikov didn’t conclude, he just abruptly stopped in mid-rant.

There was a long pause. The air became suddenly heavy. I was the junior RAND person as well as the youngest person on our team. Dr. Lambeth sat to Sergei’s left. In addition to having been at RAND for 15

years, he was a Harvard PhD, spoke passable Russian, had experience as a Russia analyst at the CIA, and was one of RAND's leading Soviet experts. I was none of those things. I anticipated that Dr. Lambeth, being the senior member of our group and the most experienced, would step in to make the opening remarks. Dr. Lambeth, who leaned forward and looked at me, made a slight hand gesture that meant, "It's your show."

Sergei, sitting to my immediate left, who was doing his usual excellent job of whisper interpreting, looked at me. He raised his eyebrows. I didn't know Sergei very well at that point, but his look was unambiguous, "What are you going to do?"

I leaned forward and looked down the table at my team. Five faces looked back at me. "Yikes! This is up to me." I reflected, for a moment, on all the training and experience I had. This was a one-shot deal. If I screwed it up, no telling what the implications would be. Without notes, no prepared text, and with less than 30 minutes of advance notice, I was in the conference room of the chairman of the KGB on the seventh floor of Lubyanka. I wondered how many Americans had been in that room before and under what circumstances.

There was no reason to beat around the bush with the suits on the other side of the table. Absolutely no beating around the bush. The immediate requirement was to make a firm and professional statement delivered in clear, short sentences that would be difficult to misunderstand or misinterpret into Russian.

I looked across the hollow square. The gray suits on the other side couldn't be any more difficult than the suits I encountered at Georgetown, Carnegie, SAIS, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), Congress, and RAND. I thought of what General Eisenhower said while he waited for the first news from the Normandy beaches. "There are times when you have to put everything you are and everything you have ever learned on the line. This is one of them." After a deep breath and another long look at the plastic flowers, I said to myself, "Yes. This is one of them, indeed."

The short black suit interpreted my remarks into Russian for the KGB. Sergei interpreted my remarks into Russian for Major Zolotukhin and Colonel Ulyanov. I scribbled a quick note to Sergei. "Pay close attention to their interpreter, OK?" Sergei blinked to acknowledge the note.

I leaned forward to make eye contact with my team one more time, as if that would make me more confident or persuasive.

It was game face time.

Taking care to speak directly into the plastic flowers, after a deep breath I said:

Gentlemen.

Thank you for the opportunity to meet with you this evening. I would like first, to tell you who we are, and second, to tell you why we are here. (I made introductions, paused for interpretation on the other side of the big open square. After the short dark suited man paused, I continued.)

I am from the RAND Corporation. The US Department of Defense has requested that we determine, through primary source research, whether American servicemen who did not return from World War II, the Korean War or the Cold War, had been transported to the territory of the Sino-Soviet bloc. We were not given the task to assess the Vietnam War.

I am the project leader. We have come to Moscow in order to establish a local research team, which will be led by Colonel Ulyanov, Dr. Matskovsky and Major Zolotukhin. Their task will be to continue this research after my colleagues and I return to the United States.

Let's be clear on two points. First, we are making no accusations. I am proposing that we address these issues objectively with academic thoroughness that will satisfy the most demanding professional standards. Second, in light of your opening remarks, we must acknowledge that our view differs from yours, with all due respect, as to whether the past or present personnel and archives of your organization can shed any light on the fate of the Americans who have not been accounted for.

We respectfully request that your organization cooperate with this project. I have brought two documents. One is a State Department record from the National Archives that describes one of many inquiries submitted to the Soviet Government on this issue. The other is a letter of introduction from our Secretary of Defense.

The man in the dark suit walked over to collect the National Archive document and a copy of SecDef Cheney's letter from me. The archive document was a State Department telegram from the 1950s that stated an American had been sighted in the Soviet Gulag. The dark suit, in turn, did not hand the documents to General Aleinikov. Instead, he studied the two documents, looked up at his boss, and nodded in the affirmative. I stared into the artificial flowers, suppressing the urge to say to Sergei and Dr. Lambeth, "We just got the KGB's Good Housekeeping seal of approval, my friends."

General Aleinikov, who apparently was satisfied with our bona fides, said, "Although this is a wild goose chase, this organization is willing to cooperate." In all of my interactions with KGB officers, no one ever referred to the KGB. They always referred to "this organization."

General Aleinikov pointed to a man who looked to be in his late 20s or early 30s, who was sitting near the large window to the general's extreme left. He said, "I have asked Mr. Prilepski to act as our liaison with your side. He will represent this organization on my behalf."

Mr. Prilepski, who wore a cream-colored camel hair Off The Rack (OTR) sport coat that appeared to be two sizes too large, had short carefully combed jet black hair that contrasted to his pasty white, bowl of plain oatmeal-colored face that was ubiquitous among Russians in the middle of the winter. General Aleinikov referred to Mr. Prilepski as mister (*gospadine*, господин) rather than comrade (*tovarishch*, товарищ).

Sergei grunted after General Aleinikov introduced Mr. Prilepski. Mr. Prilepski looked like a summer time intern in a Congressional office. What kind of training had someone like Mr. Prilepski received as a young KGB officer? The CIA had the "Farm" where new officers learned tradecraft such as how to use disappearing ink and the best way to steam open envelopes. The KGB had to have its version of a dark arts academy. I made a note to ask Mr. Prilepski about that.

After Mr. Prilepski was introduced, General Aleinikov put both hands flat on the table, looked around, then said, "I think we are finished." With that, the Russians got up then filed out through a door that opened in the wall behind them with Mr. Prilepski holding up the rear.

RESCUING SERGEI FROM THE LUBYANKA PRISON

The Russians simply left. No handshakes, no fanfare, no pretending. It was all sort of anti-climactic, like the time Jerry Jeff Walker was too drunk to play an encore at my college. One of the roadies grabbed the mike and bellowed. "It's over. Go home." Even the short fat man in the dark suit vanished. We were alone in the KGB chairman's conference room. We collected our papers, stood, looked at one another, shrugged, then shuffled out. We didn't say much to one another as we put on our rubber shoes, trench coats, scarves, and gloves.

The two side-by-side small German-made elevators arrived simultaneously. Dr. Lambeth, Dr. Matskovsky, Major Zolotukhin, and I entered the one on the right. Sergei and Colonel Ulyanov got into the elevator on the left. After the short ride to the entry level, we stepped out of the elevator into the lobby. I looked toward the other elevator. It wasn't there. Instead of the door to the other Schindler lift, there was nothing, just wood paneling, a solid wall. Dr. Lambeth, Dr. Matskovsky, and Major Zolotukhin bumped into me as they made their way toward the exit. The blonde

Lurch-looking doorman was nowhere to be seen. Something wasn't right. We weren't in the same place where we had entered.

"Ben! Ben! Where's Sergei and Georgi?"

Dr. Lambeth stared at the wall where the elevator was supposed to be. One of RAND's leading Soviet experts said, "Maybe they went to the wrong floor."

"Ben," I said, pointing at the wall. "The elevator's missing." Dr. Matskovsky and Major Zolotukhin spoke quietly to one another. Sergei's outstanding prison sentence came to mind as several possibilities occurred to me, none of them particularly good. Lubyanka's basement prison cells were infamous.

I said to Dr. Matskovsky, who spoke excellent English, "What should we do?" The range of not-so-good possibilities narrowed as Dr. Matskovsky, who said nothing, gave me the fatalistic Russian palms-up shrug.

After walking quickly toward a heavy oak door down the corridor to the right of the elevator, I heard a faint voice in Russian-accented English cry out, "Where the hell are we?" I gingerly turned the round doorknob. Much to my surprise the door was not locked. The door opened onto a very beat-up cement stairway that went one direction—down into the infamous dungeon of Lubyanka, notorious for its prison cells and execution and torture chambers (Fig. 6.6).

(After the fall of the Soviet Union, some of the prison cells in the dungeon were converted to offices for the KGB's catering staff.)



Fig. 6.6 Prison cells in basement of Lubyanka (Photo: Public Domain)

“Sergei, is it you?” I yelled. “Up here! Come up here!” It was so cliché that I could barely manage say the words, “Follow my voice!” I heard rapid footsteps coming up the stairs. After what seemed like an eternity, Sergei’s head appeared around the first landing, followed closely by Colonel Ulyanov.

Sergei’s face, which was ashen, revealed that he was clearly shaken. “Gaaaaad. Let’s get out of here,” he said as he hustled through us toward the door. There was little conversation in the minivan as we drove through slush and darkness back to the hotel.

After arriving at the hotel, we said goodnight to our Russian colleagues. After a brief visit to our rooms to get rid of our coats and overshoes, we re-assembled in the dining room. We made it a point to sit at a table toward the front of the room where the ubiquitous television was on at full volume.

Sergei ordered 200 grams (about seven ounces) of vodka that was served in a cut glass carafe. We made several toasts to one another. Sergei leaned forward so that we were nearly touching foreheads, to make it difficult for anyone listening. He said *sotto voce* that when the elevator opened in the basement of Lubyanka, he was convinced that he was going to be arrested. “It scared the shit of me,” he confided. “I couldn’t believe it when I heard your voice.”

“Hey, so I rescued you and Georgi from the basement of Lubyanka. How about that?”

“My hands are still shaking,” he said. He showed me his right hand that shook like he was suffering from hypothermia.

“No one will believe this,” Dr. Lambeth said. “I’ve been studying the Soviet Union for twenty years. No one will believe what just happened.”

“It was terrible,” Sergei said. “Let’s have a drink.” We toasted one another using the Finnish words “hirvi kyrpää,”²⁷ which had become one of our team’s inside jokes. The three of us had a late supper that featured decent chicken scallopini, but none of us had much of an appetite. We acted as though we were recovering from shock.

Dr. Lambeth said again and again, “I cannot believe what just happened.”

Later in the evening, after Sergei had recovered thanks to the miraculous properties of hundreds of grams of Stolichnaya, he smiled broadly as he said, “Imagine! The Chairman of the KGB apologized to me! And I got rescued from the basement of Lubyanka.” Sergei lowered his head, shook it from side to side slowly, then looked up at me. “Gaaaaad,” he said. “This is a weird world. Hirvi kyrpää!!” We clinked glasses for the umpteenth time.

Dr. Lambeth said, “No one will believe what just happened.” Sergei replied, “I think we got it, Ben.”

I asked Sergei, “What was with your grunt when Aleinikov introduced Prilepski?”

Sergei took a sip of vodka as he pointed toward the ceiling, shaking his finger as if he were dancing the Charleston. The gesture, which I would see many times, meant that Sergei was thinking. “Yes, yes. It’s impossible,” he said. “Really impossible. Prilepski means ‘pilot fish’ in Russian.”

“That’s wonderful,” I said. Deputy Chairman of the KGB General Aleinikov’s helper was named Prilepski, which in English has the meaning of “pilot fish,” as in the fish that attaches itself to sharks and eat their parasites and leftovers. A more appropriate name for an assistant to the deputy chairman of the KGB could hardly be imagined.

We saluted “pilot fish” with a vigorous toast of “hirvi kyrpää!”

I journaled:

December 17, 1991 – Moscow

I think I did a good job of negotiating. Aleinikov said it was all a wild goose chase. Prilepski assigned to us. “Pilot fish.”

Sergei learned from Major Zolotukhin that RAND was perceived by the Soviets to be an arm of the US intelligence community; thus the KGB had described us as “intelligence agents of the highest order.” Sergei and I have referred to one another as “intelligence agents of the highest order” ever since.

* * *

I was in Moscow in the winter, wearing the same clothes I had put on in sunny LA four days before. In order to take some of the burden off of Sergei, we retained Mrs. Natasha Kuznetsov, a local interpreter whose command of English was astonishingly proficient. After our first day together, Mrs. Kuznetsov took pity on me and offered to loan me some of her husband’s T-shirts and underwear that she brought to me in a small shredded plastic shopping bag that was covered with holes. She informed me that her husband, who was a KGB officer, had basically walked out on her and her two sons, so he wouldn’t miss the clothes. While the sentiment behind the gesture was appreciated, the opportunity was politely declined. The idea of wearing some other person’s underwear, particularly someone else’s KGB underwear was not appealing. In addition, all of the clothes were a couple of sizes too small for me anyway.

A minor miracle occurred on Tuesday evening.

Sergei called my room at ten in the evening, just as I was preparing to say “nite nite” to the darkness, hidden mikes, and concealed cameras. He said he just received a call from the front desk. There was someone in the reception to see me. This was utterly confusing, as no one knew me in Moscow. Sergei advised the reception that it was OK to send up whoever it was. I got up, turned on the lights, then got dressed.

A few minutes later, I could see through the spyhole that a swarthy looking man wearing a black leather jacket was knocking on my door. I opened the door warily. There it was. The man had my bag. There was absolutely no doubt that it was mine, as it was a fold-over suit bag made of soft gray material. Someone had sewn each zipper shut with rough twine, then used red wax to seal the knots, which created what appeared to be seals on the Treaty of Ghent.

I tipped the man five dollars, which was the equivalent of a month’s salary. He was overjoyed, I was overjoyed, we were both overjoyed. I said *spa-see-bah-bowl-shoy*, the only Russian words I could think of, several times. He said “spasiba bolshoi” to me several times. We said “thank you very much” in Russian several times, as he bowed, I bowed, we both bowed, we shook hands vigorously a couple of times, then my luggage savior bowed as he backed up, moving toward the elevator. We waved and smiled maniacally as the doors closed in front of him.

Curious as ever, Sergei dropped by to see what was going on. When he saw my bag, he laughed, wagged his finger in the air, and said, “This is a miracle. You must come to my room for a drink.”

After Sergei left, I turned on the taps in the bathroom to determine whether there was any hot water available. I showered for the second time in the day, this time in slightly warmer than tepid water, then put on fresh, clean clothes for the first time since leaving Los Angeles five days ago. Despite the late hour, I felt wonderful. The flu was gone, I had a warm shower, and I was wearing clean clothes.

I wandered down to Sergei’s room. We shared 100 grams of vodka and toasted to my most unlikely success. We made a special toast to Finnair’s baggage boys at Sheremetyevo. “Hirvi kyrpää,” we said as we clicked the chipped, well-worn glasses that had been provided by the hotel beside a blue-glass bottle of what might have been water.

The label on the bottle had fallen off a long time ago.

INTERVIEWS WITH SOVIET KOREAN WAR VETERANS

On Wednesday morning we conducted our first interview. We were driven to an Air Force hospital that appeared to double as a retirement home. The condition of the building, both the interior and exterior, was appalling. As usual, everything was dirty, rusted, broken, or a combination of all of the above. The floors consisted of ancient, cracked green plastic. All of the windows, which were covered with spider web breaks, were coated with so much dust and grime that only dim gray light could penetrate. Men who looked like veterinarians wandered down the corridors wearing square cotton hats, blue rubber gloves, and white gowns smeared with dried blood.

We met Colonel Georgi Plotnikov in what appeared to be a day room where he was watching black-and-white television on an ancient, bulky set with another resident.

Colonel Plotnikov, who was around 65 years old, was a stout man with thinning salt-and-pepper hair combed straight back. He wore a bathrobe, dark pin-striped pajamas, and fuzzy slippers. The most striking feature was Colonel Plotnikov's face. His cheeks, which were unusually smooth for a man of his age, were pushed up toward his eyes, which gave the impression that he was vaguely Asiatic.

The second time we met Plotnikov, I was able to take the following photograph (Fig. 6.7).

Colonel Plotnikov's Asiatic features, vague or not, had come in handy during the Korean War. In 1951–1952, Colonel Plotnikov had been a GRU officer who wore a DPRK uniform and used the Korean name Muk Su (*plotnikov* and *muk su* mean “carpenter” in their respective languages). Colonel Plotnikov's job as a Soviet military intelligence officer was to have face-to-face contact with American POWs in Korea. Colonel Plotnikov told us that Soviet officers interrogated or sat in, while the Chinese interrogated American POWs both on Korean territory and in Mukden, China,²⁸ where the Soviet MiG-15s were based. Colonel Plotnikov said, “I have Asian features, I spoke Korean, so the Americans did not suspect that I was Russian.” He said that most of the interrogations he was involved with took place in Mukden, China, on the north side of the Yalu River because any structure in North Korea was vulnerable to a USAF air strike at any time. (By 1953 the USAF had burned down almost every North Korean town. Aircraft were grounded due to the fact that there was



Fig. 6.7 (R) Colonel Georgi Plotnikov (Photo: PM Cole)

no building over one story in the entire country that had not been burned or damaged.) As far as Colonel Plotnikov was aware, all of the American prisoners who had been transferred to the Soviet interrogation facility in Mukden, China, had been returned to POW camps in North Korea.

Colonel Plotnikov told us that in addition to interrogations in the Mukden facility, he had routinely participated in face-to-face interrogations with American POWs on the battlefield in Korea. He recalled in particular detail how he had assisted with the interrogation of an American POW who he described as a 30-year-old infantry battalion captain, perhaps from the 2nd Division. According to Colonel Plotnikov, the interrogation took place at a camp located approximately 20 kilometers (12.5 miles) north of Pyongyang. Colonel Plotnikov's description of events matched those of repatriated US POWs, who "reported being questioned by men they suspected of being English-speaking Russians."²⁹

While we spoke to Colonel Plotnikov in the hospital, a friend of his poked his head in the door, realized Colonel Plotnikov was busy, apologized, and left. Colonel Plotnikov asked, "Do you know who that is?" We hadn't a clue. Colonel Plotnikov said, "That was Andriyan Nikolayev, the third cosmonaut to go into space."

After the interview with Colonel Plotnikov ended, we went to lunch at one of the first Italian hard currency restaurant and grocery stores to open in Moscow. In contrast to \$1.75 for four on the ruble economy, lunch for Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, me plus Mrs. Kuznetsov came to \$210. Mrs. Kuznetsov could not believe what she saw in the Italian grocery store. It was exactly one week before Christmas day, so I used my own money to buy some groceries and supplies as a gift for Mrs. Kuznetsov and her two young boys. I bought feminine pads, olive oil, a block of hard cheese, canned tuna packed in oil, butter, sugar, facial tissues, cotton swabs, chocolate, scouring powder, tinned tomatoes, more or less what I would buy for my wife and me in LA. It all came to 36 dollars, or around 3000 rubles. Since the collapse of the ruble, a half-kilo of cheese cost close to a half-month's salary for most people.

I emerged from the store, then offered the bag of goods to Mrs. Kuznetsov. "Merry Christmas."

Mrs. Kuznetsov refused to accept the gifts. After I insisted, she began to weep, then said she would accept only if I shared something with our van driver, so I did. He got the cleanser and the butter and sugar. Mrs. Kuznetsov had already received a kilo of sugar cubes that I had brought from LA.

I journaled:

December 18, 1991 – Moscow (Wednesday)

What a day. This hotel was a primo Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) poo-bah joint, by the way. The morning interview was at a Soviet Air Force hospital. Our guy was a GRU liaison officer in N Korea in the 1950s. The third man in space popped his head in from time to time – didn't meet him.

Lunch was at a hard currency Italian place. Lunch for 4 – mediocre but not bad, \$210. Contrast that to ruble prices we pay for meals here.

It was not fair for three Americans to swan around using powerful dollars without sharing with Mrs. Kuznetsov and the others who were helping us. Mrs. Kuznetsov later told me that she was able to provide a special Christmas for her two boys.

* * *

On Wednesday afternoon we met with General Anatoli Kharkov, commander of the Institute for Military History in Moscow. We gathered at General Kharkov's office, which hadn't seen a coat of paint or the business

end of a mop for decades. The outer pane of one of the double-pane windows was broken. The chairs were loose and wobbly. All of this detritus was in the commander's office. The three of us plus Mrs. Kuznetsov sat on one side of a narrow conference table. General Kharkov and his deputy, a colonel, sat on the other side. They had somehow come up with two little flags, one Soviet and the other American, that were crisscrossed in a cracked porcelain vase in the middle of the table as if this were a state visit or the SALT negotiations.

The meeting began with my carefully worded presentation that was presented by Mrs. Kuznetsov who spared Sergei the task of interpreting. We showed General Kharkov the letter of introduction from Secretary Cheney. My main interest was to convince General Kharkov to assign one or two of his academic staff members to carry out the research in the archives. The success of an archive research projects always depends entirely on the skill and dedication of the worker bees, so the type of cooperation we required was absolutely essential to the success of the project.

Talking about doing archive research is easy. The actual research part is tedious, time-consuming and more often than not unrewarding drudgery. A successful archive researcher must have the discipline to sit for hours, sifting through box after box of documents, looking for the needle in the haystack, which more often than not isn't there. It is solitary work that isn't for everyone.

Another problem is that it is extremely easy to waste time by napping or drinking tea in the cafeteria. Then there is the fact that one always finds something interesting in the archives. The problem is that interesting documents may have nothing to do with the task at hand. One must have the discipline to put the interesting but irrelevant material away and keep going. It takes a disciplined academic mind to conduct productive archive research. The payoff when one finds something of significance makes it all worthwhile. Barbara Tuchman's description of the rapturous joy she experienced when she found the Zimmerman telegram is an example of that kind of payoff.³⁰

After Mrs. Kuznetsov finished delivering my opening pitch, an amazing thing happened. General Kharkov stood up. For a moment it appeared that he was going to throw us out. Instead, he picked up his chair, carried it around his desk, put it next to me, and sat down with large, exaggerated gestures. He extended his hand in an embellished handshake and then said something in Russian. Sergei interpreted. "He says he is on your side." General Kharkov shook my hand vigorously, then shook hands with

Dr. Lambeth, whose eyes were beginning to bug out. The general barked an order to one of his aides, who quickly appeared with a bottle of vodka on a tray with six shot glasses. We toasted one another and spent the next three hours discussing how to fulfill the archive research objectives of the project, as well as politics, history, and whatever came to mind.

General Kharkov said that he needed to have access to certain records controlled by the General Staff under General Leonid Ivashov, the director of the foreign liaison office within the Ministry of Defense. The collection had the opaque name of the "Special Archive." General Kharkov made a call, after which he set up an appointment with General Ivashov for later in the day. He then banged out a note on the world's oldest manual typewriter that he asked me to give to General Ivashov.

The meeting with General Ivashov was arranged so we could propose that he would authorized General Kharkov to allow our group to have access to the record group called "Special Archive." As we milled around outside General Ivashov's office in the foreign liaison reception room, Colonel Ulyanov, who worked for General Ivashov, walked up to me. We had met at the reception on the first night and he was with us when we went to see General Aleinikov, but he had not spoken a word of English to me up to that point.

This time, Colonel Ulyanov put his face so close to mine that, if he were an American, I would have been convinced he was trying to kiss me. Instead, Georgi gestured with his chin that I should listen to him. I tilted my ear close to his lips. He was so close I could feel his breath on my cheek. Georgi whispered to me, "Pavel. Thee anzer eess yezza."

Then he stood back, in his ill-fitting gray-green Soviet colonel's uniform, huge brim of his brown Army hat, and gave me a little smile and winked both eyes simultaneously. As it turned out, this was exactly what happened. We went through the meeting following the familiar script. After an hour or so, General Ivashov, twiddling a pencil, said, "We are prepared to offer our cooperation to fulfill the humanitarian matters that you have proposed."

The general didn't have an accent because it was the voice of Mrs. Kuznetsov's whisper interpreting. I nodded and scribbled on the pad of Soviet General Staff paper in front of me something like, "kow-a-bunga." We asked Sergei afterward what, exactly, had been proposed to the general. All of this was left to our local team members. How in the hell would an American, even an informed one, be able to form the correct question in such a way so that a Soviet general would agree to a project that called for the *Amerikanski* to poke around in what was off limits to 99.9 percent

of the citizens of the Soviet Union? Hundreds of American know-it-alls who would have insisted on doing it “their way” would have ended up with nothing.

Sergei told me he was not entirely sure how it all worked, due to the fact that he let Colonel Ulyanov handle everything.

This was another astonishing breakthrough.

* * *

That evening we dined at Pitsunda, a Georgian restaurant. The food and service were absolutely first-rate in every respect. The kitchen was wide open which Sergei said was done so deliberately so that guests could see how clean the place was. We were served fresh, ripe tomatoes with bunches of cilantro leaves in the middle of the Moscow winter. Mrs. Kuznetsov said to me several times that she had no idea that such things were available even to the political elite in Moscow. In contrast, through the crack in the heavy curtains covering the windows, one could easily see people queued up in the freezing gloom at a bread shop across the street.

Over an astonishingly good dinner, Colonel Ulyanov filled us in on the behind-the-scenes negotiations with General Ivashov, among other things. We were receiving fantastic, high-level cooperation due to the fact that the leadership had embraced a new era of Russian history. Soviet history was not Russian history. We were welcome to look into Soviet records simply because the leadership regarded the Soviet era as if it were a foreign country. The new Russian leadership wanted to establish a new relationship with the rest of the world in general and with the United States specifically.

The Russian opening to a new era of relations with the United States would subsequently be completely and utterly mismanaged by three consecutive US presidents, two Republicans and a Democrat.

* * *

On the morning of Thursday, December 19, 1991, much to my surprise, General Kharkov had arranged for us to meet Lieutenant General Georgi Ageyevich Lobov, who had been the commander of the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps. The 64th was the unit that flew MIG-15s against UN forces during the Korean War. Mr. Danz Blasser, Senior Analyst, Korean War Working Group (KWWG), Joint Commission Support Directorate (JCSJ), who conducted archive research in Soviet military records, stated:

General Georgij Lobov, one of the three war-time commanders of the 64th, wrote in an article that the total number of Soviets involved in the Korean War over its duration was approximately 70,000 with peak strength of 26,000. The Soviets flew roughly 74% of all communist combat sorties during the Korean War. [...]

According to Soviet documents, during the Korean War the Soviet Air Force flew a total of 63,229 sorties, 60,450 of which were during the day and 2,779 at night. They fought in a total of 1,790 aerial engagements, and claimed 1,097 victories. Soviet anti-aircraft artillery units claimed to shoot down an additional 212 aircraft for a total of 1,309 U.N. aircraft shot down. Soviet acknowledged losses amounted to 335 aircraft and 120 pilots.³¹

We met General Lobov at a veteran's club, sort of a Soviet VFW, only more run down and without a huge bar. None of us could have known that when he met with us, General Lobov had less than two months to live.

General Lobov, who had been a WWII fighter ace, was around 90 years old. He arrived for the meeting in full military dress that included an enormous winter greatcoat. He was decked out with a chest full of medals that covered more than half of his tunic. Despite the fact the old man was frail, he had a square face and penetrating eyes that left no doubt that in his prime he had been a formidable commander.

The vast majority of the interview turned out to be a pro forma waste of time. After my carefully worded introduction, which Sergei recited without notes, General Lobov launched into a prolonged harangue. He opened with a review of the Allied bombing of Dresden during WWII. As far as tirades went, this one was pretty good. He managed to work in every lame Soviet-style cliché about American imperialism, war mongering, the decadence of capitalism, and so on.

After the first five minutes the diatribe became so tedious that Sergei's simultaneous interpretation consisted of comments such as "Oh, gaaaaad. He's quoting Lenin about the internal contradictions of capitalism. Gaaaaad. It's getting worse. I can't bear it. I won't translate it."

After the interview spun into a dialectic cul-de-sac, I stopped taking notes. Toward the end, I couldn't help asking, "General Lobov, perhaps you could explain to me why the exchange ratio between MIG-15's and Sabre jets was fifteen to one in favor of the U.S. Air Force?"

General Lobov's reply was quick and decisive. "What you are saying is irrelevant. We accomplished our mission." According to Army Task Force Russia (TFR):

The Soviet Union initiated its battlefield testing in the Korean War with the activation of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps Headquarters in Antung (now Dandong, Manchuria), in November 1950, just as North Korea teetered on the edge of destruction. The Corps was charged with a threefold mission:

1. Air defense of the area north of the 38th Parallel;
2. Protection of the trans-Yalu bridges; and
3. Training of North Korean and Chinese pilots

Analysis of documents provided by the Russian side, however, shows that the 64th had yet another mission: the management of the overt and covert human intelligence (HUMINT) effort targeted against the USAF.³²

During the interview, I managed to ask General Lobov if he knew anything about American POWs being sent to the USSR during the Korean War. He replied, “I heard rumors that American POW’s had been taken to the USSR.” Out of respect, we allowed General Lobov to complete his no holds barred smackdown, thanked him for his time, and left. We all thought it was quite a missed opportunity.

Shortly before his death in February 1992, General Lobov was interviewed by Mr. Igor Morozov, a Russian journalist. Morozov gave a copy of his notes from the interview to the USRJC. The US side of the USRJC described the notes as a “transcript.” According to Mr. Morozov, General Lobov stated:

I can testify to the following: I know that in summer 1952 at least 30-40 American POWs were placed in a separate and closely guarded carriage, attached to a goods train, and sent to the USSR. The most ‘valuable goods’ on this train was the American pilot of Russian origin Colonel Mahurin – he was a wing commander in the USAF, and by Soviet standards a ‘wing’ amounts to almost a division. I know that Mahurin agreed to work with our intelligence people, and he helped us a lot. In particular, he explained details of the ‘Sabre’, which we were greatly interested in at the time. We have to presume that the other 30-40 prisoners were also of some value to our intelligence. They must have been a treasure trove. [...] As regards the subsequent fate of those 30-40 Americans, I, like yourself, can only guess.³³

The US side of the USRJC concluded:

[T]he U.S. side of the [USRJC’s Korean War Working Group (KWWG)] believes that the [Morozov] interview with General Lobov accurately reflects what the General knew to be the case, i. e., the Soviets indeed sent some American POWs from Korea to the Soviet Union.³⁴

In an interview with the BBC shortly before his death, General Lobov stated:

I know that in the summer of 1952 at least 30 to 40 American POWs were placed in a closely guarded carriage attached to a goods train and sent to the USSR. They must have been a treasure trove. I think that it was from these very men that our intelligence people's remarkable knowledge came.³⁵

Colonel Georgi Plotnikov corroborated General Lobov's statements concerning how US POWs would have been moved and by whom.

It would have been a KGB [MGB] operation in cooperation with North Korean intelligence. The Soviet Army had no Gulag and was not prepared to deal with a stream of prisoners. The KGB [MGB] could do all of these things.

The Soviets had the capability to move POWs, the Koreans would have permitted such an operation, and transport across the PRC would have been no problem, in Colonel Plotnikov's view.

At the time there was train service from Pyongyang to Moscow with a stop in China. [The POWs] would have been loaded into trucks with canvas drawn around them, then transferred to trains at night. The North Koreans hated Americans. They would have cooperated in such an operation if asked by the Soviets. The North Koreans would not have said no to a Soviet request.

"Specialized organs" in the Soviet Union would have made requests for particular types of Americans. Colonel Plotnikov added, "Design bureaus might have made such requests."³⁶

Colonel Plotnikov concluded that the deputy chairman of the KGB [MGB] would have been the lowest political level that could have approved such an operation.

The text of General Lobov's interview was included in the BBC *Timewatch* documentary entitled, "Russia's Secret War." In contrast to a ringing endorsement of the veracity of a Russian journalist's notes, DPMO staff members accused the BBC of either misinterpreting the interview with General Lobov, asking leading questions, or faking the interview altogether.³⁷

Despite DPMO's criticism and dismissal of the BBC's interview with General Lobov, DPMO's *77-Page Report* included "Appendix B: 31 Missing USAF F-86 Pilots Whose Loss Indicates Possible Capture."³⁸ According to DPMO, the number of missing F-86 pilots who might have been captured was roughly equivalent to General Lobov's estimate of how many American POWs had been transferred to Moscow.

* * *

Some of the Soviet veterans we wanted to interview came to see us at the Oktyabrskaya Hotel. Colonel Alexander S. Orlov, who had been a military intelligence officer stationed in Korea during the war, was one of them. The interview with Colonel Orlov was by and large a waste of time, due to the fact that he was not very helpful. We got the impression Colonel Orlov was either beating around the bush or deliberately evasive. His version of Soviet military intelligence in Korea, more Sergeant Schultz than Red Army colonel, varied significantly from the version we heard from Colonel Plotnikov and Colonel Bushuyev.

Colonel Orlov was not very informed concerning our area of interest, or perhaps was informed but chose to say nothing of any particular value. He did, however, tell us a fascinating story about the Cuban Missile Crisis from the perspective of the Soviet General Staff. He said that it was obvious that the Strategic Air Command had encircled the USSR with a ring of steel and nuclear weapons. Colonel Orlov said this was perhaps the key factor that convinced Soviet Premier Khrushchev to back down. Other than that, the interview was a comprehensive waste of time.

The Orlov interview was a prime example of how in the research business one is required to kiss a lot of frogs. I gave him a box of Domino sugar cubes at the end of the interview, which turned out to create an awkward moment. It occurred to me later that well-connected people like Orlov didn't need this sort of assistance.

Colonel Orlov, who went on to be a member of the Russian side of the USRJC, was held in high regard by the American side.

Colonel Orlov, who played a central role in defeating the purpose of the USRJC, certainly gained a lot of weight during his time on the USRJC.

* * *

On Thursday evening, we were interviewed by Russian state television, by a reporter who wanted to publicize our project. Dr. Lambeth and Sergei conducted the interview in Russian as I looked on in silence. The purpose

was to explain our project and invite people who might know anything to contact us. The piece ran on Russian TV after we returned to Santa Monica.

* * *

PALM TREES IN MOSCOW

Sergei and I organized a banquet at the Oktyabrskaya Hotel as a way to thank everyone who had helped us during the week. Before the banquet, scheduled for Saturday night, we needed to take a break.

On Saturday morning, Dr. Lambeth went to see General Pyotr Deynekin, the commander of the Russian Air Force. Sergei and I went to a much-needed steam bath, or *banya* as it's called in Russian. Dr. Lambeth, whose meeting ran long, joined us later. After he arrived, Sergei and I asked Dr. Lambeth what he had asked General Pyotr Deynekin, who had become the first head of the new Russian Air Force in August 1991. Dr. Lambeth advised us that he didn't ask any questions because he did not want to give the impression that he was a spy. We gave Dr. Lambeth plenty of good-natured ribbing about what General Deynekin might have thought of someone who asked for a meeting during which the guest asked no questions. "General Deynekin must have concluded you were just a terrible spy," Sergei said as we all had a laugh at Dr. Lambeth's expense, a treatment we all received from time to time while working abroad.

I journaled:

December 21, 1991 (Saturday)

The afternoon in the Russian sauna was really something. The guys had a case of American Beer from the Pittsburgh brewing company and some Russian pivo (beer – tasted like Pilsner Urquell). After the sauna we tied towels around our heads and wrapped ourselves in these white sheets. I sat in the corner with my turban and toga watching the cockroaches that had been driven out of their nests by the heat.

The room was perhaps 10' x 20', with a wooden picnic table, a TV and a sink. The walls were paneled with strips of pine. Some cheap linoleum was nailed to a big section behind the table. They had dried fish – tore into them with our bare teeth, making a sound like opening a stubborn plastic wrap. The meat was rather salty and tough to gnaw off the little bones. The beef was better. Apparently it was simply dried. Lt. Col. Sasha, the Banya Commander, cut pieces off with a pocketknife and offered them on the tip of the blade.

The bath was situated where the Bolsheviks had blown up Christ the Savior cathedral in 1931. I waddled out once down the snow-packed path to take a dip with Sasha in the steaming outdoor pool. Every pore on my body was delighted to be purged of all of the cigarette smoke and other Zone fumes. A *banya* followed by a long nap was an incredibly powerful restorative.

* * *

An hour or so before the guests were scheduled to arrive for dinner, we went down to the restaurant to check out the preparations. I had naïvely assumed the event would be held in the large, brightly lit hotel dining room where the giant color TV was always on, blaring away on high volume. Like a matryoshka nesting doll, however, there were rooms within rooms in the Oktyabrskaya Hotel. This had been, after all, one of the go-to places for members of the Central Committee of the CPSU. We had walked into the hotel's dining room several times a day for a week. Instead of taking us into the dining room, the hotel manager used a skeleton key to open a door in the wooden wall that we had passed by a dozen times. This was the second time during my week in Moscow that a door appeared out of solid wood. We walked through the door and then into a huge greenhouse that was so incongruous with the surroundings that it felt like a movie set. Outside a frigid Arctic wind was blowing snow all over the place. Inside the greenhouse, which was as warm, humid, and green as a tropical island, there were palm trees, large ferns, and strangler figs. Had Johnny Weissmuller swung by on a vine, it would not have seemed out of place.

All of our guests arrived more or less on time. As they arrived I wondered whether anyone would believe that our evening in Moscow began with a reception held in a greenhouse full of palm trees inside of a Communist Party Central Committee hotel. We served sweet Russian sparkling wine Sovetskoye Shampanskoye (*Советское Шампанское*, Soviet Champagne) and various finger food starters, known in Russian as *zakuski*. We took a group photograph surrounded by the tropical plants, a photo that was to become an issue with my RAND project manager in due course.

During the reception, General Kharkov asked to have a private word with me. We stepped off to the side behind one of the larger palm trees. For some reason, he had brought his daughter along for the evening, as if he were trying to set her up with one of the attendees. Instead, he said

discreetly through Mrs. Kuznetsov our interpreter, “This project will be a success. Graves will be located. Americans will be exhumed, repatriated and monuments will be erected.”

I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. General Kharkov raised his bushy gray eyebrows and his wine glass. We clinked glasses and drank a toast to our mutual success. I huddled quickly with Sergei and Dr. Lambeth to tell them what General Kharkov had just told me. Mrs. Kuznetsov assured Sergei and Dr. Lambeth that she interpreted what the general had said accurately.

When it came time to move to the dining room, I again naïvely expected that we would go back through the door in the wall to the hotel dining room. Instead, yet another inconspicuous door opened in the back of the greenhouse. Behind that door and down a few steps was the private dining room of the Central Committee of the CPSU. The room was dominated by a long wooden table capable of seating 20 or so guests. The sturdy wooden chairs and bleached pine paneling reminded me of a fishing lodge in northern Minnesota.

The multi-course meal included fresh trout, expertly sautéed, complete with slivered almonds. When the fish course was served, Mrs. Kuznetsov asked me what was on the plate. When I told her it was trout, her eyes filled with tears. She told me that she knew the word but had never seen fresh trout before in her life. As she wiped her eyes, she told me that she did not know that such things were available in Moscow. The main course was a generous portion of bone-in rib eye steak, known as the “tomahawk” cut, that was grilled à point (medium). One problematic feature of the evening was the fact that the vodka and water bottles were identical. Both bottles were made of pale blue glass without labels. In good Soviet fashion, the adhesive had failed, so the labels had simply fallen off. This fact was discovered the hard way. I wanted to stay hydrated and mitigate the effect of the endless rounds of toasts to our mutual success. I poured a large glass of water, then took a sip. Vodka. Drinking that much vodka was out of the question, even for the Russians. The only thing to do was to ask the waiter for another glass. By the end of the evening, all 15 guests had a half-dozen or so glasses in front of them.

An ocean of vodka was wasted, but the Russians always seem capable of making more.

Dinner for 15 in the secret dining room of the Oktyabrskaya Hotel cost 1000 rubles for the room (\$13) and 2000 rubles for the food and drinks (\$26) or \$2.60 per person, all in.

I journaled:

December 21, 1991 – Moscow (Sat)

We hosted our first thank-you banquet tonight. Got some tremendous news. General Kharkov says graves will be identified. Americans will be exhumed, repatriated and monuments will be left. So my mission to Moscow looks like it may be a success.

We ate in a dining room behind a greenhouse situated within this former communist rat hole. Hotel Okyabrskaya has fresh trout to fry while the rest of Moscow starves. Natasha said that thanks to our gifts she might be able to have a decent Christmas table. We make a difference in our own way. I gave our driver a jar of coffee, some figs and dried fruit.

One more killer banquet tomorrow. Tonight's meal for 15 costs 1,000 rubles for the room (\$10) and maybe 2,000 rubles for the booze (\$20). Banquet food for 15 cost \$30. Tomorrow will be US\$70 per person. This will be a serious bill to pay.

We held a second banquet in order to accommodate the fact that some of our team members refused to socialize with anyone from the KGB.

THE KGB BANQUET

On Saturday night, Sergei, Dr. Lambeth, and I hosted the second dinner, this time at a privately owned restaurant we had seen on television. The meal and the service were both Zone-style dreadful, but the conversation was productive and informative.

I journaled:

December 22, 1991 – Moscow (Sunday)

The food was OK at best and the prices were outrageous. The number two guy from the MoD (Ivashov), two KGB guys (one named Prilepski, the other Maksov), the head MIG test pilot (Menitski), a colonel from the General Staff (Ulyanov), Ben, me, Sergei, the Head of the Institute for Human Values, and our interpreter Natasha filled out the group.

Many many subplots were played out during the evening. The KGB was sniffing like crazed dogs. The big news is that Zolotukhin, who was also there, will come to RAND on January 12 with a bag of documents which will prove that US servicemen were taken from Korea to the USSR in the 1950s.

I hosted the dinner, so General Ivashov sat to my right as the guest of honor, Dr. Matskovsky to my left. We learned that General Kharkov had been the chair of General Ivashov's PhD committee (Fig. 6.8).



Fig. 6.8 L–R: General Kharkov, General Ivashov, Dr. Paul M. Cole (Photo: PM Cole)

Our “pilot fish” Prilepski showed up with his own guest, a little guy sporting a black eye. The guy with the shiner said his name was “Viktor Maksov,” a name that Sergei said was impossible to have for some Russian reason. Maksov said he had gotten his shiner while playing volleyball. Prilepski put Maksov across from me, next to Dr. Lambeth. Maksov spent most of the evening grilling Dr. Lambeth in Russian about Dr. Lambeth and me.

The big news of the evening occurred when Major Zolotukhin asked me to have a private word with him. He said through Mrs. Kuznetsov that he proposed to come to RAND on January 12, 1992, to deliver documents that would prove that US servicemen had been transferred from Korea to the territory of the USSR in the 1950s.

General Kharkov asked Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, and me to stay behind after the dinner wrapped up. General Kharkov also told us that Major Zolotukhin would come to LA on January 12, 1992, with a bag of documents.

As a result of this visit, Sergei and I commissioned a report, deriving from primary source archive research, to be produced by the Soviet Institute for Military History, the KGB, the General Staff, and some others, all under the coordination of the Institute for Human Values, directed by Dr. Matskovsky.

Sunday morning Dr. Lambeth and I left for home. Mr. Yuri Pankov and Mrs. Kuznetsov our interpreter came to say goodbye.

I journaled:

December 22, 1991 – Air France #2987

At cruising altitude nearing Berlin.

While I was in Moscow the USSR ceased to exist. Rumor was that Gorbachev had resigned.

The ride out to the airport was dark and slushy. The airport is a sad looking place with miserable people at every turn. Dismal lighting at the airport. The “bar” consisted of a bunch of picnic tables jammed together around a counter, where one lady took her sweet time serving the few drinks they offered while the other sat with a calculator figuring out how much foreign currency things cost. One small glass of white wine and one Pepsi = 19 Finnish Marks.

Rather than returning through Helsinki, which would have been pointless, Dr. Lambeth and I rebooked so we could fly a more direct route, Moscow-Paris-Washington-Los Angeles. While we were over the Atlantic, Dr. Lambeth tried to use the public phone on the plane to call DASD Ford to advise him about our trip. Dr. Lambeth was overwhelmed by the cooperation and information that we had obtained in such a short time. He tried to get through a dozen times, but the plane’s air phone didn’t work.

On Monday morning, while changing planes at Dulles, before flying to LA I phoned Admiral McDevitt to brief him on our trip. No notes exist that record the admiral’s reaction.

After returning to Santa Monica on Christmas Eve, 1991, I produced a “Trip Report of Moscow Visit, December 15-22, 1991” and made arrangements for all of the recorded interviews to be translated and transcribed by a US government linguist at the Monterey Institute in California.

* * *

On Christmas Day 1991, the red hammer and sickle was lowered from the Kremlin wall, then replaced by the blue and white Russian flag.

On December 26, 1991, the USSR was dissolved. Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev resigned and then handed power over to Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

* * *

NOTES

1. On January 12, 1953, a B-29 using the call sign “Stardust Four Zero” was shot down near the Soviet airbase in Andung, China. Of the crew of 14, 11 were captured and repatriated after the war. Colonel John Arnold, Commander of the 581st ARC Wing, who was onboard, was one of the captured. The B-29 crew was transported from North Korea to China where they were charged, along with CIA officers Fecteau and Downey, with espionage.
2. The four F-86 pilots who were held as political prisoners after the end of the Korean War were all US Air Force officers, Colonel Edward Heller, Captain Harold “Hal” Fischer, and Lieutenants Lyle Cameron and Ron Parks.
3. “Nuclear Signaling and China’s Perspective about Nuclear Threat: How China Handled Nuclear Threats in the Cold War,” Tong Zhao, Sam Nunn School of International Affairs, Georgia Tech (undated). <http://posse.gatech.edu/sites/posse.gatech.edu/files/Nuclear%20Signaling%20and%20China%E2%80%99s%20Perception%20about%20Nuclear%20Threat%20-%20How%20China%20Handled%20Nuclear%20Threats%20in%20the%20Cold%20War.pdf> Zhao cites: “A Chronicle of Zhou Enlai,” Beijing: Party Literature Research Center of the CPC Central Committee, p. 439.
4. *U.S.-China Ambassadorial Talks, 1955–1970*, U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/china-talks>
5. Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, to Assistant Secretary of Defense Frank C. Nash, (CONFIDENTIAL), Subject: Unaccounted for Americans Believed to Be Still Held Illegally by the Communists, March 5, 1954. *Volume I: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 204.
6. “Chou Accepts Bid by Hammarskjold To Discuss Fliers,” Sydney Gruson, *New York Times*, December 18, 1954.
7. “The U.S. Has ‘Full Confidence’,” *New York Times*, December 14, 1954.
8. *Sweden*, (SECRET), Copy No. 1, for the President of the United States, CIA SR-7, April 6, 1949, p. 70. *Volume I: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 215.
9. Ambassador Marshall Green (1916–1998), whose career focused on Asian affairs, was stationed at the American Embassy in Stockholm 1950–1955. He was one of 13 US State Department Officials who accompanied President Nixon to China in 1972. “Marshall Green Dies at 82; Longtime Diplomat in Asia,” *New York Times*, June 11, 1998. <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/06/11/world/marshall-green-dies-at-82-longtime-diplomat-in-asia.html>
10. “Memorandum for the Secretary of State” SECRET 19 January 1955. The memorandum addressed “Cases of John T. Downey and Richard

- Fecteau, Civilians Captured by Chinese Communists During the Korean Hostilities.” <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP84-00499R000300010016-6.pdf>
11. *Current Intelligence Bulletin*, TOP SECRET Office of Current Intelligence Central Intelligence Agency 8 May 1955, p. 4. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79T00975A002000260001-0.pdf>
 12. *Return of American Prisoners of War Who Have Not Been Accounted For by the Communists*, House Subcommittee on the Far East and the Pacific, 1957, p. 10, cited in, *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 214.
 13. “The Hammarskjold Mission,” NSC Briefing, SECRET 12 January 1955. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79R00890A000500010032-6.pdf> One UN fighter pilot, Squadron Leader Andy McKenzie, was a Royal Canadian Air Force pilot who was shot down in December 1952 while on an exchange program with the US Air Force. McKenzie, who had been shot down by a US Air Force F-86, was released separately on December 5, 1954, over the Hong Kong border. McKenzie had also been shot down by a US fighter in Europe during WWII.
 14. Memorandum for the Record From: National Security Council Production Staff Subject: NSC Briefing Topics for 13 January 1955, January 10, 1955. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79R00890A000500010004-7.pdf>
 15. Memorandum to: Director of Intelligence, “Hammarskjold’s Impressions of Chou En-lai” SECRET From: Huntington D. Sheldon, Assistant Director, Current Intelligence, January 14, 1955, p. 2. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP91T01172R000300050006-9.pdf>
 16. *Current Intelligence Bulletin* TOP SECRET Office of Current Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, 18 May 1955, p. 9. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP79R00890A000500010032-6.pdf>
 17. “U.S.-China Ambassadorial Talks, 1955–1970,” U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1953-1960/china-talks>
 18. “Foreign Policy Positions of Former Prime Minister Olof Palme,” SECRET March 12, 1986. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP86T01017R000403540001-4.pdf>
 19. After Prime Minister Palme was assassinated in Stockholm on February 28, 1986, Swedish national television (SVT2) was unable to convince any US government official, current or previous, to appear on camera. The TV2 Washington correspondent, Mr. Göran Rosenberg, who advised that Dr. Kissinger had declined to comment, asked me to do an on-camera interview, which occurred on Saturday morning February 29 at the CSIS premises. Prior to the interview, I phoned Mr. Donald Gregg, who was Vice President George W. H. Bush’s security advisor, to ask for the US

- government's position. Mr. Gregg replied, "I'm sitting here with the Vice President." After conferring with the Vice President, Mr. Gregg said, "The United States government sends its condolences to the Swedish people." *Frostens År* had created some scars that had not completely healed.
20. Mr. Bildt would subsequently become Sweden's foreign minister as well as a member of the RAND Board of Trustees.
 21. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986).
 22. Note that 20 years later, this claim has still not been verified. Other than the K208 remains, the only way other than unilateral turnovers at Panmunjom that the DPRK has transferred remains to the United States has been by placing remains into pits, known as "salting" a site, then falsely representing to US recovery teams that the remains found dated from the time of the Korean War. The CIL scientists, who were able to determine which sites had been "salted," asked the North Koreans to stop doing so because "salting" degraded the information content of the remains.
 23. Wide is pronounced "VEE-deh" in Swedish.
 24. Georgi Ulyanov is not this person's real name. Out of concern that in Putin's Russia in 2017 he would be held accountable for assisting Americans in the early 1990s, "Ulyanov" asked that his real name be withheld.
 25. According to history and legend, Grigory Potemkin, who was one of Catherine the Great's lovers, constructed façades of villages to deceive the Empress into thinking that Russia was better off than was actually the case. "Potemkin" or "Potemkin Village" describes a project undertaken with the sole purpose to conceal or divert attention from the true purpose. Participants can all be aware of the deceptive nature of a Potemkin project.
 26. "Closing Down the K.G.B.," David Wise, *New York Times Magazine*, November 24, 1991.
 27. "Hirvi kyrpää" literally means "moose dick." A Finnish friend of mine, Mr. Tappio Peltonen liked to tell Swedes, who he loathed, that "hirvi kyrpää" was a way to say "cheers" in Finnish that was reserved for special friends or honored guests. "Cheers" in Finnish is "kippis." Tappio told me, "If you ever hear a Swede saying 'hirvi kyrpää,' you will know he has met Tappio Peltonen."
 28. In addition to Mukden, the Soviet fighter base was located at Andung (Andun).
 29. Central Intelligence Agency Information Report Subject: UN/US POW Camps (Camps and Conditions) SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION January 18, 1954, p. 16. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80S01540R001200160003-4.pdf>
 30. In 1917, the German foreign minister sent a coded telegram to the German minister in Mexico, offering a military alliance between Germany and Mexico in the event the United States entered World War I against Germany. The telegram was intercepted and decoded by British intelligence.

31. "Research in the U.S. – Russian Archives: The Human Dimension," US-Russia Archival Conference (undated). <http://www.koreacoldwar.org/news/usrarconfblasser.html>
32. *The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union*, Joint Commission Support Directorate Research and Analysis Division, DPMO, August 25, 1993, p. 3.
33. *Comprehensive Report Of The U.S. Side Of The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission On POW/MIAs*, No publisher indicated in the report, June 17, 1996, pp. 363–365.
34. *Comprehensive Report Of The U.S. Side Of The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission On POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 365.
35. General Lobov's interview appears in the 1994 BBC *Timewatch* documentary entitled, "Russia's Secret War." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1wlCxaQ-Jc>
36. *77-Page Report*, op. cit., p. 16.
37. DPMO's criticism of the BBC's Lobov interview was confirmed by the documentary film's producer, Mr. Paul Lashmar by email to the author on June 2, 2017.
38. *77-Page Report*, op. cit., Appendix B, pp. 57–67.



CHAPTER 7

Pentagon Briefing, Lunch with a KGB General

Back at RAND following a trip to Moscow that had been intensive, suspenseful as well as highly productive, we counted on the DoD project sponsor to minimize interference with and provide assistance for our project by providing “top cover” “inside the building,” as events at the Pentagon were called. This did not always happen as planned.

On January 3, 1992, I asked our project PoC Commander Kinzel to help Major Zolotukhin to obtain a visa so he could come to the US in order to deliver the documents as we had discussed in Moscow. Major Zolotukhin had advised Sergei that the line for consular services at the American Embassy in Moscow was huge. CDR Kinzel went to see Mr. Steve Mann in the ISP office who had just returned to DC from a tour at the embassy in Moscow. Mr. Mann called a colleague in Moscow to see if he could speed things up.

I journaled:

January 3, 1992 – RAND (Friday)

Things are moving rather quickly. Seems the retired KGB Maj. General Oleg Kalugin has stirred the pot concerning Soviet involvement in the Vietnam War. This has diverted attention, for the time being, from my project. I’m on the phone nearly every day – two and three times sometimes – trying to work out various problems or to keep thick bureaucrats from screwing things up.

My main contact is Commander John Kinzel. The nemesis is Army Col. William Jordan, who has proposed one stupid solution after the next.

Guarding the bureaucratic flanks takes more time than working on the project sometimes.

Our task today was to try to and get a visa for Zolotukhin and his wife. The lines at the counselor section at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow are out to the horizon nowadays. So I called Kinczel, who walked over to see Steve Mann in ISP. Steve just returned from a tour at the US Embassy in Moscow. So Mann called a colleague in Moscow in order to speed things up. These things take time that diverts attention and breaks one's concentration, of course.

It's pretty exciting to be working on a real problem rather than yet another study of the penultimate fate of Europe. In retrospect it was rather fun to have been in the Soviet Union during its final days.

On January 13, we were advised that Major Zolotukhin could not make the trip as planned. We were told that his Soviet diplomatic passport had been recalled. It didn't matter, as we received no assistance from Mr. Mann. Some people in ISA began to suggest that we had been sold a bill of goods in Moscow. We began to wonder as well. We were acutely aware of the risks. It was not productive to be reminded that our hosts in Moscow, who were now our colleagues, might have put on an elaborate ruse intended to deceive us for whatever reason. Though the possibility could not be excluded, we believed it was remote. In the post-Cold War era, there would be old dogs in both countries who had no interest in learning new tricks, thus the task before us was to find a way to work around them

I journaled:

January 13, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Monday)

Our courier from Moscow couldn't bring the documents because his Soviet diplomatic passport was recalled. Misha Matskovski was supposed to bring the stuff, but he might not make it either. So the set up now is to have some declassified KGB documents sent by air freight, some classified KGB documents sent by fax. Can't wait to get the stuff so my cuticles can grow back.

January 15, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Wednesday)

No word yet from Moscow about the rescheduled delivery of the KGB documents. This waiting is getting to me. The ISA boys are convinced I've bought a bill of goods. I don't think so, but there is no substitute for hard copies of documents. Sergei is supposed to phone this evening with some news from Russia.

We began to suspect that the interests of more than a few people in Moscow, and more surprisingly a few people in Washington, would not be served if the RAND project proved to be successful.

We were convinced that many people in positions of authority in Moscow did not want the truth to emerge. This problem was compounded by the fact that some US officials had posted the “Not Invented Here” sign. This meant that progress could only be made by them. Any other progress achieved by outsiders was regarded as unwanted interference if not an outright threat.

SECOND LETTER FROM SECRETARY OF DEFENSE CHENEY

In light of the overwhelming level of support we had received during our first visit to Moscow in December 1991, Sergei spoke with Colonel Ulyanov to determine how we could solidify and expand our work in Moscow. Colonel Ulyanov suggested that we obtain a letter from the highest level within the DoD as possible. The letter should be a modest expression of gratitude for the reception and assistance extended to us in Moscow. Colonel Ulyanov said such a letter would provide reassurance as well as open new doors. Sergei asked me if it would be possible to produce such a letter.

“We won’t know if we don’t try,” I replied. “This is, after all, America’s highest national priority, isn’t it?”

I called Commander Kinczel to discuss whether such a letter from Secretary Cheney could be coaxed out of the DoD bureaucracy. The Navy Commander replied, “You are aware that I am a Navy Commander, aren’t you? This is way above my pay grade.” I reminded Commander Kinczel that he had managed to get the letter of introduction from SecDef Cheney faxed to a classified fax number in the Soviet General Staff headquarters. Thus in light of the success we had achieved in large measure due to SecDef Cheney’s letter of introduction, getting a thank you note would be like falling out of bed in comparison.

Commander Kinczel came through with a result that exceeded our expectations, so say the least. On March 12, 1992, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney signed a letter to Marshal of Aviation and Commander in Chief of the CIS Armed Forces, Yevgeny Ivanovich Shaposhnikov (Fig. 7.1).

The text of the letter Secretary Cheney signed on in March 1992, parts of which Sergei and I had drafted, stated:

In December 1991, an important step was made toward the resolution of an issue that has complicated our bilateral relations for over 40 years. With your assistance, a number of your subordinates have created a procedure to examine POW/MIA issues in the former Soviet archives.

Fig. 7.1 General Shaposhnikov Marshal of Aviation and Commander in Chief of the CIS Armed Forces (Photo: Public Domain)



I would like to extend my thanks to Lt General Leonid G. Ivashov for the cooperation he has extended to the RAND Corporation, under contract from the Department of Defense, to carry out this important archival research. General Ivashov has offered the services of Colonel I. I. Kotliarov as well.

Major General Anatoli Kharkov, Director of the Institute for Military History, has offered the resources and expertise of his staff. This is a welcome contribution to this effort.

Finally, I would like to commend Colonel Georgi Ulyanov, an officer on the General Staff, for the assistance he gave to the RAND research team during their visit to Moscow. I have been told that his work was essential.

With these excellent people committed to the resolution of the POW/MIA issue, we should be able to make quick progress in our efforts. As Under Secretary Wolfowitz and you discussed during his recent trip to Moscow, this is an issue of great importance to the U.S. government, and to all Americans. It is essential that we resolve all outstanding questions in this area. Your support will be indispensable as we work toward final resolution of this issue.

Commander Kinczel faxed the SecDef Cheney's letter to me at RAND, which attracted a few prying eyes. Sergei then faxed it to Colonel Ulyanov at the Soviet General Staff. Colonel Ulyanov advised that a second letter

from the American secretary of defense to the Soviet minister of defense appearing in the classified fax machine set the cat among the pigeons in the General Staff.

On March 18, 1992, Marshal of Aviation Yevgeny I. Shaposhnikov replied to Secretary Cheney.

I share your concern over the establishment of the fate of your fellow countrymen, who disappeared/perished (Translator note: Could be either) in World War II, over the course of the Korean War, the war in Vietnam and during the Cold War.

In connection to your request, work is being carried out in the archives of the military department on the study of documents related to this problem.

I hope for a positive outcome to this noble and humanitarian task. Upon the receipt of the results, I will immediately contact you.

The letter from the Secretary of Defense to the Soviet minister of defense established our credibility in Moscow. The reply from Marshal Shaposhnikov to Secretary Cheney appeared to us to be an inter-governmental agreement that upgraded our initiative to an official project. We would soon learn that this exchange of letters meant nothing, indeed were regarded as a threat, by certain elements within the U.S. government.

* * *

PREPARING THE BRIEFING

After we returned from Moscow in December 1992, we were asked by the DoD project sponsor to come to Washington almost immediately. The purpose was to brief DASD Ford, the DoD project sponsor. Both Sergei and Dr. Lambeth agreed to join me.

Before leaving for Washington, I was required to present the briefing to RAND manager Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. for his input and, more importantly, approval. In those days, a slide deck consisted of images printed on plastic sheets that were displayed using an overhead projector. It wasn't always possible to organize an overhead, so I had made a storyboard with photos and color printouts pasted to 8.5 × 11 inch pieces of a white poster board. I went to Dr. Kelley's office prepared to give him the briefing along with the commentary. He was not interested in the commentary. All he wanted to see was the hard copy of the slide deck.

Instead of receiving the presentation as it would be delivered to the sponsor, Dr. Kelley flipped through my briefing slides holding them in his lap as he said, “Use this one, don’t use this one, use this one, not this one,” and so on. I was not allowed to give the narrative that put the images into context. He gave no reasons, because he was “managing” my briefing. The only explanation he gave for trying to cut some of the slides was, “They give the wrong impression about RAND.”

Dr. Kelley did not have the slightest understanding of or appreciation for what we had achieved. The fact that both the Secretary of Defense and head of the CIS Armed Forces had endorsed our project made no impression. The fact that the Deputy Chairman of the KGB had offered his organization’s assistance did not stimulate the slightest expression of interest. The fact that we had obtained access to Soviet military and intelligence archives made no impression. In addition, the fact that the project was dealing with America’s “highest national priority” did not even merit a small blip on Dr. Kelley’s radar.

Dr. Kelley had to “manage,” however, which meant doing something, when the optimal solution would have been to do nothing. Dr. Kelley had nothing useful of any substantive nature to say about the project nor did he offer any suggestions on how to improve the slide deck. His sole interest was to pro-actively protect RAND’s image, even though none of the slides was offensive or misleading in any manner. I wasn’t the only one who thought our achievements put RAND in a rather positive light, but our opinion was irrelevant.

Dr. Kelley particularly objected to the group photograph taken in the Oktyabrskaya Hotel’s greenhouse prior to the group dinner. The point of that photo was to show the faces of our Russian team members. When I asked Dr. Kelley what the wrong impression might be, he reminded me that he was my manager and thus not obliged to explain anything to me. “Just do it,” was my manager’s guidance. “This photograph gives a misleading impression about RAND,” he said.

The hubris of the RAND lifers was staggering. “Managers” usually knew little if anything about a particular issue that a professional researcher had dedicated months or years studying. Nonetheless, “managers” were not reluctant to overrule a researcher on a substantive issue.

Dr. Roger Benjamin, a senior RAND staff member, taught me an important lesson. While Dr. Benjamin was in the midst of presenting a briefing to a room full of RAND employees, Dr. Jim Thomson, the president of RAND intervened, “Roger, I think....”

Dr. Thomson didn't get past the "I think" part. Dr. Benjamin cut him off. "Jim," he said, "I am the subject matter expert here. This is my briefing. I have spent a year on this subject. I'm not really interested in what you think." The air was sucked from the room. Dr. Benjamin continued, "Do you mind if I finish the briefing?" Dr. Thompson was silent. Dr. Benjamin carried on. It was the only time I'd seen a researcher put one of the "managers" in his place.

The lesson learned from Dr. Benjamin was that the expert should neither allow anyone to take over the briefing nor dilute conclusions derived from fact.

I set off for the Pentagon, determined that a manager who knew nothing about the subject matter would not be allowed to butcher the briefing.

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LUNCH WITH A KGB MAJOR GENERAL

On January 20, 1992, Dr. Lambeth and I flew to DC to brief Admiral McDevitt, DASD Ford's deputy, on the results of our Moscow trip. As always, I tried to make the most of our time in DC.

A day before the briefing in the Pentagon, Sergei had somehow managed to track down the phone number of KGB General Oleg Kalugin, former head of counterintelligence and the youngest KGB officer ever to be promoted to general. I never knew how Sergei was able to get results like this, but he did so time after time.

General Kalugin, a graduate of the Columbia University School of Journalism, had been stationed at the KGB headquarters in Washington within the Soviet Embassy where his cover had been "press officer." All in all, General Kalugin had lived in the United States off and on from 1959 to 1970.

On the morning of January 21, 1992, I managed to reach General Kalugin in New York by telephone. He was on his way to Washington, so I offered to cover a hotel night if he would agree to see me, which he did. I booked a room for him at the Embassy Suites on 23rd Street, the same place where I was staying. By the time I went to sleep at around 11 that evening, he had not checked in. He wasn't there when I got up the next day either, so I assumed something had gone wrong. It didn't look like he was going to show for one reason or the other.

I picked up my briefcase, left my room, and headed for the front of the hotel to catch a taxi to the Pentagon.

Before reaching the front of the hotel, chanting could be heard coming from a rather large demonstration. Marches and demonstrations are not unusual in Washington, though for some reason a surprising number of them begin or end at DuPont Circle where there are no government offices to picket. This particular march filled 23rd Street NW north and south, as far as I could see in both directions. There was no way a taxi could plow through that crowd. I went back to my room to call my appointment, Commander Kinzel, to let him know I was going to be late. As I walked in my room, the phone rang. It was General Kalugin, who had gotten the number from Sergei. He had arrived the previous night as planned but had checked into the Embassy Row Hotel in Massachusetts Avenue instead of the Embassy Suites on 23rd. He was wondering where I was, since we had planned to get together for breakfast. I rearranged plans so that we could get together for lunch in Georgetown. We would meet at his hotel and then take a taxi to Wisconsin and M Streets, and from there choose a restaurant.

I called Commander Kinzel and asked him to come along. I didn't want it on my record that I had lunched alone with the former head of KGB Counterintelligence. Commander Kinzel was still getting used to his role as contract officer. He said he wanted to "ask around" first to be sure he wasn't breaking any rules by meeting with a former KGB officer.

Since Commander Kinzel was an active duty Navy officer, checking out whether it was kosher to meet with Mr. Kalugin was not a bad idea. The US Navy (USN) should have been rather sensitive about Mr. Kalugin, who had been the case officer for Chief Warrant Officer John A. Walker Jr., the man whose spy ring passed USN cryptographic and other highly classified information to the Soviets from 1967 to 1985. Mr. Kalugin told us over lunch that the first time he drove out to the dead letter drop in Northern Virginia in an embassy car to collect the documents stolen by Walker, there was so much classified material he couldn't fit it into the trunk. He described the documents as piled on the ground, covered with a plastic tarp. Due to the magnitude of the deliveries, against all rules of security and contrary to tradecraft, he sometimes had to make a second collection trip to the same site.

To cut down on the amount of material, the KGB instructed Walker to deliver nothing but documents classified "TOP SECRET" or higher. Sure enough, on the first visit to the drop site, General Kalugin said there was too much "TOP SECRET" material to fit into the trunk of his car.

According to Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, Walker's espionage provided Moscow "access to weapons and sensor data and naval tactics, terrorist threats, and surface, submarine, and airborne training, readiness and tactics." I later saw Walker on television, describing with great pride how he did all of these treasonous things. He bragged, "K-Mart protects its merchandise more carefully than the Navy protects its secrets." At that point, no DoD consultant or contractor had ever betrayed the United States or spied for a foreign power. All of the spies and traitors were found within the military, FBI, and CIA. All of them had been on active duty or were federal employees.

General Kalugin had been suspected of being involved in on the murder of Georgi Markov, the Bulgarian dissident and contributor to the BBC who was killed in London in 1978. A Bulgarian intelligence officer had stabbed Mr. Markov in the thigh with the tip of an umbrella that contained a pellet. The pellet contained ricin, a derivative of the castor bean, which was intended to produce symptoms of a "natural death." Mr. Kalugin described this operation to British author Mr. David Cornwell who wrote under the nom de plume John le Carré. According to Mr. Cornwell, Mr. Kalugin said:

People ask me, 'Did you have anything to do with Georgi Markov's assassination?' 'Listen,' I tell them, 'we're not children. I was the head man for all that stuff, for Christ's sake! Nothing operational could be done unless it went across my desk, O.K.? Markov had already been sentenced to death in his absence by a Bulgarian court, but the Bulgarians were terrible. They couldn't do a damn thing. We had to do it all for them: train the guy, make the umbrella, fix the poison.' Listen, all we did was carry out the sentence. It was completely legal, O.K.?¹

All things considered, it was a relief that Commander Kinczel came along.

At noon, General Kalugin and I set off by taxi for Georgetown. We joined Commander Kinczel at Paolo's on Wisconsin Avenue in Georgetown, one block north of M Street. On an unusually warm January day in DC, we sat at an outside table.

We hope General Kalugin would be able to help us sort out what kind of documents we could possibly hope to locate in the Soviet archives that could shed light on the fate of the Americans, civilians and service members, who presumably disappeared in the USSR during the Cold War. General Kalugin said there would be no documentation for "wet operations," which

is what the KGB called contract killings. All “wet operations” were conducted by verbal instructions by the Department of Wet Affairs (*Mokriye Dela*). Everything else, he said, would be properly documented in one form or another.

I asked him if he had ever obtained a RAND report as part of his intelligence operations.

General Kalugin replied, “It was regarded as particularly impressive to receive a RAND report, specifically one that was still classified.”

“Did you have a source with RAND?”

General Kalugin responded, “No, we got them through other sources.” One could imagine Walker strolling out of Navy headquarters with a stack of classified RAND reports destined for a trunk of a KGB sedan. I pointed out to General Kalugin that the KGB had the distinction of probably being the only organization that had of its own free will read a RAND report cover to cover.

I was particularly interested in finding out whether Mr. Kalugin knew anything about American servicemen who might have ended up in the Soviet Union against their will. I asked him directly if this had occurred (Fig. 7.2).

Mr. Kalugin’s slightly Asiatic eyes flew open. He paused with a fork of pasta hovering over his plate. “Why would we want to do something like that?” he asked, matter-of-factly.

“To exploit them for technical knowledge,” I said, quoting the DoD statement of work for the project.

“Or to become slave labor,” Commander Kinczel added.

Fig. 7.2 KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin
(Photo: Public Domain)



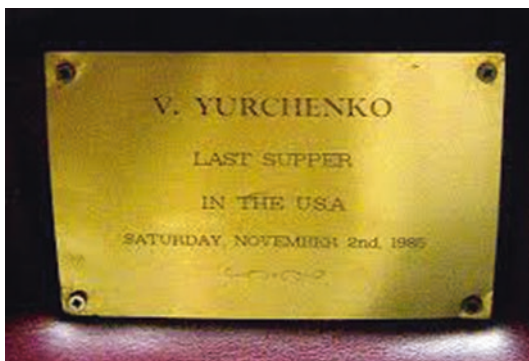
General Kalugin shrugged. “Look,” he said. “We had no shortage of slave labor. And as for technical knowledge, we knew more about American military technology than any of your pilots or specialists.” He looked at each of us, put down his fork, and then held out both hands in a gesture of futility. “What could they tell us we didn’t already know?” He took a bite of pasta. “Look,” he said. “As an intelligence operation, what you are describing makes no sense.”

After lunch, I had the idea to take General Kalugin north up Wisconsin Avenue to the restaurant Au Pied de Cochon, which was popular due in part to the fact the kitchen stayed open 24 hours. Au Pied de Cochon was also famous in intelligence circles because it was from there in 1985 that Vitaly Yurchenko, a Soviet defector, got up from a table, then walked away from his CIA handlers and returned to the Soviet Embassy, un-defecting as it were. The restaurant management had placed a brass plaque on the dark wooden bench seat where Yurchenko had sat (Fig. 7.3). After his re-defection, Au Pied de Cochon served the drink he had ordered, consisting of Stolichnaya vodka and Grand Marnier, which the bartender called the “Yurchenko Shooter.”²

“So this is where it happened,” he said, his eyes bright with excitement. “I saw it on the news and wondered where in Washington this had happened. I couldn’t quite place it in my mind.”

After returning to RAND, as required I filed a report for the Security Office concerning our meeting with General Kalugin. Anyone holding a security clearance was required to do after meeting with someone from a “restricted country.” It wasn’t clear whether Russia was still a “restricted country.” After all, three of us had been in Russia, met with many Russians, and had not been required to submit a report on any of that activity.

Fig. 7.3 Yurchenko’s plaque (Photo: Public Domain)



My report summarized the meeting, as there was no point in taking any chances. The memo went into the internal mail system without another thought about it.

Within a couple of hours, Dr. Kelley was standing in the doorway to my office, holding my report between his thumb and forefinger. He was winded from the long trek from his office to mine on the third floor of the five-story building. Dr. Kelley, whose face was scarlet from the exertion, was adamant. He advised in no uncertain terms:

- I should have wrestled Kalugin to the ground and recovered the SECRET RAND reports that he was carrying around, and
- Since Commander Kinzel was a sponsor, I should not have paid for his lunch. Don't do it again.

The lunch in question cost around \$40 for three people. We didn't drink anything stronger than iced tea and Pellegrino. One would think the RAND managers would have had better other things to occupy their time, but one would have been wrong. Dr. Kelley reported my profligate lunch to RAND's Chief Financial Officer Ray Archibald who sent me a note that admonished me for using project funds to pay for Commander Kinzel's lunch, which amounted to about 11 dollars, as this threatened RAND in some dark and ominous way. No one ever expressed the slightest interest in what General Kalugin had to say about the nation's "highest national priority."

A couple of days later, the Finnish Counsel General's Press Counselor Pekka Aalto invited Dr. Ben Lambeth and me to lunch at Michael's, one of Santa Monica's most expensive restaurants. Michael the owner with thin slicked-back hair, a crisp blue shirt and impeccable chinos, who just happened to be there when we arrived, asked us if we were local. "Yes, of course, two of us work at RAND." Michael smiled and pointed across the dining room. "Of course. I know RAND well. That's Ray Archibald's table over there. Do you know him? He has his own table. We see him several times a week." The average lunch at Michael's was easily 40 dollars per person, assuming one stuck with the daily special and had no drinks. Several RAND colleagues confirmed that Michael's was Mr. Archibald's go-to place for expense account lunches.

The lesson was that it was OK for RAND to buy Ray Archibald 40-dollar lunch at Michael's so often that he had his own *stammtisch*, but RAND couldn't cover a plate of ten-dollar spaghetti for Commander Kinzel.

BRIEFING THE DoD SPONSOR

The day after lunch with General Kalugin, Dr. Lambeth and I were ready for the “sponsor briefing.” Sergei had flown out a couple of days before us. Unbeknownst to us, Dr. Kelley insisted on attending. He was, after all, a “manager” who was managing my project.

One does not need to be a Nobel Prize winner to understand that it is more expensive to be stupid than to be smart. The stupider you are, the more it costs. Whenever possible, I planned my trips from LA to Washington well in advance in order to save as much money as possible. A 14-day advance in the early 1990s from LA to DC would cost around \$400 for a round trip. After Dr. Kelley found out I was going to Washington, he would buy a last-minute ticket two days in advance for \$2000, which came out of my project budget. He would come to meetings unannounced and then stand in silence in the back of the room. He never once said anything of any value. This was the same Dr. Kelley who had advised me to “keep the project money at home.”

On Wednesday morning, Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, and I gave Admiral McDevitt the briefing as I had prepared it, including the slides that Dr. Kelley said “gave the wrong impression about RAND.” The way I saw the situation, I was the subject matter expert. The briefing was a project work product, not some kind of public relations stunt. Dr. Kelley, who arrived after the meeting started and then sat in the back of the room by the door, remained silent throughout the briefing, a political babysitter rather than a participant.

At the end of the briefing, Admiral McDevitt jumped up, called DASD Ford’s office, and said to Ford’s secretary, “Mr. Ford must make time today to see this briefing.” Admiral McDevitt could not say enough positive things about the results of our work in Moscow. Due to Admiral McDevitt’s request, we were scheduled to see Principal DASD Carl Ford, Admiral McDevitt’s boss, after lunch. When the briefing broke up, Dr. Kelley was nowhere to be seen.

Dr. Lambeth and I ate lunch in the outdoor cafeteria located in the courtyard in the center of the Pentagon that was nicknamed the Ground Zero Café. Neither of us had any idea where Dr. Kelley had gone. “I have no idea why he was even there,” said Dr. Lambeth.

After lunch Dr. Lambeth and I made our way through the Pentagon maze to DASD Ford’s office. The briefing included DASD Ford and his military aide, Admiral McDevitt, Commander Kinczel, Dr. Lambeth, and

Sergei. This time Dr. Kelley sat in the front of the room next to Dr. Lambeth, which gave the impression that he was a substantive member of our “team.” DASD Ford had told us he only had 30 minutes to spare. As the briefing unfolded, he kept us in his office for an hour and a half.

Dr. Lambeth opened the briefing by summarizing his view that he had been “blown away” by events in Moscow. He said that in his two decades of experience as a Soviet specialist, he had not seen anything like it. Dr. Lambeth’s remarks were an effective introduction for my part of the briefing.

I journaled:

January 24, 1992 – Washington, DC (Friday)

Things have gone well. Following my briefing to ISA, Radm. McDevitt immediately set up a briefing for Deputy Ass’t Secretary of Defense Carl Ford. We were scheduled to see him for 30 minutes – I kept his attention for over 90 minutes!! The next move will be a briefing for the Secretary of Defense.

The biggest problem with all of this lies with RAND. Since I am not one of the anointed few within RAND’s inner circle, the idea that I have such high level direct access and have such a politically charged project does not sit well with the RAND Mandarins.

In the middle of the briefing, DASD Ford said to his Admiral McDevitt, in front of everyone, “We have to find money to sustain this effort.”

At the end of the briefing, DASD Ford asked us, “What do you intend to do next?”

I paused to collect my thoughts as well as to bring Sergei and Dr. Lambeth into the conversation. Before we could reply Dr. Kelley, who had been silent to that point, blurted out, “What we need to discuss is how to shut this project *down*.” Dr. Kelley made gestures with his hands that resembled an umpire ruling a runner safe at second. Everyone else in the room was taken aback, to say the least. Dr. Kelley probably thought this was pro-active client management.

Dr. Lambeth looked at me from the corner of his pale eyes. Following the meeting in person he said to me what his eyes had tried to say, “This guy is out of his fucking mind.”

DASD Ford, who was visibly incredulous, replied firmly, “Let me tell you something. You will *not* be allowed to ‘shut down’ this project. I’ll tell you why. If we shut it down, we will be accused by my children’s children of

participating in a conspiracy to avoid finding out what happened to our missing.” Dr. Kelley was silent.

DASD Ford, visibly annoyed with Dr. Kelley, turned to me. “How much do you need to keep this project going?”

At that point, DASD Ford was summoned to take a call from Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. While he was away, his military aide said to me, “You know, we have at least \$300,000 available for project work.” When DASD Ford returned, he asked me to continue.

I pulled a page from my briefing folder a document that I prepared in anticipation of this very moment. “We’ve sketched out a budget and plan for a one-year continuation. We expect the continuation to cost around \$450,000, primarily because due to the heavy travel and per diem requirements that drive up the indirect costs.”

DASD Ford replied, “That’s reasonable. We’ll make it happen.” DASD Ford closed the meeting by expressing his appreciation for our work that he characterized as “excellent” several times. Years later, Mr. Ford told me that the money spent on our project was the only value he had seen in any of the millions spent by his office on “policy support.”

After the meeting, both the admiral and the DASD shook hands with Dr. Lambeth, Sergei and me and said we had exceeded expectations, keep up the good work, knock ‘em dead, keep us informed, when are you returning to Moscow, and so on. Dr. Lambeth, Sergei, and I thought the briefing had gone as well as we could have expected, if not even better.

As soon as we got into the corridor, however, a clearly agitated Dr. Kelley read me the riot act, right there in the Pentagon hallway. He was as livid as he could be.

Dr. Kelley, who so red in the face that his pale eyes were bugged-out, said through clenched teeth, “I told you *not* to use certain slides, because they gave the wrong impression about RAND. You used them anyway. That’s insubordination. If you are not going to follow my instructions, you should tell me before a meeting and I’ll give the briefing. Also, you should never, ever discuss budgets. That’s my job.”

Dr. Kelley’s outburst was a bit shocking. I wasn’t expecting a descent of balloons or release of birds, but under the circumstances, a “good job” would have been in order. I was under the mistaken belief that the definition of success was based on the client’s reaction. The purpose of the project was to support the client that was focused on America’s “highest national priority,” not to please a RAND manager.

I shrugged and said, “Uh...I suppose.” None of these rules, restrictions, or expectations had been explained to me in advance. This is the way

it worked at RAND. You found out about a rule only after it was violated, which was a form of “gotcha management” that was an all-too-common occurrence. After yelling at me in front of several bemused passersby, Dr. Kelley went off to manage something else.

Back in Santa Monica, CRM Dr. Jonathan Pollack advised that he had spoken to Dr. Kelley who advised Dr. Pollack that our project “was distorting RAND’s research priorities.” I pointed out that the project was part of what the president of the United States had described as “the nation’s highest national priority.” Dr. Pollack continued, “Just because the DoD wants something doesn’t mean we just do it. RAND does not ‘answer the mail.’ We’re above that sort of beltway bandit mentality.”

From then on, a great deal of our efforts were focused on how we could conduct our work in such a way as not to attract attention from the RAND “managers.” In addition to doing that, I began to look into finding another job. In my view, the option was to comply with RAND policies or resign.

Dr. Kelley was not the only one who was critical about our project. A few days after the briefing, Army Colonel William H. Jordan, who was the first chief of staff of DPMO, had become interested in our project.³ He advised the POW/MIA staff to be cautious.

I journaled:

February 4, 1992 – RAND (Tuesday)

The guy in the Pentagon’s POW-MIA office Col. William Jordan told the new POW-MIA office to “lay low” on Russia since nothing will come of my efforts – it “will all blow over in one week.” I hope the history books identify him as a part of the problem rather than the solution.

Colonel Jordan would later become the commander of the world’s largest human skeletal identification laboratory at the Army’s Central Identification Laboratory – Hawaii (CILHI).

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The work of our Moscow research team was endangered by one force over which we had no control—the bureaucrats in the Pentagon and Department of State. I was also increasingly disillusioned by the lack of interest and support from RAND management.

I journaled:

January 7, 1992 – RAND (Room 2718) (Tues)

It's apparent I joined RAND at the wrong time in one sense at least. RAND has missed out on the new world that is breaking loose out there. Of the six or so people who interviewed me when I did my job talk here, only one or two will remain after two years.

It's clear my days are numbered.

The rejection of all of my proposals for additional project work reinforced my decision to leave RAND. In my view, there was no choice. Staying at RAND would mean being increasingly marginalized, forced to pick up bits and crumbs under the table of billable hours from projects, including moving furniture for a project manager.

RAND President James Thomson began an outreach program that included having lunch with the rank and file of RAND staff. President Thomson selected me to have lunch in his massive office on Mahogany Row with him and three or four other lucky staff members.

I journaled:

February 2, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Sunday)

I briefed the president of RAND on my project last Friday. I guess that went well. The small town mentality at RAND is too much to bear. My objective is to secure coverage for a full year, then set about to find something else to do.

Both research phases of the RAND POW/MIA project were complete. My focus was to complete what had become a three-volume report that responded to the initial SoW.

I journaled:

February 25, 1992 – RAND (Tuesday)

The sad tale of RAND office politics continues. The end of the Cold War is really shaking up the United States. Cuts in the defense budget mean hundreds of thousands of military officers tossed into the private sector job market. At RAND the problem is acute.

What do you do with people who are in their 40s and 50s who can do nothing but work associated with a by-gone era? Do you just fire them? Can't really re-train them. So they continue to draw big salaries, control research funds, and hold back the type of work required if this place is going to move beyond the Cold War.

The pace is just not fast enough for my taste.

I kept in touch with my PoC in the ISA office, hoping that DASD Ford would carry through with his admonition that RAND would “not be allowed to shut down” our archive research in Moscow.

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NOTES

1. “My New Friends In The New Russia: In Search of a Few Good Crooks, Cops and Former Agents,” by John Le Carré, *New York Times*, February 19, 1995.
2. The location of Au Pied de Cochon, 1335 Wisconsin Avenue, is now a Five Guys hamburger restaurant. The brass plaque, however, is still there.
3. In June 2014, Colonel William Jordan (ret.) claimed that he “hired Paul Cole.” I was never hired by Colonel Jordan, nor did I ever report to or work for him. See <http://ewrossblog.com/2013/07/14/the-powmia-dilemma/>



CHAPTER 8

Congressional and DoD Action

Consistent with the axiom that members of Congress pay little or no attention to America's "highest national priority" until *after* something appeared to have gone horribly wrong or the opportunity to milk the issue for political advantage appeared, in 1991 the Senate turned its attention to the POW/MIA issue.

Congressional intervention followed a disturbing pattern. After a problem with America's "highest national priority" that is also described as a "sacred obligation" surfaces, members of Congress would fall over one another to express their outrage. As soon as all of the political juice was squeezed and the accounting program returns to its rightful place as a matter of forensic factual evidence and battlefield archaeology, members of Congress turned their attention to issues that got them elected in the first place. No one gets elected to Congress by running on the POW/MIA issue. Involvement in this issue was almost always reserved for members holding safe seats, members who are military veterans, or more often than not members who are opportunistic political ambulance chasers who hop from one front-page crisis to the next.

* * *

DEFENSE POW/MIA OFFICE (DPMO) AND FIRST DASD/DPMO

In September 1991, the Secretary of Defense finalized an internal directive that established the Office of the DASD for POW/MIA Affairs. The resulting Defense POW MIA Office was known by its acronym “DPMO.”¹ The newly created DASD who headed DPMO reported to the Assistant Secretary of Defense (ISA).

Like a bureaucratic amoeba, DPMO absorbed various DoD organizations. DoD reassigned the following organizations under DPMO’s control:

1. The Office of the DASD (POW/MIA Affairs).
2. The DIA Special Office for POW/MIAs that had been created during the Vietnam War to collect information on American servicemen classified as either POWs or MIAs.
3. The Central Documentation Office that had been set up by the Secretary of Defense in late 1991 to review and declassify materials pertaining to American POWs and MIAs lost in Southeast Asia.
4. Task Force Russia (TFR) that was established in June 1992 under the control of the Department of the Army. TFR had been assigned the mission to support the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs (USRJC). With the creation of DPMO, TFR no longer fell under the authority of the Department of the Army. When asked to comment on this change, TFR staff replied that placing TFR under DPMO “carries with it a very real probability that TFR’s successful operating procedures will not survive subordination to the new organization.”
5. The Joint Commission Support Directorate (JCSJ) that had been created to provide assistance to the USRJC.

Ten pounds of wildly different organizations were crammed into a five-pound DPMO bag.

DPMO’s mission, as stated in its charter authorized by Congress, was to:

Provide the centralized management of prisoner of war/missing in action (POW/MIA) affairs within the Department of Defense.

A significant problem was that DPMO’s charter did not define or describe what “centralized management” was supposed to mean.

DPMO, which was the DoD office responsible for POW/MIA policy, therefore became the DoD entity that was the source of definitive, official statements and positions concerning POW/MIA issues. For example, the official list of the missing was maintained by DPMO. If a service member's name was not on the DPMO list, that service member was not a missing person. The CILHI, on the other hand, was the operational arm of the various organizations that were collectively designated by Congress as the POW/MIA Accounting Community.

DPMO's assigned responsibilities included:

§371.5(a)(5) Provide DoD participation in the conduct of negotiations in efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting of missing American service members.

DPMO's charter created a fundamental problem. The term "fullest possible accounting" had neither been described nor defined by Congress nor authorized by Congress as an accounting method. In other words, DPMO was given the task to perform a service that was never defined; thus it was impossible to determine whether any progress had been made toward achieving the goal. Without a definition of the mission, it would be impossible to determine when its objectives had been achieved. Instead of an office designed to account for missing American service members, to the delight of the lobbyists DoD had once again created a POW/MIA perpetual motion machine.

* * *

After New Year's Day 1992, the first DASD for POW/MIA Affairs (DPMO), Mr. Al Ptak, was sworn in (Fig. 8.1).

DASD Ptak was a Navy Academy grad who had been a Congressional staffer for the majority of his post-Navy career. After becoming the first DASD/DPMO, Mr. Ptak, who had served as the minority staff director of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, was able to transfer his Congressional service into federal service in order to qualify for the top pay scale, Senior Executive Service (SES). The military rank equivalent of an SES was brigadier general.

Within the next day or so, Commander Kinzel called me to advise that DASD Ptak wanted to see us soon. DASD Ptak, who had a significant political experience, was clever enough to understand that he needed help with the substantive issues for which he was responsible. Sergei and I flew



Fig. 8.1 (L–R) Mr. Paul Vivian, DPMO; Mr. Alan Ptak, DASD/DPMO; Mr. Danz Blasser, DPMO (Photo: Public Domain)

to Washington on February 18, 1992, to meet with DASD Ptak and offer our assistance.

Our first meeting went very well. Sergei and I hit it off with DASD Ptak immediately. DASD Ptak understood and appreciated what we had achieved in Moscow and what it took to produce results. DASD Ptak, who always took his job seriously, had a good sense of humor, which was an important complement to his substantial inventory of Hill smarts.

* * *

On January 30, 1992, my research assistant Mr. Ted Karasik brought to my attention a *New York Times* article with the headline, “Russian Offers Americans Access to KGB Files.”² The Russian in question was Colonel General Dmitri Volkogonov, the former head of the Institute for Military History where our team member General Kharkov was now in charge. General Volkogonov said that he wanted to add one to three American “historians or specialists” to his research group.

I was determined to be one of those Americans. I phoned Sergei and asked him to see if Colonel Ulyanov could fix it on the Moscow side. I then called Commander Kinczel at ISA to see if he could organize raising the issue with General Volkogonov when he came to Washington. General Eldon Joersz, the acting DASD for POW/MIA Affairs who also happened to be an SR-71 pilot who held the world airspeed record, thought it was a good idea as well.³

General Joersz advised me that he planned to “jam it down State’s throat.”

Nothing came of this initiative.

* * *

During the first week of February 1992, Russian state TV broadcast the interview with our team that had been recorded while we were in Moscow. All sorts of mail had come into Russian TV as a result. One man reported that he had evidence from a local KGB archive concerning the shipment of US POWs to Moscow from the Tambov Camp in the gulag in the 1940s. Other letters concerned specific sightings. A letter of particular interest was sent by a KGB Major named Levitsky who said that he had evidence of two mass graves that contained the remains of Americans. We passed the letter onto DPMO. We heard nothing in return.

In early February 1992, our Moscow team member Mr. Yuri Pankov sent us an important fax. On his own initiative, Mr. Pankov had made a research visit to the same Tambov camp mentioned in the letter sent to Russian TV, about 300 miles (480 km) southeast of Moscow. During the Soviet era, a gulag forced-labor camp had been located at Tambov.

I journaled:

February 13, 1992 – RAND (Thursday)

An important fax came to me from Moscow. Pankov returned from Tambov with a document from May 11, 1945. The document is a top secret NDVK memo, directing a camp commander to prepare for the arrival of 2,500 prisoners. Among them are British, Alsatians, and Americans. – French, too, but it is not clear because of the reference to Alsatians.

During and after WWII, between 4000 and 10,000 prisoners, mostly from Alsace-Moselle, had been held in Tambov Camp 188. Alsace had been part of Germany until taken by France after WWI, then taken back by Germany after the capitulation of France early in WWII. After WWII,

Alsace-Lorraine was restored under French sovereignty. The Alsatians, many of whom considered themselves to be French and thus allies of Russia, had been captured by the Red Army. The Soviets, who considered the Alsatians to be Germans, treated them as enemies.

The Alsace-Moselle prisoners called themselves the *Malgré-nous*, which means “in spite of ourselves,” “against our will,” or “poor bastards.” French historian Dr. Pierre Rigoulot’s research revealed that some of the *Malgré-nous* who managed to make it home alive reported seeing a dozen or so of who they believed to be American military personnel in Tambov Camp 188.

I called Commander Kinczel to fill him in.

I journaled:

This is good for me and for the project. The powers that be at RAND are not falling all over themselves with glee.

Shortly after Mr. Pankov’s news, Sergei called to let me know what he had heard from a friend in Moscow. It appeared that General Dmitri Volkogonov who was the head of the Russian archives had an assistant who kept some sort of personal archive collection. Apparently, a file or list in this personal archive had all of the names of US servicemen who disappeared in the gulag since the end of WWII. Mr. Pankov told Sergei that a friend of a friend of his who had access to the private archive would try to photocopy the list. If he managed to do so, Mr. Pankov would fax it to us.

Unfortunately, Mr. Pankov was unable to obtain the document and could not confirm that it had ever actually existed.

We continued to kiss frogs.

* * *

In June 1992, at the same time that TFR was being formed, Mr. Ed Ross took over as the acting director of DPMO from General Joersz who had also been the acting DASD/DPMO. According to his associates, Mr. Ross desperately wanted to become the DASD, not just the acting kind, but never managed to make that happen. Commander John Kinczel, the PoC for our project who had been transferred to DPMO, advised me that Mr. Ross was known for his ability to fall asleep during meetings.

The below-average quality of the people assigned to DPMO was apparent to anyone who cared to look. Harold R. McAlindon, the Peruvian-born American author, once observed, “The quality of an organization

can never exceed the quality of the minds that make it up.” I asked Principal DASD Carl Ford what was going on. He told me, “The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) is full of losers. Those who can’t make it in the Army are usually reassigned to the DIA. The ones who couldn’t cut it at DIA ended up at DPMO. What did you expect? Look, everyone in that organization failed at their previous job. What makes you think they would succeed at DPMO?”

I wasn’t the only one who shared Mr. Ford’s view.

DPMO Deputy Director Colonel Joseph Schlatter described the origins of DPMO and the general characteristics of its staff members:

In the early 1990’s, several new organizations were formed within the Department of Defense to deal with various aspects of the MIA issue, mainly to supply information to the Senate Select Committee on POW-MIA Affairs. In forming these organizations, various DoD elements were tasked to provide people to staff these new organizations. A mixture of active and reserve military and civilians were dispatched from their parent organizations to support the MIA work. As one might expect, parent agencies do not send their superstars into such an effort. Those sent were generally average or below average performers.⁴ [...]

Most of the people who made up TFR were intelligence analysts who had worked on the Soviet Union most or all of their careers. I was quickly convinced – and remained convinced to this day – that most of these people came to TFR (and DPMO) for two reasons: (1) their parent organization wanted to be rid of them, and, (2) they wanted a chance to prove that the Soviets were evil.⁵

Colonel Schlatter’s low opinion of the DPMO staff matched mine. His characterization of TFR as being composed of people who “their parent organization wanted to be rid of,” however, was completely inconsistent with my experience. Colonel Stuart Harrington, who put together TFR, chose people who were competent as well as motivated.

The corporate culture within the DPMO open-plan office was unusual to say the least. The staff, who generally disliked one another, could not agree on how to make a communal pot of coffee, so each coffee drinker had a one-serving Mr. Coffee machine on his or her desk. The daily schedule at DPMO went something like this. With military precision, some of the staff would arrive as early as six or six-thirty. Many went straight to the Pentagon gym where they would change and then jog on the bike path by

the Potomac, shower, and then go back to the office around eight or eight-thirty for the first cup of coffee of the day while reading the *Washington Post* or the *Early Bird*, which was a compendium of news clippings that the Pentagon press office compiled and circulated each morning. Reading the paper and the *Early Bird* took an hour or so.

By eight-thirty or nine, after two duty hours had been clocked in, it was time to check email or to play video games, which in those days were no more sophisticated than solitaire. State-of-the-art computers were not used for email as one understands it today, so a great deal of bandwidth was consumed surfing the limited Internet with a creepy-crawler browser such as the Nexus WorldWideWeb and playing video games that were installed on each computer. Every DPMO staff member had the latest state-of-the-art computer, the power and programs of which far exceeded any possible requirement. Creating stranded computing capacity at the taxpayer's expense was never a consideration. Everyone was entitled to the latest and greatest computer, regardless of their requirements or responsibilities. This egalitarian attitude was another example of the socialist mentality that prevailed within the US military.

One DPMO staffer with whom I worked was an Army reservist who had been called up during Desert Shield and Desert Storm (August 2, 1990 to February 28, 1991). After the war ended, he stayed on, as being in the Pentagon beat selling insurance selling or whatever he had been doing in civilian life. "Rex" proudly displayed on his desk a triangle of dark wood emblazoned with the word "WARRIOR" in capital letters. Each morning after jogging, newspaper, *Early Bird*, and coffee, he would resort the cards in his Rolodex by laying out the cards on his desk alphabetically. After ensuring the cards were in alphabetical order, he put them back into the Rolodex (Fig. 8.2).

By 10:00 or 10:30, there was a meeting that crammed 30 minutes into an hour and a half.

Around 11:00, many of the staff who had jogged in the morning returned to the Pentagon locker room to change for a noon run. After that, back to the office to eat a sandwich *al desko*, followed by staring at a computer for an hour or so. As two in the afternoon approached, those who had arrived at six and put in their eight hours, began to drift off. By three-thirty, DPMO was a ghost town.

This was the way of the warrior.

Fig. 8.2 Rolodex
(Photo: Public Domain)



Given the three-hour time difference between California and DC, if I needed something from DPMO personnel, the request had to be submitted by noon my time.

* * *

BRIEFING SENATORS KERRY AND SMITH

In February 1992 Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Senator Robert Smith (R-NH), co-chairs of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIAs, visited Moscow. The purpose of the visit was to determine, once and for all, whether missing American service members had been transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union. Their visit reflected more than a bit of hubris as well as unrealistic assumptions about how the Russians would first react, then subsequently perform.

One of Senator Kerry's aids, an attorney from Boston, came to see Sergei and me at RAND prior to his trip to Moscow. The lawyer, who neither spoke Russian nor had ever visited Moscow before, was Senator Kerry's advance man. He was a pleasant fellow, a friend of Senator Kerry's

from Massachusetts who, though nice enough, was a bit delusional with respect to how Russians would respond to the two US Senators falling into Moscow out of the clear blue sky. He was convinced that the Russians would be dazzled by the star power of the two US Senators who would convince the Russians to spill the beans. The fact of the matter was that two senators making a short visit to Moscow were not going to resolve an archive research problem. Sergei tried to explain that the average Russian official, when asked to meet a United States Senator, would turn out the lights, close the office door, and go home and stay there until the coast was clear to return. I tried to explain that an in-and-out visit would produce tears, hugs, and toasts, but nothing of substance. Both Sergei and I had simply wasted our time. The hubris of Capitol Hill types is impossible to exaggerate. If the two senators were big shots in DC, then they must surely be big shots wherever they went, including Moscow.

So off they went, and back they came.

In late February 1992, DASD Ptak had been directed to attend an inter-agency meeting where Senators Kerry and Smith would provide a briefing on the results of their trip to Moscow. This was one of the reasons why Mr. Ptak wanted Sergei and me by his side in DC when he attended the inter-agency meeting. He wanted us there to provide him with our perspective on what the senators had or had not achieved in Moscow. DASD Ptak also wanted to demonstrate that DPMO wasn't sitting on its thumb with regard to research in the former Soviet Union, despite the fact that most of our work to that point had been completed before DPMO had been created.

Following our initial meeting, DASD Ptak asked us to attend the inter-agency meeting on Capitol Hill. It made no sense to stay in DC for a week, so we returned to Santa Monica, then flew back to DC on February 26. I asked my secretary Ms. Williams to book tickets a week in advance for \$345 round trip. She booked the tickets for March instead of February, so the cancellation fee was added to the cost of a walk-up fare that cost \$1200. This trip nearly exhausted the little that was left of the project funding.

I journaled:

February 26, 1992 – LAX Airport (Wednesday)

My budget is finished. Thus, this trip to DC is more important than first imagined. No mail from Moscow today.

At about the same time, we learned through the media that President Yeltsin had ordered Mr. Yevgeny Primakov, Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service, to turn over all information concerning POW/MIA affairs from 1961 to the present to General Volkogonov.⁶

There was no evidence that Mr. Primakov complied with the order, or that if he did, that General Volkogonov released the material to the USRJC.

A more likely scenario is that if General Volkogonov received the records, he used them for his personal publication or sold the juicy bits to the highest bidder.

* * *

On Thursday, the day before the inter-agency meeting, Sergei and I met with DASD Ford and DASD Ptak in the Pentagon to discuss the status of our project. From their perspective, it was going well. At that meeting, DASD Ford made it clear that DASD Ptak was now in charge of our project, as responsibility for the POW/MIA issue had been transferred from ISA to DPMO.

Friday, the day of the inter-agency meeting, was a busy day. I took the Metro Orange line to the Clarendon station near DPMO's office in Arlington, Virginia. From there I was transported over Theodore Roosevelt Bridge to the Capitol in DASD Ptak's chauffeur-driven US government car, the first time I'd ever been in one.

The inter-agency meeting was held in a room on the Senate side of the Capitol building, which was not a first for me. Due to my experience as an intern for Congressman Tom Tauke (R-IA) and Senator John Culver (D-IA) while in grad school at Georgetown, the layout of the Hill was familiar to me. While at CSIS, I attended a "working supper" in the Capitol hosted by Senator John Glenn (D-OH) where I watched in morbid fascination as Senator Glenn emptied the better part of an entire bottle of ketchup over a well-done New York strip steak.

At the inter-agency meeting with the two senators, I was well aware of my status as a lower caste, so I made a point to take a seat out of the way in the back of the room along the wall, behind DASD Ptak who sat at the table with the other principals. There were perhaps 15 people in the room. It was a typical inter-agency séance—defense, state, a dog from every town, plus the two senators and all of their Potomac fever-ravaged horse holders.

Senator Smith started off by reading a prepared statement, which struck me as odd for a number of reasons. The meeting, which was not on the record, did not require statements for the record, as there would be no

record of the meeting. What was even more astonishing was his opening observation. Senator Smith said that he had “heard reports that RAND had been to Moscow” before his delegation and had obtained access to Soviet archives. The senator said emphatically, “This is nonsense. We have heard that Dr. Cole has made claims concerning archive research in Moscow that are untrue.” I was beyond startled. Why was Senator Smith going after RAND, which meant he was going after my project, and criticizing me by name? I swallowed hard. Where was he getting his information? Why was it so critical? I had entered the room as a nobody, then suddenly had a bull’s-eye on my forehead and a “kick here” sign pinned to my back.

Senator Smith, who went out of his way to shout down the room, had no idea who I was, nor did he have any idea that I was in the room. It was surreal and alarming to hear a US Senator attack my project and me by name. I thought, “Geez. What did I ever do to him?” I had not had any contact with the senator or his staff. Why he singled out the “RAND” project in general and me in particular remains a mystery.

Senator Smith showed some of the documents he had obtained in Moscow. One was of particular interest, he said. (No one in the room could read Russian except Sergei.) Senator Smith said, “The signature here, approving a travel request, is supposed to be of Oleg Kalugin. If only we had a copy of his signature.”

I had one of my RAND business cards with General Kalugin’s signature on the back from where he had given me his home phone number.

The subject of the new head of the KGB came up. Senator Kerry said, “If only we had a biography of General Aleinikov.”

This was the General Aleinikov we had met in Moscow on our first trip. I still had Aleinikov’s bio that Sergei had prepared and faxed to me in my briefcase.

The senators then turned to DASD Ptak, who said he would ask me to brief everyone on what my group had done in Moscow. Mr. Ptak gave me that raised-eyebrow look. I was on the spot. I had no idea that Mr. Ptak expected me to give a briefing.

I was still in a bit of shock over Senator Smith’s assault on my project. I choked at the beginning of my presentation. I so totally flummoxed that I could barely say a word. This was one of the few times in my life when I was struck by stage fright or whatever it was. My task was to contradict nearly everything two US Senators had just said. I had no confidence that anyone at RAND would support me if these guys decided to make phone calls or otherwise put the pressure on me. (I was to find out much later just how destructive a single US Senator could be to my career and

professional reputation. That story is covered in Volume II of this book.) I knew RAND management, which was pre-disposed to blame the researcher first, would preemptively throw me under the bus in a heartbeat. I had to protect my guys in Moscow. All of this was flashing through my mind as I tried to regain my composure. Captain Kinczel, who had heard me present briefings before, stared at me, then quickly arched his eyebrows as if to say, “What’s going on?”

I stammered out, “With all due respect, Senators, my team has been at work in the archives in Moscow for over two months now. The documents you have just shown me are here in my briefcase.” I pulled the documents out of my briefcase then handed them to DASD Ptak.

“I took the liberty to have translations made, so I have them in Russian and English. I also have the document signed by Oleg Kalugin, translated of course. When I had dinner with him in Moscow, he gave me his phone number and signed his name on the back of my business card.” I pulled the card out and handed it to DASD Ptak. “Here,” I said. “Kalugin’s signature and phone number on my business card. You can compare the signatures yourself, as I am no expert.” DASD Ptak passed the card to the two senators at the other end of the massive table. It was the last time I saw the card.

“As for General Aleinikov, before we made our visit to Moscow last December, we thought we might meet him. One of my colleagues at RAND sent me a brief biography of Alienikov.” I pulled that from my briefcase the bio that Sergei had faxed to me and handed it to DASD Ptak as well. I referred to Sergei as “my colleague” to keep his name out of the meeting.

After DASD Ptak handed the documents and business card to the senators, the attitude of the two senators toward me improved. The balance of the meeting was devoted to inter-agency bickering that thankfully diverted attention from me. At the end of the meeting, which couldn’t have come any sooner for me, one of Senator Smith’s legislative assistants stopped me before I could get out of the room. He told me that the senator wanted to meet me in his office in the afternoon. As soon as I had access to a phone (no cell phones in those days) I called the legislative affairs officer at the RAND office in Washington. The reaction was predictable. “Who authorized you to attend this meeting? We don’t jump whenever one of those guys says froggie.” I replied, “Call Senator Smith’s office and cancel it. That’s fine with me. This wasn’t my idea. Call and cancel it.” “Oh, all right,” was the response.

From Capitol Hill I took a Red Top cab to the DoS to brief a bilateral affairs officer at 11:30, then to the Pentagon for lunch. From there it was back to Capitol Hill to meet with Senator Smith and his staff. Sergei and I concluded that since he hadn't been specifically asked to attend, it would be better if he didn't. There was no reason to expose both of us to political flak. We agreed to meet at the hotel at six to share 100 grams of vodka. "Hirvi kyrpää, Tovarishch," Sergei said as we parted.

Senator Smith had insisted on meeting me for reasons that were not apparent. He had lambasted me at the inter-agency meeting in front of everyone. Having another go at me in the privacy of his office was not out of the question.

The DoD, which I considered to be my client, wanted to avoid antagonizing anyone on the Hill, which made perfect sense. Toward that end, the DoD legislative affairs officer asked me to suffer in silence if the senator started accusing or trying to provoke me. I agreed entirely as the opening riff from the Allman Brothers' "Whipping Post" played in my mind. By the time the meeting was held in Senator Smith's office, there were seven people in the room—two from RAND's legislative affairs office, two from the DoD, two from Senator Smith's office, and a staffer from Senator Kerry's office. Everyone was busy taking notes, nodding to one another, noting that nodding had taken place, followed by intense staring at the notes.

Senator Smith's office was typical for a US Senator. The reception area was festooned with photographs of Senator Smith standing with every person who had stood still long enough to get their photograph taken. His personal staff was crammed into overcrowded cubicles. There's little privacy or space for the staff on Capitol Hill, which is why Congress exempts itself from most regulations that apply to the federal workforce. The senator's office, in contrast, was spacious, with a huge wooden desk and a large conference table in the recess, well lit by the afternoon sun that streamed through the oversized windows that faced Union Station.

The purpose of the meeting was not obvious to anyone, but Senator Smith wanted to take it, so we all showed up. The senator was late, having been kept by his son's Boy Scout meeting. Senator Smith, who was a large man (6'6", 198 cm), made a dramatic entrance. "Uh oh," I thought, keeping my head down.

Much to my relief, the meeting went surprisingly well. Senator Smith had saved his thunder and bluster for the inter-agency meeting. In private,

he was well-mannered, polite, and smiled a lot. The DoD public affairs officer who attended reported to Secretary Cheney, “The meeting did a great deal to pave 40 miles of bad road between Senator Smith and DoD, thanks largely to the efforts of Dr. Cole.”

The DoD representative from the office with whom I had the contract reported to DASD Ford, “The Senator’s concerns appeared to be considerably relieved as the meeting went on. Dr. Cole represented us well.”

After the meeting, I was advised by RAND’s Congressional affairs office, “You should give us more warning before these meetings.”

Mr. Bob Roll, the head of RAND’s Washington office who also attended, said, “Those people always think they’re in charge. We don’t have to react just because they ask us to.”

“Tell it to Senator Smith,” I replied. “What was I supposed to do? Tell him to stuff off?”

Dr. Kelley, who was highly critical of my meeting with Senators Smith and Kerrey, reported to my department head that I had once again exceeded my authority. Dr. Kelley instructed me in writing (by email) that I was to no longer have contact with anyone in Congress, including members and their staff. All of my Hill contacts were henceforth required to speak to RAND’s Congressional liaison or to Dr. Kelley personally. Dr. Kelley, who defended his right to open other people’s mail, did not have the slightest reluctance to obstruct through fear of retaliation a citizen’s right to provide information to Congress, a right that had been in effect since the earliest days of the Republic.

First, Mr. Ed Ross banned me from talking to TFR, then DoD banned me from speaking to the press, and finally Dr. Kelley banned me from talking to members of Congress and their staff. This was an excessive amount of gagging and banning for an unclassified, open-source research project focused on America’s “highest national priority.” This type of intimidation became so ubiquitous within the federal government that Congress enacted legislation to overturn a “gag” rule, issued by the president, that prohibited employees from communicating directly with Congress (5 U.S.C. 7211 (1994)).

Though I disagreed, I complied, but wanted to at least say goodbye. I called my two Hill contacts, which was in itself a violation of Dr. Kelley’s edict, in order to tell advise that I couldn’t contact them anymore. One replied, “OK, so you can’t contact us. Big ‘effing deal. But there’s nothing to stop us from contacting you.”

Dr. Kelley's directive was followed to the letter, but in practice nothing changed. The Congressional aides who wanted to stay in touch with kept in touch with me anyway. As one said to me, "I'm not particularly concerned about pissing off some guy at RAND." I noted that this was a luxury I could not afford.

* * *

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE ON POW/MIA AFFAIRS

On August 2, 1991, the US Senate approved a resolution introduced by Senator Robert Smith (R-NH) providing for the creation of a Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs to operate during the remainder of the 102nd Congress.

The Select Committee's task was to investigate the events, policies, and knowledge that guided US government POW/MIA-related actions over the previous 20 years and to do so in order to advance the following goals:

- To determine whether there was evidence that American POWs survived Operation Homecoming and, if so, whether there was evidence that some may have been alive in captivity;
- To ensure the adequacy of government procedures for following up on live-sighting reports and other POW/MIA-related information;
- To de-mystify the POW/MIA accounting process so that the families and the public can better understand the meaning behind the numbers and statistics used in discussions of the issue;
- To establish an open, comprehensive record and to provide for the broad declassification of POW/MIA materials in order to enable both the Committee and the public to make informed judgments about questions of policy, process, and fact;
- To lend added weight to Executive Branch efforts to obtain cooperation from foreign governments in Southeast Asia and elsewhere in accounting for missing Americans;
- To review the activities of private organizations who participate in fundraising and educational efforts related to the POW/MIA issue; and
- To examine, to the extent time and resources permit, unresolved issues pertaining to missing Americans from WWII, Korea, and the Cold War.

In October 1991, chairman (Sen. John Kerry, D-MA), vice-chairman (Sen. Robert Smith, R-NH), and ten additional members were appointed to the Committee. A resolution providing funding was approved.

The Select Committee, which began work November 5, 1991, held public hearings in November 1992.

* * *

Senator Kerry and Senator Smith, who were colleagues, did not appear to have any personal chemistry or particular fondness for one another. They became the co-chairs of the Select Committee. No sooner had the Select Committee been appointed than political infighting flared. The main point of contention was between Senator Kerry and Senator Smith. Senator Kerry wanted to limit the scope of the Select Committee's inquiry to the Vietnam War, while Senator Smith wanted to include WWII, the Korean War, and the Cold War. Eventually the compromise was to devote one full day to Vietnam, then split the second day among the other three conflicts.

I had no interest in the Select Committee.

In contrast, the Select Committee was interested in me.

HOW TO BECOME A WITNESS AT A SENATE HEARING

In 1992 the fourth of July fell on a Saturday. After a week of working at NARA, instead of heading back to Santa Monica from Washington right away, I decided to stick around and see the fireworks on the mall. A group of friends from my grad school and think tank days invited me to join them for a picnic at the Iwo Jima memorial grounds from where we would have a great view of the fireworks. The plan was to throw a blanket out and have a picnic before sunset. A whole bunch of people had the same idea. Even though we arrived in the early afternoon, there weren't many open places, so we had to step over and around the early birds until we found a suitable open space on the east side of the Iwo Jima Monument on the slope leading down to the Potomac River facing the mall from where we would have an unobstructed view of the fireworks that would be shot off near the base of the Washington Monument.

By complete chance, while tiptoeing over people, stepping on blankets, and banging into picnic baskets, I literally stumbled upon Mr. Dino Carluccio, Senator Bob Smith's legislative assistant for POW/MIA Affairs.

Mr. Carluccio, who recognized me from the February inter-agency briefing and meeting with Senator Smith, told me he was putting together the witness list for the upcoming Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA hearings. He asked me if I would be willing to be one of the witnesses. I agreed to accept but only after expressing my concerns.

I advised Mr. Carluccio that I couldn't exclude the possibility that RAND would somehow prevent me from testifying for reasons that could not be predicted. I also mentioned to Mr. Carluccio that I was under three gag orders, then added that since Dr. Kelley had banned me from talking to anyone in Congress, the very fact that we were having such a conversation, even under these improbable and serendipitous circumstances, would most likely be regarded by RAND management as premeditated insubordination. No one would believe that I hadn't deliberately violated the ban and somehow used my powers to invite myself to be a witness.

Mr. Carluccio stared at me in disbelief. "Don't worry about any of that," he said. "I'll be in touch."

Two days later I journaled:

July 6, 1992 – Wash DC (Monday)

The harmonic convergence on my project work continues. There I was, walking at the Iwo Jima memorial minding my own business – who did I walk by? The deputy chief of staff of the Senate Select Cmte on POW-MIAs. I am officially restricted in my contacts with Congressional types. So Dino [Carluccio] sees me and we chat a bit. Wouldn't surprise me one tiny bit if I'm compelled to testify. Dino said nearly as much. I said, "Dino, do me a favor. Treat me like a reluctant or hostile witness. It's the only way RAND will let me appear." So we'll see.

I did not mention my conversation with Mr. Carluccio to anyone at RAND. In light of the official ban from having contact with members of Congress or staff, I figured no one would believe that I just happened to run into the deputy director of the POW/MIA committee while searching for a place to put down a blanket at the Iwo Jima Memorial.

I didn't want to give RAND management another club to beat me with in my annual evaluation. In addition, there was a non-zero chance that nothing would come of the conversation. The probability of me being called as a witness was exceptionally low anyway. After hearing nothing more about the proposed hearing, I doubled down on my effort to mind my own business.

On October 21, 1992, much to my surprise I received a phone call from Mr. Carluccio. He advised me that there was a “99.5%” chance that I would be called to testify before the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs. He asked if I had received the invitation letter from the Select Committee. I replied that I had not. The letter had been mailed more than a week before Mr. Carluccio’s phone call. It didn’t take that long for a letter to get from DC to Santa Monica, so I advised him that the letter was most likely wandering around inside of RAND, being read and marked up by managers. “They do *what* with your mail?” Mr. Carluccio asked incredulously. I was the last to see the invitation, of course.

As anticipated, the invitation made it to my inbox, after it had been opened, read, and marked up by various managers, on October 30, 1992, nine days after Mr. Carluccio’s phone call. In order to be able to accept the invitation, approval was required from the head of the RAND Washington office, the head of RAND’s Congressional Relations office, the program director, the division vice president, and the head of my department. They had all seen the invitation before I did, so when the request was made for their approval, there was no need to explain anything. I had no idea how Dr. Kelley, who had banned me from having any contact with members of Congress and their staff, was going to react.

The reaction from management to the invitation was as anticipated. In light of the fact that I was not one of the RAND-ites, as they called themselves, who had been anointed by RAND management to succeed, the invitation was regarded as interference with the mandate of heaven rather than as an opportunity. Due to *force majeure*, however, eventually everyone who had a say signed off on my appearance before the SSC. The only condition was that the director of RAND’s Congressional Relations office was required to accompany me to the hearing. In management’s view, I was just another inter-changeable automaton from the RAND collective attending yet another pro forma Congressional hearing, which was fine with me.

In contrast, significant support for my participation came from DASD Ptak, who told me he was relieved that I would be on the same panel with him. DASD Ptak also advised me that his deputy Mr. Ross nearly “had a coronary” when he learned that I had been invited to testify before the Select Committee. DASD Ptak, who appreciated the work I was doing for DPMO, told me he intended to defer to me when he didn’t know the answer to any question put to him by the Select Committee members.

In turn, I advised DASD Ptak that when a senator asked who was responsible for anything that had gone wrong with the accounting program, I was going to point at him and keep my mouth shut.

* * *

SENATE SELECT COMMITTEE HEARING

The SSC Hearing on Cold War, WWII, and Korean War POWs was held on November 10–11, 1992.⁷ There had been a great deal of internal bickering between Senator Robert Smith (R-NH) and Senator John Kerry (D-MA), the co-chairs of the Committee. Senator Kerry wanted the hearing to focus on Vietnam War issues only, while Senator Smith insisted that the hearing include WWII and the Korean War. The compromise was to split the first day between WWII and the Korean War, then devote the second day, which was Veterans Day, to the Vietnam War.

I appeared as a witness on the morning of Tuesday, November 10.⁸ It started as a good day for me. My parents drove to DC from Nashville for the hearing. Dad was a WWII and Korean War veteran, so the subject matter was not entirely hypothetical for him. In my mother's 1941 graduating class from Nashville East High, all of the males except one had been killed in WWII or the Korean War. (The lone surviving male was Frank Sutton who played Sergeant Carter on the TV program "Gomer Pyle, U.S.M.C.") My in-laws Ed and Sally Hill drove out from Iowa to attend the hearing (Fig. 8.3). Ed, who had served with the US Army in the Pacific theater during WWII, was proud of the work I had done. Ed, who had lost his best friend in combat, advised me to "Give them hell."

Aside from my concern about the lack of support from RAND management, I wasn't nervous about testifying. I had worked on both sides of the Hill and dealt with Congress on a regular basis for nearly a decade in the DC think tank world. I had become immune to the most virulent strains of Potomac Fever, which is the overwhelming desire or enthusiasm to become part of the power and prestige scene in DC.

My testimony wasn't a worry either. Getting beaten up by Senator Smith in the inter-agency meeting had been a tempering experience. For almost a year, I had immersed myself in the subject matter of the Korean War. Anyone who has done this, such as a newly minted PhD, knows that for a brief and fleeting moment, you are the most informed person on the planet about one particular issue. My opening statement, which had been reviewed and approved by RAND management with a resounding



Fig. 8.3 Senate Select Committee Hearing (Photo: C-SPAN)

ho-hum, was solid. Several of my USC students would be watching the C-SPAN broadcast. I didn't want to disappoint them. Looking back, the only question I have is why I decided to go with my LA-style haircut that made me look like Prince Valiant. It seemed to be a good idea at the time.

A nagging apprehension was that the political rug would be pulled out from under me. I had been advised and even warned repeatedly that RAND was infamous for throwing its research staff under the bus in response to the slightest expression of concern from Congress. This was explained as another symptom of the massive hangover caused by RAND staffer Dr. Ellsberg's unauthorized release of what became known as the "Pentagon Papers."

Early in the morning of the tenth, I traveled from my hotel in Massachusetts Avenue to DPMO's premises in Northern Virginia to make last-minute preparations with DASD Ptak. DASD Ptak was particularly ill-served by his staff, including Navy Lieutenant Tom Vhay and the Deputy Office Director, Mr. Ed Ross. During the preparation in the DPMO office, Lieutenant Vhay repeatedly interrupted us to show DASD Ptak "urgent messages" that had arrived from various parts of the world. This demonstrated an incredibly inept grasp of what was about to happen

in the Senate hearing. The success or failure of the DASD's testimony would not be determined by whether DASD Ptak had read a telex sent by United Nations Command Military Armistice Commission (UNCMAC) 30 minutes ago. The hearing was not going to be a quiz show that tested DASD Ptak's knowledge of current events. DASD Ptak, who had a great deal of Hill experience, agreed with me that some of the senators were going to try to hold him, the DoD representative, responsible for the sins of DoD going back as far as possible. The legislative branch was about to engage in a venerable Washington, DC, blood sport entitled, "Drill the Executive Branch." Current cables and faxes were irrelevant to the political theater that was about to unfold.

My job was comparatively easy in comparison. As a government contractor, I was a neutral party. I planned to provide the results of my research, which some senators would like and others would challenge. In response to those who didn't like my report, my response would be, "Please, by all means, write your own report."

About 45 minutes before the hearing was scheduled to start, we zipped from Arlington, Virginia, over to Senate side of Capitol Hill in DASD Ptak's chauffeur-driven government sedan.

The hearing was held in the Hart Senate Office Building where my babysitter, RAND office director Mr. Bob Roll, waiting for me. Mr. Roll, who expressed no interest in the subject matter, gave me the impression that having to sit through the hearing in general and my testimony in particular was an unwelcome intrusion into his otherwise busy schedule.

I never liked the setup for Congressional hearings where Senators up high on a rostrum while the witnesses sat below them. Just before the hearing started, I walked up to the side of the long, semi-circular elevated rostrum to say hello to Senator Smith. As I approached him, he saw it was me out of the corner of his eye and turned his back. "Oh, so it's going to be like that?" I said to myself. Friendly in private, dismissive in public. Getting shunned, which was a standard feature of the DC political *kabuki* dance, was the flip side of the obsequious fawning. After a while, one learns not to take either gesture seriously.

The hearing was both predictable and uneventful. Senator Kerry of Massachusetts interrupted my opening statement repeatedly and needlessly. Senator Grassley of Iowa read a canned statement that had nothing to do with the issues at hand. Senator Brown said some nice things. Senator McCain, who was the only senator who asked any questions that were remotely interesting, noted that my findings and the conclusions in

his briefing book “prepared by staff” differed considerably. I replied that his staff’s research was probably the source of the problem. I then offered to work with the senator’s staff to reconcile any differences. Nothing came of that offer. A couple of people in the audience heckled me. Someone said a couple of times, “Get a haircut!” I ignored them, though the guy concerned with my haircut was correct. I was hoping the chairman would call in the sergeant at arms to mace the hecklers and then wrestle them to the ground before throwing them out, but there was no such luck.

DASD Ptak handled himself well and got off easy, though as expected Senator Smith tried to hold him responsible for something DoD had done or not done in the 1950s. Congressional hearings are like depositions in a legal case. You can’t win a case in a deposition, but you can certainly lose one; thus the objective is to avoid shooting yourself in the foot. DASD Ptak was smart enough not to say, “I’ve not the remotest idea what you are talking about, Senator.” Instead, he said something calm and reassuring about how he would direct his personal staff to intensely research the important issue raised by the wise senator and then provide a written memo in writing that would be a written response to the senator’s question that was both profound and important and of vital importance to the American people. It worked every time.

After our session was over, I made a beeline for the exit. There were conspiracy theorists in the room who had convinced themselves that someone in the Pentagon was giving me orders. According to their delusional version of events, someone was always giving me orders in pursuit of a nefarious plot. In particular, they didn’t like the fact that my research did not confirm the wacko idea that Eisenhower had conspired with Stalin to send American POWs to the gulag. Some people started yelling that the sergeant at arms should be ordered to seize me, then bring me back so that they could “interrogate and confront” me. It would have been great to be frog-marched back into the tribunal to face them. It would have been productive to allow the loonies to have a go at me in public. Instead, the co-chairmen ignored the wishes of the flat earth society that was relegated to excoriating me and my work in their testimony and their self-published books, a task for which they appeared to have limitless time and resources to pursue. A few of the more technical savvy “evil creeps” left a number of nasty messages on my answering machine at RAND, all anonymous, of course.

In contrast to the peanut gallery's moaning, among the members of the Select Committee the reaction to my testimony was generally favorable. In addition to what Dr. Lambeth referred to as "snot-grams," complete strangers also left complimentary messages on my office answering machine. In contrast to the "evil creeps," these people were not ashamed to leave their names. I also received a nice message by fax from something called the "American Foreign Conflicts Electronic Library and Veteran Locator." Never heard of them before, but they forwarded my remarks to Senator Gore and recommended that my work be used as the prototype for future research.

With one exception, not a peep, nothing came from RAND management. The only comment I received was from Mr. Bob Roll, head of the RAND Washington office who after it was all over, remarked, "You didn't get killed."

Following the hearing, I focused on finishing my report for submission to DoD.

* * *

The Select Committee's final report, issued on January 13, 1993, was a pleasant surprise.

I journaled:

February 25, 1993 – RAND, S.M.

My testimony figures prominently in the final report of the Senate Select Committee On POW/MIA Affairs. I think my RAND report will be somewhere along the dimensions of this tome – 1,223 pages! The Senate report is not particularly coherent or well written. The conclusions are hidden in an avalanche of text.

This experience was a confirmation of the maxim that one can travel the world and never once find a statue that was built to honor a commission.

* * *

NOTES

1. 32-CFR 371.1 “Defense Prisoner of War/Missing In Action Office (DPMO)” (7-1-94 Edition), p. 930. <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-1997-title32-vol2/pdf/CFR-1997-title32-vol2-sec371-3.pdf>
2. “Russian Offers Americans Access to K.G.B. Files,” Allison Mitchell, *New York Times*, January 30, 1992.
3. General Joersz and LTC George Morgan set the world airspeed record on July 28, 1978, in an SR-71A Blackbird when they zoomed up to 2194 mph (3530 km/h). An SR-71 pilot had no business being in charge of the POW/MIA accounting effort, particularly the archive research segment.
4. “A Sad Story Must Be Told,” MIA Facts Site, http://www.miafacts.org/dornan_hearing.htm
5. MIA Fact Site: “Where Are The ‘Hundreds’ Of Americans Who Were In The Gulag?” <http://www.miafacts.org/january%202006.htm>
6. Yevgeny Maksimovich Primakov (1929–2015) was appointed First Deputy Chairman of the KGB in 1991. After the formation of the Russian Federation, he served as Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) from 1991 to 1996.
7. The transcript is posted here: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/pow/senate-house/investigationS.html>.
8. The video of my panel is posted here: <http://www.c-span.org/video/?34399-1/soviet-involvement-vietnam-powmias>



CHAPTER 9

Russia's Involvement in POW/MIA Affairs

In Washington, DC, the politics of the POW/MIA issue intensified, but as usual for all of the wrong reasons.

PRESIDENT YELTSIN'S SPEECH TO CONGRESS

President Boris Yeltsin arrived in the United States on June 15, 1992. The CIA anticipated that President Yeltsin's visit would focus on the following issues:

Issues of significance regarding Prime Minister Yeltsin's visit to the US on 15 and 16 June 1992 will include disarmament of nuclear war heads (sic) missiles by both the US and the former Soviet Union. In particular, land versus submarine armament cutbacks will be debated. This issue will continue to be negotiated in terms of actual numbers for quite some time. Other issues of concern are economic reforms in Russia and Yeltsin's intentions for a market economy. Monetary aid by the US for projects of economic reform will assist in restructuring the Soviet territories.¹

The CIA did not anticipate the issue that grabbed the headlines. On June 17, 1992, Russian President Boris Yeltsin delivered a letter to the Senate and a speech to a Joint Session of Congress.

The best con jobs are the ones that take place right in the open. President Yeltsin transfixed the members of both houses of the US

Congress as easily as a three-card monte dealer on a New York sidewalk swindling 20-dollar bills from Midwest tourists.

Out of the blue, during his speech, President Yeltsin promised to answer all questions regarding Americans who he said had been detained against their will in the Soviet Union.

The archives of the KGB and the Communist Party Central Committee are being opened. Moreover, we are inviting the cooperation of the United States and other nations to investigate these dark pages. I promise you that each and every document and each and every archive will be examined in order to investigate the fate of every American unaccounted for. As President of Russia, I assure you that even if one American has been detained in my country and can still be found, I will find him. I will get him back to his family.

President Yeltsin's speech brought prolonged applause, cheering, and enthusiastic shouting that was not usually associated with Congress. President Yeltsin's references to unaccounted for Americans produced the type of insane whooping that would lead a casual observer to conclude that "Yeltsin" was a boy band and Congress a gaggle of delirious teenyboppers. President Yeltsin acknowledged the ovation, referring to himself in the third person:

I thank you for the applause. [...] Yeltsin has already opened the archives and is inviting you to join us in investigating the fate of each and every unaccounted for American.²

The problem was, President Yeltsin's speech was vintage Yeltsin. It didn't take long to determine that President Yeltsin's people had written the speech on the plane on the way to Washington. The speech had not been coordinated or vetted by any organ of state such as the international section of the Foreign Ministry. Someone on the plane had prepared a translation into English using a manual typewriter. Sergei managed to get a copy of the speech in the original Russian. The English version of the speech was filled with substantive as well as grammatical errors.

The parts of the speech that were comprehensible were flawed, while the parts that were not flawed were incomprehensible.

The Russians struggled to find even the flimsiest explanation that could justify any of claims and promises included in President Yeltsin's speech. In addition, the stories the Russian side of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs (USRJC) invented did not stand up to the slightest scrutiny.

The Russian side of the USRJC quickly walked back from President Yeltsin's imaginary voyage. The report of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs stated³:

A full Joint Committee meeting was held between September 21-24, 1992 with Ambassador Toon and Gen. Volkogonov in attendance. At that time, Gen. Volkogonov explained President Yeltsin's statement before the U.S. Congress on the possibility of live Americans in Russia as being based on the revelation of Mr. Hamilton in a Soviet psychiatric hospital. Gen. Volkogonov later admitted that the David Markin story also played a role. [...] When it was pointed out that oral interviews were not consistent with President Yeltsin's statements, Gen. Volkogonov pledged to continue the interviews of former Soviet military personnel with Vietnam and Korean experience. Gen. Volkogonov also admitted at this time that he had not been through the GRU or KGB archives.

In other words, President Yeltsin had made it all up, and Congress, who had whooped and hollered until exhausted, believed it all.

The "David Markin" case concerned a single dubious source that has never been confirmed or substantiated. The "revelation of Mr. Hamilton in a Soviet psychiatric hospital" was not described in any USRJC report; thus it was impossible to assess the merits of that source.

President Yeltsin obtained the positive PR he wanted, which was the point of the exercise in the first place. The Russians, who were not about to admit anything, saw the USRJC as nothing more than a means to obscure or destroy any trace of evidence that linked the USSR to any missing American servicemen.

PRESIDENT YELTSIN'S LETTER TO THE SENATE

President Yeltsin delivered a letter to the Senate that had been concocted on the president's plane during the flight from Moscow to Washington. The following is a sample of the undated letter, which appears to have been prepared on a manual typewriter, as translated by President Yeltsin's staff. The full text, which follows the sample, includes errors as they appear in the original letter (Fig. 9.1).

Dear Senators,

As the ancient used to say, the war is not over until the last killed soldier remains unburied. That is why I had great sympathy for your request to probe into the fates of the US citizens missing on the USSR territory during world War II.

Text of President Yeltsin's letter to the Senate Select Committee on MIA-POW Affairs (undated)	<u>Translated from Russian</u>
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Dear Senators,

As the ancient used to say, the war is not over until the last killed soldier remains unburied. That is why I had great sympathy for your request to probe into the fate of the US citizens missing on the USSR territory during world War II.

By my decree, a State Commission headed by D.Volkogonov, Russia's Presidential advisor on defense matters was set up to deal with this highly complex problem. This Commission is representing the Russian component in the Joint Russian-US Commission.

The Commission began its work, and the preliminary results make it possible to conclude that the assurances by the former USSR leadership to the effect that the problem of American MIAs in its territory was non-existent were not true.

Fig. 9.1 First page of President Yeltsin's letter (Source: RAND working paper)

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The Commission began its work, and the preliminary results make it possible to conclude that the assurances by the former USSR leadership to the effect that the problem of American MIAs in its territory was non-existent were not true.

It has been established that during WWII and immediately following the war there were over 3,5 million foreign citizens as POWs and interned persons. Of them 23,000 were US citizens. Those were mainly POWs freed by the Soviet Army troops from Nazi concentration camps. The majority of them (22,554 persons) were repatriated in 1945-1946 across the front line, the demarcation line or through the specially established camps in Odessa.

However, not all US citizens were brought back home. Three US soldiers freed from the German detention died and were buried on the USSR territory. In addition, 114 US citizens, mostly of German nationality, who had fought on the side of Germany and were taken prisoner with weapons, were court-martialed. They served their sentences in the USSR camps and prisons up until 1953. We have now established that 82 of them were

released, 17 died and 3 escaped. The burial sites have been identified with respect to 8 dead. The fate of those who escaped and 121 other US citizens in this category is still being investigated.

Regrettably, one has to note that during the World War II years 716 US servicemen were interned on the USSR territory. They were mainly bomber crews who had done forced landings on the territory of the USSR or the countries liberated by the Soviet Army. The Stalin government applied a double standard with respect to those people – some were immediately and with honors handed over to the US side, while other were held in isolation for a year or more.

With respect to the US citizens listed as missing in Korea, the Russian component in the Commission identified in the lists of 510 Americans and 27 stateless persons who were taken prisoner by the Korean and the Chinese. In addition, we have established that 1309 US aircraft were shot down over the North Korean territory. As is clear from the documents, 262 American pilots survived. The Russian archives contain interrogation materials for 59 of them. These documents contain no information about holding US POWs on the USSR territory.

With respect to the US citizens listed as missing in action in Vietnam and other countries of South-East Asia, no data are as yet available. We only know that several American soldiers who evaded fighting in Vietnam were clandestinely moved from the territory Japan to the territory of the USSR. The records show that these Americans stayed in the USSR for a short period of time and later went to various European countries.

In addition, it has been found that during 1950s 9 US aircraft were shot down over the USSR territory. Some of their crew members survived. The records show that as August 1, 1953, 8 American citizens were held in Soviet prisons and prison camps and 4 others were held in special psychiatric clinics. Their history is being investigated.

I have ordered that all information relating to the US citizens on the USSR territory be carefully checked, and every possible measure will be taken so as to remove this problem between the Russian and American peoples. I express the hope that the work of the Bilateral Commission will finally provide answers to all the mysteries of the past.

At the same time I am hopeful that the Government and the Senate of the United States will help resolve the issue of our POWs in Afghanistan, which is so important for Russia. We know that many of them are still alive, their mothers, wives and children are waiting for them. The list of our POWs and MIAs in Afghanistan has been given to the US Component in the commission.

Sincerely,

B. YELTSIN

Exceptional claims require exceptional evidence. President Yeltsin's letter was not supported by any evidence at all.

In light of the fact that I had been immersed in the Korean War POW/MIA issue for more than a year, something didn't seem right about the paragraph in Yeltsin's letter that addressed the Korean War. Far more than 262 pilots and crewmembers had survived. I was particularly intrigued by the assertion that the Commission had found in the archives "interrogation records for 59 of them." Our Russian sources stated that there were hundreds of interrogation records.

Within less than a month, we determined beyond any reasonable doubt that several claims in Yeltsin's speech and letter were based, in large measure, on the results that our archive research team had produced in Moscow. We would also conclude that the Russian side of the USRJC was being deceptive, didn't understand the data, or, more likely, all of the above.

One of the sources for President Yeltsin's letter was the head of the US side of the USRJC. Ambassador Toon testified:

General Volkogonov, chairman of the Russian delegation to the Joint Commission, my opposite number, delivered an interim report on the results of the Russian archival research. Data from Volkogonov's report was later incorporated into President Yeltsin's letter to the Senate Select Committee on POW's/MIA's.⁴

An unintended but serious consequence of President Yeltsin's speech and letter was that they created anchor bias, which is an opinion formed by exposure to the first piece of information on an issue. For far too many people associated with the POW/MIA Accounting Community, the issue of whether Americans had been held against their will in the USSR never required proof. Those for whom the requirement for evidence was always optional, President Yeltsin's speech was all of the "proof" anyone susceptible to anchor bias required.

President Yeltsin's letter and speech reinforced some of the worst elements associated with the POW/MIA Accounting Community. These elements included the conspiracy theorists who peddled the story that General Eisenhower had willingly collaborated with Soviet dictator Stalin to send over 20,000 US POWs to the Soviet Gulag. People convinced that American servicemen were being held in Vietnam or Russia concluded that President Yeltsin was trying to divert attention or cover up what they were convinced was reality.

In the view of the conspiracy crowd, tens of thousands of American servicemen had been taken to the USSR against their will. Evidence was optional.

Following the demise of the Soviet Union and particularly after Russian President Boris Yeltsin's bizarre address to a joint session of Congress, Congress began to do what members of Congress do best. Hearings were held, then vast sums of money were thrown at the accounting program. After the initial flurry of attention died down, members of Congress did what they do with predictable regularity. They either turned their attention to other issues or found ways to exploit the POW/MIA issue for personal political advantage. The pattern that developed in Congress was to get completely spun up about the POW/MIA issue, particularly when something went wrong, then to forget about it until the next problem or crisis rolled around. During the interval between crises, Congress allowed the POW/MIA accounting program to drift along with little and usually no effective oversight. The absence of any form of internal observation of operations or control of how tens of millions of taxpayer dollars were spent allowed a corporate culture to develop in which almost any activity could take place as long as the activity was described as some sort of service to the "sacred" accounting mission.

In addition to shoveling vast sums of money into an open furnace without paying the slightest attention to the all-important operational details, Congress took bold, decisive action. It compounded the problem by substituting movement for progress. Congress simply turned the accounting program over to the DoD, then washed its hands of any meaningful oversight.

Instead of creating an accounting program built on a foundation of science, organized and managed in a disciplined manner that focused on producing empirical results, DoD created a patchwork of organizations, with the notable but not sole exception of the CIL, that lacked the skill sets, discipline, and long-term vision required to complete the mission.

* * *

RAND'S "WORKING DRAFT"

President Yeltsin's speech was belatedly interpreted by RAND's Vice President Michael Rich as an opportunity to circulate a memo in Washington on the POW/MIA issue. The general idea was to show that RAND was out front on the hot issue du jour. There was nothing wrong with this approach, if it had been managed properly.

I journaled:

June 26, 1992 – RAND, Santa Monica (Friday)

The past two days have been rather action-packed. I was interviewed by the Washington Post. The article appeared June 18, just below the photo of Boris Yeltsin speaking to Congress. This led to two frenzied days of dealing with the press. Then the Pentagon put a gag order on me – this decision was apparently made by Ed Ross in the POW-MIA shop. I was also told not to refer to the gag order as a gag order. Typical. This all led to me writing a ten-page paper for distribution in the Pentagon. I worked Saturday and Sunday on it. The paper was sent to DC on Tuesday.

Instead of a press release, which would have had more impact given the brief life-span of interest in President Yeltsin's speech, Mr. Rich's decision was to distribute a short analysis of President Yeltsin's remarks. It was apparent that this decision, which was a day long and a dollar short, missed the window of opportunity to squeeze any PR advantage out of the POW/MIA issue.

The fact of the matter was that Congress had already moved on. As always, the moment after a member of Congress had extracted a drop of political capital out of the POW/MIA issue and could squeeze no more, attention was diverted to other matters. The political reality was that not a single member of the House or Senate relied on the POW/MIA issue to generate votes in their district or state. The half-life of Congressional interest in the POW/MIA issue was measured in nanoseconds. After grandstanding or grabbing a headline or two about America's "highest national priority" or the nation's "sacred mission," members of Congress paid little if any additional interest. Any interest in the issue, which certainly did not take the form of effective oversight, would not extend to reading a RAND memo on the issue. At best, the memo would be handed to an intern with the instruction to, "Take a look at this."

Even though it was a bad idea, after being asked to draft the memo, I did so. Besides Sergei, Dr. Lambeth, and Mr. Karasik, I was the only RAND employee who had been in Moscow to see the situation first-hand and understood President Yeltsin's scam. I dropped everything to focus on producing a document that within RAND was referred to as a "working draft."

I went into the office over the entire weekend, much to the displeasure of my wife, consulted Sergei over the phone on some important points, finished off the draft late Sunday night, then put a hard copy into the internal mail system for Mr. Rich's attention first thing Monday morning.

Though the ability to attach documents to emails would not be invented until a year later, had I sent the document by email instead of snail mail, the result would have been identical. As anyone who has been around the healy-feely crowd long enough knows, the second Noble Truth of Buddhism states that the cause of all suffering is attachments.

The following Monday morning, out of the blue, my colleague Dr. Lambeth gave me a call. He asked me to come up to his office for a minute. I thought nothing of it, as his five-window office was on the fourth floor right above me. We often got together for a coffee and a “how was your weekend” chat. When I arrived at the “Commodore’s” office, Dr. Lambeth was sitting behind his desk holding the memo I had submitted to Mr. Rich the night before. Lying on the desk was a revised version of the memo that had been prepared by Mr. Rich. In Mr. Rich’s version, over half of the original memo had vanished. Sections of the original text had been completely deleted, while other sections were heavily edited. Mr. Rich had basically re-written the original memo, leaving little of the original.

Dr. Lambeth showed me the cover memo from the RAND vice president to him. Mr. Rich stated that since “Dr. Cole is difficult to work with,” he asked Dr. Lambeth to deal with me. Dr. Lambeth had been instructed to convince me to re-write the memo exactly in the way the vice president thought was most appropriate. Dr. Lambeth made it clear that the changes were not suggestions. If you want to be a “good corporate citizen,” he advised, “learn to take dictation from RAND management” concerning a topic the manager knew very little about, then present someone else’s version of the memo as your own work, then shut up about it. Dr. Lambeth didn’t need to do much persuading. Being asked to be a “good corporate citizen” was a condensation symbol whose meaning was the equivalent of when Dr. Zhivago informed the “local delegate” that a patient was suffering from “another disease we don’t have in Moscow: starvation.” The delegate responded, “Your attitude has been noted. Oh yes! It has been noted!”

Resistance was futile. If you were not a “good corporate citizen” at RAND, your attitude would be “noted.” In my first annual performance review, Dr. Kelley noted that “Dr. Cole does not fit into our little community” at RAND. My attitude had been noted. “Oh, yes! It had been noted!”

Dr. Lambeth and I got along well and I respected his intelligence, so I felt comfortable reminding him that during China’s Cultural Revolution, symphonic music was written by a committee. “Really, I am in no position

to object or prevail,” I said. “You know better than I that when there’s a struggle between a two-window guy like me and Mahogany Row, the outcome is pre-determined.” Dr. Lambeth agreed. In my view, the entire undertaking was a bad idea and a waste of time. However, it was in no one’s interest to prolong the suffering caused by attachments.

“Please write whatever the committee wants,” I advised Dr. Lambeth.

“I only have one request. Re-write it any way you want or that pleases Mr. Rich of course, but please just take my name off of this thing, OK? Call it the People’s Memo, Collective Communiqué No. 14, or whatever name they prefer. Just leave me out of it, please. Unlike some people around here, I’m not that desperate for a publication credit.”

One of Dr. Lambeth’s favorite analogies applied to this situation. The memo, as he eloquently described, was indeed a “turd in a punchbowl.” We had a good laugh, talked about the weekend, made lunch plans, then parted ways. That was the end of it, or so it appeared. I was wrong, again.

The resulting corporate memo, *Post-Summit Assessment of President Yeltsin’s Letter on MIA-POW Issues*,⁵ which was distributed by the RAND public affairs office, was marked both “draft” and with the embargo statement “Not Cleared for Open Publication.” There were no restrictions on the distribution of unclassified public information; thus the purpose of the embargo was to prevent publication of the draft memo by the press.

My name appeared as the sole author of the working draft.

The version of the memo as distributed, which was supposed to have been written by me, could only be described the same way Mark Twain characterized the *Book of Mormon* as “chloroform in print.” The leaden text was indistinguishable from a brochure produced by the Chicago Bridge Company’s PR department. No one as busy as the average Hill staffer could have been expected to slog through such a tedious text.

One small section of the original draft, which had inexplicably survived the re-write, turned out to be remarkably prescient.

The U.S. strategy for dealing with the Russian government on MIA-POW issues should be based on an analysis of the lessons learned from the U.S. experience with North Korea and Vietnam. In those two cases, the U.S. government relied on methods developed for dealing with nations that have sought to conceal evidence and extract concessions from the United States. A revised strategy for dealing with Russia should be developed and implemented. If the U.S. government continues to pursue these issues in Russia with a strategy developed for North Korea and Vietnam where cooperation

is limited and access to archives virtually nonexistent, the United States may actually encourage the Russians to respond in a way that blocks progress. [...]

The objective of U.S. policy should be to recover *and identify* remains. This requires a forensic strategy.

As in my other Cassandra moments, none of the recommendations received the slightest attention. DoD's accounting program proceeded with neither a coherent strategy nor an accounting standard; thus the probability that DoD would authorize a forensic strategy was out of the question. It was as if no one dared or, more probably, cared to impose coherence or expect productivity from a program devoted to the "nation's highest national priority." The POW/MIA Accounting Community operated in a bubble, immune from effective oversight of any kind.

The ghost-written memo was circulated by RAND to every Congressional office and beyond. It was clear that sending a memo to members of Congress concerning President Yeltsin's speech had not been a good idea. After barking themselves into a frenzy-like trained seals on steroids during President Yeltsin's speech to a Joint Session of Congress, it was not the best idea to tell members of Congress that they had been flimflammed by the Russian President. The fact that little if anything the Russian President had said to a Joint Session of Congress had been true was not going to be allowed to ruin the delirium enjoyed by members of Congress who had leapt to their feet like monkeys whenever organ grinder Yeltsin snapped the leash. From the perspective of a member of Congress, the expedient thing to do was to cut the losses by pretending like the sordid episode had never happened and simply move along.

The response to RAND's corporate memorandum was silence; there was no reaction, not a peep. As anticipated, the memo, which had no impact whatsoever, vanished like a hot coin tossed into a drift of fluffy white snow.

* * *

PRESIDENT BUSH DEMANDS ANSWERS

In the wake of President Yeltsin's speech to the Joint Session and letter to the Senate, President George H. W. Bush, who was justifiably concerned and confused, phoned the Pentagon to ask for an explanation. What was President Yeltsin talking about? How many American servicemen were on Soviet territory? How and when did this happen? A multi-starred general phoned the NARA headquarters which in 1992 were located in Suitland,

Maryland. Mr. Richard Boylan, a senior military archivist who assisted me with my dissertation research as well as with the RAND project, took the phone call. The general wanted to know what it would take to find the answers to the president's question. Mr. Boylan said it was hard to say. The general did not like that answer.

A surprising number of people who have never set foot in a nation's archives are convinced that archive research consists of rummaging around until one finds a box labeled "answers" or "secrets they want to hide." According to people who have never been there, the "government" knows where the box of "answers" or "secrets" is located but, due to some diabolical conspiracy, refuses to produce the box. For the uninitiated, the task is to skip the rummaging around part and simply force the "government" to turn over the box of answers and secrets. Rather than try to explain to the general that archive research really doesn't work that way, Mr. Boylan, an Army veteran, respectfully suggested that the general should come out to Suitland and see the problem for himself (Fig. 9.2).



Fig. 9.2 Mr. Richard Boylan, NARA archivist (Photo: Public Domain)

When the general arrived, he was not in the mood for nuance. The president of the United States asked a goddam question, and he was going to provide the goddam answer, goddammit. As the general and his various assistants and horse holders marched into the goddam Suitland building, the general let Mr. Boylan know that he was goddam going to get to the bottom of this goddam problem right here, right goddam now. “What’s gonna take, goddamit?” the general demanded to know. “I can provide as many goddam men and as much goddam money as it will take.”

Mr. Boylan replied, “Come with me, Sir. I think you need to see something.”

Mr. Boylan guided the general and his entourage to a large reinforced window cut into the thick concrete wall by the large freight elevator. From the internal window, one looked down on the main storage room, which was approximately 50 yards long and 20 yards wide, recessed about 30 feet into the ground. There are hundreds of movable shelves, each holding thousands of boxes of documents (Fig. 9.3). (The following photographs give an indication of the scale of the problem.)

First-time visitors to the Suitland facility were usually thunderstruck by the magnitude of the collection. The Suitland facility, now known as the Washington National Records Center, has approximately 789,000 square feet of space with the capacity to hold over 3.9 million cubic feet of records. One cubic foot contains, on average, 4200 sheets of typical 20-pound copy paper. Boxes holding onion-skin paper records contained many more sheets. The Suitland facility could hold a staggering number of sheets of paper—more than 16,380,000,000.

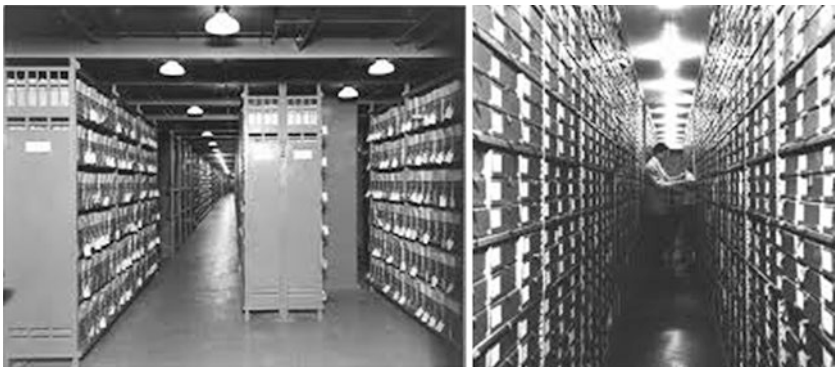


Fig. 9.3 Images of typical archive holdings (Photos: Public Domain)

Mr. Boylan said to the general, “The records of the 8th Army’s activities during the Korean War cover about, who knows, maybe 4000 shelf feet of space, maybe more.” One linear shelf foot contains approximately 1800 sheets of paper; thus Mr. Boylan was telling the general three things. First, that the 8th Army records included at least 7,200,000 pages of material. Second, a thorough search of the records may or may not shed any light on whether American servicemen had been transferred to the USSR against their will. Third, assuming one researcher could examine four linear feet of documents per day, which was an aggressive estimate, at least 1000 research days would be needed to make the first pass through the 8th Army records alone. So 1000 people could search the records in one day, assuming of course, that they knew what to look for and, most important, assuming that the information was in the records.

The general, who stared at the sea of shelves and boxes in disbelief, was speechless. Mr. Boylan fiddled with the badge hanging from the lanyard around his neck. The general and his horse holders looked at Mr. Boylan, who gestured toward the record room with his badge as he gazed into to the subterranean storage area.

“The answer may or may not be in there, or somewhere in there, Sir. It would take about twenty full-time researchers about a year to go through it all. And that’s just the 8th Army material.” Mr. Boylan paused. “Then there’s the possibility that there’s no information that can shed any light on the issues raised by President Yeltsin.”

We have no record of what the general reported back to the president. All we know is that after the general and all of his helpers departed, peace and tranquility returned to the Suitland archives.

Mr. Boylan never heard from the general again.

The following vignette, which is a bit of a diversion, illustrates how serendipitous, if not capricious, archive research can be. Sometime around 1950, the master list of 36,000 files of the *UN WWII War Crimes Commission*, an organization that had operated in London between 1943 and 1948, had been misfiled in the US National Archives. Someone had apparently simply placed the records on the wrong shelf. From that moment, no one could locate the master list. It was if the documents had simply vanished.

In 1986, Mr. Richard Boylan found the master list by accident. Mr. Boylan found the master list while he was searching for something else. He recognized the missing master list, which he re-shelved in the correct location. “It didn’t strike me as anything special,” he said.

What an understatement.

The *UN WWII War Crimes Commission* records that had been lost by accident for nearly 40 years were re-discovered by accident, just like that. Archive research often happens like this.

* * *

I returned to NARA in late June 1992 to carry on with the domestic archive research part of the project. After going through dozens of gray document boxes, Mr. Boylan stopped by my table in the research room. As always, he fiddled with the badge that hung around his neck, then said quietly, "I wanted to tell you that you passed the test."

"Which test?" I looked up at the badge, the beard, and the large eyeglasses.

"You spent a day and a half looking through this record group," he said, pointing his badge toward the dozen or so boxes on the gray metal trolley beside me. "The DPMO guy who was here a couple of weeks ago went through the same set of boxes in less than three hours." He gestured toward the archivists' offices. "They wanted me to tell you that from now on they think you know what you're doing. That means they will take your requests seriously and suggest you look at files that you might not know about."

This acceptance into the archivist Jedi knighthood was a great honor. This meant that from time to time I would be permitted to go into an archivist's office to discuss research issues. I didn't advise Mr. Ross or Dr. Kelley this development. I figured they would ban me from talking to archivists.

In the eyes of the archivists, my status as a serious researcher was further solidified after I found two reels of motion picture film in the boxes of paper records the man from DPMO had searched. Paper records and motion picture film, which should never be found together, are required to be stored in separate locations. When celluloid film degrades, it gives off a noxious, foul-smelling gas, called the "Vinegar Syndrome." This syndrome is due to the fact that acetic acid gas released from the film reels reeks like strong vinegar or, more accurately, a raccoon urine-soaked mattress in an attic on a hot summer day. When stored together, the gas eventually destroys the film and degrades the paper records. The paper archivists quickly transported the film reels to their audio-video colleagues, who whisked them upstairs asap. I was curious about the content of the films, so I requested copies.

It took a while to find out what the 35-millimeter movies contained. At NARA, one doesn't just put a reel of old, original film on a projector in order to have a squiz. The primary requirement is to preserve the original movie, a "reference copy." This means a copy must be made, a process that takes a minimum of a few weeks or even a couple of months. The researcher, who pays for the reference copy up front, is only permitted to view the reference copy.

On June 20, 1996, I testified before Congress in response to a question from Congressman Robert Dornan (R-CA):

I found two reels of film.

That is not supposed to happen. This set the archivist into a dither because the textual people did not know what to do with the reels of film, and it was the original. There has to be a so-called reference copy. You're not supposed to look at the original.

Before we figured out that this was the so-called archive copy, we looked at one, and it was a film of a Korean War atrocity site, just a slow combat camera footage of panning down this terrible scene. Well, there are two reels of this. That told me two things.

DPMO has said, they have told your office in writing and they have told me that they looked through those textual records and have analyzed them. They say they have photocopied every piece of paper that is in that archive group, RG-135. Whoever did this overlooked two reels of film, and this is very unusual.

The movies were the Army's documentation of the Suncheon-Sukchon POW massacre that occurred in North Korea on October 21, 1950. The 187th Airborne RCT and other units made a parachute drop to intercept a North Korean train carrying UN POWs deep into North Korea. My Dad was one of the C-119 pilots on what was the USAF's first combat airdrop mission since WWII. Bad weather delayed the operation by a day, which turned out to be literally fatal. The day before the paratroopers landed at Suncheon-Sukchon, about 20 miles north of Pyongyang, the North Koreans shot and killed 75 US POWs in the vicinity of Myonguch'am. The North Koreans had forced the POWs off the train, made them to sit, gave them rice bowls as if they were going to be fed, then the guards opened fire. If the airdrop had occurred on schedule, the train might have been intercepted, and this massacre might have been prevented.

The motion pictures I found in boxes that were supposed to contain only paper records documented the recovery of the victims of the massacre.

While working in the NARA motion picture archive, I also found training movies made in the CIL in Kokura, Japan, during the Korean War. Those films, which documented the procedures used during the Korean War to prepare the bodies of UN dead, showed every step in the process that began when the remains entered the CIL and ended when the caskets were loaded into trucks. The movies were rough cuts, so multiple takes of the same step were included.

One scene showed how the inventories of bones (*homunculus*) of the unknown cases were prepared by an anthropologist, then copied by hand on light boards by people who appeared to be enlisted men or local hires. Another scene showed bodies being embalmed. An extended scene presented the manner in which skeletalized remains were cleaned, assembled, inventoried, then wrapped in a green Army horse blanket.

When Korean War unknowns are disinterred for the purpose of identification, the remains are often covered with an abundance of white powder. While working on my RAND report, I located the AQG manuals that described how the insecticide lindane had been applied to remains; thus the nature of the powder was no longer a mystery. What the training films revealed was how lindane, an agricultural insecticide that is now banned by almost every country in the world, was applied to the skeletalized remains, often in large quantities. The training films showed a US Army mortuary technician using what looked like a coffee can to scoop lindane out of a large drum and then pile the powder over the remains.

The Kokura training films also included scenes in which casualties were cleaned and placed in coffins. The extraordinary thing about these scenes was that some of the casualties were identified by nameplates placed at the foot of the table. One could watch "Major X's" body be cleaned, embalmed, and placed in a casket.

I paid NARA to make reference copies of the Kokura training films, which took several weeks. Once the reference copies were available, I showed them to Congressman Bob Dornan (R-CA) when I escorted him around the NARA facility. I thought the training films would be of interest to CILHI, so I paid to have copies made, then sent them to Dr. Thomas Holland, who by then had become the scientific director at the CILHI.

Once the existence of the films became known, DPMO tried but failed to have the Kokura training films withdrawn from NARA and classified "SECRET."

The standard required to classify information “SECRET” is that the unauthorized release of the information was likely to damage US national security interests. Nothing in the Kokura training films had even a remote relationship to US national interests. In addition, DPMO’s effort to designate or re-designate unclassified information that had been properly released as restricted or classified information violated numerous DoD policies and federal laws.

Unauthorized secrecy, ill-advised control of unclassified information, gag orders, and the prominence of politics over research in general and science in particular characterized the reality of the “nation’s highest national priority.”

* * *

TASK FORCE RUSSIA

On May 15, 1992, the Secretary of the Army was designated as the Executive Agent to support the USRJC. On June 4, 1992, the Secretary of the Army delegated the Executive Agent function to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. Task Force Russia (TFR) was formed under ODCSPER on June 29, 1992, to implement the Executive Agent’s responsibilities.

Due in large measure to the impact of President Yeltsin’s speech, in June 1992 the Army’s Chief of Staff tasked Army Colonel Stuart Herrington to create “Task Force Russia: POW/MIA” (TFR). TFR’s mission was to:

[F]ield a Task Force capable of collecting, analyzing and using information from the Russian archives and drawn from interviews to achieve the fullest possible accounting of American POW/MIA personnel.

The term “fullest possible accounting” was not defined in the order to create TFR or in any other DoD policy, regulation or lexicon.

Colonel Herrington had a distinguished career in Army intelligence, particularly in Vietnam. After Vietnamese language instruction, Herrington had deployed to Vietnam in 1971 where he participated in the Phoenix program. His 1982 book, *Silence Was A Weapon: The Vietnam War in the Villages*,⁶ is a must-read for anyone interested in understanding how US strategy and

tactics applied during the war were fatally flawed. Colonel Herrington, who became a prominent outspoken critic of torture, was among the last people to be airlifted by helicopter off of the roof of the American Embassy as Saigon fell on April 30, 1975.

Colonel Herrington, who was the first TFR director, became the deputy director after Major General Bernard Loeffke was appointed director. This appointment was made for political reasons, as it was determined that TFR should be headed by a general officer. Colonel Herrington served as TFR's deputy director until June 1993. During the year that MG Loeffke and Colonel Herrington were involved with TFR, the organization was well-run, tightly organized, and, most importantly, effective.

Before it was transformed into TFR, the group that was to become TFR had been working on an ad hoc basis. In the beginning, the proto-TFR group consisted of one lieutenant colonel and a few staff members, including a handful of linguists, who had been cajoled from various agencies to join TFR on a temporary basis. TFR's primary occupation was to translate and evaluate Russian-language documents. At first, TFR was headquartered in one room at the Pentagon. When they outgrew that space, TFR relocated to the Hoffman building in Alexandria, Virginia. Eventually a parallel organization, Task Force Russia-Moscow (TFR-M), was created.

After a short period of time, TFR's core consisted of Major General Bernard Loeffke, Colonel Stuart A. Herrington, Major Danz Blasser, Major Ralph Peters, and Major Woerner Hendrix. I reported directly to Colonel Herrington, who asked me to call him Stu, which came as a great relief to me. Competent, self-confident people are not always hung up on formalities.

TFR's Air Force Russian-language linguist Major Danz Blasser was assigned to DPMO just before his retirement came around. Instead of keeping Major Blasser in the office during the last few weeks of his time on active duty, DPMO instead transferred him to the Arlington Cemetery band. When Major Blasser reported for duty, the band director asked him what instrument he played. When Major Blasser told him he didn't play a musical instrument, the director sighed, "Oh, one of those." Major Blasser was not required to report for band duty, so he played a lot of golf until his hitch expired. After his retirement became official, Major Blasser was retained as a consultant to TFR. Like thousands of military retirees, known as "double dippers," Mr. Blasser was paid a pension plus a salary (Fig. 9.4).

Fig. 9.4 Major Danz Blasser (ret.) (Photo: NOVA)



Major Woerner Hendrix, who was also a linguist, worked side by side with Major Blasser for the entire time I was associated with TFR.

By and large the TFR staff were competent and professional. Nonetheless, some of the approaches to research undertaken by TFR personnel struck me as bizarre. In the early 1990s the POW/MIA Accounting Community was focused, often to the exclusion of all else, on getting to the bottom of the question of whether US servicemen captured during America's past conflicts were still alive, being held against their will in various communist or formerly communist countries. Movies such as *Rambo* and high-profile POW ambulance chasers such as Colonel Bo Gritz contributed to a public perception that American POWs had been left behind in WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Some alleged that the abandonment had been deliberate, even sanctioned by the US government.

Regardless of how illogical and sometimes irresponsible the accusations might have been, the US government had a responsibility and obligation to answer the question with irrefutable evidence. The problem was, of course, how to obtain the irrefutable evidence and then to convince the skeptics that the irrefutable evidence was indeed irrefutable.

One of TFR's stranger methods was explained to me by Major Ralph Peters.⁷ Major Peters, who also had an intelligence background, was an Army Foreign Area Officer whose specialty was the Soviet Union (Fig. 9.5).

Pinned to the wall in one of TFR's offices was a three-foot by four-foot drawing of a cross-section of a very large onion that included a bright

Fig. 9.5 Colonel
Ralph Peters (ret.)
(Photo: Public Domain)



green stem on the top and little brown roots on the bottom. The presentation of the layers of the onion was meticulous. Each layer of the onion was associated with specific Russian officials or detailed bits of information. At the center of the onion was a large black question mark, like this: ?, as if the operation were being run by the Riddler. Major Peters and one of his colleagues explained that the Russians had something to hide and thus were deliberately obfuscating. Major Peters went on to describe how TFR could see through the Russian strategy by associating each Russian statement or document production with a particular layer of the onion. Eventually, the giant onion diagram would reveal the information the Russians were hiding behind the big question mark. The concept was to move through the layers of the onion toward the ? at the center. This was a variation on the quest for the Box of Secrets.

Major Peters asked me for my opinion of the Onion Strategy. I told Major Peters a short story. Sir Laurence Olivier was sipping his breakfast tea as he read *The Times* on the set of the feature film “Marathon Man.” The scene about to be shot was the intensive part of the movie in which the evil dentist Dr. Szell played by Sir Laurence would torture Dustin Hoffman’s character “Babe” Levy, using sharp metal dental tools. Suddenly, Hoffman burst in, looking like a dog’s breakfast. Sir Laurence allegedly said, “Good heavens, man! What’s happened to you?” Hoffman explained that as part of his “method acting” preparation,

Hoffman had stayed up all night, probably spending time at a nightclub or two until the wee hours. Sir Laurence put down his tea cup, folded his newspaper, wiped his lips with his white starched linen napkin, looked at Hoffman, and then said, “My good man, why don’t you just try acting? It’s much easier.”

I gestured toward the giant bisected onion diagram, then paraphrased Sir Laurence, “Why don’t you just try research? It’s much easier.”

As Harvey Penick said about golf, any method beats no method. I was rather dubious, however, that the onion method told us anything meaningful about Russian interests or the type of information they may or may not have had. In my opinion, a methodologically sound archive research project trumped the usefulness derived from bisecting a bulb in the lily family.

One of the great things about TFR was the director and deputy director encouraged a culture of inquiry and debate by providing “top cover” that protected the staff from political interference. General Loeffke and Colonel Herrington encouraged the TFR staff to innovate as well as to take prudent risks, even when a method was inspired by a bisected onion. I was fortunate to have many vigorous debates, some a bit more vigorous than necessary, but in every case we ended on professional, if not friendly, terms and looked forward to the next intellectual donnybrook.

TFR was active for approximately one year.

* * *

In August 1992, my relationship with TFR took a turn for the better. I was asked by Colonel Herrington to go to DC to brief TFR’s commander MG Bernard Loeffke. I reminded Colonel Herrington that Mr. Ed Ross’s gag order specifically instructed me to have no contact with TFR. Stu replied, “Don’t worry about him.” Within 24 hours, Stu drafted a letter that Major General Loeffke signed and then sent to Mr. Ross. The letter stated TFR was going to maintain close relations with me. Stu laughed when he told me that Mr. Ross was apoplectic with anger when he received the letter. With an invitation in hand and proper authorization, I made plans to go to the Pentagon to brief the two star.

I journaled:

August 29, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Saturday)

Spent a couple of hours at the office. I want to make a great first impression when I brief Army Task Force Russia and Maj. Gen. Bernard Loeffke on Monday. I have copies of every significant thing I could think of and then some.

Will be interesting to see the reaction from ISA. They were pretty good people to work with once upon a time. Since Toon took over, the US-Russian Commission and Ed Ross became office director of DPMO, all that changed for the worse.

ISA is Executive Secretary and the Army is Executive Agent on POW-MIA affairs for DoD. Executive Agent means doing the work.

Ross sent me a letter saying I am not sufficiently sensitive to the “political environment.” Dumb move. I think that this will come back to haunt them (DPMO) and Ross in particular.

Colonel Herrington organized a meeting on September 5, 1992, at Portner’s restaurant located in Alexandria Virginia’s Old Town. The purpose of the get together was for TFR team members to meet me in a low-key social setting. The evening, which went well, lasted about three hours. The next morning, I presented the same briefing to the TFR members who had been unable to join us the night before at Portner’s.

After the morning meeting with the TFR team ended, Colonel Herrington traveled with me by Metro to the Pentagon for my briefing for Major General Bernard Loeffke, the commander of TFR.

MG Bernard “Burn” Loeffke, who was one of those larger-than-life characters, had been born in Colombia, South America, to an American father and Spanish mother. He had been admitted to West Point, class of 1957, where he was granted US citizenship on graduation. MG Loeffke, who did three and a half combat tours in Vietnam as a special forces officer, had also served as the US military attaché in Moscow and Beijing. MG Loeffke held two master’s degrees, one in Russian-language studies and the second in Soviet area studies, and a PhD in international relations. He was also a physical fitness nut and health fanatic who usually made it a point to eat things such as yoghurt and dried banana slices during meetings. MG Loeffke’s distinguishing physical characteristic was his large, bald, café crème head (Fig. 9.6).

General Loeffke, who retired in early 1992, had been recalled due in part to his experience as military attaché in Moscow and Beijing, to

Fig. 9.6 Major
General Bernard Loeffke
(Photo: DoD)



serve as director of TFR which he led for one year, from July 1992 to July 1993.

Some critics thought that MG Loeffke had been out of his depth as military attaché. Many in the Army were convinced that military attachés were losers who had failed at core Army tasks such as marching, doing push-ups, or attending promotion ceremonies. It was not up to me to pass judgment on MG Loeffke's career, but from my personal perspective, MG Loeffke was well-suited to be the TFR commander.

After Sergeant Bashford, Major Danz Blasser, Commander John Kinzel and Colonel Herrington, my relationship with MG Loeffke was one of the most rewarding and productive of any relationship I formed to that point during my work in the POW/MIA Accounting Community. In a military culture steeped in deception, "pencil whipping," and "ethical fading," these five stood out for both their integrity and dedication to the POW/MIA accounting mission.

The purpose or interest that was served by Mr. Ed Ross's efforts to prevent me from talking to the TFR analysts wasn't difficult to determine. Mr. Ross's objective was to exert political control over the accounting program. The two meetings with TFR staff and the briefing for the boss went very well, after a somewhat awkward start required to overcome Mr. Ross's speed bumps.

Though I had nothing in common with the culture of the Army and had never had the slightest desire to become a soldier, MG "Burn" Loeffke and I hit it off. MG Loeffke and I shared a similar academic background that allowed us to speak the same intellectual language. When I met General Loeffke for the first time, he shook my hand, squeezed a bit too hard, tapped the back of my right hand with his left fist, looked me in the eyes, and then said, "Airborne." I honestly had no idea what he was talking about. I returned his firm handshake, looked him in the eyes, and replied, "Fedex." We exchanged quizzical glances and moved on.

A few minutes before my briefing for MG Loeffke began, like the Cheshire cat, Dr. Charles Kelley appeared in the back of the room. He did not greet me or introduce himself to anyone. Instead, he stood against the back wall in silence, which was his signature move that earned him the nickname "Cigar Store Indian" in some circles. Dr. Kelley stood silently while I briefed the general and his staff. I presented the archive research team we had in Moscow and described the activities we had undertaken, the problems encountered, as well as the progress made and the expectations. At the conclusion of the briefing, Dr. Kelley vanished without saying a word, moving on to provide issue-area support through hands-on proactive management elsewhere.

After the MG Loeffke briefing I was invited to stay for the frocking of Lieutenant Colonel Ed Pusey, who had been promoted to full colonel. Colonel Pusey served as a TFR operations officer between August 1, 1992, and March 1, 1993. He also became the first chief of TFR-M's office in Moscow on September 1, 1992.

Following Colonel Pusey's frocking, Major General Loeffke asked me to stay behind. After everyone had departed except for Colonel Pusey, MG Loeffke asked me about Dr. Kelley.

"Who was that guy in the back of the room?" the general asked me directly.

I replied, "Errr...that was Dr. Charles Kelley, the head of the National Defense Research Institute at RAND."

The general chewed his lip briefly. "Why was he here?"

I replied hesitantly, "He was managing. He's a manager, a RAND manager, part of RAND management....he provided project management.... pro-active, forward-leaning.....management."

The General wasn't buying it. "Managing what?" he asked, somewhat incredulously.

“Managing me.” It sounded stupid when I said it, so I tried to make sense of the senseless. “He manages my project, my work, and that of others, from his management position, at RAND...”

General Loeffke stared at me with coal black eyes that vanished into his head like two piss holes in the snow. I had lost my audience. I tried again. “Err...this project. He, that would be Dr. Kelley, you see, Sir, he’s a manager, who manages.....” I gestured with my right hand, which I realized appeared to be flopping around like a walleye on a hot wooden pier.

The General stood there, silent for what seemed to me to be a very long time. Pauses with real leaders seem to last longer than pauses with putzes. In a kind of bureaucratic relativity that Einstein never described, some people with the star power can transform seconds into hours. General Loeffke looked at his colonel horse holder, then at me, then at his colonel. General Loeffke squinted his black eyes as he asked me, “Did I pay for that man,” he jabbed a finger toward the back wall, “to be in this briefing?”

I replied, “Err...oh, well, Sir, I suppose in the greater scheme of things we all did, sort of, since all of this is funded by tax money, you and me being taxpayers and all that. And, of course, RAND does get tens of millions from DoD. And this is a DoD project, funded by ISA or OSD, one way or the other.....”

The General, who wanted a straight answer to a straight question, stared at me. Colonel Pusey stared at me. I shifted my feet, held my briefcase against my abdomen with both hands, and then returned Major General Loeffke’s look straight in the eyes. “So,” I began confidently, “the answer is yes, yes, Sir. You paid for that man,” I used my black briefcase to gesture toward the back wall, “to be in this briefing. I know for a fact that he pays for his travel and all of that to attend these project meetings out project funds, this project, our project I mean, that are allocated to this project for that purpose, which would include travel to attend a briefing such as the one that just occurred in that other room a few minutes ago.” I paused, then took the plunge. “Look, Sir, I have no control over what that guy does. He is a program director, which is a big deal, at RAND anyway. I guess you’d say I report to him. He’s a manager. At RAND. Where he manages things. Like me and this project.”

The General sighed heavily and then turned to his aide. “Colonel,” he said, “I never want *that man*,” he jabbed an index finger toward the empty space where Dr. Kelley had been standing, “to be in any meeting or any briefing for this project again. Understood?”

The Colonel replied, “Yes, Sir!” They looked at me.

I said, “Hey, I’m just trying to do some archive research. RAND does its own thing, you know.”

They continued staring at me. There was another one of those long, protracted awkward silences. When a long silence happens during a dinner party in Denmark, people say that “a goose had just walked over your grave.” It was better to say nothing until the moment passed. Major General Loeffke then did this sort of Oriental bow, shook my hand with a grip that would have crushed a walnut, turned on his heels, then disappeared through the door into the Pentagon labyrinth, followed by Colonel Pusey.

As I walked through the Pentagon toward the Metro exit, I thought about the text on the poster that Dr. Andrew Marshall, director of Net Assessment at the Pentagon who once worked at RAND, had on his office wall for 20 years or more. “There is only so much stupidity one man can prevent.”

At a subsequent International Policy Department staff meeting, RAND Senior Vice President Michael Rich, who for a RAND lifer destined to become RAND president was usually a decent man who earned the respect of many in the department, told the staff about what he characterized as one of the “keys” to RAND’s success (Fig. 9.7).

Among RAND’s strengths that Mr. Rich pointed out by name was Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. who, he said, had an “amazing ability,” a “rare talent,” a “one-in-a-million gift” to communicate with the people in the Pentagon. Mr. Rich described Dr. Kelley’s skill sets as a once-in-a-generation

Fig. 9.7 Mr. Michael Rich, RAND (Photo: Public Domain)



ability that allowed him “to schmooze the client” like no one else. Four or five of us in the back of the room burst out in spontaneous laughter.

Vice President Rich, a little startled, looked up and smiled. “Is there something funny?” We were all laughing because we had been on the receiving end of Dr. Kelley’s genius at “schmoozing the client.” I thought about raising my hand and pointing out that my two-star client told me he didn’t want Dr. Kelley in the same room with him ever again.

Staying quiet was a much wiser career move.

* * *

It was clear to me that in order to make progress, my project was going to irritate RAND management. Kingsley Amis once observed, “If you can’t annoy somebody with what you write, there’s little point in writing.” Though the intention was never to annoy anyone, my work seemed to annoy people within and outside RAND regardless. Working with a toxic issue appeared to have only one outcome—lose-lose.

I journaled:

September 9, 1992 – RAND, SM (Wednesday)

My experience with the POW/MIA issue is so off putting that I would like to walk away from it. The dummies are in control. Research seems to be the antithesis of politics in general and on this issue in particular. One conclusion is clear: The conspiracy theorists are wrong. There has been no government cover-up of the POW-MIA issue. Some people may have been left behind, but there was not much the government could do about it. This is the reality of naked power in international affairs. We got the vast majority out, but this doesn’t count.

I decided to persevere with the project, in part, out of an obligation to the missing as well as a sense of responsibility for our research team in Moscow.

In retrospect, I should have resigned from the project, then run, not walked away, and put as much daylight between me and the POW/MIA Accounting Community as possible.

* * *

In early December 1992, Sergei and I were asked by Colonel Herrington to fly from Santa Monica to DC to brief TFR on our progress in Moscow as well as to participate in some analytical meetings.

I journaled:

December 12, 1992

On Wednesday I spent the morning at Army Task Force Russia. That went very well. Those guys really like my work. I looked at the interrogation protocols the Soviets/Chinese/North Koreans made with U.S. POW's taken during the Korean War. These turned out to be far less interesting than one would think. The surprise was the fact that the longest, most detailed interrogation report, the one that in my view revealed the most willing degree of cooperation was done with a guy who became a highly decorated 2 star USAF general – John Giraud. Some guys gave them nothing. Giraud gave them over 80 pages of detailed tactical – technical information.

At 14.00 on Wednesday I went over to the ISA/POW/MIA holiday party. Sort of weird, but typical gov't scenery. Had a chance to schmooze DASD Al Ptak. He's receptive to the idea of me submitting a proposal for follow-on work. Al asked me if I could pass along to the Clinton transition team his interest in staying on past Jan 20. Not much of a chance of that happening. Not much of a chance of me becoming DASD either, but you can't win if you don't play.

Slowly but surely the initial optimistic enthusiasm the US side of the Joint Commission had for the process in general and their confidence that General Volkogonov could deliver began to wear off. The proof of the archive pudding, after all, was in the production of relevant documents. As we had predicted in yet another Cassandra moment, the Russian side of the commission was producing nothing.

I journaled:

December 21, 1992 – RAND, S. Monica

I spoke with Norm Kass in the POW/MIA office today. He just returned from two weeks in the former Soviet Union, Kiev, Moscow, etc. with the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission. Norm says the Commission is coming to the position I have held for over one year. Volkogonov is utterly corrupt and the KGB is trying its best to delay and otherwise thwart the inquiry. The Russians produce frivolous and irrelevant info on Elvis or Hitler's sister but otherwise have contributed little if anything to the purpose of the inquiry: finding info on American POW/MIA's.

The urge to say, “Dites-moi quelque chose de nouveau,” was stifled.

With Mr. Kass' encouragement, I proceeded with drafting a proposal to conduct research in the KGB archives in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and

Ukraine and in the East German secret police (Stasi) files in East Berlin. The idea was to include a modest amount of funding in the follow-on work to keep our researchers warm in Moscow.

I journaled:

January 4, 1993

Talked to Norm Kass in the POW/MIA office today. He is positively disposed toward my proposal. This is very good news. Doesn't mean we get the contract but at least someone on the inside is pushing for it. In the strange world of government contracting this can be half the battle or more.

Made an appointment to see the last [German Democratic Republic] GDR ambassador to Pyongyang. Will meet him in Berlin on Feb 7.

We had grown increasingly concerned that our team in Moscow was not being productive, for reasons not of their own making.

* * *

NOTES

1. "Determine and describe the issues of significance regarding Prime Minister (sic) Yeltsin during his visit to the US on 15 and 16 June 1992" June 11, 1992. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP96-00789R002300950001-2.pdf>
2. http://www.speeches-usa.com/Transcripts/047_yeltsin.html
3. *Report of the Senate Select Committee on POW-MIA Affairs*, <http://www.miafacts.org/SSC%20Report/sec%2029.htm>
4. *Toon Mission to Moscow*, op. cit., p. 12.
5. WD-6132-USDP, Prepared for the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, July 1992.
6. Presidio Press, 1982. Re-issued as *Stalking the Vietcong: Inside Operation Phoenix*, in 1997. Reissued by Ballantine Books - Random House in 2004.
7. Major Peters, who retired as a lieutenant colonel, went on to have a successful career as a writer and novelist. Peters, who published using the pen name "Owen Parry," became a commentator on Fox News. After Peters referred to President Obama as a "total pussy," he was suspended by Fox News for two weeks in December 2015.



US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA

ORIGINS

As a consequence of the Kerry-Smith visit to Moscow, an agreement had been made to establish something called the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA (USRJC).

The USRJC, which was established on March 26, 1992, was chaired on the US side by former US Ambassador to Russia Malcolm Toon. General Dmitri Volkogonov was appointed by President Boris Yeltsin to chair the Russian side (Fig. 10.1).

General Volkogonov served as chairman of the Russian side until his death on December 6, 1995.¹

* * *

The two chairmen could not have been more dissimilar.

Ambassador Toon, who had a distinguished career in the Foreign Service, had served as the American ambassador to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Israel, and finally to the Soviet Union (1977–1979). By the time he was asked to emerge from retirement to head the US side of the USRJC, Ambassador Toon was 75 years old.²

A TFR staff member advised that despite an eminent career in diplomacy, by the time Ambassador Toon was appointed to lead the US side of the USRJC, he had “passed his sell-by date.” Ambassador Toon



Fig. 10.1 (L) Ambassador Malcolm Toon, (M) President G. H. W. Bush (1992), (R) General Dmitri Volkogonov (Photo: (L) Dennis Cook/Associated Press (R) Public Domain)

described in Congressional testimony how he had raised this issue when offered the position:

Let me begin on a personal note, if I may, Mr. Chairman. Let me explain to you why I have this position as chairman of the U.S. Delegation to the Joint Commission on POW's and MIA's. I was relaxing down in Pinehurst, North Carolina, looking forward to my next golf game, when I got a call from Larry Eagleburger.³ Eagleburger said, "We have a job for you; we need you up here." I said, "What are you talking about, Larry? I'm almost 76 years of age. I'm enjoying retirement."⁴

Ambassador Toon, who had a master's degree from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy from Tufts University, was well qualified to be a Foreign Service Officer. Several TFR staff members expressed concerns, however, that Ambassador Toon lacked the skill sets, expertise, energy, and most importantly the intention span required to manage a complex archive and interview research effort on such a massive scale.

A career ambassador generally does not have the experience or training required to conduct a successful archive research project. Someone who knows nothing about doing a thing is usually the last person one would want to put in charge of doing that thing. The DoS took history seriously, as evidenced by the *Foreign Relations of the United*

States (FRUS) series. FRUS contains the official documentary historical record of major US foreign policy decisions and significant diplomatic activity. The FRUS is produced by the Office of the Historian, which is headed by a PhD in history, not an ambassador.

There was also an issue concerning possible Russian attempts to alter the record by doctoring or forging documents. The eminent British historian A. J. P. Taylor once noted that there had never been a case of a government official inserting fake documents into the archives, due to the fact that government officials never took historians seriously to deceive them. This is not because of a lack of effort. The mind-set required to falsify or suppress the historical record was found among US government officials, in and out of the Accounting Community. One of the most prominent cases occurred in November 1986. National Security Council staff member Colonel Oliver North's effort to destroy, alter, and remove evidence of his criminal role in the Iran-Contra conspiracy, the Reagan administration's illegal arms for hostages scheme, became known as "Ollie's shredding party."⁵ North altered documents in his own handwriting, instructed his secretary Ms. Fawn Hall to first re-type the documents, then re-insert the altered documents into the National Security Council files as originals. The scheme was uncovered by investigators partly due to the fact that the volume of forged documents was so great that Ms. Hall was unable to re-type them all. One had to accept the fact that similar conduct on the part of the Russians could not be excluded. The US side needed the skills sets required to detect documents that had been doctored or forged. Measures had to be implemented from the beginning that were designed to detect and deal with this type of funny business. This was not a task for a career ambassador who had never conducted archive research of any kind.

The Soviet/Russian government did not appoint a retired diplomat who lacked experience with archive research. Ambassador Toon's counterpart as the head of the Russian side of the USRJC was Colonel General Dr. Professor Dmitri Volkogonov, who had been appointed by President Yeltsin. General Volkogonov, a PhD historian who had been a member of parliament with the Liberal Party, had published biographies of the Soviet troika, Vladimir Lenin, Leon Trotsky, and Josef Stalin. His biography of Stalin, which was the product of five years of archive research, was banned by the Central Committee. His biography of Lenin was based on research in the Central Committee archives as well as research at Harvard University and the Hoover Institution in California. General

Volkogonov had been head of the Institute of Military History from 1985 until June 1991 when he was fired by Defense Minister Dmitry Yazov over his archive-intensive history of WWII that criticized Stalin's conduct of the war. General Volkogonov was appointed as the chairman of the parliamentary committee for KGB and Communist Party archives before he was appointed head of the Russian side of the USRJC. One could question General Volkogonov's motives and integrity, but not his archive research skills and experience.

* * *

The US government's inter-agency group that established the USRJC stated that "the work RAND has done" would form the "core of the Commission's work. The goal is to expand what RAND has done." This was a reference to the archive research our group had undertaken in Moscow.

In the beginning, it wasn't clear that the USRJC would be able find something as banal as office space. Despite the fact that this was America's "highest national priority," the American Embassy in Moscow advised in no uncertain terms that there was no space available for any USRJC staff. The size of the USRJC ballooned as it became supported by DIA, DPMO, and TFR.

I journaled:

March 8, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Sunday)

The US government is setting up a commission to look into the archives of the former USSR – something the group we set up has been doing for over ten weeks – looks like Sergei and I might be on the advance team going to Moscow.

We were initially, cautiously, yet ultimately erroneously, optimistic. It would have made sense for the group that wanted to conduct archive research in Russia to perhaps join forces with a group that was already working in those archives. Alas, yet again the "Not Invented Here" flag had been hoisted and the bureaucratic drawbridge pulled up.

* * *

“TECHNICAL ADVISORS” TO THE USRJC

As required by Public Law 102-183 (HR 2038-9) Section 406, in March 1992 the Secretary of Defense submitted to Congress a *Report to Congress Concerning Certain United States Personnel Classified as Prisoner of War or Missing in Action During World War II or the Korean Conflict*.⁶ The Secretary’s report summarized DoD’s on-going efforts to resolve POW/MIA issues. The Secretary of Defense noted that:

RAND is also under a Department of Defense contract to do research on those unaccounted for from Korea. The RAND study will focus on American servicemen who were reported missing in action, presumed killed (body not recovered), or who were taken prisoner but remain unaccounted for. RAND research will be focused to describe United States and United Nations efforts made to retrieve those missing in action, prisoners of war, and remains of deceased servicemen buried in North Korea. This report suggests options that could lead to a fuller accounting for U.S. personnel.

The results of the ongoing [...] RAND stud[y are] required for a more conclusive determination of the feasibility, cost and utility of centralizing all known records of individuals unaccounted for from World War II and the Korean Conflict.

In conclusion, it is recommended that continued work on this issue be performed by experienced specialists in historical and archival research. This research has already been initiated with RAND[.]

Despite this clear instruction, my interim report, which was included in the Secretary of Defense’s report to Congress, was simply ignored by the US side of the USRJC.

Sergei and I wanted nothing to do with the USRJC.

Unfortunately, the USRJC did not share our Garbo-esque wish to be left alone.

The USRJC, which had been established in response to the visit to Moscow by Senators Kerry and Smith, was scheduled to convene its inaugural meeting on March 26–28, 1992, in Moscow.

* * *

On March 10, Dr. Kelley called to inform me that Sergei and I had been “invited to go to Moscow” to serve as “technical advisors” to the new

USRJC. Though it wasn't obvious at first, something wasn't right. Mustering the resources and providing the justification to send two people from Santa Monica, California, to Moscow was not a trivial undertaking. My initial negative reaction, which was that we were the one-legged men who had just been invited to an ass kicking party, was quickly followed by the visceral suspicion similar to that evoked when a well-dressed young woman stops you on a city street to ask if you are interested in receiving a "free personality inventory."

The invitation had come out of the blue, which things do not ordinarily do in a bureaucracy. It was odd that no one from DPMO or TFR had mentioned the invitation or given either of us a back-channel heads-up. Neither Sergei nor I had been consulted before the formation of the USRJC had been made public, which is when "technical advice" would have been most effective. My Spidey-sense was tingling a bit too much for comfort. Clarification appeared to be in order.

I asked Dr. Kelley, "Who extended this invitation?"

Dr. Kelley's peevish response was something to the effect of, "I have no obligation to disclose that information. I am your manager. Just go."

"Go where? Moscow's a big place."

"Just go to the meeting."

"Oh. Thanks for clearing that up." Getting the budget sorted out up front was important. "Which project code should we use for the time and airfares?"

"It comes out of your project budget."

"What?" I couldn't believe it. "Wait a minute. You agreed to send me and Sergei to Moscow on a trip unrelated to my project, and expect the costs to come out of our project?"

"That's what you have a project budget for."

"You're the one who advised me to 'keep the money at home.'"

Dr. Kelley was silent for a moment and then said curtly, "I am your manager. Just go."

It was customary within certain RAND circles to hang up without saying goodbye.

I journaled:

March 11, 1992 – RAND Santa Monica (Wednesday)

Big day for news yesterday. Sergei and I were invited to be "technical advisors" to the "US-Russian Commission on POW-MIAs." I'm off to DC on Tuesday next to spend three days getting the advance team ready to go.

The commission will be headed by former Amb. Malcolm Toon who was US Amb in the 1970s to Moscow. I'm sending Sergei off on Tuesday to Moscow so he can find out what's going on over there.

The inter-agency group that created this commission said that the "work RAND has done" will form "the core of the commission's work." The goal is to "expand what RAND has done."

I had some misgivings about going to Moscow in a support role to a bilateral commission. As Dr. Lambeth was fond of saying, "You can travel the world over and never find a statue raised in the honor of a commission."

No one other than a couple of TFR holdovers would want us to be informal advisors to a commission composed of government employees. I envisaged Sergei and me floating around like a couple of turds in a gilded inter-agency punchbowl.

We never found out who issued the invitation to us through Dr. Kelley. All we knew was that Sergei and I had been instructed by our RAND program manager to proceed to Moscow as "technical advisors" to an organization that did not exist, and to pay for it out of a project budget the funds for which had been allocated for nothing to do with providing "technical advisors" services to an inter-agency organization.

The fact of the matter was that RAND analytical staff at our level were the equivalent of red drone Daleks. The option presented by the white supreme Dalek was, "Obey or be exterminated!"

The correct answer was to reply in unison, "I obey! I obey!"

* * *

Sergei and I were asked to provide "technical advice," whatever that was supposed to mean, to the fledgling USRJC. No one ever took the trouble to advise what we were expected to do, where we should stay in Moscow, who we were to report to, or what type of "technical advice" we were expected to provide. Sergei and I were expected to launch into the gray cloud hoping that we would figure out the details by the time we were on the ground in Moscow.

Events in Moscow made front-page news on a daily basis. In January 1992, President Yeltsin ended the Soviet-style command economy in Russia, which resulted in massive price inflation. Later that same month, President Yeltsin announced that Russia would no longer target its nuclear

weapons on the cities of the United States and its allies. President George H. W. Bush reciprocated by stating that the United States would no longer target US nuclear weapons on Russian cities. President Yeltsin attended the first summit meeting of the UN Security Council following the dissolution of the USSR. Shortly thereafter on February 1, President Bush hosted President Yeltsin at Camp David where the two presidents announced that the Cold War was officially over. They issued a joint statement that declared, “Russia and the United States do not regard each other as potential adversaries.”⁷ Ukraine, Moldova, and Azerbaijan rejected Russia’s offer to create a unified military command. President Yeltsin responded by announcing that Russia’s armed forces would be independent.

It was unclear who, if anyone, controlled access to the Soviet-era archives, but the signs were indicating that the restraints might be loosening.

* * *

After receiving the invitation from Dr. Kelley, I was instructed by General Eldon Joersz to brief Ambassador Malcolm Toon, the chairman of the US side, before his historic trip to Moscow (Fig. 10.2).

General Joersz, an SR-71 pilot who held the world airspeed record, had been the director of the ISA POW/MIA Affairs office and briefly the Acting DASD for POW/MIA Affairs. The incongruous thing was that General Joersz did not ask me to provide “technical advice” concerning archive research to Ambassador Toon. Instead, he instructed me to brief the incoming chairman of the US side of the USRJC on the status of our archive research project in Moscow. That briefing, which would take 30 seconds, could hardly be imagined as any type of technical advice. I was not asked to describe the real meat of the issue, which was how we managed to get all of the go codes in such a short period of time.

A large part of the success of our archive research project in Moscow was how we had formulated the approach to the Soviet authorities and how we managed the relationships. I prepared a briefing that integrated the RAND research project into the USRJC along the lines that the Secretary of Defense had presented to Congress. I was under the mistaken belief that if the Secretary of Defense stated that the USRJC would build on the success we had achieved, the USRJC would do so.

Fig. 10.2 Major
General Eldon Joersz
(Photo: DoD)



I prepared my briefing, called the “Game Plan,” accordingly.

* * *

Summarizing how we had approached the creation of our archive research project in Moscow was relatively easy. As “technical advisors,” we assumed that the US side of the USRJC would benefit from a description of what we had achieved and who had assisted us. Sergei and I also concluded that our advice to the US side should include a case study that would allow the two sides to focus on a common problem in order to work out procedures as well as to give the investigators the opportunity to get to know one another. We decided that an aircraft incident would be the optimal way to launch the USRJC; thus we began to consider alternatives.

In addition to the service members who went missing on land during America’s historic conflicts, during the Cold War era several US and European aircraft had been fired on or shot down by the Soviet Air Force, several in international airspace over open sea. The following table is a CIA record of these events that had been classified as TOP SECRET CANOE SECURITY INFORMATION.⁸

Record of Air Incidents

Date	Nat'lty of aircraft	Location 1	Location 2	Action	Cause?
8 Apr 1950	US	Europe	Baltic off Libau	Shot down	25X1DNSA
6 Nov 1951	US	Far East	Vladivostok area	Shot down	Routine shipping recce
19 Nov 51	US	Europe	Hungary	Forced down	
29 Apr 52	French	Europe	Berlin Corridor	Fired on	25X1DNSA
11 May 52	US	Far East	Port Arthur	Fired on	Patrol in Korean Bay
13 Jun 52	Swedish	Europe	Baltic	Shot down	25X1DNSA
13 Jun 52	US	Far East	Vladivostok area	Shot down?	Routine shipping recce
16 Jun 52	Swedish	Europe	Baltic	Fired on ⁹	Searching for 13 June Swedish DC-3
16 Jul 52	US	Far East	Port Arthur area	Fired on	25X1DNSA
7 Oct 52	US	Far East	Hokkaido area	Shot down	25X1DNSA
8 Oct 52	US	Europe	Berlin Corridor	Fired on	Out of corridor
18 Nov 52	US	Far East	Korea-Sov border	Fired on	US naval air strike on N. E. Korea
18 Jan 53	US	Far East	East China coast	Shot down AA	Patrol of Formosa Strait
10 Mar 53	US	Europe	Czech border	Shot down	Border violation earlier?
12 Mar 53	UK	Europe	Berlin Corridor	Shot down	25X1DNSA
15 Mar 53	US	Far East	Off Kamchatka	Fired on	25X1DNSA

One US case, the shootdown on April 8, 1950, occurred in the Baltic, the same area where a Swedish aircraft had been shot down two years later on June 13, 1952. The US aircraft was a Privateer, the Swedish aircraft a DC-3.

A report produced by the RAND Corporation in 1955 assessed the circumstances concerning 143 aircraft incidents involving Soviet air defenses that occurred between 1930 and 1952. Of these incidents, 114 were marked SECRET and 29 TOP SECRET.¹⁰ Both the Privateer and DC-3 incidents were marked TOP SECRET. The geographic proximity and extreme sensitivity of the two incidents piqued our curiosity. In addition to these similarities, an examination of the Privateer incident would contribute to responding to the project SoW requirement to catalogue the efforts made by the US government to recover or account for American servicemen who had gone missing during America's historic conflicts.

We therefore began by investigating the Privateer incident.

* * *

On April 8, 1950, a USN PB4Y-2 Privateer¹¹ (HB 7 #59645), named the *Turbulent Turtle*, took off from Wiesbaden, West Germany, with the destination of Copenhagen, Denmark (Fig. 10.3).

The Privateer's mission was to conduct electronic surveillance on Soviet radar coverage in the Baltic Sea. This was part of an electronic intelligence-gathering program code-named "Passionate," later known as "Ferret."

On April 8, 1950, the Privateer was intercepted over the Baltic by four Soviet La-11 fighters. The un-armed Privateer was shot down over international airspace in the Baltic by Soviet fighters. All ten American crewmembers of the Privateer went missing. Rumors abounded that some of the surviving Privateer crew had been captured by Soviet forces.

The shutdown of the Privateer was determined by the RAND report to be "deliberate – i.e., a matter of policy."

The best evidence of this comes from highly classified Swedish intelligence sources. Although, according to available information, U.S. military authorities apparently had no direct report of the incident from the Navy plane concerned or from possible survivors, Swedish intelligence intercepted radio communications to Soviet fighter aircraft ordering them to pursue the plane and to shoot it down.¹²



Fig. 10.3 "Turbulent Turtle" refueling at NAF Port Lyautey, Morocco (Photo: Public Domain)

Rumors that the crew of the Swedish DC-3 had been captured and sent to the gulag by the Soviets were similar to the rumors concerning the fate of the Privateer crew.

On April 10, 1952, the CIA issued an Information Report entitled, “Survival of Three Crew Members of U.S. Navy Privateer Downed Over The Baltic in April 1950,” that was classified “SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION.” The CIA report, in its entirety, stated:

The U.S. Navy Privateer which disappeared over the Baltic Sea in April 1950 was shot down over the Baltic Sea a few kilometers (approximately ten) from Kaliningrad (54-45 N, 20-30 E) by members of an unidentified Soviet Air Force unit which at that time was stationed at a military airfield near Kaliningrad. When radar stations and units of the Soviet Navy determined that a U.S. aircraft was in the area, two squadrons of aircraft were dispatched to pursue the plane. The U.S. Navy Privateer was allegedly ordered to land at a nearby airfield; when it refused to comply with this order, the Soviet planes opened fire and shot it down. Soviet naval units were patrolling the area in which the plane crashed and rescued three members of the American plane crew. The American airmen were taken into custody by Soviet Intelligence and taken to a place unknown [REDACTED 50X1-HUM].¹³ Soviet Intelligence was very interested in the imprisoned Americans and that their rescue could hardly be ascribed to humanitarian motives.¹⁴

The location of the Privateer crash site, approximately ten kilometers from Kaliningrad, was improbable as this would be well within the Bay of Gdansk.

In contrast to the location provided by the CIA’s source, a US Air Force Security Service (USAFSS) study reported:

[A]t about the time of the shutdown, [...] the reconnaissance aircraft [...] located twenty to twenty-five miles off the coast of Latvia. [...] The report backtracked the Navy reconnaissance aircraft to a position 56-30 N 20-17 E at the time at which the Soviets alleged that fire was exchanged.¹⁵

The US Armed Forces began an immediate search for any survivors of the Privateer shutdown. “For the next ten days, four USN aircraft and twenty-five USAF aircraft scoured the Baltic for survivors, without success.”¹⁶

The US side of the USRJC stated in 1996:

U.S. records indicate that the plane was shot down within a 50-mile radius centered at 56-19N 18-45E. This location was estimated by the Chief of

Naval Operations based on current and wind information and the locations of debris picked up by search crews.¹⁷

The source(s) for the CIA's report's statement in 1952 that the "American airman were taken into custody by Soviet intelligence and taken to a place unknown" were redacted in the version released in 2012 using an exemption that protected human sources of intelligence.

In a 1955 memorandum to President Eisenhower, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles revealed that human sources were responsible for the finding that members of the *Privateer* crew who survived the shootdown had been captured by Soviet forces. Secretary Dulles advised the president:

We have also received a number of reports from returning European prisoners of war that members of the crew of the U.S. Navy *Privateer*, shot down over the Baltic Sea on April 18 [sic], 1950, are alive and in Soviet prison camps. We are asking for their repatriation and that of other American citizens being held in the Soviet Union not only because of general humanitarian principles, but also because such action is called for under the Litvinov-Roosevelt Agreement of 1933.¹⁸

In 1956, the US DoS advised the Soviet government in no uncertain terms that the US government was convinced some of the *Privateer* crew-members were alive in Soviet custody.

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and has the honor to refer to the question of the detention of United States military personnel in the Soviet Union. The United States Government has for some time received, from persons of various nationalities freed from Soviet Government imprisonment during the last several years, reports that they have conversed with, seen or heard reports concerning United States military aviation personnel, belonging to either the United States Air force or to the United States Navy Air Arm, in actual detention in the Soviet Union. [...]

Specifically, the United States Government is informed and is compelled to believe that the Soviet Government has had and continues to have under detention the following:

1. One or more members of the crew of a United States *Privateer*-type aircraft which came down in the Baltic Sea on April 8, 1950. The United States Government has since that time received reports that various members of the crew of this United States aircraft were, and are, detained

in Soviet detention places in the Far Eastern area of the Soviet Union. In particular, it is informed, and believes, that in 1950 and in October, 1953 at least one American military aviation person, believed to be a member of the crew of this United States Navy Privateer, was held at Camp No. 20 allegedly near Taishet and Collective Farm No. 25, approximately 54 kilometers from Taishet, under sentence for alleged espionage. This American national was described as having suffered burns on the face and legs in the crash of his aircraft and using crutches or a cane.

Reports have been received from former prisoners of the Soviet Government at Vorkuta that in September 1950 as many as eight American nationals, believed to be members of the crew of the United States Navy Privateer to which reference is made, had been seen in the area of Vorkuta in September 1950. One stated that he was serving a twenty-five year espionage sentence and had been a member of a downed United States aircraft.¹⁹

The note included a manifest with names and service numbers of the Privateer crewmembers.

* * *

Fortunately, the timing could not have been better for an investigation of the circumstances surrounding the Soviet shootdown of the Sweden's DC-3 in the Baltic in June 1952. There turned out to be more similarities and relationships between the Privateer and DC-3 incidents that had been previously known.

On June 13, 1952, a Royal Swedish Air Force version of the Douglas DC-3 (Tp 79), an aircraft named *Hugin*, took off from Bromma Airport near Stockholm for a mission over the Baltic (Fig. 10.4).

The name *Hugin* was significant due to the fact that in Norse mythology the chief god Odin had given two ravens, named *Hugin* and *Munin*, the ability to speak. Each morning, Odin would send the ravens out to fly around the world. When they returned, the ravens would perch on Odin's shoulders in order to whisper into Odin's ears a description of everything they had seen and heard. As the legless man who once got his wish from a genie knew all too well, magical powers rarely come without dangers.

The Swedish DC-3 was packed with signals intelligence equipment provided by the British and probably by the United States as well.



Fig. 10.4 DC-3 *Hugin* (Photo: Public Domain)

The mission of the *Hugin* was to map Soviet radar coverage over the Baltic by carrying out radio and signals intelligence-gathering operations near the border between Latvia and Estonia. The skaldic poetry of the Viking Age often refers to battle as “Hugin’s feast.” (In Old Norse, *Hugin’s jól*.) Ravens, as carrion birds, were present when battle took place. “To slay someone in battle was, in a sense, to give the ravens a gift.” It was fitting, therefore, that *Hugin’s* mission was to find gaps in the Soviet radar coverage so that US bombers could use the “Baltic corridor” to deliver atomic weapons over Leningrad and Moscow.

In accordance with the “hardware for intelligence” bargain, the signals intelligence produced by the Swedes was shared with the United States and NATO. This activity, which was inconsistent with Sweden’s declared national security policy of “nonalignment in time of peace with the intent to remain neutral in wartime,” was one important reason why Sweden’s cooperation with NATO was concealed from the Swedish public.

The Red Army, on the other hand, knew precisely what the Swedish Air Force was doing and on whose behalf the recon flights were made.

* * *

One of Odin’s greatest fears was that one day *Hugin* would not return. In the Eddic poem *Grímnismál* (“Sayings of Grimnir”), Odin despairs:

Hugin and Munin
Fly every day
Over all the world;
I worry for Hugin
*That he might not return*²⁰

As Odin feared, one day *Hugin* disappeared.

The Soviet government was having none of Sweden's clandestine relationship with NATO. On June 13, 1952, the Soviet Air Force shot down the DC-3 *Hugin* over open international airspace, resulting in the loss of all eight Swedish crewmen.

To underscore how seriously Moscow disapproved of Sweden playing footsie with NATO, three days later on June 16, the Soviet Air Force shot down a Swedish Air Force Tp 47 Catalina flying boat rescue aircraft in international airspace over the Baltic. The Catalina, which had no electronic intelligence-gathering capability, was not armed. The Soviet government claimed that the Catalina, which had a top speed of approximately 125 miles per hour (200 kph), had violated Soviet airspace and then opened fire on a MiG-15, which retaliated in self-defense. The crew of the Catalina managed to get into their lifeboats, then after several fake strafing runs on the boats, the Soviet fighter broke off to return to base. All of the Catalina crew survived. They were rescued by a West German freighter that happened to be in the area.

The Swedes refer to the shootdown of the two aircraft collectively as the “Catalina Affair,” (*Catalina-affären*) even though the “DC-3 Affair” would have been more appropriate.

* * *

Hugin didn't stand a chance. The Soviet government knew everything about the mission of the Swedish DC-3 as well as how the Swedish government was sharing electronic intelligence with NATO (Fig. 10.5).

In Moscow, the objectives of the Swedish ‘transport plane’ were well known. Information came from a colonel in the Swedish Air Force, Stig Constans Wennerström, who spied for nearly 15 years for Soviet military intelligence, the famed Main Intelligence Directorate of the Armed Forces General Staff, or simply the GRU.²¹

Wennerström studied Russian at the University of Riga, Latvia (1933–1934) where he was identified as a person of potential interest to Soviet intelligence. He served as Sweden's deputy military attaché in Moscow during WWII from November 1940 to March 1941. Wennerström returned to Moscow as Sweden's air attaché between 1948 and 1952. He claimed he had been recruited in 1948, though it may have

Fig. 10.5 Colonel Stig Wennerström (Photo: Swedish Air Force)



occurred earlier. Wennerström rose to the rank of major general in the GRU, the Soviet Army's intelligence branch, under the code name "Eagle" though his case officer called him "Viking." Wennerström's case officer at the time of his arrest was Major General Vitaly Nikolsky (Fig. 10.6).

Between 1949 and his arrest in 1963, Swedish Royal Air Force Colonel Stig Wennerström spied for Moscow, but many suspected that he was not the only one who had done so. During the Cold War, several Swedish officials including Foreign Ministry diplomats such as Sverker Åström were suspected of being Soviet spies or overly friendly "agents of influence."

The Swedish DC-3 was shot down based on the information provided by Wennerström to Soviet military intelligence. The CIA review of the Wennerström case, "Notes on the Wennerström Case," states that Wennerström's GRU handler emphasized that the most important of all the spy's tasks was to "endeavor to get hold of the principles of NATO war planning," with special attention to aerial warfare and invasion.²² The *Hugin's* mission fell squarely within this tasking.

In April 1952, Wennerström became Sweden's air attaché in Washington, DC. The year 1952 is important in light of the fact that Sweden signed an agreement concerning clandestine military cooperation with the United States. On June 18, 1952, five days after the *Hugin* was



Fig. 10.6 Colonel Wennerström with Major General Vitaly Nikolsky (Photo: Public Domain)

shot down, Sweden's Prime Minister Tage Erlander advised Foreign Minister Östen Undén that the conditions under which the implementation of "the American agreement" was taking place had changed.²³

During his tenure as Swedish air attaché in Washington, the Swedish spy had access to classified information concerning US and Canadian air defenses as well as information dealing with USAF's atomic weapon planning.

Wennerström gave the Russians details concerning Swedish purchases of US weapons and equipment for the Swedish Air Force. The information concerning NATO that Wennerström turned over to the Russians included plans for the defense of Northern Europe, a description of the British Bloodhound surface-to-air missile, details of British anti-aircraft defenses, the characteristics of the American Sidewinder, Hawk and Falcon air-to-air missiles, as well as data on NATO military maneuvers.

Wennerström “was convicted in 1964 to a life sentence in prison for having sold out the entire Swedish air defense system as well as large pieces of Sweden’s defense organization to the Soviet Union.”²⁴

The potential damage to US national security was sufficiently grave that in 1964, the Senate convened a hearing into the Wennerström matter.²⁵

* * *

In 1956, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev admitted to Swedish Prime Minister Tage Erlander that Soviet Air Force had indeed shot down the two Swedish aircraft over international waters. This information was kept from the Swedish public for 35 years.

In March 1991, General Shinkarenko, who in 1952 was a colonel and commander of the Baltic air defense area of responsibility who issued the order to shoot down the Swedish aircraft, gave several interviews. In response to these interviews, on March 21, the Swedish Foreign Minister Sten Andersson authorized a “DC-3 investigation.” On March 25, the Swedish Supreme Commander launched a parallel military investigation, led by Colonel Rolf Gustafsson.

On October 30, 1991, Soviet Ambassador Yuriy Evgenovich Fokin, who at the time was the Head of the Second European Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was given the task by the “highest level” of the Soviet government to meet with Swedish Prime Minister Carl Bildt (Figs. 10.7 and 10.8).

Ambassador Fokin advised the prime minister that the Soviet Union was prepared to admit in public that the Swedish aircraft had been shot down by Soviet fighters over international waters. On November 18, 1991, this admission was made public for the first time.

In 1991–1992, a joint Swedish-Soviet commission investigated the “Catalina Affair.” The official report, produced by the Swedish Foreign Ministry, was entitled *The Shoot Down of the DC-3 in June 1952 – Report of the DC-3 Investigation*.²⁶

The Swedish report UD-92 included a map from the Soviet archives that showed the route taken by the MiG-15 to intercept the Swedish DC-3 (Fig. 10.9).

The Soviet “Tukums Map,” that was created at the Soviet Army’s Ventspils radar station, includes a transcript of the transmissions between the MiG-15 “Venera-67” pilot Captain Oshinskiy and Soviet fighter command based in Riga, Latvia. At time mark 13.16 (Moscow time) Colonel

Fig. 10.7 Prime Minister Bildt (Photo: Public Domain)



Fig. 10.8 Ambassador Fokin (Photo: rusemb.org.uk)



Shinkarenko, commander of the Soviet Baltic forces, issued the code word “Kortyo” to “Venera-67.” The pilot, Captain Oshinskiy, confirmed receipt of the code word “Kortyo,” which meant, “The intruder is a foreign aircraft. Close in and attack.” Captain Oshinskiy approached the *Hugin*

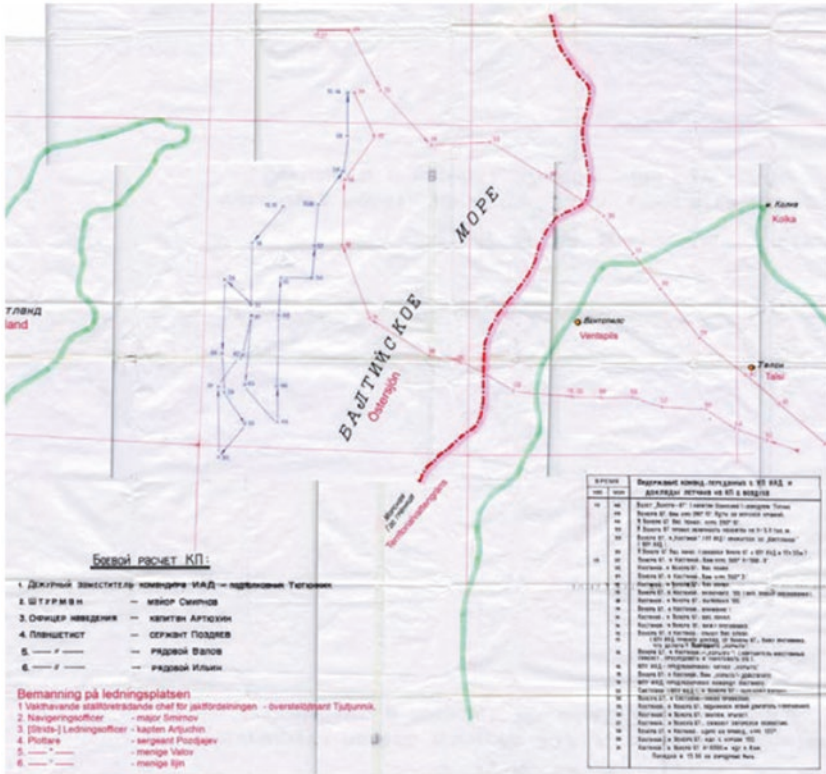


Fig. 10.9 Soviet archive document “Tukums Map” (Source: “Soviet authorities,” included in *HR*, p. 26)

from behind and then opened fire with his 23-mm cannon from a distance of 600 meters (1968 feet).

At 13.25 Captain Oshinskiy reported, “The enemy’s port engine is beginning to smoke. The crew is jumping.” (*Fiendens vänstra motor börjar ryka. Besättning hoppar.*) At 13.27, Venera-67’s Captain Oshinskiy reported, “The aircraft is completely engulfed in flames.” (*Flygplanet har fattat eld fullständigt.*)

Captain Oshinskiy’s sketch of the incident was included in the material produced by the Soviet government (Fig. 10.10).

СХЕМА
SCHEMA
воздушного боя с с-том противника
över luftstrid med fiendligt flygplan
13.6.

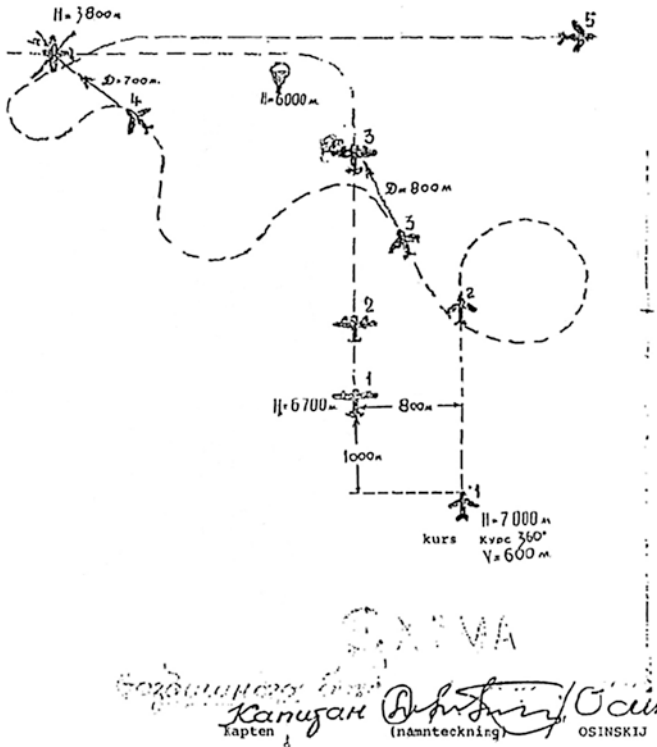


Fig. 10.10 Pilot's sketch map (Source: HR, p. 31)

The sketch map was signed by the pilot, Captain Oshinskiy, both in cursive and block letters.

Captain Oshinskiy stated that he saw a door on the port side of the DC-3 open while the aircraft plunged toward the sea. The pilot's sketch map made shortly after the incident indicates he saw a parachute that appeared at 6000 meters. When interviewed in 1991, however, Captain Oshinskiy "flatly denied" (*förnekar bestämt*) that he had seen any parachutist leave the aircraft. The Swedish report contains extensive interview evidence that at least one and perhaps two parachutists were observed jumping from the doomed DC-3.²⁷ At least five parachutes were missing from the DC-3 wreckage. Colonel Shinkarenko's report to Moscow dated June 13, 1952, which the Soviet side produced for the Swedish government, clearly stated, "At the same time one parachutist (*fallskärmhoppare*) left the aircraft through an open door on the port side of the aircraft."

A subsequent Swedish assessment concluded that after the aircraft hurtled toward the sea in a controlled dive, "impact occurred approximately 11.28, plus or minus one minute."²⁸ One of the *Hugin's* cockpit clocks stopped at 11.28.40 Swedish time (13.28.40 Moscow time).²⁹

A Catalina flying boat sent to search for survivors was also shot down by Soviet fighters. The Catalina made an emergency landing after which the five crewmembers were rescued by the West German freighter *Münsterland* (Figs. 10.11 and 10.12).

During the Catalina Affair investigation, the Soviet authorities gave the Swedish government maps, archive documents, transcripts, as well as the names of the staff at the Soviet fighter command center (*bemannning på ledningsplatsen*). The Soviet document production included military records as well as transcripts of conversations and orders issued over encrypted communications links (*Kryptotelefon*).

This information was vital to the resolution of the fate of the DC-3 *Hugin* and the recovery and identification of the remains of four of the eight crewmembers.

* * *

The implications of the joint Swedish-Soviet investigation of the Catalina Affair were profound. Without this joint investigation, the prospect of success for the subsequent salvaging of the DC-3 wreckage and the recovery and identification and the return of remains of four of the DC-3 crew would have been highly improbable.



Fig. 10.11 Swedish AF Catalina (Photo: Swedish AF Museum)



Fig. 10.12 Swedish Air Force Catalina (Photo: dn.se)

In 2003, a privately financed expedition located the *Hugin* at a depth of 413 feet (126 meters) on the floor of the Baltic. The wreckage was brought to the surface on March 19, 2004 (Fig. 10.13).

The wreckage is displayed at the Swedish Air Force Museum (*Flygvapenmuseum*) in Linköping (Fig. 10.14).

The evidence collected from the floor of the Baltic included biological (remains of four of the crew) as well as material evidence. The biological evidence was collected using a method called “freeze dredging” (*frysmuddring*)



Fig. 10.13 DC-3 wreckage (Source: *HR*, p. 94)

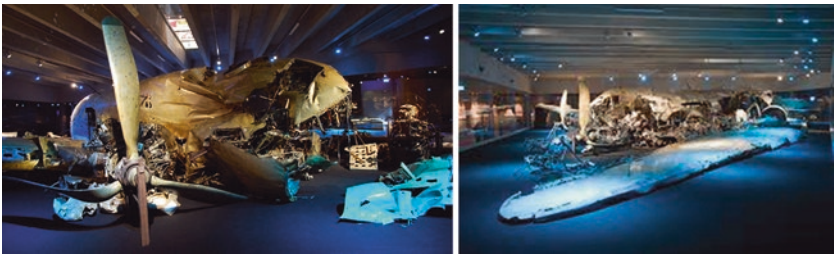


Fig. 10.14 DC-3 wreckage (Photo: *Flygvapenmuseum*)

that used “freezer plates” (*frysplattor*). A “freezer plate,” which was lowered over the remains, was chilled to minus -4° and -22° Fahrenheit (-20° and -30° Celsius). The plate created a solid block of ice that captured material within approximately 20 centimeters (eight inches) below the plate. “Within the iceblock that was frozen over the remains even the slightest details were captured.” The frozen block was wrenched to the surface where it was placed on a barge.

Using the freezer plate method, the remains of three Royal Swedish Air Force crewmen and one from the National Defense Radio Establishment (*Försvarets Radioanstalt, FRA*) were recovered. “The remains of Ålmberg, the pilot, and navigator Blad were found in the wreckage. FRA group chief Jonsson’s remains and the remains of flight engineer Mattsson were found on the bottom of the sea each with lifevests that had been inflated. Their respective positions were ca 600 meters [1,968 feet] and 435 meters [1,427 feet] northeast of the aircraft. No fragments of parachutes or parachute harnesses were found.”

The recovered material evidence included a knife, a sheath, jewelry, wristwatches, a whistle, shoes, rubber boots, cloth fragments from a flight suit, a key fob with ten keys, as well as four wallets, such as the one that was associated with the navigator Gösta Blad (Fig. 10.15).

Three of the four recovered wallets contained documents that linked the wallets to the crewmen. A scarf consisting of two woman’s stockings tied end to end that Blad was known to wear around his neck for good luck was recovered.

One purpose of the salvage operation was to locate, recover, identify, and return remains to the primary next of kin (PNOK) (Fig. 10.16).

The remains of four crewmen, Mattsson, Ålmeberg, Blad, and Jonsson were recovered and identified using DNA analysis as one line of evidence.

The fate of the other four FRA crewmen has never been determined.

There have been suggestions, but thus far no evidence, that some of the crewmen had been picked up by a Soviet naval vessel. There were also strong suggestions, but no evidence that a USAF officer was aboard the ill-fated Tp 79 *Hugin*. A Swedish researcher, for example, located documents that in his view confirmed the conclusion that “a previously unknown American was on board the DC-3 when it was shot down.” He also alleged that three of the Swedish crewmen who were “plucked from the water by the Soviet Union ended up in the Gulag.”³⁰ The implication was that the unknown American suffered a similar fate.



Fig. 10.15 Navigator Gösta Blad's wallet (Source: *HR*, p. 162)



Fig. 10.16 DC-3 crew (Photo: FRA *HR*, p. 42)

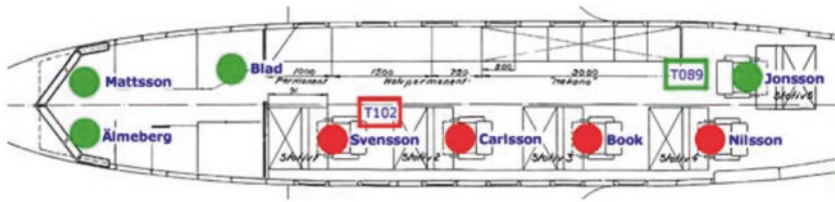


Fig. 10.17 Duty stations of DC-3 crew (Source: *HR*, p. 236)

The following diagram of the *Hugin* shows the locations of the four crewmembers whose remains were recovered and identified and the locations of the four crewmen whose remains were missing (Fig. 10.17).

The remains of three of the four crewmen indicated by green dots that were recovered and identified were in duty stations located fore, while the fourth that was recovered was located in an aft duty station. Three of the four that were recovered occupied duty stations on the starboard side.

Four of the *Hugin*'s eight crewmembers are still missing. All four of the missing were in duty stations located on the port side of the DC-3 near the emergency exit door. Svensson, Carlsson, and Book were in duty stations located above the port wing; Nilsson's duty station was located on the port side aft. As shown in the following photographs, the *Hugin*'s port side was riddled by the MiG-15's cannon fire (Fig. 10.18).

The wreckage suggested that the interior of the port side of the DC-3 had been an "inferno."

* * *

None of the wives of the *Hugin* crew remarried.

Ms. Ulla-Britt Blad, navigator Gösta Blad's widow, said after receiving the news that the DC-3 and the eight-man crew had disappeared, "We waited and we waited. First we thought they were prisoners in the Soviet Union. I thought, 'We'll hear from them within three months.' When Stalin died we thought, 'Surely they'll let them out now' (Fig. 10.19)."³¹

Ms. Blad, who did not remarry, said, "Just imagine if I had remarried or was just living with someone, which is what they do nowadays, and suddenly Gösta appeared in the doorway. Such a situation was not out of the question."

She said after her husband's remains and those of three fellow crewmen had been located, "I was relieved, but I thought; let them be. Let them



Fig. 10.18 Hugin wreckage, port side highlight (Photos: “DC-3:ans Sista Resa”) (“DC-3:ans Sista Resa” (“The Last Flight of the DC-3”), a 2004 documentary film by Johan Candert and Malcolm Dixelius. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4OI-2hzyFM> All images and text from “DC-3:ans Sista Resa” used with permission)



Fig. 10.19 Ms. Ulla-Britt Blad (Photo: “DC-3:ans Sista Resa”)

rest where they have been for fifty-one years. There has been a great deal of longing and pain all these years. In the beginning, all we knew was they had disappeared. We suspected the Russians had something to do with it. Then the Russians admitted they had shot them down. But after we heard that, we had no idea that anyone would be able to find them (Fig. 10.20).”



Fig. 10.20 Ms. Ulla-Britt Blad (Photo: “DC-3:ans Sista Resa”)

Later Ms. Blad added, “I have reconsidered what I said about letting them rest where they were found. Children need to be able to go to a grave. Now there will be a grave for children and grandchildren to visit.” After her husband’s remains were returned and her husband had been memorialized, Ms. Blad said, “It’s like he came home. He’s home now. Nothing more can happen.”

Ms. Karin Lisshagen Jonsson, widow of crewman Einar Jonsson, began looking for answers in 1952 but found nothing but closed doors. Ms. Jonsson said in a 1967 interview with Swedish television that in 1952, “The wives of the missing started thinking about whether we should try to find out what had happened. We decided to appeal to Prime Minister Erlander, but he wouldn’t meet with us. He referred us to the minister of defense who was responsible for this matter.”³² The defense minister advised the wives that he knew nothing about electronic intelligence gathering. “The defense minister treated us like we had made up the whole thing (Fig. 10.21).”



Fig. 10.21 Ms. Karin Lisshagen Jonsson (Photos: (L) SVT Bild, (R) “DC-3:ans Sista Resa”)

After the remains of her husband had been recovered, identified, returned, and buried, Ms. Jonsson said, “I have been so sad. Just think, that one could live for fifty years, carrying on like normal people do.”³³

* * *

The similarities between the *Privateer* and DC-3 incidents were compelling.

As shown in the following maps, the incident occurred off the coast of Latvia near the city of Liepāja (Figs. 10.22 and 10.23).

Both the DC-3 and *Privateer* incidents took place well within international airspace. The *Privateer* had been shot down approximately 135 miles (222 km) south of where the Swedish DC-3 that was shot down in the Catalina Affair. The following map shows the relative positions of the *Privateer*’s shootdown location compared to the Swedish DC-3 (Fig. 10.24).

The distance between the two impact areas is approximately 105 miles (168 km). At jet fighter speed (average 400 mph, 643 kph, 7 miles, or 10.7 km per minute), a Soviet-era jet from the 1950s such as the MiG-15 could have covered the 105 miles between the DC-3 and the *Privateer* in approximately 15 minutes. The two shootdowns occurred in the same area of responsibility for the Soviet air defense.

The entire ten-man crew of the *Privateer* and eight-man crew of the DC-3 had gone missing. In both cases, however, there were strong suggestions and rumors that survivors of both shootdowns had been captured by Soviet forces.



Fig. 10.22 Privateer shutdown location (*Code Warriors: NSA's Codebreakers and the Secret Intelligence War Against the Soviet Union*, Stephen Budiansky (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2016), p. 125. https://books.google.com/books?id=JWgqDAAAQBAJ&dq=1950+Privateer+Baltic+CIA&source=gb_s_navlinks_s)

We weren't the only ones who saw strong similarities between the two shootdowns. The parallels between the *Hugin* shootdown and the *Turbulent Turtle* incident were recognized by the Swedish government.

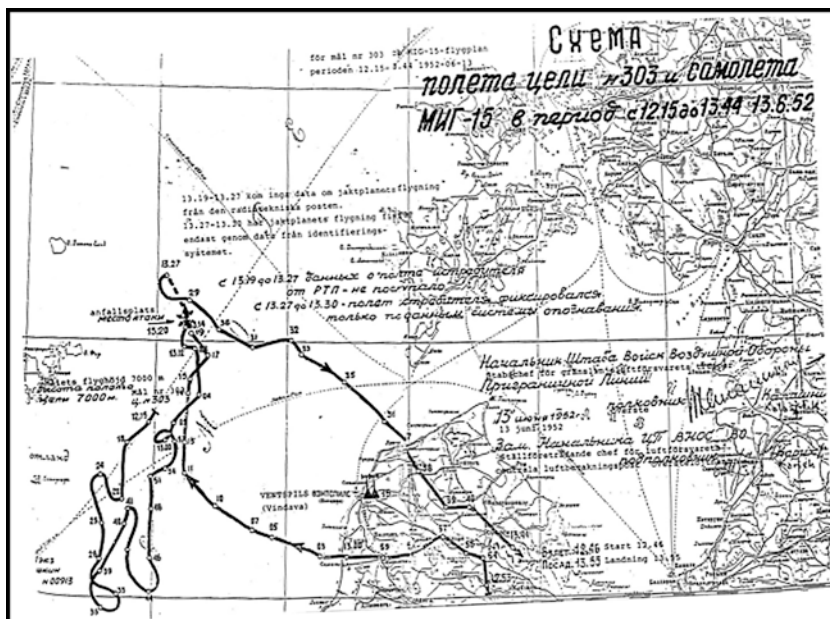


Fig. 10.23 DC-3 Hugin shootdown location (HR, and Code Warriors: NSA’s Codebreakers and the Secret Intelligence War Against the Soviet Union, op. cit.

The analysis of the [Swedish government] ministers was relatively unanimous. The ministers concluded that the Soviet Union had taken deliberate measures to stop the Swedes from obtaining any insights into Soviet military conduct. The only reservation was whether the Soviet Union dared to go so far as to shoot down the plane over international waters. An earlier example indicated that they were, in fact, prepared to do just that. For example, they shot down an American aircraft over the Baltic in 1950.³⁴

There were also parallels between the *Hugin* and *Turbulent Turtle* widows. LT jg Robert Reynolds had been one of the *Privateer*’s crew.

In 1992, the widow of Lt. jg Robert Reynolds came to Moscow to talk with the pilot who claims to have shot down the *Privateer* and to search for her husband. The pilot told her that he believed the plane crashed with a loss of all hands. Igor Privalov told her, in contrast, that while he was a prisoner in the Soviet GULAG during the late 1970s he met another prisoner who recalled once having shared a cell with an American pilot named Reynolds.³⁵

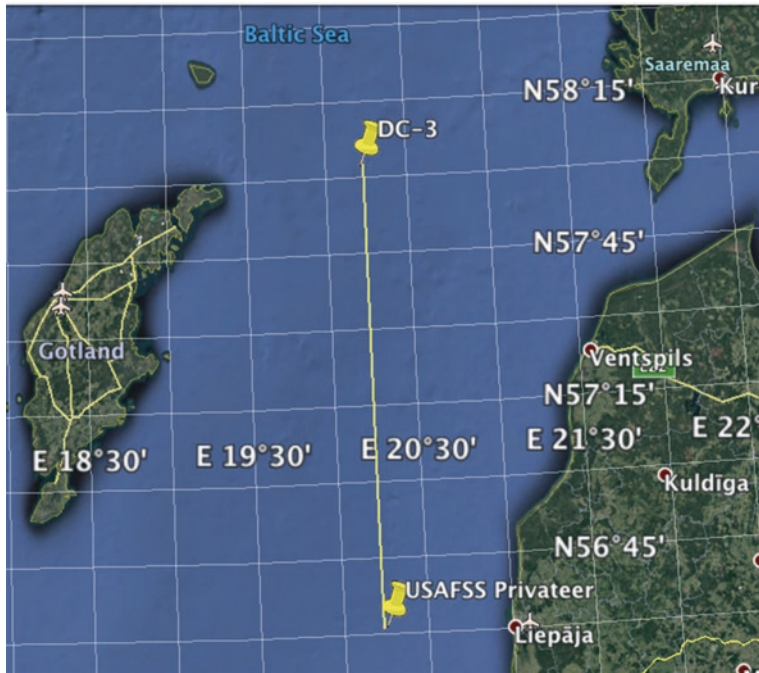


Fig. 10.24 DC-3 and Privateer crash sites (Image: Google Earth)

At the very least, LT jg Reynolds' widow as well as the other next of kin deserved the same degree of clarity that had been provided to the Swedish widows.

It is unlikely in the extreme that this degree of closure for the families of the *Hugin* crew would have been possible without the research and analysis of the Swedish-Soviet commission. The salvage and recovery operations were facilitated by the commission's inquiry into the Catalina Affair.

If the Swedish government could obtain such high level of cooperation from the Soviet government, produce such detailed findings that resolved a Cold War shutdown incident, and recover and identify the remains of missing crewmen, there was no reason why the US side of the USRJC should settle for anything less.

Any number of shutdown cases could have been investigated by the USRJC using the same method that the joint Swedish-Soviet commission

applied to the Catalina Affair, but the Privateer shootdown appeared to be the most relevant as a way to start. At the very least the US side of the USRJC could learn valuable lessons from the Swedish-Soviet joint commission's work.

In our view, it would be instructive to show Ambassador Toon how the Soviet government and a friendly western government had conducted an archive research project with into a Cold War shootdown. If nothing else, the Swedish-Soviet investigation of the Catalina Affair was an excellent template for the USRJC to begin its research into Cold War-era aircraft incidents.

I spent hours translating documents from Swedish and making charts by hand to include in the briefing for Ambassador Toon. Sergei helped by translating and providing context for the Russian-language maps in the Swedish report. We thought we had produced a case study that was relevant, interesting, and, perhaps most relevant, doable.

We had wasted our time.

* * *

HOW TO NEUTER A BRIEFING

I packed for another trip from Santa Monica to Moscow via Washington, DC.

On March 17, 1992, one day after Sergei departed Los Angeles for Moscow, I flew from Santa Monica to DC. I was prepared to brief Ambassador Toon on the Swedish government's experience of conducting a joint archive research project in cooperation with the Soviet government. The intention was to present the results produced by the Swedish-Russian commission as a model for the results the US-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs should strive to achieve. At the very least, the US side of the USRJC should advise the Russian side that results produced by the USRJC should be the equivalent to or better than the results produced by the Swedish-Soviet commission.

Prior to meeting with Ambassador Toon, I was instructed to present my "Game Plan" briefing to General Eldon Joersz, someone who had no training, background, or personal experience with any type of archive research, at his office in the DPMO premises. I presented our briefing by presenting the images that had been mounted on 8.5 × 11 poster board.

During the briefing, General Joersz was silent, the meaning of which could have been interpreted several ways.

At the end of the briefing, General Joersz offered no suggestions on how to improve the briefing. Instead, he instructed me to delete every reference to the DC-3 shootdown, the Catalina shootdown, and the Soviet-Sweden joint investigation. General Joersz specifically instructed me not to show Ambassador Toon the Swedish government's report of the Soviet-Sweden joint investigation or any of the maps contained in that report. Sweden's Prime Minister Bildt had already provided valuable services in support of the RAND project; thus we could have counted on the Swedish government's cooperation going forward. General Joersz instructed me not to make any reference to the Swedish prime minister's support of the RAND project.

If that were not enough, General Joersz also directed me not to show Ambassador Toon the "Game Plan" that included a discussion of how to organize research in Soviet archives in order to achieve an optimal outcome. He also instructed me not to show the ambassador any of the other exhibits that Sergei and I thought were relevant and constructive. Two-thirds of the images in the slide deck had been "shit-canned (thrown out)," as they say in the US military, with no explanation. This was an instruction, not a suggestion. General Joersz approved a half-dozen generic slides that gave a general, boring description of the RAND archive research project in Moscow. The meeting was over and that was that.

General Joersz's instructions puzzled me a great deal, as it appeared to be obvious that the US delegation could have learned a few valuable lessons from the Swedish-Soviet joint commission of matters of mutual concern to the two countries involved. As a result of General Joersz's instructions, however, the "technical advisors" to the US side of the US-Russian Joint Commission were not allowed to provide "technical advice." Our role as a "technical advisors" had been marginalized before it began.

This turn of events was reminiscent of a story told by the American comedian Don Adams, who got his start as an opening act for the iconic diva Mae West. Before the first show, Ms. West summoned Mr. Adams to her dressing room. She instructed Mr. Adams to deliver his comedy routine. As he did, Ms. West instructed Mr. Adams to "cut that line" repeatedly. When he opened for Ms. West, Mr. Adams was required to tell jokes without any punchlines. The next day, the critical reviews praised Ms. West's performance. At the end of the review, the closing line stated, "Mr. Adams had been billed as a comedian."

After what had happened to my briefing, I considered changing our affiliations on the first slide from “Researchers, RAND Corporation” to “Dr. Cole and Mr. Zamascikov had been billed as technical advisors.”

That evening back at the hotel, I reluctantly culled two-thirds of the slide deck. After the presentation had been neutered, I muttered aloud for the umpteenth time, “Why do I bother?”

* * *

The next day, prior to the briefing for Ambassador Toon, at around eight-thirty in the morning, I met DIA analyst “Magnús.”³⁶ We were working on the same issues, but Magnús was one of the few DIA analysts who saw any value in cooperating with me. We met in Rosslyn, Virginia, at a little coffee shop run by Koreans a couple of Metro Orange line stops from both the DIA and DPMO headquarters. The shop was on the first floor of a building that was a short walk from the parking garage where Deep Throat had *rendez-voused* with Bernstein and Woodward during their Watergate investigation.

After I bought Magnús a large coffee for 68 cents plus tax, I begged him not to tell RAND’s chief financial officer that I had spent 68 cents plus tax entertaining a government employee.

Magnús was not only informative, he had been extremely helpful to me with my Korean War research. He also agreed that my “technical” advice should be referred to as the “Game Plan.” After I showed my original uncut slide deck to Magnús, I asked him if he had any clue that would explain why General Joersz had castrated the briefing. Magnús sighed. “I call it the Little Red Hen syndrome. Everybody wants to eat the bread, but nobody wants to plant the wheat, grind the flour or bake the bread. The people I have to deal with every day never play small ball, as in doing the hard research and analysis. Instead, they’re all swinging for the fences. They all want to be the one who breaks the big story, hits the grand slam. Very few of them even understand what it takes to do effective research in general. Awareness of how much effort and discipline it takes to do archive research is out of the question.” Magnús stirred more sugar with a little wooden stick as he stared at the tiny whirlpool in his tepid coffee. He looked up at me for a moment, then returned his gaze to the vortex in the coffee. “It’s tough to stay motivated sometimes,” he said, more to the coffee than to me.

After our productive conversation, Magnús and I shook hands. After he left I waited for a few minutes, pretending to read the *Washington Post’s* Style section. After a decent interval, I went outside, hailed a taxi, and never saw or heard from Magnús again.

An Arlington-based Red Top Cab transported me to Rosslyn over Memorial Bridge, past the Lincoln Memorial, then to the front entrance of the State Department building in Foggy Bottom. The guard desk had no record of any invitation for me. I had to pace around the lobby like an expectant father in a maternity ward as the guard tried to sort things out. After 30 minutes or so, I was finally issued a visitor's badge, which consisted of a piece of sticky plastic that peeled off another piece of plastic. With a VISITOR badge glued to my lapel, I was allowed to wander the building without an escort. It took some time to find the office where the briefing concerning America's "highest national priority" was scheduled to occur.

The venue for the briefing was a grim institutional conference room equipped with a grim wooden table, a few grim windows shaded by grim Venetian blinds that hadn't been dusted since John Foster Dulles had been Secretary of State, and a dozen or so grim metal chairs that were straight out of the IKEA "Nuremburg Defendant's Box" collection. The repurposed building designed for the care of the chronically ill geriatric in Santa Monica was a palace in comparison. Minutes before the appointed hour, a string of grim-looking inter-agency participants, each one anonymous, silent, sullen, and carrying a grim notebook, shuffled into the conference room. They all stared sullenly into their notebooks. In another age, they would have stared into smartphones that would not make an appearance for another two decades.

I sat with my back to the windows, to the left of the head of the table where the incoming chairman of the US side of the USRJC was scheduled to sit. Though I faced them, none of the mandarins made the slightest effort to acknowledge my presence. The omens were not heralding that this would be a successful séance. I killed time by sorting through the detritus of the slide deck for the umpteenth time. As we waited for the ambassador, I knew what Sultan Osman II felt like as he waited for the oil wrestler to administer death by compression of the testicles.

Around 10:30 on March 21, 1992, Ambassador Malcolm Toon made his entrance. As a career diplomat who had risen to the top of his profession, Ambassador Toon was in his element.

Ambassador Toon, who was well aware that success in one field did not guarantee success in another, was fond of telling the following story. Ambassador Toon was at a reception in the embassy when an admiral approached him. The admiral looked around, then said, "You know, after I retire, I would like to become an ambassador." Ambassador Toon

replied, “Yes, I know what you mean. After I retire, I plan to become an admiral.” After he retired, Ambassador Toon became an archive research specialist.

Putting an ambassador in charge of an archive research project was the equivalent of putting a lawyer in charge of a human skeletal identification laboratory, which is also what the DoD did.

* * *

Once the ambassador was settled, it was made abundantly clear that I was on my own. Not only was I not part of the inter-agency club, I was referred to as a “historian” rather than “technical advisor.” Although I had sufficient academic credentials to qualify under federal human resource guidelines as a “historian,” I never referred to myself as a historian, defined by H. L. Mencken as “an unsuccessful novelist.”

After a round of perfunctory introductions, Ambassador Toon flipped his hand over in my direction. That was the extent of the introduction. With a heavy sigh, I breathed out success and breathed in despair. Before describing our archive research project that was underway in Moscow, I made some general organizational observations. I advised Ambassador Toon that Karl Jaspers, the father of modern psychiatry, once warned, “Beware of how you organize. It is possible to organize in such a way as to guarantee that you will never be able to answer the question.” The reaction was icy silence.

In my view, as a technical advisor, it was imperative to launch the USRJC on the proper trajectory. If the project’s initial angle of attack were off by even one degree, or if the research hypothesis were stated improperly, or if people with the wrong skill sets were given responsibility or authority, the probability of success would be no greater than random chance.

This warning turned out to be yet another Cassandra moment.

What followed was more akin to glancing at road kill than an informative briefing. The presentation was the equivalent of “My Summer Vacation” without any vacation photos. The briefing was bland and only marginally informative. There was no way to put any lipstick on that pig.

I had complied, however reluctantly, with the instruction to dilute the briefing due to the fact that General Joersz, who was acting in place of DASD Ford as the DoD ISA sponsor of the RAND archive research project, was the client. The client had stated unequivocally that he did not want parts of the product that had been produced. I had disregarded

Dr. Kelley’s instructions due to the fact I was the subject matter expert and he was not; thus the client should be given the opportunity to see the product before it was rejected. The two instructions, which were therefore completely different, served a similar purpose, which was to undermine the integrity of the subject matter. If the topic had been the rate at which marbles bounce on a steel plate, this type of tinkering and interference would have been unthinkable.

At the time, I did not have an awareness of the extent to which the accounting program was a creature of political control and personal whim. In retrospect, instead of proceeding as instructed, I should have refused to present such a mangled briefing and resigned as “technical advisor” to the USRJC.

I advised Ambassador Toon that the US side of the USRJC should not, under any circumstances, hand over a list of names of missing persons to the Russians. “Never tell them the names of the missing persons you’re looking for,” I advised, and for good reason. “You are not negotiating the release of hostages, the task is to figure out how many of our guys, if any, are now or have been under Soviet control. Telling them who you are looking for also creates the problem of confirmation bias.” I presented a relevant case study to illustrate what could go wrong.

In 1918 during the Russian revolution, the United States invaded Russia on behalf of the Menshevik (i.e., non-Bolshevik) Russians twice, once in Siberia in August 1918³⁷ and the second time in Archangel in September 1918 (Fig. 10.25).



Fig. 10.25 (L) US Army troops in Siberia and (R) Archangel (“The Polar Bear Expedition: The U.S. Intervention in Northern Russia, 1918–1919,” Alexander F. Barnes and Cassandra J. Rhodes, *Army Sustainment*, Vol. 44, Issue 2, March–April 2012. http://www.almc.army.mil/alog/issues/MarApril12/Polar_Bear.html), 1918 (Photo: NARA)

The motivation for the US deployments was, at best, scrambled and confused.

In the summer of 1918, the president of the United State, Woodrow Wilson, responding to pressure from the Allies, reluctantly and against his better judgment agreed to participate in the Anglo-American intervention at the Russian port of Archangel. Inspired and led by the British, this ill-conceived venture had as its primary objective the restoration of the eastern front against Germany.³⁸

The American Expeditionary Force North Russia (AEFNR) to Archangel, composed of approximately 13,000 troops, was assigned to the operation called the “Polar Bear Expedition.” The troops involved in the invasion referred to themselves the “Polar Bears.” As shown in the following maps, the Polar Bears landed and fought the Bolsheviks near Archangel, some 600 miles (960 km) from Moscow (Fig. 10.26).

What had started as an expedition to rescue military supplies and stabilize a portion of Russia had changed focus. As winter came along, the primary objective of the Polar Bears became to stay alive.

A winter of fighting Bolsheviks and wondering why they were still in combat when the war with Germany had ended led to severe morale problems among the American troops, including an alleged mutiny in March 1919 by one company in Archangel, and the presentation of an antiwar petition by members of another company in the same month.³⁹

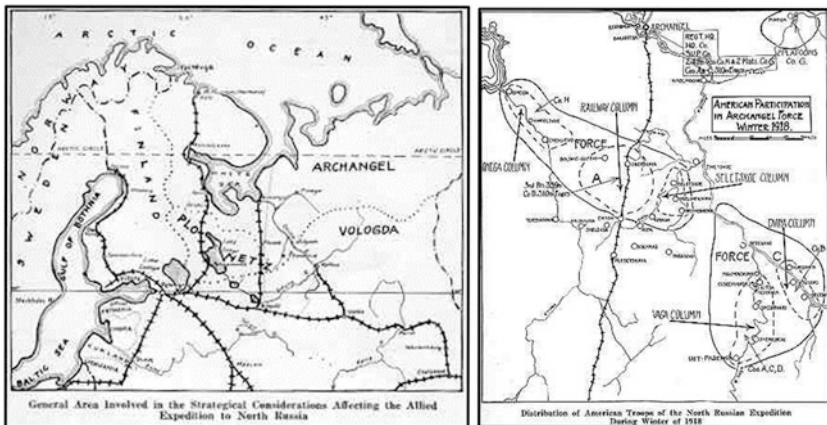


Fig. 10.26 Archangel (Maps: U of Michigan)

During the fighting in and around Archangel on the coast of the White Sea, approximately 144 Polar Bears were killed in action; 81 died of disease, predominantly due to the Spanish flu; and at least 30 were determined to be MIA. According to another account, “Out of a force of 5,500 Soldiers, the Polar Bears suffered 244 deaths from action or accidents, 305 wounded, over 100 dead from influenza, and one suicide.”⁴⁰

In June 1919, the Americans were extracted from Archangel by the cruiser USS *Des Moines* that had to smash through ice that was 15 feet (4.7 meters) thick.

The only U.S. forces remaining behind after the Polar Bears’ departure were the two railroad companies and a graves registration detachment attempting to recover the bodies of the soldiers who had died in Russia. A short while later, even those logistics units departed, leaving behind more than 120 bodies still unaccounted for.⁴¹

It was widely known that the Bolsheviks held many American POWs and other US citizens against their will. The new Soviet government attempted to barter US POWs held in their prisons in exchange for US diplomatic recognition and trade relations with their fledgling regime, which is exactly what the People’s Republic of China did following the end of the Korean War in 1953. The United States refused to bargain with the Bolsheviks, despite the fact that at one point the Soviet government threatened that “Americans held by the Soviet government would be put to death.”⁴²

US President Harding initially refused to consider providing any compensation to the Bolsheviks for the release of US POWs. Eventually, however, the Harding administration relented. In the resulting Riga Agreement with the Soviet government, the US government agreed to provide humanitarian aid to “starving Russian children” in exchange for the release of all Americans detained in Russia. The “humanitarian aid for starving Russian children” turned out to be the ransom the Bolshevik government had demanded in the first place.

The US government turned over a list of names of the 20 US soldiers believed to be held by the Bolsheviks. The list was not even close to being complete or comprehensive. After they received the list, the Bolsheviks asked the US government whether the discrepancy was deliberate. Was the US side suggesting that the POWs whose names were not on the list

should not be returned, as in “taken care of”? In the end, the Bolsheviks returned 100 captured Americans, nearly five times (500 percent) more than what had been requested by the US government. Even after that many prisoners were returned, the US government concluded that the Soviet government retained an unknown number of American POWs, estimated to be around two dozen. After the Roosevelt administration recognized the Soviet government in 1933, the American government expected the Soviets to release or account for the remaining POWs. This did not occur.

In 1929:

Two commissions, one appointed by the governor of Michigan and the other organized by the Veterans of Foreign Wars for the War Department, went to Archangel to recover the bodies of American soldiers buried in Russia. The remains they found were returned to the United States and reburied with honors in the Polar Bear Memorial at White Chapel Cemetery, Troy, Michigan.⁴³

The missing “Polar Bears” have neither been returned nor accounted for.

An important lesson from the AEFNR experience was this: Do *not* provide the names of missing American servicemen to the Soviet/Russia side of the USRJC. Instead, the optimal approach would be to ask the Soviet/Russia side of the USRJC to locate, return, or account for as many Americans as possible. Only *after* the Soviet side had assured they had done their utmost should the results be assessed. I advised Ambassador Toon and everyone else in the room that handing over a list of names would undermine the US negotiating position significantly and seriously diminish the prospects for success. At the close of my remarks, a rather extended, awkward silence followed.

Several State and Defense Department inter-agency apparatchiks attended the briefing. After the truncated presentation came to a merciful end, a couple of the attendees spoke with great assurance even though they lacked any understanding of the problem. Mr. Steve Mann, one of the participants who was both the OASD/ISP Russia Desk Officer and an “expert” member of the USRJC, objected to nearly every point I made. His hostility to the archive research project we had established in Moscow was palpable, probably a symptom of the endemic rivalry between the departments of State and Defense.

My new career as a “technical advisor” was off to a bad start. I was under the mistaken assumption that Sergei and I had been invited to be “technical advisors to the USRJC” for two reasons. First, I was a subject matter expert who had first-hand experience working in national archives in the United States and Europe. Second, Sergei and I had successfully established an on-going archive research project in the military and security service archives of the former Soviet Union. I also naïvely thought that the fact our archive project in Moscow that was up, running and producing results, would count for something. Instead, everyone else in the US side of the USRJC delegation was the expert.

The entire briefing fell on deaf ears. Ambassador Toon, who did not ask any questions or make a single comment, was probably unaware that the DoD had appointed me as a “technical advisor.” It was abundantly clear that Ambassador Toon was going to ensure that neither Sergei nor I would get anywhere near the business end of the USRJC.

The meeting broke up as grimly it began. People shuffled around with their heads down, staring at their notebooks as they exited the grim conference room.

The only undisputed outcome of the briefing was it had been a comprehensive waste of time.

* * *

I removed the stick-on VISITOR badge, wadded it up, then tossed it into one of the State Department’s metal trash bins on my way out. I walked over to the Foggy Bottom station, then took the Metro Orange line to TFR’s offices near the Clarendon station. I sat around, chatted with a couple of the TFR members, but otherwise had nothing to do. No one at TFR had the slightest idea why Sergei and I had been asked to go to Moscow as “technical advisors” to the USRJC. Using a well-known military acronym, they told me that from what they could tell from their end of the food chain, Ambassador Toon was the Joint Commission’s MFWIC.⁴⁴ TFR had not been asked for its input. A TFR Russia expert asked sardonically, “Why would someone setting up a joint commission in Moscow want to consult with yoyo’s like us at Task Force Russia?”

Like a bad B-grade horror movie, the plot was fully adumbrated. The instructions from General Joersz and the lack of any reaction or the expression of the slightest curiosity from Ambassador foreshadowed a disaster. The idea of going all the way to Moscow as nothing more than

a straphanger struck me as a colossal waste of time and money. If I had known then what I know now, I would have gone straight back to California and would never have had anything to do with the USRJC, regardless of the consequences.

Sergei, who was already in Moscow, needed to know what was going on. It was almost impossible to reach Sergei by phone, and calling Moscow from a hotel in Washington was absurdly expensive, so that evening back in the hotel, I called Sergei's girlfriend who was in LA. I asked her to pass along a short message to Sergei during their daily phone call. Knowing that any call to Sergei was the equivalent of sending a fax directly to the KGB, I kept the message short and cryptic.

"We're dealing with a bunch of jobniks. Today was a complete waste time. If I could get out of it, I wouldn't go to Moscow. See you in a couple of days anyway. Hirvi kyrpää." Sergei's girlfriend, herself a refugee from the Soviet Union, did not ask for an explanation.

Sergei, who could read between the lines, understood what was going on.

* * *

THE US SUBMISSIONS TO THE USRJC

One of the reasons that our briefing fell on deaf ears and perhaps explains why General Joersz gutted the briefing is due to the fact that the US side had already made two of its initial submissions to the Russians. Neither of these submissions had been shared with us prior to or following our appointment as "technical advisors" to the US side of the USRJC.

* * *

Four years after the first USRJC meeting, a clue emerged that helped explain why General Joersz had instructed me to delete all references to the Swedish-Soviet commission as well as to the Privateer shootdown from the briefing for Ambassador Toon and the US side of the USRJC.

In 1996, DoD released its *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S. Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*. The report stated:

[The Privateer] case was presented to the Russian side of the Commission in 1992[.]⁴⁵

The US side, which had presented the Privateer incident without using any of the material Sergei and I had prepared, had not shared their presentation with us. There are no minutes from the March or June USRJC meetings, and no copy of any such presentation has been located in the archives or released by DoD.

Perhaps General Joersz did not want the USRJC's "technical advisors" to present any technical advice that might bring into question the quality of the USRJC's staff work. If so, this would be another example of the bureaucracy's "Not Invented Here" sign. Perhaps General Joersz did not let the air out of the USRJC's balloon by pointing out the Sweden-Soviet commission had gone first and achieved excellent results.

Another possibility is plain, old-fashioned bureaucratic rivalry. A commission endorsed by the presidents of the United States and Russia could not be allowed to be upstaged by an archive research project endorsed by the US Secretary of Defense and the Soviet/Russian Marshal/Minister of Defense.

One way to marginalize the Cheney-Shaposhnikov project was to pretend that neither the Sweden-Soviet commission nor the RAND archive project existed.

* * *

The other document submitted by the US government to the Russian government prior to the USRJC kickoff meeting was nothing short of bizarre. The dismal quality and lack of gravitas was simply shocking. In addition, the document violated every recommendation included in my briefing to Ambassador Toon.

On December 5, 1991, three months before the inaugural meeting of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, in preparation for the March 1992 meeting, the DoS submitted a memorandum to the Soviet government "concerning certain individuals who could have been detained in the Soviet Union in the 1950s." The US memo was signed by "Mr. Jim Collins."⁴⁶ The Russian response (the USSR had dissolved in the interim), which included the original US memorandum plus copies of Soviet/Russian archive material, was sent to Secretary of State James Baker by Russia's Foreign Minister Kozyrev. Neither DoD nor the State Department would allow Sergei, me, or anyone from our team to look at the "official" information exchange. We therefore turned to our

Russian colleagues who produced copies of the US and Soviet/Russian documents for us.

The US submission, which was a transparent farce, consisted of a list of names that appeared to have been cobbled together without anyone involved having applied their mind to the purpose of the endeavor. The Russian response, which was thorough and measured, was a comprehensive rebuke that should have embarrassed anyone on the US side who had anything to do with producing or submitting the original submission.

The Soviet/Russian response noted:

As a result of our research, we have uncovered a series of documents which shed light on the fate of those individuals; the documents are being passed over to the U.S. side as a gesture of goodwill.

The Russian response, which addressed the names provided by the US government, included the following conclusions:

- Mr. Wilfred S. Cumish was handed over by Soviet authorities to the US side in Berlin on September 5, 1955.
- Mr. Sidney Ray Sparks was handed over to US authorities on February 17, 1956.
- Research conducted in 1955 established that US citizens Verta Elizabeth Thompson and William Baumeister were not held on the territory of the Soviet Union.
- As to the question touched on by the US side about the fate of Col. Serny and First LT Kushman, we would like to have more detailed data (year and place of birth, first names, etc.) which would allow us to provide a more definitive answer.

The State Department request for information from the Soviet/Russian government had been submitted without the slightest effort to fact check the submission.

Two of the US citizens the State Department asked about, Cumish and Sparks, had been returned by the Soviet government to the US authorities 36 years prior to the US inquiry.

Private Wilfred C. Cumish, born on September 18, 1915, in Amesbury, Massachusetts, went AWOL on March 24, 1948, from Headquarters 7769, Military Intelligence Detachment Vienna. Cumish was transferred by the Soviets to the Americans in Berlin on September 5, 1955.

The Sparks case contained no ambiguity whatsoever. The DoS instructed the American Embassy in Moscow to raise the Sparks case with Soviet authorities in the 1950s.

Sidney Ray Sparks. Identified by Army Disciplinary Section as Private Ray Sparks AWOL as of December 1951. Born December 12, 1932, Wrightsville, Georgia.

Berlin has the following information from consular and Army counter-intelligence records: Sparks held the rank of private, serial number 14335116 Company L, Third Battalion, Sixth Infantry Regiment, stationed at Berlin. He escaped from the guardhouse on December 4, 1951 and surrendered to Soviet authorities in East Berlin. Reports since then were that on 31 December 1952 he was being held as a spy; on 12 January 1953 he was apprehended for breaking into a railway car in Bautzen to steal radios; on 11 May 1953 allegedly sentenced to 25 years for espionage; from July 2 to 21, 1953 in jail at Brestlitovsk; and in October 1953 he was seen working at mining pit Number 3, Vorkuta.⁴⁷

In Note No.79/9, dated February 22, 1956, the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) advised Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko:

The USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs hereby informs you that U.S. citizen Sidney Ray Sparks on February 17 of this year in Berlin under a legal statement was transferred to the representative of U.S. authorities Lt. Col. HAMONDS.

During the transfer no complaints were registered.⁴⁸

The inquiry about Baumeister concerned an American serviceman who died in 1944. Baumeister's remains were recovered in Burma in 1954, identified using medical and dental records at the CILHI, then buried at his father's instructions in the Fort Snelling National Cemetery in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1957.

The inquiry about "Col. Serny" was a self-inflicted embarrassment of note. "Colonel Paul Serny," who claimed to be a member of the USAF, had been arrested by Soviet forces for attempted espionage in 1948 or 1949 while crossing the border in Semmering, Lower Austria. The State Department stopped making representations on behalf of "Col. Serny" by 1954 due to the fact that it was impossible to verify Serny's claim to US citizenship or to believe the testimony of numerous witnesses who reported that Serny claimed that he had been responsible for "rounding up John Dillinger, America's Public Enemy #1" in the early 1930s and

happened to know where the kidnapped Lindbergh baby had been hidden. When “Serny” was asked why he told such highly incredible stories, he replied, “Just for the hell of it.”

US representations on behalf of “Kushman” were also stopped, apparently because it had proven impossible to relate the information obtained from repatriates to any missing US citizen.

A DoS official, when asked why the note was so poorly researched, advised me, “They asked for names so I flipped through a file and gave them some names.”

The credibility of the Russians who were convinced that the US had a hidden agenda that was concealed by an insincere interest in resolving “discrepancy cases” was strengthened considerably. Why else would the US government submit cases that had been resolved decades ago? Significant suspicions already existed in Moscow that the search for missing American servicemen was actually a smoke screen for US intelligence-gathering operations. A similar concern had been raised by the Vietnamese government that labeled America’s “excessive” demands as a “cloak for espionage.”⁴⁹

The State Department’s inept request sent many signals to Moscow, most of which were not positive. The dubious quality of the State Department’s submission to the Soviet/Russian government may explain why we had to acquire the material from our Russian colleagues.

* * *

THE FIRST USRJC MEETING IN MOSCOW

Our March 1992 visit to Moscow started off with a rare moment of hilarity. Before I left Washington, I had tried to obtain another hard copy of the report the Swedish government had published concerning the Soviet-Sweden investigation into the Catalina Affair. That didn’t work because the Swedish Embassy in Washington had run out of copies. The Swedish press attaché said he would send a cable to a friend of his at the Swedish Embassy in Moscow to ask him to have a copy ready for me at the reception desk. All I had to do was go to the Swedish Embassy and pick it up.

Shortly after arriving in Moscow, I phoned Mrs. Natasha Kuznetsov, the woman who worked as our interpreter and resident assistant. Mrs. Kuznetsov, who spoke excellent English and did all sorts of arranging and errands for me and our team, was unusually competent and reliable.

I asked Mrs. Kuznetsov, "Would you please contact the Swedish Embassy for me? I am supposed to collect a report concerning the shootdown of two Swedish aircraft in 1952." Mrs. Kuznetsov seemed particularly eager to do this. If she needed to go to the embassy in person, we would reimburse her for the fare. Mrs. Kuznetsov said she would bring me the report within a day or so.

After a couple of days, Mrs. Kuznetsov hadn't delivered the report. I phoned Mrs. Kuznetsov to ask what was going on. She was pleased to tell me that she had done as I asked. Mrs. Kuznetsov had telephoned the Swedish Embassy and reported, as I requested, that two Swedish aircraft had been shot down at 19:52 hours off the coast of Latvia. Mrs. Kuznetsov advised that the Swedish Embassy's receptionist was astonished to receive this information.

I immediately dropped my efforts to obtain the report. The staff at the Swedish Embassy must have thought I was completely out of my mind.

* * *

There was little or no snow on the ground in Moscow in March 1992.

Sergei organized for us to stay at the Oktyabrskaya Hotel again, though since we had stayed there last, the name had been changed to the Arbat Hotel, which was a rose by any other name. Nothing had changed, no improvements of any kind since our last visit. In the cloakroom, there was a phone that still had a Central Committee logo on it. During Soviet times that telephone had been a direct link to the Central Committee in the Kremlin. The hotel's restaurant, which served surprisingly good fare, was always filled with gangster-looking men wearing new gray suits or shiny black leather jackets and dolled-up women who wore way too much make-up and wild 1950s Bride of Frankenstein-style beehive hairdos.

One of the unanticipated yet extraordinarily annoying problems about staying at the Arbat Hotel had nothing to do with the usual litany of Zone-related problems, such as the smell or lack of hot water. In the springtime, hundreds of black-billed magpies formed a gigantic flock in the hotel's courtyard. Magpies, which are in the crow family, are extraordinarily noisy. This wasn't the pleasant chirping of a few little birds. Instead, dozens and dozens of these creatures sat in the trees where they squawked and cried from dawn to dusk, creating a cacophony so loud that it was difficult to carry on a conversation in a room, particularly one that overlooked the courtyard. Like feathery cicadas, the noise reached an



Fig. 10.27 One of the evil magpies (Photo: Public Domain)

unbearable crescendo when the sun emerged from behind the clouds. After a few minutes the screeching, which was amplified as it echoed off the walls of the courtyard, became unbearable. Shutting the window didn't help very much (Fig. 10.27).

The magpie's brain to body ratio is similar to that of the great apes and humans. There is no question that these clever buggers knew exactly what they were doing.

In contrast to our basic magpie-plagued Soviet-era accommodations, Ambassador Toon and his immediate entourage insisted on staying at the Penta Hotel, one of the most luxurious and expensive US-dollar denominated hotels in Moscow. General Eldon Joersz and his assistant Navy Lieutenant Vhay stayed at the Aerostar that was also among the most expensive hotels in Moscow. Besides being two of the most opulent hotels in Moscow, those two hotels had another thing in common: Neither would permit the average Russian to set foot in the lobby. Very large "doormen" ensured that anyone who looked like a local would be turned away. The US officials staying at the Aerostar or Penta cut themselves off from all of the local Russians who were supposed to be assisting the USRJC, with the exception of the elites, of course. Elites, however, are rarely those who sit on uncomfortable benches in the underheated archives and turn page after page, day after day.

Sergei and I were summoned to General Joersz's suite on short notice. He received us with his assistant, Navy Lieutenant Vhay. We asked for the schedule so that we would be on time to participate as "technical advisors."

General Joersz advised us that we were not included in the “official US delegation.” The “official” US delegation that was working with the “official” Russian delegation, thus the “official” agenda, did not include us either.

Sergei and I understood that General Joersz and Lieutenant Vhay regarded us as awkward guests who were trying to crash a beer bust at the frat house. Our meeting in General Joersz’s room required Sergei and me to sit on the edge of the bed like two adolescents being scolded for staying out after the streetlights had turned on. The meeting was short, superficial, and equally annoying to all involved. We attempted to explain that the Aerostar was not only completely dollarized but also off-limits to Russians, but they were uninterested. Our unofficial “technical advice” was not part of the “official” program.

As we were dismissed, General Joersz instructed Sergei and me to “stand by.”

* * *

Once in the elevator, Sergei impulsively pressed the button for the second floor. “Gaaaad. I can’t take it,” he said. “What means ‘stand by’? This is worse than working for the communists.” As the doors opened, we were greeted by a bright, clean room with an incredibly shiny and fantastically expensive floor made of Italian marble that overlooked the reception area. Sergei’s *Komsomol* logic followed the Švejk model. Always obey orders. Sergei shook his right forefinger in the air. “Let’s go stand by the l’Estrade Lobby Bar,” he said as he led the way (Fig. 10.28).

As we “stood by” a couple of Bombay Sapphire martinis, Sergei and I quickly sussed out that our role as exalted “technical advisors” was a farce.

There were 27 members of the US side of the USRJC. Eleven of them, who were referred to as “experts,” had no experience with any type of archive research or even the faintest “expertise” on the subject. General Joersz, the chief “expert,” was a pilot whose academic training was in business administration. Lieutenant Vhay, who was listed as an “expert,” was a Navy aviator with a B.A. in physics. Major Charles Gittins, a Naval academy grad who became a radar intercept officer aboard Marine Corps Phantom jets, was listed as an “expert.” Four of the 27, including three “experts,” represented DIA, an organization that had advised the Deputy Secretary of Defense that it lacked the resources, competency, and the personnel qualified to conduct archive research.



Fig. 10.28 l'Estrade Lobby Bar, Aerostar Hotel (Photo: en.aerostar.ru)

In contrast, some of the specialists selected by the Russian side held the title of “academician,” indicating they were members of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. These were specialists from the ethereal reaches of Soviet academia who were properly referred to as “Academician Professor Doctor.”

Of the nine “experts” on the Russian side, four were directors of archive facilities such as the Central State Special Archives, the Central Ministry of Defense Archives, the Central State Special Archives, and the State Archives of the October Revolution, Higher State Organs, and State Administration. Unlike the US side, none of the Soviet/Russian “experts” had expertise unrelated to archives, research, or academic matters.

The official roster of the official US side of the USRJC made no mention of Sergei or me. We had no idea why we had been dragged halfway around the world to Moscow to be told we were not part of the US delegation as well as excluded from all official activities.

We never figured out who had issued the invitation or referred to us as “technical advisors” in the first place. There was no justification for any of this.

“Gaaad,” Sergei said. “I spent five years planning to defect from this place, now the U.S. government sends me back to Moscow and tells me

to stand by. So, the good soldier Zamascikov is standing by,” he added as he leaned his elbow onto the bar.

“Hirvi kyrpää!” we said as our glasses clinked.

* * *

Besides the literal interpretation, the instruction from General Joersz to Sergei and me to “stand by” apparently meant that we were expected to hang out at our hotel all day like some kind of jilted teenaged lover waiting for the phone to ring. We knew that our role as “technical advisors” was an expensive, time-consuming joke. For three days, all we received from General Joersz was a phone message that said nothing more than *mañana mañana*. “Why am I here?” was not an abstract philosophical question for either of us.

Despite the fact that the “official” US delegation did not want us around, Sergei and I were determined not to sit around like potted plants. We turned our attention to our research team. One of the first things we did in Moscow was to brief our research team member Major Zolotukhin on the “Game Plan.” Major Zolotukhin, who was impressed with the plan, said that he would ask Dr. Matskovsky’s group to translate it into Russian and then attempt to use the Game Plan to influence the Russian side of the USRJC. Major Zolotukhin was under the impression that two “technical advisors” to the US side of the USRJC had some sort of special status or even clout. In his view we were giving the Russian side valuable intelligence into how the US side was going to approach the negotiations.

After we informed Major Zolotukhin that we were not part of the “official” US delegation, he concluded we were giving him a lame cover story to protect our status as intelligence agents of the highest order. Why else would DoD have sent us from California to Moscow? Major Zolotukhin said we were very clever, but he didn’t believe a word of our story. I asked Sergei to interpret for me. “My friend, by the time this is all over, you are going to ask yourself how you managed to lose the Cold War to these guys.”

Among the many maddening things was the fact that when the US delegation to the USRJC arrived in Moscow to establish an archive research project, our research team had been busy working in the Soviet archives for over three months, producing excellent research for only a little money. Sergei told me that our Russian team advised him that while

we were in Moscow, we should expect to receive evidence that at least five Americans had been transported to the USSR from Korea. The question was whether the documents would be given to us or stolen by the Russian side of the USRJC who would take credit for the discovery. Our researchers, who advised Sergei that General Volkogonov's people spent more time keeping an eye on our team than they did doing any of their own work in the archives, worked in constant fear that their research would be confiscated by the Russian side of the USRJC. There was also the very Soviet-style risk of being banned from the archives for finding things that were not supposed to exist.

For three days after Sergei and I went to see him at his luxury hotel, we heard nothing from General Joersz other than a short daily message phoned into the Arbat Hotel that instructed us to "stand by." Other than that, we had no contact with anyone from the US side of the USRJC. We concluded that we were not going to play any role as "technical advisors to the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs," so we forgot about them.

"Standing by" in Moscow presented one with choices, one less attractive than the other. Hanging out in the hotel all day was out of the question, partly due to the evil magpies. A street near the hotel called the Arbat had turned into an informal pedestrian-only open-air market. From one end of the street to the other, the entire market appeared to be a Soviet Union going out of business all inventory must go yard sale. Dozens of stalls and tables were heaped with Red Army fur hats, great coats, helmets, binoculars, flasks with a large red star attached, daggers, and even ship's clocks taken from decommissioned submarines from the Northern Fleet. There were dozens and dozens of *matryoshka* (nesting) dolls, each painted with Gorbachev, Yeltsin, or some other Soviet bigwig on the outside, then Lenin or Hitler as the innermost figure (Fig. 10.29).

Foreign tourists liked to buy fake KGB IDs as if the organization had been nothing more than a Kiwanis Club. Any foreign-looking person walking in the Arbat market would be besieged by beggars, old women with knobby hands ravaged by arthritis begging for kopeks, or shabbily dressed, underfed little children trying to sell small packets of tissues or matchboxes.

The message to "stand by" always came around eight in the evening, presumably an afterthought after General Joersz had returned from some "official" meal or meeting. With nothing other to do in the morning, I would head out on my own to walk around Moscow. Sergei and others advised me to be



Fig. 10.29 (L) Matryoshka nesting doll. (R) Fake KGB identification (Photo: (L) [ebay.com](https://www.ebay.com) (R) Public Domain)

very careful, as muggings of foreigners were increasingly common. I always left my passport and wallet with my driver's license in my room. It was pointless to carry credit cards, since the majority of shops and restaurants didn't accept them anyway, so those were left in the room as well. The old-school people who ran the Arbat Hotel ran a tight ship; thus my things were safe there. I carried a few thousand rubles and a couple of hundred US dollars in 20s, which would have been a bonanza for any mugger. I made it a point to walk in places where there were a lot of people, which I hoped would dissuade any highwaymen.

On one of my mid-morning meanders on the Arbat, I looked up at a building. In the second-floor window, there were several people who appeared to be holding what looked like pints of Guinness Stout. I walked over to the dark entryway where a bright white and green sign indicated that the Irish House was located two flights up. When I got to the top of the stairs, there it was. An Irish pub that had been magically transported from Dublin to the Arbat. I opened the door and was immediately hit by a vast cloud of acrid cigarette smoke that hung from the ceiling to one's waist. I pushed my way to the bar and bought a pint of Guinness for five dollars. The pub was a cash-only, US-dollar-only business.

The barkeep filled a glass from one of the dozen pints that had been filled three-fourths to allow the head to settle. I used my right pinkie to carve a "C" in the thick, slightly tan head. In a proper pint, that "C" would be intact after the last drop of stout had been drained. I then made my way toward the window that I had seen from the Arbat. Once there,

I peered through the thick smoke, wondering who were all of these men, as there were no women, and why they were all hanging out at the Irish House at 11 in the morning. I turned, then looked down at a man sitting in a leather chair.

“Hi Paul,” he said.

It was my RAND colleague Dr. Alex Alexiev. I had no idea that he was in Moscow. He had no idea I was in town. I sat down on the wooden sill in front of the window. We spent the next two hours talking about our projects and comparing notes on what was happening in Moscow. I was relieved to have something to do while “standing by.”

Dr. Alexiev, whose family had fled Bulgaria after the communist took control, had been with RAND for many years. I explained what was going on and asked for his advice. Alex said that if he were in my shoes, he would call the sponsor, tell them this whole thing is a waste of time, then catch the first plane to anywhere in the civilized world and then fly back to Santa Monica.

“RAND management would crucify me if I did that,” I said. Dr. Alexiev advised me that Dr. Pollack, our department head, was in Moscow, attending a conference. “He’s at the Metropole. Go see him. Find out for yourself.”

Back at the Arbat, I explained to Sergei what Alex thought we should do. Sergei made a couple of calls and by chance found Dr. Pollack in his room. He agreed to see us, but said he was terribly busy and would not have much time for us. “Gaaaad. What else is new?” Sergei asked me.

Dr. Pollack met us in the lobby of the magnificent Metropole Hotel. The meeting was briefer than we had anticipated. I quickly summarized how we were wasting our time and then asked Dr. Pollack if we should let ISA know we were leaving. Dr. Pollack’s reply was not encouraging. He advised Sergei and me that the SoW for our project did not include trips to Moscow and there was no authorization to spend money on research there. He concluded, “you’re basically on your own.” Dr. Pollack excused himself to return to whatever he had been doing before we showed up.

Sergei looked at me, shrugged, crammed his hands into the pockets of his great coat, then said, “As long as we’re here, I suggest that we continue to obey orders.”

“Comrade Zamascikov,” I replied. “Are you suggesting that we stand by in the Metropole for a while?”

As he turned toward the lobby bar, Sergei said, “Yes. We have our orders to stand by.”

After we had secured two Tanqueray martinis while standing by the world-famous Chaliapin Bar, Sergei said to me, “Gaaaaad. I hate this.”

We touched glasses. “Hirvi kyrpää!”

We stood by in silence, each of us staring into his respective martini. Without turning my way, Sergei repeated himself, “Gaaaaad. I hate this.” He turned toward me. “Believe it or not, it’s worse than working for the communists.”

I didn’t bother to tell Sergei that he had told me this a couple of times already.

* * *

The Russians on our research team became extraordinarily dissatisfied with the fact that they were being watched by the Russian side of the USRJC and ignored by the US side. They were also unhappy with being excluded from all of the “official” activities. Our guys were beginning to wonder if we were legit. In order to prevent our team from giving up, or even worse turning to the dark side, Sergei and I met up with them for dinner. They understood why General Volkogonov’s people were hostile to their work. Our Russian team members felt that being watched by the Russian side and ignored by the US side of the USRJC, particularly in light of the letters exchanged between Secretary of Defense Cheney and Marshal Shaposhnikov, was disrespectful. We had to do a lot of explaining and reassuring over what turned out to be a long, liquid night, Russian style. The story that Russians judged others by how well they could handle their vodka was no fairy tale. Sergei and I managed to convince our team not to give up on us and to continue work in the archives.

When we returned to our hotel at around two in the morning, we expected to find yet another message from General Joersz instructing us to “stand by.” Instead, there was a message from him stating that we were expected to be at the American Embassy by eight o’clock the next day. We were asked to be prepared to brief the American delegation to the USRJC. Just our luck. The one night we stayed out late and drank an insane amount of vodka was the night before we were summoned to present our briefing. I downed a liter of bottled water, took three aspirins, and managed five hours of sleep.

I journaled:

March 26, 1992 – Hotel Oktyabrskaya, Moscow (Thursday)

I wasn't feeling red hot today, so of course I was asked to brief the US delegation at the US Embassy.

At eight o'clock in the morning, Sergei and I showed up at the American Embassy more than a bit worse for wear. We were kept waiting, of course. The guards who manned the heavily armed entrance to the embassy building, who had no record that we were expected, also had no idea who to call to verify our appointment. Gestures of futility and yelling at the guards through the metal-covered round hole in the bulletproof glass got us nowhere. We eventually were allowed to enter Fortress America, where we were once more instructed to wait. Eventually we were admitted to the main part of the embassy where we were instructed to wait in the cafeteria. Around nine-thirty, after we had been kept waiting for an hour and a half, we watched as the US and Russian delegations emerged from the embassy conference room. There were a number of representatives from various agencies and departments in the US delegation, including the acting chief of the US National Archives, Dr. Trudy Petersen.

After both the US and Russian delegations filed out of the conference room, ignoring Sergei and me as they walked past, a rather desperate-looking DASD Ptak gestured to me discreetly. We went off to a corner where we could talk in private. He whispered in my ear as he shook his head in disgust, "Toon has been a disaster, a real embarrassment. He gave away the store. The very first thing, the very first fucking thing he said to the Russians was that he wants to see is his KGB file. That convinced the Russians that this whole thing is all a joke. What do they call it? Potemkin? That's it. It was terrible. I can't tell you how embarrassing this was. Absolutely disgraceful. I don't see how we can fix this. The damage has been done."

DASD Ptak's demeanor reflected total disillusionment.

This was not the first time the credibility and integrity of the US interest in resolving Russia's role in America's "highest national priority" had been undermined by the dubious conduct of US officials.

* * *

The US side's lack of interest in the RAND project and total indifference to our alleged role as "technical advisors" was reinforced by the how Sergei and I were required to present our briefing. General Joersz instructed us to stand before a profoundly listless US delegation, minus Ambassador Toon of course, in the embassy cafeteria during a break in the formal agenda. We had no alternative than to stand in front of a group of about a dozen bored commission members who were unsure of why we were there. General Joersz, who introduced us in the most general and unenlightening terms, gave the impression that Sergei and I just happened to be in the neighborhood and stopped by to say hello. He said nothing about the RAND project or the fact we were appearing because we had been invited in our capacity as "technical advisors."

Against this background, the chances of our extraordinarily uninspired briefing making any sort of positive impact were miniscule at best. The fact that Sergei and I were hungover, which we did not make any effort to conceal, was a cost of doing business in Moscow. If you were working with Russians and you weren't hungover from time to time, you weren't doing your job. A slow morning did not diminish the overwhelming evidence that our archive research project was producing results. Whether we had been hungover or sober as a judge would have made no difference. Our briefing had been sterilized and our status had been diminished to casual groupies. We could have produced Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna holding hands with Glenn Miller, and no one would have noticed or cared.

Sergei and I had to suppress the urge to down tools and just walk away, which with the aid of 20/20 hindsight, we agree we should have done. The two of us were surrounded by embassy staff doing cafeteria things, such as carrying trays of food, slurping coffee, eating breakfast, chatting, bussing tables, and making all sorts of noise. We were supposed to compete with this background noise while presenting a briefing concerning archive research. It was an utterly useless exercise in abject futility that succeeded in demonstrating that Sergei and I were outsiders if not party crashers. As Sergei and I proceeded with the briefing concerning our work on America's "highest national priority," some of the US delegates left to go to the toilet, others to fetch coffee refills, while a handful retreated to a corner of the cafeteria to get away from our presentation. Two of the delegates sitting in front of us read the *Herald Tribune* with the paper held up to block any sight of us as we attempted to get through the briefing as quickly as possible so we could get out of there.



Fig. 10.30 Structure of the RAND archive research project in Moscow

I showed the US delegation the same neutered, dumbed-down briefing I had given to Ambassador Toon, which included an organizational chart that revealed each member of our Russian team. I described the preliminary results of our archive research that were thus far rather positive. My briefing included the following chart that described our archive research team (Fig. 10.30).

One would have thought that a group of Americans who had been given the task to organize a research project in the Soviet archives would have been interested in an on-going research project in the Soviet archives, particularly one that had been endorsed by the US Secretary of Defense and the Soviet Minister of Defense. We were prepared to answer questions from Dr. Trudy Petersen, the acting head of NARA, but she expressed no interest whatsoever. In fact, no one on the US delegation asked a single question. It was painfully obvious to Sergei and me that the US delegation did not have the slightest interest in our Soviet archive research project. The idea that Sergei and I were there in our capacity as “technical advisors” was so ludicrous that we didn’t raise the issue. The “official” US delegation did nothing to conceal their irritation that we had disrupted their “official” coffee break.

In the early morning prior to our briefing to the US delegation to the USRJC, I learned that Mr. Pankov had faxed to my RAND office a document he had obtained from the Soviet archives that contained the names of seven US servicemen who were alleged to have been transported to the USSR during the Korean War. The only thing I knew was that the names had been taken from Soviet archive documents that Mr. Pankov said were allegedly for sale to the highest bidder. My concern was that it was premature to release or discuss such potentially important information without scrubbing and verifying it first.

We did not mention the document during our briefing to the USRJC. It would have made no difference had we done so.

In summary, the only question was which was worse, the briefing or the reaction to it? General Joersz had instructed me not to use several slides that I thought were important, which eviscerated our briefing. No one in the US delegation expressed the slightest interest in the RAND archive research project. Throughout our stay in Moscow, no one, not a single member of the US delegation to the USRJC, with the sole exception of DASD Ptak, expressed the slightest interest in learning from any of the case studies we presented or from the RAND project. No one sought our “technical advice.”

We had been ignored when we briefed Ambassador Toon in Washington, so it came as no surprise that we were being ignored in the cafeteria of the American Embassy in Moscow. As far as we could tell, the US delegation members considered us to be nothing more than a nuisance that interfered with their coffee break.

At the end of that disastrous briefing, I was tempted to say, “Hey, this wasn’t my idea. You invited us to come here.” Our appearance and briefing had been a complete waste of time to everyone involved. That was the end of our exalted status as “technical advisors to the US delegation to the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.” General Joersz sort of nodded in our direction, which we interpreted as a sign that the ordeal was over and we should leave, preferably as soon as possible.

Sergei and I returned to the Arbat Hotel. During the taxi ride, we shared a brief look at one another that said without words, “Why do we bother?” Pankov was waiting for us at the hotel with the list of seven names.

I journaled:

March 24, 1992 – Hotel Oktyabrskaya, Moscow (Tuesday)

Saw the POW/MIA guys yesterday. I was somewhat disappointed by their attitude and reaction. As representatives of an official delegation they

have to permit Russian officials to lead them around somewhat. The truth is that access to archive info is a political act in any country.

Before I came to Washington last week I put together a proposal for how these talks should be approached and structured including preferred outcomes. It was not treated very seriously by the US officials in any sense. Gen. Joersz would not permit me to give the text of the briefing to Amb. Toon. I was asked to brief him only on the graphics that showed the structure of my project in Moscow. When I did this, I gave the entire briefing packet to DASD Ptak. Perhaps he will use the text.

On the bright side, however, I got a list of seven names yesterday of US servicemen who are supposed to have been transported from Korea to the USSR. I have no idea whether these are authentic data, but the names are supposed to be taken from files that are for sale.

DASD Ford had directed that within the USRJC, “RAND will do the archive research.” This, of course, was precisely the opposite of what happened.

It spoke volumes about the futility of our presence that Sergei and I, who had been invited as “technical advisors” to the USRJC, had not been included in any of the US delegation’s meetings, nor were we consulted at any stage by any member of the US delegation. The Russians were allowed in, but we were excluded. We will never know, but if we had been allowed to contribute as “technical advisors,” some of the US delegation’s unforced errors might have been avoided.

THE GROUND RULES

Later in the day after the inaugural session of the USRJC had concluded, DASD Ptak, who looked thoroughly disappointed and demoralized, met with Sergei and me. He repeated his astonishment and profound disappointment with Ambassador Toon’s conduct. DASD Ptak also summarized the debilitating ground rules proposed by the Russian side that Ambassador Toon had accepted without any objection.

DASD Ptak advised us that one of the first things Ambassador Toon as the head of the US delegation to the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs agreed to do, despite our warning to the contrary, was to provide the Russians with a list of names of missing American servicemen. This was not simply another example of the axiomatic fact that benighted functionaries in public administration have no need for the lessons of history. This was a methodological blunder of cosmic proportions. As we

anticipated and had advised Ambassador Toon and the US delegation, the Russian side of the USRJC would use the US list to ensure that not one—not a single one of the names on the US list—would ever be found by the Russian in the security service archives or in the manifests of prisoners held in Soviet Gulag camps.

The ground rules were abundant proof that Ambassador Toon, despite his claim that he was intimately familiar with the Russian mind, did not understand or perhaps did not care about the slightest thing concerning the optimal way to conduct archive research. DASD Ptak told me that no one in the US delegation made any effort to influence the ground rules in favor of open, transparent research of any kind. Instead, they sat mute as Ambassador Toon gave away the store. The list of ground rules Ambassador Toon and the US delegation agreed to follow ensured that the failure USRJC was pathetically predictable.

No minutes of the first organizational meeting nor any description of the USRJC ground rules have appeared in anything but verbal descriptions by Ambassador Toon. The Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs report simply stated, “The Joint Commission’s inaugural meeting was held in Moscow March 26–28, 1992.”⁵⁰

DASD Ptak and others involved with the USRJC described the following picture of the USRJC ground rules that Ambassador Toon endorsed. The ground rules, which were created during the plenum sessions, were neither codified in the minutes of the USRJC nor described in any DoD or State Department publication. According to sources:

- Ambassador Toon agreed with the Russian proposal that no audio or video recordings were to be made of interviews with Russians who came forward with information concerning the presence of Americans on the territory of the USSR.
- The US delegation accepted the Russian proposal that any documents the Russians produced that related to the presence of Americans in the USSR would be classified by the US side and withheld from the American public.
- The two sides agreed that the commission would neither accept nor consider information provided by “independent” sources. This included any information provided by journalists and voluntary witnesses and in particular would exclude anything produced by the RAND archive project.

- The US side was required to advise the Russian side as far as one month in advance before making a research visit to any archive, prison, or any site of interest. The US side agreed to provide in advance to the Russian side a list of the names of missing American servicemen that would be used in each research visit.
- Of these profoundly ill-advised ground rules, the most debilitating was Ambassador Toon's acceptance of the Russian proposal that each side would accept the other's position on issues without assessment or challenge. This meant that if the Russian side said the moon was a balloon, the American side would be obligated to accept the statement as the truth, regardless of how preposterous the statement might be.

These ground rules did not empower a serious research project; rather, the US delegation's acceptance of these rules ensured that the USRJC would be a pathetic, expensive, staged farce. Ambassador Toon's actions were consistent with Barbara Tuchman's observation, "A phenomenon noticeable throughout history regardless of place or period is the pursuit by governments of policies contrary to their own interests."

After Sergei and I found out what Ambassador Toon had done, we said to one another, "Why do we even bother?"

Ambassador Toon's version of events was completely different. On July 1, 1992, Ambassador Toon and DASD Ptak testified before the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.⁵¹ He described the inaugural meeting of the USRJC in the following terms:

At the request of President Bush, my first trip to Moscow as chairman of the U.S. delegation to the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW's/MIA's took place on March 27 and 28.⁵² At that first official session, the U.S. delegation presented unresolved questions about missing U.S. servicemen from the Vietnam and Korean conflicts, cold war aircraft incidents, and World War II.

The two sides agreed on cooperative procedures for investigating and exchanging information. We agreed to perform archival research, conduct interviews with Russian and former Soviet officials who might have information about U.S. servicemen, and arrange visits to locations where Americans were reported to have been seen or buried.

Ambassador Toon did not provide any details concerning the ground rules he agreed to or mention that he had asked to see his KGB file as the first order of business.

We received some interesting insight about the USRJC's ground rules from one of Dr. Matskovsky's employees, a man named Mr. Smirnov who was assisting with our project. (I never heard Mr. Smirnov's first name. This Mr. Smirnov was not the same Mr. Smirnov who worked on the POW committee in the Supreme Soviet.)

I journaled:

September 18, 1992 – Moscow (Friday)

Smirnov told us something very interesting about the Commission's meeting last March. I was here in Moscow at the time, but excluded from their work.

Turns out, Volkogonov proposed that the Commission exclude all "independent" evidence, research and documents. The U.S. side accepted this!

This certainly explains why my contacts with ISA dried up after March. This also gave the bad guys the green light to dissuade people like Smirnov. Those bastards. They probably didn't even realize what they did. Imagine, minutes after they betrayed my project, they came to the banquet Sergei and I organized for the Judases to meet our independent researchers!

We took this as confirmation of what we had heard informally and suspected for some time. The consequences of Ambassador Toon's ill-advised agreements were not hypothetical. I testified before the House Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security on June 20, 1996:

A fellow who was in Moscow with Task Force Russia – I am going to have to be careful here, because he told me – this was one of these things where he was not really supposed to be doing what he was doing – he did not like this rule about tipping the Russians off to what we wanted to do. He was a Russian speaker. He said that every time they went to a prison camp, he said he could tell that the card files, the prisoner files had been gone through. If someone – even with your inbox, if someone jumbles the papers, you can tell it. But this happened time-and-time again.

The first time I met Ambassador Toon was before we went to Moscow in March 1992, I said, "Do not tell them the names of who you are looking for. It is a bad idea. Just tell them you want to find Americans and see what you get." Well, that showed my naïveté. Ambassador Toon said understood the Russian mind.⁵³ The Russians asked, please, give us all the names.

Well, the person responsible for going to the prison camps told me that he was ordered to tell the Russians in advance that he was going, he said, but what he did not say, what his orders did not forbid was he had a list of people he knew had been in the gulag but came out, repatriated gulag prisoners.

He said, on the list of the people he was ordered to look for, he never found one. But on his private list of people he knew had been there, he found 85 percent.

Ambassador Toon's view of his actions and agreements differed from my view of events, of course. Ambassador Toon also testified before the House Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security on June 20, 1996. He stated:

Through a great deal of persistence and resourcefulness, we have established an enduring structure for pursuing a comprehensive interview and archival research program throughout the former Soviet Union.

Ambassador Toon's description was, to put it mildly, inconsistent with the facts. The ground rules guaranteed that the USRJC would be a prolonged, expensive failure, which it has been for over 25 years. Despite claims to the contrary and despite spending millions of dollars, the USRJC has never generated with its own resources a single lead that resulted in the location, recovery, and identification of a single missing American serviceman. To alleviate the boredom of the Americans assigned to conduct research in Moscow, DoD lifted the ban on "fraternization" so that the US military personnel were allowed to acquire Russian girlfriends and boyfriends.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR

In the evening of the same day as our unproductive briefing for the US delegation at the embassy, Sergei arranged for us to meet with General Oleg Kalugin, the former head of KGB counterintelligence. We agreed to rendezvous at my room in the re-named Arbat Hotel.

On March 26, at the agreed hour, nearly to the minute at six o'clock, there was a knock on the door. I opened it to find General Kalugin. "Under other circumstances," I said, "I don't think I would have been able to say welcome. Under the current conditions, however, it's good to see you."

General Kalugin replied as he stepped in and began to remove his trench coat, “I didn’t have any trouble getting in.”

I journaled:

March 27, 1992 – Hotel Oktyabrskaya, Moscow (Friday)

Gen. Kalugin showed up on time. He has quite a good sense of humor. He told me that during his time in the United States (1959–1970) he obtained classified RAND reports through sources outside of RAND.

He joined us for dinner at Vladimir Zolotukhin’s place. He drove ahead, so we followed in order to pick him up so he wouldn’t have to worry about drinking and driving. Before we left, he invited us up to his flat. I saw the foyer, kitchen and living room with large bookcases. His wife and some man were there. Kalugin simply wanted to have a shot of scotch with us for the road. So we did. Kalugin was quite affable throughout dinner.

We followed General Kalugin to his apartment that was located in the privileged part of Moscow. The buildings were clean and the streetlights all worked, which created a light oasis in the otherwise omnipresent winter gloom. The former spy chief put a lock on the steering wheel of his car and then invited us to follow him into the apartment building. The interior of the apartment could have been transplanted from anywhere in western Europe. It appeared to be the result of what would have happened if an English gentleman had gone on a shopping spree in a West German department store in the 1970s. One long shelf in the lounge held every spy novel ever published, mostly paperbacks. The flush toilets had been made by the Arabia porcelain company in Finland. Some of the furniture looked Italian. The kitchen, where we had a Scotch standing beside a tea table, bore somewhat of a resemblance to an industrial break room, with wide stainless steel counters and high, curved shiny nickel-plated faucets similar to what one would find in a laboratory or a small commercial catering company.

Mr. David Cornwell, known to most people as the master spy novelist John le Carré, published an article in which he described meeting Kalugin at the same apartment in Moscow. I was fascinated to read this, in part, because Mr. Cornwell’s power of observation and skill at describing events greatly exceeds any similar capacity of mine. The article, however, was a disappointment to me. In his *New York Times* article, Mr. Cornwell wrote:

General Kalugin’s apartment is in a complex built for K.G.B. top brass. Though the building is no longer patrolled day and night by plainclothes

crushers with walkie-talkies, everyone knows that this is where the big spooks lived, and where a lot of them live still. The outside of his front door is white-painted metal, like the doors of his neighbors. But the inside is lined with mahogany, and the apartment has the coziness of old Europe: paneling, books, a smell of culture, the embrace we all like best. [...]

Scotch, only the best – these K.G.B. Western hands are connoisseurs. Huge portions, ice, pretzels, hors d'oeuvres prepared by General Kalugin's homey wife, Ludmilla. Is Nick [Cornwell's son] old enough to drink, he asks me anxiously, holding the bottle in the air. I give my assent. Nick drinks. Oleg and I are both fathers, after all.

Nick, still seething about Oleg Kalugin, fantasized that the general might come to a lecture in Cambridge, so that Nick and his fellow students could perform a citizen's arrest. Rather to his chagrin, Nick's plan was anticipated by Scotland Yard, which arrested General Kalugin at Heathrow Airport last year on suspicion of complicity in Markov's murder, then released him for lack of evidence.⁵⁴

Mr. Cornwell's basic message was that General Kalugin, a murderous thug whose organization terrorized the world, was on the losing side of the Cold War; thus Mr. Kalugin should apologize or at least show some sort of contrition.

General Kalugin, who saw the meeting in slightly different terms, replied to Mr. Cornwell in a letter to the editor of the *New York Times*.

To the Editor:

I was upset and somewhat perplexed by John le Carré's remarks about me in his essay "My New Friends in the New Russia: In Search of a Few Good Crooks, Cops and Former Agents" (Feb. 19).

Whatever happened to the famous author of spy thrillers, renowned in the past for his care for detail and true-to-life portrayal of literary characters?

A couple of years ago I did indeed entertain Mr. le Carré in my house in Moscow. I was then and still am his fan, for few writers are so convincingly good in their description of the intricate world of espionage. As a matter of fact, not only did I entertain him at my apartment, but I also made it possible for him to meet the last chairman of the K.G.B., Vadim Bakatin, who had done more than anyone to destroy the old monster of the Soviet secret police. Mr. Bakatin had never heard of John le Carré before, and I urged him to read at least "A Small Town in Germany," after which he agreed to meet the author.

Most amazing, however, is Mr. le Carré's description of my home and the interpretation of my comments on the assassination of the Bulgarian

dissident Georgi Markov by the Bulgarian secret police. The building where I reside is correctly described as one in which K.G.B. top brass live, but at no time was it “patrolled day and night by plainclothes crushers with walkie-talkies.” All my American and British friends know that the outside of my front door, as well as the doors of my neighbors, is not and never was “white-painted metal.” They are all made of wood and bear an unmistakable ash tree color. The inside of my home is not “lined with mahogany.”

Could Mr. le Carré have mistaken my home for some other he had visited in the past, when he looked for a Soviet publisher for his books?

Taking jabs at my easy adjustment to new styles of life in Russia, Mr. le Carré misses the point again. I am proud that I have made the transition from the past to a productive and legitimate business life. However, the transition was far from “seamless”! Stripped of my rank and pension, charged with disclosure of classified documents, accused of being a C.I.A. spy (which Aldrich Ames can now confirm is absolutely false) and placed under surveillance by the K.G.B. during the coup of 1991 for a planned roundup of democratic leaders – all of this was anything but seamless. Fostering legitimate business development among Russia’s new entrepreneurs is now the focus of my activities. Improving Russian life by promoting Western investments that produce jobs for Russians is my contribution to my country.

More disparaging, however, are Mr. le Carré’s remarks on the Markov affair. In his wording, it looks as if I condoned the murder of this man and have no remorse over what happened. In fact, when we discussed the affair I referred in broad terms to the problems existing in different countries in regard to dissidents, spies and traitors. I said that some prefer character assassinations or the electric chair, while others do away with their real or imagined enemies by sentencing them to death in absentia. Right or wrong, that’s how different political and legal systems operate, and we have to face it squarely.

As to the substance of the Markov affair, my record is known and clear. I did not participate in the planning, discussion or execution of the plot. I did not train either Russians or Bulgarians, nor did I hand over to them the lethal weapon. That is why I was released without charges after a thorough questioning by the London Metropolitan Police in October 1993. All this can be found in my book, “The First Directorate,” as well as the fact that I was the first to divulge Markov’s story to the news media. It is true that as chief of K.G.B. foreign counter-intelligence I was aware of the Bulgarian plans, and I testified to this openly and freely in Bulgaria as a guest of President Zhelyu Zhelev in 1992.

Incidentally, Mr. le Carré attributes to me words that I never use (for example, “for Christ’s sake” and “damn”). Did he again confuse me with someone else?

Mr. le Carré signed five or six of his books in my library. In one he left this inscription: "Thanks for the enjoyable evening and your hospitality. Your whisky was fascinating. Best of luck, David Cornwell (John le Carré)."

Memories fail people at times, and literary plots run dry. In his essay on present-day Russia, Mr. le Carré had not one nice word about its people, not one note of sympathy toward the dire circumstances they are in or the problems they are trying to solve, only nostalgia for the old times.

Did he forget how he had always been received in my country, or has venom affected his judgment? (Maj. Gen) OLEG D. KALUGIN Washington

John le Carré replies:

There were two other witnesses to my meeting with General Kalugin, apart from my son: Mikhail Lyubimov, the writer and former K.G.B. colonel in charge of the London residency, and Vladimir Stabnikov, at that time administrative head of Moscow PEN. Is the general really denying that he said what I have reported him saying? He would be hard put to do it. I do not believe I have erred in any material point: neither in my account of what he said of his own part in the murder of Markov, nor of how he said it. I have no recollection of the broad philosophical discussion he refers to. Rather, I remember a monologue, singularly free of the remorse that he now claims is his.

He asks, where is my compassion for the plight of modern Russia? It is everywhere. I am quite as distressed as he is, I believe, by the sight of a country that can't face its past, its present or its future without a shudder. And I am sorry for the many decent Russian people who grew up as communists in good faith, and must now accept that their faith was misplaced.

And I am sorrier still, not for Communism's winners, among whom I count the general, but its losers. For which reason the general will perhaps allow me a little compassion for the surviving family of Georgi Markov, whom his former service murdered and who even in death is being hounded by the Bulgarian regime, which now cynically and untruthfully brands him a former K.G.B. double agent. And when the general speaks of my venom, I would prefer him to call it plain anger at the notion of a former K.G.B. luminary making a party piece out of his involvement in the murder of a brave opponent of a disgusting regime, however much he now wishes to explain it away.

Of course I wrote a lavish inscription in his book. To my shame, I was courtesy itself, as my essay was at pains to point out. When the general complains that I have abused his hospitality, I am embarrassed. He has my full apology. Perhaps one day he will apologize to Mrs. Markov.⁵⁵

The Russians I met considered themselves to be citizens who served the legal authorities of their nation with honor and in good faith. A few of them even believed in communism.

Even loyal servants of the state such as General Kalugin eventually, and at some risk to themselves, parted company first with Soviet ideology, then with President Vladimir Putin's increasingly authoritarian Russia. As for their sordid if not criminal activities on behalf of the Soviet state, in my experience conversations with Russians about these issues were similar to conversations with American veterans who served in Vietnam. Both say things like, "We had no choice," "That's the way it was," and "If I did any of those things in civilian life, I'd be behind bars." Or as long-time Strategic Air Command Commander General Curtis LeMay said after WWII, "Killing Japanese didn't bother me very much at the time. I suppose if we had lost the war, I would have been tried as a war criminal."⁵⁶

My view of Mr. Kalugin differs from that of Mr. Cornwell in one salient respect, which has nothing to do with a mutual abhorrence of an attempt to justify one's actions through the false premise of moral equivalence. As was shown in the Nuremberg trials, service to the state and following orders neither justifies the crime nor exculpates the perpetrator. Yet Mr. Cornwell's rather ecumenical if not pious view that one must repent for one's past before one is allowed to start over runs counter to the solidly secular and perhaps uniquely American willingness to embrace the wicked who have turned their back on a life of crime. This tradition is encapsulated by the question put to pioneers and miners in the Wild West, viz., "What was your name back east?"

After dinner, our driver Sergei showed up in an ambulance, wearing a white smock. The ambulance consisted of four wheels, a motor, a steering wheel, two large red crosses on either side, and an army cot in the back. There was no medical equipment in the ambulance, not even a first aid kit. My Sergei fell asleep on the cot in the back. General Kalugin sat up front with the driver Sergei while I occupied a little wooden stool in the back. Through a small window that connected the passenger compartment with the back I could see the heads of Sergei the driver and General Kalugin. About ten minutes into the drive, General Kalugin looked at Sergei the driver and then looked at me and said somewhat excitedly, "Hey! This guy knows the way to my house!"

General Kalugin took a good look at Sergei the driver and then said to me, "He's the same guy who drove us to the dinner!" Sergei the driver, wearing his white hospital smock, simply made a shrug that said, "Meh. What can you do?"

At that point, the passenger side door flew open. I reached through the window separating the driver's compartment from the back of the ambulance and managed to grab the passenger door so General Kalugin didn't fall out.

After he figured out that ambulance driver Sergei was also taxi driver Sergei, General Kalugin started to enjoy himself. He asked Sergei the driver

to turn on the lights and siren, saying he always wanted to do that. Sergei turned on the lights and siren and floored it. We flew across Moscow at Mach one point too fast, blue lights flashing and siren screaming. Every time we hit a pothole, we all became weightless for a few seconds like we were in the Vomit Comet and then slammed back to earth only to be launched into orbit at the next pothole. Sergei in the back who was asleep on the cot next to me was bouncing around so much I was concerned that he would fly out the back door. I held the passenger side door in my right hand while anchoring the cot inside the back of the ambulance with my left leg. Once we had dropped General Kalugin, I got in front and advised Sergei the driver, who spoke no English, “*Dolce, dolce.*” He turned off the siren.

We made it back to the hotel without further incident.

A few years later, Mr. Kalugin was living in the Washington, DC, area. He had become a US citizen.

* * *

THE OFFICIAL RECEPTION

Despite the fact that we had nothing to do with the USRJC, we were determined to make the best of our time in Moscow. While in Moscow, Sergei and I took our responsibilities seriously. Despite the fact that the US delegation went out of their way to ignore us, in addition to the disastrous embassy briefing we made efforts to at least inform them about our on-going work in the Soviet archives. Before the “official” delegation departed, we made an effort to introduce them to the Russians who were assisting us. We wanted to make it clear that our research team in Moscow consisted of more than Sergei and me and a poorly drawn org chart.

We tried to arrange to have our research team meet the “official” US delegation, led by Ambassador Toon, at a reception at our hotel. Sergei and I didn’t really care what the US delegation thought of us, but we figured the American delegation would greatly benefit from meeting the Russians who had already organized what the US delegation had come to Moscow to organize. Sergei and I arranged a reception at the Arbat Hotel, formerly known as the Oktyabrskaya. We extended the invitation to the US delegation through General Joersz.

General Joersz’s aide, Lieutenant Tom Vhay, told me the “official” group could not come to our “unofficial” reception, because they had an “official” invitation to meet the “official” Russian delegation at an “official” reception in the official Oktyabrskaya Hotel. I tried to tell Vhay that

there were two hotels by the same name in Moscow, and tried in vain to give him directions to each. He refused to listen. "You don't understand," he said, brushing me off. "We are an official government delegation on official government business and have an official American embassy van."

"Oh, that's reassuring," I replied. "By the way, we are your official 'technical advisors' and we're not even invited to your 'official' party?" Vhay said nothing.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote, "It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself."

Around five in the afternoon, Sergei and I were sharing 100 grams of vodka in the lobby of our hotel, killing time as we had done every day for the previous four days as we waited to be called upon to provide our "technical advice." We were dejected, tired, and disillusioned. In the silence of the lobby, my only remaining source of inspiration was the optimism of Vladimir and Estragon.

We talked about the fact that had it not been for our team working in the archives, our trip to Moscow for the purpose of being "technical advisors" to the US side of the USRJC had been a complete waste of time and money. The only positive result was that we had been able to meet with our archive research team who provided us with copies of some documents they had located in the Podolsk archive where Soviet military intelligence records were stored. We also had the opportunity to meet with Dr. Matskovsky to discuss the progress he was making on the production of the report by our Moscow team.

None of these tasks required two people to travel to Moscow from California. Neither Sergei nor I had any interest in unnecessary international travel. Moscow, which was a long, uncomfortable way from home in Los Angeles, was freezing cold, wet, damp, overcast, smelly, as well as uncomfortable in every respect. This colossal waste of time was not even our idea. We had been invited by someone within the DoD whose identity remains a mystery. We had been instructed by Dr. Kelley to make the trip, which we did. We sat on either side of a small round table made of black lacquered wood, sipping vodka from small glasses. The one I was given had a chipped edge that I had to keep track of to avoid acquiring a cut lip, which would have been the perfect complement to everything else that had gone wrong.

Sergei let the kitchen staff know that in the unlikely event that our invited guests arrived, we would only serve them a drink and maybe some basic *zakuski*, nothing more. The idea was to let the "official" US delegation mingle with our local partners, perhaps even learn something from them. Sergei and I said little to one another, but our thoughts and body language said the same thing. Every now and then Sergei would look up at me, raise

his pitch black eyebrows, make a “chick” sound through his teeth into his thick mustache, and then shrug his shoulders in a way that spoke the unspeakable, “Why do we bother?” Eventually we had nothing further to say, no futile gestures that hadn’t been made countless times. We sat in silence, staring through the murky windows at the light snow falling as the dim afternoon daylight faded. The yellow glow of the sodium vapor streetlights, that is, the ones that were working, began to illuminate the night sky.

About a half an hour before our reception was scheduled to begin, the front doors of the Arbat Hotel burst open. The entire “official” American delegation to the USRJC spilled into the lobby like the cabin sketch in *Night At The Opera*. Ambassador Toon, who wasn’t among them, had his own chauffeur-driven car. After Sergei and I exchanged a few “how about this?” comments, I approached Lieutenant Vhay. “Hi, glad you could make it,” I said.

Lieutenant Vhay replied as he tracked slush across the hotel foyer. “Can’t talk,” he said without looking at me. “We’re late. This is the official U.S. delegation. We need to get to the fourteenth floor *right now*, where the official reception is taking place with the official Russian delegation.”

“Good luck,” I said. After a pause for dramatic effect, I added, “This hotel only has ten floors.”

Lieutenant Vhay slid on the marble floor a bit as he made a full, emergency stop. He gave me that deer-in-the-headlights look. His face became ashen as he blurted out, “That’s impossible.”

I replied, “No. It’s more than possible. In fact, it’s as a matter of fact. You are thinking of the other Oktyabrskaya hotel. Remember, the one to which I tried to give you directions earlier today?”

“I let the driver of the official embassy van go!” shouted Vhay as he sprinted in his rubber overshoes to the hotel’s front door only to see the official tail lights of the official embassy van disappear around the corner in the gloomy, sodium orange twilight. In that nanosecond, Lieutenant Vhay suddenly became our best buddy. He started pleading with Sergei and me to “please please please” help arrange transport for the “official” delegation to the other “official” Oktyabrskaya Hotel where the “official” reception hosted by the “official” Russian delegation was being held on the 14th floor in the “official” reception room.

Sergei and I looked at each other. Sergei gave me a look. His raised his mustache, revealing his two front teeth in a way that Dr. Lambeth and I referred to affectionately as Sergei’s “Were-mole” look that said, “Why should we assist these guys?” I replied with a look and a shrug that said, “We’re humanitarians. We have no choice other than to help these guys, I guess.”

Sergei worked with the hotel staff to assist the “official” US delegation to organize taxis to take them to the “official” reception at the other “official” Oktyabrskaya Hotel. Not only were Sergei and I not invited, no one from the “official” US delegation bothered to thank us for the help.

No one from the US “official delegation” stayed for our “unofficial” reception. When our Moscow team members arrived, only to find that they had been stood up again, they all left.

As we shuffled off to have an early dinner, I said to Sergei, “Why do we bother?”

* * *

AN UNOFFICIAL DINNER

The next night Sergei and I tried again. We hosted an unofficial dinner for a few members of the official US delegation who were curious enough to meet the members of our Russian research team. DASD Ptak, the highest-ranking member of the US delegation to accept our invitation, told me that he was eager to break away from the “official” meetings in order to see first-hand how we had managed to make progress in the Soviet archives.

We held the dinner in the same Arbat Hotel hideaway dining room located downstairs and behind the greenhouse where we had held the banquet on our first visit to Moscow. Once they heard that DASD Ptak was coming, we actually got a few of the other members of the US “official delegation,” including Congressman Miller (R-WA), to attend. The US participants made it clear, however, that their presence, which was not “official” in any way, shape, or form, was not “official.” We understood, which was fine with us. We were just two “technical advisors” trying to help people who had repeatedly made it abundantly clear that not only did not want our help; instead, they had nothing but thinly veiled contempt for us.

Unlike the previous banquet, we skipped the reception in the greenhouse. Instead, we headed directly to the dining room located in the *sanc-tum sanctorum* of the Arbat Hotel. As we greeted each guest, I got the uneasy impression that everyone from the “official” delegation was genuinely pleased to be there. After being ignored and stiff-armed for nearly a week by the “official” delegation, we were entitled to our skepticism. Four of our Russian team members joined us, including one of Sergei’s cousin who worked in an aerospace design bureau.

We placed General Kalugin next to DASD Ptak. We seated General Eldon Joersz, the former SR-71 pilot who held the world airspeed record, next to Engineer Leonid Ivanovich Bondarenko (Sergei Zamascikov's first cousin). Leonid Ivanovich was the principal designer of the MiG-29 (Mikoyan-Gurevic design bureau) who also worked on the Su-27 (Sukhoi design bureau). Leonid Ivanovich, who had firsthand knowledge of the US Air Force aircraft and parts that had been brought to Moscow, had been in charge of designing an aircraft capable of shooting down the SR-71. (At the end of the evening, General Joersz and Leonid Ivanovich had become BFF.)

During the *bank-ett*, as the Russians pronounced banquet, a worried Ivan from the reception showed up looking for Sergei. Ivan needed to report a problem. According to Ivan, a "drunken whore" was trying to get into the party. As it turned out, the woman was Ms. Heike Nussbaum, Congressman Miller's legislative assistant, who was neither drunk nor the other thing. Sergei and I went to the reception area to meet her. It turned out that Ivan and his managers had drawn conclusions based on the fact that in Moscow only certain types of women wore blue jeans. We thanked Ms. Nussbaum for coming and did what we could to ensure that she was comfortable with the proceedings. Ms. Nussbaum, who was a welcome addition to what was otherwise an all-male affair, held her own quite well. Ms. Nussbaum told us she had enjoyed the evening that she described as "stimulating."

Congressman Miller, who pitched in to help the proceedings along, asked General Kalugin as he gestured around the party room of the Central Committee of the CPSU, "If these walls could talk, what would they say?"

KGB General Kalugin, replied, "How would I know? This is my first time here. We had our own places."

As the host, I was asked to give a toast. Using Sergei as my interpreter, I noted that the mix of Americans and Russians in the Communist Central Committee's secret banquet hall behind the greenhouse was an event that no one could have foretold. "As they say, a hundred monkeys with a hundred typewriters writing for a hundred years could not have come up with this script."

Sergei, peering into his vodka glass, said to me, "Oh, *gaaaaaad!* I have no idea what you are talking about. Monkeys, typewriters, people? No one will understand this. I'm not sure I understand what you're talking about. I'm just going to tell them thanks for coming."

Our archive research team was in place. We had access to the archives, a team in place and all of the go codes we needed from both governments,

including both Secretary Cheney and Marshal Shaposhnikov. Our team had already produced a bundle of important records.

What could possibly go wrong?

* * *

Despite the fact that Sergei and I had been excluded from the USRJC, we were instructed by General Joersz to stay in Moscow until after the US delegation departed. This was done to reinforce the appearance that we were not part of the official US delegation.

On Saturday night, after the official US delegation had left town, Sergei and I went to dinner at Colonel Georgi Ulyanov's apartment. Even though Colonel Ulyanov was on the General Staff, he was very careful when discussing our project work, even in his own home. No place was off-limits to the people who were monitoring our activities. Throughout the evening, Colonel Ulyanov spoke discreetly in a low-volume voice. Sergei whispered his translation in a low voice. I spoke using a lot of analogies in a low voice. It was that kind of evening.

I journaled:

March 30, 1992 – Hotel Arbat, Moscow (Monday)

On Saturday night we went to [Ulyanov]'s for dinner. The entry way to the flat complex reminded me of an old slaughterhouse where my Dad once worked. Bare, crumbling concrete, bad lighting, scary elevators. The flat was crowded, stuffy and closed up, sort of the norm here as far as I can tell.

Colonel Ulyanov, who was responsible for achieving the access our researchers had in the Soviet military intelligence archives, kept the dinner party small. We discussed, in carefully muted voices, how to proceed with the project. It wasn't all shop talk. Colonel Ulyanov's young daughter showed us how she had taught her parakeet Keesha to speak English.

As we were leaving Colonel Ulyanov's apartment, I noted a leather bag by the door that looked to me to be a gym bag. Using Sergei as an interpreter, I asked Colonel Ulyanov if he worked out at the gym. Colonel Ulyanov laughed. He then explained the bag was no gym bag. It was "quite normal," he said, to keep a bag packed with spare clothes and basic supplies in case one was arrested with no notice. "This," he said pointing at the leather bag, "is my Gulag bag."

Colonel Ulyanov said, “Just in case.” Then he smiled as he shook my hand as we said goodnight.

“You never know,” he said as he closed the door to his apartment.

* * *

INTERROGATION RECORDS

During our otherwise futile, frustrating, and unproductive March 1992 visit to Moscow as “technical advisors” to the USRJC, a tiny ray of light penetrated the gloom. While the USRJC was busy having official meetings and attending official receptions and official dinners, our archive research team made a phenomenal find. They found complete interrogation records in the Podolsk military archives. These were the interrogation transcripts, called “protocols” by the Russians, that had been made by Soviet military intelligence officers who interrogated or participated in the face-to-face interrogation of US POWs during the Korean War. Our research team, which had turned up about a half-dozen records of the interrogation of USAF pilots and crewmen, said there were many, many more, perhaps hundreds, where those came from.

Our guys had located records, which the Russian side of the USRJC had stated repeatedly and emphatically did not exist, that chronicled events the Russian side of the USRJC had stated repeatedly had not occurred.

Sergei and I made plans to collect the records. We took precautions and harbored no illusions. We were playing an away game on an uneven field. If the security services wanted to follow us, or listen to us, there was no doubt that they could do so without us ever knowing. We therefore tried to appear as boring and inconsequential as possible, which after our treatment by the USRJC was a plausible cover story. With this in mind, we made arrangements to meet in an obscure place where one of our researchers would be waiting to deliver the records to us. We discussed the possibility that we might be walking into a setup. It was impossible to estimate the odds with more precision than “non-zero.” We accepted the risk and proceeded to the meeting.

In mid-afternoon, our driver Leonid took us to a bleak part of Moscow that stood out for being bleaker than most of the city. Our guy was emphatic that it was risky for him to have the records; thus he had chosen an out-of-the-way office building in a nondescript Moscow neighborhood for the meeting. His hands were not just quivering; he was shaking as if he were suffering from delirium tremens, which might have also been the

case, when he handed me the records. As I took the documents, I looked around. “If they are going to bust us, it will happen now,” I whispered to Sergei who nodded uncomfortably. After a moment, we concluded the coast was clear.

The documents were marked “СОБЕРИШЕЕНО СЕКРЕТНО,” the Soviet equivalent of TOP SECRET. There was no way around this. On a practical level, there was the fact that the Russian archives had no mechanism or reliable procedure in place to declassify documents.

De-classification wasn’t an issue. The fact of the matter was that the country that had classified the records no longer existed. The USRJC’s rule that the US side would recognize the classification of Soviet-era documents was the equivalent of recognizing the legitimacy of material classified by Nazi Germany, the Confederate States of America, or the Ottoman Empire. Respecting the classification made by a country that no longer existed served no coherent purpose other than to withhold the information from the public.

Sergei and I were also concerned, with good reason, that if the either side of the USRJC got their hands on the interrogation records, they would simply vanish once again. The most problematic issue we faced was that the Russian side of the USRJC had advised the US side that no interrogation records existed, and the US side had agreed to treat that position as fact.

An example of the Russian side’s denial occurred later in 1992 during a USRJC meeting in September. The minutes of the meeting state:

During this Joint meeting, ten [Russian] archival directors gave their reports. They all claimed not to have found any information indicating U.S. soldiers were sent to the USSR from Korea or Vietnam or that the Soviets took part in interrogating American POWs from these wars.⁵⁷

In 1996 the Russian side of the USRJC put a slightly different spin on the same story.

The Russian side has provided to the U.S. side several interrogation reports of American POWs. According to the Russians, the interrogations were conducted by the Koreans or Chinese and the information was then forwarded to Soviet advisors.⁵⁸

According to the official position of the Russian side of the USRJC, no Russian had contact with any American POW during the Korean War. Due to the ground rules that Ambassador Toon had accepted, the US side of the commission was obligated to accept this position without assessment

or challenge. This meant that the US side had accepted Russia's position that the interrogation records did not exist. In addition, the records had been located by a "third party," which according to Ambassador Toon's ground rules was excluded from providing information to the USRJC.

The way these ill-advised ground rules concerning archive research were implemented was described as follows:

Following the first meeting of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission in Moscow in March 1992, by official Russian decree no independent research on POW/MIA issues was permitted in the archives of the former Soviet Union. According to Member of Parliament Yuri Smirnov, one decree that 'forbids anyone outside of the Commission from doing archive work on POW/MIA affairs' was issued shortly after the initial Commission meeting. 'Also,' Smirnov added, 'due to 'inventory' requirements, all work in the KGB archives was "suspended until further notice" by a subsequent KGB decree. The ban on access was extended to Russians and foreigners alike. Deputy Chairman of *Roskomarchiv*, Vladimir Kozlov, told Ludmila Lebedeva that the Joint Commission 'has exclusive rights to POW/MIA archive material.' Further, any material located by researchers had to be registered with the Commission. 'Any research who does not follow this decree,' said Lebedeva, 'will be reported by the archivists to the Commission' and barred from further access to the archives.

Independent researchers have been systematically discouraged or overtly warned by Russian security services to stop research efforts.⁵⁹

The Russian side of the USRJC's position was that their archivists had not found any information "indicating that the Soviets took part in interrogating American POWs" from the Korean War because in their view no such activity occurred. In contrast our researchers, who had located the interrogation records, advised us that there were dozens, perhaps hundreds of interrogation records that revealed repeated, direct Soviet involvement over a long period of time.

Less than two months after the USRJC meeting in September, General Dmitri Volkogonov, head of the Russian side of the USRJC, contradicted the statements by the ten archival directors. General Volkogonov stated during his testimony before the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIAs:

In Korea [some] of our special services did interrogate American pilots. [...] This is irrefutable evidence that this was done in Korea; we have documents of the interrogations.⁶⁰

If the ten archivists working for the Russian side of the USRJC claimed to have found no evidence that “the Soviets took part in interrogating American POWs,” where and how did General Volkogonov obtain this evidence? Our Russian team members told us that Volkogonov’s people had confiscated the records, then claimed they had found them on their own.

The Soviet records were important for many reasons. The value of the Soviet records lay in the fact that USAF records concerning air combat during the Korean War were notoriously “pencil whipped” and often deliberately faked. This fact was recognized by DoD analysts such as DPMO’s Mr. Danz Blasser.

During the Korean War, U.S. Air Force rules of engagement decreed that the Yalu River was not to be crossed, and airfields in China were not to be molested. Sanctions for violations of this policy were great, to include being cashiered from the service. Nevertheless, Soviet Korean War documents reveal that this order was routinely disobeyed, and in fact, U.S. Air Force pilots made a habit of crossing the Yalu River, orbiting over Soviet airfields, all of which were located in Manchuria and shooting down MiGs over their own runways while they were attempting to land or take-off. [...]

The fact that American crashes took place in China was hidden from U.S. commanders because of the American ban on flight beyond the Yalu. We often find inaccurate or patently false data on actual loss location of these pilots in U.S. records.⁶¹

The practice of falsifying air combat reports, which was an open secret in the USAF during the Korean War, was another example of the degree to which “pencil whipping” and ethical fading were characteristic of the US military’s corporate culture.

Access to original, unaltered Soviet records was important for another reason. The Russian side of the USRJC repeatedly presented a false interpretation of events that included altering original records. The Russian side’s efforts to mire and obliterate the truth were not accidental or due to incompetence. During our interview with Colonel Gavriil Korotkov, a Russian Korean War veteran and archive researcher, Colonel Korotkov advised us that General Volkogonov had deliberately presented a distorted view of the degree to which Soviet officers engaged in direct interrogations of Americans until he was forced by the facts to change his story. Colonel Korotkov advised us that General Volkogonov knew “personally” what the truth was, but due to “official policy” he told a completely different story to the USRJC.⁶² “Official policy” meant that

someone or some organization in Moscow did not want the fact that Russians had interrogated American POWs in Korea to emerge.

Colonel Korotkov pointed out that General Volkogonov had been the head of the Soviet military's Department of Special Propaganda, which was the psychological warfare department. Colonel Korotkov noted that only a fully committed communist could have obtained such a post. In Colonel Korotkov's view, General Volkogonov was applying on the USRJC the same psychological warfare lessons he had learned as the head of Special Propaganda. Given Ambassador Toon's idiosyncratic style and lackadaisical attitude, the US side of the Joint Commission's preemptive surrender to Volkogonov's *dezinformatsiya* was remarkably easy to achieve.

Altogether, our research team provided us with photocopies of five complete POW interrogation reports and fragments of six others. The records and fragments ranged in length from a dozen to 50 or more pages. We eventually obtained a complete interrogation record that consisted of nearly 100 pages of text and drawings made by the American POW. Each document was a summary of one or more interrogations of American POWs that had been carried out by or with the assistance of Soviet intelligence officers. All of the records were interrogation protocols of USAF pilots or crewmembers.

The Soviet interrogation records were photocopies in A4 format made on a type of paper unknown in the west. The vaguely yellowish-colored paper, which was rough to the touch, was made of tiny wood chips. The paper appeared to be thin sheets shavings of cheap pressboard. If passed through the feeder of a photocopy machine, this type of paper disintegrates. Though the photocopies were new, the pages were so fragile that they broke when folded.

The coversheet of each interrogation protocol was covered with all kinds of handwritten information as well as numbers that we interpreted to be archive filing data. Our initial analysis of what appeared to be index numbers, the interrogation records indicated that there may have been as many as 450 or more Soviet interrogations of US POWs. Our analysis was consistent with Colonel Bushuyev's statement made during our interview with him when he said that "hundreds" of US POWs had been interrogated by Russian intelligence officers.⁶³

Like a dog that chased a car and finally caught one, we had a big dilemma. What should we do with the interrogation records? The longer we held onto them, the greater the risk. Sergei and I were concerned that if we tried to take the interrogation records out of the country in our luggage or

carry-on bags, the records could be confiscated by the Soviet border police. There was a danger that we might be accused of trying to remove “historic artifacts” from the country. We were to find out later how a Swedish colleague had been stopped by Russian border police from taking a manual typewriter out of the country. The police claimed it was a “historic object” and demanded payment in US dollars to release it. We trusted our team but could not exclude the possibility that this was a setup or that our team had been coerced into setting us up. Since we were well aware that we were being watched, we could not exclude the possibility that the KGB was involved somehow. We were concerned that General Volkogonov’s people might be watching not just our archive team but Sergei and me as well. We also couldn’t exclude the possibility that someone would break into our hotel room, which would not have been difficult, simply try to steal the records, thinking they had a re-sell value somewhere.

Our concerns were greater than non-trivial. Sergei and I were convinced that if the US side of the USRJC found out that we had located interrogation records, they would give us no support. In fact, we were convinced that Ambassador Toon would order us to return them to the Russians. After all, this is exactly what Congressman Sam Johnson (R-TX), co-chair of the USRJC, asked me to do with the records we had obtained from the Soviet archives that the Russian side of the Commission claimed did “not exist.” (I refused to turn over the records.)

We had to figure out how to get the interrogation records back in one piece to the relative safety of the RAND office in Santa Monica, with the emphasis on “relative.” We reluctantly admitted to one another that if Ambassador Toon or some other USRJC member complained to RAND, our managers would force us to turn over the records. Beyond that, to appease the USRJC, we were certain that RAND management would delete any reference to the interrogation records in our reports. We would have to deal with those problems after we figured out how to get the records out of Russia.

Given the ordeal involved to make copies in Moscow, photocopying the records would attract attention. Scanning the records was a science fiction fantasy, as Adobe 1.0 (aka, a PDF file) would not be launched until June 1993, more than one year in the future. The solution I came up with was to send the records to myself by snail mail. We couldn’t take the risk of using the Russian postal system. The solution was to mail the records from the American Embassy. The mail would leave Russia in a US State Department diplomatic pouch. At the State Department in Washington, the packets

would be deposited in the US postal service system. From there, the USPS would deliver the records to me at RAND in Santa Monica. Sergei, an “intelligence agent of the highest order,” agreed that the alternatives to snail mail presented unacceptable risks.

We were concerned about letting those valuable records out of our possession, but we agreed that we had no choice. Sergei and I packed the records into three A4 envelopes made of flimsy Soviet-era paper, addressed them using my RAND address in Santa Monica, then called a friend at the embassy. We went to the embassy, had a coffee in the same cafeteria where we conducted our ill-fated briefing, made small talk, then asked casually, “oh, by the way,” if it would be OK if we mailed a few things back home. Our friend, who didn’t mind in the least, took us to the embassy mail-room. We weighed the envelopes, attached the correct US postage, then slipped the records through the slot in the type of blue and red mailbox found on street corners throughout the United States.

We put the records into the mail at the embassy without making a copy. If we were searched at the airport, we’d be clean. We also didn’t want to put any of our local teammates at risk by leaving copies with them. All we could do was wait.

The interrogation records took almost one month to get to Santa Monica. It took so long that Sergei and I began to suspect something bad had happened. Perhaps the records had been lost, stolen, or destroyed in some freak US mail sorting room accident? I asked Sergei to ask our researchers if it would be possible to obtain replacements. Our researchers, who thought it would be far too risky, told us that General Volkogonov’s people were not the only ones watching them as they worked in the Soviet archives. We reluctantly concluded that the records had gone missing, which was a perfectly ironic ending for a missing person project. There was nothing we could do.

One fine day the records appeared, jammed into the small cubby hole at the end of the hallway. The envelopes were in tatters. The astonishing thing was that the records hadn’t fallen out along the way. A kind person in a post office somewhere had used cellophane tape to stick the scraps of the envelopes together. Sergei and I were surprised that the envelopes had not been opened and examined by RAND management, the same way RAND management opened and read personal correspondence, or maybe they had done so. A more probable explanation is that they had no idea of the importance of the records they were examining, couldn’t read Russian, thus simply passed them along.



Fig. 10.31 RB-45 Tornado (Photo: boeing.com)

The point was we had the interrogation records, all in one piece except for the corners of the fragile paper that had broken off along the way.

Our initial assessment of the interrogation records indicated that these were important documents of note. The coversheet for one of the interrogation records included a routing list that started with Stalin. Sergei provided translations of proper names and other information so that I could begin researching the names in US records.

One interrogation record immediately revealed itself to be of particular interest. On December 4, 1950, a USAF RB-45 had been shot down 45 miles east of Andung, China, just across the border from Sinuiju, North Korea (Fig. 10.31).

The pilot, Captain Charles E. McDonough, who did not return from Korea, lived long enough after he was captured to be interrogated by Chinese and Russian intelligence officers (Fig. 10.32).

The information in Soviet records supported the testimony from repatriated American POW First Lieutenant Hamilton B. Shawe Jr., who had been held in the same bombed-out prison in Sinuiju as McDonough.⁶⁴ After he was repatriated, First Lieutenant Shawe reported that he had seen Captain McDonough alive. The Soviet records and First Lieutenant Shawe's first-hand report suggested that Captain McDonough had parachuted into the burning wreckage of his own aircraft, which inflicted severe injuries including third-degree burns. Despite his injuries, Captain McDonough evaded for approximately three days before he was captured. First Lieutenant Shawe reported during his repatriation debriefing that he had seen and spoken with McDonough, who Shawe said suffered from severe gangrene in both legs. First Lieutenant Shawe also stated that he last saw Captain McDonough alive when McDonough was being taken away in an ox cart by Chinese or North Koreans.

Fig. 10.32 Captain
Charles McDonough
(Photo: Public Domain)



Our Moscow team also produced a cable that described the Russian interrogation of McDonough. The document, dated December 18, 1950, was a cable signed by Marshal Stepan Krasovskii, the senior Soviet military advisor to China. The cable, which had been found at the Podolsk military archive by our researchers working for the RAND project, was addressed to Marshal Pavel Batitskii, chief of the General Staff in Moscow.

The Soviet cable reported that “under interrogation” McDonough stated that “the aircraft was shot down at an altitude of 30,000 feet.” The report also stated:

I am informing you that the pilot from the shot-down RB-45 aircraft died en route and the interrogation was not finished.

“En route” to where, exactly? It was not out of the question that McDonough was being moved to either a hospital, an interrogation facility, or some other location. Did McDonough die “en route” in North Korea or China? How and where was the body disposed? These were basic questions that the Russian side of the USRJC should have been able to answer.

The McDonough case was complicated by the fact that Colonel John R. Lovell had also been on board the doomed RB-45 (Fig. 10.33).

There was no seat on the aircraft’s flight deck for Colonel Lovell, so he apparently had to sit in a folding chair in the only space available, between

Fig. 10.33 Colonel John R. Lovell (Photo: Public Domain)



the pilots and the navigator near the forward hatch. His role on this mission has never been explained satisfactorily. One plausible explanation is that Colonel “Jack” Lovell, who worked directly for the head of Air Force intelligence Major General Charles P. Cabell, was involved in planning the RB-45’s surveillance missions and wanted to see first-hand how the missions were flown. Mr. Paul Lashmar, a British documentary filmmaker, located a Soviet intelligence officer who had seen Colonel Lovell alive after he was captured. The Soviet officer stated that the North Koreans who had captured Lovell marched him into a village. Colonel Lovell was forced to wear a crudely made placard hung around the neck that stated “I am an American war criminal” or words to that effect. Once in the village, Colonel Lovell was beaten to death. This was a tremendous loss for Soviet intelligence. Colonel Lovell, who was an extraordinarily informed, experienced officer, was the highest-ranking US intelligence officer captured during the Korean War.

Mrs. Jeanne McDonough-Dear, Captain McDonough’s daughter, and Mrs. Nancy Lovell-Dean, Colonel Lovell’s daughter, worked tirelessly over many years to try to determine what had happened to their fathers. On her own and at her own expense, with no assistance from the US government in general or DPMO in particular, Mrs. Dear was able to track down Aleksandr F. Andrianov, the Soviet MiG pilot credited with shooting down the RB-45. Mr. Andrianov advised Mrs. Dear that he had also spoken to the Soviet officer who interrogated her father (Fig. 10.34).

Fig. 10.34 Mrs.
Jeanne McDonough-
Dear (Photo: PM Cole)



In September 1994, I obtained the record of a plenum session of the US-Russian Joint Commission.

I journaled:

September 24, 1994 – Washington, DC

Attached to this journal is a note from Nancy Lovell-Dean whose father was lost on Dec 4, 1950. I've helped her and the daughter of the pilot of the doomed RB-45, Jeanne McDonough Dear, to find info about how the Soviets participated in the shoot down and subsequent interrogations.

I am profoundly disappointed in the way DoD has conducted the work with the Russians. I read the transcript of the 10th Plenum of the USRJC – not a transcript, really, since an Army officer [pencil whips] it in order to make everyone look good. The nauseating, fascistoid rewriting of history notwithstanding, the US side is so poorly prepared for the sessions that the Russians, notably Alex Orlov, and Mazurov of the KGB, get away with bloody murder. An alternative explanation is the effort to search for POW/MIA's cannot become a resolution effort since the result would necessarily embarrass the current Russian gov't which would become a bilateral political issue, precisely the sort of thing the Clinton admin will avoid at all costs. The Russians are not being completely forthcoming, but a president who dodged the draft does not need to look soft of POW/MIA issues.

I counted at least 20 references to my work in the Korean War Working Group during the 10th Plenum. Orlov referred to my RAND report about ten times. He finally said my report was “replete with errors,” and no one on the US side said a peep in my defense.

I hope I can get enough work lined up so I can get away from these guys finally. I guess I'm not cynical enough to continue to get paid by incompetents.

Reminds me of my turning point at CSIS when it became clear that politics determined the content of research. OK, if it's what one is paid to do, that's one thing. Presenting a political document as if it were an unpartisan intellectual exercise is unethical and perhaps criminal when one considers the families whose suffering is compounded by this sort of behavior. In addition to everything else, there is a crucial double standard. Relations with Vietnam are determined, in large measure, by POW/MIA issues. US relation with Russia, on the other hand, seemed designed to avoid the same issue.

It was disturbing and disheartening to see this happening. One keeps hoping to be surprised because the US gov't has been unusually competent. Sadly, it's often the opposite.

The USRJC's ground rules, specifically the agreement to exclude information produced by "third parties," ensured that Mrs. Dear's work would be either ignored or criticized by the USRJ Support Directorate.

* * *

DPMO's staff devoted a great deal of time and effort to question and undermine the validity of the information and evidence concerning the fates of Captain McDonough and Colonel Lovell.⁶⁵ DPMO analysts concluded that First Lieutenant Shawe's statement was not just unreliable; they concluded First Lieutenant Shawe had not seen Captain McDonough at all. In addition, DPMO concluded that the comments made by Colonel Pavel Vasilyevich Fironov, the intelligence officer who said that he had witnessed the death of Colonel Lovell, had been "potentially influenced or 'tainted'" by the BBC.⁶⁶ Mrs. Dear's discussion with Mr. Andrianov was simply ignored.

With regard to the Russian attempt to present altered documents as complete originals, the US side of the USRJC reported:

Originally the Russians provided the U.S. side of the Commission with one document that was in reality a sanitized, pasted together version of the two. A contractor working for the Defense POW/MIA Office, however, was able to provide the U.S. side of the Commission copies of the two original documents.⁶⁷

Sergei and I were the “contractor” in question who provided the two original documents.

During the House Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security on June 20, 1996, I testified under oath:

I sent these documents to DPMO in 1993. The next of kin got the documents in 1993 as well. The United States – Russian Joint Commission never accepted those documents as evidence. What they did accept from the Russians were two partial documents that were cut, pasted together by the Russians and presented as a single document. Because [the fake document] came from the Russians, that was OK. The [American side] could accept that. The full text of the documents that my group had uncovered was never accepted by DPMO or the Commission as evidence.

I asked [Mr. Norm Kass at DPMO], “How do you make this determination?” The answer I got back was, “Some things we accept [as evidence] and some things we do not.” [...]

Only at the insistence of a family member were these complete documents ever put into the casualty file, and to this day, they have never been officially put into the casualty file. When a family member asked DPMO why is it taking over two years, the answer was, “It was a bureaucratic oversight.” That is a direct quote.

The mothers of Lovell and McDonough, the two men who went missing in December 1950, were still alive, in their 90s, when the information from the Soviet archives was produced in 1992. In light of First Lieutenant Shawe’s testimony, Ms. McDonough-Dear’s meeting with Colonel Fironov, and the information obtained from the Soviet archives, the family had obtained closure. McDonough’s family organized a memorial service in Texas for Captain McDonough. They bought a plot and acquired a headstone, and the Air Force provided missing man formation flyover. The families, who had their answers, were satisfied that they knew all there could be determined about the fates of McDonough and Lovell.

Shortly after the memorial service, DPMO reported to Congress that McDonough and Lovell were the same people and the case was “still open.”

As of early 2017, both McDonough and Lovell are still carried by DoD as “unaccounted for.”

* * *

Sergei and I returned to Washington in mid-October 1992 to brief the POW/MIA Office and ISA, the project sponsor. Our briefings for TFR went very well. After the briefings were finished, I also took advantage of the trip to do some work at NARA. It was a productive trip, as I found records that detailed the presence of Soviet military personnel in North Korea and their role in interrogating American POWs. This was an important find due to the fact that this was the first confirmation located in US records that confirmed the version of events that we had obtained in Moscow.

Russian veterans who had served in the Soviet military during the Korean War told us that the official instruction to the Soviet armed forces was to avoid face-to-face contact with Americans. They told us that they conducted face-to-face interrogations against orders anyway. There was overwhelming evidence consisting of archive material from US and Soviet sources as well as statements from Soviet intelligence veterans and repatriated US POWs to confirm it.

All of this contradicted the official line from the Russian and American sides of the USRJC that things that happened hadn't actually happened. As we had anticipated, after DPMO obtained approximately 30 interrogation records in 1993, the first thing they did was to classify the records SECRET. This was improper for several reasons. The reports were available in an archive located in a foreign country. The original classification had been made by a country that no longer existed, meaning there was no such thing as "Soviet SECRET." Classifying the reports SECRET in the United States ensured that the only country where it would be illegal for people without a clearance to possess or read the records would be the United States.

The purpose of this unnecessary classification of the records by the US side of the USRJC was to assist the Russian side with its efforts to conceal the fact that Russians had interrogated American POWs during the Korean War.

LT Colonel Giraud, who had been a POW in Germany during WWII where he spent 18 months in captivity, was captured on June 16, 1953, during the Korean War (Fig. 10.35).

For reasons that are not readily apparent, the interrogation record of Lieutenant Colonel John Giraud was declassified by the JCSD and Records and Documentation Declassification group on January 22, 1996. It appears that the records were declassified in response to a FOIA request

Fig. 10.35 General John Giraudo (Photo: Public Domain)



submitted by the Associated Press in 1993.⁶⁸ The AP ran a story on the Giraudo interrogation record in 1997. The 1997 AP story stated:

The Pentagon blacked out the names of the Americans, citing privacy considerations. The AP was able to identify some of the men through other means.

In 2008, ten years after the record had been released to the AP, USAF veteran Colonel John Lowery (ret.) submitted a FOIA request for the Giraudo interrogation record, which DoD denied citing privacy grounds. This was an improper decision for several reasons. The first improper reason was that the records had already been declassified and released in 1996. The second was the fact that the person in question, John Giraudo, who flew combat missions in three wars (WWII, Korea, and Vietnam), had died in 1996. The deceased have no right to privacy. The third improper reason was the fact that the request record was more than 50 years old. The fourth improper reason was that the record should never have been classified in the first place.

Mr. Lowery contacted me to ask my assistance in formulating an appeal for the Giraudo record, which I did. Mr. Lowery, who served with Major General Giraudo, had a personal interest in obtaining his colleague's interrogation record.

On July 10, 2015, eight years after the original FOIA request and seven years after the appeal, DoD released the Girauo interrogation record to Mr. Lowery. The transmittal letter from Mr. Michael L. Rhodes, Director of the Office of the Deputy Chief Management Officer in the Pentagon, to Mr. Lowery stated:

The information withheld in the attached document remains exempt from release because if released, would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of the personal privacy of individuals.

Part of the 83-page interrogation record, which is an English translation made by TFR’s linguists, follows:

[11-1]
 [REDACTED]
 copy no.
 [handwritten "2"]

M A T E R I A L

FROM THE INTERROGATION OF THE COMMANDER OF THE 25TH AS, 4TH FIGHTER-INTERCEPTOR GROUP, LT. COLONEL DZHURADO [Jurado], SHOT DOWN OWN 16 JUNE 1953 BY AA FIRE IN THE REGION OF LONG-DONG. ID NO. A16292

1. BIOGRAPHICAL DATA.

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Father - leader of one of the union parties subject to the interests of capitalistic circles. Living conditions of father and family are very good. The prisoner has a wife and a baby.
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Completed 92 flights in Korea, has 3980 hours flight time.

R e l a t i v e s

FATHER - 60 years old.
 MOTHER - 56 years old.
 BROTHER - 17 years old.
 BROTHER - 27 years old - in the USAF, receives 350 dollars.
 DZRON DZHURADO [John Jurado] (prisoner) received 650 dollars.

S e r v i c e H i s t o r y

March 1942 - March 1943 - Stockton, California, stationed at a training

Thus in an alleged effort to protect the privacy of Major General John Girauo, DoD censors released his name, rank, and serial number. One did not need to be a code breaker at Bletchley Park to figure out that Lieutenant Colonel John “Jurado” was Lieutenant Colonel John Girauo.

The *New York Times* stated that Giraudo was shot down in Korea on his 99th mission in May 1953. The interrogation record stated that Giraudo was shot down on June 16, 1953. The Korean War armistice was signed on July 27, 1953. The *New York Times* obituary stated that “neither his superiors nor his family knew [Giraudo] was alive until he was freed at Panmunjom later that year.”⁶⁹ In Giraudo’s interrogation report, there is a letter written to “Mom and Dad” from “Your Johnny” dated June 22, 1953. Whether the letter was ever delivered is not known.

By the time Giraudo was interrogated, there was very little left for Soviet intelligence to learn about American weapons and tactics, or anything else for that matter. General Lobov, the commander of the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, stated that Soviet military intelligence had extracted extraordinarily detailed information from American POWs:

I imagine that it was specifically from these people that the GRU’s remarkable knowledge of our adversary came. If necessary, I could request from Moscow information on any squadron and that information would be supplied immediately. Furthermore, it was surprisingly detailed, right down to what brand of whisky the commander of the squadron preferred, and even what sort of women he preferred – blondes or brunettes. Incidentally, I know that it was accurate information of this sort, gathered from these Americans held on Soviet territory, which in 1951 helped us seize a Sikorsky helicopter from the Americans. This was something Moscow was extremely interested in at the time.⁷⁰

The following part of LT Colonel Giraudo’s interrogation reveals the level of detail to which General Lobov referred:

Meal times.

Breakfast—0300–0800.

Lunch—1100–1400.

Dinner—1700–2000.

The bar is open from 1900 until 2300.

Pilots, on duty at these times, may be served at any time.

LT Colonel Giraudo’s record included drawings that were deleted in the English translation released by DoD.

In contrast, there was a brief interrogation record from a private who had been a crewmember on a downed B-29. The private basically said,

“I’m not telling you commie rat bastards anything,” or words to that effect.

General Lobov’s assertion was corroborated by US Army intelligence which concluded that:

Communist interrogators collected information from American captives with little difficulty. In many instances, little or no coercion was applied to captives who revealed military information[.]⁷¹

Colonel Bushuyev also noted that “the interrogations were easy.”⁷² US Army intelligence corroborated Colonel Bushuyev’s observation.

Communist interrogators collected information from American captives with little difficulty.⁷³

Colonel Plotnikov stated that specialized organs of state would have been interested in POWs with specialized skills or experience.

Grabbing American POWs would have been a political decision in response decision in response to a request. Infantry was of no interest to Soviet intelligence. American POWs who would have been moved as specialists fell into the camps. They would have been identified and moved. The interest would not have been in people who operated equipment as much as it would have focused on people who understood the principles of why things worked as they did.⁷⁴

The interrogation records and testimony of repatriated American POWs told a story that comprehensively demolished the Russian position that Soviet intelligence had not interrogated American POWs during the Korean War.

* * *

AVOIDING A DISASTER AT SHEREMETYEVO AIRPORT

We departed Moscow, not a moment too soon as far as Sergei and I were concerned, on April 1, 1992. It was not just April Fool’s Day, it was almost Disaster Day for me.

We left the Arbat Hotel by six in the morning. Mr. Yuri Pankov came along in the taxi to see us off. As we drove through the gloom to the airport,

Mr. Pankov insisted that we buy some warm “Belgian beer” from a kiosk for a farewell toast. Mr. Pankov opened one of the cans that spewed warm, foul-smelling beer all over everyone and everything in the taxi.

Mr. Pankov dropped us at the dismal, dilapidated, and dreary Sheremetyevo Airport. It was the crack of dawn and the place was already packed. Once inside, we stopped at one of the raised tables to fill out the required departure and customs form. We then wedged our way through the crowd toward the check-in counter. I pushed the luggage cart forward through the mayhem in the general direction of the passport checkpoint. Forward progress was measured in inches. The can of “Belgian beer” that I had jammed into the upper rack tilted over and then silently filled up the purse of the woman standing next to me. I discreetly hid the can and played dumb.

We plowed through another mass of people clustered around the customs stations. Sergei showed me how to hold up my American passport and wave it around. For some reason, the locals would get out of the way of a foreign passport like vampires confronted with a crucifix. There was no Mr. Nice Guy when it came to getting through the mob at Sheremetyevo. If we had politely waited our turn, we would still be there today. We joked about how nice it would be to sit in the Irish pub on the other side of the passport control where it would be clean, and quiet, with no Zone smell. Many a true word spoken in jest.

We laughed sardonically over how pointless it had been to be “technical advisors” to the USRJC. We shook our heads as we talked about how much work we were able to achieve while “standing by” to assist the “official” US delegation to the US-Russia Joint Commission. We reflected on the progress our team had made in the archives and how the people at RAND and DoD would be in awe of our achievements, though we knew that would never happen.

Above all, we were relieved to be getting out of the Zone and going home.

When it was my turn at customs, I reached down and realized my briefcase was missing.

In that split second, not only had all of the air been suddenly sucked out of Sheremetyevo. The airport had abruptly become a place of evil. An unearthly quiet set in. My brain kicked into “oh shit!” mode. Everything was in my briefcase. My tape recorder, the taped interviews, my camera, notes, archive documents, as well as my personal things. That black leather attaché case had been my mobile office for years. All of the work I had

done over the past week was in there. Losing it would be a cosmic catastrophe.

My mind raced. Where was my briefcase? Did I leave it under the front seat of the taxi? Did someone steal it? Did I forget it somewhere? The thought also crossed my mind that one could not exclude the possibility that certain Soviet “organs of state” had decided to have a look at my work in order to determine what Russian contacts were reporting to me.

I kicked myself in the virtual ass, repeatedly. I had violated my own rule of research and business, “Focus on the end game.” Never assume the ends are wrapped up, never conclude there was nothing of interest in the last page in the last file in the archive storage box, and never ever lose your briefcase at the end of a week in Moscow.

Sergei found an airport security officer, whose contribution to the resolution of the problem was to wander around, shrug his shoulders, and move the bill of his dark gray-green hat up and down. The security man showed me his palms and twitched his huge eyebrows a lot. After 30 minutes of pacing about like mad scientists on speed, we had to make a decision. The flight was leaving. Sergei and I both had complete trust in Yuri Pankov. We would call him. If my briefcase was to be found, Yuri would find it.

I reluctantly gave up the search and joined Sergei in the departure queue. There were three people in front of me waiting to go through a large metal turnstile beyond which there was no return into the terminal.

There was nothing we could do. I felt strangely empty without the valise that had gone around the world with me. I wondered whether anyone at RAND would believe why I returned from Moscow empty handed. I said to myself, “At least I had the sense to mail the interrogation records to myself.” The loss of my briefcase and all of its contents, which was an inexcusable error of note, was entirely my fault.

As we inched toward the huge prison-like turnstile that rotated in only one direction, I noticed a man standing in the passport control line about four people behind Sergei. The man was wearing a *Kommersant* sweat-shirt, which was the name of the newspaper where Mr. Pankov worked. I poked Sergei on the shoulder and then pointed to the man. “I wonder if he knows Pankov,” I said. Sergei said, “I don’t know, but I recognize him.” Sergei began to speak Russian to him. It turned out they had met at a conference in the past year or so. The man, whose name was Dr. Mikhail Kozhokhin, worked at the US and Canada Institute. He asked Sergei

where he was going. “To California,” Sergei replied. “I work at the RAND Corporation.” We inched toward the turnstile.

“That’s interesting,” Mr. Kozhokhin replied in English. “I just saw a briefcase with a RAND bag tag on the table where you fill out the departure forms.” He gestured toward the airport entrance.

I couldn’t believe it. I was the next in line to go through the turnstile. I had my hand on the large metal spoke that had to be pushed forward to get into the one-way contraption. I said to Sergei, “I’ll see you on the other side.” I ran as fast as I could through the airport, past the check-in counter, through security, out into the hall toward the entrance, made a sliding high-speed turn on the slick stone floor, then sprinted over to the tables where we had filled out the departure forms. My heart was pounding, my hands covered in sweat.

There it was.

My black leather attaché case was standing on top of one of the tall round tables while I filled out the customs form, just where I left it. The bag had been unattended for at least 40 minutes or more. I don’t know what was the greater miracle, that Sergei’s friend had seen it, that Mr. Kozhokhin happened to be in the queue standing next to Sergei, that he happened to be wearing a *Kommersant* sweatshirt, that I retrieved the briefcase, or that no one had bothered to steal it.

I raced back, pushed my way through immigration, wave my passport over my head like a man possessed, went through the turnstile clutching the bag, then met up with Sergei as planned in the Irish bar. Sergei, who couldn’t believe that the briefcase hadn’t been stolen, suggested that I buy something for Dr. Kozhokhin to show my appreciation.

I went over to the duty-free shop where I bought Mr. Kozhokhin a liter of vodka. I found him reading the *International Herald Tribune* in the departure hall. I handed him the bottle and said, “Thank you. Spa-see-ba. Please, take this. I can’t thank you enough. Spa-see-ba. You saved my life!”

Mr. Kozhokhin accepted the bottle graciously. He looked at me for a moment, then replied, “You’re telling me your life is worth one bottle of vodka?” He cracked a smile.

I smiled, we shook hands, I bowed, said thank you a half-dozen more times.

As I turned, I let out a colossal sigh of relief. We were leaving the Zone, and the Zone nearly won.

PARIS

Sergei and I boarded an Air France flight to Paris in remarkably good spirits. Any time one departed the Zone, it was grounds for a celebration. I was incredibly relieved to have found my attaché case. I had dodged quite a bullet. We were getting out of the Zone. It was April Fool's Day which was an appropriate time to bring the curtain down on our farsical role as "technical advisors" to the USRJC.

The interior of the Air France aircraft was colorful and clean. The lights were bright. There was no Zone smell. The air cabin attendants smiled, showing teeth that were not framed in gray metal or filled with off-yellow gold.

We plopped down in clean, odor-free business-class seats. We were offered a split of champagne. We congratulated one another on getting out of the Zone. After takeoff, we each ate two of the Air France breakfast omelets and then slept the rest of the way.

The point of stopping in Paris was to meet Dr. Pierre Rigoulot, a researcher at l'Institut d'Histoire Sociale (Fig. 10.36).

Dr. Rigoulot had obtained access to the KGB archives in order to write a book about French servicemen from Alsace-Lorraine who ended up in the Soviet Gulag during and after WWII. These were the poor Alsatians, *les malgré-nous*, who were forced into the German army, deserted to the Soviet side, then treated by the Soviet Union as if they were Germans. Dr. Rigoulot graciously allowed us to photocopy a number of valuable and interesting KGB documents that we could not have obtained in any other way.

Fig. 10.36 Dr. Pierre Rigoulot (Photo: Public Domain)



After we got to Paris, we took a cab to my friend's flat in the Lavandière Sainte-Opportune neighborhood, just across the Seine from Notre Dame. My friend, who was away, had left keys for me in his mailbox for which I had the security code. Staying at his place saved a lot of project money.

After I was settled in Paris in a better frame of mind, I journaled:

April 1, 1992 – Paris (Tuesday)

The departure from Moscow was nearly a disaster. I misplaced my attaché bag but didn't notice until we were standing at the check-in counter. I had no idea where I left it. I noticed a guy standing in the passport control line wearing a Commersant sweatshirt. Sergei spoke to him since they had met one another at some conference. SZ said he was off to California. The guy said, "Oh yeah. I saw some RAND guy's bag at the custom's declaration place." So I ran over to the table where one fills out the forms and sure enough, there it was – left unattended for 40 minutes or so. Quite a relief to have it back.

Sergei and I took a taxi to visit Dr. Pierre Rigoulot at his office to discuss his work in the Soviet archives.

I journaled:

April 1, 1992 – Paris (Tuesday)

We zoomed off in a taxi to the Institut d'Histoire Sociale where we saw Pierre Rigoulot for two hours. He gave us several dozen great documents from various Soviet archives.

He allowed us to photocopy his entire collection of KGB documents.

White asparagus was in season. Sergei and I treated Mr. Rigoulot to lunch to thank him for his cooperation.

I wondered if Dr. Kelley was going to order me not to speak French to historians or buy them white asparagus.

* * *

AN UNWANTED INVITATION TO A BAD PARTY

On May 11, 1992, RAND management advised that the USRJC expected Sergei and me go to Moscow for the first plenum meeting in June. We couldn't believe it. Once again, the source of the invitation was never revealed, and the un-programmed cost of the travel and per diem was to

be charged against my project. We did not want to go, for a variety of reasons, including the fact that our previous attempt to cooperate with the USRJC had been a fiasco, to say the least.

The US side of the USRJC had not impressed anyone with their approach to the work, nor had they expressed the slightest interest in collaborating with me, Sergei, or anyone on our team in Moscow. The chairman of the US side, Ambassador Toon, who had agreed to debilitating ground rules, had made my life miserable by complaining that our archive research project in Moscow was “disruptive and out of control.”

The priority Ambassador Toon placed on obtaining his KGB file and the acceptance of dysfunctional ground rules that either suppressed the inquiry or favored the Russians, coupled with the grade-school quality of the State Department’s submission of names, reinforced the Russian view that the USRJC was a Potemkin exercise—just a show. The Russian side had no incentive to take the inquiry more seriously than the American side did.

In addition, the Russian side had not done any archive research of its own. Our researchers working in the Soviet-era archives said they hadn’t seen anyone from the Russian side of the USRJC working there since the commission started.

The trip Sergei and I made to Moscow in March 1992 allegedly as “technical advisors” to the USRJC had been a comprehensive waste of time, money, and energy. Sergei and I decided to ignore the request, hoping it would go away or that someone in a position of authority would come to their senses and realize what an ill-advised idea it was.

With regard to the USRJC, as long as the Americans were willing to finance the operation, however, and in light of the US side’s low-quality submissions and the absence of a meaningful methodology, it cost the Russian side nothing to play along.

Pretending to work while others paid was a Russian specialty.

Fortunately, the invitation was forgotten shortly after it was issued. We concluded that we had been dis-invited after we learned that the US side of the USRJC during the June 1–2, 1992, visit had been led by Mr. Ed Ross, the same person who had issued a gag order, tried to stop me from communicating with TFR, and cut off any contact between me and the media.

We heard no more of the invitation, which was fine with us.

Interneccine infighting was a standard feature within organizations responsible for America's "highest national priority." Turf battles, unchecked egos, the ubiquitous "Not Invented Here" sign, and other examples of bureaucratic vanity were permanent features of the Accounting Community that ensured that no dispute, no matter how petty or trivial, and no perceived slight, regardless of its inanity, was too insignificant to prevent it from being raised to an inappropriate management level.

The Russian side of the USRJC complained to Ambassador Toon about the RAND project. Rather than working with us to expand on RAND's archive research and treating me as a "technical advisor," instead Ambassador Toon complained to RAND management that the DoD-sponsored RAND archive research project in Moscow was "disruptive, out of control" and "damaging to the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission." Neither Ambassador Toon nor anyone from the US side of the USRJC expressed this opinion to me or to Sergei directly.

No one at RAND discussed the complaint with me to assess its validity. Instead, Ambassador Toon's complaint was included as a criticism of me in RAND's annual performance evaluation.

When asked about me under oath, however, Ambassador Toon told a completely different story. Ambassador Toon testified before the House Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security on June 20, 1996. During that hearing, Ambassador Toon stated:

Mr. Dornan. Mr. Ambassador, did you read the RAND report? I have met Paul Cole, who is going to be the next panel, and he has my confidence. I saw him also in the BBC documentary. I am not a bad investigator, after doing 6 years of interrogating people in front of the camera and winning Emmys for it. I am pretty good at getting information out of people, getting them to say things they did not plan on when they came on my TV show. But I like Paul Cole's report. I know what a great archivist he is.

Mr. Toon. I know Cole very well. I have had a number of sessions with him. I think he is pretty well informed.⁷⁵

* * *

In May 1992, we managed to get Dr. Mikhail Matskovsky to RAND for a few days. We set him up with a small office in the unclassified section of the building. Over lunch one day, Dr. Matskovsky advised Sergei and me that our researchers had found in the Soviet archives transcripts of torture sessions on American POWs who had been transferred to the Soviet

Union. We had no reason to question or distrust Dr. Matskovsky, but such an explosive revelation had to be examined carefully. As President Reagan had said to President Gorbachev, “Doveryai, no proveryai” (Доверяй, но проверяй), meaning “trust, but verify.”

The problem for us was if the documents actually existed and were authentic, how were we going to get the documents out of Russia?

I journaled:

May 21, 1992 Santa Monica, RAND

My research assistant [Ted Karasik] is off to Moscow tomorrow. All sorts of weird stuff is happening. As it turns out, the Russian delegation to the US-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIA's is beginning to get nervous. The Russian head, Gen Volkogonov, is working with the Dept of State. The DoS, as per usual, is way behind the curve. They are relying on Volkogonov to solve their problem and bring glory to the Commission – Volkogonov can't deliver. My guess is that Volkogonov's spies are aware of the results of our work in Moscow. It's too late to stop it. My guess is that DoD will finally get around to using this as a stick to whack DoS, and rightly so. The telling point in all of this is when Toon heard from Volkogonov he immediately accepted his position and questioned DoD and RAND. One could ask Toon, “Who's side are you on?” This can be a miserable business pursued by staggeringly small-minded people.

At the end of the month, Mr. Karasik phoned from Moscow to tell me that he had a productive trip. He planned to bring the first draft of the report our archive research team produced. Due to reasons beyond his control, however, Mr. Karasik returned but not empty handed.

The other purpose of Mr. Karasik's visit to Moscow was to describe the structures, access, and declassification procedures for Soviet-era civil and military archives located in and around Moscow. Mr. Karasik's task was to focus on the archives associated with the top leadership bodies, namely, the CPSU Politburo, Secretariat, and the Central Committee; the diplomatic, security, and intelligence services, NKVD, KGB, and GRU; and the former Soviet military. Mr. Karasik's excellent report was published as a RAND monograph in 1993.⁷⁶

My journal entry was another Cassandra moment. The bad guys in Moscow were keeping a closer eye on our archive researchers and Dr. Matskovsky's institute than we had imagined.

NOTES

1. General Volkogonov was succeeded as chair by Major General Vladimir Zolotarev.
2. For an overview of Ambassador Toon's life and career, see "Malcolm Toon Made Waves as a Diplomat, but His Death Went Largely Unreported," *New York Times*, May 1, 2017. Ambassador Toon died in 2009, but his obituary did not run in the *Times* until eight years later. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/01/world/europe/malcolm-toon-dead-us-ambassador-to-soviet-union.html>
3. In March 1992, Mr. Lawrence Eagleburger was Deputy Secretary of State. He became Acting Secretary of State, in August 1992. Through a recess appointment, Mr. Eagleburger became the Secretary of State, the only career Foreign Service Officer to hold that position.
4. *The Toon Mission to Moscow: New Information on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 11.
5. In October 1984, Congress passed the second Boland Amendment that outlawed the use of the DoD, CIA, or "third-party nations" to fund the Nicaraguan Contras. A number of Reagan administration officials, including National Security Advisor John Poindexter and Colonel Oliver North, conspired to circumvent the Boland Amendment by selling arms to Iran at high prices in exchange for the release of American hostages held by Lebanese terrorists backed by Iran. The profits from the arms sales were used to fund the Contras. Ms. Hall, who testified that she altered and removed documents to help Colonel North conceal his criminal activities, stated under oath, "There are times when you have to go above the written law." "Context of 'November 27, 1986: North's Secretary Portrays 'Shredding Party' as Business as Usual'," History Commons, <http://www.historycommons.org/context.jsp?item=a112786shredusual>
6. http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/Reading_Room/Personnel_Related/498.pdf
7. "Highlights in the History of U.S. Relations With Russia, 1780 – June 2006," U.S. Department of State, Office of the Historian, Bureau of Public Affairs, May 11, 2007. <https://www.state.gov/p/eur/ci/rs/200years/c30273.htm>
8. "Record of Air Incidents," Central Intelligence Agency, (undated) TOP SECRET CANOE SECURITY INFORMATION. Approved for release on August 31, 2001. CIA-RDP80RO1443R000100100005-6. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp80r01443r000100100005-6>. "CANOE" was a compartmentalized code word used between July 1, 1952, and September 1953 for COMINT (Communications Intelligence). "A History of NSA's Top Secret SIGINT Codewords," Bill Robinson, July 10, 2014. <http://www.matthewaid.com/post/91391130951/a-history-of-nsas-top-secret-sigint-codewords>

9. The Swedish Catalina aircraft was both shot at and shot down.
10. *Case Studies of Actual and Alleged Overflights, 1930–1953 – Supplement*, A. L. George (U.S. Air Force Project RAND, August 15, 1955), p. 12. Originally marked TOP SECRET. Cleared for open publication on June 20, 1996. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_memoranda/2014/RM1349.supplement.pdf
11. The Privateer was the Navy’s version of the US Army Air Force’s B-24 Liberator long-range bomber.
12. *Case Studies of Actual and Alleged Overflights, 1930–1953 – Supplement*, op. cit., p. 12. The report cites “Department of State, ‘Memorandum of Conversation,’ with Ambassador Boheman, Swedish Embassy (June 23, 1952) by Mr. U. Alexis Johnson (FE), and Mr. William B. Sale (EUR); SECRET Ambassador Boheman added that, for security reasons, such information could not be used publicly against the Soviets, since to do so would give away the fact that Swedish intelligence was intercepting Soviet military communications.” This Memorandum of Conversation is referenced in the TOP SECRET version of this report as well. https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_memoranda/2014/RM1349.supplement.pdf
13. “50X1-HUM” is an exemption that applies to information that would reveal the identity of confidential human sources or human intelligence sources, but not to all intelligence sources and methods. Under Executive Order 12958, Classified National Security Information, April 17, 1995, “50X1-HUM” replaced “25X1-HUM.” <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/WCPD-1995-04-24/pdf/WCPD-1995-04-24-Pg634.pdf>
14. “Survival of Three Crew Members of U.S. Navy Privateer Downed Over The Baltic Sea in April 1950,” “SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION,” Information Report, Central Intelligence Agency, February 1952. Sanitized copy approved for release on March 21, 2012. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP82-00457R011300320008-6.pdf>
15. “Maybe You Had To Be There: The SIGINT on Thirteen Soviet Shootdowns of U.S. Reconnaissance Aircraft,” originally classified SECRET SPOKE, Michael L. Peterson, *Cryptologic Quarterly*, p. 8. (SECRET SPOKE was a classification compartment for communications intelligence.) The USAFSS study referred to is: USAFSS Special Research Study 31–53, “Incidents Involving Attacks Against Western Aircraft in Communist-Bloc Border Areas,” May 25, 1953 (TSC), 10–12. Cryptologic Archival Holding Area, Accession No. 23630, box G18-0310-7, NSA. https://fas.org/irp/nsa/maybe_declass.pdf
16. “Maybe You Had To Be There: The SIGINT on Thirteen Soviet Shootdowns of U.S. Reconnaissance Aircraft,” op. cit., p. 7.

17. *Comprehensive Report Of The U.S. Side Of The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 8.
18. MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT – Subject: Americans Detained in the Soviet Union. SECRET From: Secretary of State John Foster Dulles July 18, 1955. Declassified July 30, 1991. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., pp. 52–53. The Roosevelt-Litvinov Agreement was an exchange of letters on November 16, 1933. Each government agreed to adopt measures to inform representatives of the other government as soon as possible, and in many cases within seven days, whenever a national of the other country is arrested.
19. From: State #CA-10165 To: Moscow and Tokyo (CONFIDENTIAL), June 20, 1956 794.5411/6-2056. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., p. 53–6.
20. “Hugin and Munin,” Daniel McCoy, *Norse Mythology for Smart People* (undated), <http://norse-mythology.org/gods-and-creatures/others/hugin-and-munin/>
21. “The GRU’s ‘Viking’ Spy In NATO,” Colonel Nikolai Poroskov, *Espionage History Archive*, June 19, 2015. Colonel Poroskov, a GRU officer, relies on the first-hand testimony of Wennerström’s case officer and the man Wennerström described as his “best friend in the world,” GRU General Vitaly Nikolsky. The work translated is: Порошков, Николай. “Успехи и провал Викинга” (The Successes and Failures of the Viking) Независимое военное обозрение, (Independent Military Review) 05.06.2015. <https://espionagehistoryarchive.com/2015/06/19/stig-wennerstrom-soviet-spy-gru/>
22. “Notes on the Wennerström Case: Operational detail of professional interest in the testimony of the famous Swedish spy” CIA Historical Review Program. September 22, 1993. Posted May 8, 2007. https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol10no3/html/v10i3a07p_0001.htm
23. Erlander’s telegram to Undén, who was on vacation in Rome, is cited in: *Catalina-affären 1952*, Michael Karlsson, (CRISMART, 2009), p. 4. <https://www.fhs.se/Documents/Externwebben/forskning/centrum-bildningar/Crismart/Publikationer/Webbpublikationer/Catalinaaffaren.pdf>
24. “Spionen Stig Wennerström död,” Mikael Holmström, *Svenska Dagbladet*, March 28, 2006. <https://www.svd.se/spionen-stig-wennerstrom-dod-8Tf>
25. *The Wennerström spy case, how it touched the United States and NATO: Excerpts from the testimony of Stig Eric Constans Wennerström, a noted Soviet agent* United States. Congress. Senate. Committee on the Judiciary. Subcommittee to Investigate the Administration of the Internal Security Act and Other Internal Security Laws. Washington: U.S. GPO, 1964.

26. *Nedskjutningen av DC 3-an i juni 1952 – Rapport från DC 3-utredningen* (Stockholm: Utrikesdepartementet (Foreign Ministry), 1992) Referred to herein as *UD-92*.
27. *HR*, pp. 222–3.
28. *Teknisk utredningsrapport över haveri med Tp 79 nr 001 (2007) – Nedskjutningen av Tp 79 001 (DC-3) över Östersjön den 13 juni 1952*, Christer Magnussen (Stockholm: Försvarsmakten (Swedish Armed Forces)), May 25, 2015, p. 240. Herein referred to as *HR*.
29. *Teknisk utredningsrapport över haveri med Tp 79 nr 001 (2007) – Nedskjutningen av Tp 79, 001 (DC-3) över Östersjön den 13 juni 1952*, op. cit., p. 9.
30. “DC-3:an samlade datatrafik från sovjetiska stridsflyg,” Ruben Agnarsson, *Nyhetstidningen INBLICK*, December 19, 2011. <http://old.inblick.se/Default.aspx?ID=141&PID=1907&Action=1&NewsId=684>
31. The photos and quotes from Ms. Blad and Ms. Jonsson courtesy of Sveriges Television AB, “DC-3:ans Sista Resa” (“The Last Flight of the DC-3”), a 2004 documentary film by Johan Candert and Malcolm Dixelius. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O4OI-2hzyFM>. Used with permission from Deep Sea Productions.
32. Text and photograph of Mrs. Jonsson from the documentary *Frågetecken Över Östersjön* (Question Marks Over The Baltic Sea), broadcast June 13, 1967) courtesy of Sveriges Television AB (SVT). Used with permission of SVT.
33. Text and photo of Mrs. Jonsson from the documentary *DC-3:ans Sista Resa* (The DC-3’s Last Flight) (2004), courtesy of Deep Sea Productions. Used with permission of Deep Sea Productions.
34. *Catalina-affären 1952*, op. cit., p. 10.
35. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., p. 42, citing “Missing POW’s Family Gains Hope in Russia,” Judi Buehrer, *Moscow Times*, September 15, 1992. DPMO described the visit as follows. “Mrs. Jan Reynolds-Howard arrived in Moscow to seek information on her former husband Lt. Robert D. Reynolds whose USN PB4Y plane was engaged by Soviet aircraft over the Baltic Sea on 8 April 1950.” *Summary of Activities In Moscow of Joint Commission and of Committee Investigation*, Staff Draft December 11, 1992, Not Approved By Senators, p. 59.
36. Not his real name.
37. “Guarding the Railroad, Taming the Cossacks: The U.S. Army in Russia, 1918–1920,” Gibson Bell Smith, *Prologue Magazine* (National Archives), Winter 2002, Vol. 34, No. 4. The photograph of U.S. Army troops in Siberia appears in Smith’s article. <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2002/winter/us-army-in-russia-1.html>

38. "The Anglo-American Intervention at Archangel, 1918–1919: The Role of the 339th Infantry," Benjamin D. Rhodes, *The International History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, August 1986, p. 367. https://www.jstor.org/stable/40105628?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents
39. "American Intervention in Northern Russia, 1918–1919," Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. The two maps come from the Bentley Historical Library collection as well. <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/p/polaread/history.html>
40. "The Polar Bear Expedition: The U.S. Intervention in Northern Russia, 1918–1919," Alexander F. Barnes and Cassandra J. Rhodes, *Army Sustainment*, March–April 2012.
41. "The Polar Bear Expedition: The U.S. Intervention in Northern Russia, 1918–1919," op. cit.
42. *An examination of U.S. policy toward POW/MIA's*, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing, May 23, 1991. This submission was prepared by the Committee's Republican staff.
43. "American Intervention in Northern Russia, 1918–1919," op. cit.
44. Motherfucker What's In Charge.
45. June 17, 1996. http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/Reading_Room/Personnel_Related/USsideUS-Russia_Joint_Commission_POW-MIAS.pdf. The Comprehensive report cites Dr. Cole 12 times.
46. There was no affiliation noted for "Jim Collins" on the memorandum. A Mr. James Collins was deputy chief of mission and chargé d'affaires at the American Embassy in Moscow from 1990 to 1993, but whether he was the "Jim Collins" who signed the memorandum submitted to the Soviet government has not been established.
47. From: State #9 To: Moscow (CONFIDENTIAL), July 6, 1955 611.61241/7-655. See: *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., pp. 151–152.
48. Memorandum from Minister of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union Dydorov SECRET To: Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR Comrade A. A. Gromyko, February 22, 1956.
49. "Hanoi Aide Says U.S. Search For M.I.A.'s May Be Cover For Spying," *New York Times*, August 9, 1992. See also: *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., pp. 179–181.
50. *Report of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*. <http://www.miafacts.org/SSC%20Report/sec%2029.htm>
51. *The Toon Mission to Moscow*, op. cit.
52. Ambassador Toon also testified that he had gone to Moscow at the request of Acting Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. *The Toon Mission to Moscow*, op. cit., p. 11.

53. Ambassador Toon testified before Congressman Dornan's committee that he had an "intimate knowledge of the Soviet Union's modus operandi."
54. "My New Friends In The New Russia: In Search of a Few Good Crooks, Cops and Former Agents," by John le Carré, *New York Times*, February 19, 1995.
55. "In The New Russia," by Oleg Kalugin, *New York Times*, April 2, 1995.
56. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/bomb/peoplevents/pandeA-MEX61.html>
57. *Report of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit. <http://www.miafacts.org/ssc%20report/sec%2029.htm>
58. *Comprehensive Report Of The U.S. Side Of The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 119.
59. *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 96. Professor Ludmila Lebedeva was a Senior Researcher, Institute of General History, Russian Academy of Science. The author interviewed Professor Lebedeva in Moscow on February 9, 1993.
60. *Hearings On Cold War, Korea and WWII POWs*, *Hearings before the Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, U.S. Senate, November 10 and 11, 1992, p. 334. http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/pow/senate_house/pdf/hear_11_92.pdf
61. Danz Blasser, Senior Analyst, Korean War Working Group, Joint Commission Support Directorate, U.S.-Russia Archival Conference (undated). <http://www.koreacoldwar.org/news/usrarconfblasser.html>
62. The US side of the USRJC's notes indicate that Colonel Korotkov was apparently pressured by forces within Russia to change his own story several times.
63. In contrast, the US side of the USRJC advised the Senate Select Committee, "Col. (ret.) Viktor Aleksandrovich Bushuyev, former intelligence analyst in North Korea with the 64th Air Defense Corps, told investigators that the Soviets had access to the interrogations of hundreds of American pilots. He claimed not to know if the Soviet officials had taken part in the actual interrogations." *Report of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit. <http://www.miafacts.org/ssc%20report/sec%2029.htm>. According to the USRJC ground rules agreed to by Ambassador Toon, "official" US investigators were not allowed to make audiotapes of interviews. Our "unofficial" interview with Colonel Bushuyev was taped by me using a handheld mini-recorder. Both the original and a copy of my "unofficial" taped interview with Colonel Bushuyev were "lost" by DPMO. In my view, the loss of the tapes by DPMO was not due to any conspiracy to suppress evidence; rather, it was due to carelessness or incompetence.

64. First Lieutenant Hamilton B. Shawe Jr., a Silver Star recipient, was a pilot assigned to the 8th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron. See: *Military Times*, Hall of Valor. <http://valor.militarytimes.com/recipient.php?recipientid=25364>
65. "1992–1996 Findings of the Korean War Working Group," <http://www.koreanwarpowmia.net/Reports/KWWG.htm>
66. "1992–1996 Findings of the Korean War Working Group," op. cit.
67. "1992–1996 Findings of the Korean War Working Group," op. cit.
68. "Long-Secret Documents Detail Soviet Interrogations of American POWs," Robert Burns, January 27, 1997. <http://www.apnewsarchive.com/1997/Long-secret-documents-detail-Soviet-interrogations-of-US-POWs/id-7c0020dbb37cbf7afeb7427f300e81f8>
69. "Maj Gen John C Giraud, 73, Who Flew in Combat in 3 Wars," by Wolfgang Saxon, *New York Times*, June 22, 1996.
70. *Comprehensive Report Of The U.S. Side Of The U.S.-Russia Joint Commission On POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 160.
71. *Volume I: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 92.
72. *Volume I: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 142.
73. *Volume I: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 92.
74. *Volume I: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 157.
75. *Status of POW/MIA Negotiations with North Korea*, Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security, House of Representatives, June 20, 1996, p. 56.
76. *The Post-Soviet Archives: Organization, Access and Declassification*, Theodore W. Karasik, (Santa Monica, CA: RAND: 1993). https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monograph_reports/2006/MR150.pdf



Archive Research Follow-On Project

One might have reasonably concluded that it should not have been difficult to obtain additional funding for a follow-on research project focused on an issue that the President of the United States had designated as the “nation’s highest national priority.”

One would have been wrong.

RAND research was funded on an annual cycle. Toward the end of each calendar year, International Security Policy (ISP) staff members were required to submit proposals for research projects that, if approved, would be funded the following year. There were several pots of money within RAND, including the coveted RSR that was discretionary money controlled by RAND management. Most projects, however, were funded by permanent projects within RAND such as PAF, the NDRI, or the Arroyo Center each of which received tens of millions of dollars in line item allocations from Congress each year.

During my three-plus years at RAND, as required I submitted several proposals for project funding each year. With the exception of a small RSR allocation used to convert a portion of my dissertation into a RAND monograph, not a single proposal I submitted to RAND management was approved. This state of affairs was frustrating and confusing. RAND had recruited me, not the other way around. Yet every proposal I submitted for funding was rejected, often without any comment. This was a serious matter. Without a project code, researchers had to charge time using the

overhead code. The number of days one could charge to overhead per year was limited. Thus, without a funded project, eventually one was fired.

A researcher's annual evaluation depended, in part, on how much project work one did. Project work depended on funding, and the only way to get funding was to get proposals approved or to latch onto someone else's project. In a huge organization with tens of millions of dollars washing around, quality and relevance were not the sole criteria on which research proposals were evaluated.

RAND managers turned down my proposals for different reasons. Sometimes RAND would not circulate my proposals within DoD to see if anyone was interested. Sometimes all I was told was my proposals had been rejected on the grounds that if approved they would "distort RAND's research agenda." What a laugh. There was no research agenda. At CSIS we had a director of studies, who in consultation with the president and senior fellows determined the focus or theme of the upcoming year's research. Foundations published their annual priorities that guided grant applications. RAND had no equivalent position, policy or publication. Dr. Ron Asmus, a five-window IPD colleague, once offered me three days of "coverage," which in RAND lingo meant the ability to charge time to a project, in exchange for helping him move furniture from his apartment into a new house.

The only way I could obtain funding for my POW/MIA accounting project was to apply directly to the DoD, over the head of the RAND "managers." The trick was, any money obtained through this method was counted against a cap, or maximum amount that Congress allowed FFRDCs such as RAND to collect from government sources over and above the annual line item allocation. What this meant was if my proposal were successful, money that would otherwise have had a *chance* to fund the RAND *nomenklatura* was no longer available.

In order to avoid becoming a Johnny One Note kind of researcher, I cast a wide net hoping to find additional project funding. Without secure research funding, my career at RAND would be over almost as soon as it had begun. I wrote several proposals that were circulated to the managers who controlled various pots of money within RAND. My hopes for some kind of follow-up project funding at RAND or funding for a new project were all given the *coup de grâce*. Using DoD project money to pay to move furniture was consistent with RAND's research agenda, while archive research in Moscow was a distortion.

One of my favorite proposals that was never funded involved taking advantage of the access to Soviet military archives that we had established during the POW/MIA project. I had reached a conclusion about deterrence during the Cold War. In my view, the structure of the US military forces and the content of America's strategic policy were designed to deter the United States. In other words, America's deterrent policy was self-referential. I reached this conclusion while working on a monograph for the CIA that addressed the question of why Sweden, a nuclear-capable nation, decided not to join the atomic bomb club.¹ The reason the Swedes eschewed the nuclear option was due to something I referred to as the cultural correlates of national security. Nuclear weapons were inconsistent with the Swedish concept of the cultural correlates of Swedish national security. Whether nuclear weapons made an objective contribution to national security was not the decisive factor. Each nation has its own cultural correlates of national security. I proposed to study America's cultural correlates of national security in order to examine how well US leaders understood the cultural correlates of the Soviet Union.

US deterrence policy relied heavily on a concept known as the escalation ladder, which theoretically would have permitted the national command authority to control the level of violence in a conflict with the USSR. Escalation ladder theory asserted that after the outbreak of hostilities between the United States and USSR, decisionmakers and commanders would be able to escalate or de-escalate at will using a conflict rheostat switch. Dial it up from tactical to strategic nuclear weapons, dial it down for conventional warfare. I discussed the US escalation ladder concept with members of the Soviet General Staff. They told me rather directly that the escalation ladder played no role in their operational planning. That's when it dawned on me that the US concept of deterrence was self-referential. America's deterrence policy, which paid no attention to Russia's cultural correlates, was designed to deter people who thought like Americans. A good example of self-referential deterrence occurred in the 1980s when Secretary of the Navy John Lehman advocated a 600-ship navy that was supposed to deter the USSR. "Deterred from doing exactly what?" many asked. Domination of the Black Sea? The United States, not the USSR, was a maritime power flanked by two oceans.

* * *

One of my project proposals submitted to RAND management attracted attention, of the wrong kind. RAND had a long history of providing advice on military matters to the Pentagon. In 1971, the eminent strategist and RAND analyst Bernard Brodie published an article in the journal *Foreign Policy* concerning the problems created by RAND's flawed recommendations concerning Vietnam War strategy. The article was entitled "Why Were We So (Strategically) Wrong?"² Brodie once observed that "Elegance of method is indeed marvelously seductive, even when it is irrelevant or inappropriate to the major problem." Brodie's concern was that the influence of quantitative analytical methods, such as systems analysis, crowded out the importance of regional political expertise as well as an understanding of a nation's cultural correlates of national defense, though he did not use that exact term. Brodie observed that if a country expert were handed a plan, the best response one could expect might be a shrug of the shoulders followed by the comment, "Eh! This will never work."

My proposal was to select a defense policy recommendation generated by RAND, then implemented by the DoD, that had been given credit for deterring or otherwise influencing the security policy or conduct of the USSR, bending their will as the Clausewitzians would say. There were plenty of examples to choose from, most of which were well known or unclassified. The task would have been to search the Soviet military archives for an assessment of how the USSR had reacted to that particular RAND recommendation. The fundamental question to be examined was whether the recommendation or policy had the intended effect on Soviet policy or conduct.

I proposed to test Brodie's position with an empirical study in which RAND management would select three or four policy recommendations that in their view had the greatest impact on the conduct or was responsible for a change in the USSR's intentions. I would instruct our research team in Moscow to search the General Staff archives for anything related to those policy recommendations. We could then compare the recommendation to both the Soviet perception as well as the subsequent effect on Soviet policy or conduct. I submitted the proposal, then thought no more of it.

Within a few days, Dr. Kelley appeared in the doorway to my office holding my proposal. On behalf of NDRI, Dr. Kelley rejected the cultural correlate proposal. The rejection wasn't unusual, but generally the rejection was delivered by inter-office mail, not by a house call.

"What's the objection?"

Dr. Kelley replied, "Do you have any idea how bad this could make RAND look?"

“No. I have no idea, actually. How bad?”

One was not entitled to any additional insight into the decision. Dr. Kelley instructed me to shred every copy and not discuss the proposal with anyone.

I have often wondered what remarkable insights we could have obtained if the archives of the USSR's General Staff have been copied and then transferred to a research facility in the United States. The massive collection of Russian and Soviet material held by the Hoover Institution comes to mind as an example of what could have been done. In light of the deterioration of US-Russia relations, such an opportunity will not re-occur in my lifetime, if ever.

On August 16, 1992, Ms. Nanette Gantz, program director for the Arroyo Center, came to see me in my office. The Arroyo Center, founded in 1982, was one of the US Army's FFRDC's for studies and analysis. In an organization that required researchers in the PSD to have a PhD, Ms. Gantz was unusual. She had a master's degree in regional studies from a second-tier school and had been hired without going through the dreaded “job talk,” but none of that hindered her career at RAND. With the right connections, the rules always applied to everyone else. The explanation for Ms. Gantz's meteoric rise within RAND to become the arbiter of a significant pot of the Arroyo Center's project funding was a matter of on-going lunchtime speculation.

The appearance of favoritism and the disequilibrium between the qualifications of the supplicants and the evaluator rubbed many in the PSD the wrong way. Academics are renown for expressing dissatisfaction and disagreement in ways that those who have not spent significant time within the Ivory Tower would not understand. Dr. Lambeth, for example, referred to Ms. Gantz as “Bonette.” Whenever Dr. Lambeth spotted Ms. Gantz in the five-story building, he played George Thorogood's “Bad to the Bone” through his computer speakers with his office door wide open. This inside joke was intended to be hilarious. The “life of the mind” can be remarkably sophomoric at times.

Ms. Gantz advised me that she had decided to turn down all of the proposals I had submitted to the Arroyo Center, including a proposal to continue our archive work in Moscow. Ms. Gantz advised me that all of my proposals for additional research in the former Soviet Union had been rejected because in her opinion the projects were “historical work that required high-risk primary source research.” I thought that “high-risk primary source research” was a good thing, but not Ms. Gantz.

I journaled:

August 16, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Sunday)

Got a visit from Nanette Gantz, program director for the Arroyo Center, on Thursday. She told me none of my proposals was approved. She said they were all “historical work based on high-risk (or pure?) research”

I hope the lot of the current RAND management is one day exposed for their gross incompetence. Thus far they have passed on the opportunity presented by the research team I’ve established in Moscow. That’s the RAND comparative advantage, not the fact we may get to the bottom of the POW-MIA issue – or come close to it anyway. Nanette’s visit reinforced my resolve to find a new job.

Arnold Horlich, perhaps RAND’s most respected Sovietologist turned CIS-ologist, has announced his intent to resign from RAND on principle. Apparently he is convinced the president of RAND, Jim Thomson, is destroying the company. So there is another one who has left under the “don’t let the door hit you in the butt on the way out” policy RAND seems to follow.

Our research team in Moscow had obtained access to the Soviet General Staff archives, the GRU (military intelligence) files, as well as whatever was in the “Special Archive,” but I couldn’t get anyone in RAND management to understand the importance or the potential.

RAND management published an internal newsletter, *RAND Items*, that was distributed in hardcopy once a month. Much to my surprise, the front page of the August edition highlighted what was described as “the first” agreement between RAND and the Russian government. The first agreement concerned the exchange of scholars or something to that effect. I sent a note to Dr. Kelley that pointed out that, in fact, the RAND archive research project included an agreement between RAND, Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, and the Russian Minister of Defense Marshal Shaposhnikov. That agreement, which had been the first agreement between RAND and the Russian government, might be of interest to the RAND staff as well. Perhaps the *RAND Items* editorial staff would be interested in publishing a brief notice to this effect.

The reaction was, in no uncertain terms, to mind my own business. If RAND management decided that the second agreement had been the first, first it was.

What was the point of taking the “nation’s highest national priority” more seriously than RAND did?

CONTINUATION FUNDING

As a result of DASD Carl Ford's insistence that RAND continue the project, ISA "study money" was allocated to support the continuation of our archive work in Moscow. Instead of reporting to Mr. Ford, however, the project sponsor became the new Office of the DASD for POW/MIA Affairs, led by DASD Ptak. RAND management, which did not want anything further to do with the "nation's highest national priority," was required to do so by *force majeure*. This arrangement, which RAND management referred to as a "distortion of RAND's research agenda," was unsustainable. At some point, DoD would tire of treating RAND like a moulard duck, force-feeding it funds for a project RAND did not want. To mix metaphors, it was inevitable that DoD's force-feeders would determine that the juice was not worth the squeeze. Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. would prevail in his stated objective which was to "shut this project *down*." The additional funding provided by ISA extended the Moscow archive research project from May 1992 to April 1993. The project that paid my salary was on a very short fuse, thus I acted accordingly.

* * *

In addition to continued funding for another year of research, ISA renewed the original mandate, then expanded the SoW. ISA's expansion of the SoW included the requirement to produce an assessment of whether any American citizens—civilian and military—had been held against their will on Soviet territory since 1945. The scope of the research expanded, but the method was substantially the same. In the follow-on phase, we were required to carry on with the assessment of documents and evidence obtained from Soviet sources as well as from the US archives. This was a relief due to the fact that continuity in a research project is extremely important.

The most daunting challenge we faced in the continuation phase was how to deal with the most formidable opponents of the project, namely, the overt opposition from the USRJC and the indifference as well as the mild hostility from RAND management. In addition, a less visible source of opposition began to stir. A number of lobbyists, conspiracy theorists, "evil creeps," and "crack pots," whose disproportionate interest in our work was not always positive, began to appear on the scene as well. As Voltaire advised, I tended my own garden. It never occurred to me or the

members of our team that anyone would take the “evil creeps” seriously. We simply ignored them. This may have been a mistake, but there would not have been much we could have done had we taken the loonies seriously. RAND management was responsible for top cover, and we depended on them to protect us as we carried out the project to which we were assigned.

I journaled:

May 15, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Friday)

I’ve pressured the program manager and the VP into holding a conference call on Monday. We’re supposed to come up with some sort of strategy. I hope it’s not too late since there are a number of Members of Congress who are suspicious of what I am doing. It’s absurd.

The program manager, Charlie Kelley, is so inept when it comes to politics one could easily conclude that he is a charter member of the conspiracy to avoid getting to the bottom of this. The truth is that this project is as intellectually challenging to him as choosing a new color scheme for the reserved spots in the parking lot. All of this political nonsense – some of which goes with the territory – and I’m still supposed to do the research and writing. My A#1 ace in the hole is the report being produced in Moscow. Matskovsky was here for three days. He’s confident.

Despite the external disturbances, we continued to focus on fulfilling the project’s primary objective, which was to determine if service members who went missing during America’s historic conflicts or any other American citizens had been transferred to the territory of the USSR. Staying focused on the SoW is always a difficult task in the best of times. Staying focused on research while being forced to look over one’s shoulder for snipers is almost impossible.

Later in May, I approved travel money for my RAND colleague Ted Karasik to travel to Moscow. Mr. Karasik, a PhD candidate at UCLA, spoke and read Russian adequately enough to conduct research in the Russian archives. Mr. Karasik’s task was to search for evidence that Americans had been held against their will within the Soviet *sharashka* prison camp system.

‘Sharaga’ or *sharashka* is a Russian slang term with various definitions. In the context of the gulag, a *sharashka* is a “secret project, designer’s office, etc., manned by specialists subjected to repressions. These were prisons or camps where Soviet and foreign scientists and technicians, including prisoners of war, were forced to work on military and industrial projects. These prisons

were part of the Special Technical Bureau (OTB), also known as the Fourth Special Department of the MVD. The MVD would select prisoners with special technical skills or knowledge and transfer them from their place of confinement to a *sharashka*, where their abilities could be exploited. Prisoner-technicians worked in all fields of military-industrial research, including aviation, electronics, rocketry, and nuclear weapons. Generally, prisoners in a *sharashka* received better food and treatment than prisoners in a camp or prison. Andrei Tupolev, the great aviation designer, and Sergei Korolev, father of the Soviet space program, were prisoners in a *sharashka*. These facilities are of particular interest because of their use in scientific and technical exploitation of prisoners of war. If U.S. personnel with knowledge of advanced weapons systems were transferred to the former Soviet Union, these prisons were a likely place of confinement for them.³

The last sentence in the previous quotation was taken from the report Mr. Karasik and I co-authored.⁴ The *sharashka* camps held foreign specialists, such as Nazi Germany's ballistic missile scientists, where their expertise was exploited by Soviet intelligence. Our research hypothesis was that if the Soviets had captured American specialists, they may have been transferred to and held in the *sharashka* camps as well.

I journaled:

May 21, 1992 – Santa Monica, RAND (Thursday)

My research assistant is off to Moscow tomorrow. All sorts of weird stuff is happening. As it turns out, the Russian delegation to the US-Russian Commission on POW-MIAs is beginning to get nervous. The Russian leader, General Volkogonov, is working with the Department of State (DoS). The DoS, as per usual, is way behind the curve. They are relying on Volkogonov to solve their problem and bring glory to the Commission – Volkogonov can't deliver.

My guess is Volkogonov's spies are aware of the results of our work in Moscow. It's too late to stop it. My guess is the DoD will finally get around to using this as a stick to whack DoS – and rightly so. The telling point of all of this is when Toon heard from Volkogonov he immediately accepted his position and questioned DoD and RAND. One could ask, "Whose side are you on?" This can be a miserable business pursued by staggeringly small-minded people.

My program director continues to manifest stupidity of Olympian dimensions.

All we could do was to focus on our work and hope that what economists call the "negative externalities" would stay external.

“VARIOUS AND SUNDRY KAZAKHS”

Sergei managed to establish contact with a citizen of Kazakhstan named Mr. Almaz Istekov who lived in Washington, DC. Mr. Istekov represented himself as having some sort of association with the Kazakh government. We could take a telephone conversation only so far, particularly with respect to evaluating whether Mr. Istekov would be a reliable, credible partner. Rather than incur the expense to go to DC, we flew Mr. Istekov out to Santa Monica to discuss how to conduct research in Kazakhstan to determine whether Americans may have been transferred through or relocated in Kazakhstan.

I journaled:

June 5, 1992 – RAND, Santa Monica (Friday)

Took care of Almaz Istekhov of Kazakhstan yesterday. He sort of represents the Kazakh gov’t in DC. He looks like a tall Vietnamese. He thinks US POWs may have been used as guinea pigs in Soviet atmospheric nuclear tests in the 1950s.

Our guys in Moscow were supposed to put a copy of the Shaposhnikov ministerial report in the Federal Express system in Moscow today. This would be a tremendous thing. I’m quite pleased with the progress I’ve made on my manuscript. It’s about 400 pages thus far. There’s some quality lurking in the quantity as well.

Our investment in this preliminary evaluation of Mr. Iztekhov was worth the time and money. One clue was that his answering machine greeting began with him singing in the Kazakh language in a weird, warning voice and then stating in English, “You’ve reached a representative of the Kazakh government.” Mr. Istekov presented himself as representative of the Kazakh government, but that wasn’t why we were interested in meeting him. We thought that he might be able to establish a research team to work in Soviet-era archives in Almaty, the capital of Kazakhstan, similar to the project we established in Moscow. We invited him to visit us as part of our “kiss a lot of frogs” strategy.

Mr. Istekov’s visit was more than a complete waste of time, with one exception. We quickly determined that Mr. Istekov would not be a reliable or credible addition to our research team. He knew nothing useful, didn’t listen, appeared to be so distracted that we wondered how he managed to get on the plane at Dulles and off the plane at LAX. We thanked him for his time; reimbursed him for taxi fares, meals, and incidentals; sent him on his way; and thought that was it.

After our meeting in Santa Monica, Mr. Istekov began to show up at hotels and other places either drunk or giving the distinct impression that he was blotto. Then he began writing letters to various organizations stating that he represented RAND, which the management of the organization frowned upon big time, with justification. A year or so later, Mr. Eugene Rumer, a RAND staff member, tried to organize a conference in Kazakhstan. Somehow, Mr. Istekov found out about the conference, and for reasons known only to Mr. Istekov, he managed to sabotage it. I was gone by the time this happened, but Sergei was still at RAND.

Sergei was criticized in his annual evaluation by Dr. Pollack for having “relations with various and sundry Kazakhs.” At RAND, one was not criticized for doing nothing; rather, one was criticized for doing something.

Another kiss had been wasted on another frog.

* * *

NORTH VIETNAM AND NORTH KOREA

One of the tasks in DoD’s expanded SoW directed us to determine whether the Vietnamese had taught the North Koreans how to extort money from the United States in exchange for the remains of missing Americans. It was not immediately clear why this task was relevant to the fulfillment of Congressman Miller’s Amendment 120 to the FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act concerning archive research. Why this issue was a source of concern and to whom in DoD, and for what reason, were not included in the SoW agreed to between DoD and RAND.

The archives shed some light on why concern over collusion between North Vietnam and North Korea had been included in the SoW approved by DoD. Four years before the RAND project was commissioned, in 1987 the CIA had addressed this issue in a Special National Intelligence Estimate (SNIE) entitled, *Hanoi and the POW/MIA Issue*.⁵ I was not aware of the report until well after it had been approved for release (declassified) in January 1996, two years after my RAND report was published. Annex A, “The Korea Connection,” stated:

Vietnam is not the only Asian country trying to exploit POW/MIA issues. [...] Since mid-1985, North Korea has tried to exploit the Korean war dead as a part of a continuing attempt to create a forum for direct official contact with the United States. P’yongyang has offered to return remains of the over 2,500 missing and unaccounted for UN POWs believed located in North

Korea. However, negotiations have stalemated over the North's unwillingness to employ the multinational Military Armistice Commission, which includes South Korean representatives, as a communications channel.

Noting Hanoi's attempts to exploit POW/MIA issues and the growing interest of Korean War veteran's groups, P'yongyang will continue to play its MIA hand. P'yongyang may repatriate some remains either to keep the issue alive or in an attempt to project an image of international responsibility. However, P'yongyang is unlikely to agree to joint recovery efforts in North Korea with any US agency.

The CIA report, which makes no reference to US payments for remains, provided no evidence of the way in which the government of the DPRK allegedly "noted" Hanoi's "attempts to exploit POW/MIA issues." None of the physical evidence supported such a conclusion. As noted in my RAND report in 1994:

North Korea has not demonstrated the anthropological sophistication of the Chinese or Vietnamese, for example. If North Korea is watching Vietnamese behavior it has yet to demonstrate any lessons learned.

Initially, the DPRK did not ask for any compensation for turning over remains. For example, they turned over 208 boxes of remains at Panmunjom in the early 1990s at no cost to the US government. The remains of nearly 500 individuals were present in the 208 boxes. In other words, the North Korean government provided the remains of nearly 500 individuals without asking for any compensation for that transfer.

The main snag was that the North Koreans were attempting to use the remains issue as a way to establish a direct channel of communication with the US government. When the DPRK transferred remains at Panmunjom, the recipients were soldiers assigned to the UNCMAC, which included South Korean personnel. Following the success of Zhou Enlai's successful strategy in 1955 to use UN POW's as hostages to motivate the US to engage in direct talks, Pyongyang sought to leverage the remains for political purposes. The North's objective, which was to deal directly with the US government, not UNCMAC, succeeded on two accounts. First, the US government agreed to bilateral negotiations. Second, after 1994, DoD began to pay the North Koreans for remains that heretofore had been transferred by North Korea through the UNCMAC channel at no cost to the US government.

Between May 1990 and July 1992, the DPRK transferred 208 containers of remain in a series of unilateral turnovers through the UN Command Military Armistice Commission. The transfers occurred at no cost to the US government, other than the cost to transport the remains from Panmunjom to the CILHI.

In 1992, the relationship between the North Koreans and DoD changed. One eyewitness stated that the North Korean government's eyes were opened to the possibility of huge "gratitude payment" after a US military officer, on his own initiative, presented the North Koreans with a briefcase full of cash and then asked, "How much do you want?"⁶

In 1992, for the first time the North Koreans "asserted a claim for compensation of expenses connected to its prior unilateral recovery and repatriation of US MIA remains." After DoD revealed a willingness to pay enormous sums of money and to provide fuel, equipment, and luxury vehicles in exchange for access to North Korea, there was no turning back. The only issue on the table was how much DoD would pay for the privilege.

From then on, the North Koreans demanded that the US government compensate the DPRK for its efforts. Initially, the North Koreans left the question of what they referred to as a "gratitude payment" to the American side. After the North Koreans realized that the Americans were willing to subsidize the North Korean regime, the demands for cash, supplies, vehicles, fuel, food (including fresh fish, fruit, and vegetables), and luxury goods ballooned beyond all reason and became more specific.

Ambassador C. Kenneth Quinones, who participated as a member of the US team that negotiated with the North Koreans concerning the recovery of remains of American servicemen who went missing during the Korean War, shed considerable light on how the North Korean position evolved.⁷

Previous DPRK initiatives to engage the United States in negotiations concerning remains in 1986 and 1987 when the DPRK asked the Soviet Embassy in Washington to invite members of Congress to a meeting to discuss the issue had gone nowhere due to the fact that the US side did not respond.

Between 1996 and 2002, DPMO made arrangements with the DPRK to conduct joint recovery operations (JROs), also known as joint field activities (JFAs). Between July 1996 and October 2002, 25 JROs were conducted in the DPRK. In order to understand how this access was achieved, it is necessary to follow the money. It is important to note that

the compensation for remains was separate from US payments to North Korea for their compliance with the agreement to freeze all activity at its Yongbyon Nuclear Research Center.

On August 24, 1993, North Korean People's Army Major General Ri Dok-gyu and USAF General Nels Running, representing the United Nations, signed the "Agreement on Remains-Related Matters." The agreement became:

The foundation for regularizing cooperation on remains-recovery operations and organizing the Korean People's Army – United Nations Command Remains Working Group, whose mission is to locate, exhume, repatriate and identify the remains of United Nations Command personnel, located north of the military demarcation line.⁸

The implementation of this agreement was determined by bilateral negotiations between the DPRK and the DoD. Responsibility for the fulfillment and administration of the August 1993 agreement was assigned to DPMO and CILHI.

The August 1993 arrangement was a mirror image of how the Chinese government had leveraged the detention of 15 USAF members after the Korean War to compel the United States into bilateral negotiations with a government Washington did not recognize. The government of South Korea suspected, and the American ambassador agreed, that North Korea was attempting to use the remains issue to manipulate Washington into direct talks with Pyongyang. Pyongyang had simply taken a page from Zhou Enlai's playbook, with remarkable success. Important for the purpose of this discussion is the fact that the "Agreement on remains-related matters of 24 August 1993" makes no mention of any compensation or payments to the North Korean government in exchange for complying with the agreement. The North Koreans, however, interpreted the phrase "render support" in paragraph 3 to "mean that the UNC owed it three million dollars to compensate for costs associated with the 162 sets of remains repatriated between 1990 and 1993."

On January 2, 1994, CNN broadcast an interview with me concerning the remains the North Koreans had recently turned over that they alleged were those of missing American servicemen. The US government reportedly paid the North Korean government nearly \$900,000 for "actual recovery costs," which the North Koreans referred to as "gratitude payments." I stated in the interview that the justification for such a payment

to the DPRK was “baloney.” DoD had never conducted an assessment of the value of services allegedly provided by the DPRK. Instead, DPMO adopted a negotiating approach that amounted to little more than an argument over how much taxpayer money to hand over to the North Korean regime.

On January 12, 1996, during a meeting at Hickam Air Force Base, KPA Senior Colonel Pak Rum-su demanded three million dollars in compensation for the “labour work, material, equipment and facilities used up and damaged in searching for, disinterring and identifying the US remains.” Knowing that the UNC would agree to reimburse the DPRK two million dollars, retired General James Wold, the head of DPMO, offered to pay one million dollars. After the DPRK delegation rejected the offer, they were sent packing back to Pyongyang with nothing to show for their effort. According to Ambassador Quinones, the North Korean People’s Army was desperate to obtain dollars, while the North Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs was more interested in “building positive relations and political capital with Washington.”

On May 4, 1996, the kabuki dance continued at the Hyatt Hotel in New York City. The North Koreans demanded three million dollars. Without any analytical work or detailed statements that would support payments of any kind, Mr. Wold countered by offering two million dollars. Neither General Wold nor anyone on the US side had any training or experience with any forensic science; thus they were incapable of evaluating the merits of the North Korean claim for compensation. The fact that scientifically illiterate people were sent to negotiate a scientific agreement would have been unthinkable had the issue been heart surgery, radioactive material disposal, or verification by national technical means. That no one within DoD thought this arrangement was in the least bit unusual once more confirms the science of the accounting program was not just controlled, it was excluded by politics.

Ambassador Quinones noted that “the UNC/MAC representative expressed displeasure with DPMO’s handling of the negotiations.” Mr. Wold, who had no skin in the game, rejected the UNC/MAC’s criticism. The North Korean delegation accepted the offer and then agreed to the principle of organizing joint recovery operations (JROs) in North Korea. Mr. Wold had formalized DoD’s “cash for remains” policy by writing a taxpayer-backed check for two million dollars.

On May 9, 1996, Mr. Wold and Ambassador Kim signed the “New York Agreement on USA-DPRK Remains Talks.” The first of the agreement’s three short paragraphs stated:

1. The US side expresses appreciation to the DPRK side for its past sincere efforts in recovering and returning 162 sets of US servicemen’s remains. The US side will pay the DPRK side two million US dollars during the week of 20 May at Panmunjom for the costs associated with the labor, materials, equipment and facilities used by the DPRK.

A handwritten note stated, “Both sides agreed this compensation will not serve as a precedent for any future compensation.” The New York agreement was a drop in the bucket compared to the subsequent “compensation” paid by DoD to the DPRK against no invoice or analytical reckoning of any kind. Ambassador Quinones stated, “In the case of North Korea, it was impossible to specify compensation for expenses connected to the remains returned 1990–93. Instead, DPMO preferred to settle the matter with a single, lump sum payment.” As demonstrated by DPMO’s support for the US-Russian Commission on POW/MIA Affairs, the Other People’s Money (OPM) window was wide open.

In May 1996, during a visit to Pyongyang, Congressman Bill Richardson (D-NM) asked the North Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs if the DPRK would be willing to “accept food aid as compensation for further MIA remains repatriation.” The North Koreans latched onto the proposal immediately. The White House reminded the Congressman that members of Congress are not authorized to negotiate on behalf of the US government, but the damage had been done. The North Koreans wasted no time.

On June 8, 1996, DPMO and a team from CILHI met with the North Koreans. Despite the fact that the talks included North Korea’s demand to be compensated for battlefield archaeology services, no one on the CILHI team—Colonel William Jordan, Captain Mario Garcia, and Sergeant Frank Tauanuu—had any training or experience with either archaeology or any other forensic science. Sergeant Tauanuu, for example, was a mortuary affairs specialist, while Captain Garcia was a member of CILHI’s S3, the operations shop. The CILHI team chosen by Colonel Jordan excluded

everyone from the scientific staff. A scientist familiar with firsthand knowledge of these events stated that CILHI commander Colonel Jordan chose Garcia and Tauanuu because he “liked being around other Army guys.”

The pattern of scientific illiteracy continued even during technical talks to establish the first JRO, which was an archaeological and anthropological mission. During the talks, the North Koreans sought to “squeeze the US for as much money as possible for each category of compensation,” yet the US delegation lacked any expertise required to evaluate the North Korean claims. Science was not given a back seat; instead, scientists were not even invited to the party.

Ambassador Quinones described the scene when the first cargo flight arrived in Pyongyang at 1:30 AM on July 8, 1996.

Our KPA hosts guided us to the USSR built IL-76 jet as it parked. The opening of the large rear doors revealed much more than the JRO cargo. Two Isuzu cargo trucks (each filled with bottled water purchased in China) and a Jeep Cherokee were slowly backed out of the airplane. A cargo pallet filled with CILHI equipment followed. Then emerged four huge tires, a US made Hewlett-Packard computer server and other communication equipment, all addressed to the DPRK Ministry of Telecommunications, plus cases of European wine and liquor.

Two more cargo flights arrived early 9 July with 7 Jeep Cherokees, tents, small generators, propane gas stoves, and related equipment plus a ton of rice, and a variety of condiments and fresh vegetables. The sight of the Jeeps angered Colonel Pak and a KPA officer tried to pry the “Jeep” symbol from one vehicle. Pak boomed that being seen in Chinese made Jeep Cherokees would embarrass the KPA when the UN World Food Program used much more expensive Toyota Land Cruisers. His grumbling ended after we explained that the US designed Jeeps had been purchased to minimize possible criticism from the US Congress.

In addition:

DPMO authorized providing the KPA sufficient money to purchase beef and other fresh food for the JRO’s KPA members. ... The KPA soldiers ate freshly cooked meals twice a day but the Americans survived on MREs and canned food that they had brought with them from Hawaii.

The two million US dollars provided by DPMO more than likely facilitated the North Korean shopping spree. The US Congress would not have noticed if DoD had purchased a fleet of Ferraris.

* * *

Concern over the huge sums DoD's JTF-FA paid to foreign governments for access to battlefields for the purpose of conducting investigations and recovery operations was raised by various members of Congress with regard to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and the Lao Peoples Democratic Republic. The DoD Inspector General investigated these concerns in 1997 when JTF-FA was under the PACOM.⁹

The 1997 assessment of DoD payments to Vietnam and Laos focused on compensation "based on the rate designated in the MOU between the central government of Vietnam and the U.S. Government." The OIG referred to an "April 193 MOU signed by representatives of JTF-FA and Vietnamese government" and an additional MOU, "Financial Arrangements for Joint Document Center and Film Review Project," signed on August 23, 1993. The payments investigated concerned labor, land compensation, and helicopter blade hours. The OIG's investigation, which makes no mention of massive transfers of cash, food, and SUVs to either Vietnam or Laos, refers to a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). The amounts in question were \$300 k to \$500 k in land damage compensation, \$1.5 million in per diem and \$511500.00 in "organizing fees for the services of Vietnamese officials in FY 1995," \$3.56 million for rental of helicopters "from the Defense Ministry of Vietnam," and some other allegations that were determined to be unwarranted, such as that vehicles provided had been leased to tourists. The OIG's investigation of Laos included \$510,840.00 in FY 1996 for expenses based on "The Minutes of Understanding Financial Arrangements for Joint Field Activities," signed on October 4, 1994, that established charges and operational expenses, and \$32,749.00 for Laos National Film Archive expenses.

According to the OIG, the DoD "has no humanitarian assistance program with Vietnam and provides no humanitarian assistance to that country. Laos receives humanitarian assistance in conjunction with the USPACOM Cooperative Engagement Strategy." Over a seven-year period, the United States "delivered \$4.9 million in humanitarian assistance to Laos," which included training and assistance in "demining and explosive ordnance disposal."

The OIG concluded, “We found no evidence that the government of Laos has linked humanitarian assistance as a condition for support of MIA full accounting activities.”

JTF-FA left a trail of evidence that included Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) and major contracts awarded by JTF-FA through the Naval Regional Contracting Center, Singapore. “The JTF-FA follows Federal Acquisition Regulation procedures and is supported and assisted by Naval Regional Contracting Center, Singapore, contracting officers.” The JTF-FA “accounted for transferred [U.S. Government property] by hand receipts.”

The OIG’s evaluation found no references to transfers of cash, food, or fuel to either Vietnam or Laos. All of the US government’s arrangements with Vietnam and Laos were memorialized by a MoU, which within the DoD is regarded as a contract.

* * *

In contrast to payments made to Vietnam and Laos, the amount of cash, equipment, luxury vehicles and food that the US government agreed to provide to the DPRK was staggering.

Beginning in 1996, at least 33 joint recovery operations had been conducted in North Korea. Remarkably little information has been released concerning the terms and conditions and financing of these operations, with two exceptions. In 2004 and 2011, two deals were struck between DPMO and the North Korean government. Both deals with the DPRK differ dramatically from the agreements made with Vietnam and Laos. The recovery program had been suspended in October 2002 until June 2003 after the North Koreans disclosed that they had been operating a nuclear weapon development program in secret. One would think that DPMO would learn from this experience.

In 2004, the “Annex” to the “Record of Agreement” between DPMO and North Korea obligated the United States to pay North Korea \$5,500,000 in cash.¹⁰

The schedule for the cash delivery was as follows:

The first payment of \$1,500,00.00 will be delivered on February 10, 2005. The second payment of \$2,500,000.00 will be delivered on August 10, 2005. The final payment of \$1,500,000.00 will be delivered on October 20, 2005. All payments will be made in Panmunjom as in the past.

A participant in the cash delivery described how several pallets of 100-dollar bills were counted one-by-one on the tarmac of the Pyongyang airport. The North Koreans provided mechanical bill counters of the type one would find in a bank or a casino. After those broke down, the North Koreans and Americans sat on the tarmac, counting the C-notes one-by-one. The money counting exercise took several hours.

In return for \$5.5 million in cash, the North Koreans agreed to provide:

- Access to a facsimile machine.
- Telephone capable of calling the United States.
- Weekly visits to each field site.
- Access to continuous communications via telephone and two-way communication radios with the base camp.

This deal was unbalanced. The relationship between services and compensation was way out of equilibrium. In addition to \$5.5 million in cash, DPMO agreed to provide food, supplies, equipment and luxury vehicles. DPMO agreed to:

- Provide 83,136 kg of rice and 10,392 kg of vegetables, 395,055 liters of gasoline, 111,504 liters of diesel, 12,500 liters of kerosene, 12,265 liters of lubricant, and other necessary supplies for the joint activities. The shipment will arrive not later than March 1, 2005, weather permitting.
- Leave behind 24 Nissan Patrols and two vans.
- Replace 14 Nissan Patrols and two cargo trucks with 24 Mitsubishi Pajeros and two new cargo trucks.
- The United States will lease 20 sedans, four buses and four trucks for each JFA, 12 sedans for the pre-investigation period, and 25 trucks for ten days to transport supplies and equipment from base camps during deployment or redeployment.

DPMO did not include even a rough estimate of the costs of this food aid, commodities, and vehicles. Rather than reasonable payment for services rendered, DPMO provided supplies and equipment like a satrap paying danegeld to a hegemon.

The cost of 24 Nissan Patrols and 24 Mitsubishi Pajeros at an average price of \$30,000 (without shipping) would have been an additional

\$1,500,000. The “Arrangement” was silent on the cost of leasing a total of 112 sedans, 20 buses, and 45 trucks. In a command economy such as North Korea’s, the costs, which would have been artificial, could have calculated easily.

The total amount of the payment to North Korea would have been in excess of \$8,000,000 plus the cost of rice, vegetables, gasoline, diesel, kerosene, lubricant, and other commodities. In November 2004, for example, the world commodity price for rice was approximately \$380 per metric ton; thus the cost of 83.14 metric tons of rice would have been approximately \$32,000 plus shipping. Note that the 2004 “Record of Arrangement” did not include any “meat.” This oversight would be corrected in 2011.

All of the food aid, supplies, and vehicles, which were intended to support five JFAs, were to be delivered to North Korea on or before March 1, 2005, “weather permitting.” The first JFA was scheduled for April 16 to May 24, 2005, the second May 28 to July 5, 2005.

On May 25, 2005, “the Pentagon abruptly suspended U.S. efforts to recover the remains of American soldiers from North Korea, accusing the Koreans of creating an environment that could jeopardize the safety of U.S. workers.”¹¹ The North Korean government retained all of the food aid, supplies, and vehicles intended to support five JFAs after only one had been completed. In a normal transaction, the overpayment would have been carried forward on the balance sheet as a credit.

The evidence acquired thus far did not include the faintest suggestion that the North Vietnamese played the slightest role in teaching the North Korean government how to extract payments from the US government in exchange for the remains of American servicemen who went missing during the Korean War.

* * *

In October 2011, a US delegation led by DASD/DPMO Robert J. Newberry met with a North Korean delegation in Bangkok, Thailand. The purpose of the meeting was to negotiate terms and conditions for US teams to recover remains of American servicemen who went missing during the Korean War. The recovery operations were composed of four separate JFAs.

The US delegation included representatives from DoD, the DoS, the PACOM, and the UN Command/Korea. Mr. Newberry, a scientifically

illiterate pilot who held a master's degree in political science, had no training or subject matter expertise in any of the forensic sciences. After DPMO, Mr. Newberry was reassigned to the Assistant Secretary of Defense's office for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, as the office director for Combatting Terrorism Technical Support, a position that required no scientific training or experience.

Negotiations with the North Koreans were led by Ms. Melinda Cooke, who had joined DIA's POW/MIA Office in 1988 as a Research Intelligence Officer. In October 2011, Ms. Cooke was DPMO's Senior Director for Personnel Accounting Policy. Ms. Cooke, who "played a critical role in negotiations with...the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 2011... which led to breakthrough agreements," received the Secretary of Defense Award for Exceptional Civilian Service in 2001, 2009, and 2012. The citation for the most recent award called her "the Department's subject matter expert for the Defense personnel accounting community."¹² Ms. Cooke, who in Washington would be referred to as a "policy wonk," was responsible for negotiating with the North Koreans concerning battlefield archaeology, an academic discipline for which she lacked any training or experience.

Scientifically illiterate policy wonks who are not subject matter experts are expected to have the integrity to understand that they lack technical expertise. This is why negotiators are supported by a "technical working group" that is responsible for working through complex scientific problems. The fate of SALT I, for example, depended on whether the US and Soviet sides could agree on the extraordinarily complex issue of verification by national technical means. Neither the United States' chief negotiator Ambassador Gerard Smith nor Secretary of State Henry Kissinger who put the agreement together through a back channel was an expert on verification. This is why the US side created the SALT Verification Panel, the Verification Working Group, as well as the aptly named Backstopping Committee. All of these groups had the same responsibility, which was to support the US SALT diplomatic team as it negotiated with the Soviets over verification by national technical means.

Backed by hubris of the type that was never in short supply in the accounting program, neither DASD Newberry nor Ms. Cooke recognized their lack of expertise or sought assistance from experts. The purpose of the negotiations was to reach an agreement that would allow US teams to conduct battlefield archaeological operations in North Korea. Despite the fact that recovery operations would be led and staffed by anthropologists

and archaeologists from the CIL, and without any regard for the fact that recovery operations were conducted according to the CIL standard operating procedure, DASD Newberry and DPMO's Ms. Cooke not only excluded CIL scientists from the US delegation, they did not seek any input from the CIL, and the expert advice that was offered was ignored.

One of the JPAC participants in Bangkok, retired Army Colonel Scott Thomas, the deputy director of J4/Planning who had participated in recovery operations in North Korea, stated that he was not allowed in the conference room where the negotiations took place. No one with any experience with recovery operations in North Korea or with any scientific expertise was allowed by DPMO to participate in the negotiations, and all of the suggestions concerning logistics and scientific procedures raised by Mr. Thomas and others were ignored by the DoD negotiators. This was another unambiguous example of the primacy of policy over science.

Ms. Cooke expressed concern to Mr. Scott that the North Korean delegation might take offense if the US negotiators pressed the DPRK for meaningful concessions or was asked to provide answers to important questions. Ms. Cooke's concern for the comfort and well-being of the North Korean negotiators extended into other areas, including the scientific. Mr. Scott suggested to Ms. Cooke that she should ask the North Koreans if the remains of missing American servicemen were in storage anywhere in North Korea. Ms. Cooke was reluctant to pose the question out of concern that it might irritate the DPRK delegation. This was a manifestation of the jejun American tendency to believe that if "we are not mean to them, they will not be mean to us."

The resulting US-DPRK deal, which was a monument to political control over the science of human skeletal identification, was not a "break-through agreement" in any meaningful sense of the term, primarily due to the fact that the deal was not an "agreement."

In the resulting "Record of Arrangement"¹³ between DPMO and the Korean People's Army's Panmunjom Mission represented by Major General Pak Rim Su, that was negotiated by Ms. Cooke and signed by DASD Newberry, the North Koreans were asked to agree that "A U.S. anthropologist will direct all joint excavation activities and will determine the scope, nature, and extent of work at each excavation site." DPMO was asking the North Koreans to recognize the authority of the American scientists, something DPMO was unwilling to do itself.

In the "Arrangement," DPMO agreed to transfer an enormous amount of US taxpayer money to the North Korean regime, without any obligations

being incurred by the North beyond goodwill. The 2011 “Arrangement” did not apply any of the unused food aid and other credits carried over from the 2004 “Arrangement.”

Under the terms of the “Record of Arrangement,” DPMO advised that it would:

- Provide necessary equipment and materials to build the base camps and conduct joint activities.
- Provide 30 new sport utility vehicles and two new cargo trucks.
- Lease 30 sedans, four buses, and four trucks for the pre-investigation period and 20 sedans, six buses, and four trucks for the joint field activities.
- Provide 72 tons of rice, 8.9 tons of vegetables, 26 tons of meat, 333,204 liters of gasoline, 100,000 liters of diesel fuel, 12,500 liters of kerosene, seven tons of propane, and 8660 liters of lubricant

Neither the 2004 nor the 2011 “Record of Arrangement” placed a market or cash value on the value of the food, commodities, supplies, and equipment DPMO agreed to transfer to North Korea. This meant that somewhere within DoD, DPMO had access to an open account that could be drawn upon to pay for “26 tons of meat” and 24 luxury SUVs regardless of the dollar amount of the purchase and transport costs. This type of open-ended obligation is unheard of in government contracting.

In addition to the surplus that should have been carried forward from 2004 to 2005, the 2011 “Record of Arrangement” provided far more food than the North Koreans involved in the JFAs could have possibly consumed over the timeframe of the 2012 program. The “Record of Arrangement” stated that “an overall total of 540 KPA personnel” would be involved in the JFAs including the “pre-investigation” and “advance work” phases. Assuming the weights were in metric tons (1k kg) as in the 2004 “Record of Arrangement,” the 2011 “Arrangement” provided for 1.13 kg (2.5 pounds) of “meat,” 3 kg (6.6 pounds) of rice, and 38 grams (1.34 ounces) of vegetables *per KPA participant per day*. Assuming that a human being could eat 4.13 kg (9.1 pounds) of meat and rice every day, at a minimum, this amounted to over 6095 calories *per KPA participant per day*, not including snacks and dessert.

In 2011, the average person on earth consumed 2870 calories per day, while Americans topped the chart with 3641 calories.¹⁴ In contrast, in 2011 the average North Korean consumed 2103 calories per day, 1318 of calories (63 percent) from grains including rice, and 97 calories (five percent) from meat.

The 2011 “Record of Arrangement” basically tripled the average North Korean’s daily intake of calories by increasing meat consumption from 97 grams (3.42 ounces) of meat to a whopping 1130 grams (39.86 ounces or 2.5 pounds), the equivalent of eating ten four-ounce (113.40 gram) ham-burger patties every day.

The mix of meat and grain provided by the 2011 “Record of Arrangement,” which greatly exceeded the average North Korean’s daily diet, was nearly twice that of an average America’s daily intake. This hardly mattered, of course, as the food aid was delivered to the North Korean government, not to the KPA workers involved in the 2012 JFAs.

* * *

In 2011, as in 2004, in addition to the food, fuel, and vehicles, DPMO agreed to pay North Korea a massive amount of cash as well. DPMO agreed to:

- Reimburse the Korean People’s Army for the services it provided, a total of \$5,699,160.00

The cash was to be paid in three installments. According to paragraph 7 of the Annex to the “Record of Arrangement”:

The first payment of \$1,500,000.00 will be delivered on March 9, 2012.
The second payment of \$2,699,160.00 will be delivered on August 24, 2012. The final payment of \$1,500,00.00 will be delivered on October 19, 2012. All payments will be made in Pyongyang.

The initial \$1.5 million was scheduled to be paid on March 9, during the “KPA pre-investigation phase” that was scheduled for March 1 to March 29, 2012. DPMO agreed to “reimburse” the Korean People’s Army for services that had not yet been provided. “Reimbursement” for services that the service provider not only has not provided, but by the terms of the “Arrangement” has the option not to provide at all, is generally regarded as bribery, extortion, money laundering, or garden-variety theft. The initial installment of \$1.5 million in cash was delivered on March 9, 2012, two weeks before the JFA was canceled.

* * *

The title, “Record of Arrangement,” reveals everything one needs to know about DPMO’s flimflammy. There is no such concept in common law as a “Record of Arrangement.” When one buys a car, opens a cell phone account, or rents an apartment, one signs a contract. Organizations that wish to partner with the DoD to provide or receive services are required to sign either a contract or a MoU.¹⁵ DPMO simply invented something called a “Record of Arrangement” that was intended to appear to be an agreement, when in fact it was nothing of the sort.

The amateurish nature of the “Record of Arrangement” was further revealed by the fact that the document contained neither an enforcement mechanism nor a meaningful dispute resolution clause, both of which are standard features of a legitimate “agreement,” contract, or MoU. In contrast to the MoUs between the US and Vietnamese governments, the North Korean government was not required or even asked by DPMO to provide receipts or any other form of proof that any of the services for which they were “reimbursed” had been provided in the first place.

Paragraph 12 of the 2011 Arrangement stated that “disagreements regarding the interpretation or application of this Record of Arrangements should be resolved through consultation by the representatives of both sides,” when it was precisely this type of consultation that would have created the disagreement in the first place.

To ensure that North Korea could amend or simply fail to abide by the “Record of Arrangement” at will and with impunity, DPMO agreed in paragraph 12 of the 2011 “Arrangement” that:

This Record of Arrangement is not intended to be a binding document. It is a voluntary arrangement setting forth activities that both sides intend to undertake, making best efforts.

An agreement to make an agreement is not an agreement. This is another example of why DPMO had to refer to the document as an “Arrangement” rather than a contract, a Memorandum of Agreement, a MoU, or simply an “Agreement.” In practical terms, the “Record of Arrangement” obligated the US side to perform due to the fact that the North Koreans had something DPMO wanted. The DPRK, which was not required to comply, could withdraw from the “Arrangement” after receiving all of the supplies and cash at any time with impunity due to the fact that at the end of the day, food aid, fuel, supplies, and vehicles were all that the North wanted. An “Arrangement” that required the American

side to provide full payment in advance yet allowed the North Korean side to withdraw with impunity after receiving the payment is an “Arrangement” that DPMO could only have made with OPM.

Paragraph 11 to the “Annex to the [2011] Record of Arrangement” committed the American citizens who participated in the JFA mission, among several extraordinary obligations, “to abide by the laws of the DPRK.” North Korea’s laws included:

- Strict adherence to one of 28 state-sanctioned haircuts.
- Anyone caught with a Bible in North Korea will be imprisoned or executed, or both.
- Everyone is required to provide human waste to be used as fertilizer.

Fortunately, compliance with this commitment was optional as well; otherwise any American with an illegal haircut who wanted to take the Bible along when visiting a flush toilet would have been in big trouble.

Finally, the vast amount of food aid provided to the North Korean government might suggest that not all of it would be distributed to the KPA participants in the planned 2012 JFAs. In 1996–1997, members of Congress expressed a similar concern with regard to the reimbursements and land compensation provided to the government of Vietnam. The concern was that “the government keeps the payments and the [Vietnamese] farmers see very little compensation.”

After investigating these questions, the DoD OIG concluded that the issue of whether the food aid actually got to those who provided the labor and services to support the recovery of remains of missing American servicemen was not an American concern.

The compensation amounts paid to individual Vietnamese farmers are determined by Vietnamese government officials. Although individual farmers may be involved in negotiating a particular compensation, the agreement to pay compensation is between the U.S. government and the government of Vietnam and is based on the MOU. The determinations made by the government of Vietnam for payment to an individual are an internal matter of a sovereign nation.¹⁶

Applying the same standard to North Korea, the US position was that the decision whether to feed the KPA participants or to distribute “72 tons of rice, 8.9 tons of vegetables, and 26 tons of meat” among the

kleptocrats running North Korea was an “internal affair of a sovereign nation” of no concern to the US government.

With respect to DoD’s question, the bottom line was that the North Vietnamese government played no role in DPMO’s decision to transfer prodigious amounts of food aid, commodities, luxury vehicles, and cash to the North Korean government.

Every bit of evidence pointed toward the same conclusion. With regard to the question of whether the North Koreans had collaborated with or learned from the Vietnamese, the North Koreans had not. The US military, not the North Vietnamese, was responsible for teaching the North Koreans how to extort money from the US government with regard to the recovery of the remains of American servicemen who went missing during the Korean War.

Congress has never conducted an oversight hearing concerning the tens of millions of dollars in cash, equipment, fresh vegetables, and luxury vehicles that JTF-FA and DPMO transferred to the North Korean regime.

* * *

The scientific illiteracy of the US negotiators did not inhibit them from making decisions concerning science. Once on the ground, the CIL scientists could compensate for some of the liabilities imposed on them. A profound lack of understanding of or appreciation for North Korea’s cultural correlates of national security, however, introduced an internal contradiction into the “Arrangement.”

The contradiction, which was avoidable, was responsible for a collapse of the “Arrangement” that was both predictable as well as preventable. The key thing to remember is that North Korea did not cancel the 2005 and 2012 JFAs; instead, they were both canceled by the US government. All Pyongyang had to do in order to retain the massive transfer of food aid, commodities, luxury vehicles, and cash was to provoke the US government. Cancellation of the JFAs by the US government *after* the food aid and cash had been transferred relieved the North Koreans of any obligation to perform. For North Korea, it was an ideal outcome, the equivalent of Br’er Fox punishing Br’er Rabbit by throwing him into the briar patch.

The first “JFA” covered by the 2011 “Record of Arrangement” was scheduled to take place between April 24 and May 29, 2012, in two areas: Unsan County, which is approximately 60 miles (96 km) north of the

capital Pyongyang, and near the Chosin Reservoir, where more than 2000 members of the Army and Marines went missing.¹⁷ Getting through the April–May JFA was absolutely essential to the success of the entire undertaking. One would have thought that the DPMO policy experts would have applied their minds to ensure that the initial JFA, like the first hurdle in a track meet, would be cleared.

DPMO, a policy shop that insisted on negotiating the terms and conditions for a battlefield archaeological mission, also ignored and excluded the CIL, which would have been responsible for conducting the JFAs. Exerting political control over science weakened the US position. This self-inflicted wound, which is directly attributable to the hubris of scientific illiteracy, was compounded by a lack of appreciation that bordered on a total ignorance of North Korea’s cultural correlates of national security.

The cultural correlates of national security are the beliefs, historical experience, customs, and the way of thinking and behaving that form the foundation of a nation’s security. In addition to borders and governments, nation-states consist of people who shared common characteristics, such as language, traditions, culture, and morality. Bernard Brodie described a nation-state as a collection of “accustomed ways and accustomed thoughts,” which is a “cake of custom” that forms the cultural correlates of a nation’s security policy.¹⁸ This “cake of custom” is an intangible yet crucial component of national security.

Without a clear and concise understanding of North Korea’s cultural correlates of national security, any negotiation designed to influence the DPRK to comply with a voluntary “Record of Arrangement” would amount to a little more than guesswork. For example, imagine that DPMO had been assigned the task to make a similar deal with England. Imagine that DPMO’s lead negotiators, who could not speak or read English, had never heard of the Norman invasion, the Battle of Hastings, the Magna Carta, Winston Churchill, or the Battle of Britain. Imagine that the DPMO negotiators refused to listen to or take advice from people who had actually been to England or spoke English. The resulting assessment of Britain’s culture correlates of national security would amount to a little more than gibberish, and the result of the negotiation would be a lopsided, convincing loss for DPMO.

This is precisely what happened during the October 2011 US-DPRK negotiations concerning access to North Korea for the purpose of conducting a JFA to recover the remains of American servicemen who went missing during the Korean War. DPMO was not prepared to release

science from political control. This trait, which was deeply engrained in the American psyche, had been reinforced by the creation of a “science advisor” position with DPMO, the purpose of which was to compromise the independence of the CIL. The outcome could have been different, however, had the DPMO negotiating team consisted of or had taken the advice of competent North Korea specialists who, in the vernacular, understood what made the North Koreans “tick.”

In addition to lacking any foundation in battlefield archaeology, the DPMO people who negotiated the “Record of Arrangement” were culturally tone-deaf. A country specialist with a reasonable command of North Korea’s cultural correlates of national security would have been aware that April was not a wise choice for the initial JFA, or any project milestone for that matter. The weather might be acceptable, but the socio-political conditions would not be conducive to a successful project launch in the month of April, as the North Koreans were concerned with a different kind of launch.

The North Koreans are exceptionally serious and sensitive about April due to the fact that April 15 is the birthday of Kim Il-Sung, the patriarch of the Kim crime family that founded North Korea. Kim Il-Sung’s birthday, April 15, 1912, the day the Titanic sank, is referred to as the 100th Day of the Sun. The name “Il-Sung,” which was made up during WWII, literally means “to realize the sun.” April 15 was re-named during the Kim Jong-Un regime as “the Day of the Shining Star.”

April, which is the cult of the personality month in North Korea, always includes parades and other spontaneous demonstrations of affection intended to glorify the stupendous achievements of the eternal president. April 2012 was exceptional for several reasons. The recovery mission was scheduled not for the year 2012 but for the year “Juche 100,” because the year Kim Il-Sung was born is officially “Juche 1.” (“Juche” is the North Korean term for autarky, a policy of self-reliance that is used to describe North Korea’s reliance on the Soviet Union/Russia and China.) April 15, 2012, was also significant due to the fact that it marked the first opportunity to mark the birth of the Great Leader following the death in December 2011 of Kim Jong-il, the Dear Leader. All of this would mark the ascension of the understudy Kim Jong-Un to the throne. There would be a great deal of activity in Pyongyang in April, very little of which would have the remotest connection to fulfilling North Korea’s voluntary option to comply with the “Record of Arrangement.”

Undergraduate North Korea watchers could have easily anticipated that the government would lay on a lavish commemoration that would include a vast military parade led by thousands of rosy-cheeked goose-stepping soldiers, a string of sinister-looking fake missiles on mobile launchers, and creaky old Soviet-era jets making low-level passes over the eponymous Kim Il-Sung Square. The same casual observers would have also been aware that no immortal centenarian's birthday bash would be complete without some heavy-duty fireworks intended to disturb the neighbors.

On March 22, 2012, DoD canceled the April 24 to May 29, 2012, JFA shortly after the DPRK announced plans to launch a satellite into orbit. The recovery mission to North Korea was canceled due to what the Government Accountability Office described as “political developments.”¹⁹ According to Pentagon Press Secretary George Little, the suspension came about as a result of North Korea's recent “threats to launch ballistic missiles” and other “actions that might be provocative...presumably toward South Korea and other perceived foes.”

In the early morning of April 13, 2012, a mere 11 days before the first JFA was scheduled to commence, a 100-foot-long (30 m) Unha-3 (Milky Way 3) rocket attempted to hurl the Kwangmyongsong-3 “application satellite” into the earth's orbit from the Sohae Satellite Station in Tongchang-ri. The Unha-3 rocket, which was a long-range missile technology banned by UN Security Council Resolutions 1718 and 1874, failed after less than a minute of flight time during the boost phase (Fig. 11.1).

The scientific-, cultural-, and political-risk defects in the “Record of Arrangement” could have all been easily avoided had the US negotiating team been properly staffed and managed competently.

In February 2012, the US government made a deal with the North Korean government that provided for a large-scale food assistance in exchange for the DPRK refraining from additional nuclear weapons tests. The deal was canceled by the US side less than three weeks later, after the North announced its plan to launch a satellite into orbit using a long-range missile as the delivery vehicle. The “Record of Arrangement” stated that the “bulk shipment should arrive no later than the week of February 13, 2012.” The North Koreans would not allow South Korean ships into its ports; thus the shipments were arranged by DoD using vessels contracted from countries that were acceptable to the North.

North Korea rocket planned trajectory and crash site



Fig. 11.1 North Korean missile test, April 13, 2012 (Image: bbc.com)

The 30–34 members of the US recovery team would bring their own supplies; thus the “bulk items” provided by the DoD at US taxpayer expense went directly to the DPRK government.

A majority if not all of the food and fuel items described in the October 2011 “Record of Arrangement” had been delivered by DoD to North Korea in February 2012. Just two weeks before the White House announced the United States would stop food deliveries to Pyongyang, the DoD delivered a massive amount of food to the DPRK. The North Korean junta obtained everything on their wish list without being obligated to do anything in return.

DPMO, which signed the “Record of Arrangement” on October 20, 2011, had shipped 72 tons of rice, 8.9 tons of vegetables, and 26 tons of meat” before February 13, 2012. On March 28, 2012, DoD announced

that it had “suspended plans to provide nutrition aid to the impoverished nation [of North Korea], senior defense officials told Congress today.”²⁰ The White House issued a statement that “North Korea’s provocative action threatens regional security, violates international law and contravenes its own recent commitments” that made it impossible for the United States to follow through on a food aid deal. The White House did not mention the fact that the DoD had recently sent many tons of food and fuel to North Korea less than one month prior to this announcement. DoD’s gifts to the DPRK regime are never mentioned in the context of US “humanitarian” aid as these deliveries are characterized by DoD as “compensation” for services provided by the DPRK.

In addition to being a prime example of the incompetent way DoD conducted negotiations with the DPRK, the fact that “72 tons of rice, 8.9 tons of vegetables, 26 tons of meat, 333,204 liters of gasoline, 100,000 liters of diesel fuel, 12,500 liters of kerosene, 7 tons of propane, 8,660 liters of lubricant” were given to the North Korean government shortly before the White House terminated the “food aid” agreement linked to the DPRK’s nuclear weapon program revealed that activities associated with the “nation’s highest national priority” were in fact stunningly insignificant.

There is no record of the Congress authorizing DPMO to spend millions of taxpayer dollars to give the North Korean regime massive amounts of food, fuel, and vehicles. There is no public record from which account DPMO drew the money to pay for these transfers in 2004 and 2011.

DPMO’s budget request for FY 2004 was \$15.8 million²¹; FY 2011, \$24.155 million²²; and for FY2012, \$22.372 million.²³ The funds required to pay for the goods and provide the cash as specified in the November 18, 2004, or October 20, 2011, “Record of Agreement” should have been included in either the FY 2004, FY 2011, or FY 2012 DPMO budget requests under “Description of Operations Financed.”

DPMO’s FY 2003/2004 budget requests stated:

DPMO significantly broadened access to the isolated nation of North Korea and dramatically expanded the overall accounting effort.

The FY 2003/2004 budget request does not include the word “arrangement.”

DPMO's FY 2011 budget requests stated:

The DPMO leads negotiations and enters into international arrangements designed to achieve worldwide access to account for and recover missing personnel or their remains.

USG is unable at this time to conduct accounting operations in North Korea.

DPMO's FY 2012 budget request stated:

The DPMO leads negotiations and enters into international arrangements to secure foreign nation support for the search and recovery of remains and access to archives and other information to support the personnel accounting mission.

Re-start investigations and remains recovery operations in North Korea if access to that country is regained.”

Neither the FY 2003/2004, FY 2011, nor the FY 2012 request refers in any way to a plan to provide millions of dollars' worth of food, fuel, and vehicles and millions of dollars in cash to North Korea. The expenditure in 2011 for food, fuel, vehicles, and cash would have consumed one-quarter of DPMO's total budget. None of these budgets give the slightest clue as to what DPMO planned to donate to the DPRK or the sources of the funds.

One of many perplexing aspects of this is how DPMO was authorized to conduct its own “food aid” program that placed no binding conditions on North Korea that was independent of the White House's “food aid” program that was linked to North Korea's obligation to restrain its nuclear weapon and missile programs.

The fact that DPMO's 2012 giveaway to the DPRK government occurred shortly before the White House canceled a “food aid” program was also clear and convincing evidence of the total absence of meaningful oversight of the accounting program.

The lesson for the North Korean regime was that whenever the junta was running low on food, fuel, cash and SUVs, all that was required was to place an order through a DPMO “Record of Arrangement.”

* * *

DoD wanted to know whether the North Vietnamese government had taught the North Koreans how to extract money from the US government's accounting program.

The Vietnamese government had nothing to do with teaching the North Koreans how to obtain money from of the US government. DoD's representatives and officials were the ones who first offered to "compensate" North Korea millions of dollars and then agreed to pay for "work" the North Koreans could not possibly have completed and "services" that were never provided.

The Vietnamese were not the ones who taught the North Koreans how to extract money out of the United States—the Pentagon taught North Korea how to extort money from the US government. The North Koreans did not begin to demand money for remains until *after* a representative of the US military offered the cash in the first place. The DoD taught the North Koreans how to squeeze money out of the DoD for remains after the transfer of 208 boxes of remains in 1992, which the North Koreans had done without demanding any compensation.

During the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security, June 20, 1996, I was asked by Congressman Dornan:

Mr Dornan: Is it possible, given that they are allied at one time formerly, allied Asian Communist nations, that North Koreans would walk across the street, from the People's Republic of Vietnam to North Korea and say, "Tell us how you deal with the Americans in crash sites. How do you get the money out of them? What is the potential for money and how do you do this?"

Mr Cole: I do not have to even make a hypothetical answer to that. I was asked to make a comparison between the way the Vietnamese are exploiting the remains issue and the North Koreans. I got into an area that I do not claim any expertise on whatsoever, forensic anthropology. I looked and held, physically held in my hands, quite a few of the remains that we obtained and identified from Vietnam and I saw the records that the Vietnamese turned over with them.

They show classic signs of French education and French forensic anthropology. The notes are in French. The notation system is right out of the textbooks. These are educated people who are dealing with these remains. In one case, they are numbered. In one case, I saw a set of remains that were hanging in some doctor's office for a while.

The point that I am trying to make here is that the Vietnamese who dealt with these remains showed a certain level of anthropological sophistication, derivative from France. It was not their own. You could say that the Vietnamese learned how to deal with remains from the French.

Then we go to Korea. My RAND report from 1994 was the first time that any photographs [of remains] have ever been published. It is an oddball

thing. The Department of Defense will not allow the photographs of those bones to be published, for “privacy reasons.” But I can go to the National Archives and see film of Korean War KIA’s being embalmed, by name.

The point here is, the North Koreans showed absolutely no training, no sophistication, no nothing. So I cannot stress strongly enough that there was absolutely no similarity between the Vietnamese exploitation of these remains and the North Korean conduct five years ago.

I do know, and no one ever told me this was classified, maybe it is, but I was told that the North Vietnamese charged per site visit. To go visit a crash site, the price tag was \$450,000.

Until a couple of years ago, remains obtained from North Korea, there was never any question of compensation or anything. In my own view, the fact that the DPMO announced that they were going to visit a crash site, we have taught the North Koreans how to exploit us. Five years ago, they were clueless. We have told them how to do it. We paid them almost one million dollars for remains.

Facts are stubborn things and research is research.

During the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security, June 20, 1996, Congressman Owen Pickett stated:

I am also concerned, however, that we do not underestimate the apparent willingness of the North Koreans to give little or nothing, while trying to get a lot. For example, since 1990, North Korea has returned the alleged remains of 207 US personnel. To date, only four of these remains have been officially identified as American. Nevertheless, in January of this year, North Korea broke off POW-MIA negotiations when the US refused to pay as much as \$4 million to compensate North Korea for so-called expenses incurred in the recovery of remains. Moreover, not until the US agreed to in May to pay North Korea \$2 million for expenses incurred in the return of remains in the early 1990s did North Korea agree to permit US field operations. Why the US agreed to pay this money remains unclear.

In light of the fact that the 2004 and 2012 JFAs were canceled *after* the food and cash arrived in the DPRK, there is no doubt that DPMO’s “Record of Arrangement” was simply a “food aid” and cash subsidy program runout of a low-level DoD office. The purpose of DPMO’s food aid program was to provide aid and comfort to the North Korean regime in exchange for no tangible benefits to the US taxpayer who financed these OPM operations.

Thus far, Congress has not conducted any hearings or provided any oversight over DPMO's food aid program and cash subsidies to the North Korean regime.

* * *

MOSCOW

In June 1992, Sergei traveled to Moscow to collect the report we commissioned in December 1991 that had been produced by our research team. Before Sergei departed Santa Monica, we worked out a set of code words so that he could inform me of the findings over an open telephone line from Moscow. We weren't paranoid. Sergei and I always assumed that anything we discussed over the phone was going directly to the bad guys, so we took precautions.

We were well aware that our activities had attracted the attention of nefarious government apparatchiks such Mr. Ed Ross and sinister organs of state, such as the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, that didn't wish to see us succeed. In Moscow, it was increasingly apparent that the KGB was not going to sit on their hands while we tried to resolve one of the most important mysteries of the Cold War.

I journaled:

June 21, 1992

Sergei just phoned from Moscow. He's seen the report. Before he left we worked out a simple replacement code. So I sat here ticking off keywords such as Cleveland (KGB), New York (GRU) and Secretaries (POW's). Sergei said the Menu (report) has some spicy (detailed) items. We're dealing with American POWs, "definitely, man," who were at Santa Monica Place (on the territory of the USSR). The market for bicycles (live Americans) is not serious. There are many Rollerblades (dead Americans). These conversations took place last Month (Korean War) and Yesterday (Vietnam War).

Our secret code, which was a primitive simple one-off substitution cipher that was secure as long as no one else had the key, worked well for the most part. Sometimes we became so confused talking about bicycles that were at Santa Monica Place that got there last month from Cleveland that we forgot about our stupid code and talked openly. Or one of us would refer to "yesterday" and mean yesterday while forgetting we were talking in code. No one who was listening would have been able to make any sense of what we were discussing, as we were barely able to understand one another.

The bottom line was that Dr. Matskovsky had obtained, collated information, and produced a written report.

* * *

In August 1992, I booked one last around-the-world research trip: LA – Paris – Moscow – Seoul – Honolulu – LA. This was one hell of a commute. A “round-the-world” business-class ticket costs 5207 dollars and 65 cents. On September 11, 1992, I departed LA for Moscow via Paris on what was supposed to be the big event when the Russian team would finally deliver their report.

In Paris, I met with Dr. Pierre Rigoulot and his colleagues for the last time. My French was good enough to carry on a rather technical discussion about archival research methods. One of Dr. Rigoulot’s colleagues spoke only a little English, so we all spoke French during the meeting. The KGB records Dr. Rigoulot had obtained indicated that a small number of American servicemen, certainly not 20,000, with ethnic or national backgrounds of interest to the Soviet government had been transferred to the Soviet Gulag during and shortly after WWII.

From Paris, I traveled solo to Moscow.

* * *

Much to my relief, Sergei and Mr. Yuri Pankov met me at Sheremetyevo on September 13, 1992. Navigating through the crepuscular arrivals hall filled with dozens of men in black leather jackets, the majority of them smoking acrid Russian cigarettes that had an empty tube where the filter appeared in western brands, offering taxis and other services was daunting in the best of circumstances. Mr. Pankov guided me through baggage retrieval and then out of the terminal where our driver was waiting.

Sergei had managed to book us into the Soviet Red Army Hotel. We were the first Americans to stay there. Our main purpose in staying there was so that any Russian who wanted to meet us could get in, which wasn’t the case with the western hotels. Our colleague Mr. Pankov, for example, was not allowed to enter the Penta, Aerostar, or any of the other expensive western hotels.

The Red Army Hotel was as basic as it gets, which is actually a back-handed compliment. In typical Soviet fashion, everything in the hotel was either broken or rusted, broken and rusted, worn out, or simply missing.

The whole place appeared to be a Boy Scout camp that had been vandalized and abandoned in the 1930s. In my room's bathroom a chunk of what appeared to be someone's scalp with long light brown hair attached was stuck to the wall above the bathtub. Dried blood held the hair and scalp onto the wall like crusty glue. That gory feature, which was plastered to the tiles like a talisman, went undisturbed throughout my stay.

The other guests in the Red Army Hotel included Cossacks in gray military uniforms who constantly waved horsehair whips about, even when there were no flies to shoo away. In the small dining room, Chinese soldiers, in dark green uniforms and caps festooned with a single red star, chain-smoked, stared intently at the TV regardless of what was on, and sipped hot water from little white ceramic cups with no handles as they loudly cleared their throats and then repeatedly hocked large loogies on the floor. Never had so much sputum been collected in one place beyond the confines of a Swiss tuberculosis sanatorium. One had to be careful where one stepped.

Breakfast in the Red Army Hotel consisted of a pile of something that appeared to be *kasha*, a pseudo-cereal also known as buckwheat that had been boiled to smithereens, an irregular lump of coagulated grayish-brown goo described as "meat," a cup of thick plain yoghurt which was always good, some sausage slices that were often imbedded with small curly fragments of what appeared to be aluminum turnings from a drill press, a chipped glass in a metal holder filled with hot tea fortified with a ton of sugar, and a glass of thick yellowish mucus-looking room-temperature slime that one could only hope had been some kind of "fruit juice" in a previous life. An enormous 1970s-vintage color television, complete with a coat hanger antenna with an aluminum foil sail, was constantly on with the volume cranked as high as possible. From time to time the kitchen staff would emerge to stand like department store mannequins before the TV, transfixed by dubbed Australian soap operas or locally produced programs that explored the existential wonder of tractor maintenance.

On the first full day in Moscow at the Institute for Human Values, Dr. Matskovsky showed me a draft of the report, on the letterhead of the Institute for Human Values, that had been prepared by our Russian team. Though the report was in Russian, Dr. Matskovsky's group was working on an English translation. Dr. Matskovsky walked me through the document. The major finding was that no American POWs had been transported to the USSR during the Korean War. After all we had been through, including

information our team allegedly found that indicated the exact opposite, this didn't seem right. I was first suspicious, then concerned that the bad guys had succeeded in applying some muscle on Dr. Matskovsky. We scheduled a follow-up meeting at the Institute for Human Values so I could meet the researchers, raise my concerns, and discuss the report in detail. Dr. Matskovsky, who owned a reasonably modern photocopy machine, made a copy of the Russian-language draft report to give to Sergei. The original draft was to remain with Dr. Matskovsky for safekeeping.

I advised Dr. Matskovsky that if Sergei were satisfied with the draft report, I would release the interim payment for his work, but not before.

The document produced by the Institute for Human Values was important for another reason due to the fact that it was material evidence that our team in Moscow had produced a written report. This would help silence those who had accused us of buying a bill of goods. The quality of the draft report, once it had been reviewed, revised, and released, would be assessed by others. We were therefore interested in generating feedback if not a full-on peer review of the draft report, the results of which would be provided to Dr. Matskovsky.

On September 14, Sergei and I went to the American Embassy where we met with Colonel Ed Pusey and Colonel Bill O'Malley. Colonel Pusey, whose frocking I had attended in the Pentagon, had been named the first chief of TFR's Moscow office on September 1, 1992. Colonel O'Malley was a TFR-M analyst between July 25, 1992, and June 29, 1993. The TFR staff consisted of eight to ten people, including a deputy, a lieutenant colonel historian, an archivist, three field interviewers, an interpreter, an administrative NCO, an administrative clerk, and a secretary. The purpose of our visit was to show them the draft report by the Institute for Human Values. We allowed the two colonels to make a copy of the draft of the Institute for Human Values report. They told us they were "thrilled" with it.

After the embassy meeting, Sergei left to take care of other matters. Professor Gordievsky met me at the embassy from where we went to the Institute for Contemporary History to meet Dr. Kiril Anderson the director of the Russian Center of Conservation and Study of Records for Modern History. Moscow turned out to be a small town.

I journaled:

September 16, 1992 – Moscow (Wednesday)

Two great things happened yesterday. First, I happened to meet Gen. Dmitri Volkogonov, head of the Russian commission. I was talking with the

director of the Institute for Contemporary History, and Volkogonov just showed up. He's doing research on Lenin's mistress. He's a short, chubby sort of gnome. Doesn't strike me as the three-star general type.

General Volkogonov, who was shorter in person than he appeared on television, was wearing a natty gray pin-striped suit that was clearly tailored to order, perhaps in a Savile Row shop. General Volkogonov, who entered the chief archivist's office without knocking, was surprised to see that I was there with Dr. Gordievsky. Both of us stood up as General Volkogonov shifted a bundle of folders from his right arm to the left in order to shake hands as he introduced himself. The general produced two business cards from the pocket of his suit that he handed first to me and then to Dr. Gordievsky. While all of this was going on, Dr. Anderson stepped back from his desk to take in the scene as if he were a bystander.

After I handed General Volkogonov my card, his eyebrows shot up when he saw the RAND logo, as such a reaction could not have possibly been caused by reading my name. The general's demeanor changed completely. He turned to me, alternating his gaze between my card and my eyes. The top of his head came to my chin, so his gaze was directed upward. General Volkogonov moved so close to me that the buttons on the vest that swathed his ample abdomen touched my unbuttoned suit jacket. The tips of our shoes were inches apart. General Volkogonov held my card in his right hand as if he were comparing it to my face. Dr. Gordievsky, the consummate professional, moved with discretion close enough to whisper interpret for me.

General Volkogonov expressed no interest as to why I was in the office of the director of the Institute for Contemporary History in Moscow. Instead, he launched into a one-sided explanation of why the story of Lenin's mistress was so important and how much time he had spent in the archives, how much concentration it took, and so on. The amount of energy and enthusiasm General Volkogonov was pouring into a story told to a complete stranger gave the unmistakable impression that the gentleman was protesting too much. What possible interest could Dr. Gordievsky or I have about the fascinating world of Lenin's mistress or why the head of the Russian side of the USRJC was spending time in the Institute for Contemporary History in Moscow instead of in the Soviet military archives in Podolsk?

Without giving either of us the chance to say a word, General Volkogonov said something to the effect of, "Wow, look at the clock! I

gotta go. Nice talking with you. I have to see a man about a dog. Bye!” With that, the little round general turned and walked out of the office as abruptly as he had entered. As Dr. Gordievsky and I looked at one another, I said, “What was that all about?”

Director Anderson said to me in English, “This Lenin mistress thing is all he cares about. He comes here a couple of times a week to check on the guys he has working for him.”

Following the serendipitous meeting with General Volkogonov, Professor Gordievsky and I took a walk through Red Square where he pointed out to me the crypts of the more than 100 famous people who had been entombed in the Kremlin wall necropolis, such as Stalin, Yuri Gagarin, Alexei Kosygin, and the American John Silas “Jack” Reed.

I journaled:

Second, I finally got inside Lenin’s tomb. I managed to take my camera with me, though I didn’t use it of course. The set-up is rather impressive. Lenin’s head and hands look like aged plastic. Sort of like there is a thin layer of cornstarch clinging to everything.

Walked around Red Square with Professor Alexandr Gordievsky. He is the head of the Int’l Section of the Diplomatic Academy where I’m lecturing on Friday.

Lenin’s hands, folded over his abdomen, looked like a mannequin in a Ross’s discount shop window (Fig. 11.2).

My guide, Dr. Alexander Gordievsky, said, “Russian morticians were remarkably skilled.” I politely observed that denoting national pride in the currency of skilled morticians was rather unusual. “Don Vito Corleone appreciated the services of skilled morticians as well.” One of the guards gestured to us to shut up.

After we exited Lenin’s tomb, I said to Dr. Gordievsky,

That got me thinking about how the totalitarian state’s obsession with preserving the flesh of the deceased was exceeded only by that of the Catholic church. The Catholic church’s doctrine of incorruptibility states that due to divine intervention, as a sign of divine holiness the flesh and bones of the saints are spared the normal process of decomposition. The atheistic Soviet state, which made no claim to divine intervention, believed in the doctrine of incorruptibility as well.

“I’ve no idea who is supposed to be impressed by such an obvious example of human taxidermy. The irony was that the atheistic dictator’s



Fig. 11.2 Inside Lenin's Mausoleum (Photo: Public Domain)

remains did not decompose, while the remains of every saint on public display have turned gnarly and awful. It would appear," I added, "that the secular doctrine of incorruptibility is more effective than its religious counterpart."

Dr. Gordievsky made humming noises.

* * *

Early into our September 1992 visit to Moscow, Sergei and I noticed that we were being noticed.

The first clue was that the *babushka* on our floor of the Red Army Hotel had vanished. In traditional Russian hotels, there was a *babushka* on every floor who took care of the room keys and looked after the guests by doing things such as tending the samovar. The *babushka* sat at a little wooden desk right in front of the elevators so she could keep an eye on everyone coming and going. The day we arrived there was a standard issue *babushka*

on our floor—a fat old woman, gray hair twisted into a bun, who wore a worn sweater with several moth-eaten holes and dilapidated fleece slippers that barely concealed swollen feet and fungus-encrusted toenails.

The next day, our *babushka* had been replaced by a young man who appeared to be in his mid-20s. Our new *babushka* had a high and tight military haircut, a crisply ironed long-sleeved buttoned-down pastel shirt, what appeared to be brand new khaki trousers with razor sharp creases, and very shiny black leather shoes. This guy was straight out of central casting. Nobody who looked like that would take such a job, no matter how desperate they were. Sergei said, “Prilepski is lucky he didn’t get this assignment.”

I also began to receive periodic “wrong number” phone calls to my room. I didn’t know but assumed that my room was bugged. This was the Red Army Hotel after all. It wasn’t like they didn’t have the opportunity. What I wondered about was the motive. What were we doing that deserved this kind of attention from the security services, most likely the KGB?

The morning we were scheduled to meet General Leonid Ivashov at the CIS High Command, we got no further than a couple of blocks from the Red Army Hotel when two traffic policemen waved us over using a large stop sign on a stick that appeared to be brand new. The “policemen” wore immaculate new uniforms with large white cuffs that resembled the wings on the Flying Nun’s cap. Even their pristine gloves appeared to be right out of the box. Sergei, who was in the front passenger seat, got out to speak to the cops. Our driver Leonid, in his worn black suit, was pre-occupied with producing documents from both his wallet and the leather pouch he kept in the glove box.

One of the pretend cops stood with our driver Leonid between the front of our car and the back of the cop car that was parked in front of us. The cop and Leonid were discussing the front license plate, which the pretend cop intended to remove. In order to retrieve the plate, the offender was required to go to the station and settle the fine. I sat in the back seat, taking in the scene, wondering how long it was going to last.

Gradually and at first unperceptively, the car I was sitting in began to creep forward, down the slight incline. A prolonged half-groan, half-creaking noise emerged from below my feet as the hand brake failed. I realized that if nothing were done, within seconds the front bumper of our car would crash into the metal bumper of the cop car. Like a guillotine, the collision would sever the legs of both our driver and the cop just below the knees. Leonid and the pretend cop were about to have very real injuries

unless I did something. Shouting would have been useless because Sergei, who was standing several feet away on the sideway talking with the other fake cop, would have been the only one who would have understood me.

Crawling over the driver's seat and pressing the brake pedal with my hands wasn't going to work. Instead, I threw open the driver's side passenger door, which attracted the attention of the two pretend cops in a nanosecond. Pushing my left foot against the pavement did little to stop the gentle drift of the rusty black car. I yelled at Sergei, who took one look at the creeping car and understood immediately what was happening. He leapt to the front of the car where he began to push against the hood. The fake traffic cop who was giving Leonid a hard time leapt out of the way and then also began to push to stop the car. Leonid, who was trapped in the middle, jumped onto the bumper of the fake police car.

A disaster had been averted, but there were no thank-you notes.

Instead, the phony cops added a faulty equipment citation to Leonid's bald tire indictment. Our counterfeit traffic cops finally let us go, probably knowing that they just made the number two guy in the CIS High Command wait for us.

We gave Leonid enough money to cover the fines so he could get his front license plate back in time to fetch us after our meeting. We added a handful of rubles to cover his lunch as well. Sergei found out later that whenever we gave Leonid a tip or some walking-around money, he used part of it to buy sweets or some kind of treat for his wife.

* * *

THE DIALECTIC OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

On September 18, 1992, I was invited to present a lecture at the Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Academy. Dr. Alexander Gordievsky, the head of the International Section who had guided me through Lenin's tomb, collected me from the hotel in a somewhat beat-up Foreign Ministry chauffeur-driven car. Dr. Gordievsky advised me that I was not only the first US citizen who had ever been allowed inside the Academy building, I was the first westerner to present a lecture.

As we made small talk on the way to the Academy, Dr. Gordievsky described how during the Soviet time the location and even the street address of the Diplomatic Academy had been highly classified state secrets.

To increase interest in my talk, I had deliberately entitled it "The Dialectic of American Foreign Policy," thinking the word "dialectic"

would attract the attention of the Marxists or perhaps even a few of the Hegelians in the former Soviet diplomatic corps. I didn't need to generate interest. The conference room was packed with over two dozen academics, diplomats, and others, some white-haired retirees, some around my age, most dressed in dark gray or black suits, a few with the dark plastic shoes that were once ubiquitous among Zone officials during the Cold War. The audience was seated around three or four large tables with me alone at a little wooden desk at the front of the room. Under other circumstances, one would have thought an interrogation or a self-criticism session was about to take place.

As everyone settled into their seats, I wondered who they thought I was and why I was there. I had no pretension to be among the US foreign policy *illuminati*, yet at the same time if the audience wanted to think of me as an intelligence agent of the highest order, I was under no obligation to disabuse them of their mistaken impression. The possibility that several people in the room knew more about US foreign policy than I could not be excluded.

In preparation for the lecture, I had gone over the basic points I planned to make over and over until I could present the material without notes, making it appear that my remarks were extemporaneous. Dr. Henry Kissinger had told us during the class I took from him at Georgetown, "Eighty percent of any successful briefing is theater."

After a brief introduction by Dr. Alexander Gordievsky, I began my remarks in English as I could not speak Russian. There was no need for an interpreter. Every one of the Soviet diplomats and scholars spoke excellent English, some with British accents and in other cases with clear, flat, unaccented American tones. One may condemn them for the Gog and Magog they served, but there was no question that elite Soviet diplomats were as diabolically sophisticated as they were extremely well trained.

My remarks were kept deliberately short in order to maximize the opportunity for discussion. In light of the fact that I was teaching international relations at the University of Southern California, had a MSFS degree from Georgetown where one of my dual concentrations was "Force and Diplomacy," had spent three years in the Georgetown government's department reading political philosophy, seven years at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, was working at the RAND Corporation, and was less than two years removed from the SAIS PhD program where my major field had been American foreign policy, I was more familiar and fluent with the subject matter than before or since.

I began my thesis with the standard catechism of the realist school of international politics. Nations do not have friends, they have interests. Every head in the room nodded in agreement.

The first issue addressed was whether there was any difference between the national security interests of the Soviet Union and the resurrected Russia. It didn't take a rocket scientist to understand that primarily for geo-political reasons, the national interests of the United States and the Soviet Union were not just incompatible, elements of each national interest were fundamentally antagonistic. Now the heads were nodding up and down in vigorous agreement as if it were bobblehead night at the Diplomatic Academy.

During the Soviet time, the ideology of Marxist-Leninism dictated that the path of history was not random; rather, the inevitable endpoint defined by dialectical materialism for every country and society on earth was communism, aka the dictatorship of the proletariat. In light of the fact that democracy was also a universal ideology, meaning there were no territorial limits, the confrontation between communism and democracy was a structural feature of international relations, though as we would learn, not a permanent feature as some believed. Two universal and antagonistic ideologies could not co-exist indefinitely. This confrontation, however, was neither permanent nor did it have to be necessarily violent, as the end of the USSR revealed in unmistakable terms. The fact that the People's Republic of China's commitment to its version of Marxist ideology had not been affected by the demise of the USSR suggested, in my view, that the collapse of the USSR was due primarily to bad management and dubious decisionmaking in the Kremlin. In other words, nothing is inevitable until it occurs.

This led to the antithesis, that the Eurocentric nature of US foreign policy during the Cold War was encapsulated in the saying, "The purpose of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was to keep the Americans in, the Russians out and the Germans down." In the post-Cold War international environment, Germany was not a security threat, the Russians had no territorial ambitions in Europe, and the United States, if the history of isolationism was any guide, should be expected to withdraw into the shell of its own hemisphere. This antithesis, I stated, was flawed.

The synthesis, I concluded, was that with regard to the structural nature of international security, for the first time in the twentieth century, Germany was largely irrelevant as a military force. With regard to Russia, the critical issue was whether Moscow would accept the independence of

the former Soviet republics without a fight, accept the loss of its security buffer in the European “near abroad,” return to czarist ambitions, or continue to see the world through Soviet-colored glasses.

Finally, the synthesis for American foreign policy was that driven primarily by atavistic domestic political purposes, Congress would continue to fund the US military at Cold War, if not at substantially greater levels. In the absence of any hegemonic restraint, the US political-military global footprint would be expanded. Retraction into the confines of the western hemisphere was out of the question. Unless these trends were modified immediately, momentum would carry us into uncharted territory. The only certainty that could be derived from this analysis, I concluded, was that unless both the US and Russian sides made a dedicated, nearly revolutionary effort to establish a new relationship based on post-Cold War interests, the probability of US-Russia antagonism becoming more intense was, unfortunately, unacceptably high. It would be irresponsible for anyone to take comfort from the fact that we escaped a major conflict during the Cold War, in large measure due to the fact that we had been extraordinarily lucky at several critical junctures. “Luck,” I concluded, “is fickle. In my view, we can find a more empirical and mutually-agreeable metric than luck to guide our way forward.”

With that, Dr. Gordievsky opened the floor for discussion.

The gray and black suits moved around while right legs crossed over the left were exchanged for left legs crossed over right. Others slicked back their salt and pepper hair with both hands. Several rubbed their chins as they stared at me intently.

The participants immediately asked about the prospects and implications of the expansion of NATO. The first question was direct. “In your view, what is the probability of NATO expansion?”

The subject matter was more than familiar to me. In early 1992 during the first Clinton administration, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin gave RAND the task to create a “justification for NATO expansion.” Secretary Aspin motivated the task by issuing a dire warning, “If NATO doesn’t expand, it goes away.” This played into RAND’s strong suit. In this division of labor, Secretary Aspin provided a conclusion while RAND produced the study. In addition, the US national security community was chockablock with many thousands of professionals who could not conceive of a world without the Cold War or bilateral confrontation of some sort, perhaps with China. Many “Soviet specialists” in the intelligence community had made a career out of following a single Soviet official’s rise

and fall within the communist bureaucracy. Those who had risen to the top of America's foreign policy elite had suddenly been exposed as nearly irrelevant in the post-Cold War international environment.

I had opposed the expansion of NATO on the straightforward grounds that at the end of WWII, the United States had offered Europe a military alliance. Forty-five years later at the end of the Cold War, the United States was offering Europe an enlarged military alliance. This approach was not just intellectually lazy, it was the work of Americans who could not conceive of an international system without the Cold War. If NATO went away, so did their careers. The end of the Cold War had been a severe blow to the US military-industrial complex. The prospect of NATO "going away," which was unimaginable, had to be avoided at all costs.

More than a few of my colleagues and I were convinced that NATO expansion would inevitably lead to a serious confrontation between the United States, its allies, and Russia. Instead, we proposed that NATO should be retired and then immediately replaced with a modern treaty alliance that would have as its foundation the new security structure of Europe, with the United Kingdom, Germany, and France taking the lead. Our arguments fell on deaf ears. Once opposition to NATO expansion was made clear within RAND, those of us who opposed the concept were excluded from the group that created the justification for expansion. RAND went so far as to convene the NATO expansion group's meetings at "off-site" locations, meaning they were held in conference rooms in nearby hotels.

When the expansion study was released, of course, it was presented as *sui generis*, a conclusion that was presented as if had been produced by weighing all of the alternatives, when nothing of the sort had occurred.

After stating my opposition to NATO expansion to the masses assembled in the former Soviet Diplomatic Academy, every head in the room nodded in agreement, while one or two black-suited attendees applauded discreetly. This moment was surreal, to say the least. My opposition to NATO expansion was based on my understanding of what was best for the US national interest. The Russians were opposed to NATO expansion due to their understanding of what was best for the Russian national interest.

The consensus in the room between one American analyst and two dozen veteran Soviet/Russian diplomats and academics was that if the United States persisted with NATO expansion, a clash between national security interests between the United States and Russia was inevitable.

If the United States proceeded with NATO expansion, the question was not if; instead, it was only a question of when US and Russian national interests would collide.

I concluded that unfortunately, the honeymoon phase of post-Soviet US-Russia relations might be sweet and tender, but it would end quickly and with a messy divorce. The two sides would fight over who would have custody over the dependent nations in Europe.²⁴

My brief lecture was rewarded with a prolonged round of applause. Due to the absence of spontaneous rhythmic clapping, I concluded that most of the applause was indeed genuine.

Following my lecture, Dr. Alexander Gordievsky and Dr. Yevgeni Bazhanov, the vice president of the Diplomatic Academy,²⁵ invited me to lunch at the Foreign Ministry's press club. The cavernous club was cold and empty. We sat down at two forty-five. At that hour, we were the only guests.

A half hour later nothing, no water or tea, not even the *zakuski*, had arrived. Since I was scheduled to meet Colonel William O'Malley at the American Embassy at four so that from there we could proceed to the Red Army Hotel, I finally had to give up on lunch. This was not the first time I had missed a meal in Moscow. I was reminded of the time Sergei and I arrived at our hotel so late that the only thing available to eat was smoked bear meat and a bottle of homemade vodka that Sergei bought from the taxi driver. Around three-thirty, I asked Dr. Bazhanov to organize a car to take me to the American Embassy to collect Colonel O'Malley then on to the Red Army Hotel, which he did.

Colonel O'Malley expressed a modicum of surprise when I arrived to pick him up sitting in the back seat of a black automobile belonging to the Foreign Ministry. After he got in, I explained that he was to refer to me as Strelnikov, not Pasha any longer. I thought that Colonel O'Malley would find the Red Army Hotel to be interesting. In addition, Sergei and I thought it would be a good idea for Colonel O'Malley to meet some of the Russian members of our team, so we had organized happy hour drinks and *zakuski*.

Sergei and I had brought a couple of bottles of Veuve Clicquot from Paris that we hoped would impress our Russian friends. We were also looking forward to a break from the relentless physical pounding that resulted from Russian vodka.

Every one of our team members showed up at the Army Hotel an hour late, but much to everyone's relief, General Leonid Ivashov made an

appearance. The Russian members of our team were reassured by Colonel O'Malley who told them that Sergei and I were not operating on our own.

With Veuve Clicquot and *zakuski*, we felt like czarist royalty.

* * *

I was up early the next day. The research trip had been productive but it was once again time to get out of the Zone.

I journaled:

September 19, 1992 – Sheremetyevo Airport

Getting out of this country is the single greatest deterrent to ever coming here. Customs is nothing less than a nightmare of cosmic proportions. Zillions of people trying to stuff through a few shabby little stalls. I followed some guy who was shoving his way to the front guided by a local lady. Horrible. Just horrible.

The KGB was swarming around the hotel last night. This is after the police spontaneously pulled us over as soon as we left the hotel in the morning. The old babushka on the floor was magically transformed into a young man who looked like a spook school drop out. Then this morning Misha took me out for a walk to tell me Georgi had come to tell him I was being closely watched by the KGB. I was not to take the report out of the country. They let me see it in the car (the English version). I had toted the Russian version all week. Both versions will be given to my friend Alex Alexiev who travels with a Bulgarian diplomatic passport. He will take the documents to Paris and from there send them to me in Santa Monica. At least that's the plan.

So who am I to tell my friends in Moscow how to deal with the bad guys?

From Moscow I proceeded to Seoul, Korea.

* * *

In early February 1993, Sergei and I returned to Moscow. The purpose was to collect the report from the Institute for Human Values and do some last chance research.

On February 3, due to the fact that it was nearly impossible to use a credit card in Russia, I collected 6000 dollars in 100-dollar bills and then collected my ticket from RAND's travel agent. I departed Los Angeles for Moscow via Berlin.

Sergei preceded me to Moscow. I had asked him to tell Dr. Matskovsky in no uncertain terms that I was not happy with pace or results of the team's work. The draft report he had delivered was "lean cuisine." They had to add some substantive bulk or I wasn't going to authorize final payment. It also was important to make it crystal clear to our team that my objective was to do a few more interviews, collect the report, and leave. Fortunately, other than some small change and walking-around money, I hadn't paid the full amount to anyone in Moscow for their alleged services. Sergei advised our team in Moscow that I was not going to pay them unless they produced a decent written report and delivered it to me in person.

My arrival in Moscow did not go smoothly this time.

I journaled:

February 9, 1993 – Aerostar Hotel, Moscow

I was struck as we got off the plane at Sheremetyevo by the Zone odor that pervades this place. Makes me think of forty years of dirt and grunge in the air. As I was moving about the cracked floor and broken everything, I was held up at passport control by one of the young, vigilant green clad border guards.

Turns out the stamp on my visa is smudged. This is, of course, a crisis for the border troops. They pondered my visa, held my passport under ultraviolet light, phoned superiors, whispered to one another, then finally after 45 minutes let me through. Turns out there was no one to meet me. This can be a problem in a country where nothing works.

I was swarmed over by ill-clad men offering taxis and money changing. Not the sort of place where one wants to stand around with lots of enticing luggage. One guy walked up to me and said, "Maybe taxi?" I said, "Yes, maybe taxi," as I hoped a familiar face would appear. After ten minutes I concluded that it was time to get out of there. I asked the guy, "How much, taxi?" He said a few things in Russian then from his wallet he pulled a worn piece of paper. "Official, official," he said. So for \$30 – ca 15,000 rubles, I got from the airport to the hotel on my own for the first time.

For what I believed would be my final visit to Moscow, I booked a room at the Aerostar Hotel. The majority of the research phase of the project was over, thus I didn't need to stay in a Zone hotel. In addition, staying in terrible lodgings had taken its toll. I had my fill of cold water showers, mystery meat, bits of scalp stuck to the wall, evil magpies, and other Zone treats. No local person was scheduled to come see me other than Pankov, who we would meet elsewhere.

On Thursday, February 11, 1993, Sergei and I spent the morning with the number two official in the Soviet Ministry of Defense. We also had another interview with a Soviet Army Korean War veteran who had been in Korea the same time as my father. We went to the Supreme Soviet to meet with Major Zolotukhin who was arranging a meeting with the number two official in the Soviet Foreign Ministry.

In the afternoon, Dr. Ben Lambeth went off to play tennis with the chief test pilot of the Mikoyan design bureau. One of Dr. Lambeth's hobbies was to fly in the back seat of jet fighters. He had been the first westerner to fly in the back seat of a MiG-29 Fulcrum.

GEORGE BLAKE: KOREAN WAR POW AND BRITISH TRAITOR

Sergei and I met General Vadim Ivanovich Makarevsky for lunch on familiar territory at the Oktyabrskaya Hotel.²⁶ General Makarevsky brought along a quarter liter of buffalo grass vodka. When the bottle was empty, he placed it in a ragged plastic bag. General Makarevsky told us that if you didn't bring in an empty bottle to the shop, you couldn't buy more vodka. As he slipped the empty bottle into the tatty plastic bag, he muttered, "To this level we have been reduced."

Over coffee and Armenian cognac General Makarevsky advised us, "I am about to tell you something I was forbidden to tell anyone for the past 23 years. My officemate at IMEMO²⁷ is George Blake." During Soviet times, IMEMO was the state-run Institute for World Economy and International Relations.

George Blake, who as of early 2017 was still living in Moscow, is an Englishman of Dutch extraction. Born in the Netherlands to a father who was a British subject and a Dutch woman, Blake had been trapped in the Netherlands by the German advance after WWII broke out in 1940. He escaped in 1943 and made his way via a most perilous route to Britain where he joined the Royal Navy.

Following WWII, Blake was posted to Naval Intelligence, again serving with distinction. His reward, after studying languages including Russian, was a Special Intelligence Service (SIS) post working under diplomatic cover as vice-consul in Seoul, South Korea. He was captured by the North Koreans as their invasion swept south in 1950. Blake spent nearly three years in captivity, part of the time with American POWs with whom he had marched north and shared transport to a POW camp near the Chinese border.

To George Blake's colleagues who had shared his ordeal in a North Korean POW camp, he was a hero. His courageous defiance of his brutal North Korean captors had earned him the admiration of the other prisoners. Blake treated his guards with contempt and tried to escape on at least two occasions.

Sometimes things are not as they appear.

According to Blake's version, he woke up one fine day in a North Korean POW camp and decided of his own free will to volunteer to spy for the Soviet Union. It was during his three years as a prisoner of the communists, Blake said during his trial, that he decided that communism was a preferable system. In his memoirs, Blake stated that he became convinced that communism would achieve the goal of realizing Calvinism on earth.

On his release after being held by the North Koreans for three years, SIS gave Blake leave to recuperate, then posted him in April 1955 to the SIS station in West Berlin as deputy director of Technical Operations. His special assignment was to study the Soviet Red Army in East Germany, looking for potential defectors and informants among its officers.

In addition to sending commandos and agents to face torture and firing squads, Blake's most infamous deed was his role in compromising one of the most important operations of the Cold War.

Blake served the KGB well.

The "Blake case" began in 1954, when the CIA and British MI-5 began to burrow a tunnel beneath the Soviet-West sector boundary from Rudow to Altglienicke. The plan was to tap the telephone lines of the Soviet Army and other Soviet allies occupying Berlin. "Operation Gold," which cost around 30 million dollars (approximately \$260 million in 2015 dollars), was betrayed almost from the very beginning. The tunnel operation, blown before it began, was finally closed in April 1956. Blake had informed the Soviets of the operation while the tunnel was in the earliest stages of construction. The Soviets, who considered Blake to be their most important agent in England, did not inform those in the East who were being tapped that their lines were not secure. It was more expedient, from their view, to allow information to pass to the west than to risk revealing Blake's existence as a Soviet spy.

The British eventually caught Blake. In early 1961, Howard Roman, a CIA case officer who had been handling a communist intelligence officer positioned as vice-chairman of Polish military intelligence, gave the British SIS a lead that revealed the KGB had in its possession a list of 26

Polish officials who the SIS considered potential targets for recruitment. Analysis of the list, which had been compiled by SIS staff members in Warsaw, revealed that the information could only have come from George Blake's safe.

Blake, 38, a war hero considered by most of his Foreign Service colleagues as a "splendid chap," married to the daughter of a respected British Foreign Office official and father of two, was arrested and charged in April 1961, for violations of the United Kingdom's Official Secrets Act.

Blake, who first successfully stonewalled all questions of the SIS interrogator, later broke down and admitted his guilt. Blake stated in his confession:

I must admit freely that there was not an official document on any matter to which I had access which was not passed on to my Soviet contact.

For example, he revealed to the KGB each new plan and move of the West in the delicate East-West Geneva negotiations on the Berlin question.

Blake was tried at the Old Bailey courtroom where Chief Justice Lord Parker took only 53 minutes to reach his decision. Blake's treason, he commented, "rendered much of this country's efforts completely useless."

Lord Parker sentenced Blake to 42 years in prison, the longest term ever imposed under English law for espionage during peacetime. Though George Blake undoubtedly had a lot of blood on his hands, he has maintained in many interviews, including the one with me, that he agreed to supply names of western agents to the KGB on the condition that "they would not be harmed." The KGB was quite happy to let him believe this to be true. In fact, as many KGB officers including General Oleg Kalugin have confirmed, all of the people Blake betrayed were executed or imprisoned. In 2015, the *Daily Telegraph* published documents located in the archives of the Stasi that revealed "agents betrayed by the MI6 mole [Blake] to the KGB mouldered for up to 17 years in East German prisons."²⁸

The severity of Blake's sentence was explained by the judge as one year for each of the 42 British agents for whose torture and death he was responsible.

Blake served only five and a half years before escaping from Wormwood Scrubs Prison in West London. He escaped, vanished, then surfaced in

Moscow a year later. Many believe the KGB organized Blake's escape by contracting with some of the worst elements of the IRA. Sean Bourke, the Irish criminal who organized Blake's escape, detailed the escape in his book, *The Springing of George Blake*.

According to Bourke, in order to escape, Blake had to break an iron-framed window, slide down a roof dropping to the ground, then climb over an 18-foot wall on a rope ladder, made by Bourke, and again drop the final few feet. This feat was accomplished by Blake, an unathletic man, in a matter of minutes. He managed to fracture his arm in the process.

Bourke stated that after he was hidden in various flats in London, Blake was smuggled to East Berlin by an Anglo-Irish couple that hid him in a secret compartment in a camping van. As of 2016, Blake was a 93-year-old living in Moscow married to a Russian woman named Ida. They have a son, Mischa. Bourke died mysteriously in Ireland. He was found dead in his bed on January, 26, 1982, apparently from alcohol poisoning. Hollywood brought Blake's perfidy to the silver screen in 1993, *Und der Himmel steht still* (*And The Sky Is Still*, released as *The Innocent*) with Anthony Hopkins, Isabella Rossellini, and Campbell Scott in the leading roles.

We went to General Makarevsky's office at IMEMO to meet Blake. The purpose was to discuss his experience as a prisoner of the communist forces during the Korean War as well as to get his opinion of a list of western prisoners the Russians had provided to the US government. According to the Russians, the list included all of the westerners who had come into contact with Soviet intelligence during the Korean War.

We arrived at the previously secret IMEMO building shortly after noon on a bright sunny but desperately frigid day to find unshoveled walks, freezing wind, and more filthy, cracked windows. There was the usual abandoned train station sort of reception area with a thousand coat hooks blocked off by a counter where four or five nice *babushkas* arranged the exchange of coats for grimy plastic chits with worn numbers that were barely legible. We took the decrepit, shaking elevator to one of the upper floors. General Makarevsky greeted and led us to his office, which wasn't much warmer than the outside. We entered and shook hands with George Blake.

Blake stated repeatedly that he hadn't betrayed England for money. As a pre-condition for our interview, he said he would not take money or any "gifts." General Makarevsky, on the other hand, was quite pleased to receive the liter of Gordon's gin we brought along as a thank-you gift, thinking gin would be an appropriate tippie for someone with pretensions to be an English gentleman.

Blake, a slight man, short with a disproportionately large head, sported a thin beard; big, bad plastic Russian shoes; and terribly stained teeth. He wore a herringbone jacket with leather patches on the elbows. His quiet manner and academic appearance reminded me more of a professor of philosophy at a small college in the Midwest rather than one of the most treacherous traitors of the Cold War.

The visit to see Blake was part of our interview program. The Russian side of the US-Russian Joint Commission was adamant that the KGB had no contact with American POWs during the Korean War. Following the insipid rules agreed to by Ambassador Toon, the American side of the USRJC had to accept the Russian version as fact. To do otherwise, in the words of the US Army Attaché in Moscow, would “undermine the stability of the Yeltsin regime.”

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski once observed that it was fundamentally improper for the United States to formulate foreign policy with the intent of supporting or not supporting one contender over another for the presidency of Russia. Unfortunately, not everyone at DPMO shared that view.

As an independent researcher, I was under no obligation to accept a Russian statement that was refuted by evidence and testimony. In addition to being patently false, the Russian position was illogical. It was a matter of record that Blake had been recruited by the KGB while being held in a POW camp in North Korea. We knew from several first-hand sources such as Colonel Georgi Plotnikov, that Soviet military intelligence had face-to-face contact with American POWs in Korea.

In my view, therefore, it made sense to determine whether the Soviets took the opportunity to interrogate or try to recruit other POWs, including Americans. At the very least, we could document how the KGB organized its activities in North Korea in this case, then look for similar conduct elsewhere. We hoped that Blake could give us some insight into how Soviet intelligence operated during the Korean War.

According to the USRJC ground rules, interviews could not be videotaped or tape recorded. In contrast, we recorded the interview with Blake by using my handheld mini recorder that refused to work until after I had warmed it up by putting it under my armpit for a few minutes (Fig. 11.3).

I showed Blake the list of people given to the US side of the USRJC by the Russians, who claimed it was a comprehensive inventory of westerners, including British and Americans, who had come into contact with Soviet intelligence during the Korean War. Blake stared at the list intently, then said in a strangely high-pitched voice, “Hmmm....they don’t have my



Fig. 11.3 L–R General Makarevsky, Mr. George Blake, Dr. Paul Cole—George Blake (Photos: PM Cole)

name here, and I certainly had contact with them. Look here! They have the name of my clerk,²⁹ but not me. This is a very curious list indeed. They have my clerk but not me!” He pronounced clerk with a long “a,” as in *clark*.

Blake was clearly peeved by being left off of the Russian list. Everyone involved in the operation agreed that Soviet intelligence agents had face-to-face meetings with Blake in Korea. Why did the Russian side of the USRJC commit such an obvious error by leaving Blake off of their “comprehensive” list? The Russians had clearly misrepresented or probably lied about the names on the list, or had reasons to conceal certain names.

I asked Blake about events he witnessed as a prisoner, such as when captured American GIs were shot in cold blood or pushed off a cliff by North Korean guards. Blake said, “Many of the American prisoners were sick or wounded. Had they survived the march, they would have suffered a much crueler death in the camps during the winter.”

I reflected on Blake’s logic. I thought of Dr. Pangloss taking Candide for a walk through the destruction caused by the great Seville earthquake. Candide asked his mentor why God had killed all the people. Dr. Pangloss answered, “Had they lived, there is no question that they would have died in more prolonged and cruel ways. So, a sudden death was God’s gift.”

I’m convinced Blake, an intransigent Calvinist, really believed in and took comfort from his Panglossian logic.

The Soviets recruited Blake in the 1950–1951 timeframe in a POW camp in Korea, yet the Russian side of the USRJC claimed their intelligence people had no contact with him. What did the US side of the USRJC do when I submitted Blake’s comments (recorded and transcribed)? Worse than nothing.

As they were obligated to do, the US side of the USRJC agreed there had been no contact between Blake and the KGB because the Russian side of the USRJC had said so. Blake’s name was not on the comprehensive list; thus there had been no contact between Blake and Soviet intelligence.

One member of the US side of the USRJC rejected Blake’s statements in their entirety. He advised me, “Blake might have a reason to lie.” He told me that Blake was simply an attention seeker who was trying to impress me by claiming to be worthy of personal attention from the KGB. In contrast to the USRJC member’s view, the KGB was convinced that western POWs in general and US POWs in particular were worthy of personal attention.

According to Blake’s version, he managed to send a note through the prison guards to the KGB, who sent people to the camp to accept Blake’s fabulous offer. The former head of KGB counterintelligence, Major General Oleg Kalugin, told a completely different version of events. General Kalugin told us that the Blake case was a “required reading” at the KGB counterintelligence academy.

I journaled:

February 11, 1993 – IMEMO, Moscow

Kalugin told me over dinner that he had read Blake’s case files at the KGB. There is no question, according to Kalugin, that Blake had been identified and worked on. Blake made it a point to say he initiated the contact with Soviet intelligence.

“Of course he was given the impression he had volunteered.” General Kalugin first laughed and then said quite seriously, “Of course he believes that. When you recruit someone, you don’t care what they believe as long as it serves the recruiter’s purpose. Let the subject of recruitment believe anything he likes that advances your objective, which is to recruit him.”

Blake’s case, which was not a singularity, was part of a much larger pattern of Soviet efforts to exploit and if possible recruit US POWs.

General Kalugin also told us about how the KGB had contact with American POWs in Vietnam. As a result of those contacts, he said, the

KGB had “recruited ten POW’s who agreed to be contacted once they returned home.” This was a standard Russian intelligence practice that can be documented in WWII and the Korean War. General Kalugin said, “The operation fell apart when we made the follow-up contacts. We hadn’t anticipated how frequently Americans move. When we made the follow-up calls years later, not a single phone number or address we had for any of the Americans was good any longer.”

The CIA reported to National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger that a North Vietnamese “rallier” stated during his debriefing that:

Attempts to gain the cooperation of the POW’s are emphasized and various techniques including ideological indoctrination are used to this end.³⁰

In this report, however, the CIA did not indicate any involvement by Soviet forces.

I reported General Kalugin’s story to the DoD. The response was, “You are mistaken.” A DPMO staff member on loan from the CIA advised me that no such conversation could have taken place and, if in the unlikely event that it had, I had misunderstood what General Kalugin told Sergei and me. The CIA officer advised me that the word “recruit” meant something specific in intelligence circles. Since I was not a trained intelligence officer, he said, I was incapable of understanding what I had been told. In addition, he said, “I seriously doubt the conversation ever occurred, but if it did, Kalugin had every reason to lie to you.” What General Kalugin’s motive to lie to us might have been was never revealed. The CIA officer made no comment when I asked him what motive I had to lie to DPMO, if it were true as he said that the conversation never took place.

Once again, however, our research did not support DPMO’s conclusions that were sometimes nothing more than opinions. DPMO’s response to evidence that was inconsistent with their opinions was to determine that the contrary evidence did not, in fact, exist.

Sergei and I were advised by our research team in Moscow that they had determined that the KGB produced an assessment of the KGB’s experience with American POWs in Vietnam. The assessment was described as a standard text at the KGB’s counterintelligence academy. One source advised that the report was distributed to every KGB office in each republic of the USSR as well as in some Eastern European countries. We put a lot of effort into trying to locate any evidence that such a report existed as well as to obtain a copy of the report itself but came up empty. If the

assessment existed, and we had no reason to doubt it, as the Russians emptied out the KGB buildings in the soon-to-be-liberated republics, such an explosive document would have been one of the first records to be sent to Moscow or destroyed.

One month later we obtained evidence of a similar assessment of how WWII POWs had contributed to Soviet industry. In March 1993, I finally received a document from Moscow that I had been hoping to get since my last visit to Moscow. Through Dr. Matskovsky's company, we had retained a researcher who had access to some intriguing, specialized archives. Our investment had paid off.

I journaled:

March 25, 1993 – RAND, S.M.

A document I was expecting from Moscow arrived today. Christer Larsson of Radio Sweden picked it up for me about three weeks ago. He gave it to a friend of his at the Swedish embassy in Moscow who sent it via the diplomatic pouch to Stockholm. From there Christer sent it by delivery service to me at RAND.

The report is an MVD assessment of the value of foreign POWs to Soviet industry. The document is dated 1950. We got 30 of 1,000 pages!

The report had been produced by the MVD that was created out of the NKVD in 1953 after the MVD was split up. That split resulted in the March 1954 creation of the secret police organization KGB. The TOP SECRET document was entitled *About Spies, Operative Work with POWs and Internees Taken Prisoner During the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet People*. Of the many interesting subjects in the document, there was no indication that over 20,000 American POWs had been held in the USSR after the end of WWII.

I provided the 30 pages to DPMO. As usual, the reaction from DPMO was no reaction. My guess is the document was ignored because it had been produced by an "independent researcher."

There was no doubt that Soviet intelligence actively exploited American POWs in WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

* * *

Friday morning in Moscow began with watching a Reebok step aerobic program on state-run television. One could only guess what the average Russian made of a glamorexic skinny woman in neon red tights yelling at

five other people as they spent a half hour waving their arms, marching in place, and squatting vigorously as they smiled maniacally at one another.

In the afternoon, I met with Dr. Matskovsky to discuss progress with the report. He assured me that everything was on track. Dr. Matskovsky, a good guy with whom I had developed a decent friendship in addition to the professional interests we shared, treated me to dinner. The restaurant featured a roulette wheel. Dr. Matskovsky spotted me some rubles. Together we lost about 20,000 rubles (US \$40) before we quit. Dr. Matskovsky mentioned that the average salary for someone like George Blake at IMEMO was 3000 rubles a month.

Dr. Matskovsky's driver dropped me off at the Aerostar Hotel around 10:30 in the evening. I was ready to call it a day when I spotted Colonel Ed Pusey in the bar. He said he had been waiting for me. We talked for nearly two hours. Colonel Pusey was a really good guy who was always professional and took time to understand our archive research project. We discussed how frustrating it was to deal with the debilitating conditions that Ambassador Toon's acquiescence had imposed on the USRJC.

I journaled:

February 12, 1993 – Aerostar Hotel, Moscow

I don't think the U.S. government could screw up the search for information on POW/MIA's more than has been done. I shall try to document in my report the bizarre regulations and restrictions imposed on official and independent researchers. The politicians and bureaucrats created the research structure – massive incompetence reigns.

The next morning, Colonel Pusey came back to the hotel. We spent five hours going over the material that my Russian research team had produced. We met at the hotel due to the fact that the rules of the USRJC excluded contact with independent researchers, so Colonel Pusey didn't want anyone to see us together. Around noon, the head of the international department of the Diplomatic Academy, Dr. Alexander Gordievsky, dropped by to see me. Colonel Pusey appreciated the opportunity to meet Dr. Gordievsky.

Following my meeting with Colonel Pusey, on Saturday evening, February 14, 1993, Valentine's Day, I departed Moscow for Seoul, South Korea.

SEOUL

I departed Moscow for Seoul, a ten-hour and 20-minute flight (Fig. 11.4).

The Moscow-Seoul flight on Korean Air Lines took nearly two hours more than today. In the early 1990s, China did not allow Korean Air to fly across its airspace, so we had to make a huge starboard clockwise loop around the People's Republic. As we flew across the eleven time zones of Russia, every time I looked at the illuminated map, I thought about Korean Air flight 007 that had been shot down by a Soviet Air Force Sukhoi fighter on September 1, 1983, killing 269 people, including Congressman Larry McDonald, a member of the House of Representatives from Georgia.

I made a big mistake by changing my seat to the upper deck of the Korean Air 747. I preferred the upper deck because it was always quieter, it has fewer passengers, and the service was usually more attentive. I was not aware that the upper deck was the business class smoking section on Korean Air. The other two dozen or so passengers chain-smoked during the entire flight. After a couple of hours, the smoke was thicker than in a Bosnian nightclub at midnight. By the time the plane landed, my clothes were so clotted with cigarette smoke that my pants could have stood on their own.



Fig. 11.4 En route from Moscow to Seoul on Korean Air (Photo: PM Cole)

Every now and then I glanced up at the illuminated map, wondering when we would get out of Russian airspace. For some reason, I didn't sleep a wink on the flight. Instead, I passed the time editing and re-writing my RAND report. This was all done with pen and ink on hard copy, of course. The days of the portable personal computer were still in their infancy.

* * *

As we approached the Kimpo airport, I looked out the window, trying to see as much as I could. All I could think of was how many times my father, a C-119 co-pilot during the first year of the Korean War, had made a similar approach into K-14, the wartime code name for the airfield.

I arrived at Kimpo early in the morning in remarkably good shape, though I wasn't prepared for the mayhem at the taxi stand. I joined the bewildered passengers who were confronted by a gaggle of taxi drivers who offered different fare prices: "Ten thousand Won!" "Nine thousand Won!" "Twelve thousand Won!" Not knowing one fare from the other, I pointed at one of the drivers who grabbed my suitcase and off we went.

On the way into town from Kimpo airport I noticed several bewildered people standing on the side of the highway with their luggage. I later found out that some taxi drivers demanded that passengers pay double the fare quoted, but only demanded the ransom after they were underway. The passengers who refused to cough up the extra money were summarily dumped out on the side of the road.

I stayed at the modern, brightly lit and more importantly meticulously clean Seoul Garden Hotel. What a relief it was after the gloomy, worn-out, strangely foul Red Army Hotel in Moscow. The only problem was that in Korea all of the hotel furniture was about three-quarters scale. The foot-board on the bed hit me mid-calf and I could enter, but not turn around in the shower stall. One span of my hand separated my head from the ceiling. I felt like Gulliver among the Lilliputians, though I doubt Gulliver ever watched Japanese sumo wrestling at three in the morning while shaking off jet lag.

On the first day in Seoul, a US government car delivered me to the American Embassy where my friend and former Georgetown School of Foreign Service professor, Ambassador Don Gregg, was glad to see me (Fig. 11.5).

He hadn't changed much since I was a student of his in 1980–1981.

Fig. 11.5 Ambassador Don Gregg (Photo: Public Domain)



I journaled:

September 21, 1992 – Seoul, Korea

The 1st Secretary Jim Pierce and a political officer sat in while Don and I gassed about the good old days. They are all impressed with my work on Korean war casualties.

The embassy provided a car for me back to the hotel. No sooner had I returned to the hotel at 16.00 than the embassy was calling. I was sitting in my room watching a Sumo tournament from Japan. A Maj Gen from UNCMAC was calling to set up an appointment with me for Wednesday. They said, “The word is getting around that you’re here.”

The following day I briefed the UNCMAC staff, which included an informative discussion about day-to-day relations with the DPRK. We discussed the procedures followed when the DPRK turned over human remains.

I also briefed two major generals, one Air Force and the other a Marine, who shared some of their recent research on the Korean War’s POW/MIA issues. They gave me copies of documents and reports that I could not have obtained had I been there in person, as I had no idea the material existed.

That evening, when returning to the hotel from dinner, the taxi driver, who spoke English reasonably well, pointed out a couple of landmarks. He told me about the time when, as a kid, he had taken shelter under a particular bridge while fighting raged around him as the communists invaded. I mentioned to the taxi driver that my father had been in the Korean War. He turned off the meter and insisted on giving me a free ride to the hotel. I thanked him. As I walked into the lobby, I realized that the set of wooden soup bowls I had purchased that day were in the back seat of the taxi.

The next day I flew from Seoul to Hawaii via Narita.

* * *

In early 1993 I repeated the Moscow to Seoul trip, this time arriving on a public holiday, which was fine with me because I needed to sleep for about 12 hours.

I journaled:

February 15, 1993 – Seoul Garden Hotel, Korea (Monday)

Boy was I zonked yesterday. Slept 12:00 – 17:00 then half slept from 18:00 – 19:30. Tried to stay up until 22:00 so I would have a chance to sleep through the night. Woke up at 02:30, again at 04:30 and have been awake since then. Watched the Daytona 500 on Armed Forces TV. Now the Indiana – Michigan basketball game is on. Called my parents, got their machine. Told Dad, “I much prefer to land at Kimpo sitting in the upstairs of a Korean Air 747 than like you did in the pilot’s seat of a C-119.” And how.

In the early morning of February 16, 1993, the American Embassy sent a car to take me to the UNCMAC headquarters in Seoul. From there, with a South Korean driver and a US Army military escort, we drove north to the Peace Village in Panmunjom (Fig. 11.6).

As we approached Panmunjom, my military escort removed his name brick from his tunic and slipped a yellow armband on the outside of the left sleeve of his jacket. This was intended to prevent the DPRK guards from knowing his name as well as to indicate his status as a visitor.

I journaled:

February 17, 1993 – Seoul Garden Hotel (Wednesday)

As we drove north the road narrowed, check points became more apparent – armed guards, barriers, etc. Also, there are those enormous tank barriers above the road – giant blocks of concrete, apparently loaded with



Fig. 11.6 En route to Panmunjom (Photo: PM Cole)

massive amounts of explosives so in the event of an invasion the roads can be completely blocked. Sort of eerie, but I supposed familiarity grows even when one is exposed to these sorts of things. Eventually there is one final checkpoint before one begins to cross the Han River on a one-lane bridge. There the demilitarized zone (DMZ) starts. This is a serious military area. There are perhaps 4,000 American soldiers in and around this area.

At the “Peace Village,” I was given what was described as the “insider’s tour” of the truce buildings. The weather was atrocious (Fig. 11.7).

I journaled:

February 17, 1993 – Seoul Garden Hotel (Wednesday)

The Neutral Nations Supervising Commission (NNSC) buildings are rather 1950-ish. Bad furniture and some of the worst carpeting I’ve ever seen. In several of the buildings there is a line across the middle indicating the division between North & South Korea. [...] The N Koreans wander around in their woolen great coats with red trim and insignia. Stone-faced S Koreans stand at parade rest peering around the corner of buildings. The whole scene is totally weird.



Fig. 11.7 Dr. Cole in the Panmunjom Peace Village (Photo: PM Cole)

The negotiating building, which was a classic example of something one would find in Pre-Fabograd, had all of the charm of an abandoned mobile home. The feature that reminded a visitor that this was a serious business was the sign that demarcated the border. Even the negotiating table had a line through it (Fig. 11.8).

The demilitarized zone (DMZ) was cordoned off by an impressive fence. Visible through the mist on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) side of the DMZ was an enormous flag, the size of which one would expect to find flying over a used-car dealership in Alabama. There were also several banks of gargantuan loud speakers that blared what sounded to me like a lunatic's ravings.

There had been many incidents in the DMZ's "Joint Security Area," including attempts by the North Koreans to snatch Americans and drag them into North Korea. The most notorious incident occurred on August 18, 1976, when two US Army officers, Arthur Bonifas and Mark Barrett, were attacked and killed by North Koreans (Fig. 11.9).

Fig. 11.8 Dr. Cole in North Korea (Photo: PM Cole)



I journaled:

February 17, 1993 – Seoul Garden Hotel (Wednesday)

Across the DMZ the N Koreans have loudspeakers that constantly send out propaganda or speeches or songs or whatever. Since there are many loudspeakers sending the same thing, it reaches the listener at different times, creating a bizarre echo of background sounds. [...] I've heard people say about N Koreans, "They're just like us." No way. People who are "just like us" don't run countries the way the N Koreans do.



Fig. 11.9 Dr. Cole with the Bridge of No Return in the background. The axe murder occurred several feet in front of the right side of the bridge (Photo: PM Cole)

By the time we finished the tour, my shoes and socks were soaked, my thin trench coat was sopping wet, as was my suit jacket. This was nothing compared to the US soldiers who lived and fought in weather that was much worse and much, much colder for weeks at a time.

On the way back to Seoul, we stopped for lunch at a typical Korean restaurant. In addition to fabulous kimchi and bulgogi, the dining room was equipped with heating elements designed to dry clothes. My military escort and I hung our coats and in my case my shoes and socks, in the drying area. What a relief it was to have dry clothes.

After returning to Seoul, I gave a seminar at UNCMAC that lasted two and one-half hours. The seminar included a long discussion about how various lists of the missing had been produced, by whom, when, and for what reasons.

The next day the American Embassy sent a car for me to take me to see the American Ambassador Don Gregg. We talked politics in general and specifically the strange bureaucratic politics of the POW/MIA issue. Ambassador Gregg, as usual, was smart, polite, and forthcoming.

Following our meeting, I was invited to have lunch with First Secretary Jim Pierce and Second Secretary Eric Kattner.

I journaled:

February 17, 1993 – Seoul Garden Hotel (Wednesday)

Went to a restaurant near the Embassy. I'd never find it again. Shoes are removed outside. There are many low tables with cushions for four. All sorts of kimchi is arranged in little bowls. I really enjoy the cabbage kimchi. Then they bring a fish with a large boiled radish and a little boiling pot of spicy soup. The three of us happily ate our way through all of it for Won 5000/person (ca. \$6.50). We were served a cup of hot water to go with the meal. Stainless steel chopsticks have replaced the disposable wooden ones. Pierce says it's because 45 million Koreans were using disposable chopsticks made in China – steel is supposed to be environmentally sound, but the real reason is trade. [...]

Pierce told me that the IAEA is contemplating tough action against N Korea's nuclear weapon program, but the S Koreans are in the midst of a presidential transition which makes it impossible to report to Washington a coherent S Korean position. The life of a political officer.

The South Koreans did not see any point in importing hundreds of millions of wooden chopsticks from China year in and year out. It's a lesson other countries should implement.

That evening I flew to Hawaii, via Narita International, for my fourth and final visit to CILHI where I worked in the records room for a couple of days.

I journaled:

February 17, 1993 (continued)

Hawaii is a beautiful place, but if one is not interested in watching Polynesian-clad strongmen juggling flaming torches or incredibly fat people playing island music, there isn't much to do. I thought about playing golf, forgetting that the Japanese tourists have driven the cost of a tee time to over \$100 at the resorts. I'm trying to find some guy at CILHI who can get me on at one of the Army courses.

Work is going well. I'm going to have a good report. 20:25

There are only so many luaus one can attend.

* * *

CENTRAL IDENTIFICATION LABORATORY: HAWAII (CILHI)

During the Korean War in 1951, the Department of the Army established the CIL in Kokura, Japan, on the northern tip of Kyushu. The Kokura CIL processed the remains of US dead and unidentified from the Korean War. In 1956, the Kokura CIL was closed.

During the Vietnam War, as Executive Agent for Mortuary Affairs, the US AQC operated two mortuaries in Vietnam, one at TSN Air Force Base near Saigon and the other in Da Nang on the east coast. In January 1973, a CIL was opened at Camp Samae San in Thailand (CIL-THAI). CIL-THAI's mandate was to search for, recover, and identify servicemen who had gone missing during the war. In 1973, the Paris Peace Accords created a JCRC, also located in Thailand, that cooperated with CIL-THAI. The JCRC operated until 1992. In January 1992, the Commander-in-Chief, USPACOM, formed the JTF-FA when it was re-designated as Joint Task Force-Full Accounting. JTF-FA replaced JCRC as the primary organization focused on the accounting program.

In 1976, CIL-THAI was closed and then relocated to Hawaii where it became the US Army USA-CILHI.

In 1985, CILHI was assigned the mission to search for, recover, and identify the remains of US servicemen who went missing as a result of WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Lieutenant Colonel Johnie Webb Jr. was the CILHI commander between 1982 and 1993. "When I originally took command, the holdover from the Vietnam War was using morticians to make the identifications. We needed to bring key scientific staff on board to do the work that needed to be done."³¹

In 2003, the JTF-FA and CILHI were merged into a single organization named the JPAC. As part of the merger, JPAC, which included the CIL, was taken from the Army and then placed under the Navy's USPACOM.³²

* * *

I made my first visit to the US Army's CILHI in June 1992.

The CILHI commander, Lieutenant Colonel in the Quartermaster corps Johnie Webb Jr., approved my visit. The fact that a lieutenant colonel who had neither expertise nor training in any type of forensic science was in command of the CIL, the world's largest skeletal identification laboratory, spoke volumes about the extraordinarily low regard within the

DoD for the scientific integrity of the identification process. It also spoke volumes about the reality about the mission that was alleged to be America's "highest national priority."

LTC Webb signed the letter that authorized my access onto the Pearl Harbor base but other than that expressed little or no interest in the purpose of my project. My PoC for administrative and research and for all other intents and purposes was Sergeant First Class David Bashford, a mortician who was sort of in charge of the record room. I say "sort of" due to the fact that the commander of the record room was actually an Army major who owned a motorcycle shop somewhere in Honolulu. The major came into the office in the morning, gave some orders, then disappeared for a few hours. He asked me to come with him to see his motorcycle shop every day, but I declined.

Whenever I had a question or needed some administrative task done, Sergeant Bashford took care of it quickly and efficiently (Fig. 11.10).

The CILHI building known as Building 45, which was originally designed to be a morgue and an autopsy lab, consisted of three parts,



Fig. 11.10 (L-R) Dr. Paul M. Cole, Sergeant David Bashford (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 11.11 CIL lab space (Photo: (L) Public Domain (R) Dr. William Belcher)

administrative offices, a record room, and a laboratory. The lab was dominated by a dozen or so tables on which skeletal parts were laid out (Fig. 11.11).

Until the mid-1990s, the glass wall separating the reception area of the CIL from the laboratory floor did not exist. The lab space was separated from the CILHI reception and office area by a red line on the floor. In those pre-DNA analysis days, people, including visitors like me, could handle remains with their bare hands. Swabbing visitors who would come in contact with remains for a DNA sample would not become standard practice until approximately 1997. The lab space included roller shelves where remains and material evidence were stored in gray boxes.

I went to CILHI for a couple of reasons, the most important of which was that was where the original personnel records of the Korean War missing were stored. The records included the original and only copies of the IDPFs.

An IDPF is a remarkable record. The information concerning each person who died or was presumed to have died during military service and became an “inaccessible corpse,” or was missing and had been declared dead by administrative decision usually after one year and one day, is contained in an IDPF. The IDPFs, which were produced by the GRS during WWII and the Korean War, contain a great deal of detailed information, including an individual’s medical records, the most important of which is the dental record and thorax radiograph, military unit, plus a narrative that describes what was known or had been reported concerning the loss incident.

For some reason, CILHI was allowed to store all of the approximately 8000 Korean War IDPFs, one for each of the Korean War missing, in the

CILHI record room. Why these original records were not in the custody of the NARA or the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis was a mystery. Unlike a proper archive facility, at CILHI there were no rules for handling original records. Anyone who had access to the facility could take the IDPFs out of their boxes and handle the records with their bare hands. People who worked with the records routinely drank soft drinks or coffee or even ate chocolate candy bars or sandwiches while handling the documents. The IDPFs included fragile copies that had been made on onion paper with carbon paper and a manual typewriter. In addition to everything else, CILHI was located in a tsunami zone. If the IDPFs at CILHI had been damaged or destroyed, there was no backup copy or any way to reconstruct them. To “save space,” on their own initiative the CILHI record room staff routinely removed and destroyed original records that appeared to the staff to be “duplicates.”

* * *

While at CILHI, I spent the majority of my time in the record room. The record room, which had no windows, gave no indication that one was in Hawaii. The enlisted men told me that while inside the windowless facility, they could be anywhere in the world, so they referred to the CILHI record room as “Des Moines.” Like all of the enlisted men who worked there, on my first day I was issued a fold-up card table, a swivel office chair, and a can of *RAID* insect killer. Some of the enlisted men had an IBM Selectric typewriter on their table that they used to type letters that answered inquiries from family members. None of us other than Sergeant Bashford had an office or a telephone.

The table and the chair made sense, but I was initially puzzled by the can of *RAID*. The answer was revealed quickly.

After the end of the Korean War, an F-86 lost power on takeoff from the Narita Airport in Japan. The instant before the pilot ejected, the aircraft turned over (inverted), resulting in the pilot ejecting straight into a mud flat. Neither the pilot nor the ejection seat was located.

Around 1990 during the expansion of the Narita Airport, construction workers came across an ejection seat from a USAF F-86. The pilot was still strapped into the ejection seat. The pilot’s remains and the ejection seat were shipped to CILHI for analysis.

The ejection seat, which was material evidence, was propped against the wall in the record room. What no one knew until it was too late was that

the seat was filled with fire ant eggs that hatched when exposed to the indoor temperature of the record room. There were zillions of tiny red biting ants everywhere. The only defense against being bitten was to spray a *RAID* perimeter around each table in the morning. One could always tell when a new person was in the room, as he (there were no women) would suddenly jump up and start swatting and scratching as the fire ants found a new source of sustenance.

Through the use of CILHI records, I determined that the F-86 pilot, who died in a mud flat in Japan after the Korean War, was on the list of the missing submitted to the communists on the grounds he might have been captured alive and not returned after the Korean War. This was typical of some of the incredibly sloppy recordkeeping concerning the Korean War missing. The crash occurred after the end of the Korean War, the crash occurred in Japan, yet the loss was included on a list of servicemen who had gone missing during the war. I could not rule out that this type of “pencil whipping” was neither accidental nor isolated.

The Army major who was in charge of the record room was a medium-sized man with unusually large feet for his stature who walked like a circus clown. I could hear him coming due to the loud flapping noise his boots made on the gray-green linoleum floor. *Flap flap flap....here comes the major.* One of the main tasks assigned to the enlisted men in the record room was to respond to letters of inquiry sent in by family members of the missing. All of the enlisted men, who were new to the Army, were all in their teens or maybe as old as 21. An enlisted man would read the letter of inquiry, access the missing person’s IDPF, then type a reply letter on an IBM Selectric.

Each morning, the major would flap into the room, demand everyone’s attention, and then give the following instruction.

Listen up, all of you. I want you to write the *fucking* letters to the *fucking* families! Do you *fucking* underSTAND? That’s why we’re *fucking* HERE! Does everyone underSTAND? This is our fuckin’ mish-IN!! What the **fuck**? Do I have to ree-PEAT myself? Any fuckin’ questions? Then get to fuckin’ work. I don’t want any fuckin’ jacking off! Do you fucking understand? It’s simple. No fuckin’ jackin’ off! If you want to jack the fuck off, don’t bother comin’ in here to do it. UnderSTOOD? Write the fuckin’ letters to the fuckin’ families, underSTOOD?

The enlisted men would mutter, “Yes, Sir!,” after which the major would *flap flap flap* out of the record room. We usually didn’t see him again until late in the afternoon. The reason for this was due to the fact that the major

owned a motorcycle dealership in Honolulu. He spent several hours a day downtown looking after that business. The major invited me several times to come see his shop, but I never took him up on the offer.

When the major returned at the end of the day, he often repeated the morning speech. The only difference was he spoke in questions or the past tense. “Did you write the *fuckin’* letters to the *fuckin’* families? I hope for your *fuckin’* sake that you wrote all of those *fuckin’* letters.”

* * *

My contact for scientific issues was Dr. Kim Schneider who was the laboratory director of the CIL between 1991 and 1992. I didn’t spend much time in the CIL, as my main focus was on the material in the record room. Dr. Schneider, who was considerate enough to give me a tour of the lab and explain the science of the identification process to me, was always willing to drop what she was doing to assist me or answer any questions, regardless of how basic or repetitive.

One of my project tasks was to determine whether the Vietnamese and the North Koreans were sharing information or colluding to leverage the US government over the POW/MIA issue. Specifically, DoD wanted to know whether the North Vietnamese were advising the North Koreans on ways to extract financial compensation from the United States on the remains location and recovery program. The question I put to Dr. Schneider was whether there was any similarity in the way the Vietnamese and North Koreans handled skeletalized human remains.

I journaled:

June 9, 1992 – Honolulu, Hawaii (Tuesday)

Spent the day at the Central Identification Lab (CILHI). After the initial facility briefing I was given a tour of the lab. The room had about ten tables with skeletal remains on them. My initial reaction was one of ghoulish fascination. The head forensic anthropologist kept picking bits up to show me something. I was at first reluctant to handle the things. After a moment or two I dove into the things, examining femurs, fragments, molars and skulls with the best of them.

Turns out one can draw some conclusions about the remains returned by the North Koreans. The people who have handled the stuff in the DPRK are rank amateurs or merely incompetent. The hands and feet tend to be missing – sign of lousy collection technique. The mandible tends to be missing as well. The bones had been stored somewhere that is air conditioned in

the summer and heated in the winter. The NKs have lied about where the remains were collected. The names usually don't match up. The remains tend to be commingled. Unlike the Vietnamese, the NKs haven't made any money off of the remains. They appear to have some sort of singular political motive in mind.

My RAND report summarized the difference between the remains provided by the North Koreans and the remains turned over by the Vietnamese.

The bones delivered by the North Koreans show a remarkably similar degree of curation, decomposition and color. In contrast, bones recovered from the Vietnamese show signs of curation – inventory cards and registration numbers etched on the bones – and variations in color and decomposition. Skeletons returned by the Vietnamese include some that were autopsied – pelvic bones were cut and vertebrae sawed in half. One Vietnam case was strung together into a wired skeleton. None of this variation appears in bones delivered by North Korea.³³

Some of the remains produced by the Vietnamese government showed signs of burn marks. None of the remains turned over by the North Koreans bore similar burn patterns.

Dr. Schneider demonstrated that the remains turned over by the North Koreans were so uniformly degraded and thoroughly commingled in similar patterns that as the CIL laboratory director she suspected that the bones had been stored in North Korea for a long time.³⁴ Dr. Schneider knew that little could be done with the remains until an appropriate analytical technique became available, so after examination the remains were carefully stored in the laboratory. Until DNA analysis became available 15 years later, there was little that could be done in the interim.

Those who viewed the remains recovery effort through the lens of politics drew a different conclusion. Paid lobbyist Ms. Mills-Griffiths denigrated DoD's recovery operations in Southeast Asia. According to the lobbyist, US search teams "go to the field and run around" and return with "a lot of ash and trash."³⁵ Referring to biological evidence as "ash and trash" is an example of scientific illiteracy that would be difficult to create in a work of fiction. These bone fragments, some smaller than a single tooth, would subsequently be used by the CIL scientists to produce dozens of identifications.

In 1992 there was no reliable analytical technique that could associate random fragments of bone with a single individual. If the bones could be

reassembled (articulated), it was possible to determine whether the bones probably belonged to a single individual. In 1992, there was no accredited analytical technique that could be used to determine the identity of an individual based on a few bone fragments small enough to fit in the palm of your hand.

Until the DNA analytical technique became widely available around 1997, no known forensic testing technique was available that could be used to extract probative evidence from the fragments of bone turned over by the DPRK. Many of the cases were represented by one small bone fragment, a single tooth, or even material that looked like gray dust. This is one reason why many cases remained in the CIL for years. Uninformed critics claimed that the bone fragments were in the CIL for so many years due to incompetence or inability of the CIL staff to analyze the remains. Unfortunately, too many of the scientific illiterates in America fell for this nonsense.

Beginning in 1997, there was finally an appropriate analytical technique—DNA analysis—that could be used to associate a bone fragment with a specific missing person. The technique consisted of two parts. First, a DNA sample had to be collected from the remains of the missing person. This was done by cutting a portion of the bone that was sent to the AFDIL to be processed into a “reportable sequence.” Second, someone had to collect a mitochondrial DNA “family reference sample” (“FRS”) from a person in the mother’s line of the missing person.

One important limitation on the use of DNA was the fact that at least ten grams of bone was consumed in order to produce a reportable DNA sequence. In many cases, the amount of bone recovered was less than ten grams. Federal law prohibited all of the biological evidence from being consumed during testing; thus there was no accredited analytical technique that could be used to associate a small fragment of bone with a particular missing person. For this and other reasons, without an appropriate analytical technique, cases consisting of tiny fragments of bone including some that were no more than bone dust were stored in the CIL for years.

This dilemma opened the door for purveyors of junk science and quackery. One CIL director used a self-taught method he called “morphological approximation,” which was used to produce many dubious identifications. A delusional cabal within DoD attempted to impose an absurdly named example of junk science, “Random Incident Statistical Correlation,” on the CIL. Adversaries of the CIL and scientifically illiterate meddlers who understood nothing about the science of human skeletal identification

claimed that the reason why tiny bone fragments had not been identified after years, in some cases decades of storage, was not due to the lack of an appropriate analytical technique. In their warped view the lack of an identification was attributed to incompetence and unwillingness. As the amount of bone required to produce a reportable DNA sequence fell below ten grams, the CIL was able to produce identifications from tiny bone fragments.

The responsibility to collect the “FRS” was handled by the SCOs. The SCOs spent a great deal of time and effort locating family members whose DNA samples were forwarded to the AFDIL. AFDIL’s responsibility was to sequence the samples, then search for a match between the sample taken from the remains and the pool of samples obtained from family members.

Seizing the opportunity to implement this groundbreaking technique, the CIL began its pioneering work in DNA analysis for the purpose of identifying skeletal remains, but results from that effort were a half-decade off. It would take some time to build a database of FRSs. The CIL began to cut a sample of bone from every one of the thousands of fragments in the K208 collection. In some cases, it took AFDIL six months or more to return a reportable DNA sequence. It was slow going at first.

After an intensive program of DNA sampling and reference sample collection was initiated, the CIL, which pioneered the use of DNA in skeletal identification, was able to convert the “ash and trash” into dozens of identifications of the Korean War missing as well as Vietnam and WWII cases, some of which had been in the laboratory for decades.

* * *

A typical day in the record room for me, after establishing the *RAID* perimeter, consisted of searching through the large collection of documents and records stored there. The CILHI record room had the original copy of each Korean War missing person’s IDPF. Some of the IDPFs had a great deal of information about the circumstances of loss. A large number of IDPFs were thin, due to the fact that little or nothing was known about the circumstances of loss. I also spent a significant of time working with Sergeant Bashford building a database of the Korean War missing on his personal 386SX laptop computer which was the only computer at CILHI.

The database, which Bashford entered by hand, was rather basic—name, rank, service number, date of loss, and geographic area where the loss of the approximately 8000 missing from the Korean War occurred. We probably used a primitive version of Excel. Because there were over 8000 line entries in a 32-bit computer with approximately 65 K bytes of memory running MS-DOS, it took forever to sort the database. Whenever we sorted, we spent a lot of time staring at a blinking C:> prompt. After we entered a command, for example, to sort by everyone reported missing on a specific date in 1952, we had plenty of time to go get a cup of coffee and come back 15 minutes later. Even after a quarter hour the sorting was often not completed.

Sergeant Bashford, who made a number of innovative efforts to create a quantifiable and digitized database for the Korean War missing, installed several enormous maps of North Korea on the back wall of the record room.³⁶ One of his projects, undertaken on his own initiative, was to determine from US records (usually from an IDPF) the location where a missing man was last seen, last known alive, or reported to have been killed or died, then compare it to the location where the North Koreans claimed to have recovered the remains. Using nothing more sophisticated than multi-colored stick pins on a large map, Sergeant Bashford was able to demonstrate that the DPRK's claims concerning the "recovery" site of the remains unilaterally recovered by the North Koreans and then turned over to the US government through the UNCMAC were nothing more, *mirabile dictu*, than lies.

In 2014, the official JPAC casualty database was called "Mapper." I often speculated that the name of and information in the Mapper database derived from Bashford's original work with the huge maps in the record room and the database he created on his slow, first-generation 386 personal computer.

One day I asked Bashford about a pile of boxes jammed into a corner of the record room. I had both noticed the boxes and also noticed that no one paid any attention to them. Some of the boxes were broken or torn. Stacks of documents that had spilled out of the boxes were just lying on the floor. Some of the documents bore the marks of the soles of military boots. Bashford said he didn't know what the records were or where they came from.

"Knock yourself out," Sergeant Bashford said. "As far as I know you'll be the first lucky bastard who's ever looked through any of that mess."

I collected the documents, taped up or transferred them to new boxes, stashed everything under my card table within the *RAID* perimeter, then began to examine the records page by page. It took a while to figure out where the documents came from and why they ended up dumped unceremoniously in the corner of the CILHI record room, but it was worth the effort. The story how the documents ended up under my card table was an example of how successful archival research is often produced when hard work is supported by dumb luck.

In 1951, the Department of the Army created the first CIL in Kokura, Japan, on the northern tip of Kyushu. The Kokura CIL processed the remains of US dead and unidentified from the Korean War.

Mr. Tadao Furue, who worked for the US Army's CIL in Kokura, Japan, served as a physical anthropologist between the mid-1950s and 1977. In 1956, when the Kokura CIL was closed, the Army in its infinite wisdom directed the CIL to dispose of the unit's records. Whether through dumpster diving or some other collection method, Mr. Furue collected a number of boxes of documents from the Kokura CIL then took them home.

In 1977 Mr. Furue immigrated with his family to Hawaii, taking the Kokura CIL documents with him. Mr. Furue served as a forensic anthropologist at CILHI, eventually becoming the chief forensic anthropologist. Mr. Furue died in 1988 in Hawaii.

At some point between 1988 and 1992, Mr. Furue's widow apparently dropped the boxes of the Kokura CIL records off at CILHI, where they sat in a corner of the record room until I came along. The only evidence to support this version of events consists of bits and pieces of stories. Regardless of whether the story I cobbled together is entirely accurate or not, the documents were there.

Had it not for the diligence of Mr. and Mrs. Furue, the Kokura CIL documents found in the record room would have vanished along with the rest of them that had been summarily shoved into a dumpster.

I thought the records Mr. Furue pulled out of the dumpster were the only surviving records that documented the Kokura CIL's activities. Much later, when working in the National Archives for a Korean War documentary for the BBC, I found a half-dozen reels of film that the Army had made to document how dead bodies as well as the skeletalized remains of unknowns had been processed at Kokura.

The films and the paper records saved by Mr. and Mrs. Furue are the only primary records concerning the Kokura facility that are known to exist.

The records rescued by Mr. and Mrs. Furue turned out to be an unprecedented treasure trove, a one-of-a-kind find that can only be described as spectacular. The only thing I could determine from my initial examination was that these were original personnel files associated with Korean War losses and missing persons. Most of the records, which were incomplete, often appeared to be random pieces of larger reports. These records included the locations, including map coordinates, of the isolated burial sites in North Korea as of June 1953 where Americans had been buried. I found a roster of 144 isolated burials organized by service that included map coordinates, longitude and latitude, as well as a brief description of the burial place. One GRS record provided the grid coordinates and longitude and latitude of 317 UN aircraft crash sites in North Korea that involved 405 casualties, the majority of which were Americans.

I couldn't preserve all of the records that were in four or five medium-sized cardboard boxes, and the staff in the records room didn't want "all that paper." This is why I decided to include some of the more important or informative documents in *Volume 3: Appendices* of my RAND report. A few of the original records were subsequently lost or destroyed by the CILHI record room staff, so the only evidence that they existed is found in *Volume 3*. In addition to the loss of the records in the five cardboard boxes, CILHI record room staff routinely removed or simply tore out and disposed of pages that appeared to be "duplicates." (Twenty years later, the JPAC record room asked me to produce a document in my RAND report that had been named in a FOIA request. I pointed out that the report stated that the source of the document was the CILHI record room. "Oh, we got rid of that stuff a long time ago," the JPAC record room staff person told me. She had expected me to produce the original document.)

A Korean War veteran, a Marine named Mr. Ron Broward who fought in Korea, came across my RAND report and bought three copies. Mr. Broward, who was only 17 when he served as a Marine during the Korean War, was determined to locate the missing remains of one of his buddies who was killed during the war. Mr. Broward, who became a volunteer at CILHI and its successor organization JPAC, traveled to Hawaii at his own expense to work with historical and dental records. I met Mr. Broward several times and shared an office with him for a few weeks during one of his visits. Mr. Broward's copy of *Volume 3*, which was intensively annotated in pencil in his tight, neat handwriting, was also festooned with dozens of yellow Post-it notes. Mr. Broward's main objective was to get as many

unknown cases out of the ground as possible so that they could be identified and returned to their families. By the time Mr. Broward passed away in 2013, he had used *Volume 3* to produce a line of evidence that contributed to the successful exhumation and identification of at least two dozen missing Korean War servicemen who had been buried as unknowns in the NMCP.

Volume 3 also included what I thought were useful records I located and in some cases had declassified at NARA.

* * *

The DPRK turned over what they claimed were the remains of 16 missing American servicemen in May 1990, what they claimed were 11 individuals in June 1991, what they claimed were 30 individuals in two turnovers in May 1992, and what they claimed were 46 individuals in July 1992.

Collectively, the DPRK turned over a total of 208 containers of remains, which was the beginning of the K208 project.

Due to the fact that the Korean War has never been resolved by a peace treaty, the remains were transferred by the DPRK through the UNCMAC at Panmunjom. In turn, UNCMAC transferred the remains to the US government.

The DPRK provided these remains in a series of unilateral turnovers occurred at no cost to the US government, other than to transport the remains from Panmunjom to the CILHI.

In my RAND report, I described the condition of some of the remains that the DPRK turned over to Senator Robert Smith (R-NH) on June 24, 1991, during a ceremony at the Panmunjom peace pavilion.

The information associated with the remains obtained by the Smith delegation from the North Koreans did not correspond to the evidence produced in subsequent examinations at CILHI. The 11 remains were actually partial sets of 15 remains. The remains showed signs of having been hastily prepared. The boxes containing the remains were roughly assembled in contrast to the boxes used a year before. The paint on the boxes was still wet. The remains were arranged in ludicrous patterns. One box of remains delivered by the North Koreans consisted of a skull and five or six femurs laid end to end like two enormous legs. This is consistent with the assessment that the North Koreans regard the remains issue as a political factor

that can be used to placate the United States. Thus, when remains are needed they are produced. Whether the goods are legitimate or not is immaterial to the Pyongyang regime.

By sheer coincidence, I happened to be at CILHI in June 1992 when the second set of containers that North Korea turned over on May 28 arrived in the laboratory.

PACOM summarized the origin of the remains and the transfer procedure as follows:

Return of Korean War Remains

(U) After a series of meetings and discussions between the United Nations Command (UNC) and the Korean People's Army (KPA) at Panmunjom drawn out over four months, the two sides reached a "hand shake" deal on 1 May 1992 to repatriate 30 UNC war remains. The first repatriation ceremony in which 15 caskets with the remains of UNC soldiers and effects were passed was conducted at 1000 hours, 13 May, at the Military Demarcation Line in the Joint Security Area at Panmunjom. The KPA reported that the remains had been discovered in Nom-Jong-Gu, Suan County, North Hwang-Hae Province in October 1991. For the first time, the KPA used military pallbearers to pass the remains, as pallbearers dressed in civilian clothes were used in the 1990 and 1991 repatriations.

A second group of 15 remains was passed during similar ceremonies conducted on 28 May [1992]. Joint ceremonies were conducted at Hickam AFB upon arrival of the remains, and they were subsequently transferred to CILHI for processing and identification.³⁷

The text in the section in PACOM's command history concerning the "Background on the Agreement" (pp. 231–237) that resulted in the remains transfer was completely redacted by PACOM. The only clues as to why the background information was sensitive are the footnotes that were not redacted. The footnotes are:

- CINCUNC 280700Z Oct 92 (C), p. 232
- Ibid.; AMEMB Seoul 05940/030836Z, Jun 92 (C), p. 233
- See note above, p. 235
- CINCUNC 031014Z Dec 92 (S), info used was Confidential, p. 235
- CINCUNC 280700Z Oct 92 (C), p. 236
- CINCUNC 031014Z Dec 92 (S), info used was Confidential, p. 236
- Ibid.; CINCUNC 152254Z Dec 92 (C), p. 237

PACOM did not include an exemption number; thus it is impossible to determine the grounds on which the information was redacted. All of the footnotes referenced communications that occurred after the remains had been transferred, in some cases seven months after the event. No evidence has been produced to support this conclusion, but my personal guess is that the redacted information concerned the payments the DoD began to make to the North Koreans.

The North Koreans probably intended for the boxes to be considered coffins. A coffin is a six-sided funerary box, tapered at the bottom. A casket is rectangular and even. The containers North Korea turned over were wooden boxes. Each container made by the North Koreans was a rectangular box made of wood planks about an inch and a half thick. The edges of the wood were so uneven that the planks, which showed saw marks, must have been cut by hand. The handles on both sides of the container were made of three pieces of rough wood, nailed together, then attached to the side planks with large metal screws. The containers were covered with a thick, gooey paint that refused to dry. The chemical smell was overwhelming. We could see the patterns where the gloves of the US honor guards had stuck to the handles. I couldn't make a clipboard in high school shop class, but I could have made a container better than what the North Koreans had managed to produce. The containers, which should have been preserved, were destroyed.

Sergeant Bashford and Dr. Schneider invited me to observe when one of the North Korean containers was opened in the CIL.

The roughly hewn wooden lid came off without incident. Weak DPRK nails were no match for Sergeant Bashford's made-in-China solid steel crowbar. Inside the container was a part of one skull minus the mandible and at least six femurs, each laid out below the skull, three femurs on each side. Sergeant Bashford leaned over the container with his hands clasped behind his back, had a good look, then said in a mortician's tone of voice, "Bone Maaaaan." The North Koreans had included a 1952 plastic pocket calendar from an upstate New York insurance company that they claimed was Bone Man's "military identification card." The North Koreans claimed that the name of Bone Man, the man with six femurs, was "Allstate."

CIL Scientific Direct Dr. Holland noted in his monograph concerning the remains turned over by North Korea:

Each set of remains was alleged by the North Koreans to be a recently exhumed American serviceman. Each set of remains was delivered in its own ‘coffin’ or case. As of February 1993, the contents of 35 (76 percent) of the 46 coffins have been analyzed at the Army CILHI. A minimum of 5 individuals are represented in the 35 cases studied thus far. Nearly all of the remains received post mortem damage during excavation. There are numerous holes caused by probes as well as cuts from digging tools. The bones show signs of shovel trauma, root marks, and animal scratchings, which indicate the individual was buried without a coffin. There are few small bones, which suggests that burial sites were not properly screened. Alternatively, the small bones were lost during subsequent curation.

Eventually the North Koreans turned over 208 boxes, each of which they said contained the remains of one missing US serviceman. The 208 boxes were designated the “K208 collection.” The only way to identify these intensely commingled, dry, fragments of bone was through DNA analysis. In 1997, the CIL initiated a project to cut the K208 remains for DNA, while the SCOs began to collect DNA samples from the family members of the missing.

By March 2015, the K208 collection had yielded reportable DNA sequences for over 400 individuals.

By January 2016, the DNA-led K208 project had produced over 50 identifications, with many more to come.

This was laboratory work, carried out by the CIL and AFDIL. The good news was that many identifications were made. The bad news was that producing identifications in this manner gave the impression that the “military tourism” program to locate remains in the field was successful. Congress, the media, and anyone in DoD with oversight responsibility simply looked at the raw number of identifications. The fact that the IDs were being produced by remains obtained in a series of unilateral turn-overs by the DPRK was ignored. Identifications produced by the CIL and AFDIL were credited to the entire organization, which gave the false and misleading impression that the field search program was successful.

* * *

President Clinton made a refueling stop at Hickam Air Force Base while I was at CILHI. The military members of CILHI were required to polish the floors in the morgue and record room, then stand in formation in the

courtyard, just in case the POTUS decided to drop by the morgue. The chances of that happening were extremely remote, of course.

Even people who were supposed to visit CILHI didn't do so. While I was sitting in the record room, about once or twice a day, an individual or two or three guys dressed in golf attire or right-off-the-rack goofy-looking aloha shirts and new shorts would appear as part of their CILHI tour. The guide would say something to the effect of, "And this is the records room where we.....", then the visitors would say something to the effect of, "Yeah, well, this is interesting, but I think we've seen enough for today," then they'd leave to go to the beach or play golf.

* * *

In the early 1990s, in order to see the archives and other historical records, one had to go where the records were located. There were no viable travel substitutes when the World Wide Web was in its infancy. The only alternative was a video conference facility at RAND that had scratchy audio, buffering video. The cost to use it was something like 1000 dollars per hour.

On June 30, 1992, Sergei's partner Irina phoned me. I happened to be in DC working in the National Archives. She phoned me at my hotel to advise that Sergei had just phoned her from Riga, Latvia, from where he could speak with only a miniscule possibility that any Russian three-letter organizations were listening. Sergei had the report that Dr. Matskovsky's group had obtained from our partners in the CIS High Command. The report included a list of 59 names of American POWs who the Russians believed had been transported to the territory of the USSR during the Korean War.

When I started working on the archive research phase of my dissertation in 1988, the place to go was the National Archive building at 700 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, DC. In those days, a researcher was allowed to wander the stacks in search of records. After the new archive facility opened in Suitland, Maryland, one had to take a shuttle bus from the downtown archive building. The route the shuttle bus took went right through Anacostia, one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the DC area. Apparently, one dead body a day was found floating face down in the Anacostia River in the vicinity of the Suitland archive building.

I journaled:

July 1, 1992 – On the Archives shuttle bus, DC

Sitting here waiting to make the 15-minute trip to the Suitland branch of the Archives. I've spent two productive days there.

Irina phoned last night. She has spoken with Sergei who is now in Riga, Latvia. He has the report. Sergei says it contains the names of 59 Americans taken to the territory of the USSR during the Korean War. I wonder – did anyone know this? Am I the first to find this out in the USA? Hard to believe if it's true.

Today I will focus on intelligence reports. Perhaps this was reported at some time in the past. Such is the research game.

As I pondered what Sergei had reported, it suddenly dawned on me. Our researchers compiled a list of exactly 59 American servicemen who had apparently been taken to the USSR during the Korean War. President Yeltsin's letter to the Senate stated that exactly 59 Americans had been interrogated. My immediate reaction that this could not be a coincidence. At the time, it was impossible to know how two separate sources had arrived at the same number, but we were going to find out.

I journaled:

July 6, 1992 – Wash DC (Monday)

Sergei is supposed to return to LA on Tuesday with the report from the CIS High Command. The anxiety over this business is keeping me awake at night. What if, what if, what if... The worst part is I feel vulnerable, exposed, and not in control of events. RAND management is not exactly supporting me in any profoundly reassuring way. Their attitude is more or less, "Good luck, pal. Hope you don't spend too much time in prison."

Sergei told me that he obtained the list of 59 names from Colonel Georgi Ulyanov who had in turn obtained it from General Leonid Ivashov. After the breakup of the Soviet Union, General Ivashov had become part of the new CIS High Command. Sergei said that Georgi's hands were shaking when he handed over the list. According to General Ivashov, each of the 59 servicemen whose names were on the list had been taken to the territory of the USSR.

In order to determine what happened to the 59 POWs, I needed to use the archive material stored in the record room (aka "Des Moines") at CILHI. If any of these POWs had not returned, there would be an IDPF for each one. There would have been a juridical finding of death after one year and one day of the last known alive date. Conceptually, the task

required to verify the status of the 59 servicemen was straightforward. All I had to do was spend time in Des Moines at CILHI.

When Sergei returned to Santa Monica, we made two copies of the list of 59 names. I put the original in the safe in my office at RAND, gave one to Sergei to hide somewhere, and took a copy home. There was no way to secure the document in our apartment, so I removed the front of one of the stereo speakers and put the list behind the woofer. We had no idea what the names on the list would tell us; thus we weren't taking any chances.

Even paranoids have enemies.

With the list of 59 names that Sergei had obtained in Moscow in my attaché case, in July 1992 I flew from LA to Hawaii to work in the CILHI record room.

Inside Des Moines, nothing much had changed since my first visit. Everyone assigned to the record room, except for Sergeant Bashford, still sat at a fold-up card table, which gave the place the appearance of an illegal poker game. The biggest change in the record room was that the ejector seat had been moved somewhere else, so the fire ants were no longer an issue.

I journaled:

July 13, 1992 – Waikiki, Hawaii

Sergei brought back a list of 59 names of Americans who the Commonwealth of Independent States High Command says were taken to the territory of the USSR during the Korean War. The reason I'm at CILHI is to check the files of these people. What do we know about them from U.S. sources? I'm sort of suspicious of the quality of the info even though I'm confident in the people who gave it to us.

Using the CILHI records and Sergeant Bashford's "Mapper" database, I was able to quickly determine that if the 59 POWs on the list had been transferred to the USSR, it wasn't a one-way trip. All of POWs whose names appeared on the list of 59 had been repatriated after the armistice in 1953. The picture that was developing suggested that the 59 POWs on the list had not been transferred to and retained in the USSR; rather, it was becoming increasingly evident that they had passed through a Soviet interrogation facility of some kind. It also appeared that all of the POWs on the list had been interrogated by Soviet intelligence officers, then repatriated after the armistice or otherwise accounted for.

While I was working on my own project, I checked on the progress of the USRJC from time to time. I journaled:

July 13, 1992 – Waikiki, Hawaii

I've been pleased, fascinated and disturbed to watch the Dep't of Defense (DoD) permit the US-Russian Commission screw up the work. It's simply bizarre. We have a source that can shed light on the question of whether American POWs were taken from Korea to the territory of the USSR. The DoD is clinging to a source that fell into their lap. Problem is, their source is convenient but impotent.

Volkogonov can't do the work – I suspect he knows it.

After working on the list of 59 names at CILHI for a few days, I was able to draw the conclusion that our Russian researchers did not understand their own information. Every American on the list of 59 names had been repatriated.

President Yeltsin's letter stated that the 59 had been interrogated, presumably by Russian or Soviet intelligence services, but that there was no evidence that any US serviceman had been transferred to the territory of the USSR. The same number of POWs, with two different explanations from the Russians. One intriguing possibility was that both stories were true. Perhaps the 59 had been interrogated, sent to the USSR, then returned to a POW camp in North Korea?

I wasn't going to solve the problem by sitting in the middle of the Pacific in a windowless room, so I made arrangements to return to RAND as soon as possible.

* * *

During my final day at CILHI, I was sitting in Des Moines, aka the record room, when a private came over to my card table and said, "Dr. Cole, there is a phone call for you." He pointed toward Sergeant Bashford's office. Nobody other than my wife and a couple of friends knew I was at CILHI. I was initially suspicious that one of the "evil creeps" who liked to leave nasty messages on my answering machine at RAND had somehow tracked me down.

I went into Sergeant Bashford's office where I picked up the phone. "Hello?" It was Dr. Kelley, the head of the NDRI at RAND.

"What can I do for you?"

Dr. Kelley said, "I just received a call from the Pentagon. They have a report that you are in Moscow selling archive documents."

I sputtered, "Where? Doing what?" I paused and then added, "What did you tell them?"

"I told them I'd check."

"What? Charlie, you signed off on my travel request. I'm in Hawaii as planned, not in Moscow as you have probably just figured out. You just dialed the 808 area code. Anyway, what sort of documents would I be selling?"

"I don't know," he replied. "I just wanted to be sure."

I was more than a little pissed off but managed to keep my cool. I said, "So you gave the client the impression that there was a possibility that I was capable of filing false travel papers, misleading RAND management and making a fraudulent visit to Moscow without country clearance in order to sell something I don't have? You had to check? And how much was I going to make from this alleged nefarious archive transaction to make it worth the risk? Can't you see that this is insane?"

"I'll call them and tell them it's OK," he said. This was Dr. Kelley's idea of "pro-active management" which was typical of the lack of confidence and the absence of support that characterized Dr. Kelley's "management." I returned to the stack of records on my card table. Sergeant Bashford, who thought it was unusual for me to get a call in Des Moines, asked innocently, "Who was that?"

"RAND. One of the senior apparatchiks wanted to make sure I wasn't in Moscow."

Sergeant Bashford stared at me and then asked, "In Moscow, eh? You're not, are you? I mean, you're here, not in Moscow." Sergeant Bashford paused, then said, "I was under the impression that you had to be smart to work at RAND."

"Who told you that? Anyway, isn't there supposed to be a difference between showing up and getting paid and showing up and actually doing something useful?"

"How would I know?" Bashford said, "I'm in the Army."

This was a typical example of how RAND management routinely failed to provide support or, to put it in Pentagon jargon, provide "top cover," for RAND researchers.

As I returned my attention to the IDPF files on my fold-out card table, I thought of the poet Friedrich Schiller who wrote,

Folly! Thou conquerest, and I must yield! Against stupidity even the very gods, Themselves struggle in vain.

I muttered, "Why do I even try?"
I departed Hawaii for California that evening.

* * *

POLITICAL INTERFERENCE WITH CIL

Political interference with the science of human skeletal identification, which occurred frequently, resulted in the resignation of two of CILHI's senior scientists.

I journaled:

August 29, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Saturday)

The head of the CILHI forensic laboratory, Dr. Kim Schneider, resigned citing undue political interference with her work. That should make some headlines before long. Much greater attention is focused on lesser things. The bottom line is people who know nothing about research and science are in positions of authority, e.g., Ed Ross. Try explaining to these people that the policy on recovering remains is creating the insoluble science problems. Several people for whom I have a great deal of respect have tried, tried and tried again, then walked away in disgust with the whole thing.

This is not a problem that can be solved by politics, but politics can ensure that it will never be resolved. At this point I'm sort of morbidly curious about the endgame of all this. Our colleague Pankov has been inside Volkogonov's research HQ. Yuri is going to take detailed notes and brief us about what he has. Pankov interviewed Volkogonov on Thursday. A short version of the story will run on Thursday.

The GAO reported:

CILHI's laboratory director resigned effective September 18, 1992, and the senior anthropologist is planning to resign in late October 1992. The laboratory director cited several managerial and administrative problems at CILHI as reasons for her resignation.³⁸

The GAO's version of events was not entirely accurate. Dr. Schneider's resignation was motivated after several members of Congress questioned the CIL's scientific competence. Dr. Schneider mentioned two examples to me.

The first event occurred during a Senate hearing when Senator Robert Smith (D-NH) stated that the Vietnamese had deliberately burned human bone over a charcoal grill in order to make it impossible to identify the remains. After Dr. Schneider pointed out that a grill could not generate sufficient heat to make the scorch marks that appeared on some of the bones, Senator Smith was quoted stating, "They're barbecuing our boys!"

The second event occurred at the CIL. During a lab tour, Congressman Robert Dornan (R-CA) and his wife insisted on joining hands for a circle prayer around a lab table on which remains had been laid out for analysis. Congressman Dornan announced that he could "feel the presence" of "our missing men" while standing next to a table that contained remains subsequently determined to be those of a foreign national. After that séance, Mrs. Dornan took Dr. Schneider, the scientific director of the CIL, aside to say, "If you ever want to tell anyone what really goes on here, you can talk to me. You know, girl to girl."

Dr. Schneider, a well-respected forensic scientist, told me she loved her job, but under no circumstances would she be a willing party to the normalization of stupidity.

* * *

I returned to Honolulu from Seoul mid-morning on September 25, 1992.

It was too early to check into the timeshare I had reserved near Fort DeRussy until two in the afternoon, so I spent several jetlagged hours driving my rented convertible around Oahu. I had the top down in an effort to air out the stench of cigarette smoke that had penetrated every pore on my body. Later that evening, I touched the crown of my head and then looked in the bathroom mirror. Where my hair was parted, the sunburn on my scalp was so severe that two grape-sized blisters had formed.

Early in the morning on September 26, 1992, I was on the H1 to CILHI. Fortunately, this was a commute that went opposite the rush hour traffic headed into Honolulu. As luck would have it, the time it took to commute from the hotel to Hickam Air Force Base was equivalent, down to the last minute, of the time it takes to perform Beethoven's Choral Fantasy, which I listened to a full volume each morning using the

4. *The Sharashka System: The Link Between Specialized Soviet Prison Camps and American POW-MIA's in Korea?* (RAND, 1993).
5. *Hanoi and the POW/MIA Issue* Special National Intelligence Estimate SNIE 14.3-87, Original date, August 2, 1987, date on coverage September 1987. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/DOC_0000095417.pdf
6. The source of this information derives from an eyewitness to the event who described it to the author.
7. Quinones, C. Kenneth, "Building Bridges – The US – DPRK 1994 Agreed Framework and The US Army's Return To North Korea," undated but file properties indicate 2008. <http://ckquinones.com>
8. UN Security Council. "Letter Dated 9 May 1995 From The Deputy Permanent Representative Of The United States Of America To The United Nations Addressed To The President Of The Security Council," May 11, 1995. "D. United National Command Remains Issue," pp. 7-8. http://repository.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/42636/S_1995_378-EN.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y
9. Memorandum for Undersecretary of Defense for Policy; Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller); Commander IN Chief, U.S. Pacific Command; Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Financial Management and Comptroller); Auditor General, Department of the Army From: DoD Office of the Inspector General Subject: Evaluation of DoD Controls Over Resources Used to Account for Missing U.S. Personnel (Project No. 6RB-5047), February 19, 1997. <http://www.dodig.mil/audit/reports/fy97/97-096.pdf>
10. "Annex To The Record of Arrangement," "RECORD OF ARRANGEMENT BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE AND THE DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA KOREAN PEOPLE'S ARMY CONCERNING JOINT FIELD ACTIVITIES FOR REMAINS OF UNITED STATES SERVICE PERSONNEL," November 18, 2004, signed by Colonel General Ri Chan Bok, Representative Panmunjom Mission, Korean People's Army, and Jerry D. Jennings, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, POW/Missing Personnel Affairs. (All capital letters in the original.)
11. "Recovery Efforts in N. Korea Halted," Robert Burns, Associated Press, May 25, 2005.
12. "In Memory of Melinda Wheeler Cooke," Dignity Memorial, April 5, 2014. <http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=Melinda-Cooke&lc=1143&pid=170507330&mid=5920408>
13. *Record of Arrangement between the United States Department of Defense and the Democratic People's Republic of Korean People's Army Concerning Joint Field Activities for Recovering the Remains of United States Personnel*, October 20, 2011. This agreement was signed by Major General

- Pak Rim Su, Representative, Panmunjom Mission, Korean People's Army, and Robert J. Newberry, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, POW/Missing Personnel Affairs.
14. "What The World Eats," National Geographic, <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/what-the-world-eats/>
 15. See: "DoD MOU Between DOD Office of the USD (P&R) and Educational Institution and Service-Specific Addendums," https://s3.amazonaws.com/dodmou/dodmouwebsite/documents/DODMOU+3+SAMPLE+July_10_2015.pdf
 16. *DoD Controls Over Resources Used To Account For Missing U.S. Personnel*, DoD Office of the Inspector General, February 19, 1997, Enclosure 1, p. 1.
 17. The remaining three JFAs were scheduled for June 5 to July 10, August 4 to September 8, and September 11 to October 8, 2012.
 18. *Escalation and the Nuclear Option*, Bernard Brodie (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966).
 19. *DoD's POW/MIA Mission: Top-Level Leadership Attention Needed to Resolve Longstanding Challenges in Accounting for Missing Persons from Past Conflicts*, Government Accountability Office, July 2013, p. 17. <http://www.gao.gov/assets/660/655916.pdf>
 20. "Officials Suspend North Korea Nutrition Aid Over Planned Launch," Karen Parrish, [Militaryinfo.com](http://www.militaryinfo.com), March 28, 2012. http://www.militaryinfo.com/news_story?textnewsid=8182
 21. *Defense Prisoner of War / Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) Fiscal Year 2004/FY 2005 Biennial Budget Estimates*, February 2003. http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/budget/fy2004/dod/fy04pb_dpmo.pdf
 22. *Defense Prisoner of War / Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) Fiscal Year 2011 Budget Estimates*, February 2010. http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2011/budget_justification/pdfs/01_Operation_and_Maintenance/O_M_VOL_1_PARTS/DPMO_FY11.pdf
 23. *Defense Prisoner Of War / Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 President's Budget*, February 2011. This was the request for an allocation to cover Operation and Maintenance. http://comptroller.defense.gov/Portals/45/Documents/defbudget/fy2012/budget_justification/pdfs/01_Operation_and_Maintenance/O_M_VOL_1_PARTS/O_M_VOL_1_BASE_PARTS/DPMO_OP-5_FY_2012.pdf
 24. In January 2016, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared that NATO expansion was a threat to Russian national security.
 25. Dr. Bazhanov became the president of the Russian Foreign Ministry's Diplomatic Academy in 2011.
 26. General Makarevsky passed away in 2001.

27. IMEMO was the Soviet Institute of World Economy and International Relations.
28. “Revealed: Grim fate of MI6 agents betrayed by George Blake,” Tom Parfitt and Justin Huggler, *Daily Telegraph*, March 14, 2015. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/11472573/Revealed-Grim-fate-of-the-MI6-agents-betrayed-by-George-Blake.html>
29. Blake pronounced “clerk” as “clark,” in Clark Kent.
30. Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger From: John H. Holdridge Subject: North Vietnamese Exploitation of U.S. POW’s SECRET/NOFORN June 25, 1970. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP96-00789R002300950001-2.pdf>. Mr. Holdridge was a senior staff member for the Far East of the National Security Council.
31. “Until They Are Home: Behind The Doors At JPAC, Part I,” Robert Widener, *VFW*, April 2007. <https://www.vfw.org/uploadedFiles/VFW.org/Community/POW-MIA%20info.pdf>
32. For a comprehensive history of the Central Identification Laboratory and its operations, see: “Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command’s Central Identification Laboratory,” Thomas Holland, John Byrd and Vincent Sava, *The Forensic Anthropology Laboratory*, edited by Michael W. Warren, Heather A. Walsh-Haney, and Laurel Freas, (CRC Press, 2008), pp. 47–62.
33. *POW/MIA Issues: Volume 1, the Korean War*, op. cit., p. 256.
34. The first photographs of the remains turned over by the DPRK to be released to the public appeared in *POW/MIA Issues: Volume 2 – The Korean War*, op. cit.
35. *Until the Last Man Comes Home: POWs, MIAs, and the Unending Vietnam War*, Michael J. Allen (University of North Carolina Press, September 18, 2009), p. 6.
36. These maps were still there, with Bashford’s colored stick pins, as late as 2014.
37. *USCINCPAC Command History, Volume 1, 1992*, op. cit., pp. 231–2.
38. *POW/MIA Affairs: Issues Related to the Identification of Human Remains From the Vietnam Conflict*, op. cit., p. 64.
39. Santa Monica, CA: RAND, P-7820, March 1993.



Final Project Briefing and RAND Report Published

IN-HOUSE BRIEFING

On April 6, 1993, I presented the final project briefing to RAND management.

I journaled:

April 7, 1993 – RAND, Santa Monica

I gave my briefing to Charlie Kelley yesterday. The good news the project is over – I don't have to deal with him ever again. He sat sort of slack jawed and asked two or three banal questions. This guy is VP material.

On April 8, I presented my project briefing to anyone in the International Policy Department who cared to see it. The invitation was distributed to everyone in the department. About ten people, nine more than expected, attended. In contrast to Dr. Kelley's indifference, the session with my colleagues ran 30 minutes beyond the allotted one hour due to the large number of questions, comments, and discussion.

On April 21, I presented my final briefing to ISA and DPMO, which went very well.

On May 13, I briefed the head of the CIA's Korean department from the operations side of the CIA. He had been sent to Santa Monica to see me by CIA Director James Woolsey. The day after the meeting, I received a "Dear Paul" letter from Director Woolsey in which he advised me that

he was sending someone from Langley to Santa Monica to see me. The letter had been opened, read, and circulated through RAND management for so long that the visitor had come and gone before Director Woolsey's letter reached me (Fig. 12.1).

The CIA officer told me that the Agency had "found" two Americans who had been "taken" from Korea to the USSR. He said they were still alive, living in the USSR. He wouldn't elaborate. Without providing any evidence, the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs stated in its final report:

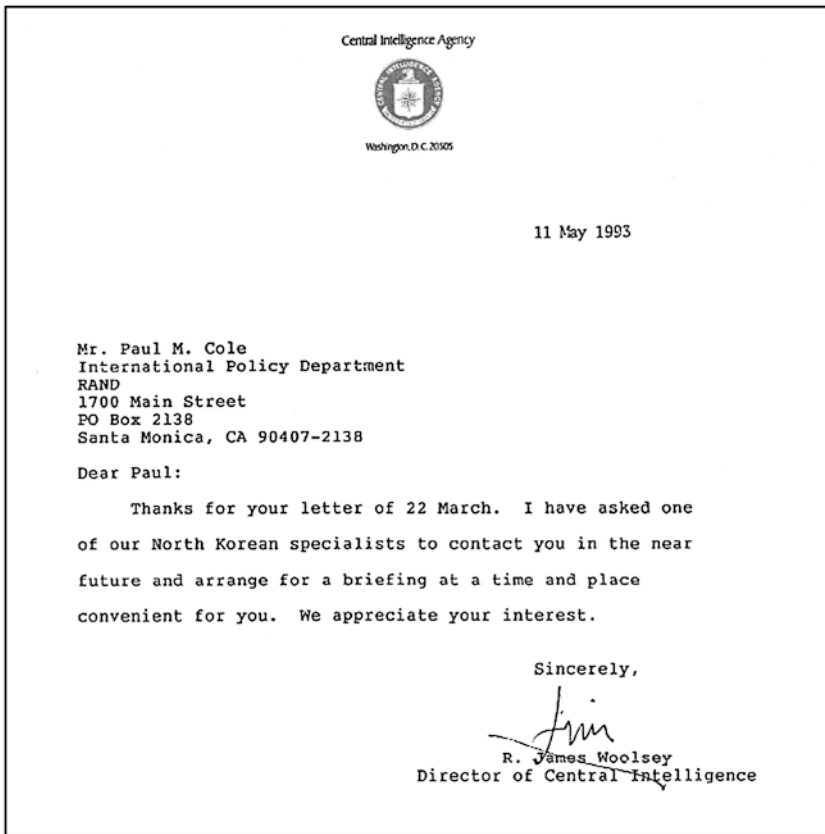


Fig. 12.1 Letter from DCI Woolsey to Dr. Paul M. Cole

The Committee further believes it is possible that one or more POWs from the Korean Conflict could still be alive on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

“Were still alive” and “could still be alive” are two entirely different things. The CIA officer did not share the Select Committee’s indecision. I journaled:

May 22, 1993 – 3775 Beethoven

I find it hard to believe they’ve kept this under wraps for so long, but I have no doubt it’s true. I’ve said all along that the Agency would know this if anyone did and the CIA has been conspicuously silent. I tipped off Stu Herrington at Army Task Force Russia and he said he’d try to find out what’s going on.

The only firm leads TFR has gotten about Americans thus moved have come from my project. A few people know this – none of them at RAND.

If Colonel Herrington looked into the matter, he did not share his findings with me. No Congressional oversight committee has taken up the CIA’s discovery in an unclassified hearing. Instead of an inquiry, Congress entertained semantic wordplay.

In a 1992 written statement to the US Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs, General Volkogonov stated:

No U.S. citizens are currently being detained within the territory of the former USSR. This conclusion is based on a thorough analysis of all archival documents, interviews with witnesses, and on-site inspections of possible American housing sites.

The keywords in General Volkogonov’s statement “are currently being detained,” implying that someone was currently being held against one’s will. Someone who willingly chose to stay in the USSR would not be “detained.” In addition, someone who had been detained but subsequently died was also not “currently being detained.” General Volkogonov’s statement was another one of his minor masterpieces of obfuscation that no one in the accounting program questioned.

On June 8, 1993, I received a phone call from the local CIA officer in Los Angeles. Until then, I was unaware that the Agency maintained branch offices. He had been contacted by the Langley officer who instructed him to pass a message to me. The LA-based officer advised that headquarters was thinking about coming up with some money for me to return to

Germany to continue my contact with Ambassador Maretzki. He said this would be a clandestine job for the Agency. I replied that we should discuss the project in more detail, though it was not clear to me why it would be necessary to conduct a clandestine op.

I heard nothing more from the CIA about this proposed project.

Fade to black.

* * *

RAND REPORT

My RAND manuscript was way too long to be a single volume—in excess of 900 pages. My method is always to overwrite the first draft. It's much easier to sharpen, condense, and delete than it is to add text, to conduct additional research, or—most importantly—to produce thoughtful analysis with minimal evidence. With a long draft, one is able to explore different approaches as well as to experiment with various analytical techniques, re-interpret evidence, or to take a line of inquiry just to see where it goes, even it ends up in a logical cul-de-sac. A long draft also provides the opportunity to write rubbish just to get it out knowing as one writes that it will all be deleted in the editing phase.

The final version of good writing rarely bears any resemblance to the first draft. Hemingway advised, “I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it underwater for every part that shows. Anything you know you can eliminate and it only strengthens your iceberg. It is the part that doesn't show. If a writer omits something because he does not know it then there is a hole in the story.” Evidence-based academic reports are not fictional stories, but neither reports nor stories will survive bad writing or worse, untidy thinking. Thus, in the final stages the emphasis is on cutting and condensing the manuscript. Bad ideas, unsuccessful arguments, and extraneous material must be ruthlessly deleted in coldblood. RAND's review process helped focus and shorten the report so that the final draft could be judged on substantive merits rather than style.

Prior to publication, a RAND report was required to go through a review process that included:

- A review by the RAND program manager who funded the project
- An internal review by two RAND colleagues which in this case would be members of the International Policy Department

- An external review by the DoD project sponsor
- Peer review by two external subject matter experts

The first draft of my report was submitted to Dr. Kelley on November 3, 1992, for the NDRI program review. Dr. Kelley took so long to provide his review that I thought he had just forgotten about it. Several months later, I was summoned to the office of Dr. Jonathan Pollack, the CRM (pronounced *krim*) of the International Policy Department. Such a visit was like going to the dentist or proctologist, the outcome of which might be associated with something positive, though the process was rarely pleasant (Fig. 12.2).

On the large wooden table in Dr. Pollack's five-window office overlooking Santa Monica Bay was the massive draft manuscript laying there like a beached whale, festooned with little bright yellow Post-it notes.

Dr. Pollack had been instructed by RAND management to present Dr. Kelley's comments of my manuscript to me. Dr. Kelley's review consisted exclusively of tiny yellow "Post-its", usually torn into fragments to save money, that drew attention to comments written in the margin of a particular page.

One of the things many of us liked about RAND was that subject matter arguments and discussions were usually straightforward, if not brutal, but always civil. Expressing one's opinion was encouraged, as long as personal insults were avoided. My discussion with CRM Pollack went something like this:

Fig. 12.2 Dr. Jonathan Pollack (Photo: [Public Domain](#))



Dr. Pollack opened the meeting by saying, "I've been asked to go over your draft with you, since you are unable to get along with Charlie."

"Wait a minute. Maybe it's his inability to get along with me. Maybe you should be supporting me, a member of your department, rather than making excuses for him."

"That may all be true, but you don't get along with Charlie."

"So, you agree he's not only clueless about the work I'm doing, but also way out of his depth when it comes to the fundamentals of social science research in general, archive research in particular, and field research most acutely?"

"Well...you state that in rather strong terms, but in general the outlines of the framework you describe in your overview, as I said, are a bit strong, the way you put it."

I gestured toward the manuscript.

"Let me guess why we're here today. Charlie got stumped by the big words again. In a previous draft, he penciled-in question marks before and after any word he didn't understand. Rather than taking the time to look them up, he instructed me to delete them. For example, I stated that the process of grieving often includes a 'threnody.' Charlie flagged 'threnody' with a half dozen question marks. He told me that if he didn't understand a word, then nobody else would, so he demanded that it be deleted. He also assesses evidence through the lens of how facts and findings might influence his understanding of how others perceive RAND, not the value of the facts and findings on their own."

Dr. Pollack replied, "Now wait a minute. Charlie has a lot of experience and can add a lot to a project. He knows the clients so well. He's a real schmoozer."

There was no point in trying to stifle a laugh. "That's what Mr. Rich said at the last staff meeting. Is this the revealed truth now? Have we concluded as a matter of corporate policy that Charlie is the Great Schmoozer? Are you aware that Major General Loeffke, the head of TFR, has ordered that Charlie is not allowed to attend my project briefings?"

Dr. Pollack, who stared at me in silence, gestured toward the document. "Let's get on with this. We're wasting time."

"Of course we are! This whole thing is crazy." Nietzsche concluded, "In individuals, insanity is rare; but in groups, parties, nations, and epochs it is the rule."

Dr. Pollack said quietly but firmly, "May we begin?" He then opened the document to the first yellow sticky tab. He read aloud, "The note here says, 'Delete this word.'"

“Can we pretend we had this meeting and just skip the rest? I don’t think either of us can bear this for very long.”

Dr. Pollack, pulling up another yellow Post-it, read aloud, “Needs a footnote.”

I replied with a heavy sigh. “That *is* a footnote.”

Dr. Pollack mumbled a bit and then said, “What Charlie is saying, what he must mean, what he’s really saying, is, when one looks at the manuscript holistically, in its totality....”

At that point, I lapsed into a quantum state of semi-consciousness called “Numbnesia.” When Numbnesia strikes, one is aware of everything taking place, yet nothing is captured or accumulates, sort of like what happens when a private window is opened in a web browser. All is seen and heard, yet nothing is recorded or remembered. Like someone dying of hypothermia, as Numbnesia sets in a caring voice calmly begins to urge you to “sit down, relax, everything’s going to be OK, just rest here for a moment. It’s safe here, says the voice. Close your eyes, it’s nice and warm here. Don’t worry about anything. It will be alright.” As you give into the voice and settle into the chair, all of the windbaggy begins to pass like neutrinos zipping unencumbered through a thousand miles of solid lead.

During the state of Numbnesia, time and space become irrelevant. After one hour or even two hours may have passed, I was roused from my warm, cozy comfortable state of Numbnesia by a mental alarm clock. Like the freezing man who hears another voice screaming, “Get up! Move or you’re going to die here,” I willed myself to return to the present. As Dr. Pollack explained, Dr. Kelley’s concern over the last couple of sentences marked by fragments of yellow stickies, I realized that I was nodding mechanically as Dr. Pollack asked me promise to delete what Dr. Kelley had flagged as the “unnecessary words that no one understands.”

Dr. Pollack’s voice broke through the torpor of the Numbnesiatic state, asking me, “OK, so that’s it. Do you have any questions?” I hesitated, wondering whether it would be more expedient to say “yes” or “no.” All I said was something to the effect of, “Charlie’s concerns appear to be cosmetic or editorial rather than substantive, so everything can be accommodated. Thanks for your time.” Ringing in my ears was a passage from an essay about the evolution of Nietzsche’s writing style. Imagine Dr. Kelley’s reaction if Dr. Pollack had written what Nietzsche’s critic had stated, “Dr. Cole agrees with your editing and comments but wonders if it would be OK with you if he stopped being apophthegmatic in order to be more aphoristic?”

I sighed the sigh of futility that is an unmistakable symptom of Numbnesia, gathered up my ten-pound manuscript that spilled over my arm like a furloughed circus seal and then slunk back to my lair. The walk downstairs from the ethereal seven-window realm of a CRM to the two-window cell of a RAND novitiate gave me time to reflect on the situation.

Emerging from the fire escape stairwell onto the third floor, I eyed the powerful, industrial-strength paper shredder, the kind used to destroy large quantities of classified material quickly. I paused for a second, holding the bloated manuscript. I understood for the first time why Hedda Tesman had burned Professor Lövborg's manuscript with no regrets. In that instant it became apparent what had motivated Jean Sibelius to consign all of his unpublished compositions to the flames. I sighed again, went into my small office, shut the door, put my feet up on the desk, and looked out the window toward the Holiday Inn on Colorado Boulevard. I was hoping Dr. Lambeth in the office above me would tap the linoleum floor with his broomstick to send the alert that a guest at the Holiday Inn had been spotted standing naked in front of an open window. I sat there for the longest time, utterly convinced that I had wasted everyone's time. The lack of support from my department head, which I had not anticipated, was utterly deflating, which was perhaps the point. I needed a distraction to stop thinking of giving a Viking funeral for the giant manuscript that wallowed on my desk. Alas, Dr. Lambeth did not knock three times on the ceiling.

Several weeks after this meeting, Dr. Pollack was replaced as the CRM of the ISP department. The head of the Washington office Mr. Bob Roll told me this was going to happen weeks before Dr. Pollack was removed. I noted in my journal that Mr. Roll, who swore me to secrecy, said that "big RAND" had noticed Dr. Pollack's lack of what Mr. Roll characterized as "balls." I told no one about what Mr. Roll had said.

Dr. Pollack was replaced, just as Mr. Roll had predicted, shortly after I left RAND.

* * *

A nefarious way but common way academics compete against their colleagues is to sabotage their work from behind the scenes. In research institutions and consultancies where landing a new project may be the difference between promotion or just keeping a job, the competition is often as intense as it is unfair. The people who specialized in stealing

someone else's project were a sub-species of parasite who liked to think of themselves as mentally tough male lions when, in fact, male lions are opportunistic feeders who let other creatures make the kill, then steal it.

Professional jealousy, turf battles, and subterfuge are facts of life in the think tank, consultancy, and beltway bandit world. The threats were rarely announced. At CSIS, where all my power was derivative, a new senior fellow named Dr. Harlan Ullman, a former Navy commander who thought I had threatened him in some way, said to me directly, "You know, it's possible to get cut off in this town, and you'll never know how or why it happened. I'd watch it if I were you."

In companies without any sort of endowment, the mantra was "you eat what you kill." In those companies, the competition for project work was even more intense and unpleasant. Consulting is not a business for the faint of heart. When the writer Gore Vidal said that whenever a friend of his had any success, "I die a little," he could have been talking about the corporate culture at most research institutions that provided services to the Pentagon. The hubris required to make a splash in the media could also summon Nemesis, as many, including Dr. Ullman, found out the hard way.¹

A number of people at RAND did not like the fact that Sergei and I were the ones who had made unprecedented breakthroughs in Moscow. We were the first RAND analysts to be invited not just to KGB headquarters but to the chairman's conference room in Lubyanka, we were the first to obtain copies of documents from the Soviet general staff archives including records of the interrogations of American servicemen, we were the first to stay at the Red Army Hotel, we were the first to have an agreement with Soviet Minister of Defense Marshal Shaposhnikov which authorized our research, and I was the first westerner to lecture at the Soviet Diplomatic Academy, the street address of which had been a state secret. Our crime was that we were not among RAND's high-priced sovietologists, many of whom were the dons among RAND's *caporegime*.

Through the grapevine it became apparent that senior RAND staff member and prominent sovietologist Dr. Jeremy Azrael was trying to sabotage our work in Russia. He went about this by providing reports to RAND management in which he attacked Sergei and me personally and disparaged the reputations of members of our Russian team. Dr. Azrael told the RAND "managers" that due to the fact that I was not a Russian-speaking Kremlinologist, "he is in over his head." Dr. Azrael also accused members of my Russia team who were not KGB officers of being KGB

officers. Dr. Azrael had never once taken the initiative to speak with Sergei or me or his RAND colleague Dr. Lambeth, about any of these concerns, of course.

We knew what was going on. RAND was a small place and gossip was the coin of the realm. Dr. Azrael had made the mistake of bragging to colleagues, some of whom were my friends, about his efforts to sabotage our project. His motivation was simple. Sovietologists were dinosaurs. He knew it, they knew it, we all knew it. The dinosaurs had been quite successful in their day. Now the climate had changed. We represented the first snowflake to Tyrannosaurus Azrael. We controlled nearly a half-million dollars in research funds, we were dealing with the former USSR, and he wasn't getting a penny. He had nothing to contribute, and he knew it. Sergei said that Dr. Azrael's inflated ego could not accept the fact that we were managing a large project and had established high-level contacts in Moscow that "Dr. Azrael could only dream about." If he couldn't control the project money, why should we be allowed to do so? Dr. Azrael tried to scupper our work through the usual methods—whining, whispering, and innuendo.

I looked up his office number in the RAND directory and then went to see Dr. Azrael. I was a junior two-window guy on the third floor who had been at RAND for a little over a year. Dr. Azrael, who was a five-window guy with about 15 years of experience at RAND, occupied a two-room office with a third room for his secretary (Fig. 12.3).

Dr. Azrael, who wasn't very happy to see me, chain-smoked a bit more feverishly than usual. I said, in a polite yet firm style acquired while in management at CSIS after years of dealing with problematic employees, "If you have a problem with me or my project, please have the professional courtesy and basic decency to talk directly to me about it. I'd like to think I would do the same if I had a problem with your work, with which I must admit I lack any familiarity."

Dr. Azrael, who chain-smoked and squirmed, shuffled papers between his two desks while his eyes darted back and forth from me to the five windows that were streaked with yellow nicotine that distorted the sunlight like unwashed stained glass in a forgotten cathedral. I was no detective, but it appeared to me that he behaved as someone who is caught out in a lie will often do. I asked him on what basis he could accuse my Russian partners of being KGB officers. All he would tell me was, "I have certain sources."

Fig. 12.3 Dr. Jeremy Azrael (Photo: [Public Domain](#))



After reminding him that we were sitting in a secure facility and we both had the same security clearances issued by the same US government, I said that I would be bound to protect any information that he regarded as restricted. “All you have to do is to say the words, ‘This meeting is now classified.’” Dr. Azrael refused to do so.

To conclude a most unproductive meeting, I said, “Well, in that case, if you don’t get your tits out of my porridge, you just might find them in a wringer one day.”

Though it was pointless, for procedural reasons I felt it was necessary to go through the motions of informing CRM Pollack and Dr. Kelley about Dr. Azrael’s crude attempt to sabotage our work. I thought there was a small chance one of the two would find it in their interest to support, if not protect, one of their staff members. More than anything, it was important to have on the record a statement of what was going on. My action had been motivated by a sense of loyalty first to my RAND colleagues Sergei, Ted and Dr. Lambeth as well as to my Russian team who had been loyal to me and doing good work under demanding conditions. Why should I stand by and let a has-been RAND lifer smear people he didn’t know for no other purpose than his own *schadenfreude*?

The results were, like most things at RAND, entirely predictable. The CRM told me Dr. Azrael “was like that” and probably had “his reasons” and I should “understand he is a senior staff member with lots of windows, two rooms and a secretary” and “don’t worry about it” and “stop

being so easily agitated.” The CRM, of course, wrote in my annual performance review that this episode was further evidence that I had trouble getting along with my colleagues. Dr. Kelley, in his plodding, gray prose, advised me to “stop picking on Jeremy.”

This episode had one lasting effect on me. I concluded that I did not want to work with people who behaved like that. I began to plan my resignation from RAND but would not leave my POW/MIA work unfinished.

I was determined to find a way to do both, carefully, legally, and ethically, three words that did not always appear together in the consulting business.

* * *

In March 1993, after incorporating the comments generated by the program officer’s review, a rather slimmed-down and heavily revised draft of the POW/MIA report, carefully pruned of any big words of course, was submitted to the RAND editorial office for the mandatory internal review. The internal review process took about one month to complete.

Neither of RAND’s two internal reviewers had anything of substance to say. Since it was impossible to respond to their criticism that the report was “not mainstream RAND research,” the only option was to tick the box and move on. As expected, in April the RAND editorial department, which was generally competent and reliable, returned the first edited draft of the final version of the report.

The next step in the publication process was to circulate the draft and slightly revised manuscript to the DoD sponsor, which was also a standard procedure. After submitting the manuscript in early May, in July 1993 RAND received the first set of comments from DoD that had been produced by DPMO’s Mr. Norm Kass. The majority of Mr. Kass’ review was positive, professional, and useful. Mr. Kass, who was a Russia specialist, understood the subject matter, and was a decent editor, was also a career bureaucrat. Mr. Kass recommended that almost all of the critical observations about DPMO’s performance as well as all conclusions inconsistent with positions taken by DPMO or the USRJC be deleted. Not amended, explained, or supported by additional evidence; rather, if fully implemented his recommendation would mean that anything that suggested that the track record of either DPMO or the USRJC had been less than stellar was *streng verboten* and had to be airbrushed out of the report, leaving no trace that the events in question ever occurred.

With respect to Mr. Kass' review of my draft report, I journaled:

July 16, 1993 – RAND, SM CA

Almost all of the comments focus on political items or my assessment of events. It's clear that history can rarely reflect the day-to-day workings of government. In my case, I've seen the unpleasant facts simply deleted. What's left of contemporary history is a tasteless mush. No one is responsible for anything. A department is about the smallest entity one is permitted to discuss.

In 1993, Navy Lieutenant John Joyce produced a nine-page memo concerning my draft report for Acting DPMO DASD Ed Ross. The memo, which included references to our catastrophic briefing to the US side of the USRJC in Moscow, surfaced for the first time in 2014. I was completely unaware of the document until then. Joyce's ad hominem attack on me was an example of the bureaucratic turf battles and politics of personal destruction that have hobbled and undermined the POW/MIA Accounting Community for decades.

The lieutenant absolutely excoriated me personally and heaped nothing but scorn and contempt on the archive research project we had organized in Moscow. He blasted me for "showing up drunk or hungover" at the embassy briefing. The lieutenant also reviewed a draft of my RAND report, which he found to be unprofessional, deeply flawed, and unnecessarily critical of the USRJC.

The review by Joyce, who by coincidence just so happened to work for the same Mr. Ross who had slapped a gag order on me and prohibited me from having contact with TFR, was both a scathing personal attack on me and a blatant bit of bureaucratic scorched earth turf warfare. Several of Joyce's minor masterpieces deserve to be highlighted.

Cole uses this report as a forum to express his obvious dissatisfaction with and contempt for the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.

This was certainly true but, if anything, the critique had been understated. The USRJC was an unmitigated disaster, a complete waste of taxpayer money, as well as a self-inflicted wound that could have been completely avoided. Joyce's idea of commentary was to defend his organization from any criticism while taking the all too familiar and shopworn low road of attacking the messenger.

In another of Joyce's self-serving personal attacks, he stated:

Cole makes several unprofessional judgments about the commission's effectiveness, calls statements by Ambassador Toon absurd, and takes inappropriate potshots at named commission members and their staff.

In contrast to Joyce's histrionics, the judgments I had made about the USRJC's lack of effectiveness were restrained, professional, and grounded in evidence. I named names and made critical remarks, referenced as "potshots," that were not only appropriate but well deserved and vindicated by subsequent events.

Joyce conveniently failed to provide a single example of one of my alleged "potshots." His review made it abundantly clear that it was unprofessional and unfair to associate government officials by name with dubious or objectionable conduct. In Joyce's world, "potshots" were only allowed to be taken against people outside the government who disagreed with the government's conduct. Joyce's review was a stellar example of the internecine turf battle and the disproportionate influence of the philosophy of ignorance within DoD that severely handicapped the effort to resolve missing person cases.

Joyce's nine-page review was little more than a transparent defense of the US-Russia Joint Commission, where by a miraculous coincidence, he just so happened to be assigned.

Joyce's "pencil whipping" that masqueraded as a substantive review was an excellent example of the pernicious way that politics and petty personal prejudices were permitted to percolate throughout the POW/MIA Accounting Community. The USRJC was created to be successful; thus any suggestion that it was a failure was anathema to low-level staffers like Joyce who believed their role was to be defenders of the realm. The USRJC became one of the most prominent specimens of how politics had been allowed to infect the POW/MIA Accounting Community through regulatory capture. In due course the USRJC, which was a tangible manifestation of the triumph of politically inspired wishful thinking over the realities of empirical research, became a pet project promoted and defended by representatives of pressure groups such as the paid lobbyist Ms. Mills-Griffiths.

The USRJC was also the poster child that confirmed a venerable truth of public administration. Programs are easy to start, but once started

almost impossible to stop, regardless of how ill-advised or ineffective they might be.

Over the course of almost two decades, the paid lobbyist played a crucial role in and was responsible for convincing a DoD hierarchy too spineless to put up any resistance and members of Congress and their feckless staff who were too disinterested or unable to recognize a colossal boondoggle when they saw one to stop shoveling taxpayer money into the USRJC's gaping, insatiable furnace. Annual all-expenses-paid Commission meetings in Moscow were an excellent opportunity for "commissioners" and their guests to participate in DPMO's notorious "travel-itis" program.

Mr. Kass, who was responsible for providing DPMO's critique of the draft RAND report, recognized Joyce's jejune rant for the vapid cheer-leading that it was. This realization ensured that none of Joyce's petty and intellectually revolting remarks were included in the official sponsor review that was provided by DoD to RAND. Mr. Kass simply ignored Joyce's remarks. Others shared this view. In contrast to Joyce's tiresome harangue, reviewers who were highly regarded historians, national security professionals, as well as subject matter experts of note drew opposite conclusions.

On July 27, 1993, RAND received the review of my draft report from the two non-governmental external reviewers. The reviewers had been chosen by RAND management without any consultation with me, which was the proper way to do it, as this was a peer review. This was a "peer review of sorts" due to the fact that I was neither in the same league nor a peer of the two senior, well-respected scholars and analysts who were retained to review the draft report. They were my respected elders, in many ways role models, not peers. I was profoundly humbled, as well as apprehensive that my work had been submitted to these two prominent scholars for peer review.

The first external peer reviewer, Dr. Harry Gelman, had been one of RAND's and for that matter one of America's leading sovietologists for decades. Dr. Gelman's scholarly and academic production, which was consistently brilliant and fantastically prolific, included such stem winders as *The Rise and Fall of National Security Decisionmaking in the Former USSR: Implications for Russia and the Commonwealth* (RAND: 1992). Dr. Gelman's reputation preceded him.

The second external reviewer, USN veteran Professor Roger Dingman, was an extraordinarily accomplished Stanford-/Harvard-trained historian who taught at the University of Southern California. Professor Dingman's scholarly output and professional reputation placed him among a handful of academics whose work on international relations in general and the Soviet Union in particular were regarded with admiration around the world.

Dr. Gelman and Professor Dingman were both diabolically smart, clever people, but also personable. In another era, they would have been referred to, in my case deferentially, as "gentlemen" in the traditional meaning of the word.

Both peer reviews by Dr. Gelman and Professor Dingman were positive, which came as a great relief. Independent of one another, however, they shared the common concern that neither RAND nor DoD could handle the truth as presented in my report. Their concern was reflected in Joyce's screed that objected to the rock being lifted off of the US-Russian Joint Commission. The Navy lieutenant could not bear to see the insects squirm under the disinfectant light of sunshine.

In contrast to a Navy lieutenant's mewling and puking, Dr. Gelman had concluded that the release of my report, including the details about incompetence in government in general and the USRJC's pretentious ineptitude in particular, was in the US "national interest." Those were powerful words coming from such a heavyweight.

Although encouraged by the reviews by Dr. Gelman and Professor Dingman, I was concerned by their apprehension that RAND management would not lift a finger in my defense should DoD object to the findings. Both of the peer reviewers correctly anticipated that RAND would throw me, or any other researcher for that matter, under the bus at the slightest provocation.

I journaled:

July 27, 1993 – 3775 Beethoven

I worked until 20.45 this evening, trying to get my POW/MIA manuscript in order. The reviews of my manuscript have been more or less similar. The external reviewers think the research is extremely impressive, but the format stinks.

Harry Gelman, retired from RAND, says it's in RAND's interest and the "national interest" to see the information in my report come out. Gelman added, however, that if I do the right thing by including the analysis of the

U.S. government's incompetence, the KGB's cover-up, etc., the Pentagon won't clear the manuscript for open release and "given recent events" RAND management will not lift a finger in my defense.

Gelman thinks that I was basically left dangling by RAND's so-called management. Powerful words from one of the bigger names at RAND.

I have to make some major changes, turning the single uncontrollable 900-page manuscript into three separate volumes. Makes a lot of sense to do this but it will take a few more days of work.

In government, where you stand is often determined by where you sit.

It didn't take long for the Gelman-Dingman warning to come to fruition. The only part they got wrong was that the problem was not an external threat. Instead, it would be RAND management's pre-emptive surrender to the perception of a non-existent external threat.

Our Moscow team discovered that General Volkogonov, the head of the Russian side of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, was selling documents obtained from the Soviet archives, including records from Soviet military intelligence archives. General Volkogonov was selling copies of the records, not the original documents. Our colleague Mr. Yuri Pankov learned this directly from several of General Volkogonov's customers, one of which was the South Korean military attaché and the other a journalist. The way Mr. Pankov found out what was going on was after a South Korean official from the embassy's military attaché office complained to Mr. Pankov that he had paid top dollar, for the transaction was in US dollars, for documents that General Volkogonov subsequently sold to a South Korean journalist for a lower price.

Cash "rewards," bribery, and other measures that undermine the integrity of a national archive system can have negative consequences. There are always those who think that throwing around money is the best way to expedite archive research.

Mr. Mark Sauter, described in the Russian press as a "desperate representative" of the National Alliance of Families went to Moscow in December 1991 trying to buy information about U.S. servicemen lost during World War II and the Korean War. (Yulia Goryacheva, "About POWs Again?" *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, December 25, 1991) Staff members of the Tambov POW camp cemetery reported that shortly after Sauter offered large sums of money for information concerning American POWs, the Tambov graves were desecrated. They attribute Sauter's offer of reward money as the motive for the desecration.²

In light of his position as head of the Russian side of the USRJC, and given the detailed description of events and the evidence provided by our trusted colleague Mr. Pankov, I included a description of General Volkogonov's archival yard sale in the final draft of my RAND report.

I received an email from Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr., who in his capacity as the "manager" of the DoD-sponsored archive research project had the power to stop the release of my report. Just as Dr. Gelman had feared, Dr. Kelley instructed that all references to the sale of archive documents by General Volkogonov had to be deleted. According to Dr. Kelley, if RAND published any references to General Volkogonov's archive sales, RAND could potentially be "sued for slander." The idea that General Volkogonov, a resident of Moscow, would file a slander suit against RAND in Southern California was so far-fetched and ludicrous to contemplate that I at first thought that this was some sort of a bad office prank. In addition to the non-trivial issue of jurisdiction, one cannot be slandered by the truth.

If I did not agree to delete the reference to General Volkogonov's nefarious activity, Dr. Kelley advised that he would stop the publication of my report altogether, just as Dr. Gelman and Professor Dingman had feared.

The thing that disturbed me the most was the fact that not only was Dr. Kelley protecting the *bad guys* in Moscow, he had no idea that he was doing so. I was under the mistaken impression a RAND "manager" was supposed to support the good guys in general and the RAND research staff in particular.

I scheduled an appointment to see Dr. Kelley. Dr. Kelley not only did not understand, in the form of someone who spoke no foreign languages; he couldn't pronounce Volkogonov's name without making a gagging noise that sounded something like "vo-ko-gandalf." Rather than being forced to listen to that garbled pronunciation, I advised Dr. Kelley that the literal translation of "volkogonov" was "wolf chaser," which is what Dr. Kelley called General Volkogonov when he wasn't up to stumbling over the pronunciation.

I tried to explain to him that by deleting the reference he was protecting General Volkogonov's effort to undermine the effort to determine the fate of missing Americans, which was America's "highest national priority." I asked him, "Why should Volkogonov turn valuable documents over to the U.S. government when he could just as easily sell them to the highest

bidder?” He didn’t understand. I thought of Friedrich von Schiller’s observation, “With stupidity the gods themselves struggle in vain,” then tried again.

I explained, slowly, that we had primary source information, evidence corroborated by two witnesses, that confirmed that General Volkogonov was selling documents from the Soviet military intelligence archive to which he alone controlled access.

My explanations, which became less complicated and more basic, included fewer syllables. I struggled to find an analogy or example simple enough to make sense to him.

I tried one more time. “Look,” I said, “It’s sort of like how a newspaper works. Let’s say I’m the reporter, you are the editor. The editor always ensures that the reporter’s sources are genuine. If the editor is satisfied that the source is legit, then the story runs, sort of like Ben Bradley’s role in the publication of the reporting on the Watergate break-in.”

Dr. Kelley replied matter-of-factly, “RAND is not a newspaper.”

I said in a tone that was increasingly exasperated, “I’m sort of aware of that. Look, I’m trying to use an analogy to address your concern over the validity of the evidence.”

Dr. Kelley gave me a quizzical look. “Do you have any receipts?”

“Any what?”

“Receipts. Receipts that prove Vo-ko-gandalf, the wolf chaser, sells documents.”

“Charlie, what Volkogonov, or vo-ko-gandalf as you say, is doing is illegal. Who in their right mind would ask for or even provide a receipt for the unlawful sale of documents stolen from the Soviet archives?”

“So you have no proof of sale.”

“There is one eyewitness, plus the testimony of two buyers. This has all been disclosed to you.”

“But nothing in writing.”

“Like a receipt?”

“Yes, like a receipt.”

“This is crazy. Why would anyone document an illegal transaction? Does a dope dealer give the crack head a receipt?”

Albert Einstein allegedly said, “Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.” This could not be made any more simple. The situation was hopeless. Mr. Pankov had worked in Moscow for several

weeks to obtain this evidence, but in Santa Monica it was being rejected by someone who had never set foot in an archive facility anywhere in the world.

Sitting there in Dr. Kelley's spacious multi-windowed office, I suddenly recognized that I was experiencing what George Smiley endured at the hands of the incompetents at the London Circus:

Abruptly, he felt inside himself the rising panic of frustration beyond endurance. With panic came an uncontrollable fury with this posturing sycophant, this obscene sissy with his greying hair and his reasonable smile. Panic and fury welled up in a sudden tide, flooding his breast, suffusing his whole body.

I gave up. I gathered my things and walked out of Dr. Kelley's office. As I left, I muttered between my teeth, "I've had enough of this."

Dr. Kelley shot back, "I'm going to report this to Ray Archibald! I'm going to tell Ray Archibald about this! I'm going to tell him exactly what you said, to Ray Archibald!" Mr. Archibald, who was RAND's chief financial officer, was apparently Dr. Kelley's version of RAND's principal.

I laughed, not the good kind of laugh, as I was astounded that this sort of grade-school mentality could exist at a place that was supposed to be run by adults.

"What on earth does an accountant know about the ethics of archive research?" I paused to add, "Do whatever you think is necessary. It doesn't change the evidence."

As I left, I muttered to myself out of earshot, "You won't get it right anyway." As the German philosopher, Theodor Adorno once observed, "Intolerance of ambiguity is the mark of an authoritarian personality."

I returned to my office in the converted old folks' home by negotiating the labyrinth of shortcuts I knew by heart, all the while thinking that this little episode should work out in my favor. The facts were on my side. In addition, the story was important and, as Dr. Gelman had observed, *deserved* to be told. I rode my bike home that evening along the beach bike path speculating on how I would spend the bonus money and trying to decide on which wall I would hang the RAND citation for excellence in research support for America's "highest national priority."

Once again, I had miscalculated, big time.

It had not occurred to me that anyone in the RAND hierarchy could be more indifferent to the facts than Dr. Kelley. Dr. Kelley had summarized

my comments in an email that he sent first to RAND's Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Ray Archibald, then forwarded to me. Unfortunately, but not surprisingly, Dr. Kelley's "summary" was so utterly inconsistent with what had actually been said that it was little more than a gobbledygook, bordering on the incoherent. As I was trying to figure out why RAND's CFO should be involved in a field research issue, I sat before my computer screen like that dog in front of the speaker in the old Motorola ads, jaw slack, trying to suss out what possible connection there might be between Dr. Kelley's email "summary" and what I had actually said to him.

Dr. Kelley advised Mr. Archibald I wanted to accuse General Volkogonov of selling documents, I had no receipts, and the standard to be used was whether a newspaper would print the story.

I began to receive emails from Mr. Archibald, a RAND corporate officer to whom Dr. Kelley had whined about my unwillingness to back off on the truth. After I got over the stunning fact that an accountant and a marble-dropping manager were now involved in the substantive nature of my archive project work, I re-read what passed for Dr. Kelley's summary of my work. Re-reading didn't help. It was clear that neither Dr. Kelley nor Mr. Archibald understood anything about archive research in general or why the fact that General Volkogonov was selling documents stolen from the Soviet archives should be included in my report. Dr. Kelley's summary was so laughably divorced from reality that any decent corporate officer would have sentenced him to remedial education at Santa Monica Junior College. Check that—make it Santa Monica Junior High School. But not at RAND. The head accountant, after admonishing me, revealed that he had referred the matter to RAND's corporate legal counsel in San Francisco. (Remember, these are US taxpayer's dollars paying for everything here.)

RAND's thousand-dollar-per-hour lawyers advised that the reference to General "vo-ko-gandalf's" sale of archive documents, which in their legal opinion was, indeed, slanderous, had to be removed before publication; otherwise "vo-ko-gandalf" might sue RAND for "slander."

The following is the compromise paragraph that was approved by the lawyers:

In November, 1993, Yuri Pankov, a Russian journalist who Task Force Russia had recognized for his important contributions to POW/MIA research in the former Soviet Union, learned that the Russian military and security services had written a joint memorandum to President Yeltsin

concerning the POW/MIA issue. Sources informed Pankov that the military and security services complained that they were uneasy working with the Russian side of the Joint Commission because a senior member of the Commission was earning large sums of money from the sale of Soviet-era archive material. The military and security services were reluctant to provide additional material out of concern that this individual would sell it for personal gain.

“Vo-ko-gandalf” became “a senior member of the Commission.” Never once, not one time, was the credibility of the evidence discussed. RAND’s lawyers never spoke to me. I gave up at that point and responded to Dr. Kelley and Mr. Archibald simply, “You win. But you are still wrong.”

I added, “PS: By the way, you could have saved some money. Buy your lawyers a dictionary.”

“Slander is spoken. Libel is published.”

* * *

On Wednesday, July 7, I received a phone call from Mr. Michael Rich, RAND’s Senior Vice President. He said he wanted to speak to me in his office at ten o’clock on Friday, July 9, about the publication of my report. I had never been asked to attend a meeting in Mr. Rich’s office before.

I journaled, motivated by fear and general apprehension:

July 7, 1992 – Santa Monica

This all seems fishy and sinister to me.

July 9, after all, was a Friday. People usually get fired on a Friday, but usually late in the afternoon, not in the morning. The notification of my pending contract with DFI had appeared in the Commerce Business Daily (CBD) on July 7. (The DFI contract is discussed in the following chapter.) Though there was absolutely nothing wrong with seeking employment elsewhere, I was concerned that the RAND-ocracy had noticed the announcement and would link it to me.

On the same day I received the call from Mr. Rich, I also received by fax an advance view of a very complimentary letter from Major General Bernard Loeffke, commander of TFR. Mr. Danz Blasser, who was the chief of the TFR translation cell between August 17, 1992, and August 9, 1993, had drafted the letter. He thought I might like to see what Major General Loeffke had to say about me prior to receiving the original letter.

A few minutes before ten on July 9, I wandered through the RAND maze of corridors toward Mahogany Row where Mr. Rich's office was located. In contrast to the linoleum tile floor and drab gray drywall in the five-story building, the floors in Mahogany Row were carpeted. The walls made of dark wood were decorated with colorful paintings, worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, that had been donated to RAND by the founder of Norton Utilities.

Outside of Mr. Rich's office, both Dr. Charles T. Kelley Jr. and CRM Dr. Jonathan Pollack were lurking around, which was a disturbing omen. Neither one said hello or offered to shake hands. They glanced at me from the corners of their eyes and continued their private conversation. Another senior RAND manager who I had seen but had never spoken to showed up. My Spidey sensors were tingling madly. Fight or flight? I was convinced that I was about to be terminated in a way that required witnesses.

Instead of being fired, Mr. Rich graciously presented me with a certificate at a ceremony in his office. In contrast to LT Joyce's mean-spirited, lower-shelf comments concerning the first rough draft of my RAND report, Major General Bernard Loeffke presented me with an award for our research in Moscow as well as for the RAND report, which he praised as a significant contribution to TFR's mission. I also received recognition for this achievement from the vice president of the RAND Corporation, the head of my department, as well as the director of NDRI that had funded my work for TFR.

On June 30, 1993, Major General Bernard Loeffke, Director, TFR, Lieutenant Joyce's boss, had written the following to Dr. Jim Thomson, President of RAND.

I wish to express Task Force Russia's appreciation for the help, insight and courtesy given by Dr. Paul M. Cole of the International Policy Department of RAND to our mission of resolving the fate of unaccounted for U.S. servicemen in Russia.

Dr. Cole's systematic approach, thorough research and honest analysis of this issue as well as his willingness to share information and ideas has been of immeasurable assistance to Task Force Russia analysts. The quantity and quality of his work is truly outstanding and has saved Task Force Russia from vast amounts of duplicate work. Dr. Cole's efforts have culminated in answering numerous questions which have arisen from our own analysis.

I and my staff are anxiously awaiting the release of Dr. Cole's final report, which senior government officials believe will have future policy development applications.

Dr. Cole's effort and dedication reflect great credit upon himself and RAND.

Please, pass along my personal thanks for a job well-done.

MG Loeffke presented me with a "Certificate of Accomplishment" for "outstanding support to Task Force Russia and our unaccounted for servicemen."

Major General Loeffke's letter of commendation shared none of the negative views expressed by Lieutenant Joyce when in fact the views were the personal opinions of a lieutenant that were ignored by his superiors.

The award from MG Loeffke was highlighted in the internal newsletter, *Rand Items*, in late July. The article included a photograph of Mr. Rich shaking hands with me as he presented the commendation letter from MG Loeffke.

In the photograph, I look like an amalgam of an inmate released from weeks of solitary confinement combined with a young deer caught in the headlights.

* * *

At 30 minutes after midnight, August 1, 1993, my daughter Marion Catherine was born in Santa Monica, California. I was there when she was born.

I took a week of paternity leave, for which I was grateful to RAND for providing, to be with her.

* * *

Despite the fact that the project was officially over, we continued to receive records located by our research team in Moscow. This isn't unusual, due to the fact that documents in the pipeline continue to trickle out even after a project has ended. On August 27, Sergei faxed me a document that he obtained from our research team in Moscow.

I journaled:

August 27, 1993 – RAND, SM

The document Sergei faxed to me is somewhat of a smoking gun. It's a report from the Soviet chief of staff to the Soviet politburo – everyone, including Stalin – reporting that an American F-86 pilot shot down on 22

Dec 50 was interrogated by Soviet forces, direct face-to-face interrogation, within one week of his capture. The pilot's name is Laurence Bach, and he was repatriated.

This is big news, but unfortunately this information cannot be used by the US-Russian Joint Commission because it has not been discovered by "official" efforts.

There was still time for me to work this information into my draft report. This would be the first time that a record of a Russian interrogation of an American POW in Korea would be released to the general public.

On September 24, 1993, I submitted the final draft of the three-volume report to RAND's publication office for final editing and production. The report, entitled *POW/MIA Issues*, consisted of *Volume 1: The Korean War*, *Volume 2: World War II and Early Cold War*, and *Volume 3: Appendices*. I included a copy of the coversheet from the interrogation record to the RAND editorial office with a request to include it in the report, which they did.

The RAND report was published in 1994, six months after the project had ended and several months after I had resigned from RAND.

* * *

The publication of my report was not the only thing that happened after I left RAND.

One of the many consequences of the end of the Cold War was the fact that hundreds if not thousands of "sovietologists," people who studied the Soviet Union, and "Kremlinologists," people who studied the goings on in the Kremlin, were suddenly redundant. People who had spent their entire professional career trying to make sense of the USSR were not needed anymore. There were even people whose entire career revolved around studying a single person in the Soviet hierarchy. Those people were particularly useless in the post-Cold War environment.

During the Cold War, there was a shortage of information concerning every aspect of life in the USSR. American sovietologists and Kremlinologists made a living out of finding factoids, one bright, shining object, a nugget of information, some *obscurata* that allegedly illuminated an important aspect of the USSR. The instant the Cold War ended, overnight, these

people were unnecessary. As early as 1991, I could sit at my computer in Santa Monica and download information from every oblast in Russia, find data on every region of the former USSR, and do all of this faster, cheaper, and without having to consult a single sovietologist. Their time had come and gone. Like dinosaurs staring at the first snowflake, the sovietologists understood that the climate would no longer support them.

Publically funded research is a funny kind of business. In theory, it is supposed to serve the public interest. As such, one researcher should be pleased when another researcher lands a fat grant. No one should be surprised to learn it doesn't work that way. Researchers are almost by definition insanely jealous of one another.

Obtaining a contract or a grant was the difference between making progress in one's career and stagnating or, worse, drifting into irrelevance. The competition for research money was fierce, there were few rules, and those with no shame often had the upper hand. Some people specialize in stealing ideas and hijacking projects.

During my May 1993 project briefing for RAND staff, I had described my various interviews with Ambassador Maretzki. I also related how I had interviewed an East German scientist, an expert on Beryllium, who had lived in and worked on North Korea's nuclear weapon program. I described how I planned to start a project to locate other diplomats and scientists in the former Eastern bloc who had similar experience in North Korea in order to interview them. In light of our success with Ambassador Maretzki, part of the project would be to find other former socialist bloc ambassadors to Pyongyang and interview them as well. Ambassador Maretzki had written to me, stating that he was prepared to collaborate with me on the project. As proof of concept, Helmut arranged for my interview with an East German scientist, an expert on Beryllium who had worked on nuclear power reactors in North Korea. I proposed the project to RAND management, but was turned down.

In January 1994, one of my former RAND colleagues, Korea specialist Dr. Katy Oh, phoned me to report that my idea to interview Eastern bloc scientists had become a fully funded RAND project. The RAND employee who obtained the funding, who attended my May 1993 briefing, had presented the proposal as his original idea. He even stated that he had a network of former socialist ambassadors to draw upon. This occurred as I was seeking government funding for precisely the same concept.

I went through the pointless process of complaining to RAND that my idea had been hijacked. After a “careful investigation,” RAND concluded that the International Policy Department staffer who stole my idea had actually come up with it on his own.

* * *

NOTES

1. Ms. Jeane Palfrey, the so-called DC Madam who “outed Ullman as a client” in March 2007, claimed that she selected Ullman because “he had come up with the phrase ‘shock and awe,’ later used for the government’s war effort in Iraq[.]” Palfrey also said she never liked Ullman, whom she referred to as ‘Mr. U.’ ‘He was an unpleasant person,’ she said.” “No Way to Treat a Lady,” Vicky Ward, *Vanity Fair*, May 6, 2008. <http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2008/05/madam200805>. At the time of the “outing,” Dr. Ullman was listed as a “senior associate” at CSIS. Ms. Palfrey committed suicide on May 1, 2008.
2. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., p. 46.



CHAPTER 13

Moscow, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, and East Germany

This chapter describes how we organized access and conducted DPMO-sponsored research in the KGB archives located in the former Soviet republics of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Ukraine, as well as the KGB and Soviet military intelligence (GRU) archives located in Moscow. This project included research in a wide range of archives created by the German Democratic Republic (aka East Germany), most prominently the archives of the Stasi, the East German secret police.

This project was administered by Defense Forecasts Inc. (DFI) in Washington, DC.

FROM RAND TO DFI

After the conclusion of Phase II of the RAND project, DPMO advised me that DoD was eager to fund substantial follow-on work. Sergei and I were willing to continue the project. One problem, however, was that RAND, which was not even lukewarm to the idea, had repeatedly rejected my proposals to continue the POW/MIA project, America's "highest national priority."

RAND management had not only rejected my proposals for follow-on research that the DoD was prepared to fund at nearly a half-million dollars, RAND management criticized my work on POW/MIA issues in my annual performance review for "distorting RAND's research agenda" and "disrupting the work of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs."

I was keen to continue the work we had started on the POW/MIA accounting effort in the former Soviet Union. Under the circumstances at RAND, the only way was to take the project elsewhere.

In November 1992, I began to organize my departure from RAND.

I asked Mr. Norm Kass if I could take the project to another firm. He advised me that he was indifferent to which company managed the project, as long as the other company was properly registered with DoD and could tick all of required procurement regulations and fulfill every administrative requirement.

I raised the issue of a DPMO-sponsored POW/MIA follow-on project with Dr. Barry Blechman, who owned a small Washington DC-based consulting firm, Defense Forecasts Inc. (DFI). As the name suggested, DFI focused on DoD budget issues and military analysis.

Dr. Blechman was a DC lifer with the standard profile—PhD from a second-tier school, a dissertation that read like a long book report, think tank experience, revolving door job in government, a reasonable set of publications, second marriage to a politically savvy, well-connected fellow DC lifer, and a row house in northwest DC.

I had met Dr. Blechman a few times. He had been a senior fellow at Carnegie when I was an assistant editor there, a fellow at SAIS when I was a PhD candidate, plus I had recommended one of my former interns for a job at DFI. He had also been an occasional contributor to our work at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

On a mild winter day in December 1992, I met with Dr. Blechman at his home on Swann Street, NW. I had written a proposal for follow-on POW/MIA work that I wanted to submit through his firm DFI. Dr. Blechman invited me to his home to have a martini while he looked after his adopted daughter. This was my first opportunity to have one-on-one conversation with him.

I wrote the unsolicited sole-source proposal that was eventually submitted on DFI letterhead. In the terms of the federal government's procurement process, this was known as an "unsolicited sole-source proposal." Dr. Blechman said he liked the proposal, so much so that he said to me, "This is a gift."

An alarm bell went off when Dr. Blechman described the project as "a gift," to DFI, but it was not apparent to me what might be wrong. At the end of our meeting we agreed to move ahead with the proposal. We agreed then shook hands. In Washington, DC, a handshake deal lasts only as long as the strength of the integrity of both parties.

I submitted the unsolicited, sole-source proposal in draft form to DPMO for comment.

In February 1993 I spoke with my PoC at DPMO, Mr. Norm Kass, about the proposal. He advised that while the concept and draft SoW “looked good,” he couldn’t proceed until after he had received an indication from the incoming Clinton administration that there would be continued interest and political support for research into POW/MIA issues. I reminded Mr. Kass that this was the nation’s “highest national priority,” then advised Dr. Blechman that we needed some political top cover if we were going to make this work.

On April 15, 1993 Mr. Kass advised me that DoD had approved my proposal. This meant that if all went well I would be moving from RAND to Defense Forecasts Inc. with a project worth \$485,000 in hand. That was a significant budget even for a large consulting firm.

In June 1993, the proposal moved from DoD to the Commerce Department for publication in the *Commerce Business Daily* (CBD). Due to the fact that this was an unsolicited sole-source proposal, notice in the CBD was a required step that publicized the proposal while giving potential competitors the opportunity to submit competitive proposals. The day the proposal appeared in the CBD was the day I received the commendation letter from MG Loeffke. We could do nothing during the comment period except wait.

On August 20, the 45-day period for public comment for the proposed project came to an end. No objections or counter-proposals had been submitted to DPMO, which was unusual because unsolicited sole-source proposals are almost always contested by would-be competitors. We were good to go, but the government’s contracting process moved at its own glacial pace.

The proposal I submitted to DPMO had been sent by Mr. Kass to an Army officer for evaluation. This submission coincided with my last trip to the National Archives as a RAND employee. The purpose of that trip was to read the debriefings of repatriated POWs. All of the records I wanted to see, which were still classified, were stored in a big metal cage in the basement of the archive building in Suitland, Maryland. In light of the lack of interest if not outright opposition to my project at RAND, I could have skipped this step, just dialed it in, but did not. Before I departed Santa Monica, I asked RAND to transfer my SECRET clearance to NARA, a routine procedure that would allow me to sit within a cage in a windowless basement for several days sorting through box after box of old paper.

As I flew to DC, one of the most unlikely coincidences in world history occurred. I learned about it after checking into the Embassy Suites near DuPont Circle.

After tossing my suitcase on the bed in my Embassy Suites room, the flashing red message light on the phone caught my attention. It appeared to be a message for the previous guest that hadn't been cleared. The only person who would call before I checked in would be my wife. After pressing "9" for messages, I heard the following: "Hi Dr. Cole. This is Colonel Krumperly (not his real name)." The colonel found out that I was staying at the Embassy Suites by phoning RAND. "I'm responsible for transferring clearances and vetting proposals. I did not transfer your clearance because I informed RAND that you no longer worked at RAND due to the DFI International proposal in which you are named principle investigator. They didn't seem to know you no longer worked there."

This was a potentially difficult point for the colonel, because proposals submitted to the federal government are proprietary. He had no right whatsoever to acknowledge that such a proposal existed, to name the people involved, or to mention the subject matter. Those rules exist to minimize insider trading. The colonel had informed RAND about a proposal from a competitor. Thus, the information RAND received had been obtained improperly. The colonel concluded, "So, I am responsible for transferring RAND clearances, but I didn't transfer yours to NARA because it appears to me you no longer work for RAND. I hope I didn't step in it. Have a good evening."

All of a sudden, the cat was among the pigeons. I stared at the handset in disbelief.

I was concerned that RAND would fire me on the spot, even though no rules had been broken. I certainly couldn't rule out the possibility, due to the fact that within RAND loyalty weighed far more than competence. I ate a sandwich in the hotel bar just before it closed and wondered what was going to happen. The next day, I happened to run into Dr. Ron Asmus in the hotel.

Dr. Asmus, a fellow SAIS PhD and International Policy Department colleague, once offered me two days of "coverage" from one of his DoD projects in exchange for moving furniture from his apartment to his new house. After I produced a report funded by one of Dr. Asmus' projects, he asked me to add him as co-author even though he had nothing to do with producing the document. I advised Dr. Asmus that I wouldn't do it.

After I asked Dr. John van Oudenaren whether this was a typical RAND practice, Dr. van Oudenaren wrote in my annual performance review that I had provoked a dispute with Dr. Asmus.

Within the cabal of RAND's "made men" was a sub-cabal of Democratic Party political operatives who often did campaign work during office hours. They made no effort to conceal the fact that they were politically active, they used the office fax machine to send memos to the campaign, they socialized in a closed circle, and they scratched one another's backs with make-work projects that funded their friends. Dr. Asmus was part of the sub-cabal, which I was not. I had no favors to cash in and no days of coverage to offer him for any support.

I didn't trust Dr. Asmus and did not think of him as a friend—I'm certain the feeling was mutual—but times being what they were, it was a good idea to ask for his advice. I told him what had happened. He advised that I should ask Dr. Pollack directly whether I would be able to count on his support. That was a hell of a thought. The chairman of my department had provided no support for me since I was hired. The situation looked bleak.

Instead of sitting in the basement of the Suitland branch of NARA encased in a steel cage reading classified USAF Korean War records, I changed my reservation and scheduled to return to California as soon as possible, which as it turned out was the following Monday.

I checked out of the hotel as soon as I decided not to go to NARA. I was not providing any project services; thus it would have been inappropriate to swan around collecting a per diem while doing no project work. Instead, I spent the weekend on the Easter Shore at a friend's place, racking up his long-distance bill as I explored my options.

I fully expected RAND to fire me, since this would have been precisely the exact opposite of what should have been done. Getting fired, which would have simply accelerated by departure from RAND, would not have accelerated DoD's proposal approval process.

My saving grace was the fact CRM Pollack decided to intervene. His intervention was both a curse and a blessing. The curse was he usually lacked the courage to do the right thing. My colleague Dr. Gordon McCormick told me that he was convinced that alien body snatchers had kidnapped Dr. Pollack and replaced him with a clone. "Look for the pod under the table in his office," he advised me. Eventually, Dr. McCormick told me that he had advised Dr. Pollack to invest in an "inflatable

backbone” that could be used from time to time, then deflated when it was no longer needed.

The blessing was that Dr. Pollack’s dubious methods often created gaps through which one could comfortably drive a large truck. Senator Eugene McCarthy must have been thinking about RAND when he observed, “The only thing that saves us from bureaucracy is its inefficiency.”

I could only count on RAND following its default *modus operandi*—dragging things out, never taking a clear decision, and making a hash of the decisionmaking process. They didn’t disappoint. In fact, the same night I heard from the colonel, my extremely agitated wife phoned me. She reported that Dr. Pollack had just phoned her at home. The purpose of Dr. Pollack’s call, she said, was to get the answer to his question, “How pregnant are you?” My initial impulse was clouded by fury. I explained to my wife what had happened. She was pregnant, emotional, and distressed. After I took a couple of deep breaths, it appeared to me that Dr. Pollack was trying to figure out how to circumvent the federal Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978.

I returned to Santa Monica, where I laid low. The first day I was back at RAND, a colleague came to my office to tell me he had seen a memo about me lying in the unclassified printer tray at the end of the corridor. I went to have a look. The memo, which was written by Dr. Pollack and indeed was about me, was marked “Confidential.” A memo marked “Confidential” should have been printed in a classified printer. This one, printed in an unclassified printer, had been left lying around for everyone to see, which in addition to bad judgment was a security violation. Leaving the memo in the open for everyone to see might have been the point.

I thought about making a photocopy of the memorandum, but figured RAND would charge me with espionage. Instead, I immediately emailed Dr. Pollack, asking for a copy of his memo. He assured me in writing he would give it to me and that I had “right” to have it. I seriously doubt I would have ever seen it if my friend had not tipped me off. If Dr. Pollack had used the classified printer or collected the document before my friend saw it, I would never have known the memo existed.

My sentence was to go see the Vice President of Finance, Mr. Raymond Archibald. I could not figure out what this guy, the chief green eyeshade who got involved in field research and legal matters, had to do with personnel matters, but I went along anyway. I once attended a party in Santa

Monica once where I spoke with a Swedish woman who had lived in LA for several years. We had fun speaking Swedish in the warm late afternoon in California. She asked me where I worked. When I told her RAND, her eyes rolled. I thought she might be another anti-RAND wooly sweater drum pounder or worse, one of the blood slingers. Instead, she told me that the only thing she knew about RAND derived from the fact she had lived next door to a RAND employee named Ray Archibald, who she characterized as “an insufferable little turd.” She added some additional salacious details that were rather entertaining.

The salacious bits caused me to break a smile as I navigated my way through the RAND labyrinth to Mahogany Row, the land of the managers. After locating the correct office, I introduced myself. The secretary guarding the outer perimeter, who gave me one of those, “Man, are you going to get it,” looks, said, “Go right in.” No “please” or any attempt at civility, just a thumb pointing at the door as if she were hitchhiking.

I knocked on Mr. Archibald’s door, which was open. While he kept me waiting, I counted about 15 windows. The guy had clearly slithered rather far up RAND’s greasy totem pole. Mr. Archibald, who pretended not to hear my knock, continued to stare down, scratching on some documents using a shiny black fountain pen the size of Maduro Robusto equipped with an unusually large gold nib that stood out like a bill on a platypus. The oversized gold-encrusted pen might have created an aura of power, but to paraphrase Freud, sometimes a pen is just a pen. I just stood in the doorway, waiting for something to happen. When Mr. Archibald finally looked up, he didn’t even have the simple courtesy to introduce himself or offer me a chair. I sat down anyway. He moved around his desk then took a seat on a large leather sofa. Without any introduction or discussion of what I was there for, Mr. Archibald launched into a condescending, sneering diatribe about how I “could be fired” for what I did. I was immediately reassured. People who are fired are usually fired. People who “could be fired” usually weren’t. When you get fired, you walk in the room, you get fired, you leave, and that’s that. Trash talking about “could be fired” was nothing more than an intimidation technique.

Mr. Archibald did not ask me to provide my side of the story or to comment on any alleged “facts” of the matter. I sat there, listening to his tedious spiel, waiting for him to finish. I wasn’t sure what this act was supposed to mean. During my DC days, I had been read the riot

act by some of the best in the business. This was tepid in contrast to the Bessemer furnace jobs that I had survived and actually dished out a couple of times.

When he finally paused to take a breath, I butted in. I asked Mr. Archibald if I could see the memorandum Dr. Pollack had written, printed, and left in the open for everyone to see. This was, after all, the charge sheet where the alleged “facts” of the case were presented. He said I had no “right to see RAND management documents,” even if they concerned me. He was asserting, in other words, that RAND had the right to maintain parallel and secret personnel files, which violated about a half-dozen federal and California state laws. I showed him Dr. Pollack’s email in which he had promised in writing to give me a copy, which made sense in light of the fact the document was now public. Mr. Archibald said Dr. Pollack was wrong.

Mr. Archibald went on to say that as a RAND employee, I was not permitted to participate in competing proposals. I noted that it wasn’t competitive, since it was work RAND had twice turned down. His Orwellian response was that *all* research money in the *entire* federal government was *potentially* RAND money, so *every* proposal from another organization was *by definition* competitive.

I responded by pointing out that I had put plenty of RAND people in proposals we wrote at CSIS. Mr. Robert “Blowtorch Bob” Komer, a RAND-ite in the DC office, had been a frequent go-to participant in our projects in the CSIS political-military studies program. I asked him, “Please show me, where it says in the RAND manual that I cannot do this, but others at RAND may? Don’t the rules apply equally to every employee?”

For that, he had no reply whatsoever. My guess was that Mr. Archibald understood all too well that organizations that received federal money, particularly one situated in the People’s Republic of Santa Monica, had to apply rules equally to all employees.

I then turned the tables. I pointed out that after finding out that my proposal existed, Dr. Pollack, in his attempt to get to the bottom of my alleged duplicity and alleged misconduct, had placed a telephone call to my wife. We were expecting our first child and the CRM knew it. My pregnant wife was home alone, and he knew it. In the course of transparently bogus pleasantries, Dr. Pollack asked, “By the way, how pregnant are you?”

How low can you get? He was attempting to figure out how to fire me, that was clear. One issue for him was what it would look like for RAND to kick out a two-window researcher with a wife in labor. That was a big, big mistake, and not simply from the standpoint of employment law.

I asked Mr. Archibald, "Is it RAND policy to permit your managers to inquire about my private life? To interrogate my wife about her pregnancy? Is this your policy?"

Mr. Archibald replied, "What do you mean?"

I said, "CRM Pollack phoned my wife and asked intimate questions about her pregnancy. Do you allow this? Do you condone this? I'm asking if this is RAND's standard practice?"

This was the only point in the conversation when Mr. Archibald took notes with his over-sized fountain pen. I then got a little agitated.

"Listen, you guys permit other RAND employees to participate in competing proposals, you found out about this matter in a most dubious and probably illegal fashion. It wouldn't have happened if I hadn't been doing my job. Even though I plan to leave here, I was going to NARA to do my job. RAND declined the work outlined in the other proposal *twice*. You are now attempting to restrain me from looking for another job, and you permit and may have instructed your 'manager' to make phone calls to my pregnant wife that were most unwelcome and inappropriate. She's seven months pregnant, for Christ's sake! Then, to top it off, you have the audacity to accuse *me* of wrongdoing. You don't have a fucking leg to stand on."

I immediately regretted swearing, but I had had it. I added for good measure, "And *you know it*," then mumbled an apology for losing my temper.

There ensued an awkward silence of some seconds. I concluded by asking, "Are we finished with this?"

Mr. Archibald, who was now giving the distinct impression of a deer caught in the headlights, simply said, "You will receive our decision."

I rose from chair. Mr. Archibald, who didn't look up, retained his position, slunk into the sofa with 15 windows in background.

"I'm sure I will."

I paused as I left. I was thinking that I could excuse a lot of things, but rudeness was not one of them. I turned and said, "Sorry for swearing. I'm also sure you will understand if I don't say thank you or say what a pleasure it was to talk with you. And I still want Dr. Pollack's memo as promised."

I wandered back to my cell. I had lost all respect for people who are content to suck at the public tit. I was one of them, but at least I understood public tit money was public, not personal. I meandered from the gray carpet of the “manager’s” area on Mahogany Row to the gray linoleum of the “researcher’s” area to the even grayer area of my office. I closed the door then took a cat nap. The guy across the hall never bothered to close the door when he slept at work. He just simply put his feet on his desk, crossed his palms across his huge belly then snoozed, and snored. I at least had the dignity to take a nap behind closed doors.

I was summoned to CRM Pollack’s office a couple of days later to hear the verdict. Jean Jacques Rousseau’s observation came to mind. “Frequent punishments are always a sign of weakness or laziness on the part of a government.”

So as not to harm “my career,” Dr. Pollack announced, I had been put on “unwritten administrative probation” which would not be entered into my personnel file. (I didn’t ask which one, the official one or the secret one maintained by Mr. Archibald.) Further, I was to meet periodically with Dr. Pollack to keep me on the straight and narrow. So there was nothing in writing, no paper trail, no resolution of RAND’s missteps. It was a “double secret probation,” *Animal House* style. I was at RAND about another six weeks.

I was never called to a single meeting to review my conduct.

* * *

On August 27, 1993, Dr. Blechman called me to report that by September 15 “our” contract with DoD should be signed. My proposal had become DFI’s. Of more importance, however, was the fact that our work on POW/MIA resolution efforts had only begun. We had an unprecedented opportunity to continue work in the archives of the military and security services of the former Soviet Union and East Germany.

I was not the only one who was convinced that the window of opportunity that had opened in the former USSR had to be exploited as quickly and, more importantly, as thoroughly as possible. DASD/DPMO Alan Ptak expressed the same sense of urgency when he testified before the Asia-Pacific Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee regarding access to information, including archive material, in Russia:

You have my personal assurance (emphasis in original) that this unique opportunity to answer the questions of so many families will not be lost.¹

I endorsed the view of DASD Carl Ford who, in response to Dr. Kelley's insistence that the archive research project in Moscow should be "shut down," stated that if we did not continue our research in Soviet-era archives, our children and grandchildren would never understand or forgive us. I felt a personal responsibility to see this project through to the end.

My colleagues and I could not understand, however, why RAND management was not just indifferent, but actively opposed our work in Soviet-era archives. Increasingly, this was becoming a missed opportunity of historical proportions. The Russian side of our team assured us that in addition to the Soviet military intelligence archives, we could have access the archives of the Soviet General Staff as well. Backed by our team members on the Russian General Staff, our Russian team members made the following offer. We were offered the opportunity to photocopy all of the records in the Soviet General Staff archive in exchange for leaving the photocopy machine behind. I pitched the idea to RAND management, which quickly rebuffed the offer immediately. The deal was characterized by RAND management as a transparent attempt by Russian scam artists to obtain a copy machine for which there would be no tangible benefit in return. "How could you be so naïve?" they asked me.

Mr. Bob Levin, a senior RAND analyst who had been with the company for decades, observed during a staff meeting that my interest in "detailed empirical research" was "fatuous." My proposals for additional archive research in Moscow had been dismissed by the head of RAND's Arroyo Center as "high-risk primary source research." RAND management criticized the entire POW/MIA project as nothing more than a "distortion of RAND's research agenda," then threatened to fire me when I took the work elsewhere.

* * *

The new DPMO contract with DFI came through in early September 1993. In order to activate the contract, DoD required that I sign a letter of intent that promised DPMO that I would join DFI, the new firm, as principal investigator of the project. Before I faxed the agreement to DPMO from a Kinko's on Wilshire Boulevard, I signed a second letter, stating that I resigned from RAND. After I signed the resignation letter, for a moment, I was neither employed nor unemployed. I had a wife and a one-month old baby.

Being neither employed nor unemployed gave me an insight into the terror that must be limbo. Standing in the Kinko's on Wilshire Boulevard, I felt simultaneously alone, terrified, exhilarated, and confident that I had taken control of my career.

I resigned from RAND on September 1, 1993. Moments later, I accepted a position with Defense Forecasts, Inc. (DFI).

After I submitted the letter of resignation, I hung around RAND for two weeks during my notice period. Nothing happened. It was as if the "unwritten administrative probation" had never occurred. When my last day came, two TFR staff members, an Air Force Major Woerner Hendrix and Major Danz Blasser, happened to be visiting RAND. They were excited about the work I had done and couldn't wait for me to continue it under the DPMO contract. They were puzzled over why RAND didn't "give a shit," and would just let me and the project drift away, just like that. One of the visitors was in my office when CRM Pollack stopped by "to say goodbye." That was the first and only time that Dr. Pollack had come to my office in three years.

I simply said, "I couldn't bear the thought of enduring yet another dismal annual performance review."

Dr. Pollack simply nodded and muttered, "Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh."

Dr. Pollack had not acknowledged my resignation letter—I had submitted it directly to RAND Human Resources, over his head, but I'm sure he knew about it. Dr. Pollack wandered away. A couple of months later, he was removed as CRM.

On my last day I packed up my personal things, put them in the car, and drove away from RAND. No party, no farewell, no handshake, no cards, no nothing. It was as if I had never worked at RAND. There was nothing to do but go home and watch the fires of October 1993 rage on the Santa Monica Mountains.

My decision to leave RAND was a move I felt compelled to make for several reasons. It was quite a risk, but a calculated risk that would break in my favor, or so I thought. With one brief exception, I had worked in the not-for-profit 501(c)(3) world for over a decade. One of my objectives was to break into the private sector, to work in the for-profit world of "normal" business. I was convinced that there would be more opportunities that would come along faster in the private sector. The risk was greater. I was confident the rewards would be commensurate.

It had taken me nine months to organize my departure from RAND. After just three years in California, I moved my little family back to

Washington, DC. I used frequent flyer miles to fly to Dulles ahead of my wife and one-month old daughter. As I sat in the arrival area, waiting for them to arrive from Los Angeles, I wondered whether I was doing the right thing.

Even though I was confident that I could carry out the project successfully, something bothered me about the future. I couldn't put my finger on it then.

The following Monday I understood the source of my concern.

Joining DFI would turn out to be one of the biggest mistakes, if not the biggest, I have ever made in my life.

* * *

The first day I came to work at DFI, I regretted it immediately.

I expected Dr. Blechman to be enthusiastic about a project worth nearly a half-million dollars, particularly in light of the significant profit margin for DFI.

I was mistaken.

Within minutes of the very first day, I realized that joining DFI had been a huge, irretrievable mistake. The sensation was similar to when you see your fiancée walking up the aisle and you realize that you are about to marry the wrong woman. Dr. Blechman, the president and owner of the firm, neglected to introduce me at the first staff meeting. I sat through the meeting, catching the eye of the ten or so staff members, each of whom was asking, "Who is this guy and why is he here?" My former intern, who I had introduced to Dr. Blechman and who had risen to be a vice president and shareholder of DFI, said nothing. I had the sinking feeling that I could no longer count on him as a friend, and I was right. This was a very disturbing omen. I had brought a project worth nearly a half-million dollars dealing with "America's highest national priority" to DFI, and Dr. Blechman "forgot" to introduce me to the rest of the staff.

As I squirmed during the staff meeting, I reflected on some advice I had received and ignored. I had been warned against trying to work with Dr. Blechman by some of his previous colleagues. A good friend of mine who had worked with Dr. Blechman advised me that he was not to be trusted. "He will steal your project," my friend warned me. I was familiar with the "bait-and-switch" tactic used by research organizations in Washington, because we did it all the time at CSIS. The way it works is like

this. The company puts together a proposal that features one or more well-known senior people in a particular field. After the project is awarded, the senior people are paid a fee for the use of their resumes, and then the junior people, sometimes even interns, do the work. The company pockets the difference between the salary of the senior staffer and the intern. In more cutthroat companies, the person who brought in a project is fired, and the work is done by a lower-cost employee.

The way to protect yourself from this type of ruthless predatory activity is either through an employment contract, being specified as an irreplaceable “principal investigator,” or through mutual trust that a handshake deal would be respected and honored.

I doubted my old friend. I trusted Dr. Blechman. This was another mistake.

Having spent over a decade in DC where I earned my masters and doctorate and then worked in two think tanks as well as spent a lot of time in the embassy reception and cocktail circuit, I thought I was reasonably well informed and understood what I was getting into at DFI. On the one hand, my judgment may have been clouded by my experience at RAND. On the other hand, I had not worked in the private sector outside of think tanks. At CSIS the staff signed annual letters of appointment. At RAND, the staff were protected by an employment contract, which provided at least a modicum of safety from improper termination. Due to my inexperience, it never occurred to me to insist on an employment contract with DFI. I was naïve enough to think that my handshake agreement with Dr. Blechman, the word of honor between two men, was sufficient.

I was about to learn the hard way, the very hard way, that this was not the case. I also learned that some people take advantage of oral agreements. In a city dominated by the shifting sands of politics, to certain types of people, a handshake and a promise was nothing more than a clever tactical maneuver. When circumstances changed, so did the commitments and loyalties.

The consequences of my misplaced trust would play out over the course of the coming 18 months.

We received office space and basic administrative support from DFI. A project concerned with the “nation’s highest national priority” was just another consulting gig. Highway 495 that encircled Washington, DC, was known as the “beltway.” “Consulting” firms that grew on the federal government like zebra mussels on the hull of a Great Lakes freighter were referred to as “beltway bandits.” The key is to understand the “beltway

bandit” mentality. The federal government, which was the source of millions upon millions of dollars of “study money” each year, was the “big tit.” Beltway bandits ranged in size from a former government official working alone, aka “sole practitioner,” out of her apartment’s kitchen to gigantic billion-dollar-a-year firms. The smaller firms were similar to one-man law firms whose practice consisted of anything that walked in off the street. The motive was to land a contract. Believing that federal money should support a public interest was a fairy tale for chumps. A sole practitioner beltway bandit was the type of person who could advocate for nuclear disarmament in scholarly journals in order to impress politicians while simultaneously soliciting consulting work to support Boeing’s lobbying effort to obtain Congressional funding for another generation of nuclear weapon delivery systems. For a beltway bandit, the “nation’s highest national priority” was whatever you wanted it to be, sir.

* * *

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The archival research project that began at RAND under the authority of the US Secretary of Defense and with the endorsement of the Soviet Minister of Defense² continued at Defense Forecasts Inc. (DFI). The official title of DFI’s DPMO-sponsored project was “POW/MIA Research in Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Berlin.”

The DoD-approved SoW required me as the principal investigator to establish archive research teams in each of these countries, as well as to sustain a “modest” archive research effort in Moscow. The focus of the research was to search the records of the security services, such as the KGB records, in four of the former USSR republics and in the archives of the German Democratic Republic’s (GDR) security service, the Stasi. The objective was to determine whether there was any evidence, whether archive records or eyewitnesses, or indication that American citizens had been transported across or held against their will on the territory of the USSR or its various allies at any point following the end of WWII.

One of our research hypotheses was that if the Soviets had transferred Americans during the Korean War, they would have relocated the Americans in areas with a compatible ethnic composition, so that the Americans would blend in. We anticipated that a six-foot tall (183 cm),

blue-eyed American would blend in among other men in East Germany or Hungary, for example. A six-two (188 cm) blonde man in Tajikistan, however, would have been too easy to spot.

A second purpose of the project was to search the Stasi records with the same objective. Did the East Germans play a role in the capture, transfer, or imprisonment of American POW/MIAs during the Korean War or Vietnam War? In addition, due to the fact that the 20,000 plus American POWs allegedly turned over to the Soviet Union were held in German POW camps, part of our research agenda was to determine if any evidence of such a transfer could be found in relevant German records from the Nazi era or any other time period. The research agenda included an examination of records to determine whether any evidence documented the presence of American servicemen or citizens in East Germany. Our hypothesis was that if we located records concerning some American servicemen or citizens, this might provide leads that would help us locate records concerning others.

A third objective was to search the KGB archives and other records of the security services in four of the former republics of the Soviet Union plus archives in Moscow for any evidence that over 20,000 American POWs from WWII had been transferred to the territory of the USSR. If such an enormous transfer had indeed occurred, as alleged by several American journalists and authors, we anticipated that a colossal, risky undertaking of this magnitude would have left a trail of evidence in the archives of the Soviet security services. As demonstrated by Dr. Pierre Rigoulot's work in the KGB archives, we knew there was significant evidence that documented that during WWII several dozen French Alsatians had been captured by the Red Army and then transported and held in the Soviet Gulag. The Alsatian prisoners reported sightings in the same gulag camp of a dozen or so prisoners who the Alsatians claimed were Americans. Our objective was to search for a similar paper trail concerning tens of thousands of American POWs who were alleged to have suffered a similar fate.

The executive summary of the project's final report described the origin and purpose of the project in the following terms:

Background

Approximately nine months following the creation of the US-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, it was by then clear to the American side that the Russian side was not providing full access to Soviet archives. Thus, one of DPMO's predecessor organizations (Task Force Russia) concluded that a

search of Soviet archives, particularly the KGB and security services archives located in the former republics of the Soviet Union and the former GDR, would complement the Commission's efforts and could possibly shed light on the content of records that were not made available for research in Russia.

Purpose

The purpose of the archive research in Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia was to locate, identify and obtain access to previously classified files (particularly KGB archives) and other records in order to determine whether information concerning American citizens in general and American POW/MIAs in particular is stored in Soviet-era archives located in the former republics of the Soviet Union. The purpose of DFI's research in Russia was to sustain an on-going archive research project that had begun four months before the creation of the US-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.

In addition to archives located in former Soviet republics, DPMO determined that archives located in nations that were once members of the Warsaw Pact could possibly yield data relevant to the effort to resolve American POW/MIA issues. In 1992, the principal investigator for this project began negotiations with the Foreign Ministry of the Federal Republic of Germany in order to obtain access to records of the GDR that at the time had not been made available for research by non-governmental specialists.

Underlying DPMO's interest in archive research in Germany was the hypothesis that American POW/MIAs had been relocated against their will to the territory of the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) during and after the Korean War.³ As shown previously, during World War II Soviet forces transported to third countries under Soviet occupation American POWs who had been obtained from German POW camps.⁴

The purpose of DFI's research in Germany, therefore, was to test the hypothesis that if American POW/MIAs survived capture and transport by Soviet forces, then perhaps some of them had been relocated to the territory of the GDR during the Cold War. If so, it was assumed that this would have been a joint Soviet-GDR operation; thus the presence of these Americans would be reflected in the records of the military intelligence or state security (Stasi) organizations.⁵

Finally, DPMO provided funds necessary to sustain nothing beyond a "modest" research effort in Moscow. Our team in Moscow had done an outstanding job during the RAND project, they had incomparable access to important archives, and it made sense to keep them going. DPMO, which initially agreed with this plan, eventually instructed DFI to close down our research in Moscow, which we did, reluctantly.

Part of the motivation for the project was also pragmatic or political, depending on one's point of view. The fact of the matter was that the Russian side of the US-Russia Joint Commission was neither cooperative nor productive. The minutes of the USRJC contain numerous references to deception, lack of cooperation, and obfuscation by the Russian side. Examples of this type of Russian behavior include the following⁶:

- General Volkogonov admitted that he had not been through the GRU or KGB archives (March 26–28, 1992).
- After a US Commissioner referred to “strong evidence” that American POWs had been taken to the Soviet Union during the Korean War, the Russian side said they found no evidence in their research that this had taken place (December 1992).
- General Volkogonov stated that political turbulence in Russia was overtaking the work of the Commission and that there continued to be opposition within the Russian Government to its work (December 1992).
- Russia's traditional archival research community, found primarily in academia, is ready and willing to respond to American inquiries, especially in return for fair compensation. Officials of the Security and Defense Ministries are currently more resistant to US inquiries[.]
- The level of cooperation from the Russian side has not met the standard of official statements.
- There are a number of other examples of a failure to provide basic information about individuals despite the fact that the information must be readily available to the Russian side.
- The Russian side has agreed to a 48-hour notice policy for on-site inspections of any camp or archive.
- Since much of the information developed to date points to the KGB as the institution most likely to have been involved in arranging transfers and escorting Americans onto Soviet soil, the United States may want to look into which former republic archives containing KGB records were capped after the coup and whether we can gain access to these records.
- In the Committee's November 1992 hearings, the USRJC's US investigator in Moscow testified that the US was “intentionally being stonewalled” by the Russians on the subject of Cold War incidents, despite pledges of cooperation from President Yeltsin and General Volkogonov.

- There is strong evidence, both from archived US intelligence reports and from recent interviews in Russia, that Soviet military and intelligence officials were involved in the interrogation of American POWs during the Korean War, notwithstanding recent official statements from the Russian side that this did not happen.
- Unfortunately, the level of cooperation from within the Russian military and intelligence bureaucracy has been less than extensive and has, at times, seemed intentionally obstructive.

These were examples of Russia's standard operating procedure that no amount of "wining and dining" could change.

* * *

In light of the official problems encountered by the US side of the USRJC, could our unofficial efforts produce results that the Russian side was incapable or unwilling of producing?

After excluding "independent researcher" from the work of the USRJC, the US side was now turning to independent researchers to do what the Russian side could not or would not do.

* * *

KGB RECORDS IN THE FORMER SOVIET REPUBLICS

Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1990, the 14 non-Russian Soviet republics became independent states. This rupture in the fabric of the international system created uncertainty as well as opportunity. Our experience in Moscow revealed that many Russians, including those in the innermost circles of authority, embraced the opportunity to make the transformation from the Soviet era in order to become Russians again. Former Soviet officials told us that we were welcome to examine the archives due to the fact that they were the records of the Soviet Union, a nation that no longer existed. The creation of the CIS followed by the establishment of the Russian Federation was to be interpreted not just as a break with the past. Russia's re-emergence was regarded by ex-Soviet officials as an opportunity to establish a new relationship with the west in general, and the United States of America in particular, with a clean slate.

The Russian government's willingness to allow access to Soviet-era archives, though a small slice of the greater geo-political pie, was intended to be a gesture of openness, a continuation of the policy of *glasnost* and *perestroika* that had contributed to the peaceful breakup of the USSR. The importance of small gestures in international relations should not be dismissed. A great deal depends on the skill of the intended recipient to understand that a signal had been sent as well as the ability of the national command authority to react appropriately. For example, one of the first public clues that Beijing was interested in improving US-Chinese relations occurred on April 6, 1971, when the US national ping-pong team was in Japan for the World Table Tennis Championships. Out of the blue, the Chinese team extended an invitation to the US team to make an all-expenses-paid visit to Beijing. Less than one year later, the apex of Ping-Pong Diplomacy was achieved in February 1972 when President Nixon made his historic trip to China. Dr. Henry Kissinger once observed that his role in opening relations with the People's Republic of China was not to pound on the door; rather, "My contribution was to recognize that the door was open. All we needed was the courage to walk through it."

The implications of an invitation to a ping-pong exhibition could have been easily disregarded or ignored as a triviality. According to our Russian counterparts, Moscow's willingness to allow access to archives that no westerner had ever seen before was intended to be perceived by the US national command authorities as a gesture, as formulated by one former Soviet General Staff officer, that "Russia is Russia. We are no longer the Soviet Union." Archive access was intended to be a part of a larger plan to place US-Russia relations on a new post-Cold War footing.

Part of our task was to determine whether a similar attitude existed in some of the former republics of the erstwhile USSR. As a pragmatic matter, the only way to find out was to find out. My main partner in the Russian and former-Soviet segment of the project was once again Sergei Zamascikov. Without Sergei, the realization of this project would have been impossible. Under Sergei's leadership, we began by assessing which former republics might be open to such an initiative.

Throughout the Cold War the three Baltic republics, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia, were regarded by the United States as "Captive Nations" that had been occupied in 1939 and then unlawfully annexed in 1940 by

the USSR according to the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact between the Soviets and the Nazis. This position was codified by a Joint Resolution of Congress passed in 1959 that was reinforced by a July 17, 1959, Presidential Proclamation entitled “Captive Nations Week” signed by President Eisenhower. The Proclamation included the Baltic nations:

Among the many nations throughout the world that have been made captive by the imperialistic and aggressive policies of Soviet communism; and the peoples of the Soviet-dominated nations who have been deprived of their national independence and individual liberties.

The Proclamation was renewed by consecutive US presidents for 25 years, even after the end of the Cold War. At the time it was issued American specialists on the Soviet Union, such as the venerable State Department official George Kennan, realized no significant geo-political change could be achieved through bombastic presidential proclamations, the primary purpose of which may have been to antagonize the Soviet government. Whatever the interpretation, the fact remains that the United States government never recognized the Soviet annexation of the Baltic nations. The refusal to recognize the incorporation of those three small nations into the USSR may have been a small gesture, but it was significant to those who fought for the independence of those countries during the Cold War.

Incorporation of the Baltic nations into the Soviet Union after the end of WWII was never recognized by most western nations, with certain exceptions. Two significant exceptions occurred in the 1960s when Sweden transferred Estonia’s gold reserves (2.9 metric tons) to Moscow “at the very first request of the Soviet Union.” Swedish officials, who did not use the term “Soviet occupation,” instead referred to what had happened to Estonia after the end of WWII as the “restoration of Soviet authority.” In order to secure a trade agreement with the USSR, in 1969 Great Britain declared Estonian gold (4.8 metric tons) deposited in Great Britain’s banks to be Soviet property.⁷ With these decisions, Sweden and the United Kingdom recognized the incorporation of Estonia into the USSR as a *fait accompli*. The post-WWII borders in Europe were considered, particularly by the government of the GDR, to be permanent.

In 1989, however, the geo-political tectonic plates in Europe began to move, but toward different destinations. By 1991, the three Baltic nations,

which had been independent nations prior to successive occupations by the Soviets in 1918 and 1939, the Germans in 1941, then Soviets again in 1945, were particularly eager to re-establish domestic political control as well as to exert their sovereignty free from Russian domination. Moscow was making the transition from being an integral part of a global superpower to being the capital of a nation with a GDP slightly greater than that of Italy. The Baltic nations wanted nothing to do with either the Russian Federation or the CIS, which in their view were nothing more than a transparently feeble attempt to re-brand the USSR.

The inchoate nation of Ukraine began to stir as well. Western Ukraine, which had been part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Eastern Ukraine, which had been part of the Russian empire, were making an effort to combine into a single national identity after seven decades of Soviet domination.

Each of the four former Soviet republics bore deep scars from the era of Soviet occupation. The artifacts of the Soviet era included the detritus of the KGB (*Komitet gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti*), the dreaded organ of Soviet state security. In the Soviet system, the KGB was a “union-republic state committee,” which meant that there were corresponding “committees” of the same name in each of the 14 non-Russian republics. Each of the KGB franchises in the republics was under the tight and highly centralized control of the KGB’s head office in Moscow.

Every KGB outpost in each of the non-Russian republics was a replicate with the same components: offices, a prison with well-equipped torture chambers, execution facilities, and a record room.

As the USSR broke apart in 1991, in a desperate scramble to obliterate evidence of their infamous activities, Russian elements of the KGB attempted to remove or destroy a vast number of records, files, and archives in the Baltic countries.

The default setting to airbrush unpleasant events from the public record was deeply ingrained in Soviet communist culture in general, and within the KGB in particular. In an infamous photograph of a group of Soviet cosmonauts, the face and torso of trainee Grigori Nelyubov, who had been kicked out of the program, had been airbrushed out. This was typical of the Soviet desire to control history (Fig. 13.1).

In various versions of the doctored photograph, Cosmonaut Nelyubov’s body was replaced by a wall, a staircase, and a shrub. Nelyubov’s right



Fig. 13.1 Cosmonaut Nelyubov disappears (Photos: www.jamesoberg.com)

hand, which was resting on the shoulder of the first man on the left in the back row, was also removed by the diligent Soviet revisionists, though it left a dark smudge. Stalin and Lenin routinely ordered that photographs be edited to erase the faces of errant comrades whose presence had become inconvenient. The Soviet impulse to make history go away was encapsulated in the folk saying, “It never happened. And besides, it was a long time ago.”

The KGB's efforts to alter history were an example of life imitating art. In Orwell's *1984*, the Ministry of Truth was responsible for modifying history. In the Baltic countries, however, the KGB were prevented from carrying out their history-altering shredding party by the heroic intervention of the local population. Due to this fact and consistent with the cult of incompetence that had become synonymous with Soviet rule, the KGB were prevented from erasing all evidence of their crimes.

Consistent with Soviet custom, the KGB left its mess for someone else to clean up.

* * *

Following the breakup of the Soviet Union, the Russian KGB was forced to clear out of the former republics, but they didn't leave empty handed. In many cases the KGB loaded everything they could carry, including files and documents, crammed into trucks that disappeared into the east. Therefore, following the chaotic evacuation of the Russian KGB from the Baltic countries, the quality and quantity of materials left behind varied considerably. The former KGB facilities were often in shambles. Thousands of documents had been abandoned, some still in boxes, others partially burned, untold numbers left in heaps on the floor or shredded into colossal mounds of confetti.

When our project began, the governments of the newly liberated republics, which were in the midst of organizing the files, were also dealing with the question of who should have access to the records.

We didn't know what to expect in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, or Ukraine. Russian officials in Moscow initially treated the records of the Soviet era as those of a foreign country. We were hoping that an equivalent attitude would prevail elsewhere.

* * *

Sergei, our German partner Mr. Richthammer, and I had to overcome several obstacles, the first of which was geography. One significant challenge was the fact that the KGB and East German archives we were responsible for investigating was spread across Central Europe. The distances we had to contend with were (Fig. 13.2):



Fig. 13.2 Map of Central Europe (Image: Public Domain)

• Washington, DC, to Moscow, Russia	4857 miles	7880 km
• Moscow, Russia, to Berlin, Germany	1004 miles	1616 km
• Berlin to Vilnius, Lithuania	508 miles	818 km
• Vilnius, Lithuania, to Riga, Latvia	181 miles	295 km
• Vilnius, Lithuania, to Tallinn, Estonia	328 miles	529 km
• Riga, Latvia, to Tallinn, Estonia	173 miles	310 km
• Riga, Latvia, to Kiev, Ukraine	502 miles	1013 km
• Riga, Latvia, to Moscow, Russia	523 miles	841 km

The distances, which do not tell the entire story, were deceiving. In the immediate post-Cold War era, travel throughout the former Soviet Union was unpredictable, uncomfortable, as well as time-consuming. The roads were in terrible shape, and border crossings that hadn't existed during the Soviet time were popping up. Border guards who had protected the USSR's borders were suddenly in charge of new national borders while still wearing Soviet uniforms. Before the dissolution of the USSR, some of the old Soviet border guards attempted to impose their non-existent authority between two nations that did not recognize the Soviet Union. Finding not just gasoline but reliable gasoline was hit-or-miss. There were no roadside rest stops,

no convenient food kiosks, no toilets along the roadside. More often than not we ate whatever we could find along the way while driving.

We stayed in hotels, some of which were hotels in name only that usually reeked of Soviet-era smoke, dirt, sweat, and industrial cleaning products. Some of the hotels had very little heat, no hot water, and with few exceptions. With few exceptions, they lacked any type of restaurant. On one occasion Sergei and I had to sleep in our parkas in a freezing hotel after eating a meal consisting of smoked bear meat and vodka.

The timing of the project, which was out of our control, was not optimal for travel. Moving around the Zone during the summer was difficult enough. Making the same journey in the winter was a calculated risk. If our car broke down on the road (calling the roads a highway would be an exaggeration), there was no roadside assistance of any kind. More than once the door locks on our car froze solid. Air travel, using start-up private companies that relied on old aircraft somehow obtained from the defunct Soviet Air Force, reminded one to put one's personal affairs in order before getting on board.

Telephone service, particularly international calling, was completely unreliable. Fax machines were state-of-the-art technology. Cell phones were still the stuff of science fiction. In one instance our DFI-issued credit cards were denied because DFI failed to make a monthly installment payment; thus we were on our own in the middle of the former Soviet Union with only our wits and our personal money to rely on. Criminal gangs were beginning to pop up. In addition to the unreliable support from DFI and DPMO, a resurgent KGB began to turn its Sauron's Eye toward our work.

When something went wrong during our travels, we were on our own.

* * *

Sergei Zamascikov who worked from his home in Los Angeles and I from the DFI office in Washington, DC began to organize the project. We agreed that the research required three phases. The first phase would organize the research in each of the five locations. The second phase would be to make a mid-course progress report. The third and final phase would involve collecting the results produced. The product of the project would be a written report that summarized the findings and included the evidence collected.

We decided to first visit to Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Berlin in that order. The purpose of the initial visit was to obtain access privileges as well as to assemble research teams in each country. After Berlin, we would proceed to Moscow to meet our research team.

An ill omen foreshadowed the project. Within weeks of the approval of the project by DoD, inter-agency bickering broke out in Washington. Much to our surprise, instead of supporting our work, despite the fact that DPMO was the sponsor, several DPMO managers began to openly undermine the project. In addition, DPMO did little if anything to protect our project and project staff from interference from detractors in the Departments of State and Defense.

I journaled:

November 24, 1993 – DFI, DC

For some reason, DoD is reluctant to tell the State Department about our project, thus DoD told me there will be no “official” assistance forthcoming. That’s good news and bad news, really. The good news is that this minimizes the amount of official *merde de vache* with which one must contend. The bad news is I get cut off from what, if properly managed, could be useful support and helpful information. I suppose I could write a sensational book about how the US gov’t has screwed up this effort permanently. I can’t complain, really, since this issue, because it has been so poorly managed by the government, is how I was able to come to DFI. Hopefully we’ll produce something worth more than similar amounts spent on the evil Commission.

I’m preparing for my long trip. Picked up my Russian visa today. The visa section of the Soviet embassy is remarkably shoddy. In the middle of northwest Washington, the Soviets/Russians have managed to create an island of the broken down Soviet empire. I doubt if the building they’re in, 1825 Phelps St., has seen the business end of a paint brush or vacuum cleaner in thirty years. The only change I detect is the people are not thoroughly surly. This trait seems to have been transferred to our own civil – or uncivil – servants.

Sergei and I had no alternative than to rely on DPMO to provide top cover for us. Neither of us had any political clout or friends in Congress. We learned quickly, however, that no one in DFI International had the slightest inclination to burn any of their political capital in support of this project. We were as much on our own in DC as we would be in the former Soviet Union.

Our work on POW/MIA issues deriving from the Korean War began to attract attention from the South Korean Embassy. In late November 1993, North Korea turned over what they claimed were the remains of 36 missing Americans. Mr. Nam Kim, a diplomat from the South Korean Embassy, invited me to lunch to discuss what the North Koreans were doing. I wondered how he figured out that I was in DC. Mr. Kim invited me to lunch at Woo Lae Oak, an upscale Korean restaurant in Crystal City.

I wondered if Mr. Kim was one of those special diplomats who reported to certain three-letter organizations that in Korea were four-letter organizations. Mr. Kim was particularly interested in whether the United States would actually cave in and pay the “gratitude payments” demanded by the DPRK. Neither of us could believe that the US government would be naïve enough to cave into the North’s demand for money.

We were both wrong.

One day Mr. Kim called to ask me how to procure escorts, aka prostitutes, for some high-ranking government officials visiting Washington. I politely advised him that while I had no idea, there were the personal ads in the *City Paper*. He also related a story about how he had discovered the finest restaurant in Bethesda, Maryland. Mr. Kim noticed a steady stream of well-dressed people who arrived in expensive automobiles at an ornate building in Bethesda. In front of the building was a horseshoe driveway, the entrance braced by large white ionic columns. Mr. Kim noticed that the well-dressed people, who usually spent about two hours in the restaurant, departed in expensive automobiles, some of them driven by chauffeurs. He decided that was the place to go for dinner. One evening he arrived with a visiting minister and his entourage only to discover that he had brought them to the front door of the Pumphrey Funeral Home on Wisconsin Avenue.

* * *

While I was busy taking care of business in Washington, Sergei was fully occupied in Moscow prepping for my arrival. The objective of the first trip on the new DFI project was to establish research teams in four countries while sustaining our research effort in Moscow. One of Sergei’s important tasks was to help us locate suitable, properly trained professionals who were qualified and reliable enough to carry out the envisaged archive research. Another critical task was to obtain authorization from the appropriate agency or official to work in the various archives in each country. It was a daunting task.

* * *

UKRAINE

Sergei and I decided to begin our work in Ukraine.

After Russia, Ukraine was the most important republic of the Soviet Union. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, international attention was riveted on Kiev. With a population of over 50 million bordering Belarus,



Fig. 13.3 Ukraine and Crimea (Map: Gene Thorp, *Washington Post*)

Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Russia, and with its Black Sea coast in Crimea, Ukraine was the keystone that held the USSR together. In contrast, an independent, democratic Ukraine would pose a potential threat to Russia's "near abroad" (Fig. 13.3).

Ukraine conducted a referendum on sovereignty in March 1991 that received overwhelming support, but sovereignty wasn't independence. This ran contrary to the Ukraine Communist Party's record of support and loyalty to Moscow. President George H. W. Bush visited Kiev in August 1991 where he delivered a warning against "suicidal nationalism" and then added, "Democracy does not mean independence." US journalists immediately characterized Bush's speech as "Chicken Kiev."

On December 1, 1991, Ukraine's voters overwhelmingly favored (92.3 percent) The Act of Declaration of Independence of Ukraine. The United States recognized Ukraine's independence on December 25, 1991, after which the American Embassy opened in Kiev on January 23, 1992.

* * *

From his base in Moscow, Sergei had located a group in Kiev that was prepared to assist our project.

I journaled:

November 30, 1993 – DFI, DC

Sergei phoned from Moscow a few minutes ago. He says it's unbelievably cold there – around -10°F .⁸ He says things are looking pretty good for our work there. The former KGB MGen Kalugin is willing to see us again. I'm hoping that he will be able to shed some light on our problems. He was recently arrested and held at Heathrow for several hours. Apparently MI5 felt compelled to shake him down concerning his role in the murder of Georgi Markov a Bulgarian dissident in London in 1978. The murder weapon was an umbrella with a pneumatic tip that when jabbed into the victim injected a pellet of the ricin, a naturally-occurring poison derived from castor beans. Kalugin told me one year ago that the KGB provided the murder weapon because the Bulgarians were too incompetent to handle a "wet operation" on their own.

Sergei provided another update from Moscow a few days later. In the meantime, I had obtained the visas required to travel to the four former republics. No visa was required for Germany.

I journaled:

December 2, 1993 – DFI, DC

I'm all set for my trip beginning next Monday. I spoke with Sergei today. He reported 8°F ⁹ in Moscow. Apparently our new and improved research team there has some decent material for us. Sergei also suggested we may have an opportunity to see Yeltsin. That would send ice cubes shooting through the veins of the Joint Commission, I suspect. On the one hand it would be interesting to meet the main man, but on the other hand such visits produce no substance, which is, after all, what I'm after.

On December 5, 1993, Frank Zappa died. For those of us of a certain generation and attitude, this was a dark day indeed.

On December 6, 1993, I was on my way to Kiev, Ukraine, via Frankfurt, Germany. The DC to Frankfurt was all too familiar. During my time at CSIS, I created and led the US-FRG Exchange of Young Leaders, a program sponsored by the West German Ministry of Defense. Over a ten-year period, I went to Germany two or three times a year. I knew my way around and could speak basic German. For the exchange program, we flew on the German Chancellor's plane, often via Goose Bay, Canada, to Frankfurt am Main.

Before crossing the Atlantic, I reflected on the fact that we had absolutely no guarantee that our project would be successful. There was a non-zero possibility that everything could go wrong. We were dealing with former republics of the Soviet Union and a defunct dictatorship in Germany, after all. These thoughts kept me occupied as I waited at Dulles International to board the flight to Frankfurt.

I journaled:

December 6, 1993 – Dulles Int'l

I'm sort of confused, in a mild way, about this trip. Two years ago this month, I plunged into the unknown in Moscow and came away with a big winner. Not really sure what will come out of all of this – I'm not too comfortable with the way research is being done, for example. I'm not doing it myself; rather, I only know people who do it and I'm not sure if they do a thorough job. My work tends to be respected because I go over the same ground three and four times. The once over and call it a day crowd do not do a good job, by and large. But I have no alternative.

In United's Frankfurt am Main Flughafen business lounge waiting for my connecting flight, I stared at the departure board that listed Lufthansa flight 3250, departing for Kiev at 9:05 AM. It was too late to spend any more time wondering what we were getting ourselves into.

I journaled:

December 7, 1993 – Frankfurt am Main Flughafen

No sense yet of the impending flight to the east. The departure lounge should give a clue. When one flies to the Zone the lounge is a grim place in many ways.

Mr. Vladimir V. Dorofeyev, president of the Youth Search Unions Association of the Ukraine and the Obelisk Association, met me at the Kiev airport. Sergei had arranged for Mr. Dorofeyev to be the director of our research team in Kiev. The Obelisk Association, Vladimir's private, non-governmental organization, conducted research to account for Soviet military personnel who went missing during WWII. As we drove into town, Vladimir, or Volodya as he asked me to call him, told us that around Kiev in the springtime, between the snow melt and the new grass, hundreds of skulls and ribs appear from the ground (Fig. 13.4).

Mr. Yuri Pankov and Sergei arrived together from Moscow. We were ready to hit the ground in Kiev running on Day One.



Fig. 13.4 (L–R) Mr. Vladimir Dorofeyev, Mr. Yuri Pankov, Dr. Paul M. Cole
(Photo: PM Cole)

I journaled:

December 8, 1993 – Kiev, Ukraine

Room 1425, Hotel Rus. Thus far this place strikes me as being much more relaxed than Moscow. Certainly cleaner, though that isn't hard to achieve. The news describes Kiev as out of food, out of fuel, etc. The shops have all sort of goods, though the prices are extremely high for locals who must pay in Ukrainian "coupons." The coupon-dollar ratio is 27,000 to \$1. Dinner for three last night cost 1.2 million coupons. (\$44.45)

We did two TV interviews today plus interviewed two Soviet veterans from the Korean War. Both were interesting. Soviet Air Force veteran Dijerski thinks American were taken to the USSR. Colonel Askold Germon was a MiG-15 pilot. He didn't have much to say about transporting Americans, but he had some interesting observations about Soviet activities in Korea. He is a member of a Korea War veteran's organization, so he will ask his comrades to see us the next time we come to Ukraine, probably March-April.

Sergei Zamascikov is performing brilliantly. None of what has been done in the former Soviet Union for this project could have been accomplished without him. He interpreted all day long in addition to his other substantive contributions. Simply brilliant and indispensable.

Am not able to phone my wife today. The phone system is disastrous and a three-minute call from the hotel is \$30. This is the beginning of a long trip thus we're trying to conserve cash. Should be easier to phone from Latvia – and cheaper to boot.

My room is surprisingly cold.

After two productive days in Kiev, we had achieved our goal, which was to establish a research group that would carry on after we departed.

As we left the hotel early on a bitterly cold morning, light snowflakes began to fall. We headed to our next stop in Riga, Latvia, which lay 520 miles (835) northwest of Kiev, as the crow flies (Fig. 13.5).



Fig. 13.5 Kiev to Riga (Image: Mapquest)

The trip to the Kiev airport was gray, grim, and frozen. The scene at the airport gave the impression that everything was ad hoc, made up as things went along. There were no external lights nor were there any illuminated signs. The only indication that we were at an airport was the fact that our driver, who we had paid to drive us to the airport, had delivered us to a gloomy building in the middle of nowhere.

When we checked in at what appeared to be a makeshift counter, we were issued what appeared to be boarding passes printed on what appeared to be wax paper. Sergei had paid for our tickets in cash, so the waxy boarding passes were our only proof of payment. Each wax paper boarding pass was printed with the image of a red airplane zooming through blue skies with the words “First Class Service” in English on the bottom. There was nothing “first” or “class” about any of this.

We could not anticipate that those two little words, “First Class,” would be used against us by DPMO in due course.

Immigration and passport control consisted of Ukrainian border guards dressed in khaki and green standing in front of a large rectangular box in the shape of a tunnel made of what appeared to be plywood. The box had two beat-up wooden doors on either end. A single bare light bulb hung from the ceiling in the box, suspended by an extension cord that disappeared through a small hole in the ceiling. Between the two doors was a space the size of a large closet with a beat-up wooden counter behind which a border guard sat staring blankly through a large window. The patches where the window was not discolored by cigarette smoke were speckled with hundreds of black spots of fly shit. The beat-up wooden door at the end of the tunnel on the departure side, which appeared to have been taken from the front door of someone’s house, was closed. After the traveler stepped into the large wooden closet, the guard on the lobby side closed the door. One was literally cooped up in a plywood tunnel alone with the guard behind the glass.

After sliding the passport under the glass through a little trough in the beat-up wooden counter, the wait began. After picking up the passport as if it were the most onerous task in the universe, the border guard would take a look at the passport, thumb through the pages, stare at the photograph then at your face, then thumb through the pages to determine whether anything had changed since the last time he thumbed through the pages. He would look at your face to see if it had changed, then close, re-open, then flip the passport to and fro, look up and down, stare at the wall for a while, sigh heavily, maybe make a short phone call or two, then

repeat all of these again and again. Eventually, the border guard smashed a large rubber stamp on one of the passport pages, snapped the document shut, pushed it through the trough then with the flick of the wrist motioned you to go into the departure lounge, then turned his head away to ensure you understood he was a busy person. Like a bad magic act, another guard would open the door at the end of the tunnel that led to the departure area. With that, one had cleared immigration at Kiev International Airport.

Everything appeared to be going along as well as could be expected under the circumstances. That was until Sergei came to me and whispered something about Pankov having a problem. The Ukrainian border guards wouldn't let him through because Pankov didn't have a visa for Latvia. Pankov, who was traveling on a Soviet passport, required a visa, whereas Sergei and I had American passports and thus didn't need a Latvian visa. Sergei went back into the terminal through the little two-way closet, re-emigrating with no formalities. After ten minutes or so, Sergei re-emigrated through the tunnel to tell me that he thought things had been sorted out. In five minutes or so, a very relieved Pankov burst through the closet door on the departure side.

The solution began with Sergei giving Pankov five 20-dollar bills. Sergei then made a deal with one of the guards who agreed to allow Pankov to go through emigration for 40 dollars, the equivalent of 1,080,000 "coupons." After Mr. Pankov stepped into the wooden tunnel, he was followed by a border guard. Once they were alone in the box with the officer behind the glass, Pankov slipped one bill through the trough to the guard behind the glass, then handed the guard who controlled the other door the other Andrew Jackson. Mr. Pankov said the guard stood at attention with his hands against the side of his body. The guard advised that he was not allowed to touch money in *that* way. After thinking about it for a moment, Mr. Pankov followed the guard's eyes, folded one of the bills in half, then slipped the 20 under the guard's shoulder epaulet. That did the trick. The door on the other end of the tunnel opened. Mr. Pankov got through immigration and was good to continue on with us to Riga, Latvia. The Ukrainian border guards had simply shaken down Mr. Pankov. On arrival in Riga, no one asked Mr. Pankov for either a visa or for any money.

The scene in the Kiev International departure area on the other side of the immigration tunnel was vintage Zone, in other words a colossal mess. Almost all of the windows were broken, every square inch of space was covered with grime. Lots of short people wearing shiny black leather jackets

or heavy coats, surrounded by battered luggage, appeared to be living there. The departure area looked like a riot had taken place followed by flood, then another riot followed by another flood. The large windows overlooking the airfield were cracked and filthy, of course. Most of the plastic chairs were broken in half or hung uselessly from heavily corroded metal pedestals. The facilities in the men's room consisted of a jagged, rusted pipe that protruded through incredibly encrusted concrete that in turn was surrounded by puddles of odious water that had collected in a black pool on the floor. A sink that hadn't been cleaned since it was installed during the Bolshevik revolution was missing a tap which made no difference because there was no running water. The Zone smell was rather pronounced. I stood in a puddle of water and pissed into the rusted pipe that simply overflowed into one of the puddles.

In the middle of the departure area, as it would be an exaggeration to call it a lounge, was a bright, clean, and brand new Italian kiosk. The kiosk was the only clean, shiny thing we had seen since coming to Kiev. On offer from the kiosk, manned by a smooth shaven, young Italian man dressed in black slacks and a starched white shirt, were three things: espresso, grappa, and frozen pizza. The frozen pizzas on offer, each in an individual box, were kept in a little freezer with a transparent glass door. The freezer was next to a spotless microwave so sparkling and shiny that looked as if it had never been used before.

Sitting on the other side of the circular kiosk were four mysterious Zone types, who may have been Ukrainian, Czech or Slovak, or Serbian. They were watching the three of us with great interest. Sergei, who was an Italian food fiend, bought Pankov and me an espresso with a side of grappa. As was the case in those days, the Zone types observed the westerners closely then followed our lead. Instead of a thimble of grappa, however, those guys bought an entire bottle. After tearing the seal off then beating the cork into the bottle with the handle of the little spoon provided with the espresso, they passed the bottle around. Each Zonista took an enormous gulp directly from the bottle. How they were able to drink grappa straight from the bottle without the gag reflex kicking in was a testament to the fortitude of Zone Man.

The Zone types pointed at the pizzas and appeared to be discussing them with great intensity. Eventually they bought four frozen pizzas and a second bottle of grappa just as everyone began to move toward the door to board the flight to Riga. They were unaware that the idea was to actually bake the frozen pizzas in the shiny new microwave oven, but there was no time to do so anyway.

The flight hadn't been announced; rather, the process of osmosis had simply reached another phase. Like worker bees, we all received some sort of silent signal distributed by pheromones that it was time to move.

* * *

The flight from Kiev to Riga was one of the two, maybe three, times in my life that I was convinced I was going to die, or in this case be killed in a fiery, horror-filled aircraft accident.

After exiting the departure area into the frigid morning air, the 20 or so passengers were herded onto an open-air hayrack pulled by a beat-up Soviet-era collective farm tractor. By the time we traveled the half a kilometer or so from the so-called terminal to the aircraft, all of the passengers were covered by about an inch or more of fresh snow. New snow also covered the wings of the Antonov-24, a Soviet-made turboprop we were about to board, which concerned me a great deal. As we approached, we saw a man in oil-smeared coveralls fueling the aircraft with a hose connected to a large tank on wheels, which was Kiev International's mobile fueling unit. He coaxed the fuel out of the tank by periodically pumping a lever with his left hand that presumably built air pressure in the storage tank (Fig. 13.6).

The man fueling the aircraft was also smoking. I asked Sergei, whose mustache was covered with snow, "I can't remember," I said, gesturing



Fig. 13.6 An Antonov-24 (Photo: Public Domain)

toward the man with the cigarette and several hundred liters of high-octane aviation fuel, "When this thing blows up, do we get killed by the shockwave first or the heat?" Sergei shrugged his shoulders, then held up the palms of his hands as he made the long wince of futility which said, "What can you do?"

As we boarded, taking our luggage and briefcases with us, the first thing I noticed was a door, behind which was a large wooden picnic table in an aft compartment. The Czechs or whoever the Zone men were, the same ones who had purchased a second bottle of grappa to go with the four frozen pizzas, immediately occupied the aft cabin. They piled their luggage around the picnic table, making a little fort. Sergei took a window seat up front in the second row on the starboard side. There were no overhead bins, so we stacked our luggage and briefcases in the aisle. As I sat down next to him, both of the seats moved. None of the seats in the passenger compartment was anchored to the floor. As the passengers clamored in, all of the seats screeched and scraped against the metal floor (carpet was out of the question) as everyone settled in.

After everyone was on board, the guy who had fueled the plane, who was still smoking, shut the door. Looking out the tiny starboard window, all we could see was snow, snow, and more snow. The massive passenger terminal, not more than a quarter mile (400m) away, was completely obscured. The starboard wing was covered with four to five inches of fresh, fluffy Ukrainian snow. There was no de-icing vehicle or any effort to remove the snow. I had been in Washington, DC, in January 1982 when Air Florida crashed into the Potomac River shortly after takeoff during a heavy snowstorm. From a friend's apartment in Rosslyn, we had watched the recovery effort. I couldn't help but wonder if someone would witness our crash if the snow continued to stick to the wings.

Sergei spoke to the man sitting behind us who advised that he had been waiting for several hours for this flight. The first two aircraft had been determined to be unairworthy. He told us that we were lucky. We didn't have to wait. "Don't worry," he reassured us. "*This* plane is going to work."

Sergei tied his scarf around his head like they used to wrap elastic bandages around the Invisible Man, then muttered something about waking him after we got to Riga. He leaned against the window and became inert. No so for Mr. Pankov, who was terrified of flying. Yuri had managed to chug the better part of a half-liter of vodka he bought in the so-called departure area using one of the 20-dollar bills he received from Sergei. Instead of sitting down, Mr. Pankov piled his bags on the seat across the

aisle from me then went straight into the cockpit. Mr. Pankov emerged from the cockpit where he had been talking to the pilot and the air hostess. He made a beeline to me. His eyes were bugged out.

Mr. Pankov looked around and said quietly, "Pavel, Pavel. Pee-loat, pee-loat." ("Paul, Paul. Pilot, pilot.") Mr. Pankov then flicked his Adam's Apple with his middle finger, using the gesture recognized by Russians everywhere that indicated someone was either drunk or was about to be so. Instead of using a fist and a straight thumb to resemble a bottle, Russians flick their Adam's Apple. The gesture has been traced back to the time of Peter the Great, who awarded deserving subjects by giving them a medalion worn around the throat. In order to drink free in any pub or roadhouse, all one needed to do was to tap the medallion, hence the tapping of the Adam's Apple.

I thought to myself, "This is just great. We're in the third airplane of the day, near whiteout conditions, the wings are covered with snow, the seats aren't bolted to the floor, Sergei's asleep, Pankov is soused, four Zone guys are eating frozen pizzas and drinking grappa around a picnic table in the aft compartment, and now I find out the pilot is blotto. What could possibly go wrong?"

After the engines started, the pilot began to rev the motors while holding the brake. This being a military aircraft, racket was unbearable. Up and down the motors screamed, up and down, up and down. The vibrations were so intense that my teeth were chattering against one another as if I were suffering from hypothermia. At what appeared to be full throttle, the pilot released the brake so suddenly that the aircraft and everyone in lurched around like we were in a bumper car getting slammed from behind at an Arctic amusement park. This was repeated several times. There was no sign that the runway had been plowed, so the pilot began trailblazing through about six to ten inches of fresh snow. After going through another up, down, up, down throttle exercise, the pilot abruptly put the pedal to the metal. The two turboprop engines roared, the aircraft shook like it was going to break apart, suddenly the brake was off, the passengers jostled like rag dolls, and we began to hurtle down the great white way. Some of the seats moved around the cabin like players in one of those old vibrating football games. I grabbed the armrest that separated my seat from Sergei's seat to keep from scooting away too far. For the longest time there was no lift. The aircraft was acting like a horizontal acceleration sled. I began to count, "one-one thousand, two-one thousand, three-one thousand..." If I counted to fifteen-one thousand and the aircraft was still on the ground, we were in deep trouble. After what seemed like way

too long, the wings began to bend as they picked up the weight of the aircraft. As my increasingly desperate countdown reached one-thousand-too-many, the aircraft's nose began to rotate. We were headed up, or so it seemed.

The aircraft shuddered as if it were going to break apart. As the engines bellowed, through the window over Sergei's head, chunks of snow broke off the starboard wing. There was a mighty thump as the wheels left the runway, then a powerful clunk as the gear retracted into the wheel wells. We were in the air, but due to the whiteout it was impossible to tell how high. We could have been at ten feet or two hundred or a thousand. The starboard wing was slicing through a solid white space. We were headed somewhere, real fast. In one of those absurd moments when one is contemplating death, one postulates on how long it would take to die if we simply slammed into something solid such as the terminal or a power line, or if the wings lost their lift and we went nose first into downtown Kiev. Mr. Dorofeyev would look for our remains.

After 15 minutes of white knuckle time on one breath of air, we broke through the clouds. We weren't dead, or weren't dead yet at least. The jolt of intense sunshine was magnificent. It was the first time we had seen the sun since we arrived in Kiev. Mr. Pankov was taking a long pull on what was left of the half-liter of vodka. The man seated next to him who was reading a magazine was resting his head against the window. Sergei was asleep. This was just another day in the Zone.

Approximately halfway through the flight, I needed to take a piss of the most urgent variety. After the little plastic meal tray had been collected by the air hostess with the huge beehive hairdo and heavy blue eyeshade who wore a huge down anorak throughout the flight, I clambered over the pile of luggage in the aisle and made my way to the aft head. The door had no lock. The toilet consisted of nothing more than a hole covered by a beat-up wooden lid that was opened by an enormous wooden lever. Bear in mind that the Antonov-24, which was not pressurized, cruised at less than 300 miles per hour under 5000 feet. A heavy wooden lever, sort of a big ax handle, raised the lid. Immediately the little chamber was turned into a monstrous blast freezer. The wind was spinning like the cyclone that sent Dorothy to Munchkin Land. As I began to pee, the urine was immediately transformed into tiny little smaller than BB sized balls of yellow ice that turned into a cloud of mist that swirled around like a fog of sterile haze. Eventually, the cloud was somehow dispersed, faded into the hole, then disappeared into the white clouds below. I used the huge wooden lever to close the hole. As that ordeal ended, another began.

After I exited the toilet, the four Zone types at the picnic table surrounded by a wall of luggage pointed at me and cheered as if they were welcoming a hometown soccer hero. They were eating the frozen pizzas, still frozen. They waved a bottle of grappa and shouted as they gestured for me to join them at the picnic table. I had no idea how long it would take to fly to Riga and had concluded that since we were all going to die anyway, this seemed as good a place to join the choir immortal as any.

Marilyn Monroe once said that the answer to every dubious invitation was, “Oh, what the hell.”

I took a seat on the picnic table to the adulation of the four leather-clad Zonistas who smiled, revealing masses of gold and stainless steel Soviet dentistry, slammed me on the back, and shouted something above the deafening roar of the turboprops. It was colder in the aft of the aircraft than it had been on the hayrack.

The largest of the Zonistas, a real-life Tony Soprano look-alike sporting a huge gold incisor that would have blended into a gangsta rapper’s front teeth, thrust a bottle of Italian grappa into my hand. He clicked his Adam’s Apple. Another one handed me a fragment of frozen pizza. Simultaneous thoughts of salmonella and cirrhosis of the liver invaded what was left of my defense mechanisms. Even if I could speak any of the Zone languages, it was all in vain. The noise of the engines was so loud that even the Zonistas were shouting at one another. I drank some of the grappa and took a bite of the frozen pizza, then yelled, “GOOD!! GOOD!!” The Zonistas smiled, nodded, slapped me on the back, and yelled “GOOD!! GOOD!!” This went on until the aircraft began to descend for the landing in Riga which was used as an excuse to return to my seat which had shifted during flight.

I journaled:

December 9, 1993 – Riga, Latvia

The flight from Kiev to Riga was somewhat surreal. Hard to explain how weird the Kiev airport was. The system, if one can call it that, would have been opaque to me if I had to go through it myself. I have tried to formulate adequate words. The best description I can offer for the way one gets from taxi to aircraft is due to osmosis or Brownian movement.

Our flight, on a Soviet-built Antonov-24 turbo prop, took a bit more than 2.5 hours. People just sort of piled on, piling luggage hither and thither. A group of guys sat in the aft compartment that consisted of three sofa benches and a small wooden table. They chain smoked, drank and laughed hysterically the entire time. The in-flight meal consisted of a cold, somewhat oily, grey mystery meat. A cup of instant coffee in tepid water and

a black plastic bowl of Russian sparkling wine that had a thin sheen of something floating on top was complemented by a little collection of cookies and chocolate.

The airplane took off about 30 minutes late. This was the third plane they tried to get off for this flight. When the pilot, who was arguing with someone at the airport, finally got on board, Pankov noticed the guy had been drinking. I'm not so sure, but Yuri made the Russian sign for drinking – flicking one's throat with the index finger. Apparently this gesture derives from the days of Peter the Great who handed out medallions that fit around the recipient's throat. One needed only to point at it in order to drink for free in roadhouses. In addition to everything else, the cabin was freezing. I sat bundled up in my trench coat with a scarf tied around my throat.

When we landed in Riga there was no snow on the ground. The weather was warmer, and the terminal was bright, well-lit, and clean. There was no Zone smell. After we deplaned onto the tarmac, I restrained myself from falling to my knees Pope-like to kiss the tarmac.

* * *

The follow-up trip to Ukraine in April 1994 was going to be different for an unforeseen reason. Through a series of inquiries made to DoD, retired USAF Colonel Harold E. Fischer Jr. contacted me at DFI. Hal, as he asked us to call him, was one of the best-known F-86 jet aces from the Korean War. I had read about Colonel Fischer and how he had become a jet ace in his F-86, the *Paper Tiger*. Not only did Hal crash in China after shooting down his 11th MiG-15, he was one of the 15 US POWs who had been held as hostages by the Chinese until 1955. While being held as a POW in China, Colonel Fischer managed to escape twice, once with the intent to steal a MiG-15 and fly it south to freedom.

Hal told me he wanted to join up with our team in Ukraine in order to meet some of the Soviet MiG-15 pilots he had fought against. We figured Hal's presence would lend additional credibility to our project and maybe even encourage the former Soviet veterans to reveal a more complete picture of what happened during the Korean War air war, particularly with respect to the USAF pilots who did not return. Hal, who said that he would fly with his girlfriend Ginger at his own expense from his home in Las Vegas to Kiev, asked me to arrange transport from the airport and to book them into the same hotel where we were staying.

DFI's president Dr. Blechman, who never expressed more than pecuniary interest in the project, advised me to accelerate the rate at which project funds were being expended. I therefore made arrangements to take my DFI colleague and friend Mr. John Henshaw along on the second tour of our research teams. In addition to burning up some project money, John was a smart guy with a master's from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Georgetown grads like me referred to the school of law and diplomacy as the school of flaw and duplicity. John, who could dish it as well as he took it, was a tolerant type who could endure a road trip in the Zone, which was not an asset to undervalue. John was not just along for the ride. Sergei and I could count on John to fill in and assist with every aspect of project management with the sole exception of interpreting.

* * *

As usual, Sergei preceded us. John and I headed to Kiev in April 1994.

After a brief overnight in Paris to make a connection to an early morning flight, John and I arrived in Kiev, Ukraine, on Saturday, April 9, 1994. We were met at the airport by our team led by Mr. Vladimir "Volodya" Dorofeyev.

When we arrived at the Kiev airport, I was pleasantly surprised to bump into a Swedish diplomat who I hadn't seen since years ago during his days as a junior diplomat assigned to the Swedish Embassy in Washington. He was waiting for someone from the Swedish Foreign Office to arrive, so we had time to chat. He was serving at the Swedish Embassy in Kiev, which happened to be located on the top floor of the same hotel where we were staying. He suggested we spend a half hour with his ambassador, since the Swedes were also looking for some of their citizens who had been swallowed up in the gulag. The Holy Grail for the Swedes, of course, was to find any evidence that would have shed any light on the fate of Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg. We agreed to meet later in the afternoon.

While we waited at the airport for Colonel Fischer and his friend, Mr. Dorofeyev arranged for me to be interviewed by Ukrainian television interview, which attracted a lot of attention (Fig. 13.7).

Following the interview, we had to hang out at the airport until Colonel Harold Fischer and his girlfriend arrived. The Soviet veterans of the Korean War contingent waited patiently as well (Fig. 13.8).



Fig. 13.7 Dr. Paul M. Cole (C) interviewed by Ukrainian state television (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.8 Soviet Korean War veterans. Vladimir Dorofeyev (second from the left). Colonel Askold Germon, leader of the Soviet veterans group (second from the right) (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.9 Colonel Harold “Hal” Fischer, second from the left in jeans (Photo: PM Cole)

After a couple of hours in the terminal where there was nothing to eat, drink, or do and nowhere to sit except on broken plastic chairs, Colonel Fischer finally arrived. He was welcomed by the Soviet Air Force Korean War veterans, their wives, as well as our interpreters (Fig. 13.9).

Mr. Dorofeyev had arranged transportation to the hotel where he offered everyone a drink and *zakuski*, then adjourned in order to give everyone the opportunity to deal with jet lag and prepare for a full day of meetings.

Our first evening in Kiev was far more eventful than anticipated.
I journaled:

April 11, 1994 – Kiev, Ukraine
Hotel National room 604

The Air France flight to Kiev took ca. 3 hours. Our arrival in Kiev was something. A group of six Soviet veterans of the Korean War met me, along with a Kiev television crew. I was interviewed outside the terminal. The American jet ace Harold Fischer arrived about one hour later. Fischer was shot down by members of the unit represented by some of the vets. One of the Ukrainians had been shot up by Fischer moments before he went down

over China. Unfortunately, Fischer's companion Ginger Lynch turned out to be a lunatic. She drank too much, attacked Harold in their suite with a bedside lamp, then moved into another room at 23.30. Needless to say, this caused quite the commotion in the hotel. The KGB guards didn't know what to make of it all. I went to Fischer's room at 23.30 and here was a very chagrined WWII and Korean War hero with a big cut on the left side of his upper lip. "She beat me up," he said. Unbelievable.

Today we had a press conference that was reasonably well attended. Afterwards we hosted everyone at lunch at the Hotel Rus. Oh, yeah, forgot to mention that I spent 90 minutes with the Swedish ambassador at 16.00 yesterday.

* * *

Our colleague and local organizer Mr. Vladimir Dorofeyev told me that in order to line up sufficient political support for our project, we had to go see a powerful foreign advisor to the Ukrainian parliament. Volodya was not sure that he had sufficient connections to get us in the door to see this influential advisor.

"Who might that powerful foreign advisor be?"

Volodya answered, "An American named Ian Brzezinski."

Over the years I kept bumping into Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski's son, Ian. I knew Dr. Brzezinski from my CSIS days. The first time we met was when Ian was an intern at CSIS. Then Ian attended the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard in the same class as a friend's wife. I knew Ian's father better than Ian, but we kept bumping into each other. Volodya took us to Ian's office.

Within the hour, Ian was sitting in the bar of our hotel, having a beer, and telling us how he became an advisor on national security matters to the National Security Council of the Ukrainian government. Ian had managed to become sort of a Milo Minderbinder in Kiev.

We had no problem obtaining the support of the "powerful foreign advisor" for our project.

* * *

Our first full day in Kiev was surprisingly productive. Mr. Dorofeyev had arranged a conference so that we could meet and talk with a group of Soviet veterans of the Korean War. Most of the dozen or so veterans had been pilots. The leader of the Soviet veterans group was Colonel Askold Germon (Fig. 13.10).



Fig. 13.10 (L–R) Sergei Zamascikov, Colonel Askold Germon, Dr. Paul M. Cole (Photo PM Cole)

A group of about one dozen Soviet Korean War veterans had come to Kiev to see us. Most of them had traveled a fair distance to meet us, so Sergei and I arranged lunch for everyone at our hotel. The cost for everyone, food, drinks, and service charge for two dozen people, was less than our two authorized per diems (Fig. 13.11).

In light of the fact that the typical monthly pension paid to these veterans could buy little more than a small block of cheese, it seemed fair to compensate them for their time by providing a decent lunch.

* * *

The next day, Volodya organized an all-day conference with the Soviet Korean War veterans group. As shown in the following photograph, Mr. Dorofeyev booked a conference room in the hotel that was surprisingly modern and well-equipped (Fig. 13.12).



Fig. 13.11 Luncheon for the Soviet Korean War veterans group (Photos: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.12 Conference with Soviet Korean War veterans group, Kiev, Ukraine (Photo: PM Cole)

One of the Soviet veterans, a genial looking man who bore a striking resemblance to Walter Matthau, had been shot down by Hal Fischer as he attempted to land at the Mukden air base in China. As shown in the following photograph, the Soviet pilot Fischer shot down is seated in the front right to Fischer's left, wearing the brown coat (Fig. 13.13).

In addition to dogfighting, a tactic used by F-86 pilots to attack MiG-15s was high risk but effective. The F-86 pilots would loiter between 30,000 and 40,000 feet on the North Korean side of the Yalu River. As the Soviet MiG-15s came into land at the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps Andung air base, they were usually close to being out of fuel. The F-86 pilot would



Fig. 13.13 Harold Fischer (center front) with Soviet MiG-15 pilots (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.14 F-86 Sabre (Photos: Public Domain)

turn on the cockpit heater on high and windshield defroster on full blast to keep condensation from forming inside the canopy then push the stick forward, putting the aircraft into a screaming dive (Fig. 13.14).

The idea was to come up from behind the MiG-15 as it was landing because then the landing aircraft would have very little maneuverability. One delicate detail during the Korean War was that the USAF was forbidden to fly into China. As one fighter pilot after the other said, “That’s where the MiG’s are,” so many F-86 pilots attacked the MiG-15’s as they flew into Andung



Fig. 13.15 Harold Fischer and the Soviet MiG-15 pilot he shot down (Photos: PM Cole)

airfield for a landing. After he spotted one, Hal cranked the heater and defroster on full blast, then put his F-86 into a steep dive. He blasted the MiG-15 from behind as it was landing.

As shown in the following photographs, the Soviet MiG-15 pilot Fischer shot down described how Hal attacked him on final approach then pointed out where his MiG-15 had been hit by 0.50 calibre machine gun fire from Hal's F-86. I made a video of Hal and the Soviet pilot re-enacting the incident, flying with their hands as pilots are known to do. The following images are extracted from that VHS recording (Fig. 13.15).

After hitting the MiG-15 Fischer pulled up then watched helplessly as his Sabre jet ingested a large piece of debris that had separated from the MiG-15. The debris went straight down the F-86 engine's intake nacelle. Hal said that the Sabre jet tended to explode within seconds under those conditions, so his only option was to eject. He landed under his parachute north of the Yalu River near the Andung airfield where he was captured by the Chinese.

Harold Fischer and 14 other hostages were not released by the Chinese until 1955.

The Soviet veterans who attended the conference included a man whose job had been to lead a search team whose task was to locate US aircrews after they were shot down. He brought maps so he could show us his area of operation and described in detail how the search effort was organized (Fig. 13.16).

One Soviet pilot told us that a problem with the MiG-15 was that sometimes the canopy didn't release until after the pilot tried to eject, which usually killed the pilot. We learned that one important difference between the MiG-15 and the Sabre jet was that the seat in the American jet had several inches of armor. The MiG-15 had no armor in the pilot's



Fig. 13.16 Soviet Korean War veteran with map (Photo: PM Cole)

seat, which exposed the Soviet pilots to extreme danger. We arranged several small group discussions during the conference to allow the participants to explore issues of interest to them in more detail (Fig. 13.17).

In the previous photograph, Colonel Harold Fischer's face appears to the right above the dark-haired interpreter's head.

The conference, which was an excellent way start to things, brought Monday to a productive conclusion.

As we walked out of the hotel to go to dinner, Mr. Dorofeyev tugged at my sleeve, gestured with his head that he wanted me to stay behind for



Fig. 13.17 Small group discussion during the Kiev conference (Photo: PM Cole)

a moment. Mr. Dorofeyev and I could communicate on basic issues using a mishmash of my primitive German, his excellent German, and a good deal of hand waving. When we needed to discuss serious issues, we relied on Sergei to interpret. After Mr. Dorofeyev called to him in Russian, Sergei came over to interpret for me. Volodya said to me:

I need to tell you that a member of the old KGB stopped me on the street. He said “his organization” knows everything about my cooperation with you and your group. He asked me, “Do you think we are naïve enough to allow you to find who you are looking for? If you get too close, it would be a simple thing to push you in front of a bus.” I told him to go ahead, try it. See what happens. I told him I’m not afraid of you and your ‘organization.’

In Washington I was subjected to gag orders and accused of espionage by the US military. In Kiev, Mr. Dorofeyev received death threats from the moribund KGB.

* * *

We had a down day on Tuesday, April 12. In my experience, jet lag always hits the hardest on the third day.

I had always wanted to see Poltava, the battlefield where Peter the Great annihilated the Swedish army under Charles XII in 1709. According

to the map, as the crow flew, Poltava was only about 300 kilometers (190 miles) from Kiev. Averaging a modest 100 kilometers per hour (62 mph), it would be at most three hours each way. I asked Volodya to organize a car so I could visit the battlefield on my day off. It would be me and a driver, maybe John if he was interested. We would leave early in the morning and be back in time to meet with some of our research team in the evening.

It didn't turn out that way. Mr. Dorofeyev organized a lot more than a simple touristic day trip to a historical curiosity.

Tuesday's trip to Poltava was intensely surreal, even by Zone standards. My casual interest to pay a visit to Poltava for personal reasons had been expressed to Volodya by my bad German and futile arm waving as a formal project requirement.

Early in the morning, I realized I was going to get more than asked for when Mr. Dorofeyev drove me to a parking lot where five buses were parked in a row. I communicated with Volodya in a mishmash of German, English, and arm waving that would have put Marcel Marceau to shame. Volodya showed me the buses, which confused me. "Why do we need a bus for three people?" I tried to formulate the question in German, which came out as, "Warum dieses Autobus Sie aus benützen wollen?" ("Why this bus you use want to?") I gave up after Mr. Dorofeyev nodded yes regardless of the variation of the same question I posed to him.

The first bus was OK, in reasonable shape. Mr. Dorofeyev said, "Dieses Bus, hundert Mark." (This bus costs 100 German Marks, \$59.) "Ja ja, aber natürlich." (Yes. Naturally.)

We moved onto the second next bus in the parking lot, which resembled an advert for an auto crushing facility. This *autobus* was more dilapidated, festooned with even more dents, crushed fenders, and rusted wheel wells. Mr. Dorofeyev said proudly, "Dieses Bus, fünfzig Mark." (This bus costs 50 German Marks, \$29.50) I thought about saying "Aber natürlich" again but remained silent. There was nothing *natürlich* about this bus, *aber* or no *aber*.

I spotted the third bus before Mr. Dorofeyev introduced me to it. This contraption, which teetered on tires smoother than the head of Charles the Bald of France, was not only older than Charles and covered with dust, the windows were cracked *natürlich*, plus there were strange curtains that may have been frilly or simply shredded from age and sun damage that had little balls or pom-poms dangling down, hanging at odd angles in each of the passenger windows. The immediate impression was that this bus had

last seen useful service during the reign of Charles the Bald during his Italy campaign in ACE 875.

Mr. Dorofeyev pointed to the dilapidated bus, posed like Lenin indicating the direction to the Finland Station, then said proudly, “Unser Bus, twanzig Mark.” (Our bus costs 20 German Marks, \$15) I held my breath for a very long time, wondering if Mr. Dorofeyev had actually purchased the bus for 20 Marks. “Ja, ja. Natürlich.”

Mr. Dorofeyev was always eager to show me that he was not wasting project money, but this was stretching it a bit. The two of us plus the driver returned to the hotel in the Zone bus. When we pulled up to the front of the hotel, everyone was there, including the entire Soviet Korean War veterans group, Hal and the loony ace-batterer Ginger, Sergei, John, and two young women who turned out to be the day’s interpreters. Some of the Soviet veterans wore long overcoats and fedoras, which made them look like they worked for Al Capone. Come to think of it, in geo-political terms they sort of did at one point. Others, including their leader Colonel Germon, wore their Soviet military uniforms, service hats, and an odd medal or two.

We were all going to Poltava.

Everyone climbed on board (Fig. 13.18).



Fig. 13.18 Colonel Germon, wearing a Soviet Air Force hat, on the bus to Poltava (Photo: PM Cole)

One of the young interpreters sat next to me. Mr. Dorofeyev took his position in the front, sort of a bus commander, and the driver cranked the tired but reliable diesel engine. Eventually, after a huge cloud of dark exhaust enveloped everything as if we were going into stealth mode, the ancient diesel came to life. The bus shuddered as the driver shifted into first on the third try, and we were off, at literally a snail's pace.

I had anticipated a round-trip of about six hours. When we got to the highway, I quickly realized we were in for quite a journey. If the driver tried to exceed 50 kilometers an hour (42 mph), the whole expedition would have ended with a fiery horror crash that one would expect from a minivan carrying Nigerians home from a Sunday church service in Abuja. The top speed of 42 mph (50 kph) was out of the question, however, due to the combination of the decrepit bus as well as the shocking condition of the road. The road, which was a highway in name only, consisted of a series of craters and potholes held together by shreds of old tarmac and 50-year-old concrete that had been poured by a chain gang of kulak political prisoners. There was no point in trying to avoid the any of the depressions, so the bus driver took us at about 25 miles per hour (40 kph) in a more or less straight line. The shock absorbers had long since gone to shock absorber heaven. The padding on the seats had worn out when Khrushchev was agricultural kommissar, so each bump was like being whacked in the ass with a brittle metal fraternity paddle, then banged up and down and side to side inside James Bond's martini shaker.

About an hour into the mission, the bus driver began to use a Zone form of cruise control. He placed a large red brick on the accelerator pedal. After three or four hours, a relief driver appeared from out of nowhere from the back of the bus. When we embarked, we thought he was one of the Soviet veterans. The first driver got out of his seat and did a little pirouette using the steering wheel as the *barre*, then the relief driver slid under him. The relief driver had brought with him a gallon jar of pickled cherry tomatoes that he held in his right hand while he steered with his left. He sipped the brine and ate the small tomatoes as we careened down the highway. There was no toilet on the bus. I had no idea we were going to make such a trip, so I didn't bring any water. The only air conditioning was to force open the sliding windows that hadn't been opened since the Truman administration, which permitted little air but an astounding amount of dust to swirl in.

It was springtime in Ukraine. Having lived in farm country most of my life, both in the United States and abroad, I noticed that mile after mile,

hour after hour, there was nothing but fallow fields. Nothing growing. No farm animals except for the odd chicken. There were tiny houses in front of which Norman Rockwell's characters from a parallel universe stood stock-still as we crept by. Ukraine's rich farmland was idle. Olga, the interpreter sitting next to me, said the absence of crops was due to corruption in the government. According to her version of events, some evil German company had sold Ukraine bad seeds.

After about five hours I felt like I was suffering from shaken baby syndrome. Feeling compelled to make small talk, I asked Olga, "What sort of regional cuisine do you have in Ukraine?"

She responded incredulously, "Regional cuisine? There's no regional cuisine. There's just food. If you can get it you eat it." Oh.

By the time we made it to Poltava, about seven hours later, there was a thick layer of fine dust over everything in the bus. We all looked like survivors of a collapsed building or Pliny the Elder after the eruption of Vesuvius.

I expected to go straight to the battlefield, have a look around, then go back to Kiev. Instead, we suddenly veered left off and entered a former Soviet Air Force base. Poltava had been the home of the Tupolev Tu-22 M, known in NATO circles as the Backfire bomber. The Backfire, with its characteristic variable-geometry wings, resembled the USAF B-1 "Lancer" bomber, though in good Soviet fashion the Backfire had that soapbox derby with huge jet engines look to it. The Backfire was a nuclear delivery system designed to hit the United States.

During the Cold War, there was no way that five Americans would have been allowed anywhere near the Poltava Backfire base, but there we were.

At first, it appeared we were getting a way-overdue break for a piss. We might even find some water somewhere. We shuffled off the bus, milled around, straightened our backs, and brushed off the dust like cowboys entering a saloon in a bad spaghetti western.

From behind the bus a short dark-haired man in a military uniform appeared, accompanied by three officers. Mr. Dorofeyev steered the dark-haired man, who was clearly in charge, toward me. I was introduced to the base commander. He welcomed us, then asked to meet Colonel Harold Fischer. I asked Hal to come over to meet the commander (Fig. 13.19).

Hal also introduced Ginger, who was wearing what looked like the turban Madeleine Kahn's character wore in *Young Frankenstein*. I'd only been around her for two days, but it was impossible to overlook how Ginger changed personalities. One minute she was a Vegas real estate



Fig. 13.19 Vladimir Dorofeyev (second from the left), commander of the Poltava air base (military uniform center left), Harold Fischer (jean jacket center right), Colonel Askold Germon (far right) (Photo: PM Cole)

agent and the next ex-exotic dancer, and then she became a southern belle, a Blanche du Bois, who spoke in an exaggerated fake southern accent, calling everyone “suh.” Ginger extended the back of her hand to the base commander, fingers bent down, expecting him to kiss it, which he did.

After a few minutes of pleasantries, the base commander advised Hal and me that he had organized a “little lunch” for us. It was not clear what this was all about, but we were hardly in a position to refuse. We moseyed around the front of our ancient bus, everyone doing their best Alphonse and Gaston trying to let the other person go first, then entered a large hall. There must have been 20 officers, with their wives, standing beside long tables that had been laid out for a proper banquet. Each table had several platters of *zakuski*, plus carafes of water, vodka, and bottles of white wine in ice buckets. The walls were festooned with large paintings of airplanes, maps, and awards too numerous to describe. The waitresses, if you could call them that, were fat, very happy, rosy-cheeked *babushkas* whose hair was tied up in a cap made of white strings that reminded me of caul fat.

I journaled:

April 13, 1994 – Kiev, Ukraine

Yesterday was a long, long day interspersed with a few interesting moments. At 08.30 we all boarded a rather dilapidated bus for what I thought would be a three hour or so ride to Poltava. Turned out the road was in such bad shape that the bus had to weave around, stop and generally avoid enormous potholes – they were constantly there, thus the trip to Poltava took over six hours, which did not bode well for the return trip.

We were received by the mayor of Poltava at some sort of press conference. The entourage we brought, including five USSR Korean War vets, Harold Fischer and his increasingly loony friend Ginger, John, Sergei, me and our two interpreters, outnumbered our hosts. We visited the most decrepit toilet before taking the bus to the “Frantych” air force base from WWII. It was a Backfire bomber base during the Soviet era. For reasons having to do with domestic Ukrainian politics, the commander put on an amazing luncheon for us. The putative reason for the luncheon was the arrival of Harold Fischer, Korean War ace. Harold showed up in a jeans jacket and a fat lip, looking rather out of place, I might add, surrounded by about 15 Ukrainian Air Force officers decked out in their medals and decorations. The luncheon went well, I suppose, but Fischer’s friend again made sort of a scene, at one time grabbing the commander of the airbase and planting a big kiss on his lips.

We were then put back on the bus for a whirlwind tour of the Poltava battlefield. That was pretty interesting for me, having read so much about Charles XII. The museum was not as rundown as everything else here. The return trip was a nightmare. We left Poltava at about 18.30 and arrived back at the hotel around 01.15! Imagine the bad road, etc., in pitch darkness.

All of the veterans had bottles of vodka with them, so there was lots and lots of toasting and Soviet-style comradery at 40 Kph.

I still have no idea why they did it or how Mr. Dorofeyev managed to organize such a huge, formal reception at the Poltava air base (Fig. 13.20).

Early into the luncheon, Colonel Fischer gave a toast, during which he raised a glass to a Soviet fighter pilot who had been credited with shooting him down. I asked Hal afterward what that was all about. He said that wherever he went, he gave someone credit for shooting him down, even though no one actually did. Hal learned when he visited China that a Chinese pilot had been given credit for shooting him down as well. He told me, “Let them believe what they want to believe” (Fig. 13.21).

The scene at the end of the lavish luncheon was more than a bit awkward. Ginger, who had way too much to drink in far too short a time, was deep into her Blanche du Bois alter identity (Fig. 13.22).



Fig. 13.20 The commander of the Poltava air base (Photo: PM Cole)

Ginger swiveled up to me and said in her faux southern belle accent that she had “im-poe-tent en-fo-may-shun” that she couldn’t tell me about. I turned away, and she was suddenly hanging on a very chagrined base commander’s arm, doing this slinky pose that suggested if he let go she would collapse in a heap.

Before returning to the bus, we gathered for a group photograph (Fig. 13.23).

When it was Ginger’s turn to get on the bus, she planted a huge kiss on the base commander’s mouth, holding his head with two hands as she did it, sort of an exaggerated Mafioso kiss of death. Then she made her exit,



Fig. 13.21 Poltava air base luncheon. Colonel Fischer at the far end on the right (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.22 (L-R) Ginger, Ukrainian hostess, Hal Fischer, interpreter (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.23 L-R: John Henshaw in white trousers, Vladimir Dorofeyev partially obscured over Henshaw's left shoulder, base commander to Fischer's right, Colonel Germon to Fischer's left, Dr. Cole above Germon's left shoulder (Photo: PM Cole)

bus right, leaving a very startled base commander behind. All very dramatic and confusing, of course.

A year or so later, as a part of its effort to charm the Russian side of the USSRJC, DPMO took the Russian side to Las Vegas. According to participants, everyone got intensively blotto followed by Ginger doing her Vegas exotic dance routine, this time with no clothes. I'm sure the Russians were finally convinced to be like Americans and cough up the secrets of the Cold War. I wonder what the expense reports for that shindig looked like.

When the Poltava ordeal was all over, the same question was being asked on the bus as well as in the base commander's office. What the hell was all that about?

During the two or so hours we're at the air base, there was not a sound of flight operations. Hal sent me a videotape of the banquet that Ginger had made. The entire event appears to be strange, staged, and pointless.

Perhaps that was the point.

* * *

After the unexpected Valhalla-style lunch, we drove not to the battlefield but to the Poltava museum. Much to my on-going amazement, when we arrived we were greeted by the mayor of Poltava, the museum director, and a Ukrainian state television crew. At the time we had no idea where the Ukrainians got this idea, but we found out later that Mr. Dorofeyev had introduced me as America's leading expert on the battle of Poltava. As we toured the museum, I was filmed by the television crew as I was asked at every exhibit and diorama to comment on the historical accuracy and pedagogical value of each display. What really struck me was the huge pile of flags and banners in the main hall that looked as if they had been assembled yesterday. Nearly every captured Swedish banner was from a Finnish unit. (Finland was part of Sweden from time immemorial until 1805, then a Grand Duchy of Imperial Russia until gaining independence on December 6, 1917.) In addition to the usual arrangement of mercenaries, Finland provided a large percentage of the fighting troops in service of the Swedish king.

The Poltava museum exhibits were surprisingly well done. The interpretation of the battle had none of the revisionist Marxist-Stalinist fakery that passed for history in the Soviet Union. Through a series of serendipitous events that happen in war, on June 27, 1709, Peter the Great's forces thoroughly trounced the Swedes, forcing Charles XII to run for his life. In reality, Charles XII didn't run anywhere. Due to a wound to his heel, he couldn't ride or walk; thus he had to be carried on a wooden stretcher.

Had it not for the willingness of the Ottoman Sultan Ahmet III to take him in and protect him from the Russians, Charles XII and his fellow escapees would have been exterminated or enslaved by the Russians or shipped off to Siberia with the rest of the Swedish survivors, never to be heard from again. That was about it. Even the Soviets couldn't screw up such a simple story. After the tour, I was interviewed by Ukrainian television about the experience. The reporter was very serious. I was very serious. John and I took turns taking our pictures in front of the enormous statue of Peter the Great, then we moved on.

We made the short drive to the battlefield, which of course took twice as long as it should have. History is silent with respect to what the Soviet veterans were making of all of this.

One of the odd things about the Poltava battlefield was that the 7000 or so Swedish army dead had been buried in a common grave. To this day, no one has been able to locate it. In 1909, a group of Swedes constructed a monument consisting of an 18-foot-high piece of red Swedish granite that looks like an enormous rune stone surrounded by ten small stone



Fig. 13.24 Monument to fallen Swedes, Poltava, Ukraine (Photo: Tourism Poltava)

pylons intertwined by a black chain. The monument is inscribed in Swedish and Russian. “Af minnet af Svenskar fallne har 1709 Reste av Landsman 1909.”¹⁰ (To the memory of the Swedes who fell here in 1709. Raised by their countrymen in 1909) (Fig. 13.24).

The monument was not located over the mass grave of anyone. In the Zone, however, facts were rarely allowed to get in the way of a good story. The mayor of Poltava took me aside after the battlefield tour. Through Sergei he said to me, “Legend has it that Ukraine is cursed. Ukraine will always be poor because we did not properly bury the Swedish dead.”

He paused. His eyes were searching me for a hidden power I did not possess. The mayor asked me with great gravitas, “What is your view of this legend?”

“Here we go.” I collected my thoughts about how a dialectical materialist could possibly believe in the supernatural, then replied, “You say Ukraine is poor because of a curse?”

The mayor nodded.

“Mister Mayor, with all due respect, have you ever considered that communism had something to do with your poverty?” Sergei translated dutifully, then shoved his hands in the pockets of his overcoat, stared at the toes of his shoes, then turned away.

The mayor looked stunned. I continued, “Come on, Khrushchev was your agricultural apparatchik. Lysenko, who said there were no such

things as genes, taught you that wheat grows better if everyone thinks good socialist thoughts. You had the plague of the three ‘isms’ – absenteeism, alcoholism, and Marxist-Leninism.”

Sergei shot me a menacing glance as he muttered, “I’m not telling him that last bit. Gaaaaad. I won’t do it.”

When all of this weirdness, including my brief and shining moment as America’s leading expert on the battle of Poltava, was finally over, we all got back on the bus. Since water was out of the question, I asked the mayor if he could direct us to a shop where we could at least buy some beer for the trip back to Kiev. He hopped on that dilapidated wreck of a bus and stood in the front, giving the driver directions as if he were Admiral Nelson on the bridge of the HMS *Victory*. The bus weaved through the dusty, worn-out roads of downtown Poltava, turning first left then right as the mayor barked directions, then shuddered to a halt in front of what appeared to be a shop. The mayor grinned and gestured some more, making it clear he wanted me to join him for the beer run. We hopped out of the bus onto a street that could have been a set on the back lot of Warner Bros. studio. The sidewalk was thick with dust that made small cyclonic plumes behind us as we marched side-by-side to the door. Once in the shop, it became clear straight away that we weren’t going to get any beer, or much of anything else for that matter. The only goods on offer were little bread rolls stored in rusted iron baskets, jars of mysterious pickled things, and sawdust on the floor.

The mayor turned to me and made the palms-up shoulder shrug, the ubiquitous Zone gesture that said, “Oh, well. What can you do?”

Back on the bus, we began the dreary schlep back to Kiev, at 35 mph (55 kph). Dodging potholes was out of the question. There were no lights on the highway, the bus had one headlight that worked and another that produced brown light, so we plowed through the Ukrainian countryside like a quantum submarine cutting a hole in the time-space continuum.

Shortly after we got underway, Colonel Askold Germon, the leader of the Soviet veterans, came forward to speak with me. He gestured for one of our two competent interpreters to join him.

Colonel Germon said to me, “Gospadin Cole. My guys have heard a rumor that someone in your group has some Mexican vodka. Could this be true? If it is, with respect, my comrades and I would like to sample it.” The Soviet veterans had an excellent intelligence operation that was wringing the secrets out of everyone on the bus.

It turned out Hal had a 750 ml bottle of Cuervo Gold in his briefcase. Who would have expected that? Hal produced the Gold and waved it over his head. The Soviet veterans let out a banshee cheer, clapped maniacally, then opened their briefcases, each of which contained small loaves of black bread, salami, jars of pickled everything, and several bottles of vodka. Those guys had come prepared. This road trip was turning into the most epic road trip.

The weirdness wasn't over, however. Ginger, who had more than her share of Mexican vodka and regular vodka, got up and performed what I guess was supposed to be an exotic Vegas dance in the middle of the bus. She danced without music, sort of humming to herself like a thoroughly blotto Carmen. Ginger's bump and grind gave the appearance that she was being tossed around as the bus driver plowed into one gaping pothole after the next. Salomé's dance of the seven veils before Herod paled in comparison. The Soviet veterans reacted like this was one of the greatest events they had ever witnessed. Some clapped, others whistled. Being entertained by an ex-Vegas fan dancer turned real estate agent on a bus headed toward Kiev in the middle of the night while drinking Mexican vodka was a combination of events that confirmed large sample theory.¹¹

During an intermission, each of the veterans wanted to discuss fighter tactics and the relative performance of MiG-15 and Sabre jet fighter aircraft with Hal Fischer, so they came forward one-by-one to have a bump of Mexican vodka and discuss jet fighter tactics with Korean War ace Colonel Hal Fischer (Fig. 13.25).

By the time we got back to Kiev, everyone was dehydrated, drunk, beaten to a pulp, covered in dust, and exhausted. Twelve hours of pounding over potholes had reduced my bruised pointy bones to jelly. In a gloom intensified by the fact that the brown light headlight had signed off, the bus driver dropped the Soviet veterans off at various points, then let the interpreters off. We said goodnight to Mr. Dorofeyev, which left Sergei, John, me, and the two bus drivers.

Just for good measure, at 1:00 AM the bus driver lost it in a turn and smashed into a fire hydrant. Once back at the hotel, we were too numb to talk. We shared a nightcap in John's room where we reflected on what had been one of the weirdest days any of us had experienced. We quickly called it a night and went our separate ways, as we had an early start the next day.



Fig. 13.25 (L) Colonel Harold Fischer, (C) Colonel Germon (Photo: PM Cole)

I lay in bed, sort of comatose but unable to sleep. The improbability of it all had taken its toll.

My day of being America's leading expert on the battle of Poltava had come to an end.

* * *

The morning of Wednesday, April 13, 1994, came too early. I felt like I had gone 12 rounds with Smokin' Joe Frasier. Sergei, John, and I met in the hotel restaurant for breakfast around eight thirty. The plan was to meet with Mr. Dorofeyev and the rest of our archive research team.

Mr. Dorofeyev's office was a short walk from the hotel. The weather was phenomenal, the inner city surprisingly green. One could see that Kiev, which was founded by Vikings, had once been a Russian imperial city of note.

Mr. Dorofeyev's office consisted of three small rooms, one of which served as a combination museum and research lab. There were all kinds of military artifacts on tables and shelves. Mr. Dorofeyev reminded us of the order of magnitude that differentiated our tasks. The Americans were trying to resolve the fates of around 80,000 servicemen missing from WWII, half of whom had probably been lost at sea and thus unrecoverable. In the battle of Stalingrad alone, he said, approximately 475,000 Soviet soldiers were either killed or missing. No one knows the total number of Red Army MIAs as estimates range from four to five million or many, many more.

One of the artifacts Mr. Dorofeyev showed us was the Red Army's version of a dog tag. The device was a small plastic cylinder consisting of two hollow parts that screwed together. Before battle, a Red Army soldier would write his name and service number on a tiny piece of paper, place it in the cylinder, screw the two parts together then insert it in his or her rectum before battle.¹²

Volodya gave me one of the cylinders to take home, an odd yet solemn souvenir to say the least. One could not exclude that it had been used by a Soviet soldier whose remains lay in the vicinity of Kiev.

Our archive research team in Kiev had made great progress. They had not found any evidence of American POW/MIAs being held in Ukraine against their will. There was also no evidence to support the conspiratorial theory that 23,000 American POWs had been shipped to the Soviet Gulag after WWII. In the KGB archives they had located a substantial amount of evidence that American servicemen who were stationed at the Poltava air base in Ukraine during WWII were kept under constant surveillance. Though not directly relevant to our project, our research team had located a large number of reports prepared by Nikita Khrushchev, who was responsible for bloody purges and insane agricultural policies that impoverished Ukraine.

We were satisfied with the progress achieved by our Ukraine research team.

We departed Ukraine to Lithuania via Latvia.

LATVIA

After the outbreak of WWII, the Soviet Union occupied Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia in 1939, then incorporated the three countries into the Soviet Union by force in 1940 (Fig. 13.26).

Mass deportations and murders that affected between 36,000 and 60,000 Latvians decapitated the Latvian leadership which left the country



Fig. 13.26 Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia (Map: umc-ne.org)

wide open to Soviet domination. Anything worth taking was “nationalized” by the Soviets. After the Nazi occupation during WWII, another round of Soviet control occurred after the war. This was the third time Latvia had been invaded and occupied by the Soviet Union between 1918 and 1945. Between 1944 and 1952, a widespread guerilla war against Soviet occupation raged in the three Baltic countries. It was not until the Hungarian revolt in 1956 when the United States and its western allies failed to come to the assistance of the Hungarians that the Baltic populations understood that they were on their own.

After Soviet tanks attacked the Lithuanian television tower, on January 20, 1991, an enormous crowd of Latvian citizens took to the streets to protect their national government. Soviet forces attacked the crowd in the old part of Riga, which resulted in a number of deaths, which provoked condemnation in the international press.

Soviet President Gorbachev attempted to preserve the Soviet Union through a new Union Agreement, which the Latvian government rejected. Two days after the attempted coup against Gorbachev, Latvia restored its independence on August 21, 1991. Iceland immediately recognized Latvia’s independence. The United States did not do so until September.

* * *

Our first working day in Riga went very well.

I journaled:

December 10, 1993 – Riga, Latvia

Successful visit to the Latvian State Archives today. Latvia is relatively small and Riga is manageable, unlike Moscow where one sits in traffic for hours on end. We spent perhaps two hours with Dr. Daina Klavina the director of the archives, a likeable woman with a keen sense of humor. She is going to make a number of things happen, including a report stating that in 1965 Latvia sent a group of POW/MIA files to Moscow. The Latvians have made over 400 requests to Moscow for information in these files and have not received a single reply. The director is going to document all of this for us.

After our meeting we went over to the KGB archives. These are stored in an old schoolhouse. They have something like 68,000 files on people who were arrested after WWII. Each box contains twenty or so files, some enclosed in newspaper used because the mighty agency ran out of paper. Thousands of political arrests, each sitting there with confiscated passports, photographs, etc. I don’t think these records will be any help to us on this project.

Rom Misiunius arrived a couple of days ago. He is our point guy in Lithuania. He and I walked around Riga for an hour or so this afternoon. A group of three pickpockets tried to scam us. The first one bumped into me. The other two walked up with a wallet and asked me if it were mine. One guy flashed the wallet, showing it had a few dollars in it. I guess we were supposed to prove we had our wallets by taking them out, so these guys could grab them and leg it. Rather bumbling gang, or perhaps the average victim of the average street scam is Mr Not-So-Wise. They got nowhere with us. In contrast, thieves in the USA would have simply pulled a gun on us.

Our work in Latvia began with a remarkable coincidence. Dr. Daina Klavina, the director of the Latvian State Archives, was hosting a conference for her counterparts from the other Baltic nations in the seaside town of Jūrmala. She invited us to attend so that we could introduce ourselves and set up appointments. We couldn't have planned this any better.

I journaled:

December 11, 1993 – Riga, Latvia

Today Sergei and I drove to Jūrmala, about 40 minutes by car from Riga. Our meeting there with the archive guys was very good. We have excellent contacts and some promising opportunities. Our work in Berlin becomes increasingly concrete. The U.S. government has apparently banned me from travel to Moscow this month. Why does this subject attract so many unadulterated idiots? The U.S. military attaché once reported that the presence of my research assistant Ted Karasik in Moscow constituted a “threat to the stability of the Yeltsin regime.” One must be an idiot of monumental proportions to think, let alone report such lunacies. The idea of restricting freedom of travel for an American citizen. You'd think we're ruled by fascists or some sleazy Soviet system.

Sergei was the Komsomol head in Jūrmala before he defected in 1979. I was interested to see his old stomping grounds. His defection in Milano was a cause célèbre at the time. According to Dr. Misiunis, Latvian taxi drivers still recall the scandal when Sergei jumped to the West. At first the local Communist Party illuminati tried to hush it up, but Radio Liberty publicized the event. In response, the KGB spread a fake story that Sergei had been killed in an automobile accident involving a vehicle belonging to the Bulgarian embassy.

In contrast to Kiev, one sees little residue of the Soviet system here. There is only one Stalinist building. The restaurants have, by and large, good food. The Lat is stronger than the Ukrainian “coupon” (1 Lat = \$0.59)

On to Lithuania tomorrow.

Thanks to Dr. Klavina's conference and our incredible fortune to arrive in the middle of it, we were able to make appointments with the archive directors for our visits to Vilnius and Tallinn.

Sergei showed me around parts of Riga that were familiar to him from his Komsomol days. We had an early night and prepared for a long car trip from Riga to Vilnius.

Mr. Pankov had to return to work in Moscow, which left Sergei, Dr. Misiunis, and me to carry on to Lithuania and Estonia. We planned to meet with Mr. Pankov in Moscow a few days later.

* * *

We returned to Jūrmala, Latvia, from Vilnius on April 17, 1994.

The trip was much more comfortable due to the fact that this time we rented a proper van. I sat in the back and made open-face sandwiches for Sergei, Dr. Misiunis, and John Henshaw (Fig. 13.27).

Sergei, who did the driving, insisted on listening to the same Gypsy Kings cassette over and over again. I may be the only person in the world who thinks of the Lithuanian landscape when he hears the Gypsy Kings.

On the outbound trip a few days before, Dr. Misiunis had inadvertently left his notebook in a pizza place outside of Riga on the way to Tallinn. In it, he had some of the KGB documents we had collected in Lithuania. We stopped in the same pizzeria on the off chance that the notebook was still there. I can report, *mirabile dictu*, that everything was just as he had left it. Nothing was missing. The notebook was also in exactly the spot where Dr. Misiunis had left it a week earlier.

In Riga we had an excellent meeting with our head researcher, Dr. Aivars Beika of the University of Latvia. Dr. Beika had been very busy on our behalf. He described in detail the record groups he had searched and provided copies of some of the more interesting documents he had located (Fig. 13.28).

One of the intriguing records Dr. Beika found was a list of American citizens who were living in Latvia in the 1940s. Our hypothesis, that the KGB created this sort of list, was confirmed. We also specifically asked Dr. Beika to keep an eye out for any records or reporting concerning the April 8, 1950, shootdown of a USN PB4Y-2 *Privateer* by a Soviet Lavochkin LA-11 (Fang) fighter jet. The incident took place close to the Latvian port city of Liepāja. There were no known survivors from the *Privateer*, though there were plenty of rumors that the survivors had been captured by Soviet



Fig. 13.27 Victuals obtained from a Norwegian Statoil gas station (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.28 (L) Dr. Aivars Beika, (R) Dr. Paul M. Cole (Photo: PM Cole)

forces. The US government interviewed westerners who had been released from the gulag camps who reported that they had seen people they described as survivors of the *Privateer* shootdown. Our instructions to Dr. Beika included the task to look for any evidence that over 23,000 American POWs had been transferred from German POW camps to the Soviet Gulag after WWII.

Dr. Beika understood our concern and promised to do his best.

Our project in Latvia appeared to be in order.

We proceeded by van, listening to the Gypsy Kings, to Lithuania.

* * *

LITHUANIA

Lithuania's path to freedom from the Soviet Union was not easy or predictable. Decades of "Russification" followed by "Sovietification" had inflicted great damage on Lithuania as Moscow attempted to obliterate any sense of Lithuanian national identity which included stamping out the native language in favor of Russian.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, no one could predict whether Moscow would release the various republics or, as in the case of the American Civil War, use force to prevent succession. Resistance to Soviet rule grew throughout the 1980s. To protest Soviet occupation, on August 23, 1989, over two million people in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia joined hands to form a 650-kilometer (406.5 mile)-long human chain that stretched from Tallinn in the north to Vilnius in the south (Fig. 13.29).

Violence had broken out in the republics of Georgia and Azerbaijan. At midnight between January 12 and 13, 1991, Moscow announced that Lithuania was under the control of the president of the Soviet Union. Two hours later, Soviet forces moved toward the radio and television buildings in Vilnius. Thousands of Lithuanians turned out to create a human shield around the buildings. As the crowd sang, the Soviet forces fired on them, killing 13 and wounding hundreds more.

In Vilnius on at least two occasions, around the time of the declaration of Lithuanian independence and shortly after the failure of the August 1991 coup in Russia, a substantial amount of records had been transported by the KGB from Lithuania to Moscow. To prevent this from re-occurring, Vilnius residents formed a human chain around the Soviet



Fig. 13.29 Human chain across the Baltic nations (Photo: estonianworld.com)

KGB headquarters building, but this did not stop the Russians from destroying or removing an unknown number of records.

Following the failed coup against President Gorbachev in August 1991, Lithuania became an independent state. The United States recognized Lithuania on September 2, 1991, after which the American Embassy opened in Vilnius on September 6, 1991, the same day the Soviet Union recognized Lithuania's independence.

* * *

Early into the DFI project, Sergei introduced me to a long-time friend and colleague of his, Romuald Misiunis, a PhD historian who worked at the EastWest Institute in New York. Dr. Misiunis turned out to be an invaluable and important addition to our team. Rom's background was extraordinary. He had been born in Lithuania to parents who emigrated first to Sweden, then on to the United States. In addition to carrying four passports—Soviet, Lithuanian, Swedish, and US—Rom spoke English, Lithuanian, Russian, Swedish, and some other Eastern European

languages. He had studied in Moscow, so he knew his way around the Soviet empire, the region Dr. Misiunis referred to as the Zone.

Dr. Misiunis also brought some invaluable archive research experience with him. He happened to be in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, when the Russians pulled out. As they did everywhere else, the Russian KGB tried to take everything in their headquarters building with them, or failing that to destroy as many records as possible. Dr. Misiunis was in Vilnius after the KGB loaded tons of material into large trucks that headed east to an unknown destination in Russia. In Lithuania, the residents of Vilnius surrounded the KGB headquarters after the Russians had already succeeded in making off with a lot of material. Due to the brave and heroic action of many Lithuanian citizens, a great deal of KGB documentation had been preserved.

After the Russians departed, Dr. Misiunis went over to what had become the former headquarters of the KGB and asked if he could have a look around. He was told to help himself. Once inside, he found a veritable treasure trove. A Lithuanian official described the scene at the former KGB headquarters in the following terms.

Once the Soviets granted the Lithuanians unimpeded access to the archives, it quickly became clear that the Soviets had undertaken a rushed purging of documents. Many files, particularly those dealing with operational issues, were censored, with entire pages torn away or portions cut out. The Soviets had also attempted to burn as many files as possible; numerous accounts of wastebaskets full of ashes and heating stoves choked with burnt paper served as evidence of this fact.

The chaotic nature of the final days of the Lithuanian KGB was also evident in the state of the headquarters building. The floor was littered with piles of paper that had been tossed aside or thrown on the floor for incineration. Bound volumes were scattered across both archival rooms and work areas. Initially, security was amazingly relaxed; several individuals recount being able to wander through the archives unescorted and unchallenged, and even to pick through files randomly. One individual even detailed how he found a blank KGB identification badge which was easily removed from the premises and kept as a souvenir.

As the security situation deteriorated, the government intervened, tasking the military to guard the building against further looting. This measure, while reducing the number of thefts at the former headquarters, did not stop them entirely—at least four further thefts were reported, including one

in which papers were simply handed down through a ground floor window to men standing in the street.

It did nothing to halt the removal of documents and files by government bodies themselves. Such practices, which began during this time period, took place under highly suspicious circumstances. On September 5 and 16, 1991, for example, members of the Home Defense Department were observed removing documents from the very building they had been charged with guarding. Jurgis Jurgelis, the parliament deputy who made these accusations, actually named the perpetrators in public and pointed out that practically all official organizations had ignored his information.¹³

Dr. Misiunis made a deal with Mr. Balys Radžius, the Lithuanian man who had once been a prisoner of the KGB who now held the keys to the building in which he had been held prisoner (Fig. 13.30).

The portrait on the wall of the Lithuanian KGB building is that of Felix Dzerzhinsky, aka “Iron Felix,” founder of the Cheka and forerunner of the KGB.

The deal was straightforward. If Dr. Misiunis purchased a photocopy machine and left it behind, he could make as many copies as he wished. Dr. Misiunis accepted in a heartbeat. Like a good researcher, Dr. Misiunis spent little time reading as he copied. Instead, he made as many copies as he could, transferring the material as he went along to an apartment in Zurich and from there to his home in New York City. Among the most interesting things Mr. Misiunis found was the index to the documents that had been stored in one of the KGB’s secure safes. The Russians had removed all of the documents, but the index had somehow become wedged behind a wooden shelf, where Dr. Misiunis found it.

Dr. Misiunis gave us full access to the collection of documents he had obtained from the KGB archives in Vilnius.¹⁴

I journaled (Fig. 13.31):

December 12, 1993 – Vilnius, Lithuania

Sergei and I drove in our rent-a-car from Riga to Jūrmala where we picked up Rom Misiunis. From there we drove to Vilnius, most of the way in fresh snowfall or in about six inches of slushy snow from the previous day – the road wasn’t plowed.

The Latvian-Lithuanian border was rather nondescript and muddy. The sad gray of Stalinism is much more evident here. We passed all sorts of lousy apartment areas. The hotel is a mix. The staff tries to be very nice and helpful, but the building and the rooms are what Sergei and Rom call typical of the “zone.”



Fig. 13.30 (L) Sergei Zamascikov, (R) Mr. Balys Radžius (Photo: PM Cole)

Riga is far more lively and colorful than Vilnius, which is clearly closer to Poland.

We will have a full day here tomorrow then to Tallinn on Tuesday. Took ca. five hours by car from Riga, so we're looking at about eight hours to Tallinn from here.

I'm lying in bed in my neo-Stalinist room.

The following photograph shows the type of border controls that were springing up between the former republics of the former Soviet Union (Fig. 13.32).

The journey by car took over five hours on a snow-covered highway that wasn't plowed. The road was covered with six to ten inches of new snow, though the stretch in the following photograph was clear (Fig. 13.33).



Fig. 13.31 Latvia to Lithuania (Image: Mapquest)

On the snow-covered highway, there were two tire tracks down the middle of the two-lane road that were shared by traffic going both ways. When we were on our own, Sergei used both tire tracks. When we met on-coming traffic, however, Sergei would swerve right, keeping the left side tires in the right side track. We hoped the on-coming traffic would make the same maneuver on their side. When semi tractor-trailers came barreling toward us, the move to the right was harrowing. The blast of air



Fig. 13.32 The Latvia-Lithuania border, as seen from the back seat (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.33 On the road in Lithuania. Sergei Zamascikov is driving (left). Dr. Rom Misiunis is in the passenger side seat (right) (Photo: PM Cole)

from the passing semi sometimes knocked our car out of the rut we were following. Rest stops consisted of some person wrapped in a greatcoat and fur hat selling beer from an overturned wooden crate on the side of the road. Toilet facilities, when you could find them, were at best shack with a hole in the floor. For most of the journey there was nothing more than dense forest on both sides of the road.

We arrived after dark, checked into our hotel, and prepared for a busy day. (Fig. 13.34).



Fig. 13.34 Luxurious first-class bathroom in Dr. Cole’s luxurious first-class hotel room in Vilnius, Lithuania (Photo: PM Cole)

(Note in the previous photograph that we traveled with our own toilet paper.)

In Vilnius, we took a meeting with Mr. Gediminas Kirkilas, member of the Seimas (parliament). I had met Mr. Kirkilas when he visited RAND (Fig. 13.35).

We met in Mr. Kirkilas’ office at the Seimas, the address of which was 53 Gediminas Avenue in Vilnius. Mr. Kirkilas later became prime minister of Lithuania, 2006–2008.

Dr. Misiunis and Sergei took turns interpreting for me. Sergei said Gediminas’ Russian was of an unusually proficient grade. During the course of our conversation, Mr. Kirkilas said his goal was to learn English so well that he could easily read Steinbeck in the original.

I replied, “Good luck with that. Nobody can read Steinbeck easily.”

Mr. Kirkilas agreed to assist us with the project. He assured us that we would receive all of the necessary permits and would assist with finding qualified researchers who would work in the archives on our behalf.

At the conclusion of our meeting, that coincided with the end of the working day in Vilnius, Mr. Kirkilas invited us to join him for a drink.

Fig. 13.35 Mr.
Gediminas Kirkilas
(Photo: Public Domain)



We were pleased if not honored to accept his invitation. He took us to a restaurant that turned out to be owned by his brother-in-law who served us *latkes*, which are potato pancakes, not quite crêpes, that one dollops with sour cream. *Latkes* are perfectly allied with vodka. Mr. Kirkilas, however, drank brandy and smoked a pipe.

Road fatigue, general weariness, Zone fever, and a sense of looniness finally overtook us all.

I turned to Mr. Kirkilas. “You know, Gediminas is a hell of a long name. Nothing wrong with it, mind you, it’s just a long name. I was wondering, what do your friends call you? I mean, a nickname or something.”

Mr. Kirkilas listened to the interpretation from Dr. Misiunis or Sergei, pulled at his pipe, nodded, removed his pipe, and replied matter-of-factly, “My friends call me Gediminas.”

We rolled out of there at about 02:00. We had laughed ourselves silly and talked about foreign policy and politics and literature. Mr. Kirkilas, who was a wonderful, generous host, must have thought we were nuts. We had polished off so many delicious *latkes* that the chef poked his head in the door, expecting no doubt to see a convention of starving stevedores.

Due to the exchange rate, the bill for the entire evening did not amount enough to claim it as an expense against the per diem for one person.

The next day we hired a local academic, Dr. Gediminas Rainys, to head our Lithuanian research team. We learned that his boss was a fellow by the unlikely name of Gediminas. In order to conduct research in the archives, we had to obtain permission from the Director General of the National Archives of Lithuania. This was particularly important in light of the fact that control of the KGB archives had been transferred to the Lithuanian National Archives in April 1993, an event documented in “Lithuania: A Problem of Disclosure,” by Tomas Skucas, that was published in *Demokratizatsiya*.¹⁵

Dr. Misiunis took us to see the abandoned KGB headquarters that included a prison (Fig. 13.36).

The former KGB building, which was located on Gedimino Prospektas, one of the most prominent addresses in Vilnius, had quite a history. In 1899 it had been a czarist courthouse, then the NKVD, the KGB’s predecessor, used the building as its headquarters after Stalin annexed Lithuania in 1940. The Gestapo used the building between 1940 and 1944, after which the Soviets swept back in and re-established the NKVD, which



Fig. 13.36 KGB headquarters, Vilnius, Lithuania (Photo: vilnius-tourism.lt)

became the KGB. In 1947, at perhaps the height of KGB torture and oppression, the building was called the Palace of Justice.

Mr. Balys Radžius, a man who had spent one year in that prison as well as more than a decade in the permafrost of the Vorkuta Gulag camp, was our guide (Fig. 13.37).

Mr. Radžius, who was extremely proud of the fact that he had the key to the prison where he had once been held by the KGB, showed us some of the documents that had been shredded by the KGB during their hurried withdrawal from Vilnius.

The tour began by sitting in the chair where new prisoners were photographed and logged into the prison system (Fig. 13.38).

A photograph of what I initially thought was a robe follows¹⁶ (Fig. 13.39):



Fig. 13.37 (L) Dr. Paul M. Cole, (R) Mr. Balys Radžius (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.38 Photographing and fingerprinting room. KGB prison, Vilnius, Lithuania (Photo: PM Cole)

Physical torture was referred to by the KGB as “active interrogation.” In this case, the long sleeves were used to immobilize the victim prior to vicious beatings. The walls were padded with bloodstained canvas to muffle the screams of the victims and were smeared with bloodstains.

We were also shown the “wet” room¹⁷ (Fig. 13.40):

The floor of this cell was filled with freezing sewage water. Prisoners were forced to balance on the small pedestal in the middle of the cell until they fell into the fetid water due to fatigue. Sleep was out of the question.

Mr. Balyš Radžius, our guide in the KGB building, showed us how he survived when locked in a cell, intended to hold two prisoners, with 20 other men. The cell was crammed so tight that the prisoners had to stand or sit on top of one another. There was no ventilation, so the inmates took turns getting on their hands and knees in order to suck air from the space between the cell door and the floor. A photograph of one of the larger cells follows¹⁸ (Figs. 13.41 and 13.42):



Fig. 13.39 Torture chamber, KGB prison (Photo: Public Domain)

One of the bizarre things we learned about our guide's time in the Vorkuta camp was how he increased his chance of survival by forming an opera company. On performance night, the guards would attend in dress uniforms accompanied by their wives. The opera company was given extra rations and time off from hard labor to rehearse. Mr. Radžius, a tenor, sang a bit of "La Donna e mobile" from Verdi's "Rigoletto" for us.

No one knows for certain how many people were executed in the KGB's Lithuania headquarters. The best estimates concluded that during the Stalinist era that of the more than 15,000 Lithuanian citizens were held in the NKVD building, over 700 were executed for anti-Soviet activities. Following the Stalinist era, an additional untold number of Lithuanian citizens, estimated to be several thousands, had been jailed and tortured until the KGB fled in August 1991.

Fig. 13.40 The “wet room” in the KGB prison in Vilnius, Lithuania (Photo: Public Domain)



Standing in a KGB torture chamber listening to a former prisoner sing an opera aria while fiddling with a large ring of keys to the prison was a deeply sobering experience.

I journaled:

December 14, 1993 – Vilnius, Lithuania

Yesterday went particularly well. The most intriguing yet unsettling event was our tour of the former KGB building. Our guide, who spent 11 years in the permafrost of Vorkuta, spent one year in this prison. He showed us the torture chamber, which was unpleasant for me. The room had several layers of rubber on the floor and multiple layers of canvas on the wall. All of this muffled screams, of course. A black robe, at first glance, hung on the wall. The robe was actually a straightjacket – the robe had long sleeves that were wrapped around the torture victim.

Gotta split. We're driving ten hours to Tallinn.



Fig. 13.41 KGB prison cell in Vilnius, Lithuania (Photo: Genocide Museum, Vilnius, Lithuania)

We had successfully established a research program in Vilnius; thus it was time to carry on to Estonia, the fourth of five countries we were visiting on this trip.

* * *

On Thursday, April 14, 1994, we returned to Lithuania.

There were no direct flights from Kiev to Vilnius. We had no choice but to fly from Kiev to Riga from where we would drive to Vilnius. Fortunately, the flight was far less eventful than the previous trip in December 1993.



Fig. 13.42 Prisoners in KGB prison (Photo: Genocide Museum, Vilnius, Lithuania)

I journaled:

April 15, 1994 – Vilnius, Lithuania

Left Kiev by Antonov-24 yesterday. The airport, if you can call it that, was an unusual mess, even by the grim standards of contemporary Ukraine.

Arrived Riga at ca. 12.30. The welcome one receives there is much more pleasant and efficient than in Kiev or Moscow. We left Fischer and Ginger in the hands of guides and interpreters, got into a chauffeur-driven van rented from Avis then stopped at the Norwegian-owned Statoil gas station near the main highway. We bought all sorts of things to eat – sausage, tomatoes, cheese, apples, pickles, water, Lapin Kulta beer – and spent the first hour on the road eating like starving weasels freed from a cage. The border crossing took about 45 minutes. We arrived at this surprisingly comfortable place, Hotel Balatona, at 17.30 yesterday.

As noted in my journal, we hired a driver to give Sergei a break from being the full-time driver as well as the interpreter and analyst.

We arrived in Vilnius in the late afternoon, checked into the hotel, had a nap, then set out for the Red Dragon, which turned out to be an excellent Chinese restaurant. Halfway through the meal, Dr. Misiunis informed us that there was a second Chinese restaurant in Vilnius that was the Red Dragon's fierce competitor. Dr. Misiunis added that the two competing Chinese restaurants took turns bombing one another. He said it was the Red Dragon's turn to get it. We didn't linger over fortune cookies and tea.

In Lithuania, every male and every building seemed to be named Gediminas. Gediminas was everywhere—Gediminas Square, Saint Gediminas Cathedral, Gediminas Bar and Grill, you name it. The original Gediminas had been the Grand Duke of Lithuania between 1315 and 1341. Rumor had it that Grand Duke Gediminas had been murdered by the evil Teutonic knights.

The success of our inquiry depended on Mr. Gediminas Kirkilas who was still a member of the *Seimas*, the Lithuanian parliament. We needed Gediminas' help for a simple reason.

Our original Lithuanian research team had vanished.

I journaled:

April 16, 1994 – Vilnius, Lithuania

Yesterday was exceptionally eventful. At 11.00 we met with Gediminas Kirkilas, a member of Parliament who met us last December. We explained to him the problem we faced in Lithuania – e.g., the research guys we thought we hired in December 1993 simply disappeared. We hadn't paid them, so it wasn't a financial problem. So we told Gediminas the sob story about how next month I have to make a report to the DoD and I have nothing so say about Lithuania. No one needs to know about the work Rom M has done for us with the archival material he photocopied here two years ago. So GK phoned the head of the Lithuanian state archive – the guy's first name is Gediminas – everyone here is named Gediminas – so we went immediately to the archive chief's office with GK's car. The only problem was the driver took us to the police headquarters!

We walked a couple of blocks to the archives. The head of the Lithuanian National Archives, Gediminas Ilgūnas turned out to be extremely cooperative. He said he would help because of the debt Lithuania owed to the USA for its support during the “period of Russian occupation.” A nice way to put it, I thought. Turns out that this Gediminas will be on Maryland's eastern shore at the Wye plantation, not far from Henshaw's house, so we made plans to see him there.

Gediminas Ilgūnas phoned Mr. Jurgis Jurgelis, the head of the Lithuanian security service, the organization that replaced the KGB. We went to his office at 15.30. Says a lot about this place – drop in on two directors of state agencies on short notice on a Friday. He was also most cooperative and surprisingly named something other than Gediminas. Jurgis served us coffee and Georgian cognac. Nice guy, sort of on the short side with a white beard. As in the case of everyone here, he was sitting in his office with no lights on, using sunlight to do his work.

Jurgelis showed us a map he found in the KGB archives. This was a map of the locations of the graves of people who had been executed by the KGB. As in the case of most of the records of Soviet-era crimes, the document was about as banal as one could imagine.

The demise of the KGB in Lithuania is a fascinating story, but too tangential to this book and far too complex to relate in any detail. The short version of events is that the Lithuanian KGB owed its existence and influence to the support it received from the Communist Party. After the Communist Party lost power following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the failure of the coup against Gorbachev in August 1991, the Lithuanian KGB was simply set adrift. There was no blueprint or precedent for how to reform or get rid of the KGB, so in 1990 the new Lithuanian government simply created a new security service.¹⁹

Mr. Jurgis Jurgelis, who was the first head of the new organization, could not have been more approachable, professional, or helpful. We were aware that we were dealing with an extraordinary man the moment we met him (Fig. 13.43).

The scene in Mr. Jurgelis' office, on the other hand, had an über Zone-like quality. In addition to the half-dozen telephones in different colors on his shiny, wooden, old desk, a huge intercom speaker covered with fly droppings was attached to the wall. An astounding number of toggle switches and buttons were attached to the intercom.

Mr. Jurgelis invited us to have a coffee.

After we accepted his kind offer, Mr. Jurgelis reached for the intercom on the wall, flicked several switches, leaned forward, and bellowed into what appeared to be some sort of speaker. An answer came from his assistant who was sitting next to his open office door, no more than eight or ten feet away. When his assistant replied, we could hear her even though nothing was coming through the intercom device. In fact, we could see her leaning through the open door. The two of them, boss and assistant

Fig. 13.43 Mr. Jurgis Jurgelis (Photo: Public Domain)



intertwined by a Soviet switchboard, yelled at one another then signed off. The secretary ordered someone else to organize the coffee. It was a wonderful Zone moment.

After we had been served coffee, Mr. Jurgelis showed us what he was working on. It was a map produced by the KGB. The map, which covered greater Vilnius, had a number of “X” marks, each with a date. Each X indicated where the KGB had buried a prisoner they had executed. Some of the grave sites were now under parking lots in front of new western supermarkets.

After I described the purpose of our visit (with Sergei’s interpreting, of course), Mr. Jurgelis offered us his support and full cooperation, promises that he assured us he could deliver on.

Like a good Anglo-Saxon, I stood and offered to shake Mr. Jurgelis’ hand. Like a good Balt, Mr. Jurgelis stood and shook mine. Sergei, a good Russian-American, and John, a good WASP, stood and shook hands. We all stood, shook hands, and smiled at one another. With those handshakes, we had received authorization to conduct research in the KGB and other records controlled by the Lithuanian government. The Lithuanian side lived up to their obligations with no reservation.

A major problem, however, was that the Russians had made the research impossible to bring to termination. After a few months of work, our researcher Dr. Gediminas Ilgūnas was able to figure out which KGB records had been destroyed or removed by the Russians. A subsequent Lithuanian governmental commission stated:

The exact contents of those files removed by the KGB prior to the transfer of the archive to Lithuanian hands remains an open question to this day. The vetting and removal of documents began at some point in 1988–89. The head of the Lithuanian National Archives, Gediminas Ilgūnas, believed that had the KGB known what was coming, the files would have been more thoroughly destroyed. By compiling the chaos left behind, archivists have determined that among the files and indices removed were:

- Nearly 14,000 personnel files of former KGB collaborators
- Personnel and working files of 5,169 agents (with a further 36,000 known to have been destroyed)
- Nearly 16,000 files of soldiers
- 4,688 operation records
- 629 secret files
- 417 files of selected correspondence between the Lithuanian Communist Party and the KGB²⁰

In 1992 the Russians returned about 24,000 boxes of records in 1992 and some records concerning pensioners in 1993. In good Soviet/Russian form, however, a great deal of material had simply vanished.

With our Lithuanian research problem resolved, we made the long car trip back to Latvia.

* * *

ESTONIA

As in the case of Lithuania and Latvia, the United States never recognized the incorporation of Estonia into the Soviet Union. This is why the three Baltic nations were included in the group of “Captive Nations.”

Shortly after the failed coup against President Gorbachev, Estonia declared independence on August 20, 1991, the first of the Baltic states to do so. This occurred as Soviet tanks were rolling through the countryside and Soviet paratroopers were taking over Tallinn’s television center in order to cut off communications with the nation and the outside world.

Just two days later, Iceland recognized Estonia's independence on August 22, 1991. The United States and Estonia resumed normal diplomatic relations on September 4, 1991. The American Embassy in Tallinn was established on October 2, 1991, with Robert C. Frasure as *chargé d'affaires ad interim*.

* * *

We arrived in Estonia in the middle of December 1993.

The drive from Vilnius to Tallinn took a long time, over ten hours. Once again Sergei drove through heavy snow with no relief from me or Dr. Misiunis (Fig. 13.44).

When we arrived in Tallinn, it was bitterly cold and gloomy, even though it was early afternoon (Fig. 13.45).

We were in a modern car, staying in a heated hotel with warm food. I thought of the men who fought in the Battle of Narva in November 1700. Narva is about 125 miles (200 km) east of Tallinn. The Swedish army, led by Charles XII the teenage king, defeated the Russian army under Peter the Great even though Charles was outnumbered four to one. How they were able to live in the field in freezing conditions for months at a time has always been a mystery to me.

I journaled:

December 15, 1993 – Tallinn, Estonia

A long, long drive yesterday from Vilnius to Tallinn. Sergei drove the entire way since neither Rom nor I have a valid local driver's license. We left Vilnius in heavy snow at 10.00 and checked into the hotel in Tallinn at 21.30. I guess we covered 600 kilometers, perhaps the same as Washington to Boston, without the highways.

One definitely sees the distinction between the three Baltic countries. Lithuania is closer to Poland both geographically and culturally. Latvia seems to be under the influence of Germany and Scandinavia, while Estonia closely reflects the fact that this is where Finland and Russia collide. The border crossing between Latvia and Estonia was the most Soviet of the two. I think Sergei was saluted at least three times by the Kalashnikov-carrying guards. Rather ironic when one considers that the Baltic countries are supposed to be a customs union. This hotel has CNN and MTV which seem to be the global media.

I'm fatigued now. Too many late nights, long drives, weird food, translations, travel, dubious water, etc etc.



Fig. 13.44 Lithuania to Estonia (Image: Mapquest)

The Estonian kroon is something like 13.5 -- \$1. A phone call to the States costs about \$1/minute here compared to \$6/min in Vilnius and \$10/min in Kiev.

We've had considerable success in Ukraine and the first two Baltics. This morning we're supposed to see Dr. Indrek Jürjo, one of the top archivists in Estonia. We met him in Jürjala, introduced by Daina, the head of the Latvian State Archives.



Fig. 13.45 Tallinn, Estonia (Photo: PM Cole)

The meeting at the Estonian State Archives went exceptionally well. We were re-acquainted with Dr. Indrek Jürjo who we had met at the archivist conference in Jürjala. Though he had spent the entire Cold War cooped up in Soviet-occupied Estonia, Dr. Jürjo spoke outstanding, sophisticated English. Dr. Jürjo, who understood the objectives of our project without much explanation, agreed to participate as our resident project director and PoC.

I journaled:

December 16, 1993 – Tallinn, Estonia

Things went very well yesterday. We met with Dr. Indrek Jürjo at the Estonian State Archives, took a tram to the Communist party archives where we met with archivists and saw some of the index cards. We negotiated a deal with Indrek to organize the research.

Yesterday the locks on our rent-a-car were frozen shut. Should be interesting to see if we are able to get in the car today. It's something like 1°C (33.8°F) today.

Went to bed around eight. Sergei woke me up at 00:00. He had just spoken to Pankov in Moscow. Yuri is prone to exaggeration from time to time, but he may have something big for us this time. He says he has three important documents. The first is the inter-ministry memo written by the security police, ministry of defense and one other. This memo, to President Yeltsin, reports that the reason why they haven't cooperated with the Joint Commission is because if they turned over archive material to Volkogonov, he would turn around and sell it. The second document is supposed to describe how Soviet forces moved 300 Americans from Korea. The third document is supposed to deal with Vietnam, though it is unclear what this is all about. Sergei will go to Moscow, collect the documents and FedEx them to me in Berlin. If this is what Pankov claims, it is *incroyable*.

I'm still thinking about the KGB prison we saw in Vilnius. Sergei tells me the prison setup was just standard KGB issue. Torture chamber, isolation rooms, the particularly sinister "wet" isolation room that forced the prisoner to stand in the dark in dirty, cold war. Our guide told us of a famous Lithuanian partisan who was tortured to death over a long period of time by the KGB. The KGB goons punctured one his eyes, carved a cross on this poor guy's chest and abdomen, then pulled off one testicle with a noose made of piano wire. Over ten million people were killed for "deviation from socialism" and there has not been a single trial in any of the former Soviet bloc countries.

CNN is scrambled today for some reason, so I got my morning news from French channel 5. One can easily see Finnish TV here. There is the odd Swedish language bit, which I can understand, but otherwise there is MTV, in English, and a German channel.

During a break while we were having a cup of coffee, Dr. Jürjo and I had what was for me at least an interesting conversation concerning the differences between the Finnish and Estonian languages. Most people whose opinion I respected considered Finnish to be impossible to learn. Dr. Jürjo assured me that he had never met a foreigner who had managed to learn to speak reasonable Estonian.

Later in the day, Dr. Jürjo gave us a tour of the Estonian State Archives (Fig. 13.46).

We drove back to Riga, Latvia, later that same day in order to return the rent-a-car which we could not leave in Estonia. After another very long drive through snow-covered roads, we had a short night's rest then Sergei and I prepared to fly to Moscow as planned.

It was not to be.



Fig. 13.46 (L-R) Dr. Indrek Jürjo, Dr. Paul M. Cole, Sergei Zamascikov in the Estonian State Archives, Tallinn, Estonia (Photo: PM Cole)

We returned to Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, on a mild spring-like day in April 1994. The warm weather was a relief after the extreme cold we had endured during our previous visit in December.

Our research team in Estonia, which was led by Dr. Indrek Jürjo, had produced impressive results. Dr. Jürjo briefed us on both his team's research methods and their preliminary findings. After our discussion, he led us on a tour of the former KGB headquarters, including the library and record room where we were permitted to examine files and take photographs (Fig. 13.47).

As shown in the following photograph, Dr. Jürjo gave us an extensive tour of the KGB archives, including an opportunity to open boxes to examine records (Fig. 13.48).

Unable to read any Russian, other than a handful of basic words, even I understood the gravitas of the file concerning "Kalju Kukk," one folder of which is shown in the following photograph (Fig. 13.49).

Dr. Jürjo had located the file of a man named Mr. Kalju N. Kukk who the KGB alleged was a CIA officer. The file consisted of several inch-thick (2.54 cm) folders.



Fig. 13.47 Outside the Estonian State Archives, Tallinn, Estonia. (L–R) John Henshaw, Sergei Zamascikov, Dr. Indrek Jürjo (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.48 (L) Dr. Indrek Jürjo, (R) Sergei Zamascikov (Photo: PM Cole)



Fig. 13.49 KGB case file of CIA officer “Kalju Kukk.” (L–R) Dr. Indrek Jürjo, Dr. Paul M. Cole, Sergei Zamascikov (Photo: PM Cole)

During the Cold War, the CIA conducted operations code-named “REDBIRD” and “REDSOX” that involved the clandestine insertion, mostly by airdrop, of defectors and emigrés into the Soviet Union. The program, which operated between 1949 and 1959, included “AEFREEMAN” (1953–1964) that was designed to strengthen resistance to communism and harass the Soviet regime in the Baltic countries. “AEBASIN/AEROOT” supported Estonian emigrés against the Estonian Communist Party. “Project AEROOT was originally approved on 13 May 1953 under Basic Plan AEBASIN and provided for the running of REDSOX operations into the Estonian SSR.”²¹ “AEFLAG” was aimed at Latvia, while “AEPOLE” targeted Lithuania.²²

Two agents were scheduled to be inserted into Estonia in the spring of 1954, either by parachute from an aircraft taking off from Germany or by a balloon launched from the island of Gotland, Sweden.²³ The two agents were assigned the cryptonyms of “AETAXI” and “RNCHANGE.” AETAXI “was born on a farm in the Parnu District of Estonia on 16 March 1924.” AETAXI was described by the CIA as possessing “a substantial

amount of clandestine sense; he is a good soldier; he knows what is at stake when he embarks on this operation and appears to be prepared to face all it entails.” Once on the ground in Tallinn, AETAXI was instructed to contact his half-brother. Mr. Kukku, who was born on March 16, 1924,²⁴ had a half-brother living in Tallinn. AETAXI was Mr. Kalju (Karl) Kukku.

AETAXI’s companion, the agent with the cryptonym RNCHANGE, was described by the CIA as a “good soldier” who was “determined to avail himself of every opportunity – no matter how slight – to kill himself if he is to be apprehended. Although he would, no doubt, be able to withstand a good deal of torture prior to breaking, this ability is greatly minimized by the psychological effect of the erroneous belief that he cannot withstand torture.” RNCHANGE was Mr. Hans A. (Artur) Toomla.

In May 1954 Kukku and Toomla took off from the Frankfurt, Germany, Operations Base in a C-47 Skytrain. Kukku (AETAXI) and Toomla (RNCHANGE) were dropped by parachute in Estonia during the “War in the Woods.” They were cornered by Soviet intelligence three months later.²⁵

On the night of May 6-7, 1954, the CIA parachuted two agents, Kalju N. Kukku (Karl) and Hans A. Toomla (Artur) into southern Estonia near the village of Auksaar. The KGB Radio Counterintelligence Service quickly homed in on their radio transmissions and located their source. On July 11, 1954, KGB security forces struck, killing Toomla and capturing Kukku.²⁶

After his capture, Toomla’s cryptonym was changed from RNCHANGE to AEROOT/1. In April 1955, US intelligence concluded:

AEROOT/1: (formerly RNCHANGE). A native born Estonian 30 years of age. This agent was recommended by the AEROOT recruiter in Sweden. He was trained in the U.S. and dispatched in the Spring of 1954. He was killed resisting the RIS forces, shortly after dispatch.²⁷

US intelligence also stated, however, that AEROOT/1 has been “killed by resisting the EIS forces.” Or perhaps as forecast in the Agency’s psychological evaluation, Toomla might have killed himself after he was apprehended. This appeared to be the end of the record on Mr. Toomla.

In contrast, the KGB file on Kukku/AETAXI contained photographs of gear, what was described as spy equipment such as a camera in a hairbrush, a poisonous syringe in the handle of a safety razor, and other tools of the espionage trade including various amounts of foreign currency.

The REDSOX mission that resulted in the capture of Kukku and death of Toomla had been compromised before it began. They never had a chance.

All of the Baltic missions had been betrayed by British traitor Kim Philby, whose treachery amounted to little more than the act of a serial killer.

The CIA became aware that the program had been compromised. The planned 1956 “REDSOX” mission into the Estonian SSR was canceled due to the fact that:

1. Information received late in 1955 through interrogation of a confessed RIS [Russian Intelligence Service] agent indicates that the pool of existing operational support assets in the Estonian SSR are either under RIS control or RIS monitored and planned contacts through these channels can no longer be considered operationally security for the REDSOX agents.²⁸

In June 1955, the SIS sent a final radio message to their remaining 11 agents in the Baltic states. The message stated:

We can no longer help you. Will be sending you no physical or material help. All safe houses are blown. Destroy or keep the radios and codes. This is our last message until better times. We will listen to you until 30 June. Thereafter, God help you.²⁹

This message confirms that the social contract of “no one left behind” and “until they are home” is not absolute. The US government’s obligation to “account for” the captured, beleaguered, or missing depends entirely on who has been captured or beleaguered or has gone missing. The CIA knew that agents sent to the Baltic countries were still alive when this message was broadcast. The government’s obligation to CIA agents, who were advised that they were being abandoned, was terminated in a message consisting of 207 characters. In contrast, the US government’s effort to “account for” American servicemen who went missing during the Vietnam War is about to enter its fifth decade. In contrast to the assertions made by lobbyists and family members that the US government’s obligation to “account for” the missing is unconditional and open-ended, this claim is false. The next of kin of a missing CIA agent can attest to this fact.

Kukk, whose cryptonym was changed from AETAXI to AEROOT/2, was turned over by the KGB to the Soviet military.

AEROOT/2: (formerly AETAXI). A native-born Estonian 30 years of age and trained with AEROOT/1 for a joint infiltration mission. He was dispatched with AEROOT/1 in the spring of 1954. Shortly after dispatch the

agent was apprehended and played back by the RIS as if he were clean. On 14 January 1955 RIS surfaced the capture of the American Agent. This agent had been interrogated by RIS and turned over to the Soviet military tribunal.³⁰

Kukk was transported to the Butyrka (*Бутырка*) prison in central Moscow, nicknamed the “Butterfly Prison.”

As the Agency predicted, the Soviet military executed Kukk with a single bullet to the back of the neck, or perhaps by firing squad (Fig. 13.50).³¹

I journaled:

April 22, 1994 – Tallinn, Estonia

Our work is going well. Yesterday we visited the KGB archives and library. Our lead researcher here, Indrek Jürjo, has done a great job. Yesterday he showed us eight large files on the case of a CIA guy, captured by the KGB in 1954, who was shot in Moscow.

I have a copy of the KGB death warrant for Kukk.

After Kukk, who had been recruited in the United States, had been captured, there is no indication that any effort was made by the US government to secure his release. The Agency made an effort to determine why the Kukk/Toomla mission failed, but the results of that inquiry have not yet been located in the archives, or perhaps have not been released by the CIA.

Fig. 13.50 Kalju Kukk
(Photo: Public Domain)



The Agency's policy concerning the Kukk and Toomla cases was consistent with the treatment of missing American servicemen in one respect. The settlement of the cases was a function of how long the person had been in a missing status combined with a limit on the US government's financial obligations.

As shown by the CIA documents, both Kukk and Toomla were CIA operatives. The Agency had expected both to return. As REDSOX "action agents," they were "dependent on the CIA for help in rehabilitation after completion of their missions; their salaries and bonuses remain under Agency control."³² "The Agency is committed to provide assistance for rehabilitation in Sweden or in the Western Hemisphere after satisfactory performance of duty on a two-year mission in the denied area." In addition, the records of the REDSOX operation are found in the CIA archives.

There is no question that Kukk and Toomla were CIA officers who are represented by two of the stars on the CIA's Wall of Honor at CIA headquarters in Virginia (Fig. 13.51).



Fig. 13.51 CIA Wall of Honor (Photo: cia.gov)

One important lesson from the Kukk and Toomla case is that in contrast to the declaratory rhetoric of the accounting program, the US government's obligation to locate, recover, and return the remains of the missing is, in fact, both optional and negotiable. The government's obligation, which is neither unconditional nor "sacred," depends entirely on who went missing and under what circumstances. The agents were advised of that they were on their own, or as the Agency summarized it, AETAXI (Kukk) "is a good soldier; he knows what is at stake when he embarks on this operation and appears to be prepared to face all it entails."

A condition of employment for an intelligence agent is that the US government has no responsibility to account for an "inaccessible corpse." Using the rhetoric of the POW/MIA "activists," missing intelligence agents are simply "written off" by a cynical government that "closes the books" and moves on.

Missing intelligence agents were, in fact, literally "written off" on a ledger sheet as lost assets. Accounting for intelligence agents who went missing during America's historic conflicts was a business transaction. For example, the US government settled its obligation to the estate and heirs of Mr. Kalju "Karl" Kukk for less than \$15,000 (\$137,000 in 2017 dollars) within a matter of weeks.

The "Agency" stated that it was:

Committed to act as a trustee for AEROOTS 1 and 2 in execution of their wills entrusted to the Agency prior to their departure from the U.S. and executed on 20 April 1954. Their estates are composed of \$10,000. – death benefits each, and of the funds placed in escrow accounts during their training period and while on the mission, as well as the funds placed in the agents' bank accounts. This liquidation will be done according to Agency regulations and to the agents' contracts.³³

The Agency concluded in June 1955, rather pragmatically:

AEROOT/2 [Kukk] who was dispatched with AEROOT/1 [Toomla] is now before a Soviet Military Tribunal. Since his execution is almost certain, funds for payment of his salary until death and for payment of death benefits to his heirs have been included in the project budget.³⁴

The headquarters was informed about the cost of training versus the value of the intelligence produced. The valuation was made, a check was

cut, the books were “closed,” and the parties to the transaction moved on. On the Russian side, Kukuk’s KGB file ended with a receipt for the body and an invoice for the bullets.

For CIA officers such as Kukuk who went missing during America’s historic conflicts, there are no black banners on federal flagpoles, no national days of recognition, no name bracelets, no presidents trying to bury their remains in the Tomb of the Unknowns, no parades, no motorcycle rallies, nor are the missing agents represented by a paid lobbyist with a hotline to the White House who receives deferential treatment by members of Congress. There are also remarkably few “evil creeps” or conspiracy theorists who meddle in the affairs of missing agents. This is due, in part, to the fact that a field agent’s life is an on-going conspiracy theory. In other cases, the people recruited as field agents are themselves “evil creeps” because from time to time it takes an “evil creep” to get the job done.

For the next of kin of a field agent who goes missing, there is a settlement check and a star on the wall at headquarters. These intelligence agents, who are missing in every sense of the word, have been abandoned by the Accounting Community. For the next of kin of a missing agent, a straightforward financial settlement provides incomplete closure that, however flawed, is preferable to a mandatory “fullest possible accounting” program for missing servicemen in which history and science have been manipulated for political purposes.

* * *

One of the fascinating things about archive research is that unrelated items of interest are almost always found. A great deal of discipline is required to stay focused when a separate seam of records opened. An example of this occurred during our research in the Estonian KGB archives.

Though not directly relevant to our project, Dr. Jürjo’s team found several folders concerning the Soviet Army’s special forces (*Spetsnaz*). *Spetsnaz* members operated using cover stories and fake names. The records revealed the real names of several hundred *Spetsnaz* recruits, including photographs. We immediately thought that US security services would be interested in a resource that could blow the cover of Soviet special forces. Despite several inquiries and offers, no one within the DoD showed any interest, so we dropped the matter.

Instead, we asked Dr. Jürjo’s team to examine the records of the Estonian border guards. The purpose was to look for any indication of

special or unusual border crossings. This was part of our overall effort to locate any evidence that over 23,000 American POWs had been transferred to the Soviet Union after the end of WWII.

* * *

One of the extraordinary aspects of my hotel room in Tallinn was that whenever the TV was turned on, the default channel was a 24-hour non-stop German porno program called “Franz-Dieter’s Bondage Dungeon.” The Germans demonstrated the same attention to detail in making porno as they do designing watches or making cars. The TV was not turned on when there were guests in the room.

* * *

John Henshaw, Sergei, and I were instructed by DPMO to take a meeting with Ambassador to Estonia Robert Frasure at the American Embassy. The purpose was to present a short briefing on our work with the Estonian State Archives and to advise him about the political support from the Estonian government that we had obtained for our project due to the efforts of our Estonian colleagues. Ambassador Frasure, a career diplomat, had been in Tallinn since 1991, first as chargé d’affaires before he was sworn in as the first “post-Soviet” American Ambassador to Estonia in 1992 (Fig. 13.52).

Before we were allowed to see the ambassador, we were given the royal run-around by a counselor officer named Ms. Deborah Klepp who was the gatekeeper to the ambassador’s office. Ms. Klepp’s, whose arrogance was only exceeded by her rudeness, gave us an inordinate ration of shit that made no sense to any of us. We were so numbed by the incoherence of Zone apparatchiks by that point that we listened, nodded, and let the ramblings of an American apparatchik go in one ear and out the other.

I journaled:

April 23, 1994 – Tallinn, Estonia

At 16.00 we met with Amb. Rob’t Frasure at the AmEmb Estonia yesterday. The AmEmb is in the same building as the British Emb. The meeting had the prospect to be confrontational and unpleasant, since the consular officer, Deborah Klepp, had made it appear that DoD or I had “ignored” the embassy.

Fig. 13.52 Ambassador Robert Frasure (Photo: Public Domain)



We were concerned that Ambassador Frasure would reflect the boorish nature of his subordinate, but the case proved to be the opposite. Ambassador Frasure, who met us with his shirtsleeves rolled up, organized coffee. We proceeded to have an informative, wide-ranging, and to my great relief a friendly discussion. It was quickly apparent that Ms. Klepp, who sat in the meeting and made it a point to let us know that she was taking notes, also made it a point to let us know that she had no clue what we were talking about. She nonetheless insisted on interjecting periodic irrelevancies in order to prevent us from confusing her with the potted plant in the corner of the room.

I journaled:

Turns out the amb was a relaxed, smart guy who just wanted to schmooze about our work. Ms Klepp kept quiet, by and large, though she made a few facile comments. The mtg went well, in my view and I phoned Norm Kass at DoD to tell him as much.

We were advised that Ms. Klepp later worked for the USRJC, and thus her performance may have been some kind of audition.

An example of Ambassador Toon's dubious behavior was related to us by Ambassador Frasure. Ambassador Frasure spent several minutes describing in detail how Ambassador Toon and his considerable entourage had insisted on flying into Estonia from Moscow. Nothing wrong with coming to Estonia in principle, Ambassador Frasure said, except for two practical matters.

First, Ambassador Toon consistently insisted that archive research be organized from the top down. In other words, he thought if the foreign minister agreed that it should be done, effective archive research would happen. Ambassador Frasure pointed out how he had just given up trying to explain to Ambassador Toon that this was not how to go about it in Estonia or anywhere else for that matter.

Second, Ambassador Toon was adamant that he was going to fly into Tallinn on what Toon referred to as "*my*" USAF jet whether Ambassador Frasure liked it or not.

The idea of using USAF jets, referred to as "blues," for personal use wasn't new in the accounting program. DPMO's abuse of the DoD travel system and USAF assets was so engrained and the sense of entitlement so deeply infused that in a corporate culture of "ethical fading," few gave a second thought to using a USAF aircraft to go Christmas shopping in Tajikistan.

Ambassador Toon had made it abundantly clear that he considered a USAF aircraft to be his "own aircraft." In a 1996 Congressional hearing, Ambassador Toon testified under oath:

Mr. Toon: I should point out that we have managed to get the sort of transportation that I think we need to carry out the job. I made it very clear when I took this job almost 5 years ago that under no conditions was I going to fly Aeroflot and I had to have a reliable aircraft. [...] I had to have my own aircraft, and we had that all the way through.

Under the Bush administration, we flew directly from Andrews Air Force Base and the plane stayed with us throughout our, usually a week or 10-day, visit.

Under the Clinton administration – I should probably not say this – but apparently, in order to save money, we fly commercially now to Frankfurt. Then we pick up the plane. [...] Now we have another plane that usually takes us. But in any case, I have that sort of co-operation.³⁵

The sense of entitlement that resulted in Ambassador Toon having his "own" USAF aircraft did not always end well.

Ambassador Frasure told us he tried repeatedly and in vain to tell Ambassador Toon that *his* jet could not be refueled or serviced at the Tallinn airport, which was not equipped for the type of Air Force aircraft Ambassador Toon used. One day, Ambassador Toon's aircraft suddenly appeared at Tallinn International Airport. Ambassador Toon subjected everyone at the embassy to hours of meetings with Estonian officials seeking to get an agreement to allow the type of research my team had been doing for months. Ambassador Frasure attended as protocol required.

When Ambassador Toon returned to the airport (with a motorcade, no doubt) however, he was advised that *his* plane could not take off. The operations chief advised Ambassador Toon, "They can't refuel it."

Ambassador Frasure said that Ambassador Toon went into a rage, and demanded that Ambassador Frasure explain why *his* plane could not be refueled. Ambassador Frasure repeated what he had advised and even warned Ambassador Toon several times since learning of the plan to visit Estonia.

The solution was to fly in the nozzles, hoses, and coupling mechanisms required to refuel that type of Air Force jet, at great expense to the US taxpayer so that Ambassador Toon's *personal* USAF aircraft could get off the ground.

Ambassador Frasure was in a French APC that flipped over on a mountainside near Sarajevo, in August 1995. Contrary to US practice, the French stored live ammunition inside the APC. The ammo exploded after the APC rolled into a ravine. Ambassador Frasure was tragically killed in the incident.

* * *

GERMANY, EAST AND WEST

All of the archive research and other tasks related to the project in Germany were organized by Mr. Helmut Richthammer, who was well qualified for the task. Mr. Richthammer was responsible for recruiting our German research team as well as for obtaining permits to conduct research in various archive of the former GDR.

Mr. Richthammer was a participant in the first US-German Exchange of Young Leaders Seminars (*Multiplikatören Seminar*) that I had organized in cooperation with the West German Minister of Defense Manfred Wörner,

who had also served as NATO Secretary General. Mr. Richthammer, a lawyer, was a businessman as well as a reserve intelligence officer in the Germany army (*Bundeswehr*).

Mr. Richthammer, an army reservist who had completed similar assignments for the West German government, had been called up by the Ministry of Defense to assist with sorting out some issues that had arisen as the two German states moved toward re-unification. The first project he was assigned was to determine who was selling East German military equipment and weapons. Mr. Richthammer's investigation revealed that there was a GDR military base near Schwerin, 111 km (70 miles) due east of Hamburg, that had not received any official notification that the GDR had ceased to exist. That base was operating as if nothing had happened. Business as usual included the practice of dumping aviation fuel on the ground, due to the fact that flight operations were measured by the consumption of fuel. Rather than go to the trouble to actually fly training missions, the *Volksarmee* aviation units consumed fuel by dumping it instead. The fuel, which had penetrated deep into the soil, contaminated ground water and caused all sorts of environmental problems at several bases in the former GDR. It was going to take years and a colossal amount of money to undo the damage caused by this practice.

Within the Schwerin base Mr. Richthammer found a room with a large-scale replica of the inter-German border. According to the *Volksarmee* officers Helmut interviewed, the Warsaw Pact battle plan for war with NATO called for the use of atomic weapons on Day One. For example, the "Plan of Actions of the Czechoslovak People's Army for War Period," approved in 1964, stated:

In the first massive nuclear strike by the troops of the Missile Forces of the Czechoslovak Front, the front aviation and long-range aviation added to the front must destroy the main group of troops of the first operations echelon of the 7th US Army, its means of nuclear attack, and the centers of command and control of the aviation.

During the development of the operation, the troops of the Missile Forces and aviation must destroy the approaching deep operative reserves, the newly discovered means of nuclear attack, and the enemy aviation.

Altogether the operation will require the use of 131 nuclear missiles and nuclear bombs, specifically 96 missiles and 35 nuclear bombs. The first nuclear strike will use 41 missiles and nuclear bombs. The immediate task will require using 29 missiles and nuclear bombs. The subsequent task could use 49 missiles and nuclear bombs. 12 missiles and nuclear bombs should remain in the reserve of the Front.³⁶

US planning based on controlling the intensity of the conflict through the use of an “escalation ladder” meant nothing to the Warsaw Pact, which planned for a nuclear war at the outbreak of hostilities. This was another indication to me that US military planning was often self-referential, meaning that US planning made sense to Americans, but not to our adversaries. At the same military base, Helmut figured out which *Volksarmee* officer was responsible for selling weapons including a Soviet-made SCUD missile. As the arrested officer was being led away in handcuffs, he turned and yelled at Mr. Richthammer, “If we had won, you’d be in a salt mine!”

Mr. Richthammer also had the opportunity to see the East German maximum leader Erich Honecker’s premises. Honecker was the General Secretary of the German Socialist Unity Party, *Sozialistische Einheitspartei* (SED), between 1971 and October 1989, just before the wall came down. The SED was East Germany’s version of the communist party. It turned out that the range of Comrade Honecker’s interests included western pornography. Mr. Richthammer advised that the maximum comrade’s collection of US and European VHS porno videos was astonishingly vast.

After re-unification was underway, the question arose concerning the fate of the East German parliament building, the *Palast der Republik* or Palace of the Republic. The Palace housed the *Volkskammer* (People’s Chamber) that served as these things did in communist countries as a giant rubber stamp. Germany, being the practical nation that it is, had no need for two parliament buildings, so after re-unification the debate began over what to do with the *Volkskammer*. In 1990, the building was closed after it was discovered that it was heavily contaminated by asbestos, which meant that the building could not just be demolished without first cleaning out the asbestos. Helmut told me that there was another problem with the *Volkskammer* that was being kept out of the public eye.

I journaled:

October 6, 1991 – Tegel Flughafen, Berlin

Having a Schultheiss with Helmut. Quick note. The GDR was dealing in organs harvested from prisoners. They cremated the bodies of executed prisoners and put the ashes in the concrete used to build official buildings.

East Germany’s charming leaders harvested the internal organs from victims executed by the state, sold the organs for hard currency, cremated what was left of the bodies, then mixed the human cremains into building materials such as concrete, which essentially transformed public buildings such as the *Volkskammer* into columbaria, without the urns.

Until 1987, the DDR imposed the death penalty for a number of capital crimes, including murder, espionage, and economic offenses. But after the mid-1950s, nearly all death sentences were kept quiet and executions were carried out in the strictest secrecy, initially by guillotine and in later years by a single pistol shot to the neck. In most instances, the relatives of those killed were not informed either of the sentence or of the execution. The corpses were cremated and the ashes buried secretly, sometimes at construction sites.³⁷

State-sponsored murder and non-judicial executions along with “legal” murders occurred at an alarming rate within the worker’s and peasant’s paradise.

The Stasi also ransomed people convicted of all sorts of offenses, usually bogus or trumped up, to the West German government for payments in hard currency. West Germany purchased approximately 34,000 East German citizens for prices ranging from \$56,000 to DM 450,000 (\$264,705 at \$1 = DM 1.7) paid for Count Benedikt von Hoensbroech.³⁸

The preamble to the East German criminal code stated that the purpose of the code was:

To safeguard the dignity of humankind, its freedom and rights under the aegis of the criminal code of the socialist state.

It would be difficult to imagine a more cynical or merciless business than the grotesque commoditization of human beings carried out by the SED in the name of building a socialist utopia.

The *Volkskammer* was eventually demolished in 2008.

In addition to research in various East German archive holdings, Mr. Richthammer organized several interviews, the first of which took place in Berlin at the Kempinski Hotel in February 1993.

* * *

THE LAST AMBASSADOR TO PYONGYANG

On February 8, 1993, in Berlin, Mr. Richthammer arranged for me to meet with Ambassador Professor Doctor Hans Maretzki, the last East German ambassador to North Korea who served in Pyongyang between 1987 and 1990.³⁹ Our meeting almost fell through. After Ambassador Maretzki arrived at the Kempinski Hotel for our meeting, he had asked for

“Dr. Cohen.” After the reception advised him that “Dr. Cohen” was not registered in the hotel, Ambassador Maretzki took the U-Bahn home. A half-hour after the expected meeting time, I telephoned Helmut to ask what went wrong. Ambassador Maretzki was changing out of his business attire when Mr. Richthammer reached him at his home. Ambassador Maretzki climbed back into his suit and returned to the Kempinski where I anxiously awaited him in the lobby.

The meeting with Ambassador Maretzki was remarkably productive, as well as unexpectedly congenial.

I journaled:

February 8, 1993 – Berlin

Dr. Professor Hans Maretzki had been the GDR ambassador to Pyongyang 1987-90. I expected him to be a white-haired older man. He turned out to be a medium height sort of square shaped fellow with salt & pepper hair that stood straight up in the style the Eastern Europeans appear to have mastered. He speaks sophisticated English.

I asked Ambassador Maretzki his view of the reports of the sighting of Caucasians in Pyongyang after the Korean War. He advised that there had been a large number of East German engineers and construction workers in Pyongyang, which he pronounced as “fyong-yeng,” at that time, as well as in the coastal city of Hamhung. The CIA reported that American POWs had been sighted in Hamhung during the war.

On 26 September 1952 approximately 15 American POWs were at CV-738183 in Hamhung excavating air-raid shelters for the South Hamgyong Provincial Branch of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The prisoners worked from dawn to sunset. A North Korean army guard armed with a PPSH supervised their work. The prisoners slept in dugouts they were excavating. They wore old North Korean army summer uniforms. The daily ration included 1.24 pints of sorghum and fish.

[Exemption 25X1] Comment: [Exemption 25X1] 150 prisoners, including 18 white and 7 Negro Americans, arrived at Hamhung on foot on 28 October 1952.⁴⁰

After the war, Soviet bloc diplomats were also in North Korea in addition to western Europeans, such as the Swedes whose embassy represented US interests in North Korea. The sighting of a “westerner,” therefore, did not necessarily mean that an American POW had been sighted.

Ambassador Maretzki described a personal project of his own making. His goal was to determine whether GDR pilots had participated in the Korean War. He advised that the result was indecisive, “maybe yes, maybe no.” The CIA had obtained intelligence that German pilots were in the Korean War area of operations:

1. In mid-July [1951] the headquarters of the Soviet Far Eastern Army sent approximately 300 German prisoners of war, all jet plane pilots, from Komsomolsk, Siberia, to Mukden and Changchun, from where they were to be assigned to various air bases in Manchuria to pilot jet planes for the Chinese Communists. All of these prisoners of war had been held for a long time in Komsomolsk and well indoctrinated by the Soviets.
2. In early August the headquarters of the International Volunteer Air Force was in the Railway Guest House, Mukden.⁴¹

At least 24 MiG-15s were based at Mukden; thus it would have been possible for German pilots, though not specifically citizens of the GDR, to have flown training or combat missions during the Korean War.

Ambassador Maretzki said that from time to time a senior DPRK military officer would approach him, but only if they were absolutely alone. The North Korean officer, who would speak to him in fluent German, said he had studied at a GDR military academy. Ambassador Maretzki noted that after such a conversation he always sent a request to Berlin for information concerning the officer’s time in the GDR. The answer that came back was always the same. No one by that name ever studied at a GDR military academy. Ambassador Maretzki shrugged his shoulders as he advised me that these North Koreans had lied to their communist allies.

I disclosed the letter from the Swedish government to Ambassador Maretzki, then showed him the report prepared by DCM Göran Wide, whose surname when pronounced in Swedish or German was similar, “Vee-deh.”

Ambassador Wide reported in his letter to me:

There could be three places outside Pyongyang where remains of Americans could be stored thirty meters below ground. The places are Hangdong, Yodok, and Taesuk.

When Ambassador Maretzki came to the part of Ambassador Wide’s report that stated that his sources were “foreign military attachés,” he began to laugh. “Vee-deh, vee-deh, vee-deh,” he said as he looked up at

me with bright eyes and a broad smile. "I am sure this information was obtained through Vee-deh's utmost efforts. But the truth is," he said as he tapped the letter with the tips of his fingers, "that people like him obtained a lot of their information from people like me, not from the North Koreans who would tell him only lies if they told him anything at all."

Ambassador Marezki said that in light of the intense hatred in North Korea for anything American, he doubted that the DPRK collected or stored the remains of US servicemen after the war. "If they found something, they would probably destroy it at that time." Ambassador Marezki added, "This information is hard to believe, though I would not exclude the possibility that for a long time the North Koreans may have stored bones to be used in a moment of bargaining."

The CIL's forensic anthropologists had determined beyond any reasonable doubt that a small number of the remains turned over by the North Vietnamese had been in long-term storage or kept as souvenirs by private individuals. In contrast, many of the remains turned over by the North Koreans had been stored in a climate-controlled environment for an extended period.⁴² For example, one bone had a date from the 1960s written on it in pencil, which suggested that this may have been when the bone was collected. One of the locations provided by DCM Wide was associated with an abandoned mine in northeast North Korea, which would explain why the remains were stored 30 meters underground. After this information was disclosed to DPMO, there was no reaction or expression of any interest.

To compensate him for his time, I invited Ambassador Marezki to dinner in the hotel. He accepted the invitation but insisted that we "get out of here" and instead go to one of Ambassador Marezki's favorite Chinese restaurants, a hole in the wall on a side street a few blocks from the Kempinski. As we walked down the Ku'damm toward the Brandenburg Gate, he removed his tie, so I followed his example. Over very good Chinese food and several bottles of Schultheiß, the ambassador told me several stories that illustrated daily life as he had experienced it in the worker's and peasant's paradise of North Korea. With a restrained smile and a keen sense of humor, Dr. Marezki described life within the Great Leader Kim Il-Song's inner circle, of which he had been a part for three years. He recalled details of the dictatorship's world in which neither the adults nor their children lacked the slightest material advantage. Their cars were the latest BMW or Mercedes; they had new clothes from European boutiques; all electronic gadgets, including video cameras and VCRs, were

right out of the box from Japan; US dollars, particularly 100-dollar bills, were available in abundance; single malt whiskey from Scotland's most expensive distilleries and Calvados from small distilleries in Normandy were available by the crate. A small hotel for the elite and their international socialist brethren had been built in the mountains. The hotel included a reception area, the walls and floor of which were made entirely of plexiglass that hung over a gorge, which gave the impression that one was floating in the clouds.

Dr. Maretzki described a state visit by the General Secretary of East Germany Socialist Unity Party (SED) Erich Honecker to Pyongyang, October 18–21, 1986 (Fig. 13.53).



Fig. 13.53 Comrades Kim Il-Song (L) and Erich Honecker (R) in Berlin, 1984 (Photo: Public Domain)

Dr. Maretzki was responsible for the dreaded task of escorting Mrs. Margot Honecker on what diplomats refer to as “die Fraue Program.” Mrs. Honecker who was known as the “Purple Witch” due to her tinted hair and hard line views, or “Miss Bildung” (Education), a pun on the German word for deformity (Missbildung), served as education minister for nearly three decades. Under Mrs. Honecker’s leadership, “difficult children” had been confined in institutions such as the one in the city of Torgau referred to as “Margot’s Concentration Camp.”

During a tour of a grade school in Pyongyang, the guide pointed out that after the Great or Dear leader had visited the school, a plastic enclosure was built around the seats where they had sat. On a wall in the school, the guide showed Mrs. Honecker several glass cases that displayed the school uniforms designed by the Great Leader, including underwear for the children. It was a crime to make jokes about the SED government or any of its ministers. Nonetheless, Ambassador Maretzki said, with a straight face, “Imagine a country where the leader enjoys such power as to design school uniforms and underwear.” Mrs. Honecker, who turned on her heels, said nothing. Later that day, the entourage took a short walk in the woods where Ambassador Maretzki pointed out a large glass pyramid, then explained that it covered the spot where the Great Leader had paused to take a piss. Later in the walk, he drew Mrs. Honecker’s attention to two smaller glass pyramids, which covered the spots where the Dear Leader had relieved himself. Mrs. Honecker snapped, “If *I* were running the country,” referring to the GDR, “*nobody* would dare make light of school uniforms or dare to criticize monuments like these.”

In the evening, Ambassador Maretzki escorted Frau Honecker to the guest cottage where he said goodnight. Before he could leave, Mrs. Honecker asked him if he could arrange a bottle of Scotch and some ice. Ambassador Maretzki pointed diplomatically toward the ceiling then said discreetly, “If Madame Honecker makes such a request loud enough, it will be taken care of.” Mrs. Honecker replied, “They would not do that to *us!*” Ambassador Maretzki diverted his gaze in recognition of *noblesse oblige*. Mrs. Honecker, renown for being abrupt but not known for her subtlety, looked at the light fixture on the ceiling then barked in German, “Bring me a bottle of Scotch and some ice, *now!*” Within a matter of minutes, there was a knock on the door. A uniformed servant wearing white gloves entered the bungalow. Perched atop the ornate salver was a fresh bottle of Johnny Walker Red, a small canister of ice, two lead crystal high-ball glasses, and a chilled bottle of Perrier.

Ambassador Marezki recounted how he had waged a personal arms race with the North Koreans. He said that life in Pyongyang was so unbearably dull that he put in a request to the GDR Foreign Ministry for a satellite television dish. To his amazement, the request was approved, so Ambassador Marezki sent his chauffeur to Honolulu to buy one. Once it was installed in the backyard of the embassy, the North Koreans showed up the next day and built a wall that blocked the dish's line of sight to the satellite. Ambassador Marezki thought about it, then instructed the embassy staff to get some metal tubing in order to raise the dish over the wall. The North Koreans built the wall higher, and then Ambassador Marezki raised the satellite dish again. He said this went on until the wall built by the North Koreans became so unstable it couldn't be extended. This was how the embassy staff was able to watch the FIFA World Cup in Italy in 1990.

I noted, and Ambassador Marezki nodded in agreement that the East Germans knew a thing or two about how to build a wall.

Ambassador Marezki ordered another bottle of Schultheiß that he insisted on sharing with me. We ended the evening by discussing US policy toward the re-united Germany, North Korea's *juche*, as well as relations between the Warsaw Pact, Moscow, and NATO. The bill for the entire meal for two with several beers and tea amounted to less than one-third of the daily meal allowance approved by the State Department for one person in Berlin. The approved rates assumed one would dine at hotel prices.

After Ambassador Marezki departed, I retired to my room, made some notes, then prepared to depart.

From Berlin I prepared to proceed as planned to Moscow.

* * *

While in Vilnius on our follow-up visit in December 1993, after the US Army military attaché once again abruptly revoked my country clearance for Russia, I concluded that there was no alternative than to carry on to Berlin where I had arranged to collect a US government report concerning the German archives from the American Embassy. This meeting had been arranged before I left DC.

From Berlin, I had to re-route to Washington via Frankfurt, change planes, then return home as soon as possible.

I journaled:

December 20, 1993 – Hotel Kempinski, Berlin

Murphy's Law at work again. I phoned the U.S. Embassy office in Berlin where I'm supposed to pick up the German archive report. The officer I'm supposed to see is on leave for two weeks, nobody in the embassy office has a clue. Their response is to offer to phone Washington (earliest 6 hours from now) to find out what's going on, something I'm able to do myself. So much for having a substantive day.

Getting jerked around like that by the project sponsor (DoD) while in the field was disgraceful.

I had to kill a day in Berlin, so I went to the famous Christmas market near the equally famous zoo, then wandered around the *Feinschmecker Étage* on the top floor of the world famous *Kaufhaus des Westens*.

In a rather dejected mood, inconsistent with the expectations of the season, I returned to the hotel, sat in the sauna for an hour, then lay on the bed in my room watching an international snooker tournament.

I asked myself, "Why do I bother?"

* * *

STASI ARCHIVE, AMERICAN TURNCOATS, AND DESERTERS

During the 1980s, I had created and directed a project funded by the German Ministry of Defense called the "U.S.-German Exchange of Young Leaders." The program had the wonderful German name, *Multiplikatören Seminar*. The purpose of the seminar was to bring about a dozen up-and-comers from the United States to Germany where we would hobnob, seminar, and socialize with a dozen young Germans from business and politics. We were supposed to form lasting trans-Atlantic bonds to ensure that America and Germany would remain close allies forever. I did a pretty decent job of selecting, some of whom became mid-level government officials. One even became the Deputy Secretary of Defense later on in life.

The German MoD not only paid for the whole thing, they provided round-trip transportation on the Chancellor's 707 from Dulles International to Frankfurt am Main's military air base. I ran the program for five years, which meant that I chose the US delegates and served as the leader of the American group. During the seminar it was not unusual for the German organizers to refer to me as *Der Amerikanische Gruppenführer*, which took some getting used to. I must admit that I'm not sure what

return the German government received from its incredibly generous support for the program, but it was a tremendous experience.

This digression is important due to the fact that during the third year of the program, East German intelligence managed to insert a delegate, Herr Mario Bauer, who along with his wife was subsequently exposed as a spy for *Staatssicherheitsdienst*, the East German security service known by its initials MfS or its sinister acronym *Stasi*.

The *Stasi* were literally everywhere.

The East German *Stasi* was a formidable organization, far more menacing than its Nazi predecessor the Gestapo. According to Simon Wiesenthal of Vienna, Austria, who hunted Nazi criminals for more than a half-century:

The Stasi was much, much worse than the Gestapo, if you consider only the oppression of its own people. The Gestapo had 40,000 officials watching a country of 80 million, while the Stasi employed 102,000 to control only 17 million.⁴³

One might add that the Nazi terror lasted only 12 years, whereas the Stasi had four decades in which to perfect its machinery of oppression, espionage, international terrorism, and subversion. Former Colonel Rainer Wiegand, who served in the Stasi counterintelligence directorate, estimated that the number of *inoffizielle Mitarbeiter* (“IM,” meaning informants) could go as high as two million, if casual stool pigeons are included. That’s a staggering 12 percent of the East German population. The Soviet KGB needed one agent to keep the lid on 5830 people. The Nazi Gestapo needed one for 2000 citizens. The East German Stasi, in contrast, employed 480,000 full time agents, or one agent per 166 East Germans.

When one adds in the estimated numbers of part-time snoops, the result is nothing short of monstrous: one informer per 6.5 citizens. It would not have been unreasonable to assume that at least one Stasi informer was present in any party of ten or twelve dinner guests.⁴⁴

The head of the Stasi was the spymaster Markus Wolf whose agent Günter Guillaume became an aide to West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, which resulted in the Chancellor’s resignation in 1974 (Fig. 13.54).

Wolf’s agents had infiltrated the *Bundesnachrichtendienst* (BND, the Germany foreign intelligence service), and the Office for the Protection of



Fig. 13.54 (R) Stasi head Markus Wolf, 1985 (Photo: *Der Spiegel*)

the Constitution, the country's domestic intelligence agency. Stasi records indicate that there were more than 4000 agents worldwide, including 1929 collaborators or "contact people" working in West Germany in December 1988. The Stasi had 149 informants in Bonn, the former capital, as well as 542 in West Berlin. Josef Fridt, the pastor in a small town in western Germany who operated under the code name "Erich Neu," reported on a colleague who "showed a great deal of potential," Joseph Ratzinger, who became Pope Benedict XVI.⁴⁵ Jeff Carney, a USAF member who worked for the *Stasi* for years, was reported to have caused damage to the US military estimated to be in excess of \$14 billion. Carney, who received the bold "Brotherhood in Arms Medal" from the Stasi after deserting to East Germany, served 11 of a 20-year sentence in the US military prison at Fort Leavenworth.⁴⁶

Herr Bauer was one of many East German spies whose activities were disclosed after the Wall came down in 1989. On May 15, 1990, the Stasi radioed its agents in the West, advising basically to fold their tents and come home. The West German government had given the East's spies a grace period to clear out. Herr Bauer had overstayed his welcome. Bauer received then ignored the instruction, which helped lead West German counterintelligence to him.

According to the group photographs we made during each trip to Germany, Herr Bauer was a short, dark-haired young man with a mustache, of Swabian origin.

I journaled:

December 22, 1993 – Hotel Kempinski, Berlin

Yesterday was rather productive. Helmut Richthammer arrived at ca. 10.30. Sergei and I were talking with Hans Maretzki in the lounge. Helmut was extremely helpful. Helmut immediately gave me valuable advice on how to negotiate with former socialist officials. They don't understand jokes but reveal valuable info if you tell them funny stories.

After lunch we drove with Helmut to the former east part of Berlin where we met with Herbert Ziehm who is an official with the GDR security service archives. (Stasi) Learned that the Stasi report on me was destroyed because the Stasi destroyed "valuable agent reports." I was considered by THEM to be someone on the way to an important career, thus Stasi agent Mario Bauer's report on me was considered to be particularly important, thus destroyed.

At 15.30 I saw the political officer at the US Embassy office. Sometimes I wonder how the U.S. government functions at all.

The *Stasi* referred to agents like Herr Bauer as "scouts" whose mission was to tag young people who were considered to have potential value. Perhaps Herr Bauer's motivation included what Mr. Wolf referred to as "the prickle of forbidden excitement." Herr Bauer came to Washington, DC, on a reciprocal visit where he visited one of the US participants who worked at the DoS. Whatever the motive, Herr Bauer had received a bonus and special recognition from the *Stasi* for successfully infiltrating the *Multiplikatören Seminar*. Herr Bauer and his wife were rewarded by the unified Germany with a couple of years in a German slammer for their efforts.

Our German research team was busy in several interesting archive collections. Mr. Richthammer was essential in locating those archives, obtaining access, then getting results from our research team. Getting access to the archives of the East German Ministry for State Security proved to be a complicated problem.

On October 2, 1990, one day before the dissolution of East Germany, Reverend Joachim Gauck was named the Special Commissioner (or "Representative") for the Stasi records by the East German government. One day after the end of the GDR, Reverend Gauck was appointed to the

same position by the government of West Germany. In 1992 Reverend Gauck became the first Federal Commissioner of the Stasi Records Agency. (Reverend Gauck served in this position until 2010 and then in 2012 was elected President of the Federal Republic of Germany.) Due to his work against the secret police and his service as the first Special Commissioner, the *Stasi* records became known informally as the Gauck Archive.

The amount of material in the Gauck Archive was mind-boggling. Reverend Gauck once stated that if all of the records were set up in a straight line, it would stretch for 121 miles (204 km).

When the East Germans realized that the end was near, the *Stasi* went on a shredding frenzy on a scale unknown since Colonel Oliver North and beautiful but somewhat chemically enhanced Secretary Fawn Hall held their own “shredding party” in an ill-fated attempt to obliterate the record of the Reagan administration’s arms-for-hostages swindle.

The *Stasi* burned tons of magnetic tapes and also shredded tens of thousands of documents, leaving behind a mountain of confetti shoved into 17,200 bags that the West Germans are diligently reassembling. (One bag of shredded fragments contained, on average, pieces of 400 documents.)

If American POW/MIAs had been on or moved across the territory of the GDR at any point after 1945, the *Stasi* would have known or been directly involved in some way that would have produced a paper trail. The problem, of course, was how to frame the hypothesis and formulate an appropriate research method that would help the researchers find a tiny needle in an enormous haystack. In light of the fact that by law we had to rely on the Gauck staff for research services, no outside researchers were allowed in, our research hypothesis and method had to make sense to Germans who in turn would be faced with the task to understand and crack the code of how the totalitarian *Stasi* would have organized and placed the files we sought. Mr. Richthammer, the leader of our research team Mrs. Vogt, Sergei, and I spent many hours discussing, arguing, creating, and rejecting various methods. With their invaluable assistance, we formulated a plan that we all agreed if the Gauck Archive staff implemented would optimize the prospect for success.

US efforts to obtain information about and the release of detained service personnel in communist custody was known as “Returned or Exchanged Captured American Personnel,” or RECAP. Various categories of RECAP were designated by one or two suffix letters, such as “RECAP-K,” which meant “RECAP-Korea”; “RECAP-PAC,” which meant “RECAP-Pacific”; and RECAP-WW,” which meant “RECAP-Worldwide.”



Fig. 13.55 US POW “Turncoats” (Photo: Lois Mitchison/AP)

In the US archives I had located a RECAP-WW report, produced by the Army counterintelligence entitled, *List of Known United States Army Defectors In USAREUR*.⁴⁷ This report, declassified from the original SECRET on June 29, 1992, contained the names of two dozen US servicemen who had deserted to Soviet forces in Eastern Europe. These deserters were in addition to the 23 American POWs who refused to return to US military control after the Korean War armistice was signed (Fig. 13.55).

The fate of the Turncoats was well documented. One, Sergeant Rufus E. Douglas, died of a heart attack on June 8, 1954. Of the remaining 22, two changed their minds and returned to US military control in Korea. These two, who were sentenced to ten years and life in prison, were released in 1959. Eleven of the remaining 20 had left China by the end of 1958 to return to the United States.

Once they returned to the United States, they were jailed by the Army. The soldiers were expected to face military trials, until it was discovered that they had already been discharged – which meant that they were not only outside the Army’s jurisdiction but were also owed back pay for their time in confinement. When word of this development reached the other Turncoats still in China, most of them made their way home, too.⁴⁸

The exception was John Dunn, who is on the far right in the photograph of the Turncoats posing in the courtyard of the People’s University in Beijing on February 28, 1956. Dunn, whose whereabouts were unknown for decades, died in Prague on January 1, 1996. By 1966, only three of the Turncoats remained in China, two of which were WWII veterans.

The American servicemen who deserted in Europe were believed to be or last seen in the USSR or various Eastern Europe countries, including the GDR, Poland, and Czechoslovakia.

As of August 1959, of the 24 deserters, one-third (8) were believed to be in Bautzen, a small village approximately 50 kilometers (31 miles) east of Dresden. Bautzen is almost as far east as one could go in Germany before hitting the borders to Poland and the Czech Republic.

By February 16, 1960, the “RECAP-WW” list of American deserters under “Sino-Soviet Control” had grown to 53, the last known whereabouts of 24 of which was recorded as “E. Germany,” one “Russia.”

By July 31, 1961, the U.S. Army’s “RECAP-WW Roster” had grown to 42 U.S. servicemen believed to be “under Sino-Soviet control.” The July 1961 list does not include any indication of the last known whereabouts, nor is there any information concerning the repatriation of any of these deserters.

By August 31, 1963, the “RECAP-WW Roster” had increased to 49 deserters who were categorized as being “under Sino-Soviet control.” There indication of last known whereabouts. Of the 49, two had been returned to U.S. military control by August 1963.

The RECAP-WW Roster does not indicate that the whereabouts of any of the American deserters other than the Korean War Turncoats was the People’s Republic of China.

The American servicemen who had deserted in Europe had been moved as far away from the border to West Germany as geographically possible for a reason.

I wondered, “What’s so special about Bautzen?”

There did not appear to be any reference in history texts or open literature to Bautzen in the context of the accounting program. During the Cold War, Prague had been the “home to a tiny community of Americans, including a handful who had spied for the Soviets.”⁴⁹ The only reference to Bautzen appeared in the *List of Known United States Army Defectors In USAREUR*.

Our strategy was to use the known American deserter names as bait to see if by finding information about the known deserters, we would also collect information concerning other Americans whose names we did not know. Our hypothesis was that information about one American might be located in the same files as information on other Americans. This approach was inspired by the successful research method used by my respected colleague Dr. Indrek Jürjo in the Estonian archives. The question was how to do it without repeating the unforced error that the US side of the US-Russian Joint Commission had committed.

In contrast to a list of missing persons whose fates were undetermined, I had the names of American deserters who had willfully jumped to the other side. We knew who they were and we knew also that they had been on Soviet-controlled territory. Soviet authorities were well aware of who had deserted to or been transferred to the USSR and under what circumstances. We would not be giving anything away by submitting a list of American deserters, as we were not searching for them.

The US side of the Commission had committed a self-inflicted wound when they compiled a list of names of missing American servicemen, gave the list to the Russians, then asked the Russians if they could determine fates of those individuals. This approach had gone horribly wrong in 1918. There was no reason why an identical approach would be any more productive in 1992. The US side of the USRJC gave the Russians the names of the missing, which provided the Russians with the list of Americans the location or fate or whom they would know to mire and obliterate.

By telling the Russian side that the US side knew nothing about the fates of the names on the US list, the Russians were given a get-out-of-jail-free card. The Russians could simply reply, “We search diligently and found no information,” which they did with predictable regularity. Such a reply would be impossible to fact check or reject. In contrast, there was no way that the Germans could reply that they had no information about a dozen or so American deserters who everyone knew had been in the GDR.

Our hypothesis was if the Gauck archivists found any trace of the Americans we knew about, those files would be in the same place as the files of the missing whose whereabouts or fates we knew nothing.

There was another reason why we could disclose the names on the list of deserters. We had no mandate to locate or account for deserters. The official list of the missing was maintained by DPMO, and none of the names on the list of the deserters was on the DPMO list. The list of names of the deserters was in the public domain, so we weren't compromising classified information. Our research hypothesis, therefore, was that whoever or whatever organization was responsible for managing or monitoring American citizens in the GDR, whether a deserter or a POW/MIA, that organization may have been responsible for managing or monitoring all Americans in the GDR.

We could not just barge into the Gauck Archive and submit a research request. I take that back. We could have barged in, submitted a request, and gotten exactly nothing for our effort.

The Gauck Archive was one of the most politically sensitive issues to emerge after unification. The Stasi had spied on approximately six of the GDR's 17 million citizens. Neighbor had spied on neighbor, husbands on wives, plus there were radio intercepts of West German phone calls, including hours and hours of conversations involving West German politicians and officials.

We decided that the best way to get the party started was to talk to the Gauck Archive leadership. Helmut made the necessary arrangements, and then Helmut and I went to the Gauck Archive main office in Berlin to submit our proposal. We figured it was to our advantage to appear in person rather than to submit an unsolicited written proposal.

If our hypothesis was correct, this would lead the researcher to the place where the records of other Americans might be located. Perhaps other Americans are mentioned in the reports made on the deserters. If there were other names, other files of other names, then I could determine if any of those names were of the missing.

We asked the Gauck Archive to appoint a researcher who would look for the names on the deserter list. We also requested any file that contained my name, including reports submitted by Herr Mario Bauer. They agreed, which is how Dr. Herbert Ziehm joined our research team.

Following our meeting at the Gauck Archive, I departed Berlin on December 23, 1993, through Tegel International, historical artifact of the airlift.

I headed home for Christmas.

THE STRANGE CASE OF STEPHEN WECHSLER,
AN AMERICAN DESERTER

In October 1994, I headed back to Germany for what had been planned as the last research trip.

I journaled:

September 29, 1994 – DFI, DC

Just finished a two-hour interview with Bob Burns of the Associated Press (AP). He's working on a story concerning how my research contributed to the McDonough Korea War case. If only I could drive a stake through the heart of the US-Russian Joint Commission. It's a waste of time, tax \$\$ and is a needless emotional burden on the families.

A ferry, the Estonia, carrying ca. 900 passengers from Tallinn, Estonia to Stockholm sank yesterday in 60 MPH winds and 50°F seas. Over 800 people died. Most of the victims were Swedes. This is a tragedy of unprecedented proportions. Greatest loss of life for Sweden since Charles XII was destroyed at Poltava in 1709.

I'm off to Berlin-Frankfurt-Bonn and Köln on Sunday. This will be my final trip on POW/MIA business. The work in the German archives turned out to be rather interesting.

My next encounter with Mr. Burns some 20 years later would bring down much of the accounting program.

* * *

I arrived in Germany on October 3, 1994, which was Unification Day, a national holiday. All of the shops and restaurants were closed except for the odd *bier kneipe* or pizza place or kebab joint run by immigrants.

Mr. Helmut Richthammer met me in Berlin.

In the hundreds of pages of records we obtained from the Gauck Archive, of particular interest was the information about something called the International Solidarity Club in Bautzen. This is where western deserters were sent by the Soviet Union to be indoctrinated into the wondrous ways of socialism. As shown by the pin drop in the following map, Bautzen was about as far away from West Germany as one could go without crossing into Poland or Czechoslovakia (Fig. 13.56).

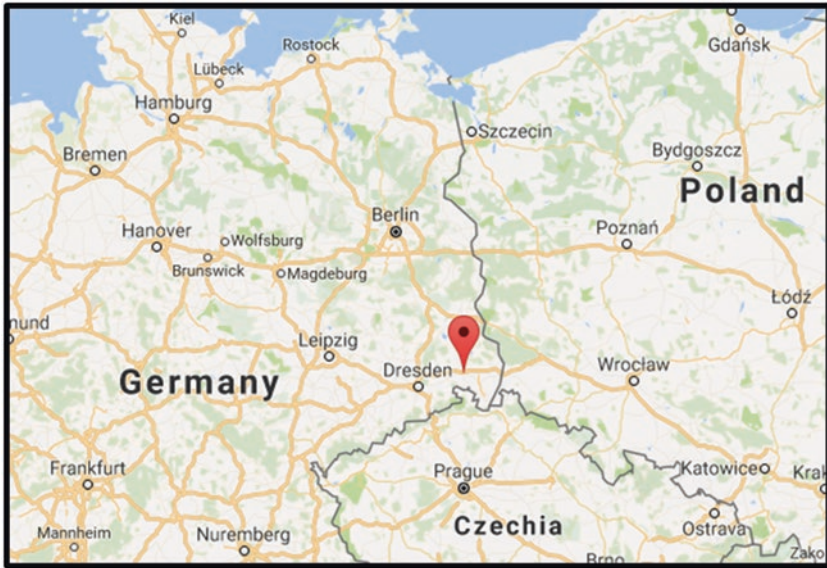


Fig. 13.56 Bautzen (Image: Google Earth)

The International Solidarity Club in Bautzen was a loosely guarded camp where Western deserters were housed until the Soviet or East German authorities could decide what to do with them. The residents of the Bautzen camp included American deserters who were criminals and petty thieves who had deserted to avoid military justice. A few were African-American servicemen such as James Pulley, whose reason for deserting to the Soviet zone was that he could no longer stand the racism in the US Army. (Pulley, who became one of East Germany's most famous jazz singers, chose to stay in Germany following re-unification.)

The Gauck Archive records provided descriptions of American deserters who passed through the Bautzen camp, as well as several photographs of International Solidarity Club residents never before seen in the Western world. (All of the photographs that we turned over to DPMO were "lost.")

One of the Gauck Archive documents puzzled me. The document, which reported on the conduct of some of the Bautzen residents, was written in German. At the top of the page, however, the word *übersetzt* (“translated”) was stamped, not handwritten, but stamped. The fact that it was stamped suggested to me that the translation was a routine task. I asked myself, “Why would a report concerning activities in a camp in Germany be translated *into* German?”

Then it dawned on me. I had answered my own question. My Eureka moment ended with me saying aloud, “Unless the report had been *first* written in a language other than German, perhaps Russian?”

I was now interested in the International Solidarity Camp but didn’t know how to proceed. I said to Helmut Richthammer, who was in charge of our research in Germany, “If only we could talk to one of the American deserters who had been there.”

Mr. Richthammer replied, “Leave it to me.”

Leaving things to Mr. Richthammer usually produced good results.

* * *

I’m not sure how he pulled it off, but Mr. Richthammer arranged a meeting with US Army deserter Mr. Stephen Wechsler. I had first become aware of Mr. Wechsler through a profile of him that was included in an Army counterintelligence report, *List of Known United States Army Defectors In USAREUR*. I did not agree with the use of the word “defector,” preferring instead to refer to active duty servicemen who abandoned their duty station as “deserters.”

The Army report stated:

WECHSLER, STEPHEN

Background: Born 1925, New York City. Graduate of Harvard University. Mother was suspected of Communist Party activity. Father was employed by US government 1942 to 1949. Father assumes blame for WECHSLER’s defection because he (father) was overseas three years without his family during government employment and failed to provide substantial home life. WECHSLER was an avowed Communist thinker. He was active in the Communist Party, several Communist fronts, and attended the World Youth Festival, Prague, Czechoslovakia, 1947. In 1948 he was arrested for illegal picketing of men registering for induction into the US Armed Forces. He was inducted into the Army 1951, making no admission of past subversive activities.

Reason for defection: Pro-communist attitude.

The Army's counterintelligence profile was close, but not entirely accurate, particularly concerning Mr. Wechsler's decision to desert.

I journaled:

October 5, 1994 – Berlin, Lichtenberg Bahnhof

I'm seeing Stephen Wechsler at 16.30 today. He deserted in 1952!

We met Wechsler in the lobby of our hotel. Helmut told me that Mr. Wechsler insisted on meeting in an open place with lots of people around because he was concerned about being abducted by the US military. His concern was real.

Three years before, USAF deserter and spy Jeff Carney, whose name had been changed to "Jens Karney" after being granted East German citizenship, had been snatched off a street near his apartment in the Friedrichshain neighborhood of the former East Berlin in 1991. Carney, who had spied for the *Stasi* for at least five years, was sent to the United States to face a court-martial that sentenced him to 38 years in prison in the US Disciplinary Barracks, Fort Leavenworth.⁵⁰ Ironically, Carney's whereabouts in Berlin had been betrayed to the Office of Special Intelligence (OSI) by a former *Stasi* officer.

I sat next to Mr. Wechsler on a sofa near the reception, using pen and paper instead of a tape recorder, which Mr. Wechsler said he would not allow.

Mr. Stephen Wechsler, a Harvard University graduate, had joined the Communist Party while he was an undergrad.⁵¹ When he was drafted in 1951, however, Wechsler signed the mandatory Loyalty Oath that stated he was not and had not ever been a member of the Communist Party, which was perjury. While stationed near Nuremburg in Germany, Wechsler received an order to report to the JAG's office. The penalty for lying on the Loyalty Oath was up to five years in prison at hard labor. He was both afraid and convinced that the Army had found out about his Communist Party membership. Mr. Wechsler told me that he was afraid that he was going to be sent to Fort Leavenworth to make little rocks out of big ones for a long time.

Rather than taking the risk of taking the meeting with the JAG, even though he had only six more months to serve before his hitch was up, Mr. Wechsler deserted from the US Army in 1952. He snuck out of his Army base then made his way through the American zone in Austria, which was still occupied by the four powers, Britain, France, USSR, and the United States.

From the American zone, Wechsler swam across the Danube river that separated the United States from the Soviet zone in Austria. Initially his desertion went unnoticed on both sides. After he made it to the Soviet side of the river, there were no Soviet troops in sight. Mr. Wechsler had to wander around for a few hours until an Austrian policeman picked him up and drove him to the Red Army headquarters. He spent the next couple of weeks in jail while the Soviet Army tried to figure out if he was an authentic deserter and if so what to do with him. They finally transferred Mr. Wechsler to Potsdam where he was questioned for several days.

During the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA hearing in 1992, General Dmitri Volkogonov produced a KGB report on the Wechsler desertion.⁵² A translation of that report follows (Fig. 13.57):

The Soviet version of events is consistent with Mr. Wechsler's account.

After the Potsdam interview, the Soviets sent Mr. Wechsler to the International Solidarity Camp, also known as the House of International Solidarity, located in Bautzen, Germany. Bautzen, which lies approximately 30 miles (48 km) from Dresden near the border of the former Czechoslovakia, is located in the easternmost part of the former East Germany.

<p>[handwritten No. 14]</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[handwritten *268*] Copy Top SECRET Copy No. 5 [handwritten *11*]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">To Comrade G. M. MOLENKOV Comrade L. P. BEREA Comrade N. A. BULGANIN</p> <p>We are reporting that, according to the Directorate of Counter-Intelligence, MGB Central Groups of Forces, on 17 August of this year, the Austrian police arrested and took to the Soviet Military Commandant Staff, an American Army private of the 169th Infantry Regiment, 43rd Infantry Division, WECHSLER Stefan, born in 1923, a native of New York, and an American citizen.</p> <p>During questioning, WECHSLER said that from 1945 up to 1949 he studied at Harvard College, where he joined the Communist Party. Upon graduation, by the order of the Communist Party, he carried out propaganda work at various institutions in the city of Buffalo.</p> <p>In January 1951, he was drafted into the American Army, hid his party affiliation, served in Virginia and in October 1951 arrived in West Germany with the 49th Infantry Division. He was initially in Munich, then moved to Nurnberg.</p> <p>WECHSLER handed over two copies of a letter of the Procurator, Military Department of the USA, in which he is accused that while a member of the US Communist Party he signed testimony [illeg], [illeg] information on his active work in the Communist Party and a request to give clarification of this matter.</p> <p>WECHSLER went on to say that in order to escape the ramifications of membership in the Communist Party, he left the unit and went</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">492</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[TPR 36-42]</p> <p style="text-align: right;">[handwritten *269*] 2.</p> <p>by train to Lipets, then swam across the Danaj into the Soviet Zone of Occupation in Austria with the intention of receiving asylum.</p> <p>WECHSLER is being sent to a screening point run by the authorized agent of the MGB USSR in Germany for a check.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">S. GOGLIDZE</p> <p>*22* August 1953</p>
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Fig. 13.57 KGB report on Wechsler, translated by Task Force Russia (Images: Public Domain)

Mr. Wechsler, who wanted to protect his family from the consequences of his desertion, decided to change his name. Mr. Wechsler stated:

The Soviet officer in charge of me said: ‘Go ahead, think of one.’ Three times, I tried but I couldn’t. So he said: ‘How about Victor Grossman?’ I didn’t like it one bit, but I was so ashamed I couldn’t think of a name that I liked so I went with it. Of course, I didn’t really think then I’d be stuck with it for life.

This is how Stephen Wechsler became Victor Grossman.

Mr. Wechsler described life in the Bautzen camp in matter-of-fact terms. He told me the residents called it the “Defector Club.”

I showed Mr. Wechsler the document stamped *übersetzt* that had attracted my attention to the Bautzen camp in the first place. He told me that the camp and its residents were under the control of the Soviets, including elements of the Red Army and KGB. He was convinced the document was a KGB report. Mr. Grossman speculated that the original report had been written in Russian by one of the KGB minders, then translated into German for use by the East German authorities, including the Stasi which is how the memo ended up in the Gauck Archive.

The KGB snitch report stated that there were a couple of Irish residents who spent an inordinate amount of time getting drunk and wandering around Bautzen painting swastikas on walls. The KGB officer noted glumly, “Our efforts to indoctrinate our Irish comrades with fraternal socialist principles do not appear to be working on them” (Fig. 13.58).

After a few years studying journalism in Leipzig and graduating from Karl Marx University, Mr. Grossman became an accomplished author. Mr. Grossman told me about his career as a journalist in East Germany. He had written books about the United States, including one about his experience hitchhiking across the country. Due to the small problem that he had never actually hitchhiked across the United States, Mr. Wechsler wrote the book using his imagination, describing what it would have been like if he had actually done such a thing. (Mr. Wechsler told others that he had indeed hitchhiked across the United States.) (Figs. 13.59 and 13.60).

Mr. Grossman acted as Ms. Jane Fonda’s interpreter when she visited the GDR cities of Bitterfeld and Wolfen in February 1990, which made for an interesting story. Ms. Fonda had disguised herself during the visit by wearing sunglasses. Mr. Wechsler’s production credits include “translating and providing voices for 200 episodes of the television western series *Rawhide*.”⁵³



Fig. 13.58 Residents of the International Solidarity Camp, Bautzen (Photo: Peter Köpf) (“Deserting the wrong way: Why soldiers went East,” *The Local*, April 12, 2013. <https://www.thelocal.de/20130412/49097>)

Since I had worked at Harvard in 1979, Mr. Wechsler and I made small talk about life in Cambridge. He told me about his “unfocused” undergraduate years in Dunster House that included participation in the Harvard Liberal Union, his chairmanship of the American Youth for Democracy, and his singing in the Glee Club. Then, of course, was his membership in the campus branch of the Communist Party.

Mr. Grossman said that he believed he was the only person in the world who held degrees from both Harvard and Karl Marx University. He told me he had recently attended his 50th Harvard class reunion (Class of 1949). I asked him whether he was concerned about being arrested when he arrived in the United States. Grossman said that he had written to Harvard and received assurances that he would not be arrested.

Mr. Wechsler told me that he was met at JFK airport by two Army officers, who transferred him to Fort Dix where he was given a dishonorable discharge.



Fig. 13.59 Stephen Wechsler, early 1950s (Both Wechsler/Grossman photos appeared in “Jewish Communists expats in East Germany recall heady 1950s,” Micki Weinberg, *The Times of Israel*, September 27, 2014. The photo from the early 1950s is credited to “Courtesy.” The photo from 2014 is credited to “CC BY-SA, via Wikipedia”.)

I journaled:

October 7, 1994 – Bonn, Germany

Wednesday was a very long day, as was Tuesday. The traffic in Berlin was unbearable, turning each car trip into a 1.5 hour crawl. We managed to see all four of our appointments in Berlin. Four hours of conversation crammed into three days. Sound fantastically inefficient, but the traffic made it so.

Saw Amb Maretzki in Potsdam. Had fish soup at the Wannsee restaurant, site of the infamous Endlösung conference in ca. 1940. Saw Professor Dr. Keetz in Wähdheide. He missed our first appointment so we had to drive to

Fig. 13.60 Victor Grossman, ca. 2014



Potsdam and back again. Finally saw Dr. Ziehm at the Stasi archives in the former E zone. Then the American deserter Stephen Wechsler came to our hotel Schweitzerhof. He swam across the Danube to Soviet forces in 1952 and didn't come back to the USA until 1994. Sort of a strange fellow, though he speaks English with no trace of 45 years living abroad.

I turned the conversation with Wechsler/Grossman to my main area of interest by asking Mr. Wechsler if the Army officers who met him at JFK airport asked him anything about "America's highest national priority." Did the Army officers ask him whether he knew anything about POW/MIAs in the Soviet zone? He replied, "They did not."

In response to my question about who else was in the International Solidarity Camp, Mr. Wechsler said there were several dozen deserters who had fled disciplinary action for robbery, assault, and other crimes.

I asked Mr. Wechsler specifically about whether there were other Americans in the Bautzen camp. Mr. Wechsler remembered several, including a couple of them whose names were included on the US Army's list of known deserters. He also remembered two American servicemen whose names were not on the list of known deserters.

Mr. Wechsler recalled that during his time in the International Solidarity Camp in Bautzen, he met one US Army soldier and saw another who was unusual. One he met told Wechsler he had come to Bautzen from Korea, during the war. Wechsler gave me the man's surname—Blevins. He didn't know the first name. I figured this was a rather credible eyewitness account from an American fluent in English, a Harvard graduate no less.

The other American serviceman he saw was a wounded USAF officer who was brought to the camp by ambulance with a military escort, which attracted attention. The USAF officer was escorted by the Red Army, which was an indication that he was being treated as a VIP. Camp guards kept the regular residents at a distance. Herr Grossman said he saw the USAF officer get out of the car and go into the camp administration building. Mr. Wechsler noticed the man appeared to be wounded, as he had one arm in a sling and his flying suit was singed and torn in several places. Mr. Wechsler told us that the word around the camp was that the USAF officer had been in the Korean War. Herr Grossman never heard the man's name.

As part of our research strategy, Mr. Richthammer had placed ads in several newspapers asking anyone with information about the Bautzen camp to contact us. A man who said he had been an ambulance driver in the early 1950s responded to our ad. He told us that he had driven a wounded US pilot who had come from Korea to Bautzen. He never knew the man's name so he couldn't help us with that. The ambulance driver's story appeared to corroborate Wechsler's story.

If Mr. Wechsler's account is correct, it corroborates two parts of our research hypothesis. First, Americans were passing through areas where the local population shared similar physical characteristics. Second, due to the fact that the two Americans were spotted in the International Solidarity Camp, which was used to accommodate deserters, the two Americans might have been deserters rather than POWs transferred against their will. Mr. Wechsler and many other American servicemen had deserted. Perhaps Mr. Wechsler, a deserter, had seen two other deserters. This would be consistent with my observation that some of the American servicemen who ended up in the Soviet Union had done so voluntarily and had no desire to be found.

This information about the Army private and the wounded USAF officer was passed to DPMO, minus the name of the Army soldier Mr. Wechsler had met. I was curious to find out how carefully DPMO read my reports, if at all, and also wanted to judge DPMO's level of interest. I did

not disclose that the information was obtained from Wechsler/Grossman to determine whether DPMO would at least be curious about the source of information.

There was no feedback, comments, or questions from anyone at DPMO, DoD or anyone else in the federal government concerning Mr. Wechsler's disclosures.

This was another example of the practical world in which "America's highest national priority" operated.

* * *

NOTES

1. "Prepared Statement By Mr. Alan C. Ptak To The Asia-Pacific Subcommittee Of The House Foreign Affairs Committee," July 1, 1992, *Toon Mission to Moscow*, op. cit., p. 44.
2. Marshal Shaposhnikov subsequently became the Commander in Chief of the CIS Armed Forces.
3. The source of these claims was never considered to be particularly credible. Some of the newspaper accounts that linked American POW/MIAs to the GDR were written by the same person who claimed, and subsequently proven wrong, that American POW/MIAs had been "abandoned" in a graveyard in Odessa, Ukraine. Task Force Russia concluded that these assertions, regardless of their dubious credibility, had to be investigated. See Mark Sauter, "Documents point to U.S. POWs in East Germany," *Tacoma (Washington) News Tribune*, December 5, 1992.
4. *POW/MIA Issues: Volume 1, World War II and the Early Cold War*, op. cit., passim.
5. *POW/MIA Archive Research Project: Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Berlin, Executive Summary*, Paul M. Cole, (Washington, DC: Defense Forecasts International Inc., December 1994, Revised February 1995), pp. 2-3.
6. *Report of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, <http://www.miafacts.org/SSC%20Report/sec%2029.htm>
7. "Reflections on the late 1980s and Early 1990s: An Opinion," Küllö Arjakas, in *Estonia: Identity and Independence*, edited by Jean-Jacques Subrenat, (Rodopi, 2004), p. 248.
8. -25.6° Celsius.
9. -13° Celsius.
10. There are no diacritical marks on the Swedish inscription.

11. Large sample theory basically states that if the sample size is large enough, anything's possible.
12. At the beginning of the battle of Stalingrad, over 75,000 women had completed military training. Soviet commander General Chuikov recognized the important role played by women in the Red Army, both in the rear and at the front.
13. "Lithuania: A Problem of Disclosure," Tomas Skucas, *Demokratizatsiya*. https://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/demokratizatsiya%20archive/GWASHU_DEMO_12_3/71TQUU2R0U717417/71TQUU2R0U717417.pdf
14. Dr. Romuald Misiunis, who was one of our most valuable consultants on KGB archives, eventually became Lithuania's ambassador to Israel.
15. https://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/demokratizatsiya%20archive/GWASHU_DEMO_12_3/71TQUU2R0U717417/71TQUU2R0U717417.pdf
16. www.wanderant.com
17. <http://coldwarsites.net/country/lithuania/the-kgb-building-prison-and-memorials-vilnius/>
18. <http://www.comtourist.com/travel/baltics/photos-vilnius-kgb-hq/>
19. "Lithuania: A Problem of Disclosure," by Tomas Skucas, *Demokratizatsiya*. https://www.gwu.edu/~ieresgwu/assets/docs/demokratizatsiya%20archive/GWASHU_DEMO_12_3/71TQUU2R0U717417/71TQUU2R0U717417.pdf
20. "Lithuania: A Problem of Disclosure," op. cit.
21. Memorandum For: Chief, SR Division From: ■■■■ Chief, SR/2 Subject: Termination of Project AEROOT SECRET March 2, 1960. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0064.pdf
22. "Soviet Russia – REDBIRD/REDSOX," [Globalsecurity.org](http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/ops/ussr-redsox.htm) (undated). <http://www.globalsecurity.org/intell/ops/ussr-redsox.htm>
23. Memorandum for: SSR/COP, via CSR/2 From: ■■■■ Subject: Plan for AEBASIN/REDSOX Spring 1954 Operation SECRET December 28, 1953. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0016.pdf
24. <https://www.geni.com/people/Kalju-Kukk/600000025696370333>
25. *War in the Woods: Estonia's Struggle for Survival, 1944–1956*, Mart Laar (Washington, DC, Compass Press, 1992). Image 40 (no page number) includes images of "maps, money, and radio equipment" taken from the "alleged CIA agent Kalju Kukk." Image 41 includes images of espionage equipment taken from the "alleged CIA agent Hans Toomla."
26. *The History of Information Security: A Comprehensive Handbook*, Edited by Karl Maria Michael de Leeuw, Jan Bergstra (Elsevier 2007), "Eavesdroppers

- of the Kremlin: KGB Sigint During the Cold War,” by Matthew M. Aid, p. 510.
27. Project Outline Cryptonym AEROOT Area of Operations: Estonian SSR and vicinity TOP SECRET April 14, 1955. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0020.pdf
 28. Memorandum for the Record From: ■■■■■ Estonian Section Subject: Cancellation of Planned SR/2 AEROOT REDSOX 1956 Mission SECRET February 27, 1956. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0026.pdf
 29. Twilight Warriors: Covert Air Operations Against the USSR, Peebles, Curtis (Naval Trust Press, June 11, 2013), “The Baltic Deception Exposed,” no page number. https://books.google.com/books/about/Twilight_Warriors.html?id=OV7XanBoZqwC&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q=Baltic&f=false
 30. Project Outline Cryptonym AEROOT Area of Operations: Estonian SSR and vicinity TOP SECRET April 14, 1955. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0020.pdf
 31. *The History of Information Security: A Comprehensive Handbook*, Edited by Karl Maria Michael de Leeuw, Jan Bergstra (Elsevier 2007), “Eavesdroppers of the Kremlin: KGB Sigint During the Cold War,” by Matthew M. Aid, p. 510.
 32. Headquarters Case Officer ■■■■■ Cryptonym: AEBASIN FI/1 Project Outline for Estonian SSR and Vicinity TOP SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION May 26, 1953, p. 5, and Part II, p. 1. (“■■■■■” indicates redacted material). https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0013.pdf
 33. Headquarters Case Officer ■■■■■ Cryptonym: AEBASIN FI/1 Project Outline for Estonian SSR and Vicinity TOP SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION May 26, 1953, p. 5, and Part II, p. 9. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0013.pdf
 34. Memorandum For: Chief of Operations, DD/P From: ■■■■■ Foreign Intelligence Subject: Project AEROOT (Renewal) June 17, 1955. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEROOT%20AEBASIN_0022.pdf
 35. “Status of POW/MIA Negotiations With North Korea,” Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security, House of Representatives, June 20, 1996, p. 50.
 36. “Taking Lyon on the Ninth Day?” edited by Vojtech Mastny, Petr Lunák, Anna Locher, and Christian Nuenlist, *Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pack (PHP)*, May 2000, p. 3. This document was originally in the Russian language. <http://www.php.isn.ethz.ch/lory1.ethz.ch/collections/colltopic647e.html?lng=en&id=14944>

37. *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police*, by John O. Koehler (Denver, CO: Westview Press, 1999), <https://www.nytimes.com/books/first/k/koehler-stasi.html>. Hoensbroech was related to Queen Fabiola of Belgium. The Stasi originally demanded \$1 million but settled for \$450,000.
38. *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police*, op. cit.
39. Ambassador Maretzki described his experience in his memoir, *Kimismus in Nordkorea: Analyse des Letzten DDR-Botschafters in Pjoengjang*, (Kim-ism in North Korea: Analysis of the Last GDR Ambassador to Pyongyang) (Böblingen, Germany: Anita Tykve Verlag, 1991).
40. Central Intelligence Agency Information Report Subject: American POW's in Hamhung SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION March 12, 1953. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80-00810A000400690006-9.pdf>
41. Central Intelligence Agency Information Report Subject: 1. German POW Jet Plane Pilots in Manchuria, 2. Air Activities in Communist China CONFIDENTIAL / CONTROL – U.S. OFFICIALS ONLY August 28, 1951. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP82-00457R008500130002-6.pdf>
42. The condition of remains representing a minimum number of individuals (MNI) in the hundred was described, with photographs made public for the first time, in a monograph by Dr. Thomas D. Holland published by the RAND Corporation that was incorporated with proper attribution into *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit.
43. *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police*, op. cit.
44. *Stasi: The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police*, op. cit.
45. “Shocking New Research: Stasi Had Thousands of Spies in West Germany,” Spiegel Online, Gunther Latsch and Udo Ludwig, November 24, 2011. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/shocking-new-research-stasi-had-thousands-of-spies-in-west-germany-a-799335.html>
46. “Code Name ‘Kid’: American Stasi Spy Tells His Story,” Jürgen Dahlkamp, Der Spiegel Online, August 14, 2013. <http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/american-stasi-agent-describes-his-experiences-in-new-book-a-916374.html>
47. The entire report is included as Appendix 22 in *Volume 3: Appendices*, op. cit. Wechsler’s profile appears on page 284.
48. “The Korean War Prisoner Who Never Came Home,” Brendan McNally, *New Yorker*, December 9, 2013. The AP photograph of the Turncoats appears in this article. <http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-korean-war-prisoner-who-never-came-home>
49. “The Korean War Prisoner Who Never Came Home,” op. cit.

50. "Catching an Air Force Spy," National Museum of the Air Force, June 1, 2015. <http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/Visit/Museum-Exhibits/Fact-Sheets/Display/Article/197642/catching-an-air-force-spy/>
51. "The lonely American: Speaking with a US defector to East Germany," *The Local*, November 3, 2009. <http://www.thelocal.de/20091103/23003>
52. *Hearings On Cold War, Korea and WWII POWs, Hearings before the Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, U.S. Senate, November 10 and 11, 1992, p. 491-2.
53. "Grad Reflects on Glory Days Behind Iron Curtain," Zhenzhen Lu, *Harvard Crimson*, April 18, 2003. <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2003/4/18/grad-reflects-on-glory-days-behind/?page=2>



“Evil Creeps,” Conspiracy Theorists, and DPMO’s Activities

“EVIL CREEPS”

Given the noble nature of the accounting program, aka the “nation’s highest national priority,” one wouldn’t expect to find con men, grifters, and others who exploited the issue. In fact, “evil creeps” used the mission for personal gain, as a way to take advantage of others or to spend public money for private pursuits. Some human beings are hardwired to take advantage of the weak, naïve, innocent, and grieving. Others simply took advantage of the lack of effective Congressional and DoD oversight in order to use the accounting program for personal gain.

During the course of the RAND project, accounts of con men and shysters who exploited the POW/MIA issue and took advantage of the families of the missing surfaced in abundance. The earliest references in declassified military reports indicated that false and misleading information concerning missing American servicemen from WWII had been produced in Macau. Why Macau, a Portuguese territory until 1999, had become the source of many of the false reports was never made clear, but the false reports emanating from there were plentiful nonetheless.

In 1994, journalist Ms. Susan Katz Keating exposed how the POW/MIA myth has been encouraged by profiteers, nefarious do-gooders, and self-appointed commandos such as James “Bo” Gritz, whose private-sector forays into Southeast Asia, including bogus reports of “live sightings,” improperly elevated the hopes of MIA families for years.¹ Ms. Keating described that at the core of the cover-up-and-conspiracy theories

lurked a small number of people who generated phony stories, passed along false information, exaggerated their skill sets, attacked government officials, conned family members, concocted serious-sounding newsletters, created World Wide Web pages, hounded members of Congress, and did everything else they could think of to promote their own personal interests. If the issue had not been so serious, some of antics of the “evil creeps” would have been hilarious, but, for the most part, the “evil creeps” were shameless and their antics despicable. Some of the “despicable human beings,” who referred to themselves as “activists,” preyed on the emotions of families of missing men while promoting themselves. According to various sources, former POW “Red” McDaniels, former Congressman Billy Hendon, and Mr. Ted Sampley made nice livings from their phony stories.²

An astonishing number of “evil creeps,” swindlers, con men, and charlatans preyed upon families desperate for information about a missing American serviceman. Congressman Sam Gejdenson stated in a 1996 House hearing³:

As a child, I remember people used to come around and tell you that for \$10,000, we could find a cousin or an uncle hidden away in Siberia somewhere. In virtually every instance, the money disappeared and no information was gathered.

Congressman Dornan added during the same hearing:

Mrs. McDonald, I met her at the league meetings. Her young son, a Navy pilot, was one of the tougher cases. She gets a call, “Come to Mexico City.” This is a mom now in her 70’s. She goes to Mexico City and some evil creep says, here is a picture of your son, half of it. Give me \$10,000 and I will go get you the other half. She comes up with the \$10,000 and never hears from him again and now she is dead. If that does not tell you the horror of this case and the scavengerous people who will hang on the fringes.

In 1992, Senator John McCain, who convened a hearing to expose the revolting conduct of the “evil creeps,” stated:

Mr. Chairman, just two days ago, one of our Committee investigators received a call from a distraught POW/MIA family member. It seems a well-known POW “activist” called this family member on Thanksgiving eve and tried to give her fraudulent pictures of her missing loved one. The

POW/MIA in the pictures, who this “activist” claimed was still alive, was one of the MIAs which Colonel Dai told you he had seen killed.

Mr. Chairman, today’s hearing is our Committee’s first detailed public examination of the exploitation of the POW/MIA issue by dishonorable individuals like the activist I have just mentioned. Sadly, the publicity attending this issue has been a powerful attraction for far too many scoundrels. It comes as no surprise to Committee members, that I am gratified that the Committee has begun to seriously address many of the questionable practices of some so-called POW activist groups.

Such an examination is long overdue.⁴

Senator McCain provided some specific examples of “cruel frauds” perpetrated by “scoundrels” and other self-appointed POW “activists.”

- Whoever cut a photograph of three Russian farmers from a Soviet magazine and passed it on as a photo of Robertson, Lundy and Stevens perpetrated a cruel fraud.
- Whoever cut a picture of a Russian baker from another Soviet magazine and marketed it as a picture of an American POW perpetrated a cruel fraud.
- Whoever took a picture of a Laotian tribesman and passed it on as a picture of Daniel Borah perpetrated a cruel fraud.⁵
- Whoever took a picture of a German bird smuggler and claimed it was Donald Carr has perpetrated a cruel fraud.⁶
- Whoever raises money or garners publicity or sells a book or makes a name for himself by disseminating information about POWs which he or she knows to be false has perpetrated a cruel fraud.

The people who have done these things are not zealots in a good cause. In my opinion they are criminals, and some of the most craven, most cynical and most despicable human beings to ever run a scam.

Some of these individuals were in the front ranks of those who demand the declassification of all POW/MIA information, and who have accused many decent hardworking government and military officers of conspiring to deceive the American people. Yet, when they were asked to allow Committee investigators to examine their own organization’s records and to submit to interviews by the Committee they refused. One of these individuals resorted to a level of cynicism that is unusual even in this town. He refused to honor a Committee subpoena, and then used the fact that the Committee was examining his own activities to solicit further donations.

The POW/MIA Accounting Community attracted “evil creeps” like moths to the flame.

Some of these “evil creeps” emerged from their chrysalis in the private sector. Others pupated at DPMO.

This chapter documents examples of this nefarious activity.

* * *

23,000 WORLD WAR II POWS

In addition to the “evil creeps” who preyed upon the accounting program, there were just as many, if not more, conspiracy theorists, each of whom gave the word “theory” a bad name.

Conspiracy theorists, more often than not, were mean-spirited cowards who did not fight fair.

* * *

Compare and contrast the factual record of the origins of the RAND and DFI projects with how Mr. James D. Sanders described these projects⁷:

As the clouds of Government cover-up appeared on the horizon in the early 1990s, Paul M. Cole, Ph.D, was hired by Dod (sic) to write the Government version of possible Soviet retention of American POWs after World War II. This “report” was financed at taxpayer expense under DoD contract number MDA903-90-C-0004. It can best be described as an excellent example of bureaucratic obfuscation of a fifty-year old cover-up.

In order to create an alleged scholarly defense of the bureaucracy, Dr. Cole was forced to ignore Battle Casualties of the Army, found in the National Archives (sic) Record Group 407.

[Two of Dr. Cole’s points] are so uncompromisingly incompetently written that absolutely no point can be discerned from the verbiage.

The final two [points] are nothing more than hysterical polemics.

Neither Paul Cole or any other member of the bureaucracy performed this analysis---it would prove extraordinary incompetence (sic) to even attempt such an analysis. On the other hand, the bureaucracy does have the ability to take the 99,101 known POWs and cross-reference them with the roster of POWs who did return. But neither Paul Cole or (sic) DOD did this---for obvious reasons. It would provide a list of Americans kept by the Soviet Union after World War II with the full knowledge of the United States Government.

Note that Mr. Sanders, who not only had not done what he accused me of being directed not to do, produced no evidence to support his illogical, fabricated, and fundamentally preposterous findings. “Hysteria” is not the plural of “evidence.”

Mr. Sanders, someone I have never met, spoken to, or exchanged any correspondence, was able to deduce that I was “hired to write the Government version,” that my work was “bureaucratic obfuscation of a fifty-year old cover up,” that I was tasked to “create an alleged scholarly defense of the bureaucracy,” that I was “forced” by some sinister force (Mr. Sanders is silent on who this might have been) to ignore certain records, that parts of my report were “uncompromisingly incompetently written” (not bad for someone whose glass house is filled with typos), in his own hysterical polemic alleged that I had engaged in “hysterical polemics,” that I did not undertake a certain task because to do so would have proved “extraordinary incompetence” (what sense does that make?), and that I was somehow in cahoots with a US-Soviet conspiracy to conceal the names of US POWs who were allegedly retained by the USSR with the “full knowledge” of the US government. This list of alleged faults, which lacks any foundation in fact, has no anchor in reality.

Mr. Sanders nonetheless clings to the idea that more than 20,000 US POWs had been abandoned, with the full knowledge of General and President Eisenhower, to a gulag hellhole, yet more than 70 years later, no evidence of such a massive movement of Americans has emerged from any credible source in the U.S. archives or from any primary source in any of the republics in the former USSR.

Mr. Sanders’s tactics—which included ad hominem attacks, wild hyperbole, name-calling, a smear campaign, the inability to prevail in a fair fight, a pre-occupation with my work that can only be described as pathologically creepy, and boorish behavior, just to name a few—were not scholarship.

Mr. Mark Noah, someone I have never met or corresponded with, who didn’t bother to speak to me, had no knowledge of the research our group carried out in Soviet archives, had the hubris to assert that his opinions superseded evidence.

[Dr. Cole’s] entire RAND Corporation report which was nothing more than a DPMO paid way to say they never knew anything about the thousands of US POWs Stalin held hostage and disposed of and Boris Yeltsin offered DPMO the first 4,000 dossiers on them in 1992 and they turned it down as they didn’t want the story in the official communication traffic. Its (sic) very pathetic, hopefully there will be hearings on the subject and it can

all become public. Ask [Dr. Cole] that slippery dude if he ever read “America’s Abandoned Sons” by Ltc Robert Miller, who he has spoken to on the phone recently. Pathetic. The DPMO issue he says you know nothing about is well known outside of the DoD as a total sham, perpetuated by DPMO. Thousands of US POWs held by the USSR after WWII and disposed of like trash.

None of the allegations in Mr. Noah’s unhinged rant had the advantage of being anchored in reality. DPMO did not exist when the RAND project was commissioned; thus, it was impossible for DPMO to be responsible for the conspiracy Mr. Noah imagines. People who cling to the conspiracy theory that over 20,000 American POWs were sent to the gulag have yet to produce the name of a single missing American serviceman who supposedly disappeared in this manner. The propagation of this myth is disgraceful. No evidence that President Yeltsin offered DPMO “4000 dossiers” has ever been produced.

In contrast to Mr. Noah’s uninformed assertion, I not only spoke with LTC Robert Miller, I am mentioned in his book 18 times on pages 281, 342–352, 354–8, and 401. Mr. Miller asked me to review a preliminary draft of a section that refers to me and my work. If Mr. Noah had bothered to read the book or check open source evidence, he would have learned that DPMO did not exist when the RAND study that concerns the issues he feels were misrepresented was produced. The RAND project was sponsored by the OSD and the Joint Staff through the NDRI.⁸ Mr. Noah was not aware that I received an award from the two-star commander of TFR for my work, but Mr. Noah wasn’t about to be deterred by his lack of facts.

In contrast to Mr. Noah’s dismissal of my RAND report concerning WWII POWs, in his book LTC Miller referred to me as a “well-known and very competent researcher” (p. 347). Mr. Miller concluded:

In retrospect, Dr. Cole’s work is a valuable contribution to the position already held by DPMO and its DIA predecessor for half a century and challenges the argument that significant numbers of US POW/MIA personnel were ever held in the USSR. (p. 349)

The “slippery dude” who should be asked whether he read Mr. Miller’s book is Mr. Noah.

The strangest attack on me appeared in *Moscow Bound*,⁹ a book by Mr. John M. G. Brown and Mr. Thomas V. Ashworth. The authors, who referred to me as “Dr.” Cole, then for some inexplicable reason, Dr. “Cole,” described a conspiracy that I was allegedly involved in with people I have never met or spoken to and attributed to me things I have never done or said.

Here are a few gems from *Moscow Bound*:

- “A key ‘expert’ quoted in this report was a “Paul Cole,” as yet unknown to the handful of American specialists on POW/MIA research, but who would later be used by the U.S. Government in public Senate hearings to counter and debunk the years of investigation by the author and two other.....” (p. 835)
- “The RAND Corporation spokesman, Cole, was permitted unlimited time on the witness stand, treated with courtesy by [Senator] Kerry, and the [Senate’s] final report contains much misinformation from Cole and liberal use of quotes from him. Cole’s hasty ‘research’ was unworthy of national coverage.....” (p. 877)

The arrogant confidence of Messrs. Brown and Ashworth is par for the course when dealing with dogmatists. Nothing in the passages cited had the remotest connection with reality.

Mr. Thomas Ashworth, a self-described “researcher, author, speaker” who I have never met or spoken to, said the following about me and my work during his testimony before the SSC:

Many funded – people, organizations, like the RAND Corporation, and one that Mr. Cole – I want to point out about his statement [before the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA’s] yesterday. He is paid – he’s paid by this Government to come to you and tell – give you good, valid information on our missing and our prisoners unreturned.

Are you aware that the RAND Corporation has done studies on this in prior years which have not been made available to Mr. Cole? What are you paying for? What’s this Government about? What’s the RAND Corporation about? I’ve even heard that Mr. Cole or another member of his staff has expressed a problem, the problem being that the Pentagon wanted to make sure that his statistics matched theirs. If that’s the object, what do need [sic] the RAND Corporation for?

[Dr. Cole is] selectively using his information. He’s purposely not told you about critical information on the subject.¹⁰

The incoherence of this testimony did not go unnoticed by the SSC co-chairmen.

Contrary to Mr. Ashworth's position, no RAND report was withheld from me, I was neither asked nor required to coordinate my statistics with those of the government and did not "deliberately withhold" information of any kind. If that were not sufficient to dismiss any claim Mr. Ashworth might have made to credibility, I had no staff, as I was far too junior at RAND to have anyone working for me. Mr. Ashworth produced no evidence to support his accusations for the simple reason that the events he describes never occurred.

* * *

Even after I left RAND, the "evil creeps" continued to pursue me. In April 1994 while working in Vilnius, Lithuania on Phase III of the POW/MIA project, I received a call from the DFI office in DC while. The heavy, Soviet-made telephone rang in my hotel room at one in the morning. Ms. Elizabeth Baldwin, a DFI manager, called to advise me that a strange message had been faxed to DFI.

A fax had come into DFI's Washington office, stating that someone was threatening to sue me for slander because of my work on WWII POW/MIA issues.

According to the fax, my RAND report was being attacked by Mr. James D. Sanders and Mr. Mark Sauter. They threatened to sue me because I disagreed with one conclusion in their book *Soldiers of Misfortune*. Specifically, I disagreed with their finding in Chap. 8 that over 23,000 US POWs had ended up in the Soviet Gulag with the full knowledge and cooperation of General Eisenhower and the US government.

The following is the version of events as expounded by Mr. Sanders and his collaborators:

Soldiers of Misfortune is the outrageous and compelling story of thousands of American POWs held captive by the Soviet Union and of the U.S. government officials who lied about their fate for half-a-century, keeping a lid on the most disgraceful cover-up in American history. *Soldiers of Misfortune* reveals for the first time that top U.S. officials, from Roosevelt to Bush, made the determination to write off America's missing sons, secretly held hostage in the Soviet Union. In an explosive revelation, Colonel Philip Corso, an intelligence aide to President Dwight Eisenhower, revealed exclusively to the authors that the president personally made the decision to aban-

don hundreds, perhaps thousands, of U.S. POWs from the Korean War. More than six years ago, Jim Sanders began his lonely quest for the truth about American POWs “liberated” by Soviet troops in Germany and Eastern Europe near the end of World War II. Then Mark Sauter and R. Cort Kirkwood joined in the search - sifting through thousands of formerly classified documents, interviewing military brass and escapees from Russia, and evaluating chilling eyewitness accounts. As the authors neared the truth, top level Pentagon officials attempted to “neutralize” and silence them in a desperate attempt to bury the truth from the public. At the same time a newspaper office and Sanders’s car were surreptitiously entered, his apartment ransacked and crucial documents stolen. A secret covenant of the 1945 Yalta agreement provided that the U.S. and Britain would return Soviet citizens residing in the West. In exchange, Stalin promised to return Western soldiers who had been liberated by the Red Army. After the war, American and British authorities breached that agreement by secretly permitting Soviets to remain in the West. Stalin learned about the deception and retaliated by holding 23,500 American and 30,000 British and Commonwealth soldiers captive in the vast Soviet Gulag system.¹¹

This tightly packed paragraph, referred to in editing circles as a “word barf,” revealed everything one needed to know about the scholarship of the aggrieved parties. “Historians who stuff in every item of research they have found, every shoelace and telephone call of a biographical subject, are not doing the hard work of selecting and shaping a readable story.”¹² Another indication that this was a “manufactroversy” was the fact that for over 45 years no one had ever heard of this alleged betrayal of over 23,000 American POWs or the 30,000 British POWs. Those making the accusation could do no better than allege that the relevant records had been “classified,” then untouched by any researchers for nearly half a century.

In the section of my RAND report entitled, “Allegations That 23,000 U.S. POWs Were Moved to the USSR,” I stated after reviewing the evidence¹³:

Charges have been made in Senate Select Committee hearings and elsewhere that more than 23,000 American POWs liberated from Nazi German POW camps by Soviet forces were transported to USSR territory and never repatriated. These accusations are without merit. Since they have received so much publicity, however, it is necessary to review them here. [...]

The assertion that thousands or even several hundred American POWs were liberated from Nazi German POW camps by the Soviets then transferred to USSR territory is fabricated and without serious merit. The only way this conclusion has been reached is by manipulating and distorting data.

There is no direct evidence from U.S. sources that supports the conclusion that over 23,000 American POWs were transferred to USSR territory and imprisoned in NKVD camps. There has been no direct evidence produced from Soviet-era archives that supports the assertion that hundreds or thousands of liberated American POWs were transported to the territory of the USSR.¹⁴

In addition, our archive research projects in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Moscow, and East Berlin and a review of the Mongolian archives by the Mongolian Foreign Ministry found nothing, not a shred of evidence to support the claim that 23,000 WWII American POWs had been transferred to the Soviet Union.

One not so insignificant problem was the fact that the complaint was never sent over the signature of an attorney. In a Congressional office, such a letter would have been consigned to the “Sad File.” In addition, the accusers’ demand letter and subsequent letters all misquoted the report they claimed had harmed them. Misquoting the underlying text was a serious problem for the credibility of the complaint as well as for the reputation of the aggrieved parties. Anyone guilty of producing what A.J.P Taylor referred to as references that were lazily misleading “might do harm to his reputation as a serious historian, if he had one.”

I journaled:

April 16, 1994 – Vilnius, Lithuania

I am no lawyer but this is ridiculous. There is no way I libeled these guys.

RAND’s managers and lawyers did not agree.

I had not criticized or referred to either Mr. Sanders or Mr. Sauter by name in this context other than with a footnote that referenced their book. It is clear from the text of my report that their so-called evidence and analysis were being examined, not them in their personal capacities. There was nothing personal in my assessment. Mr. Sauter felt offended by a statement that did not refer to him by name, yet raised no objection to the statement in the RAND study that his actions were responsible for the desecration of graves at the Tambov Gulag camp. The failure to complain could be interpreted as confirmation of culpability.

In addition, the RAND report and its various conclusions had been reviewed by DoD; reviewed, edited, indemnified, and published by RAND; then approved for public release by the DoD. Judging from

RAND’s reaction, however, one would think that my report had suddenly appeared out of nowhere as a complete surprise to everyone.

I was no longer employed by RAND when these events occurred. I didn’t expect a warm and fuzzy response, but I certainly didn’t anticipate that RAND management would turn on a former researcher who had done no wrong and distance themselves from research that had been commissioned, reviewed, approved, vetted, indemnified, and published by RAND.

As discussed above, when I tried to publish factual information about General Volkogonov selling archive documents, RAND’s attorney concluded that the publication of that fact would hypothetically expose RAND to a lawsuit. RAND not only did not support its employee, it took the side of General Volkogonov. In this case, a former RAND researcher (me) was being threatened with a lawsuit in my personal capacity for an informed opinion that appeared in a RAND publication. Once again, RAND’s response was not to support its researcher and the research product; instead, RAND supported the side of the accusers prior to any inquiry.

Instead of treating me as an ally, RAND considered me to be an adversary. Shortly after receiving the letter from Messrs. Sauter and Sanders, RAND advised me, “Get your own lawyer.”

So I did.

After we drove from Vilnius, Lithuania, to Tallinn, Estonia, I was able to make a telephone call to Mr. S. Lawrence Kocot, a former colleague who had shared an office with me at CSIS. Mr. Kocot, who earned a law degree from the Georgetown University Law Center, was working at Akin, Gump and Strauss, one of the most venerable and politically connected law firms in Washington, DC. Mr. Kocot approached one of the firm’s partners and advised him what was happening to me. The partner agreed to allow Mr. Kocot to represent me. The partner advised Mr. Kocot that there was no doubt that the firm’s fees would be paid by RAND, due to the fact that RAND and DoD had indemnified my report. In other words, due to the fact that Mr. Sauter and Mr. Sanders could not sue me in my personal capacity, the proper course of action would be to sue the proper respondents, namely, RAND and the DoD.

RAND, which was based in Santa Monica, used the same attorneys based in San Francisco, 400 miles away, who had advised RAND on the Volkogonov matter. In addition, RAND included their DC-based legal counsel. In light of that experience, this was not encouraging for me. The organization that should have been supporting me was lining up some serious legal firepower that was aimed directly at me. Messrs. Sauter and Sanders

didn't have to retain legal counsel—RAND was on their side. Within a day, a four-way conference call had been arranged between Mr. Kocot who represented me, Mr. Michael Trainor who was RAND's counsel in San Francisco, Mr. Ed Huddleson who was RAND's lawyer in DC, and me. I was in Tallinn, Estonia, so the call came at half-past midnight.

After brief introductions, the lawyers took over. It was clear from the very beginning that the RAND attorneys were going to treat me if not like an adversary, then as someone who in their view had deliberately harmed RAND in some way.

After Mr. Kocot introduced himself, stated that he represented me, and more importantly stated that he was with Akin, Gump and Strauss, either RAND's lawyer Mr. Trainor or Mr. Huddleson said to me, "Dr. Cole, when we said that you should get your own lawyer, we didn't mean *this* lawyer." In addition to a reputation for ruthless effectiveness, the stratospheric hourly billing rate for an Akin, Gump and Strauss attorney was legendary.

Mr. Kocot, who correctly concluded that it was me against Messrs. Sauter and Sanders and RAND, immediately insisted that questions for me be directed to him. This was the first time anyone had provided any type of defense for me against what I considered to be an accusation that was both frivolous as well as vindictive.

RAND's lawyers spent a great deal of time trying to establish that I had some kind of poisoned state of mind, animus, a nefarious motive or prejudice that would motivate me to launch an unprovoked attack on two innocent bystanders. I explained that in the SoW for the RAND project, DoD had specifically instructed me to examine the allegation that over 20,000 US POWs had been transferred to the USSR after the end of WWII. Part of the problem was that although this type of allegation had been made by a small number of people, they had managed to obtain maximum mileage out of minimal evidence. In other words, this was a high-profile controversy in the media that had been concocted by only a handful of people, my accusers being among them.

I was allowed to explain that throughout nearly a decade in academia and think tanks, I had never experienced a phenomenon similar to the type of complaint made by Mr. Sanders and Mr. Sauter. In their view, honest disagreement with a position they happened to hold was perceived as a personal attack. From the vantage point of two decades, one can see now that this was a characteristic among certain elements in the POW/MIA Accounting Community. Such an assertion of ownership of history was, of

course, absurd. An alternative view of the battle of Shiloh could not be reasonably considered to be a personal attack on a particular historian, unless that historian was unfairly smeared by name.

The fact of the matter is that I had not referred to either Mr. Sanders or Mr. Sauter by name in any of my reports, whether in draft or the final version, other than to cite their book. This fact meant nothing to RAND’s attorneys. The fact that the complaint mis-quoted my report meant nothing either.

The DoD SoW required me to assess the allegation, not the people who made the allegation. Nonetheless, due to the fact that they were high-profile purveyors of the WWII POW conspiracy theory that General Eisenhower had collaborated with Stalin to send over 20,000 Americans to suffer and die in the gulag, Mr. Sanders and Mr. Sauter did what conspiracy theorists tend to do. They took the issue personally then lashed out with an ad hominem attack.

Both Mr. Kocot and I were astonished that RAND had taken seriously what Mr. Kocot characterized as a “letter from a couple of crackpots.” Due to the fact that RAND’s legal counsel appeared to be acting for the accusers, I had no alternative than to take “the crackpots” seriously.

As the RAND attorneys’ interrogation dragged on, it became abundantly clear that RAND’s lawyers Messrs. Trainor and Huddleston were trying to establish not only that I was at fault in this matter but that I had waged a personal vendetta against my accusers. This was a tired, shopworn tactic used by unimaginative attorneys who, in the vernacular, “had nothing.” Instead of examining the factual merits of my report, RAND’s lawyers were trying to establish that my “state of mind” was prejudiced against the applicants. RAND’s attorneys were setting the stage to distance RAND from their own researcher and RAND’s own research product.

Unfortunately, my colleagues at RAND were all too familiar with the fact that in response to the slightest problem, regardless of the merits of the case, RAND management’s default setting was to turn against the researcher as quickly as possible. RAND’s abrupt and rather squalid dismissal of Dr. Alex Alexiev was a relevant case that was in the back of my mind during this interview. Dismissing Dr. Alexiev and going after me were examples of how RAND management emulated the US military’s default setting that doing the right thing always takes a back seat when the option exists to “pencil whip” a problem to make it go away.

I journaled:

April 23, 1994 – Tallinn, Estonia

One of my concerns is that in order to protect is corporate interests, RAND will feed me to the wolves. I said I would do most anything, but I would not give an inch on my conclusion that 23,000+ U.S. POW's had not been taken to the USSR following WWII.

Acting for me, Mr. Kocot was sharp and effective. Eventually, the RAND attorney spoke directly to me. Mr. Trainor asked me to dismiss my lawyer. He said that from then on, his firm would represent me. Mr. Kocot asked, "What material fact has changed between the time you advised Dr. Cole to retain his own counsel and today?"

There was a long silence, interrupted only by the hissing, snapping, crackling, and popping sounds made by the analogue international telephone network. RAND's lawyers said nothing. Mr. Kocot said something to the effect of, "That's what I thought. Let's wrap this up."

I journaled:

April 18, 1994 – Jūrmala, Latvia

Everyone I've spoken to is convinced the suit against me is silly. When I told Pankov over lunch who was suing me, he smiled, said "Congratulations" in his Russian-laced English and shook my hand.

Mr. Pankov, who from personal experience was all too familiar with Mr. Sanders and Mr. Sauter, told me he loathed them both. After Mr. Pankov learned that I had stood up to them, he insisted on buying one hundred grams of vodka to congratulate me.

It took about a month to make the Sanders-Sauter nuisance accusation to go away.

I journaled:

May 18, 1994 – DFI, DC

The saga of my RAND POW/MIA report continues. RAND and my attorney Larry Kocot replied to the bad guys. Our position was no money and no apology, though RAND entertained the idea of issuing a statement to the effect that I didn't harm anyone. Sort of a strange thing to say, but RAND is RAND. Then the bad guys wanted to depose me before filing suit. That's a no go. Now the bad guys are supposed to send questions to me, though if the questions are not substantive I'm not going to anywhere near them. I'm not sure I'll answer them even if they are substantive. We should just tell the bad guys to go to hell.

After Mr. Kocot’s letter was sent, there was not even a peep from either Mr. Sanders or Mr. Sauter. As Mr. Kocot’s boss predicted, RAND paid Akin, Gump and Strauss’ legal fees. This entire episode was a colossal waste of time and US taxpayer money. There was no question that had it not been for RAND’s ability to spend OPM, no one would have taken the Sanders-Sauter accusation seriously, particularly in light of the fact that their various complaints, which changed, never once quoted any of my work correctly.

I thought that was the end of it. RAND, however, had other ideas.

The lack of any merit to the accusers’ complaint, including the fact that the various complaints misquoted my report, didn’t stop RAND from providing a solution when there was no problem.

Without any consultation with me, on the basis of one letter that misquoted my report, RAND immediately stopped distribution of my reports, stopped printing them, stopped production of the RAND annual catalogue that contained references to the reports, destroyed the thousands of catalogues including the report that had already been printed, and stopped production of the carton designed to hold the three volumes that the RAND publications department planned to sell as a boxed set. All advertising for the boxed three-volume report that had appeared in publications such as *Foreign Affairs* was canceled.

RAND did all of these things before I had had a chance to reply to the accusations.

Despite the fact that there was no basis in fact for the accusations, RAND’s solution was to re-write the part of the report dealing with the question of POW transfers to the USSR. I was not consulted on the re-write, nor did RAND disclose the name of the person who re-wrote the text. After that RAND released the revised work under my name, all without having the courtesy to advise me or to send me a copy of the revised version I was supposed to have written. Re-writing my report then presenting it as my original work was capitulation to the “evil creeps” that occurred far too often in the accounting program.

As part of the effort to obliterate any trace of my original work, RAND also contacted people who had purchased the three-volume report. RAND disingenuously asked people to return the original version in exchange for an “updated” version. RAND never bothered to send me the “updated” version of my own report. “Update” means to add new information or additional analysis. Using RAND’s definition, a butchered chicken is an “updated” chicken.

I had no illusions about the importance of my work. I had been a low-level RAND researcher with absolutely no influence in the management food chain. Nonetheless, what I had written was demonstrably correct. If RAND could be rolled by people my attorney referred to as couple of “crackpots,” I wondered how RAND would respond when objections were raised concerning more serious matters.

All it took to motivate RAND to alter the conclusions in one of its reports was a single, poorly drafted letter. In contrast to RAND’s pre-emptive surrender, other organizations supported a similar finding reached by a variety of scholars.

In 1996, the US side of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIA concluded:

Several authors and researchers have alleged that the Soviet Union recovered thousands of American and Allied prisoners of war from German POW camps in Eastern Europe and consigned up to 23,000 of the Americans, and hundreds of thousands of the Allies, to the GULAG. One of the foremost among these authors is Mr. James D. Sanders. (p. 104)

There is no documentary evidence that could lead to a conclusion that significant numbers of American prisoners of war disappeared into Soviet prisons after WWII. The historical record in that regard is neither inaccurate, nor has it been deliberately falsified. In the contemporary debriefings, interrogations, and similar documentation, and in the postwar POW memoir literature, there are no verifiable accounts that claim the Soviets held back 23,000 or any other substantial number of US prisoners. Such numbers, furthermore, are not consistent with the final postwar casualty resolution and accounting.

As the information developed in several of the case studies and other material presented in APPENDICES VII, IX and X will demonstrate, not only are the generalizations of these authors questionable, but many of the cases relating to individual POWs upon which they have built their arguments do not hold up under critical analysis either.¹⁵

The Congressional Research Service concluded:

There are allegations that the USSR failed to repatriate up to 25,000 American POWs liberated from the Germans after World War II ended in Europe on May 8, 1945. This appears to have no foundation in fact and to result in large part from an apparent lack of rigor and care in analyzing the issue. Archival research in the United States and Russia, combined with interviews in Russia, appears to establish conclusively that virtually all such

prisoners were returned. In addition, the large flow of information on Soviet concentration camps of the Stalin era, beginning in the early 1960s, both in writing and from emigre accounts, has provided no indication of mass imprisonment of Americans.¹⁶

In an article entitled “United States Prisoners of War and the Red Army, 1944–45: Myths and Realities” that “principally takes issue with those accounts that allege up to 23,000 were not repatriated but disappeared into the Soviet Gulag,” the chief of Modern Military Records at the US National Archives, Dr. Timothy K. Nenninger, concluded:

During World War II about 28,000 American prisoners of War (POWs) were held by Axis powers eventually overrun by military forces of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.). [...] In the early 1990s, in fact, several accounts alleged that up to 23,000 American POWs from World War II had disappeared into the Soviet Gulag, abandoned, forgotten, never to be repatriated. This did not happen.¹⁷

Dr. Nenninger concluded emphatically that “23,000 American prisoners did *not* disappear into the Soviet Gulag as [John M. G.] Brown and others have alleged.”¹⁸

According to Dr. Nenninger, those who went through the motions of reading archives, making footnotes, and publishing books were not producing history any more than those capable of following a recipe are producing a Michelin-starred restaurant. A.J.P. Taylor observed that publishing a book is not the same as producing a “work of mature historical scholarship.”

LTC Robert S. Miller concluded:

In the end, [the Sanders/Sauter] challenge [to Dr. Cole] too turned out to be baseless, and RAND moved forward with the final production of the three-volume report which is available today on the Internet. [...] In retrospect, Dr. Cole’s work is a valuable contribution to the position already held by DPMO and its DIA predecessor for half a century and challenges the argument that significant numbers of US POW/MIA personnel were ever held in the USSR.¹⁹

LTC Miller was unaware that RAND had buckled under the pressure of a letter that misquoted the report he characterized as a “valuable contribution.”

Mr. Sanders contributed to his credentials by producing a book in which he concludes that he alone was able to determine that an anti-aircraft missile launched from a USN ship was responsible for shooting down TWA Flight 800 on July 17, 1996.²⁰

* * *

Finally, those who insist that more than 23,000 American POWs had been liberated from a German camp and transferred to the Soviet Gulag and never heard from again have yet to produce the name of a single person who suffered such a fate. For example, of the 162 US POWs from Stalag Luft I (Barth) that Mr. Sanders claims were not accounted for, “142 were returned to military control and are on the final lists of repatriates. The other 20 could not be definitely identified as having been at Barth, or as having been POWs, or in a couple of instances, even as U.S. personnel.”²¹

To paraphrase Australia’s Prime Minister Paul Keating, those who aspire to produce history but are not up to the task are “all tip and no iceberg.”

* * *

US MILITARY ATTACHÉ IN MOSCOW INTERFERED WITH KGB CHAIRMAN BAKATIN’S ADMISSION

On the evening of February 9, 1993, Sergej and I had dinner with former KGB Major General Oleg Kalugin at a Swiss fondue place across the river from the Kremlin. When Mr. Kalugin came into the restaurant, he recognized the man running the coat check. He told us the guy used to work for him in the KGB. Mr. Kalugin told us that, in fact, every coat check guy in Moscow “used to work for me.”

The food in the restaurant was unusually good, which was a relief after several days of chew-and-choke à la Zone. There was a more than competent piano player and a baritone moonlighting from the State Opera who sang in the background. We paid him a couple of dollars to sing several Russian classics.

We spent most of the evening discussing whether American servicemen had been transferred to the USSR. General Kalugin said he did not know, but he knew someone who probably would know. General Kalugin told us he would call us at 10:00 AM the next day with the coordinates for our appointment with Mr. Vadim Bakatin, the former chairman of the KGB. Mr. Bakatin, a former member of the Duma, had been appointed as head of the KGB by President Gorbachev following the failed coup attempt in August 1991.

Mr. Bakatin, who was an unusual choice to head the world’s most feared secret police organization, said that he accepted the appointment in the spirit of “post-putsch enthusiasm.” Mr. Bakatin’s paternal grandfather had been executed by an NKVD firing squad, the KGB’s predecessor, for “anti-Soviet activities.” When Mr. Bakatin was appointed, he was given the task to “dismantle what he regarded as the KGB’s intolerable power ‘monopoly’”²² that was generated by nearly half a million KGB staff members (Fig. 14.1).

Mr. Bakatin, an engineer by training and former Interior Minister who was 54 at the time of his appointment, had proven his pro-democracy credentials many times over. As a member of parliament, he was one of the few brave souls who flew to the Crimea to rescue President Gorbachev when he was held under house arrest in his dacha during the ill-fated

Fig. 14.1 Mr. Vadim Bakatin (Photo: Public Domain)



coup. Mr. Bakatin was the man who in a demonstration of new openness toward the United States had given American Ambassador to Moscow Robert Strauss both the blueprints and samples of the hardware used to bug the new American Embassy building. Few Russians could approach or exceed Mr. Bakatin's record of honesty and willingness to take risks in defense of democratic principles.

Mr. Bakatin was fired by President Yeltsin in January 1992.

The scene in Mr. Larry Jolidon's book *Last Seen Alive* concerning the meeting Sergei and I had with Mr. Bakatin was accurate. At Mr. Jolidon's request, I contributed some notes and even drafted parts for his book. The story was rather straightforward. Sergei and I were led into a run-down office building then into Bakatin's office, which was both rather cramped and filled with beat-up wooden furniture.

I journaled:

February 10, 1993 – Aerostar Hotel, Moscow

The meeting with Bakatin went well. One is struck by the lousy condition of the offices here. The former chairman of the KGB turned out to be a trim, gray fellow in his 60's. I have no idea how old he really is. His office was a little, cramped place with scarred brown furniture and the ubiquitous array of multi-colored plastic telephones.

While in graduate school at Georgetown I interviewed Admiral Stansfield Turner shortly after he was fired as the Director of Central Intelligence. The former CIA director had a desk surrounded by ancient green filing cabinets in a partially heated warehouse in the Navy Yard in southeast DC. The Russians did not treat their former chief spook any better.

Sergei and I crammed ourselves into chairs between Mr. Bakatin's desk and the outside wall. I asked whether it would be OK to use the micro-cassette recorder. Mr. Bakatin said he preferred not to have our preliminary discussion recorded. During the conversation, which Sergei translated, Mr. Bakatin looked at me and asked, "So what brings you to Moscow?"

Having been around important, busy people, it was time to cut to the chase. "I'm working for the Department of Defense to determine how many American POWs were taken from Korea to the territory of the Soviet Union."

Mr. Bakatin responded without pausing. “There weren’t many, were there? About thirty as far as I know. Isn’t that right?”

I stage whispered to Sergei, “Did the former chairman of the KGB just say he knew thirty POWs had been taken here?”

Sergei whispered “Yes,” then nodded in the affirmative.

“Do you think we could ask him to say this while the recorder is running?”

Sergei replied, “No. It’s too early. Let’s follow up later.”

I journaled:

The strongest part of the two-hour meeting occurred when Bakatin said, without prompting, that about thirty or so Americans had been transferred to the territory of the USSR. I was taken aback, but since there was no expectation that Bakatin would talk about the POW/MIA business in such frank detail. I made no follow-up questions.

We never had the chance to follow up. I summarized the meeting in several documents that were circulated within RAND and among the Pentagon reviewers who had to approve the RAND manuscript for publication. Included in those documents was a complete summary of our meeting with Mr. Bakatin. There was no reaction or expression of interest for months.

* * *

In the spring of 1993, Mr. Pete Tsouris, one of the few bright lights at DPMO, phoned me at my office in Santa Monica. He wanted to know if we could arrange to get Mr. Bakatin’s remarks on the record, preferably on videotape. I pointed out we no longer under contract to DPMO. Mr. Tsouris said we should propose a plan of action and he would see if he could come up with a short-term tour of duty (TDY) assignment.

Sergei happened to be in Moscow on a different project. I asked him if he could make an inquiry with Mr. Bakatin along the lines of what Mr. Tsouris had proposed. It took little time to get the question to Mr. Bakatin, but as usual Sergei was able to find a way to get things done. Mr. Bakatin’s reply was surprisingly fast and direct. Mr. Bakatin agreed to put his remarks, not just on the record, but in a videotaped interview, if we could ensure the following three conditions:

Primo: Mr. Bakatin insisted on continuing the conversation with the people who had first raised it, meaning Sergei and me.

Secundo: Mr. Bakatin would make his remarks on videotape if we could ensure the tape would not be appear on a news program.

Tertio: Mr. Bakatin asked for a letter from the highest US official we could reach, stating that the US government was asking him to do this as a way of improving bilateral US-Russian relations.

That was it. I made some inquiries with my friend Mr. Lincoln P. Bloomfield Jr. who worked for Vice President Quayle. Mr. Bloomfield got back to me quickly. Vice President Quayle agreed that he would provide a letter for this purpose. Everything appeared to be on track.

I reported these arrangements to Mr. Tsouris at DPMO.

After that, everything went suddenly and impenetrably dark.

About one month later, I was informed how DPMO had handled this opportunity. Colonel Jerry Parr, the head of TFR-M between August 17, 1992, and December 31, 1993, declared that DPMO had a “monopoly” on POW/MIA research in Russia. Governments have been known to assert monopoly powers, but usually over economic activity. In 1506, James IV asserted a monopoly over the production of *aqua vitae*. The US government’s monopoly over the post office was understandable, as was local government’s monopoly over trash collection and electricity generation. Asserting a government’s monopoly over social science research, however, raised the immediate question of how the monopoly was to be enforced. As in the case of the majority of monopolies, DPMO’s conduct of POW/MIA research in Russia was inefficient, poorly managed, and contrary to the public interest.

Without consulting me or Sergei, Colonel Parr made an appointment with Mr. Bakatin. According to DoD sources, Colonel Parr arrived wearing his Army uniform, accompanied by a serving member of the Federal Security Service (FSB) (formerly the KGB), the same organization that was trying to have Mr. Bakatin tried for treason. Dispensing with any formalities, Colonel Parr demanded to know whether Mr. Bakatin had ever met with me and Sergei and, if he had, whether he had told us the things as I had reported.

Mr. Bakatin, to no one’s surprise, said he could not remember meeting me or Sergei. He told Colonel Parr and his KGB sidekick that he had never made such a comment about American POWs. After Colonel Parr

reported, DPMO informed me that my report had no basis in fact, Mr. Bakatin never met us, and he had never said the things we reported.

Mr. Bakatin subsequently passed word to me through Sergei that he did not understand why Colonel Parr had come to visit, why he brought a KGB officer along, and why the American side had not respected the conditions he had spelled out for us.

Why compelled Colonel Jerry Parr to obliterate the evidence? One can only guess. According to the rules of the USRJC that were established by Ambassador Toon and General Volkogonov, information provided by each side was considered to be official. In addition, no information could be produced by anyone outside of the USRJC.

This was a bungled opportunity of historic proportions, an opportunity that would never be offered again, a self-inflicted wound that would never heal.

* * *

US MILITARY ATTACHÉ IN MOSCOW PREVENTED US FROM GOING TO MOSCOW TWICE

In mid-December 1993, we drove from Tallinn, Estonia, to Riga, Latvia (Fig. 14.2).

I journaled:

December 16, 1993 – Riga, Latvia

Our car was frozen this morning in Tallinn. The paramilitary thug at the front door of the Vigu Hotel went out in his suit jacket to help Sergei get it open. He eventually got a cabbie to loan him some anti-freeze spray.

The drive from Tallinn took a bit over six hours on icy roads, winds and lots of snow on the road. We began in freezing cold in Tallinn and arrived in reasonable slush.

I can’t emphasize how strange it is to make this trip with Sergei. He was the Komsomol chieftain in Riga, ca. 1975–79 – all planned so he could travel to the West in order to defect. He points out, sotto voce, his former offices and residences – we drove by the apartment where he abandoned all of his possessions and family when he jumped in 1979. He planned his defection for five years. The more I see of the KGB setup, the party apparatus, the grim kiosk style of life for the average “zone” citizen, it troubles me. All of the torture and sadness.



Fig. 14.2 Tallinn to Riga (Image: Public Domain)

Dr. Misiunis bid us farewell then returned to his home in Lithuania. Sergei proceeded to Moscow a day before I was scheduled to depart from Riga, Latvia.

Our trip to Moscow was part of the project itinerary that had been approved by DPMO prior to our departure. The purpose of the trip was to sustain the “modest” archive research project in Moscow that was included in the project’s SoW that had been approved and signed by the DoD.

In order for a government employee or contractor to visit a foreign country on official business, the US DoS must issue something called “country clearance.” Country clearance basically means that the embassy is aware of the visit and has no objection to it. The responsibility for obtaining country clearance is not the employee or the contractor, it is the department where the employee works or the office that is the sponsor of the contractor’s project. In our case, DPMO had obtained our country clearance from the DoS.

On the morning of my departure from Riga, at the very last minute, just before I checked out of the hotel to head to the airport, the front desk called to inform me that there was a fax for me. Getting a fax in the Zone was unusual and unexpected to say the least. I collected my luggage and briefcase then walked to the reception desk.

The fax was from DPMO. DPMO was advising that the American Embassy in Moscow had yanked country clearance from Sergei and me. It was too late for Sergei, as he had departed the night before and was already in Moscow. I stood there with my luggage staring at the fax, wondering what would have happened had I left five minutes earlier. For a split second, it occurred to me that I could pretend that I hadn’t received the fax, but quickly rejected that option.

DPMO did not lift a finger, even though it was the US military attaché who had intervened. This was a clear indication of how little clout DPMO, which was responsible for carrying out “America’s highest national priority,” had in reality, or of their unwillingness to support the project they had approved. Either way, it was cowardice.

A contractor was not allowed to go to Moscow without country clearance. After reflecting on the matter, I checked my bags with the concierge then went out to find a travel agency in Riga, which was easier said than done. After a great deal of misunderstanding and discussion that eventually included three agents, I changed my ticket to go to Berlin where I had been scheduled to go after Moscow.

I journaled:

December 17, 1993 – Departure Lounge, Riga Int’l

Change of plans. Someone put the kibosh on my visit to Moscow, thus I’m off to Berlin a couple of days early. Those bastards, really. There’s no accountability. The grey cloud makes decisions, but nobody decides.

* * *

Against all odds our research group in Moscow continued to work and produce significant results.

I journaled:

March 21, 1994 – DFI, DC

Sergei phoned yesterday from a conference in St Petersburg. The connection was terrible. We spoke rather openly about our research, something we don't do when he's in Moscow. One can never exclude the possibility the security services are listening. Sergei has some additional archive material from our guys in Moscow. He will send it to me via FedEx on Thursday. It's supposed to be good stuff. Our guys have also found anti-aircraft logs from Soviet forces in Korea.

Today I faxed to Sergei some interesting U.S. aircraft losses for our guys to check against these records. Our guys guarantee the Commission will never find this recent material. I can only shake my head when I consider how much my research team's work has sustained the Commission. This experience has certainly enriched my understanding of how the U.S. government works, or doesn't as the case may be.

Tomorrow John Henshaw and I will drive around to the Latvian and Ukrainian embassies to apply for visas. A 90-day Latvian visa that is good for all three Baltic countries costs \$5 and they do it on the spot. A one-week visa for Ukraine costs \$60 for same-day service. Both visas take up an entire page in my passport.

Later that day, out of the clear blue sky, I was asked to go see Congress Sam Johnson (R-TX). Congressman Johnson had been a POW during the Vietnam War and at the time he wanted to see me was one of the co-chairs of the USRJC. The word had spread in the Accounting Community that we had produced documents from the Soviet archives that the Russian side of the USRJC had stated emphatically did not exist.

I journaled:

March 24, 1994 – DFI, DC

In a rather amusing turn of events, I have been asked to meet with Congressman Sam Johnson today at 16.00. He intends to hand over to Viktor Mukhin, the head of the Russian archives, copies of the documents my guys have found. Johnson wants to meet with me first, for reasons that are not altogether clear to me. Johnson, who is co-chair of the Commission's Korean War working group, was a pilot in Korea and Vietnam and a POW in Vietnam as well.

Against my better judgment, I took the meeting with Congressman Johnson. The meeting with the congressman was brief and in my view rather pointless. According to Congressman Johnson, he was going to hand over the documents my team had found to the head of the Russian archives in order to show the director what was possible to produce. This was not a good idea at all. I told the congressman that the Russian side of the USRJC was doing their best to restrict access to the archives, then explained that the Russian side, which had produced a report my team had prepared as their own work, had produced next to nothing. I stressed that if he turned over the documents, it would not only put our researchers at risk, it would alert the Russian side of the USRJC which holdings had to be shut down.

Whether Congressman Johnson went through with his plan to hand over to the Russian side of the USRJC the archive materials my group had located remains a mystery. He would have obtained them from DPMO because I refused to provide copies to him.

After the meeting with Congressman Johnson, I was making small talk with his chief of staff. I asked her if there was any political benefit in Johnson’s district for his interest in POW/MIA Affairs. She told me there was none. Few constituents, if any, based their vote on whether the congressman was involved in POW/MIA issues.

On March 31, 1994, with no warning or explanation, DPMO instructed DFI to stop, with immediate effect, all research activities in Soviet-era archives located in Russia. We complied, reluctantly, but had no choice.

* * *

John Henshaw and I flew from Tallinn, Estonia, to Berlin via Copenhagen on April 27, 1994, the same day South Africa held its first free elections since the end of Apartheid.

We were scheduled to overnight in Berlin then carry on to Moscow early the next morning. DPMO had obtained our country clearance from the State Department prior to leaving Washington, DC. Once again, the Moscow visit was part of the SoW and contract that had been signed by DoD.

On a warm spring morning, we sat in the departure area in the Tallinn Airport, which consisted of plastic chairs and a bar on wheels. As we killed time, we drank Lapin Kulta, one of Finland’s greatest treasures. As John and I minded our own business, a woman with a distinctive American accent yelled at us because she thought she heard us say “Cheers,” and no American says “cheers,” she shouted at us repeatedly (Fig. 14.3).

Fig. 14.3 Finland's
greatest cultural treasure
(Photo: Public Domain)



The transfer in Copenhagen went well. Everything appeared to be in order. As soon as we arrived in Berlin, however, things changed for the worse. After checking in, the front desk notified that there was a message for me at the hotel's reception. The message was a fax from DPMO. Our country clearance for Russia had been revoked by the American Defense Attaché in Moscow. There was no explanation, only a firm instruction from DPMO that we were NOT authorized to proceed to Moscow.

Some time later, a friend showed me the classified cable from the AMEMB Moscow to DPMO. I was cleared for SECRET at the time, so there was no security breach. The sender was none other than the office of the Army Attaché, over whom one would have thought that DPMO might have had some leverage or clout. The reason given for yanking the State Department's approval of our country clearance was that our work on POW/MIA issues in Russia "threatened the stability of the Yeltsin regime." If this had not been so serious, it would have been hilarious. The idea that John and I could "threaten the stability of the Yeltsin regime" was simply preposterous.

This ludicrous claim did nothing but hinder a DoD-sponsored research project dealing with "America's highest national priority."

US MILITARY ACCUSED US OF THEFT, CORRUPTION, AND "ESPIONAGE" AGAINST RUSSIA

On January 13, 1994, Mr. Norm Kass summoned me to a meeting on short notice. My colleague and friend Mr. John Henshaw, a DFI staff member, agreed to come with me. We took the Metro from DuPont Circle, changed at Metro Center to the Orange line, then proceeded to

the Clarendon stop close to DPMO’s offices. Mr. Kass, who met us in the first floor entrance area, was uncharacteristically tight-lipped about the purpose of the meeting. Usually, Mr. Kass would describe what was going on, the agenda, the participants, and his view on what we could expect to get out of the meeting. John and I had no idea what to expect, but when the client calls a meeting, the consultant obeys.

We had met Mr. Kass in the lobby, which was normal because he had to escort us through the security check. DPMO had moved into a building that was neither designed nor intended to house classified facilities. Two of the elevators for the classified floors were cordoned off by silk ropes like in a movie theater, the other two elevators were available for everyone else who worked in the building. Re-purposing always creates bottlenecks. We stood in line for nearly 20 minutes, clutching coffee cups and making small talk.

When we got into the elevator, I moved to push the button for DPMO’s floor. Mr. Kass reached over my arm and pressed the button for a floor several floors above DPMO. I should have paid better attention to my Spidey-sense, which had begun to tingle a bit. After the elevator doors opened, Mr. Kass directed us to what turned out to be a small conference room. As we walked in, I was surprised and a little bit confused to see six uniformed military officers sitting on one side of the conference table, none of whom were familiar to either of us. John and I were seated on the other side facing the uniforms, while Mr. Kass sat at the end of the table like the patriarch at a Thanksgiving feast. John and I faced six Army officers. John produced a microcassette recorder but was advised in no uncertain terms that the use of an audio recording device in a TOP SECRET facility was forbidden. I wish he would have turned it on before placing it in the pocket of his blazer.

Mr. Kass explained that the purpose of the meeting, if one could call it that, was to give each of the six officers the opportunity to criticize my project. I couldn’t believe it. Each of the US Army officers was given the opportunity by Mr. Kass to read a prepared statement denouncing our work. Constructive criticism and client feedback are all well and good, but these statements were neither of those things. Each US military officer, who attacked our DoD-sponsored project from the Russian perspective, described how our research was undermining the Russian government in general and the “stability of the Yeltsin regime” in particular.

One officer accused us of “espionage against the Russian state.” Another accused us of selling Soviet archive documents for personal gain.

Another accused us of bribery. If it were not so serious, it would have been hilarious. Neither Kafka nor Hašek had envisioned such a scene. US Army officers were accusing an American citizen working on a project sponsored by the DoD on “America’s highest national priority” of spying on the Russian government.

At one point I interjected in a restrained voice, “Are you sure you people are wearing the right uniforms?”

John and I sat on the Metro on the way back to DuPont Circle alternatively staring blankly into space then looking at one another as we once said in unison, “What the fuck was that about?”

I journaled:

January 23, 1994 – DFI, Washington

The DoD sponsor of my work – Defense Prisoner of War Missing In Action Office (DPMO) got all bent out of shape about ten days ago. The Associated Press ran an article on my RAND Korean War study.

The current crop of invertebrates at DPMO is not aware of my work on the current DFI contract and is completely clueless concerning what I have done over the past two years-plus for DoD. One Lt Col went so far as to accuse me of “espionage” against the Russian state. The others regurgitated the standard litany of false accusations – stealing documents, bribing officials, etc and so on.

I was asked one week ago to go to Clarendon to brief the DPMO analysts who have problems with my work. Did that on Tuesday. Asked Sergei to come to town for it. The session, which lasted two hours, went very well. Only thing is Amb Malcolm Toon, the ineffectual chairman of the Commission, continues to make a stink with State about my work for DoD. That guy deserves all of the headaches I can cause for him.

I returned to DPMO to brief the officer who had accused me of espionage and her colleagues on the origins of my project, making sure to wave the letter of introduction from Secretary of Defense Cheney around to add a little chain of command gravitas to the presentation.

I journaled:

February 4, 1994 – DFI, Washington

I picked up ten copies of Volume I of my RAND POW/MIA report today from the RAND office in DC. The report looks good and I’m pleased with the content. I was free to polish the final manuscript, so some of the final form was not subjected to the Charles Kelley / RAND mandatory

dumb-down. Looks like it will be widely circulated on Capitol Hill, thus I have gotten about as much PR as could reasonably be expected.

One problem I could not solve or even understand was why our archive work in the former Soviet Union was causing such a negative reaction in the Pentagon.

What I overlooked was the fact that like a bad horror movie, the opposition was coming from within.

* * *

DPMO’S GAG ORDER AND INTIMIDATION

On June 18, 1992, the day after President Yeltsin had dropped his bombast on Congress, the Russian president, who knew a good thing when he saw it, doubled down. On the front page of the *Washington Post*, President Yeltsin was quoted as saying²³:

Yeltsin said researchers had discovered that some Americans captured in Vietnam had been taken to Soviet labor camps, and some may still be alive. He expanded on that claim yesterday, saying during a joint news conference with [President] Bush, ‘We know how many people there were on Soviet territory, how many were left, what camps the POWs were held in...which wars they were from, whether it was World War II, the Korean War or other incidents.’

In response to a request that was approved by the RAND public affairs office, I provided some comments to a *Washington Post* reporter concerning President Yeltsin’s speech. My comments paled in comparison to President Yeltsin’s claims. Nonetheless, I was quoted on the front page of the *Washington Post*, above the fold just below a photograph of the Russian leader.²⁴

If there are any Americans alive in Russia from the Korean War, they don’t want to be found, said Paul Cole, a Rand Corp. analyst who is directing a study on the fate of POW-MIAs from World War II, the Korean War and the Cold War periods for the Pentagon.

Cole said, however, that researchers working for him in Russia and the former Soviet republics have uncovered “preliminary indications” that American pilots who were shot down over North Korea or crash-landed in China during the Korean War may have been sent to the Soviet Union for interrogation.

DoD's reaction to the news was swift and decisive. Within minutes of the *Washington Post* story hitting the wires, DPMO's Acting Director Mr. Ed Ross slapped a gag order on me.

A gag order has a single purpose, which is use improper means to restrict the distribution of information. In this case, the information in question was unclassified, publicly available information that had not been designated as sensitive or For Official Use Only. A gag order establishes a perimeter of ignorance around a particular issue. Both the information as well as the people familiar with it are held in a walled garden against their will. They are able to hear what people are saying outside the garden, but they are forbidden to reply.

The gag order was revealed as I was on my way from my office to the RAND media center for another RAND-authorized interview, this time with the CBS Evening News. As soon as I reached the first floor, I was stopped in the hallway by Mr. Jess Cooke, RAND's public affairs officer who said he had just taken a call from the Pentagon. Mr. Cooke had authorized the interview, which would have been good publicity for RAND. It only took a single phone call from a low-level Pentagon apparatchik to cause RAND to change its position. Mr. Cooke advised me that I was "officially" prohibited from speaking to the media. My response was something to the effect of, "I've been told repeatedly by RAND management that RAND does not 'answer the mail' or take instructions from the client like some low-life beltway bandit. Where's your balls on this one?"

In response, Mr. Cooke said nothing. I returned to my office and complied with the DoD's gag order that had been transformed into an instruction from RAND management.

Mr. Ross' gag order applied to me not as an employee of the RAND Corporation, not to the RAND Corporation itself, but only to me in my personal capacity. In other words, a DoD employee believed he had the right to reach into the RAND Corporation, single out an individual employee, then subject that single employee to a policy that applied to no one else. Mr. Ross had no right or authority to slap a gag order on a RAND employee, of course. RAND management, which was known to throw employees under the bus at the slightest provocation, no matter how trivial or outlandish, did nothing to shield me from such blatant interference with a research project. The appropriate response would have been to either send a letter to Mr. Ross or to inform him in person that he was to keep his hands off of RAND employees, but that did not happen.

Not only was it a gag order, the gag order ordered me not to refer to Mr. Ross’ gag order as a gag order. It was becoming difficult to remember all of the things DoD and RAND had forbidden to do. I was forbidden to talk to members of Congress or their staff, forbidden to have any contact with TFR, and now forbidden to talk to the media even when the interview had been approved by RAND’s public affairs office.

People such as Mr. Ross were far more concerned with the politics of the POW/MIA issue and exerting control within the bureaucracy than with doing the heavy research and analysis lifting that was required to resolve missing person cases.

* * *

Mr. Ross made no effort to conceal his desire to exert political control over the accounting program.

I journaled:

August 23, 1992 – 3775 Beethoven (Sunday)

The heat is turning up on my work. There is a new director of the POW-MIA office, Ed Ross. The guy is a complete waste. He’s a sour old bureaucrat of 55–60 years old. He hates RAND or something and is less than thrilled about me for some reason. Simply stated, if the Russians don’t produce the report as promised next month, the chorus of “told you so’s” and evil recriminations will be deafening.

I really don’t want to hear them. The guidance was to explore the source. That is forgotten, of course. If we don’t get the report I will hide out until after the election. This could be a mess, then again things could go well.

Now that the Army is involved things could go somewhat better. At least Col. Herrington, the guy I’m dealing with in Army Task Force Russia, understands research.

Sometimes I want to say to hell with these problems and just walk, leaving the Ed Ross types of this world to choke on their own stupidity. I get a sense that RAND is supporting me a bit more, but the sense is not overwhelming.

With no warning, DPMO’s Acting Director Ross sent a letter to me that circulated through RAND before I saw it. Mr. Ross accused me of not being sufficiently sensitive about the “political environment” in which the accounting program operated. He gave no examples, of course.

Mr. Ross’ letter was deeply disturbing for a number of reasons. The ominous or even menacing tone was unnerving. The task was to look for evidence. No one assigned to a research project would be expected to

worry about the “political environment.” The evidence we were producing spoke for itself. All of the gag orders in the world wouldn’t change the objective nature of the evidence. The truth didn’t change due to one’s ability to tolerate it.

Mr. Ross’ letter was an additional, unambiguous confirmation that the accounting program was a political exercise that often had little to do with accounting for missing American service members.

* * *

DPMO LOST THE TASS POW AND GAUCK ARCHIVE PHOTOGRAPHS

Our work in Moscow had been making great progress until DPMO intervened to stop it.

As part of the SoW for our project, DoD had provided funding to “maintain a modest research effort” in Moscow. What appeared to irritate Mr. Kass and others was that we were producing the results we had contracted to produce. Not only were we producing what we were contracted to produce, we were producing material that according to the Russian side of the USRJC did not exist.

Shortly after the project began, I directed our Moscow team to focus on the TASS News Agency photo archives. TASS, founded in 1902, was owned by the Soviet and Russian governments. TASS routinely operated as a front for Soviet and Russian intelligence. KGB General Oleg Kalugin, a graduate of the Columbia University’s School of Journalism who ran the TASS operation in the United States, stated, “At least half if not more [of Tass employees] were involved in the intelligence business. Their job was to gather and collect information. They would try to recruit people and obtain classified documents. That was the top of the agenda.”²⁵

TASS photographers had taken still images of captured Americans in Korea, Vietnam, and perhaps elsewhere. I instructed our colleagues in Moscow to collect as many photographs of American POWs as possible. The TASS photo archives turned out to be a treasure trove.

Our team, which found several dozen photographs of captured Americans in the TASS photo archives, also found photographs taken by Soviet teams that searched the crash sites of USAF aircraft. We figured this was due to the fact that some of the TASS photographers might have been GRU—Soviet military intelligence—officers. In some cases, we obtained photographs of F-86 wreckage where the remains of what appeared to be the dead pilot

were clearly visible. Assuming the tail number had not been doctored, it was no trouble to determine the identity of the pilot associated with that aircraft on the day the pilot went missing. Whether the photograph of what appeared to be a dead pilot was staged or not was another matter.

All of the photographs were turned over to DPMO.

DPMO gave one of the photographs we obtained from the TASS archives to journalist Mr. Laurence Jolidon.²⁶ That photograph ended up on the cover of his book, *Last Seen Alive*, which dealt with Korean War POW/MIA issues. The cover of Mr. Jolidon’s book follows (Fig. 14.4).

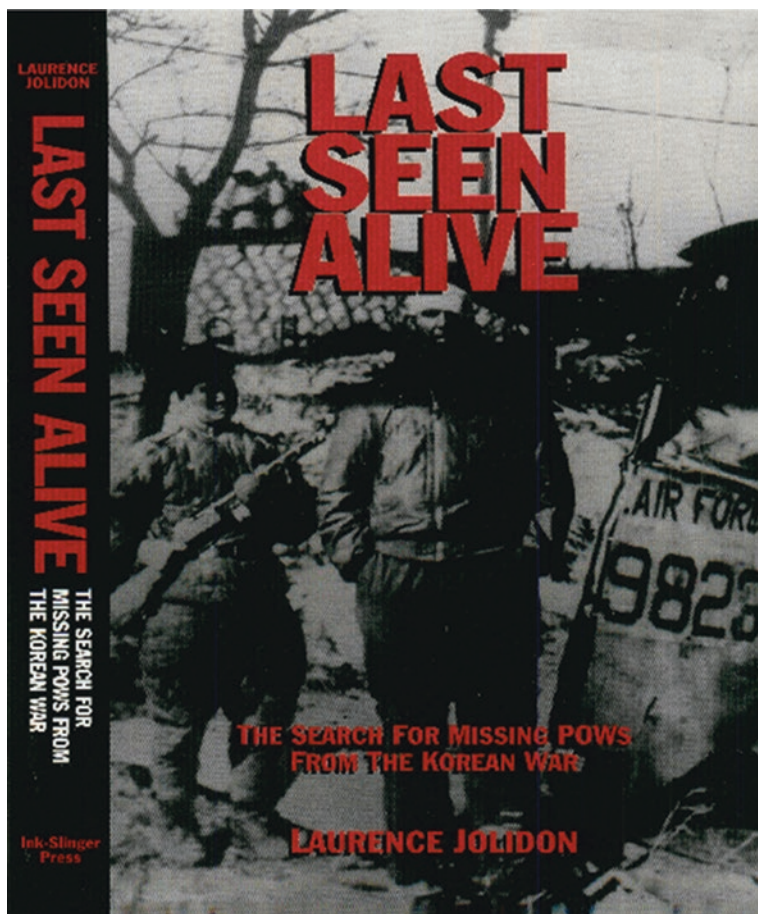


Fig. 14.4 Cover of Mr. Jolidon’s book

I asked Mr. Jolidon to do me a favor. “Would you ask DPMO for the source of the photograph on the cover of your book?”

He replied, “Sure, no problem.”

A couple of weeks later, Mr. Jolidon gave me a call. DPMO had advised Mr. Jolidon in an official letter that DPMO, the office that had provided him with the photograph on the cover of his book, had no idea where the photo came from or who the source of the photograph might have been.

All of the TASS archive photographs I turned over to DPMO were lost. Unfortunately, I did not keep copies.

* * *

The Gauck Archive material was a treasure trove. My basic German, aided by my fluent Swedish and a lexicon, was adequate for me to read and understand about 75 percent of the documents that Dr. Ziehm’s team had uncovered. The documents were fascinating. An illustration of how thorough Dr. Ziehm’s search for evidence of Americans in the Stasi archives was the fact that he had located the Stasi’s transcript of the conversation former Vice President Richard Nixon had with his handler during a walking tour of East Berlin on July 21, 1963 (Fig. 14.5).



Fig. 14.5 Vice President Nixon in East Berlin (Photo: Public Domain)

The Stasi reported that former Vice President Nixon sparred with his East German counterparts concerning topics such as whether refrigerators per capita was an adequate measure of personal freedom.

* * *

In addition to hundreds of pages of material we obtained from the Gauck Archive, there were about a dozen black-and-white photographs taken in the International Solidarity Camp in Bautzen, Germany. All of the original photographs and copies of the photographs were turned over to DPMO.

DPMO advised that all of the photographs from the Gauck Archive had been “lost.”

* * *

DPMO LOST COLONEL BUSHUYEV’S INTERVIEW TAPES

In September 1992, Sergei and I interviewed Colonel Victor Aleksandrovich Bushuyev, a Red Army intelligence officer who had been involved with the interrogation of American POWs during the Korean War.

I journaled:

September 17, 1992 – Moscow (Thursday)

Sergei and I went to the Parliament building yesterday to meet Yuri Smirnov, head of the Russian parliamentary committee on POW-MIAs. He introduced us to the guy who was the deputy chief of intelligence for the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps in China during the Korean War. The guy was in charge of reading and forwarding the interrogation transcripts of US POWs. He was able to recall all sorts of interesting details.

Colonel Bushuyev, who had been Deputy Chief of Intelligence assigned to the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, met with us for more than an hour. He was open, friendly, and willing to respond to our questions. In addition, he gave me permission to tape the interview which I did using my micro-cassette recorder that as usual would not function until it had been warmed up in my armpit.

Through Sergei who interpreted, I asked Colonel Bushuyev to describe in detail how American POWs were interrogated, the way the interrogation records had been prepared in the field and the process and route by which the records had been shipped to Moscow. My question was, how

did reports generated in pencil in Korea end up as formal typewritten reports in Moscow? Colonel Bushuyev replied:

We had contact with the American POWs, mainly the pilots. We weren't interested in anyone else. I was responsible for organizing the interrogations and for processing all of the information received during the interrogations.

All American pilots, with no exception, would be interrogated in the town of Sinuij. It was the very northernmost point in Korea, near the Yalu River across from Andung where we were stationed. There was a special building there – the interrogation point. Americans would be brought there. We could see it from Andung. We would go there about twice a week to interrogate the prisoners. Sometimes there were just a few of them so we didn't need to go.

How were the interrogations organized? All arrangements, the structure of the interrogation, its content etc., were completely in the hands of the Chinese. We prepared questions in advance. Then we gave the questions to the Chinese. They asked the questions while interrogating the American POWs. When I was there I believe all American POWs were completely in Chinese hands on the territory of North Korea.

I was responsible for the interrogations of the POWs, but neither I nor the translators ever saw any of them with our own eyes. We would sit behind a thin wooden wall and the translators would sit with us. We were prohibited absolutely from seeing the Americans.

Then a new interpreter appeared. His name was Kolya Monkuyev. He was a Buryat Mongol. He looked Chinese. This Kolya Monkuyev would go to that room and participate in the interrogations directly.

The interrogations were conducted in English. We received handwritten materials in English, written by the Chinese. They were on blank pieces of paper. After capture each POW filled in a form. This form would come to us and we would pick people who were of interest to us.

Every week we would write an overview. It would go to Moscow. I knew that. I only wrote the report. I suppose they were sent to the General Staff. But if the original English transcripts were enclosed or not I didn't know. Maybe they were. Who would keep them in Korea?

The interrogations were easy. The only case was that of Niemann who refused to answer any questions. He was wounded and that was the formal reason why he refused. He was in some hospital. He said it was a violation of some international laws. Of course, they wanted to interrogate him, but then I never saw any materials of his interrogation.²⁷

Colonel Bushuyev’s spontaneous mention of the name “Niemann” was of significant interest.

According to USAF records, Lieutenant Robert Frank Niemann, pilot of F-86E/6 (No. 522891), was “bounced” by MiG aircraft while flying as number four wingman to the element leader, at approximately 40,000 feet, 20 miles south of the Suiho Reservoir, on April 12, 1953. LT Niemann, who took off at 1115 hours, was reported to be MIA at 1225 hours the same day. LT Niemann was seen in a right turn with a MiG-15 closing on his aircraft approximately 30 miles southwest of the Suiho Reservoir.

USAF records stated that LT Niemann’s aircraft had been last seen seven miles south of Sakchu over North Korean territory. This was consistent with the routine “pencil whipping” that occurred when a US aircraft violated regulations by crossing the Yalu River into Chinese territory. In contrast to the last sighting of LT Niemann’s aircraft by USAF witnesses, Soviet records indicated that LT Niemann had crashed in China near the Andung airfield.

LT Niemann was captured by enemy forces and subjected to interrogation. LT Niemann’s name appeared on the list compiled by the Russian side of the Joint Commission entitled *A List of United States Air Force Personnel Shot Down in Aerial Combat by Anti-Aircraft Artillery During Military Operations in Korea, Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point*.

We obtained a report from Soviet intelligence that stated LT Niemann had been interrogated but died before the interrogation could be completed. Soviet records included a list of personal effects taken from LT Niemann.

Colonel Bushuyev also recalled that the Soviet Chief of Intelligence Colonel Tashchan thought it would be a good idea to interrogate Colonel John K. Arnold, whose B-29 had been shot down on January 12, 1953, three months to the day prior to the loss of LT Niemann.

Colonel Arnold was the commander of the 581st Wing that was under the control and supervision of the Psychological Warfare Division of the Directorate of Plans, headquarters of the USAF in the Pentagon. The mission of Arnold’s B-29, the “Stardust 40,” when it was shot down may have been to disburse propaganda leaflets or to drop special agents. The Chinese publicized the capture and detention of the Arnold crew.

Colonel Bushuyev stated:

Arnold was an interesting figure. We thought it would be nice to get him to Moscow. That's all I know. I just remember those conversations about Arnold being a star. They checked him from Moscow and found out that, yes, Arnold was a world star of the first category. He was a known writer, journalist.

At first Arnold refused to speak. Then the Chinese conducted this thing with him. I didn't know then it existed. The Chinese asked us to wait, let us work with him, he'd speak in three days. Three days later, Arnold said he wouldn't answer our questions but he asked for a piece of paper. He said he'd write things down. And he wrote 18 pages with this small handwriting in one night. Our guys translated all of that.

* * *

Bushuyev mentioned "Arnold" and he mentioned "Niemann," both in separate contexts with no confusion. Colonel Bushuyev was well aware of the difference between "Niemann" and "Arnold." The original tape was transcribed and translated by a Russia language specialist at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California.

DPMO, however, attempted to refute, question, alter and debunk the Bushuyev interview. The US side of the US-Russia Joint Commission issued the following statement concerning the Bushuyev interview:

In 1992, a T[ask] F[orce] R[ussia] contractor, Paul Cole, interviewed Viktor Bushuyev, a retired Soviet Colonel. During a discussion about the interrogation of crew members of a B-29, Bushuyev stated that at first two of the crew members were unwilling to talk, but three days later "Niemann" wrote down answers. According to the notes from the interview, this was a misunderstanding. The interviewer immediately questioned the name. Bushuyev replied that he was referring to Arnold, not Niemann. The Russian side of the Commission has also confirmed that it was Arnold and not Niemann. The Russian side of the Commission has steadfastly maintained that only LT Niemann's personal effects transited an interrogation site.²⁸

The URJC's description distorts and misrepresents the Bushuyev interview, perhaps deliberately so, for a number of verifiable reasons. For

example, I was never a TFR contractor. Other verifiable errors were more substantive.

1. Bushuyev did not state the name “Niemann” in the context of a discussion concerning crewmembers of a B-29.
 - (a) Bushuyev stated, “The interrogations were easy. The only case was that of Niemann who refused to answer any questions.”
2. Niemann was severely wounded, Arnold was not.
 - (a) Bushuyev stated that Niemann “was wounded and that was the formal reason why he refused. He was in some hospital.”
3. Bushuyev did not state that “‘Niemann’ wrote down answers.”
 - (a) Bushuyev stated, “Three days later, Arnold said he wouldn’t answer our questions but he asked for a piece of paper. He said he’d write things down. And he wrote 18 pages with this small handwriting in one night. Our guys translated all of that.”
4. The US side of the USRJC states, “According to the notes from the interview, [using the name Niemann instead of Arnold] was a misunderstanding.”
 - (a) No “notes from the interview” make such a statement. Neither Sergei nor I, the only two people in the room other than Colonel Bushuyev, made notes during the interview. The audio tape was the only record.
5. The US side of the USRJC states, “The interviewer immediately questioned” Bushuyev’s use of the name “Niemann.”
 - (a) This is false. I had no reason to doubt or “question” the validity of Colonel Bushuyev’s statements. Neither Sergei nor I questioned Bushuyev’s use of the name “Niemann” and no such comment appears in the transcript.

6. The US side of the USRJC states, “The Russian side of the Commission has also confirmed that it was Arnold and not Niemann.”
 - (a) There was no representative from the Russian side of the Commission during our interview with Colonel Bushuyev.
 - (b) Neither the US nor the Russian side of the USRJC produced any evidence to support their assertion that Colonel Bushuyev misspoke.

7. The Russian side of the USRJC produced *A List of United States Air Force Personnel Shot Down in Aerial Combat by Anti-Aircraft Artillery During Military Operations in Korea, Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point*.
 - (a) LT Niemann’s name is on the list that the Russian side produced on their own authority.
 - (b) Colonel Bushuyev, an intelligence officer whose duty station was “an interrogation point,” specifically recalled the interrogation of LT Niemann.
 - (c) The US side of the USRJC states, “The Russian side of the Commission has steadfastly maintained that only LT Niemann’s personal effects transited an interrogation site.”
 - (d) The US side of the USRJC concluded that the term “United States Air Force Personnel...Who Transited Through an Interrogation Point” actually referred to objects. “Personnel” were “personal effects,” not “US Air Force Personnel.”
 - (i) The US side stated repeatedly, “The Russian explanation for this is that in several cases where the pilot perished, those personal documents (i.e. (sic) ID card, ration card etc.) found intact at the crash site were gathered and sent through an interrogation point for processing. There is little reason to doubt this statement as it is common practice in the U.S. and NATO militaries as well.”²⁹
 - (ii) The US side did not provide a single verifiable example of where the US or a NATO military obtained personal documents from a deceased enemy pilot then “processed” those documents through an “interrogation point.”

Even if only half of the criticisms of our interview with Colonel Bushuyev are accurate, the facts demonstrate beyond any reasonable doubt that Colonel Bushuyev was aware that LT Niemann and Colonel Arnold were not the same people and Colonel Bushuyev did not confuse the two.

The efforts by DPMO and the Russian side of the USRJC failed to address another key piece of evidence concerning the Niemann case. Soviet military intelligence officer Colonel Georgi Plotnikov also spontaneously mentioned the name Niemann. Two Soviet intelligence officers in two separate interviews both mentioned the name “Niemann.” DPMO, which concluded that Colonel Bushuyev meant to say “Arnold,” had no explanation for Colonel Plotnikov’s statements.

* * *

In contrast to the USRJC rules that banned any audio or videotaping interviews, I had recorded the Colonel Bushuyev interview using my personal handheld microcassette recorder.

DPMO instructed me to provide a copy of the Bushuyev interview tape, so I transferred the interview from a microcassette to a standard format cassette tape, then gave the larger cassette to DPMO. Mr. Norm Kass instructed me to turn over the original microcassette to DPMO as well. Unfortunately, I did not keep a copy.

DPMO “lost” both the original and the copy of the Colonel Bushuyev interview tape. This was particularly distressing for LT Niemann’s daughter Mrs. Anne Bakkensen, who repeatedly asked and filed FOIA requests with DPMO for the tape, only to be told each time the tape could not be found. Mrs. Bakkensen, who was a young child when her father disappeared, devoted a great deal of time and energy in an attempt to locate any information concerning her father’s fate. DPMO’s loss of the Colonel Bushuyev interview tape was a bitter blow.

In 2006, Mrs. Bakkensen was able to fulfill one of her dreams, which was to sit in the cockpit of an F-86. In the following photograph, Mrs. Bakkensen is sitting in the cockpit of an F-86 of the type her father flew when he disappeared during combat on April 12, 1953. The artwork on the fuselage, which was that of her father’s unit, was designed by the Disney studio (Fig. 14.6).

DPMO’s position was that LT Niemann died in the crash, was not captured, and had not been interrogated by Russians but produced no



Fig. 14.6 Mrs. Anne Bakkensen in the cockpit of an F-86 (Photo: Courtesy of Mrs. Bakkensen)

evidence to support this position. DPMO explained that LT Niemann’s name had been included by the Russians on the list of US POWs who had passed through a Soviet interrogation center by “mistake.” DPMO analysts produced no evidence to support any of their conclusions, other than to dismiss the interview with Colonel Bushuyev interview as flawed, faked or inaccurate, or all of the above.

As of early 2018, LT Niemann’s status remained “missing.”

DPMO lost the only two copies of one of the most important interviews conducted with a Soviet military intelligence veteran who had personal experience with the interrogation of American POWs during the Korean War. Whether the tapes vanished due to nefarious volition or run of the mill incompetence will never be known.

* * *

DPMO SUPPRESSED THE *77-PAGE REPORT*

Not all of Mr. Ross’ information suppression efforts and gag orders worked as planned.

On August 25, 1993, a team of DPMO analysts with the JCSD produced a report entitled *The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POW’s to the Soviet Union*, which became known as the “*77-Page Report*.” The *77-Page Report* quoted extensively from my work produced at RAND and research conducted in Moscow.³⁰

The JCSB team that produced the *77-Page Report* was loaded with talent.³¹ The report had been produced in part because the DoD authorities refused to acknowledge the Russian side of the USRJC had been incompetent and deceitful. The authors took matters into their own hands. The executive summary said it all:

U.S. Korean War POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union and never repatriated. [...]

The range of eyewitness testimony as to the presence of U.S. Korean War POWs in the GULAG is so broad and convincing that we cannot dismiss it.

Missing F-86 pilots, whose captivity was never acknowledged by the Communists in Korea, were identified in recent interviews with former Soviet intelligence officers who served in Korea. Captured F-86 aircraft were taken to at least three Moscow aircraft design bureaus for exploitation. Pilots accompanied the aircraft to enrich and accelerate the exploitation process.

The report’s Part II conclusion was equally unequivocal:

The Soviets transferred several hundred U.S. Korean War POWs to the USSR and did not repatriate them.

The report’s overall conclusion re-iterated the same point:

The Soviet Union transported U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union and never repatriated them.

The *77-Page Report* created a number of problems, not the least of which was the fact that according to the ground rules of the US-Russia Joint Commission that had been accepted by Ambassador Toon, the US government had agreed to accept as the truth any position or interpretation,

no matter how far-fetched, as presented by the Russian side. The Russian position was that no US POWs had been transferred to the USSR during the Korean War, which by agreement became the US position. The *77-Page Report*, which had been produced by the JCSD and DPMO, contradicted the Russian claim emphatically.

The default reaction within the DPMO leadership was to solve the dilemma by making it go away. “Pencil whipping,” which was the go-to solution within the US military, was used in an attempt to make the *77-Page Report* simply disappear. Within the US military’s culture that has been described by the US Army War College as “ethically numb,” “much of the deception that occurs in the profession of arms is encouraged and sanctioned by the military institution.”³²

After the *77-Page Report* had been produced and released to the public, DPMO (some say it was Mr. Ross) marked the report “working papers” in order to be able to deny FOIA requests for the report from family members of the missing. The following is the title page of the original report that shows how the “working papers” marking was done in haste after the report had been released (Fig. 14.7).

Note the handwritten comment in the upper-right corner, “Not released to Public by DoD ...” (illegible, but could be a reference to a FOIA exemption). The designation “Working Papers” does not automatically guarantee that a FOIA request for the document will be denied. In light of the fact that the DPMO FOIA office was responsible for the determination, the belated attempt to pencil whip the *77-Page Report* was done in order to give DPMO a reason to deny FOIA requests for the report.

The statements that “This study is to be used for internal use only,” and “This document has not yet been finalized for public release” were added *after* the report had been released to the public.

The designation or re-designation of unclassified public information as classified or restricted was a clear violation of DoD policy.

During the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security, June 20, 1996, Mrs. Irene Mandra stated, “Ed Ross tried to classify this *77-Page Report* but family members already had copies, so they could not. Let us stop the madness. Let us stop the coverup. Let us fix the problem.”³³

Faced with the fact that the genie could not be put back in the bottle, the US side of the USRJC “pencil whipped” the problem by inventing a revised description of the *77-Page Report*. The same people who

WORKING PAPERS

NOT RECEIVED
DPMO
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(150628 (1943))

This study was prepared
by

Mr. Peter G. Tsouras, DAC
Major Werner Saemler Hindrichs, USAF
Master Sergeant Danz F. H. Blasser, USAF

with the assistance
of

Second Lieutenant Timothy R. Lewis, USAF
Mr. Paul H. Vivian, DAC
Staff Sergeant Linda R. H. Pierce, USA
Sergeant Gregory N. Vukin, USA

This study is to be used for internal use only. It contains subjective evaluations, opinions, and recommendations concerning on-going analysis that may impact future U.S. foreign policy decisions. This document has not yet been finalized for public release.

Fig. 14.7 77-Page Report (Photo: PM Cole)

determined that USAF “personnel” were actually “objects” issued the following statement in an Orwellian attempt to revise history:

[The 77-Page Report] is actually a collection of studies and hypotheses compiled by the U.S. side [of the URJC] to use as a working tool.³⁴

The US side of the USRJC contradicted itself, however, by describing the *77-Page Report* in the following terms:

The notion that American POWs were sent to the Soviet Union was articulated in a preliminary 1993 study produced by the Defense POW/MIA Office and titled *The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union*. This study is often popularly called “The 77 Page Report.”

The primary goal of the report was to show the Russians that a body of information exists suggesting that the Soviets had taken American POWs to the Soviet Union. The U.S. believed that once confronted with the evidence, albeit circumstantial, the Russians could no longer lightly dismiss American suggestions that the transfers took place.

The report succeeded in this goal. The Russians publicly went on record stating that the possibility of the transfer of American POWs could not be dismissed. The Russians did not confirm such transfers, but they did move away from an adamant denial of the possibility.³⁵

Mr. Ross, according to a press report, flatly dismissed the *77-Page Report*. “There isn’t one shred of evidence” that any US airman was taken to the USSR and not returned, he said.³⁶

Unfortunately, the attempted suppression of the *77-Page Report* would not be the last time that a DoD official resorted to a gag order, “pencil whipping,” or the suppression of unclassified public information to interfere with the program responsible for accounting for missing American service members.

* * *

DPMO ATTEMPTED TO SABOTAGE STASI ARCHIVE RESEARCH IN BERLIN

John Henshaw and I met with Mr. Richthammer in Berlin who had arranged a meeting at the Gauck Archive with Dr. Herbert Ziehm, an archivist who was conducting research on our behalf.

Our objective had been to obtain access to the Stasi records to determine if there was any evidence that American POWs, missing American citizens, or military deserters had been in or transported through East Germany. We were going to the Gauck Archive on a follow-up visit to see what the researchers had found (Fig. 14.8).



Fig. 14.8 (L-R) John Henshaw and Dr. Paul M. Cole at the entrance to the Gauck Archive, Berlin (Photo: PM Cole)

Dr. Ziehm advised that the research had been quite a success, but it would take a few weeks more to consolidate the material, review it, and have it cleared for release. As the researcher of record, according to German law, the records could only be given to me. All I had to do was to return to Berlin and collect the material in person.

Following our meeting, John and I had nothing to do, so in the afternoon we wandered around Berlin’s famous zoo then had lunch at the *Feinschmecker-Étage* in the Kaufhaus des Westens. In the evening, we went to the Berlin Philharmonic, also known as “von Karajan’s Circus.”

We finished the evening with a small cigar and a Courvoisier in the Kempinski bar that had seen many a Cold War intrigue. We thought everything was on track with the Gauck Archive project. We were about to find out how wrong we were.

* * *

DPMO nearly succeed with their effort to deliberately destroying our work in the Stasi/Gauck Archives.

Mr. Norm Kass and General James Wold, who was DPMO DASD (1994 to June 26, 1997), had been thoroughly briefed on the procedure required to collect the archive documents in Berlin at the Gauck Archive. We were confident DPMO understood what needed to be done and, more importantly, how we were required to proceed.

Without consulting me or my partner Helmut Richthammer, Mr. Kass dispatched Colonel Richard “Dick” Barnes to the Gauck Archive to collect the documents. Around 8:30 in the morning my time in Maryland, a very angry Helmut phoned me in a panic from his car. Helmut yelled at me, “Some Army colonel named Barnes went to see Ziehm. What is going on? This will ruin everything!”

I called Mr. Kass immediately to ask if it were true. Had Colonel Barnes been sent to collect the documents as Helmut had described? Mr. Kass replied, “Yes.”

I kept my cool, yet said icily, “You are trying to cut us out of this deal.”

Mr. Kass replied, “Yes, that’s right.”

“I told you this is impossible. Under German law, I must be involved in this project because I was the one who initiated it. There is no other way and you know it. Why did you do this? Can you tell me in simple terms why you have tried to destroy this opportunity that has taken over a year to arrange?”

Mr. Kass’ reply was a deliberate act of prevarication that should be enshrined in the Federal Government Gobbledygook Hall of Fame. Mr. Kass’ nanosecond “yes or no” was stuffed into a 30-second ass-covering ramble. He said, in words to this effect:

If, uh, the United States, uh government, err-ah, through its own, uh-err, efforts, uh, put forth for the purpose of obtaining, uh, certain materials from foreign sources, is, uh, unable to obtain these, uh, those, err certain materials, uh, err, records if you will, err uh, due to, uh, or, err, because of German law, well, uh err, we in, uh, this, err, office, can rightfully establish,

uh, err, or make a legitimate, uh, claim that we in, err, uh, this office, made an effort, uh, a legitimate effort in terms of, err, effort exerted, uh, to collect, er, uh, or otherwise obtain in terms of custody speaking-wise, uh, er, these materials, uh, err-a records, and, uh, but if, err, German law prevented this office, err uh, from doing so, then this office has, err, exerted efforts, uh, err, in terms of effort making, uh, err, to obtain without fruition, uh, those err, materials, then this would not be, uh err, the responsibility in terms of, err, this office, procedurally-speakingwise.

I couldn’t believe what he said. I half yelled into the phone, “What you are saying is that you are well aware that the Germans will not provide the material to you in the improper if not illegal way you have attempted. So, you are willing to make sure we cannot obtain these records because it cannot occur according to your idea of how it should be done.”

Mr. Kass said, in words to this effect, “I, uh-err, would not, uh, disagree with your, uh, err-uh, with your formulation.”

Mr. Richthammer and I went into disaster recovery mode. Mr. Richthammer used all of his legal reasoning and powers of persuasion to ensure that we would collect the Stasi reports. Our archivist, Dr. Ziehm, was so skittish and put off by the unwanted intervention by Colonel Barnes that he now insisted that a representative from the US government be involved. We had no problem with this, as we were acting on behalf of DoD. In light of my status as the researcher of record, Dr. Ziehm required me to be present as well. There was no budget for another trip to Berlin, so I sent Mr. Richthammer a notarized limited power of attorney to represent me at a meeting with Dr. Ziehm and Colonel Barnes at the Gauck Archive. This made it possible for me to be a juridical person at the meeting, even though I could not be there in person.

Dr. Ziehm gave the files to my proxy Mr. Richthammer who then went with Colonel Barnes to the American Embassy office in Berlin where photocopies were made. Mr. Richthammer personally turned over the copies of the original documents to Colonel Barnes at the American Embassy Office Berlin. (Between 1990 and 1998, the American Embassy Office Berlin acted as a “satellite” of the American Embassy in Bonn.) Helmut kept the original documents that were stamped with large red letters by the Gauck Archive to indicate their origin. The copies that were made for Colonel Barnes were black and white copies of our copies, thus the red letters on our copies were black on the copies given to Colonel Barnes.

Several months later I received a letter from DASD Wold who advised me that we had underestimated the power and efficiency of DPMO. Why, just a few weeks ago he wrote, Colonel Barnes successfully obtained from the Gauck Archives detailed records reflecting months of research by DPMO. DASD Wold's letter gave DPMO all the credit and glory for the research in the Gauck Archives.

DASD Wold gave DPMO credit for obtaining the Gauck Archive documents despite the fact that DPMO had come within a nanometer of sabotaging the entire enterprise.

* * *

DPMO's \$21 PER PAGE PHOTOCOPYING

DPMO's ability to conceive and implement innovative ways to squander taxpayer money was not limited to abuse of the DoD travel system and lavish parties. In 1995, due in large measure to the lobbying by the Korean/Cold War Families of the Missing organization, Congressman John "The King of Pork" Murtha (D-PA) successfully earmarked one million dollars to be used specifically for Korean War research.

After Congress approved this allocation, the money was put under the control of DPMO. Of all of the worthy research projects that could have been undertaken on behalf of the Korean/Cold War Families of the Missing, DPMO chose to photocopy a vast number of paper records that were available to the public at the NARA in Maryland. All of the records "pertained only to the condition, location, and treatment of unaccounted-for personnel from the Korean Conflict and Cold War era."

The services provided by the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress to DPMO were described, along with the associated costs, in the following receipt:

Archives accessed readily available to the general public: 36,523
 Archives access not readily available to the general public (still classified):
 2,000
 Case specific information forwarded to permanent casualty file: None
 Information forwarded to family members: Unknown
 Total Cost: \$840,212.84
 Total Pages: 38,523
 Photocopy & microfilm costs: \$12,808.84
 Labor & Administrative costs: \$827,404.00
 Cost per Page for Photocopying and Delivery: \$21.81

Whoever prepared this record did so in order to leave a paper trail that documented how one million dollars of taxpayer money had been squandered. Perhaps the most extraordinary aspect of this project was that of the \$840,212.84, only \$12,808.84 was spent on photocopy and microfilm costs. The balance, \$827,404.00, had been spent on labor and administrative costs.

The Library of Congress concluded that the amount of “information forwarded to family members” was simply “unknown.” Out of Murtha’s million, not one page—zero pages—resulted in “case specific information forwarded to a permanent casualty file.”

Contrast this outcome with Congressman Miller’s HR-2038-9 that amended the FY1992 Intelligence Authorization Act:

An amendment to require all existing information on any POW or MIA serviceperson (since 1940) to be released to the nearest living relative, or if none is living, to the legal representative of the POW/MIA.³⁷

The amendment required the DoD to search archive holdings in order to locate, declassify, and release records concerning every serviceman who had gone missing since 1940.

Instead of fulfilling the Miller Amendment, DPMO’s solution was to use Murtha’s million to pay the Federal Research Division of the Library of Congress \$840,000 to photocopy at \$21 per page publicly available documents that were shipped to DPMO where the documents were locked in a classified facility that was off-limits to the general public, including the next of kin of America’s missing servicemen.

No member of Congress, oversight Committee, Inspector General, or GAO team has ever questioned or investigated this transaction.

* * *

DPMO’S ACUTE CASE OF “TRAVEL-ITIS”

Throughout DPMO, PACOM, the JTF-FA part of CILHI, the CILHI commanders, then later the JPAC, a highly contagious disease set in. The most telling symptom of the disease, known as “travel-itis,” was pointless, expensive travel to foreign locations, often exotic or touristy, in the name of the “nation’s highest national priority.”

DPMO staff, military and civilians, used “research” trips funded by the government for what may only be referred to purposes unrelated to the accounting program’s mission.

The USAF maintained a fleet of passenger aircraft that provided official travel services to senior government officials, the commandant of the Air Force Academy, high-ranking military officers, as well as members of Congress. The Boeing 747, known as Air Force One when the president is on board, is perhaps the most well-known and certainly the most visible USAF passenger aircraft. The Air Force also maintains Learjet models 35 and 36 that are referred to as C-21A when used by the Air Force to transport passengers, which in Air Force-speak is “operational support airlift.” Around 2010, there were approximately 73 USAF and four Air National Guard Learjets stationed at 14 worldwide locations. The Air Force also uses the Boeing 737-700C airliner, known as the C-40B/C Clipper when transporting passengers and freight, that features a distinguished visitor compartment with “sleeping accommodations,” two galleys, and business-class seats with worktables intended to provide the passengers with an “office in the sky.”

A USAF passenger plane was referred to by the slang term “Blue,” as in “Let’s order a Blue and go traveling.”

A DPMO staff member stated that one “research” trip to one of the “-stans” in the former Soviet Union was organized before Christmas so DPMO’s “researchers” could buy carpets and other nice gifts just in time for the holidays. Several DPMO members stated that Mr. Albert Graham, one of DPMO’s “Russia specialists,” routinely used “research trips” to the erstwhile USSR on USAF aircraft in order to refresh an inventory of *matryoshka* (nesting) dolls, lacquer images of saints, tchotchkes, and other unspeakable Soviet kitsch that his wife sold from a kiosk in the Pentagon City Mall.

DPMO Deputy Director (July 1993–March 1995) Colonel Joe Schlatter³⁸ noticed the same problem:

One of the people [Mr. Norman] Kass wanted to keep on board was an active duty military officer, a native Russian linguist. The embassy in Moscow let me know, through the Defense Attaché office, that they wanted the guy out of the country because he was spending more time trying to set up personal businesses than he did on official duties and he was beginning to cause the Embassy some problems. Kass fought tooth and nail to keep this guy on board – I finally canned him.³⁹

DPMO’s “travel-itis” was obvious to others as well. A senior TFR manager observed:

There were at least two men who were in TFR when I arrived who clearly had personal motives for joining TFR – specifically, they were interested in getting to Russia and setting up personal businesses, or, they wanted to assist friends or family to set up businesses in Russia. I was alerted to what these two men were doing by a friend of mine in the US Defense Attaché Office in Moscow and I was able to send these people back to their parent units, though not without a lot of pissing and moaning.⁴⁰

A typical DPMO “research” trip to one of the “-stans” would be scheduled a few days prior to Christmas so that DPMO staff could take holiday care of gift shopping. On the return trip the overhead bins in the “Blue” were so crammed with textiles, all sorts of presents, handicrafts, and so many gifts that some items, such as large handmade carpets, had to be rolled up then stowed by sliding the carpets under the seats from the back of the aircraft.

“Research” trips using an Air Force “Blue” for a cost-free charter to the four corners of the former Soviet Union that repeatedly produced no results became routine at DPMO. The misuse of “Blues” for DPMO’s shopping sprees became so rampant that a memo was sent to DPMO staff directing them to stop using the term, “It’s time to take a trip,” when referring to “research” trips abroad.

Members of the Commission and DPMO were finally instructed in writing to stop saying in public things such as “I’ve never been to Armenia. Maybe we can do some research there.”

At the end of the day, DPMO’s lavish, ill-advised “wine and dine” program of squandering taxpayer money in this fashion produced nothing of value to the mission to resolve the fates of missing American servicemen.

There is no evidence that the DoD ever conducted a forensic audit of DPMO’s spending spree.

* * *

DPMO WINES AND DINES THE RUSSIANS

DPMO chose not to create a missing person resolution program built on a foundation of scientific cooperation. Instead, DPMO implemented an idiosyncratic OPM program.

Mr. Norman Kass, as executive secretary to the USRJC, became DPMO's lead person to support the USRJC in an organization called the Joint Commission Support Directorate (JCSD), which was also referred to as the "Branch." DPMO began a program of trying to "win over" Russian members of the USRJC. "Win over" was a term that meant to persuade someone to support your position or come over to your side.

The term "win over," used in a diplomatic context, was unfamiliar to me. At the Georgetown University Edmund Walsh Graduate School of Foreign Service, we were taught about the two predominant diplomatic tactics, namely, "woo them and screw them," or "wine them and dine them."

The purpose of DPMO's program, which appears to have been conveniently formulated in retrospect, was to convert US taxpayer money into probative information extracted from the Russians through the use of intensive socialization techniques augmented by a wide range of victuals complemented by unconstrained libations. In layman's terms, this was a "wine and dine" program. Those familiar with the program recommended that DPMO's JCSD should have adopted as its motto, *Nunc est bibendum*.

The idea that an American's personal engagement with a foreign official will have a positive effect on the outcome of a dispute with a hostile foreign power has been a recurring flaw in the way Americans view foreign leaders. President Johnson was reported to have said that if he could "only talk to that Ho Chi Minh fella," the war in Vietnam could have been avoided.

There were two precedents in US diplomatic history for DPMO's program to curry favor with their Russian/Soviet counterparts, neither of which was particularly encouraging.

American Ambassador William Bullitt, who had been appointed by President Franklin Roosevelt as America's first ambassador to the nascent Soviet Union (1933–1936), "was convinced that you could do business with [the Russians] if you only buttered them up properly."⁴¹ Ambassador Bullitt retired the "butter them up" trophy.

In the spring of 1935. This time, Ambassador Bullitt held a formal reception for the foreign diplomatic corps in Moscow. Thayer’s instructions from Bullitt were to plan a party that would surpass every other embassy party in Moscow’s history. Mrs. Wiley now suggested a barnyard motif, which would be entitled the “Spring Festival.” Following the debacle with the seals, Thayer was wary about using animals, but – as he later noted in his memoirs – being a mere translator, he “knew better than to argue” with the wife of a senior embassy official. Accordingly, Thayer temporarily procured some animals from the Moscow Zoo, whose Director had become “a little less nervous about collaborating with foreigners.” Thayer obtained some mountain goats, a dozen white roosters, and a baby bear that would spend the party perched on a small platform. To enhance the barnyard motif, workmen created an artificial forest in the chandelier room by using 10 young birch trees, which had been uprooted and stored temporarily in one of Spaso House’s bathrooms. They also constructed an aviary made from a fish net to house pheasants, parakeets, and 100 zebra finches (also on loan from the Moscow Zoo). Finally, the dining room table was covered with Finnish tulips, and with chicory grown on wet felt in order to simulate grass.

The Spring Festival, held on April 24, 1935, remains possibly the most elaborate and dazzling diplomatic function ever staged by an American overseas mission. Immortalized by the Soviet writer Mikhail Bulgakov in his satire of the Soviet era, *The Master and Margarita*, as the “Spring Ball of the Full Moon,” this event brought over 400 guests to Spaso House.

Apart from the fact that the bear vomited on a Soviet general after Radek mischievously substituted champagne for its bottle of milk, the party was a remarkable success, and lasted until the following morning.⁴²

The 400 guests included Foreign Minister Maxim Litvinov, Defense Minister Kliment Voroshilov, various Communist Party luminaries, and several Soviet Marshals. As far as Thayer was concerned, “except for Stalin, practically everyone who matters in Moscow turned up.” Thayer, who served as a Foreign Service Officer in Moscow for seven years (1933–1937, 1940–1942) immortalized the party in his book, *Bears in the Caviar* (Fig. 14.9).

Throwing champagne and caviar at the Russian leopard didn’t change its spots. Ambassador Bullitt’s opinion of the Soviet Union quickly deteriorated, particularly his view of the Soviet leadership. At the end of his appointment, he was openly hostile to the Soviet government.

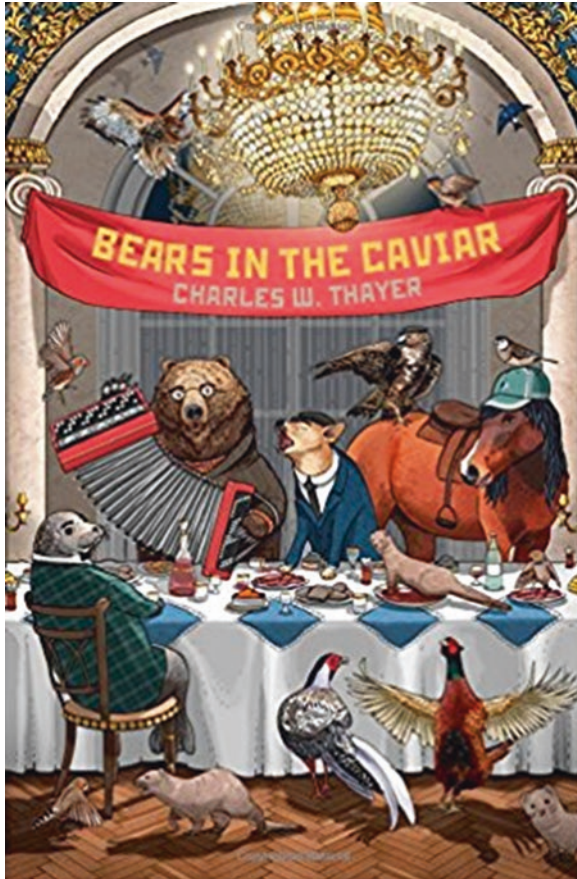


Fig. 14.9 *Bears in the Caviar*, book cover (Photo: Public Domain)

The belief in the importance of personal relationships in the “wine and dine” program surfaced frequently in US-Soviet relations. During WWII, Prime Minister Winston Churchill remarked to President Roosevelt before Yalta that it was possible to “win over” Soviet Premier Stalin. Sir Frank Roberts, British minister to the Soviet Union until 1947 and advisor to Prime Minister Churchill at the Yalta conference, recalled:

Stalin was very skillful in dealing with Roosevelt and Churchill. Even Churchill began to quite like him, you know, and talk about Uncle Joe, you

see, which was quite an affectionate term. And they both had this idea that if you treated him the right way – the phrase was, if you treat Uncle Joe as a member of our club, perhaps one day he will behave like a member of our club.⁴³

Churchill famously overlooked the fact that not only did Stalin have a club of his own, called the CPSU, he not only had no interest at all in joining, Stalin despised any club to which Roosevelt or Churchill belonged.

This is not to say that Stalin and the other Soviet bigwigs saw no advantage in participating in the wining and dining. American Ambassador to the Soviet Union George Kennan observed that Stalin was a master at manipulating visitors, particularly foreign diplomats.

[Stalin] treated them in quite a different way than he did his own people and some of them fell for this and they were really influenced by it, and I think a number of people came out saying, well, this is quite a reasonable man. And if [Stalin] had only been exposed more to my particular personality and my arguments, we might have been able to deal with him. Well, all I can say is what [Christopher Bohlen, American Ambassador to the USSR] one said, those are famous last words, like drinking doesn’t affect me!⁴⁴

After President Roosevelt accepted Stalin’s invitation to stay in the Soviet embassy during the Teheran conference, it transpired that President Roosevelt “got the idea of ingratiating himself into Stalin’s favours by making jokes about Churchill, by saying some rather nasty things about Churchill behind his back.” According to Churchill’s interpreter, President Roosevelt said to Churchill before the [Teheran] conference, “I think I can manage Uncle Joe’ – Stalin – ‘better than either my State Department or [the British] Foreign Office.’ I suppose on the same basis as he’d managed to jolly people along in the American political sphere, he thought he could do the same with Stalin.”⁴⁵

There is no example in history of a successful western effort to “win over” Soviet/Russian officials through food and drink, by setting a wholesome western example or, worse, by attempting to ingratiate oneself through fawning supplication. The average Soviet citizen would regard this type of conduct as a manifestation of the decadence of western capitalist swine. The historic record of this approach, however, made no impression on those assigned to DPMO’s “wine and dine” team.

One DPMO staff member summarized that the purpose of the program was, “To encourage the western-leaning members of the Russian

side to be like us,” as if that were necessarily a good thing. Toward this end, DPMO selected Russian members of the USRJC who seemed to be “friendly” or “open,” then set out to “win them over” through an “OPM” program of “wining and dining.” “OPM” means “Other People’s Money.” In a prolonged effort to “win over” the Russians to the American way of thinking, DPMO squandered vast amounts of US taxpayer money on one ill-advised boondoggle after another. In addition to the fact that the US taxpayer was picking up the tab for all DPMO salaries, all travel and per diem expenses, plus the lion’s share of the expenses of the USRJC, DPMO crowd began to treat the Russian side of the USRJC to elaborate meals, barbecues, booze cruises on the Potomac, Chesapeake Bay blue crab feasts on the eastern shore of Maryland, nights on the Vegas strip (including a particularly “liquid” evening that included at least one performance by a very drunk and very naked former exotic dancer turned real estate agent), as well as more mundane events such as visits to historic sites in America, including day trips to Civil War battlefields around Washington, DC.

DPMO’s strategy—if crab boils, booze cruises, happy hours, titty bars, and dinner parties may be referred to as a strategy—was intended to show the friendly Russians the equally friendly and genuine side of America. According to DPMO’s approach, after the friendly Russians realized Americans were a bunch of nice guys, then all of the nice guys in Russia would feel obligated to hand over to the nice Americans all of the documents that DPMO was convinced the Russians had collected and were hiding in one tidy box labeled “Secrets” that was located at the center of the bisected onion.

DPMO’s OPM-inspired thinking justified paying for General Volkogonov’s medical treatments in US facilities. DPMO paid for General Volkogonov’s cancer treatments, at no cost to the Russian general. No American citizen would ever get the kind of free medical treatment DPMO arranged for retired Soviet General Volkogonov. DPMO also purchased at least one “personal protection” weapon for General Volkogonov, a tear gas pistol or some kind of pepper spray device.

* * *

The purpose of DPMO’s “wine and dine” program was ill-conceived and doomed to failure for cultural reasons. Within the Soviet system people who belonged to the “*nomenklatura*,” members of the Communist Party

who were assigned key positions in government and business, received every imaginable favor and advantage at the expense of the state. Communist Party members had access to shops, all off-limits to everyone else, that were always well-stocked with a wide variety of western goods. The concept was not unfamiliar to members of the US military who were able to shop for subsidized groceries, electronics, clothes, booze, gasoline, and furniture at base exchanges that civilians were forbidden to enter. If the average resident of Hawaii, where the cost of living is the highest of any state in the union, had any idea of the variety of goods at low prices available in stores within the military bases that occupy a greater percentage land than in any other state, they would riot. This is one reason why civilians are forbidden to even enter the military’s facilities. The military does not want civilians to see what their tax dollars are providing to members of the military at a steep discount. The Soviet *nomenklatura* system, which operated in a parallel and clandestine manner, was similar to the US military’s base system, with party affiliation rather than membership in the military being the entry ticket.

The Russian members of the USRJC were products of a system in which state resources for personal entertainment, “*tyeploye mesto*,” literally a “warm place,” were embedded in the communist culture. The Soviet leadership believed the *nomenklatura* were entitled to preferential treatment because as the vanguard of the proletariat they were acting on behalf of the working class.

The OPM boondoggle culture that prevailed within DPMO was another example of the phenomenon of “ethical fading” that prevailed throughout the US military. In this case, “ethical fading” occurred due to the fact that the DPMO staff were so focused on extracting vital information from the Russians that the ethical dimensions of their actions either faded or were simply ignored. DPMO staff were not the only ones to succumb to the Siren song that they were engaged in America’s “highest national priority.” The sycophancy and toadying of the lobbyists and straphangers who took advantage of trips to Moscow paid for by the taxpayer helped keep the USRJC going for reasons that had nothing to do with accounting for missing servicemen. DPMO’s use of taxpayer money for parties, travel, hotels, meals, and booze surfaced in other parts of the Accounting Community under other names, such as “military tourism.”

The Russians did not think the parties, medical care, gifts, booze, and travel provided by DPMO were unusual. After the rather thin Colonel Orlov, who received a box of sugar cubes from me to when we met in

Moscow in 1992, became a member of the Russian side of the USRJC, he gradually ballooned into a corpulent colonel, due in large measure to DPMO's unlimited buffet and open bar strategy. Even Russians who were not part of the *nomenklatura* were familiar with the privileges of the Soviet elite. When our colleague Mr. Pankov came to Washington, DC, to visit the Pentagon, he was convinced the Metro subway system was reserved for members of the US *nomenklatura*. From Mr. Pankov's perspective as a life-long resident of Moscow, such a clean, modern, efficient system, which could not possibly be available to the general public, had to be reserved for party members.

It didn't take a clairvoyant to predict that DPMO's "wine and dine" approach would fail as a cost-effective archive research strategy.

One of the aspects of the program to provide copious amounts of food and booze to the US and Russian members of the USRJC that remains unknown, however, is how much taxpayer money was shoved into such an insatiable furnace. Without a proper forensic audit, it will remain impossible to know how much taxpayer money was squandered on DPMO's party scheme. One analyst summarized DPMO's expenditures as follows:

[A]lmost fifteen years of US-JRC meetings, hundreds of cocktail parties, scores of state dinners, and thousands of travel days to each other's symposiums in Washington and Moscow, [the] US financial outlay exceed[ed] four hundred million dollars.⁴⁶

Coming up with ways to spend 400 million dollars, the equivalent of \$26 million per month over 15 years or more than one million dollars per working day on flights, per diem, salaries, cocktail parties, and banquets to entertain the dozen or so Russian members of the US-Russia Joint Commission and their American counterparts would have been an improbably achievement, even for the profligate DPMO staff. Even if the amount spent were a tenth of this exaggerated estimate, it would have been too much.

Congress authorized a single accounting method that applied to servicemen missing from America's historic conflicts; namely, the remains are identified by visual inspection or the remains are recovered then identified by a practitioner of an appropriate forensic scientist. Throughout more than two decades of bouncing from one reception in Moscow to

another in Washington, the USRJC did not produce a single original lead or any piece of material or biological evidence that led to one identification. Given the useless nature of the USRJC, even if the total amount spent on food, booze cruises, and trips to Vegas was one-fourth the reported total, it would still constitute an unambiguously useless misuse of taxpayer money.

* * *

RUSSIAN SIDE OF USRJC PRESENTED OUR STUDY AS THEIR OWN WORK

In March 1994, Sergei and I began to make plans for our follow-up trip to Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Berlin, and Moscow. The idea was to get a mid-course report from each of our research teams as well as to collect any archive material that had been located. The plan was to take off from DC on April 8, overnight in Paris, then on to Kiev.

Before our follow-up visit, however, we were required to present an interim briefing and draft report to the project sponsor, DPMO.

During the briefing, we submitted our required interim report to Mr. Norman Kass, my project officer at DPMO. The 207-page interim report included Soviet-era archive documents as well as letters written by Russian citizens who reported first-hand knowledge of American citizens allegedly sighted in the Soviet Gulag system.

The interim report stated:

The purpose of this project’s archive research was, in Secretary Cheney’s words, to obtain ‘access to records that can help account for missing Americans.’ This objective was achieved successfully. Research, which was sustained for over two years, produced significant findings that respond directly to the original purpose of this project.

We were satisfied that our research in Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Germany, and Moscow had produced excellent results that contributed to the goal outlined by Secretary Cheney.

The Soviet-era archives yielded records that without any doubt or ambiguity clearly linked Soviet authorities with American POW/MIAs during the Korean War. There was ample evidence that Soviet-era archives contained

information that could contribute to the resolution of the fates of US POW/MIAs from the Korean War as well. Some of the significant findings included in the interim report were the following. Soviet military intelligence:

- Organized and maintained direct, systematic contact with American POW/MIAs from the earliest days of the Korean War.
- Interrogated American POW/MIAs directly using Soviet personnel and indirectly through the use of North Korean and Chinese personnel.
- Deployed search teams whose mission was to locate the wreckage of American aircraft in order to transport instruments and other materiel to Soviet aerospace and research bureaus in the USSR.
- Transported American POW/MIAs in the custody of Soviet forces, though in these documents the destinations are not named.
- Reported the results of interrogations of Americans and other data relating to American POW/MIAs to the highest levels of the Soviet government, including the Politburo.

The results we produced were not only useful on an official level, there were some profoundly important impacts on a personal level.

Instead of embracing and supporting the research, in 1994 DPMO and others within DoD used considerable influence to stop the project we had initiated in 1991.

* * *

After the briefing, Mr. Kass asked me to speak with him privately, in his office.

After he closed his office door, Mr. Kass advised me that the Russian side of the USRJC had finally produced their report. Mr. Kass, who had the report in his office at DPMO, described it as “a very sensitive document.” At first Mr. Kass refused to show the Russian side’s report to me. I reminded him of my SECRET clearance. Mr. Kass stated repeatedly that this was a “big deal,” the long-awaited report produced by the Russian side of the USRJC. Mr. Kass said that the report was “very important,” as well as “highly sensitive.”

Eventually he allowed me to have a brief peek at the supersensitive document that he kept locked in his desk drawer. Mr. Kass unlocked the drawer, removed the document, hesitated for a moment, then handed it to me.

The moment the report was revealed, I started to laugh, though it wasn’t the “hey, this is hilarious” kind of laugh.

The document Mr. Kass handed me was a draft version of the report produced by our RAND-sponsored team at the Institute for Human Values in Moscow. The draft, which was in Russian, bore Dr. Matskovsky’s familiar letterhead.

I journaled:

March 18, 1994 – DFI, DC

Met with my project sponsor at DoD yesterday. Delivered my Soviet archive collection. They compared it to the Russian Commission’s work – turns out the Russian Commission submitted the report prepared by the International Center for Human Values (ICHV) in Moscow. I commissioned that research three years ago! Thus, here I was comparing my current research with my previous research. Unbelievable. The incompetence of the government on this issue is incomprehensible.

I’m trying to phone Sergei in Moscow. He’s due to receive some more archive material tomorrow. The plan is he will FedEx it to me right away. I hope it’s good stuff – I’d love to rub the Commission’s nose in it one more time, particularly in light of the fact they stole the ICHV material from us.

More than that, however, I’d like to be able to prove that the Soviets took our guys to the USSR!

Dr. Matskovsky’s letterhead from the “Institute for Human Values” was on the cover, yet when the Russian side provided the report to the USRJC, they claimed it was their original work. They didn’t even bother to change the cover page. The Russian side of the USRJC submitted as their own work a report they had somehow obtained (read: stolen), from our DoD-sponsored archive research project.

We never found out how the Russian side of the USRJC had gotten their hands on Dr. Matskovsky’s report. The Russian side of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs had submitted as their own work a report prepared by a third party.

No one within DPMO thought that this outcome was in the least bit improper or strange.

* * *

DPMO ACCUSED US OF “OVER-FULFILLING CONTRACT TERMS”

In our view, the archive research project in the former USSR and East Germany had been a success. That is, until we became aware of the word “supererogation.”

I was understandably perplexed to receive a call from the DoD OIG. The project sponsor, DPMO’s Mr. Norman Kass, had filed a complaint against Sergei and me in our personal capacities. This was not a complaint against DFI International Inc. Instead, Mr. Kass had accused us, among other things, of “supererogation,” which is defined as “over-fulfilling the terms of the contract.”

More astonishing to me was Mr. Kass’ accusation that Sergei and I were guilty of “flying first class on a government contract.”

It was immediately apparent to us that Mr. Kass’ IG complaint was reprisal for producing results that contradicted the Russian side of the USRJC and confirmed that the USRJC was an expensive, unproductive waste of time.

For example, we had produced operational records from the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, such as the following (Fig. 14.10):

I testified before Congressman Dornan’s committee in 1996:

Mr. Cole: My team obtained [...] another folder full of these daily operational summaries, which I offered to Norm Kass and he would not take them because he said the commission did not accept documents from independent researchers. So they have been sitting for 2 years.

Mr. Dornan: But then you heard Mr. Kass say today that he thinks outside sources are essential. Was that not the word he used?⁴⁷

Mr. Kass had made a special effort to ensure that my unclassified report that contained new, important information would be concealed from his DPMO colleagues, the US side of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, and the American people, apparently due to the fact that it was critical of the Russian side of the USRJC.

The Russian side of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs had stated repeatedly that the archive records uncovered in Soviet military archives did not exist. According to the ground rules negotiated by Ambassador Toon, the US side of the commission was required to accept the Russian position without reservation. My personal opinion is that Mr. Kass, who was the executive secretary of the commission, prioritized

After accusing us of waste, fraud, and abuse of a government contract, Mr. Kass told a completely different story when he testified under oath:

Mr. Dornan: What is your opinion of independent analysis helping the Missing Persons Office?

Mr. Kass: I would say it is not only desirable, it is essential.

Mr. Dornan: Essential?

Mr. Kass: Yes, indeed, and I would also say that if you examine the 4-plus years that this Commission has been in operation, what you would find over in DoD and DPMO is that we have had through the life of the program parallel efforts to those of the Commission, because I think one of the enduring premises we make is the fact that you can learn only up to a certain amount through the Commission for a number of reasons.

The DFI project had been part of the “program parallel efforts” described by Mr. Kass under oath as “desirable” and “essential.” In his complaint to the DoD IG, however, Mr. Kass complained that our work constituted some sort of waste, fraud, and abuse.

Two IG inspectors came to see me at DFI. Sergei, who lived in Los Angeles, was spared. An IG investigation was not the sort of thing that helped my standing within DFI. The inspectors found the accusation that we had over-fulfilled the terms of the contract to be unusual, if not totally weird. I showed the investigators all of our receipts and the deliverables, which filled one and a half banker’s boxes.

Their main concern was Mr. Kass’ accusation that we had flown first class on a government contract. The specific accusation was that we had flown “first class” from Kiev to Riga. That was the flight through the blizzard when I thought we were not going to make it to Riga alive.

Fortunately, I always keep good records. In this case, I had original documents, copious notes, plus a couple of dozen photographs. I first showed the inspectors the wax paper “first-class” boarding pass from the Kiev to Riga flight of near death. Then I showed them the photographs of the scene at the airport, with the ankle-deep snow and all. They lingered for a long time over the photographs of the interior of the aircraft, including a photograph of the air hostess with the huge beehive hairdo and a shot of the tray of alleged food that she had served us.

After an hour or so, the lead auditor closed his notebook, looked at me, and said, “I will deny under oath that I have said this, but why are they doing this to you?”

I replied, “I have no idea.”

The DoD IG dismissed all of Mr. Kass’ accusations, telling me in the process that they wished that more contractors would over-fulfill the terms of a DoD contract. It’s almost always the other way around.

A few months later, I ran into a DPMO employee with whom I was on good terms. He told me that Mr. Kass had not circulated the DFI International reports. Instead, Mr. Kass had locked them in his desk drawer. On top of that, Mr. Kass advised DPMO employees that we had wasted nearly \$450,000 in research money. Mr. Kass told several people that the DFI International project had produced nothing. I was dumbstruck by the news. Mr. Kass, who was telling his DPMO colleagues that we produced nothing, had advised the IG that we had committed an offense because we had “over-fulfilled the terms of the contract.”

I mentioned this to a woman whose father had disappeared during the Korean War. The only way the DFI International reports were released to the public was due to that woman’s FOIA request to DPMO, which took more than a year to be fulfilled.

Our guess was that Mr. Kass, who was the executive secretary for the U.S. side of the USRJC, felt it was necessary to conceal the fact that our project had exposed the commission as a farce. Why Mr. Kass tried to use the DoD IG to retaliate against us is an answer that only he can provide.

* * *

HOUSE MILITARY PERSONNEL SUBCOMMITTEE

More than a year after my contract with DPMO ended, Congressman Robert Dornan (R-CA) invited me to testify before the Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security, on June 20, 1996. The subject of the “Status of POW/MIA Negotiations With North Korea.”⁴⁸

In addition to me, the principal witness list included:

- David G. Brown, Director, Korean Affairs, DoS
- Bob Dumas, brother of Korean War POW Army Private Roger Dumas
- Pat Dunton, President, Korean/Cold War Family Association
- Insung O. Lee, DPMO analyst
- Norman Kass, Russian Division, DPMO

- Alan Liotta, Deputy Director, POW/MIA Office
- Irene Mandra, sister of Korean War POW USMC Sgt Philip Mandra
- Malcolm Toon, Co-Chairman, US-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs

In his opening remarks, Congressman Dornan revealed why he had invited to testify:

The first priority should always be to resolve questions regarding men possibly alive. In addition, we must use all the means possible, including creative independent research, honest outside brokers. This has worked at the Defense Department. This has worked with outside contractors. That is why I have asked people who wrote a RAND study to come today.

Despite the presence of other Committee members, this hearing was basically a one-man show, dominated by Congressman Dornan.

Here's how Congressman Dornan introduced me:

Mr. Cole did this long, extensive report for the RAND Corporation. He is in this [BBC] documentary ["Russia's Secret War"] that I am going to send you. He has been – I hate this word – “trashed,” it is overused – but he has been critiqued severely, sort of discredited. And that is the nonsense that has to stop.

My prepared statement and extemporaneous remarks went as follows:

I will keep this brief. I am here to talk about how one does Korean War POW/MIA research. In my view, the type of research that would establish the criteria established by the Korea/Cold War Family Association of the Missing is a relatively straight-forward task. My purpose is to describe how these cases can be researched in United States and foreign archives.

I am also submitting materials for the record that I have to stress were in the public domain prior to my appearance today. I obtained a lot of archival material from the Soviet Union that, in contrast to what Ambassador Toon said today, that there is no classified material, DPMO has received materials from the Russian side of the Joint Commission and classified them in this country. I obtained the same material, in some cases, more complete copies of the same archival materials from Russia and I have them in my bag right here and I provided those to DPMO to show them the contrast between what the Russians were giving them.

Congressman, there is something that is missing here. The ground rules that Ambassador Toon agreed to when the United States – Russian Joint Commission was established, and I was a so-called technical consultant, I was in Moscow in March 1992 when this commission began. Remember, I had a research team that had been at work for three months in the archives when this commission was created, so I knew the scene.

Ambassador Toon agreed to two ground rules. The first one was that there would be no independent research used by the commission. The second ground rule was that the United States could not take the initiative to interview anyone in Russia without first informing the Russian side of the Joint Commission.

So this meant, as I found out, and I will give you an example in my statement here, of archival material that was obtained by independent sources in Moscow that pertained directly to American POW’s in Korea, submitted to DoD, to DPMO, and in many cases was never used because it violated, as Mr Norm Kass put it to me once upon a time, it violated the spirit of the commission.

Let me blow through this statement. I sort of gave some thought to this and it sort of works if I read it.

Since 1991, I have organized and have been the principal investigator for three separate research projects lasting two and one-half years relating to the Korean War POW/MIA issues. The Office of the Secretary of Defense retained me for these projects, in part, because of a DoD finding in 1991 that the Office of the Secretary of Defense did not have adequate expertise or resources to conduct archive research in the United States or foreign archives. A short summary of my work for DoD is attached to my formal statement. These projects began in 1991.

The motivation for the first project was the anticipation that the United States and North Korea would engage in bilateral negotiations. Thus, POW/MIA issues had to be addressed. I was also asked to prepare a remains joint recovery strategy, which why I have some opinions about the one they have planned now.

The general purpose of these OSD-sponsored projects was to determine the fates of World War II, Cold War, and Korean War POW/MIA’s through archive research. Included in these projects was the task to determine if any POW’s or MIA’s from any conflict had been transported to but not repatriated from the Sino-Soviet bloc.

Following the award of the first OSD contract in 1991, I initiated an archive research project in the United States, in the Soviet Union, and a smaller effort in Sweden. The joint archive project, which preceded by three months the creation of the United States – Russian Joint Commission, was approved by the Soviet Minister of Defense, Marshal Shaposhnikov, and by Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. In 1992, the first project, which focused on Soviet military archives, was so successful it was extended by OSD for an entire year. My three-volume report, “POW/MIA Issues,” deriving from these projects, was published by RAND in 1994.

I have also organized and managed archive research related to Korean War issues in the Federal Republic of Germany, including archives of the former German Socialist Republic, their military archives, and their secret police or STASI files, and also KGB archives in four former republics of the Soviet Union, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. My seven-volume report deriving from research in the KGB and STASI archives was submitted to DPMO in 1994. I brought some examples of it.

The content of all of these studies was studied, reviewed, edited and approved for release by the Office of the Secretary of Defense and DPMO.

Results are possible, but from time to time, we need to remind ourselves what we are doing. It is easy to lose track of what is important when servicemen are reduced to objects, such as BNR’s, and the families become PNOK’s. We are not looking for things; we are looking for people. The purpose of Korean War POW/MIA research is to help people find information about other people. If that is the task, then results are possible.

But in order to be effective, research should be organized only after a family expresses what they want to know about a POW/MIA case. Prior to that, one can only guess what a family wants to know. Since families are entitled to answers that match their level of interest, I think this is a logical place to start. Family interest ranges from none at all to the belief that a missing man is still alive and everything in between.

The circumstances of loss framed by these two polarities are not evenly distributed. More men remain unrecovered from POW camp cemeteries, that is about 2,100, than were transported to the USSR. In my view, that is about 35. More men were murdered after capture and their remains not recovered, that is about 950, than were unrecovered from marked, isolated burial sites, about 575. And more men remain unrecovered from temporary

military cemeteries, about 500, than might have died in aircraft crashes, about 400. So the circumstances of individual loss vary greatly.

Thus, the utility of different archive holdings varies according to the circumstances of loss. The type of information the family requires varies, as well. Each case is a custom job, you could say, but similar cases may be addressed with similar methodological techniques and similar sources.

At the end of the day, Korean War POW/MIA cases will be resolved by research, not by politics, but access to the archives is a political act in any country.

A brief word about the utility of U.S. records. The historical record of Korean War POW/MIA information is extensive and the level of detail is precise. Parenthetically, I strongly disagree with DPMO when they allege that the record is flawed.

The quantity and quality of existing information in U.S. archives alone is adequate to answer questions relating to perhaps 95 percent of the remaining POW/MIA cases.

In my experience, most families want to know what happened. Recovery of remains or expectations that anyone is alive are found less frequently. For the families who would be satisfied to know the circumstances of loss, information and details contained in U.S. archives are usually more than sufficient to satisfy their inquiries.

For example, of the approximately 5,000 POW/MIA’s who died but were not recovered from marked graves, crash sites, and battlefields above the 38th Parallel, U.S. archives can provide detailed information on the circumstances of death for over 4,500. The circumstances of death for over 4,100 men lost above the 38th Parallel were witnessed by repatriated American POW’s and over 400 more were thought to have perished in air crashes. The other 550 cases either have no geographic coordinates – loss at sea, that sort of thing – or no repatriated eyewitnesses who could have provided information.

In addition, using modern techniques derived since 1954, there is a good chance that a majority of the 866 Americans buried as unidentified in the Punch Bowl Cemetery in Honolulu could be identified. We could, in other words, recover the remains of up to 866 American servicemen without any

assistance from China, North Korea, or the Soviet Union. We could do this using U.S. archives, U.S. scientific methods, and we do not even have to leave the United States.

In my view, information derived from U.S. archives would satisfy many, perhaps the majority, of families. Since the circumstances of loss for over 4,500 may be derived from U.S. sources, I think it is a good place to start.

A brief word about the utility of Soviet records. Soviet military records in Russian custody have been proven to contain information concerning unre-patriated and unrecovered American POW's and MIA's. I attached something that I call my "Moscow Report" to my formal statement, where you can see how this archive information may be related to specific, individual cases.

Records of the Soviet KGB, on the other hand, have turned up a great deal of information on imprisoned Americans who held dual citizenship, but thus far have not revealed any information on Korean War POW/MIA's. I should stress, however, that the only KGB records I have seen, I have obtained from Ukraine, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia.

I have been in the KGB archives looking through the boxes myself, but not in Russia.

In 1991, the late General Dmitri Volkogonov promised that up to three American researchers would be given access to Soviet military archives. No governmental research group has ever placed American researchers in Soviet military archives. When Volkogonov made this promise, which was never kept, my research team was already at work on Soviet military records under the terms of the Shaposhnikov – Cheney agreement. Our group successfully located a number of valuable records, but eventually, access was denied to these archives by Russian authorities.

I should add, in contrast to what Ambassador Toon said today, he referred to my archive research team as "disruptive and out of control." It was an independent research effort that had to be shut down, as he put it. During the April 9, 1992 meeting of the commissioners of the U.S. side, the minutes of that meeting are very clear. Toon complained to RAND, where I was working at the time, that this effort was ruining their commission. This came from a complaint that Ambassador Toon received from Volkogonov,

because what I did, if I may be immodest for a second, I went to Moscow and tried to find the best archivists in Russia, and I put them to work. When the commission was put to work, they had the B Team.

I am almost finished here. The point is, the utility of Soviet military archives in Russian custody contain information that tells the story of how American servicemen died in Soviet custody, how Soviet officers witnessed the deaths of Americans or located and in some cases photographed the remains of Americans. The daily operational reports of the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, which had a combat regiment at Endol, are particularly valuable. The American side of the United States—Russian Joint Commission has requested these documents repeatedly but my team was the only source for them.

My team obtained another folder full of these operational summaries, which I offered to Norm Kass and he would not take them because he said the commission did not accept documents from independent researchers. So they have been sitting for two years.

Mr. Dornan: But you heard Mr. Kass say today that he thinks outside sources are essential. Was that not the word he used?

Mr. Cole: We have to revisit that, obviously. But Soviet military records contain information about Americans found dead in crash sites, photographs of Americans found dead by Soviet search teams, and unrepatriated Americans who were interrogated by Soviet intelligence. Also, the identity of crashed United States Air Force aircraft located by Soviet search teams can be derived from these materials. I have attached my “Moscow Report” as I call it, as an illustration. I also include a couple of these daily operational summaries.

This report demonstrates the utility of Soviet military records and how this information may be related to individual American POW/MIA cases. Soviet veterans are also a valuable source of information concerning American POW/MIA’s.

Finally, the utility of other archives. In my view, in contrast to what we heard earlier today, and I know there are a number of people in this room who would disagree with me, and I am aware of this, I think there is little to be gained from other archives. At the very least, we should concentrate our efforts on archives the utility of which has been proven.

The archives of the People's Republic of China have not been proven to have information related to POW/MIA's. I did an investigation a few years ago, trying to find out through academic circles how we could crack the code on Chinese military archives that might have some utility for this and the answer was, not in a million years. It would be an enormous effort. This is a recipe for making a lot of trips to Beijing and having banquets and toasts and all this kind of stuff, and your archives and our archives and that sort of thing. I have never liked that approach. At the end of the day, you sit down with a box of documents, you have some serious butt time, and you turn the pages. That is how you make progress in archive research, and you have to negotiate it on the worker bee level.

And the North Koreans, to describe them as vassals during the Korean War is probably to give them a bit of credit. They lifted things and they built roads and they carried stuff. I do not think they ever put pen to paper about the Americans who they were murdering after capture. Why would they?

The Senate Select Committee had testimony about how the Russian side would get to witnesses and intimidate them. One of my consultants had a very shadowy figure come up to him and say, "You are working too closely with the Americans. It would be easy to push you in front of a bus." My colleague looked at him and said, "Try it."

We can all sit around and tell horror stories about DPMO and all of that kind of stuff. You can travel the world over and never find a monument built to a commission. In my view, just as a private citizen and so forth, I do not think the Government has any business being in the research business. Doing this sort of analysis, yes, but research, no. The Department of Defense realized that in 1991. They said, we do not do archive work, and over the past five years, they have proven that they do not do archive work. They knew that very well.

[Laughter]

So the long and short of this is, look, this is not – take this in the right way – this is not brain surgery. Archive research is a matter of finding boxes and going through the documents, finding evidence. But if we focus all the efforts on going to an F-80 crash site in North Korea to dig it up, why? I have in my documents here, I can tell you who died there. I can tell you down to a space about as big as this hearing room where that plane crashed. But on the other hand, I can tell you the names of almost 3,000 U.S. servicemen who were left in marked graves by the Graves Registration Service.

So the approach just does not make sense to me. This is not a research strategy.

The hearing had no impact or influence whatsoever on the POW/MIA Accounting Community’s activities.

During the hearing, Congressman Dornan asked DPMO’s Mr. Norm Kass:

Mr. Dornan: Is there hard evidence to you that American prisoners were taken to Russia during Korea?

Mr. Kass: There is certainly evidence. I would consider it significant evidence.

Mr. Dornan: Not hard, OK. Significant.

Mr. Kass: Really, it is quibbling over the adjective, but I think there is compelling – I would consider it strong evidence to support that, yet.

After the 1996 House hearing, I was convinced that I had made my final contribution to America’s “highest national priority.”

I was wrong.

* * *

NOTES

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2. <http://www.miafacts.org/hope.htm>
3. *Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security*, June 20, 1996.
4. *Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, December 2, 1992. <http://www.mccain.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/1992/12/post-7353d7dd-cac8-44d2-bcd5-059d20dea2dd>
5. The remains of Major Daniel Vernon Borah, Jr., who went missing on September 24, 1972, were identified on June 10, 1996. http://www.dpaa.mil/portals/85/Documents/VietnamAccounting/pmsea_acc_p_usn.pdf

6. Remains recovered by a Vietnamese Unilateral Recovery Team (URT) in August 2014 were identified on August 19, 2015, as Major Donald G. Carr. Major Carr went missing on July 6, 1971. The remains were recovered on August 29, 2014.
7. <http://www.nationalalliance.org/wwii/wwii.html>
8. The introduction of *Volume I: The Korean War* of the RAND report clearly states, “DoD’s International Security Affairs (ISA)/East Asia and Pacific office was the project sponsor and monitor for Phase I (October 1991 – April 1992). Phase II (May 1992 – April 1993), though conceived in the ISA/East Asia and Pacific Region office, was conducted after February 1992 under the newly-created DoD office of POW/MIA Affairs.” The DoD contract number was MDA903-90-C-0004.
9. *Moscow Bound: Policy, Politics and the POW/MIA Dilemma*, John M. G. Brown, Thomas V. Ashworth (Veteran Press, 1992).
10. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, WWII POWs, Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, November 10–11, 1992, p. 289, 302. http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/pow/senate_house/pdf/hear_11_92.pdf
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12. Barbara Tuchman.
13. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., pp. 28–32.
14. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., pp. 29–31.
15. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 79.
16. *POWs and MIAs: Status and Accounting Issues*, Robert L. Goldich, (Congressional Research Service, Foreign Affairs, Defense and Trade Division, Report RL33452, June 8, 2005), p. 12. <http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a458266.pdf>
17. “United States Prisoners of War and the Red Army, 1944–45: Myths and Realities,” Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Journal of Military History*, Vol. 66, No. 3, July 2002: 761–2.
18. Letters to the Editor, Dr. Timothy K. Nenninger, *The Journal of Military History*, Volume 67, No. 2, April 2003, pp. 660–667. Emphasis in the original. Three of the “others” specified by Dr. Nenninger are Mr. Mark Sauter, Mr. James D. Sanders, and Mr. R. Cort Kirkwood.
19. *America’s Abandoned Sons*, Robert S. Miller (Xlibris Corporation Publishers, 2012), p. 349.
20. *The Downing of TWA Flight 800*, James D. Sanders (New York: Zebra Books/Kensington Publishing, 1997).
21. “United States Prisoners of War and the Red Army, 1944–45: Myths and Realities,” op. cit., p. 775.

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23. “Doubt Cast On Yeltsin POW Claim,” John Lancaster and Michael Dobbs, *Washington Post*, June 18, 1992. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1992/06/18/doubt-cast-on-yeltsin-pow-claim/394d7bb4-7045-4cd0-8d0b-130e4170df32/>
24. “Doubt Cast On Yeltsin POW Claim,” John Lancaster and Michael Dobbs, op. cit.
25. “This Russian News Agency Doubled As a Spy Machine,” Shane Harris, *The Daily Beast*, January 27, 2015. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2015/01/27/meet-russian-spies-best-friends-in-the-media-itar-tass.html>
26. In August 2002, Mr. Jolidon died of a heart attack while serving as the media spokesman for the NATO peacekeeping force in Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina. He was 64.
27. It is important to note that the transcript and translation of Colonel Bushuyev’s remarks were made by U.S. government Russia language linguists at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California. This is important in light of the criticism by DPMO that the interview was not properly recorded or translated accurately.
28. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs* (Washington, DC, U.S. Senate, June 17, 1996), p. 97. http://www.dod.mil/pubs/foi/Reading_Room/Personnel_Related/USsideUS-Russia_Joint_Commission_POW-MIAS.pdf
29. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 107.
30. See, for example: Footnotes 3, 4, 5, 16, 17, 18, 19, 23, 26, 27, 32, 33, 39, 41, 51, and others.
31. “This study was produced by Mr. Peter G. Tsouras, DAC; Major Werner Saemler Hindrichs, USAF; Master Sergeant Danz Blasser, USAF; with the assistance of Second Lieutenant Timothy R. Lewis, USAF; Mr. Paul H. Vivian, DAC; Staff Sergeant Linda R. H. Pierce, USA; and Sergeant Gregory N. Vukin, USA.”
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38. Colonel Schlatter served as Chief, Analysis Branch, Defense Intelligence Agency's Special Office for POW-MIA Affairs (February 1986 – December 1988) and as Chief, Defense Intelligence Special Office for POW-MIA Affairs (December 1988 – July 1990).
39. "A Sad Story Must Be Told," MIA Facts Site, http://www.miafacts.org/dornan_hearing.htm
40. MIA Facts Site: Where Are The 'Hundreds' Of Americans Who Were In The Gulag?" <http://www.miafacts.org/january%202006.htm>
41. Interview with Professor George Kennan, *Cold War Documentary Project – Episode I: Comrades*, National Security Archive, George Washington University. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/coldwar/interviews/episode-1/roberts1.html>
42. "Spaso House History," US Embassies and Consulates in Russia, US Embassy Moscow, <https://ru.usembassy.gov/embassy-consulates/moscow/spaso-house/spaso-history/> The party was memorialized in *Bears In The Caviar*, Charles W. Thayer (J.B. Lippincott, 1950), pp. 106–114.
43. Interview with Sir Frank Roberts, *Cold War Documentary Project – Episode I: Comrades*, National Security Archive, George Washington University. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/coldwar/interviews/episode-1/roberts1.html>
44. Interview with Professor George Kennan, *Cold War Documentary Project – Episode I: Comrades*, National Security Archive, George Washington University. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/coldwar/interviews/episode-1/roberts1.html>
45. Interview with Hugh Lunghi, *Cold War Documentary Project – Episode I: Comrades*, National Security Archive, George Washington University. <http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/coldwar/interviews/episode-1/roberts1.html> Mr. Lunghi was Churchill's interpreter during World War II. He accompanied the prime minister to summits with Stalin.
46. *America's Abandoned Sons*, op. cit., p. 357.
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48. <https://ia801409.us.archive.org/12/items/statusofpovmiane00unit/statusofpovmiane00unitbw.pdf>. See also <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/committeecong.action;jsessionid=d5nvVz1hzbvxyDZhZRcyPGSpCh3b88jT1bbScW22M66Q1TfhXnL!1883690855!-1677072606?collection=CHRG&committee=armedservices&chamber=house&congresspl us=113&ycord=0>



Findings and Conclusions

This chapter summarizes the most salient findings and conclusions derived from our search for American POW/MIAs in the former Soviet Union and Germany.

The product of the DFI project included six separate volumes that summarized our archive research in Moscow, Ukraine, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Germany. The report included an executive summary that highlighted the significant findings in each of the six reports as follows:

VOLUME I: MOSCOW

On October 27, 1994, I submitted a 70-page draft of the final Moscow Report to DPMO. After receiving feedback from DPMO, four months later I submitted a revised final version in February 1995.

Between October 1993 and March 31, 1994, DFI International sustained a modest archive research project in Moscow. This parallel research, which was commissioned by DPMO to complement its support of the US-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, was also motivated by the lack of cooperation from Russian authorities.

In accordance with DPMO's instruction, DFI's research in Moscow was suspended on March 31, 1994. After that, all documents accumulated, including Soviet-era archive material (ca. 200 pages), were turned over to DPMO on March 17, April 7, and June 18, 1994. In order to preserve the provenance of the data, information deriving from Soviet-era

archives (documents) was presented in a section separate from that based on information deriving from interviews with Soviet Air Force veterans who served during the Korean War. All of the photographs obtained from the TASS archives were also handed over to DPMO.

At the final project briefing on October 18, 1994, DPMO expressed no interest in receiving any additional archive material—interrogation records, Soviet military operational reports, exploitation of POWs for propaganda purposes, photographs, anything—from Soviet-era archives in Russia.

The following is an excerpt from the Moscow Report.

From October 1993 until March 31, 1994, DFI International sustained a modest archive research effort in Moscow. This parallel research, which was commissioned by DPMO to complement its support of the US-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs (USRJC), was also motivated by the lack of cooperation from Russian authorities.

In accordance with DPMO's guidance, DFI's research was suspended on March 31, 1994 and all documents accumulated (ca. 200 pages) were turned over by DFI to DPMO on March 17, April 7, and June 18, 1994.

The results of our research in Moscow, which produced Soviet-era documents that were of great interest to DPMO and the USRJC, included the following:

- We obtained documents that the Russian side of the USRJC claimed did not exist.
- We obtained complete copies of documents that had been heavily and inexplicably redacted by the Russian side of the USRJC.
- Our research in Moscow demonstrated without question that the Russian side of the USRJC was either withholding documents or was incapable or unwilling to locate them.

Documents obtained by our team in Moscow were considered by some within DPMO and the USRJC as some of the most significant either organization had received. Among the many documents we obtained, two documents and one record group attracted particular attention:

- The so-called "262" document that is the final unit history of the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps's activities during the Korean War.
- Two complete documents that were Soviet reporting concerning the death of a USAF pilot during the Korean War whose casualty status was MIA.
- Approximately one hundred pages of handwritten daily logs of the Soviet 64th Fighter Aviation Corps that detailed combat operations in Korea. We also found daily operational summaries of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps.

The daily operational summaries of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps proved to be a rich source of information that contributed a line of evidence to resolve the fates of several American USAF personnel.

According to DPMO, most of the 200-plus pages of Soviet-era archive material submitted by DFI to DPMO had not been fully analyzed or assessed by DPMO as of October 1994. In light of this, DFI reviewed the minutes of the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth USRJC Plenum Sessions in order to assess the degree to which data contained in archival material obtained in Moscow compared to positions taken by the Russian side of the USRJC. In order to be comprehensive, documents obtained during the current project, plus other documents obtained previously from Soviet-era archives and submitted to DPMO, are discussed or referred to in this report.

Among the significant findings deriving from the comparison between Soviet era documents and the record of the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth Plenum Sessions are the following:

1. Soviet records obtained by DFI contain information that is apparently sufficient for a change of casualty recommendation for approximately 29 Korean War POW/MIA cases.
2. Soviet Air Force records contradict the summary of Korean War shoot downs summarized, allegedly from primary source material, and presented as fact by the Russian side of the USRJC.
3. The Russian side of the USRJC claims to be unable to locate information in 64th Fighter Aviation Corps (IAK) files concerning any USAF personnel on the USAF list of 187 MIA/POWs from the Korean War (AFM 200-25). DFI's research in 64th IAK files located information by name concerning at least one USAF MIA from the 200-25 list and could link one other name from the 200-25 list to Soviet records.
4. Col. Alexander Orlov claims that Soviet forces involved in interrogating American POW/MIAs in Korea, when reporting results of the interrogation of American POWs in Korea, "we never listed source. We would just go ahead and say, according to testimony provided by prisoners of war, the following information was acquired." The records of the 64th IAK demonstrate that Orlov's claim is incorrect.
5. Many Soviet records, including the 64th IAK operational summaries, refer by name to American POW/MIAs and to specific USAF aircraft registration numbers. The fates of individuals may be determined from these primary source data.
6. Though Soviet reporting refers by name and date to many interrogations of American POWs, records of these interrogations have not been provided by the Russian side of the USRJC.
7. Some of the interrogation records of American POW/MIAs during the Korean War obtained by DFI were not provided by the Russian side of the USRJC to the American side. The existence of these records

contradicts statements such as those by Colonels Mukhin and Orlov who explain the discrepancy between the large number of USAF POWs who passed through a Soviet interrogation point (262) and the small number of interrogation records provided (ca. 56). Mukhin and Orlov claim additional interrogation records do not exist because they were never forwarded to headquarters. This is not true.

8. Colonel Orlov claims that the Russian side could only locate interrogation records from 1952–1953 because this is when the interrogation process became more formalized. Yet the eleven-page Soviet interrogation of USAF Capt. Lawrence Bach, whose F-86 was shot down in December 1950, has been in the public domain for over two years. This interrogation record, which was circulated to the entire Soviet Politburo, including Stalin, resulted from an interrogation conducted “by a representative of Comrade Mironov.” A four-page December 30 Soviet interrogation summary of further interrogations of Bach was sent to Moscow on December 31, 1950. Colonel Orlov is aware of the Bach interrogation, since it is included in a RAND report Orlov referred to more than one half dozen times at the Tenth Plenum.
9. At the Ninth Plenum, Colonel Mukhin claimed, “I don’t believe that our military command structure allowed the MGB¹ access to the [USAF] pilots in China, or in Korea. ... On the basis of documents, we have nothing at all regarding this issue.” At the Tenth Plenum, Mukhin dropped all references to the lack of MGB activity on Chinese territory. Documents obtained by DFI and the USRJC show that the Soviet command structure not only permitted MGB access to USAF POW/MIAs, but in some cases requested MGB participation in interrogations in China. This may explain the difference between Colonel Mukhin’s beliefs expressed at the Ninth and Tenth Plenum sessions.
10. Colonel Vyacheslav P. Mazurov stated that as a result of an order signed by Stalin in 1949 that banned Soviet intelligence operations, “the proposal from the intelligence leadership to set up operations targeting American POWs in Korea did not receive any support from our political circles. . . . Both the Koreans and Chinese refused to allow the Soviet intelligence service to conduct these types of activities on the territory of Korea.” The Soviet intelligence organizations did so anyway. As previously documented, Soviet intelligence organs made effort to recruit agents among prisoners held in POW camps in North Korea. Soviet MVD² specialists were summoned by the Soviet armed forces to interrogate American POWs in China.
11. Colonel Mazurov asserted in reference to a RAND report, that George Blake said, “he knows of incidents where the KGB worked with POWs.” Blake never said such a thing and this statement does not appear in any report, including the RAND report referred to by Colonel Mazurov.

12. Colonel Mazurov asserts that the individuals on the 510 list “have no connection with the foreign intelligence service. We did not deal with these people.” In fact, the KGB dealt with many of the people on the 510 as a cover for talking with Blake.
13. Colonel Mazurov claims that the names on the so-called 510 list were produced by “more than one search group from my service,” and that the list is complete. Yet the 510 list, allegedly derived from KGB files, does not contain the name of George Blake, though Blake’s office clerk and the name of every other civilian captured with Blake is included. Colonel Mazurov should be asked why the only person known by name to have had direct contact with the KGB—indeed, Blake was recruited by the KGB while in a POW camp—is missing from the 510 list.
14. Mr. K.S. Nikishkin claims “there are no documents in the Navy files” concerning the shoot-down of a USAF RB-50 on July 29, 1953. A July 1953 telegram from Admiral N. Kuznetsov, counter-signed by Rear-Admiral Yakovlev, Director of Operations of the Navy General Staff, was sent to the Navy Commander-in-Chief and to the USSR Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union Comrade N.A. Bulganin. Another telegram was sent by Admiral Kuznetsov to USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs Comrade V. M. Molotov on July 29, 1953. Another telegram was sent from Admiral Kuznetsov to Marshal Bulganin on July 29. All of these telegrams concerned the shoot down of the RB-50 on July 29, 1953.
15. Colonel Sergei Osipov asserted, in reference to the July 29, 1953 shoot down of a USAF RB-50, “among those documents which have been discovered to date there is no documentary evidence that there were any survivors in the case.” In fact, at least three reports from N. Kuznetsov, Admiral of the Soviet Navy, to Marshal A. Bulganin, Minister of Defense of the Soviet Union and V. M. Molotov, USSR Minister of Foreign Affairs, describe in great detail the downing of the RB-50. On July 29, 1953, Admiral Kuznetsov reported to Minister Molotov, “The US SB-29 plane flew out to the area of the proposed fall of the B-50 plane, and at 20:29 hours reported to base about locating the B-50 wreckage, a rescue boat and seven men floating near the boat.”
16. Colonel Orlov continues to assert that Soviet forces were forbidden to have direct contact with American POWs during the Korean War. Colonel Orlov should be asked to explain why the Soviet officer, a Buryat Mongol named Kolya Monkuyev who impersonated a Chinese, systematically interrogated American POWs. Colonel Orlov should be asked how his version of the ban on direct contact squares with the testimony of Colonel Valentin S. Golobov who said, “According to Air Force traditions, the pilot who was shot down meets the pilot who shot him down.” How does this systematic, direct contact fit into the alleged “no contact” policy?

17. Colonel Orlov claims there was no contact between “foreigners and any of our people.” Orlov cites the experience at Poltava during World War II as evidence of this policy. Colonel Orlov should be asked to explain why the Soviet security services maintained surveillance of over 700 American servicemen at Poltava, with special attention given to Americans with Russian, Jewish, or otherwise “suspicious surnames.”
18. Colonel Orlov said, “The Rand report cites General Lobov’s remark that 70 investigative groups had been created. Lobov didn’t say investigative groups, but ‘search groups.’” Orlov’s observation is incorrect on two counts. First, how would Colonel Orlov know what the now-deceased general said in an interview where Colonel Orlov was not present? Second, the report in question does not cite a “remark,” rather, it cites a telegram that the commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, General Lobov, sent to Moscow in 1952. In this telegram, General Lobov referred to “search group expeditions. . . . On the average, 70 Soviet servicemen participate daily in our search groups.”
19. The Russian side of the USRJC suggested it would be useful to find a veteran who participated in the Soviet search teams in Korea. DFI located and interviewed a veteran who was a member of such a search group during the Korean War.
20. Lt. Colonel Sergei I. Chuvashin stated that Corps-level operational summaries that were forwarded to the Command directorate stated, “as a rule, these reports covered 10-day and 1-month periods.” In contrast to this claim, both Corps and Division-level reporting occurred on a daily basis. Lt. Colonel Chuvashin further stated that these reports would therefore refer only to “aircraft types.” In fact, the daily reports contain registration numbers of US aircraft and the names of USAF POW/MIA’s.
21. Colonel Orlov claims that US records are confused concerning Albert G. Tenney’s rank. This is not true. Tenney was a First Lieutenant when he was shot down on May 3, 1952. Tenney, whose casualty status has been MIA since May 3, 1952, was promoted to Captain, per Special Order 62, on April 1, 1953. Thus Tenney is referred to as First Lieutenant in contemporary casualty reports and as a Captain in current POW/MIA lists, such as the CILHI database. What Orlov cannot explain is why Tenney, who was a First Lieutenant when the Soviet report on Tenney was written, is referred to as Captain in the Soviet records dated May 3, 1952. In other words, Soviet records refer to First Lieutenant Tenney as Captain Tenney *one year before Tenney was promoted to Captain*.
22. Colonel Orlov claims, “There is not a single document signed by Razuvaev that concerns POWs that have [sic] been found in the military archives.” Two documents obtained by DFI, both signed by Razuvaev, refer directly to Major General William Dean, the highest-

ranking American POW captured during the Korean War. Razuvaev not only signed these documents, he sent one of them to the entire Politburo, including Stalin.

23. Colonel Orlov asserts that “Amirov, who said that he saw a rail car with prisoners in Alma-Ata, repudiated his testimony, saying that he was misunderstood.” Major Valerie Amirov neither said this nor ever retracted such a comment.

DFI’s research team searched Tass records for photographs relating to POW/MIAs. On April 2, 1994, DFI forwarded to DPMO the original 23 photographs obtained from Tass photo archives. These photographs clearly show American POW/MIAs from the Korean and Vietnam Wars. (Photos of POW/MIAs were also obtained by the Ukraine research team. See Volume 2 of the DFI report.)

The provenance of these photographs, which was once in doubt, is now clearly established to be Russian. Copies of these photographs are attached to the end of Volume 1 in Appendix C.

Soviet archives contained information that is related directly, in some cases by name, to American POW/MIA cases from the Korean War. In other cases, information from Soviet sources pertaining to USAF aircraft losses could be related to specific individuals by correlating the Soviet information with USAF records.

We learned an important fact from the analysis of Soviet Air Force records that deserves particular attention:

Some USAF casualty records (Record Group 293) contained information concerning the locations of crash sites that was not reported completely or, in some cases, accurately by eyewitnesses. The purpose of the incomplete reporting was, according to U.S. Korean War veterans, to conceal the fact that USAF pilots routinely made unauthorized combat flights into the territory of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). Evidence concerning the presence of USAF combat and reconnaissance aircraft in PRC airspace presented in the DFI report derived, in part, from Soviet and American veterans of the Korean War. Documentation from primary source Soviet Air Force records was included in this analysis.

Imagine my surprise to see a *Wall Street Journal*³ story that stated:

Since 1992, the U.S. has been pressing the Russian government for help in learning the fate of 1,086 airmen missing in Vietnam, and 8,200 missing in Korea, most of them infantrymen. [...] ‘It’s been a long, herky-jerky process, but we have gotten our foot in the door, gotten people in the archives

on a routine basis,' says Roland LaJoie, a retired U.S. major general who is co-chairman of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW-MIA Affairs. 'And now,' he adds, 'we're getting pieces of paper that form a better mosaic showing what happened.'

No evidence was located in any archive holding in Moscow or from any Soviet/Russian witness that supported the assertion that over 23,000 American POWs had been transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

* * *

VOLUME 2: UKRAINE

DFI's research team was the first independent group ever permitted to conduct research in the Ukrainian KGB archives. Research in Ukraine began with an examination of the Central State Archive of the Public Organizations (former Archive of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine).

The Ukrainian team also searched the Republic Photo and Film Archives.

At DPMO's request, KGB documents were produced in order to demonstrate that research had actually taken place.

DFI's original research plan for Ukraine included a significant publicity campaign and interview schedule. This activity was discontinued by the Ukrainian research team following DPMO's instruction to stop interviews and instead to focus on archive research.

Soviet intelligence organs maintained files on over 700 American servicemen who served at the USAF base at Poltava, Ukraine, during WWII. Until these records are analyzed, one should be cautious about agreeing to General Volkogonov's statement at the Tenth Plenum that "the fate of all US MIAs from World War II has been made clear."

The Ukrainian research team found no evidence to support claims made by various Americans that approximately 23,000 American POWs who had been liberated from German POW camps by Soviet forces were subsequently transferred to the Soviet Union. Using records from the Agency for the Repatriation of the Council of People's Commissars, the Politburo of the All-Union Communist Party's Central Committee, organs of the state defense-industrial complex, the USSR Academy of Sciences, and the NKVD, the Ukrainian team determined that a large number of American servicemen were not registered in Soviet records.

This number, however, is estimated to be in the range of 1000–2000 Americans.

The leader of the Ukrainian team concluded that the allegation that 23,000 Americans were transported through Ukrainian territory in order to be imprisoned in other parts of the USSR is “tendentious and detrimental to our nation’s efforts to overcome Cold War legacies.”

The Ukrainian research team also located several photographs concerning Vietnam and Korean War POW/MIAs. The originals of these photographs, which were submitted to DPMO, were all “lost.”

The Ukrainian team concluded that the photo of the dead American draped across the wreckage of an aircraft in Vietnam was part of the photograph collection of the All-Ukrainian Information Agency (RATAU), though the reorganization of RATAU in 1990 scattered both records and information concerning the provenance of archive materials. This photograph apparently came through RATAU in 1960.

According to DPMO, DoD’s analysis of the photographs located by DFI’s research team contributed to the further resolution of an American casualty case from the Vietnam War.

No evidence was located in any archive holding in Ukraine or from any witness that supports the assertion that over 20,000 American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

* * *

VOLUME 3: LITHUANIA

DFI’s archive research team in Lithuania obtained access to an unprecedented variety of archive holdings, including KGB archives. Working with Lithuanian archive authorities, the head of the security services, and other officials, DFI obtained access to every relevant archive collection in Lithuania. Much of the material reviewed has not yet been made available to the general public or other researchers. For example, DFI’s researchers reviewed over 15,000 pages of material from the archives of the KGB First Main Directorate.

DFI’s first research team determined that a great deal of archive material was taken to Russia in and around 1991. Thousands of documents were also destroyed. In some cases the shredded material was left on the floor of the storage facilities (see Appendix 1 of Vol. 3).

No interviews were conducted in Lithuania prior to or subsequent to DPMO’s instruction to stop all interview efforts.

During the initial stage of research, the research team was able to determine that in 1941, a total of 41 American citizens were living legally in Lithuania. These people, who were registered by the NKVD, were characterized as individuals “in support of a foreign intelligence service” (KGB ADS. F. 10. Inventory 1. Case 3, pp. 333–334). Of those cases, only two appeared to have actually been citizens of the United States: Alfonsas Antanas Milukas and Cecil Stoner. There is no reason to expect further information concerning American citizens to be located in the KGB criminal files.

An intense search was made for any evidence concerning the shoot-down of American aircraft in or near Lithuania. In particular, a search was made for evidence concerning the *Privateer* incident, which took place between Palanga, Lithuania, and Liepāja, Latvia in 1950.

The search was complicated by the fact that neither the inventories of the operational files nor the card catalogue survived Russia’s wholesale destruction and transfer of records. Nonetheless, all files dated between April 1, 1950, and May 1, 1950, were searched. No information concerning the *Privateer* incident was located.

The MGB Klaipeda region file (F.3. Case 40/34, Vol. 2, p. 38) contains only documents concerning the intensive activities of US planes on April 14, 1950. It appears that the US aircraft referred to were searching for the *Privateer*, which makes sense yet is a speculative conclusion.

No evidence was located in any archive in Lithuania or from any witness that supports the assertion that over 20,000 American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

* * *

VOLUME 4: LATVIA

DFI’s research team in Riga, Latvia, experienced no difficulty in obtaining access to archives relevant to this project. This research project was approved and supported by the director of the Latvian State Archives, Dr. Daina Klavina. The lead researcher was Dr. Aivars Beika, Professor of History, Latvian State University, and director of the Latvian State Library. For nearly two years, Dr. Beika was the director of the department of the Latvian State Archive that was responsible for dealing with KGB archives.

Files that were either unavailable for research, transferred to Russia, or presumably destroyed are described in this report.

The Latvian archive research team focused on five record groups:

1. Latvian Communist Party Archive
2. Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic (LSSR) Council of Ministers correspondence
3. LSSR Ministry for Foreign Affairs archives
4. KGB records
5. LSSR Presidium of the Supreme Soviet correspondence with the LSSR Ministry of Home Affairs

Records that were transferred to Moscow during the Soviet era have not been returned to Latvia. In addition, when the first sign of political activism occurred in Latvia in 1991, large portions of the KGB archives were transferred to Moscow. These records have not been recovered either.

Some records relevant to this project, such as POW camp files, were not available for research because they were either destroyed or transferred to Moscow in 1965. The stock of documents of the Directorate for Prisoner of War and Internee Affairs of the Ministry (People's Commissariat) of the Internal Affairs of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic and a number of its subordinate organizations were partly destroyed and partly transferred from Latvia to the Special Archives of the Ministry of Preservation of Public Order of the Latvian Soviet Socialist Republic. A list of transferred documents is included in Vol. 4.

In keeping with DPMO's guidance, research in Latvia focused on archives rather than interviews with Soviet military veterans, retired intelligence officers, or survivors of the gulag. The Latvian research team conducted limited interviews independent of DFI's overall effort after DPMO instructed DFI to stop the interview effort.

The Latvian team made announcements on various Latvian radio stations in Latvian and Russian, placed requests with gulag survivor organizations, sought out former members of the Latvian SSR KGB, met with over 100 survivors of the 1941 Vidzemskaia deportation, sought out former KGB officers from Russia now living in Latvia, and interviewed many victims of political oppression. This effort produced little information concerning people who claimed to be American citizens.

Based on the extensive research conducted by DFI's team in Latvia, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that American POW/MIAs were transferred to Latvian territory or that records associated with POW/MIAs or the transfer of them to other destinations were stored in Latvia.

The research director, Dr. Beika, stated that after ten months of research, he was “95 percent certain that no American POW/MIAs had been on Latvian territory.” In the “very remote” possibility that one or more American POW/MIAs had been transported through Latvia, the KGB or Soviet Army would have been the escort, and only the Chairman of the Latvian SSR KGB or high command of the Baltic Military District would have been informed, if anyone were informed at all. Documents associated with such a transfer, if it occurred, would be found in Moscow.

Information concerning at least two American citizens has been located in the records examined in the Latvian State Archives, but these were criminal cases concerning dual citizens who were denied exit visas. In 1949 two Americans applied for Latvian citizenship: Herman Carlsson and Emile Pauling, both of whom had been American citizens.

There is information concerning Latvian citizens who had been in contact with American organizations in some fashion. For example, Mikelis Bugatskis served as a volunteer in the US Merchant Marine in WWII during which he was wounded in 1944 in Africa. After the war he worked in various merchant Marine services around the world. In 1949 he visited Latvia and was arrested. He was sentenced to time in the gulag and spent seven years at the prison camp in Norilsk. Bugatskis returned to live in Latvia after his release.

Records relating to a man named Leonid Bromberg were located in KGB files. Bromberg, who is listed as a stateless person, was arrested in 1954 in Latvia and charged with being an American spy who studied in the US “spy school” in Washington, DC, from 1952 to 1954. Bromberg sent a coded message to Washington saying he was under KGB control, was re-arrested in 1956, and sentenced to death, but the trail of documents sheds no light on Bromberg’s ultimate fate.

A Latvian citizen told Dr. Beika that an American, Simon Schultz, was in the Karaganda, Churbainura prison camp in 1954 or 1955. According to this source, Shultz, who was born about 1922 or 1924, about 1.85 meters (6’1”) tall, dark hair, said he had fought in Korea. There is no Simon Schultz on the official DoD list of Korean War missing persons.

DFI’s team searched for information concerning the 1950 shutdown of the *Privateer* but had no success.

No evidence was located in any archive in Latvia or from any witness that supports the assertion that over 20,000 American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

VOLUME 5: ESTONIA

The DFI-sponsored research team in Estonia had unrestricted access to a wide range of archive repositories and record collections. A new law introduced in Estonia at the end of March 1994 pertains to KGB archives and materials from other Soviet security organs. According to this new law, anyone has the right to see materials related to the individual's own case or that of a family member. There is a provision that states these documents are to be released for scientific research purposes as well. DFI's research fell into the latter category, so within the framework of this project, there were no barriers to the archives.

Three collections, investigative files, KGB letters and memoranda, and KGB special reports, proved to be of particular value for the purposes of this project.

The largest holding in the Estonian National Archives is the so-called collection of investigation files. These are the same as the files known as the files of closed trial cases. Altogether, this collection includes 30,000 items, most from the 1940s and 1950s, though there are some recent items. The documents are mostly arrest orders, prisoner questionnaires, protocols of investigation, interrogation of witnesses, trial materials, and verdict texts.

There is also a large collection of KGB letters and memoranda in Estonia. In this collection there is a finding aid and a large catalogue consisting of two boxes of index cards.

The third holding of particular interest to this project, a collection of KGB special reports, which had not been given to the National Archives yet, is in the custody of the political police. Nonetheless, DFI's researchers had a chance to review this collection that consists of detailed reports on Soviet anti-partisan efforts. There are also counterintelligence materials and detailed reports from the Second Directorate and Fourth Directorate. These include the KGB's work in Moscow, operational information, and special reports. These materials include files through 1959.

While no holdings or files were off-limits to the Estonian researchers, a large number of records transferred to Russia in 1991 have never been recovered by the Estonian government. Many records, particularly from the KGB files from the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, were removed and sent to Russia. The Russians also destroyed or evacuated recent operational files, for example, in addition to historical materials. As in the case of

Latvia where the Russians have ignored over 400 requests for the return of Latvian records, repeated requests from the Estonian government for the return of this material have been rebuffed or have gone unanswered by the Russian government.

In order to determine whether there is evidence that American citizens, including POW/MIAs, were on the territory of Estonia during the Cold War, materials of the Estonian National Archives and the Estonian National Archives (also known as the Party Archives) were searched by DFI's research team. Of particular interest were the Estonian KGB archival materials that were accessioned by the Party Archives in 1993.

The research methodology derived and applied by the Estonian team began with an assessment of the German occupation of Estonia, 1941–1944. The records of the Nazi Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst*), which contain information about the citizens of countries at war with Germany, are located in the Estonian National Archives. The Germans, under orders from the local *Obersturmbannführer*, compiled lists of citizens of countries at war with Germany. These lists contain the names of Americans, British, French, and other citizens of Allied countries many of whom were dual citizens. Some of the American citizens who were Jewish were deported to Germany by 1943.

Using these lists, the Estonian team identified 24 American citizens who were in Estonia during the time of Nazi German occupation. This step enabled the researchers to determine whether these Americans were in Estonia during the Soviet occupation. This guided the research team to files that concerned other American citizens. Documents concerning American citizens were also located in the archives of the military prosecutor's office of the Ministry of the Interior of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR).

The research methodology resulted in the identification of several American citizens who were held against their will in Estonia during the German and Soviet occupation. Since German records were used by Soviet authorities as a means to locate and arrest people, the indices of American citizens deriving from German and Soviet records were relevant to the search for American POW/MIAs.

Preliminary interviews with gulag survivors were conducted before DPMO's instructed DFI to stop this effort. The gulag survivor organization in Estonia indicated that its members could provide first-hand accounts of alleged American citizens in the Soviet Gulag, but DPMO instructed DFI not to conduct these interviews.

Information pertaining to American citizens on Estonian territory following WWII has been located in the Party Archives that is a branch of the Estonian National Archives. This collection contains KGB documents and records of the Estonian Communist Party.

After checking the list of US citizens who lived in Estonia in 1941–1944, with the help of index card files, against records in archive Fonds 129 and 130, DEI's team was able to find the investigation file of Alf Varjas (PA, f.129, 1.1., i.4778). Alf Varjas, who was born on February 8, 1927, in New York, obtained a passport in 1936 from the American Embassy in Tallinn. His father, Mihkel Varjas, was also an American citizen. When the German army retreated, both Alf and his father Mihkel stayed in Estonia, but after the end of the war, they wanted to return to the United States. This is why they visited the American Embassy in Moscow. Soviet authorities did not allow Alf Varjas to leave. According to the *ukaz* of September 7, 1940, of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, Alf Varjas was treated as a Soviet citizen (at that period he was not of age yet); in other words, Soviet citizenship was forced upon him.

On May 12, 1952, the military tribunal of the Ministry of Security of the ESSR sentenced Alf Varjas to 25 years of labor and reform camp (*ispravitel'no-trudovoi lager*). The military tribunal of the Navy commuted the sentence to ten years. On October 26, 1955, the Military College of the Supreme Court of the USSR released Alf Varjas on the basis of the amnesty *ukaz* of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the USSR issued on March 27, 1953. The same information is confirmed by the two supervision files (*nabljudatelnoje proizvodstvo*) of Alf Varjas (ENA, f. R-2276, 1.1, i.639, and 640).

The arrests of the former employees of the American Embassy that operated until 1940 in Tallinn, Aleksandra Landsberg and Aadu Liivik, are also connected to the cases of Alf Varjas and Vaika Sepp (Aipuk). Landsberg and Liivik, who were arrested in 1951 and 1949, were both citizens of Estonia who had remained in Estonia after WWII. The KGB began to take an active interest in them in 1948. As a result of strong pressure, they became KGB agents (PA, f.129, 1.1, i13619, p. 49, 167; i.10138, p. 234). To their credit, they fulfilled their agents' tasks reluctantly and badly. Liivik and Landsberg were sentenced in 1950 and 1952 to 25 years of forced labor. They were released during the so-called Khrushchev thaw in 1956.

Some materials about the activities and the arrest of two CIA agents, Kalju Kukk and Hans Toomla, in Estonia are found in Fond 131 and in the report of the second department of the Estonian KGB dated April 1, 1954

(f. 131, 1.1, i319, pp. 12–16). Kalju Kukk and Hans Toomla, who were born in Estonia, were not American citizens. Although the activities of CIA agents who were not citizens of the United States are not the subject of the current project, it is still in the interest to observe how these cases were reflected in KGB documents. The KGB's methodology may shed additional light on how other individuals of particular interest were treated.

There is a voluminous investigation file on Kalju Kukk and his accomplices Robert Hamburg, Helgi Norma, and Erna Hamburg that encompasses eight large files (PA, f.129, 1.1, i18379). These files contain cross-examination and interrogation records. The seventh volume contains photographs of the material evidence, such as an analysis of Kukk's faked documents, weapons, and special equipment dropped by parachute. The MVD Army tribunal sentenced Kalju Kukk to death by firing squad, Robert Hamburg to 25 years, Helgi Norma to ten years, and Erna Homburg to three years of forced labor. Kalju Kukk was executed in the special department of the Butyrka prison in Moscow on August 27, 1955 (PA, f.129, 1.1, i.18379, eighth volume (*litsnoje delo*), p. 142 a).

No evidence concerning American Korean War POW/MIAs was located in the Estonian archives.

An exhaustive search of the Estonian archives turned up no evidence that American POW/MIAs from the Korean War, or from any other conflict, had been transferred to or through Estonia. If it had been the case, there would have been some note in the KGB *fond* of the special reports. DFI's team did not find any information about imprisoned US citizens in the annual reports from the second and fourth departments of the Estonian KGB to the USSR KGB in Moscow.

The search for Vietnam War POW/MIAs was as thorough as possible, but the absence of relevant KGB archive materials, where there could be some information, made the search inconclusive. The materials in Estonia end with the year 1959. The materials about later years have either been destroyed or taken to Russia (probably to Ulyanovsk).

No evidence was located that supports the assertion that over 20,000 American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

In addition to these findings, our research team located a set of files that was of particular interest and importance. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union maintained highly trained special forces called *Spetsnaz*, aka "Troops of Special Purpose." The *Spetsnaz* were the equivalent of Navy SEALs, Green Berets, and CIA Armed Forces all rolled into one. Members of the *Spetsnaz* were assigned fake names. The files we located were dozens

of background checks of *Spetsnaz* members. The files included photographs, home addresses, and, most importantly, the real names of each person. Given the fact that *Spetsnaz* were used to infiltrate western countries, the true identity of several dozen *Spetsnaz* members could be vital information for counterintelligence agencies in the west.

Though these files were not part of our project deliverables, we nonetheless made copies and then offered the information to DPMO and the DIA.

We received neither a reply nor an expression of interest from DPMO or any other DoD agency.

No evidence was located in any archive in Estonia or from any witness that supports the assertion that over 20,000 American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

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VOLUME 6: GERMANY

The purpose of DFI's research was to determine whether there is evidence concerning American prisoners of war (POWs) or MIA from the Korean War, the Cold War, or the Vietnam War, located in the archives of the former GDR.

DFI organized and carried out research in ten archives and research centers located in various parts of Germany, both the West and the former East. In most cases, access to these archives would not have been possible without the support of the sponsor of this project, the DPMO, and the support and cooperation of the government of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).

Research took place in the following archives of the former GDR and the FRG:

- *Bundesarchiv, Potsdam*, including archives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Security, and the *Nationale Volksarmee* (National People's Army or NVA). Of particular interest were the records relating to Korea, the Korean War, prisoners of war, cases of citizens of "capitalist" or "imperialist" nations seeking asylum in the GDR, and reporting from the GDR embassy in Pyongyang.
- *Militärisches Zwischenarchiv* (GDR Military Archive), *Potsdam*. Research focused on records relating to the Korean War, North Korea, reporting from the GDR Embassy in Pyongyang, and American prisoners of war.

- *GDR Military Archive, Freiburg*. Research focused on records relating to the Korean War, North Korea, reporting from the GDR embassy in Pyongyang, or American prisoners of war.
- *Bundesarchiv, Koblenz*. Research focused on the records of the *Nationale Volksarmee*, as well as records relating to the Korean War, North Korea, reporting from the GDR embassy in Pyongyang, and American prisoners of war.
- *SED Party and Mass Organizations Archive, Berlin*. Research focused on the personal papers of prominent GDR officials, SED Politburo meetings, bilateral GDR-North Korean files, official visits, subject files on Korea, bilateral assistance programs, and American prisoners of war.
- *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amt [am Ministerium für Auswärtige Angelegenheiten]* (Political Archive of the GDR Foreign Ministry), *Berlin*. Research focused on the personal papers of prominent papers of prominent GDR officials, SED Politburo meetings, and bilateral GDR-North Korean files.
- *Staatsicherheitsdienst (Stasi) Archive, Berlin*. Research focused on the location and search of records relating to American deserters who lived in the GDR at any time during the Cold War. The purpose was to determine whether these files contained information concerning *other* American servicemen whose presence in the GDR has not been previously demonstrated.
- *FRG Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Bonn*. Research focused on the follow-up of the FRG MFA report to Secretary of State James Baker.
- *Saxonia State Archives, Dresden*. Research focused on regional records concerning areas where American military deserters were known to have lived in the GDR, such as the International Solidarity Camp located in Bautzen.

In light of DPMO's guidance to DFI to stop work on the effort to locate and interview individuals who have direct knowledge of POW/MIA issues, DFI stopped its extensive interview effort in Germany. Prior to the cessation of this effort, DFI's research team located and interviewed American military deserters and also located individuals who have direct, first-hand experience with at least two American servicemen who were allegedly taken from Korea to GDR territory in the 1950s.

DFI's research team located evidence, both archival and from interviews, concerning the following:

- Archival information concerning methods for transporting GDR POWs from Vietnam to GDR territory in the 1950s. The transport method required both Soviet and Chinese coordination and cooperation.
- Interview information describing the involvement of Soviet forces in transporting American deserters from third countries to GDR territory in the 1950s.
- Interview information concerning Soviet responsibility for assigning new identities to American deserters in the GDR.
- Interview and archival information demonstrating the direct involvement of Soviet intelligence services in the organization and surveillance of American deserters located on GDR territory in the 1950s.
- Interview information describing American servicemen allegedly transported from Korea to GDR territory in the 1950s.
- Interview information asserting that *no American servicemen from Vietnam* had been transported to GDR territory.
- These findings, while credible, are not definitive. Additional research in Germany that may contribute to a more complete understanding of these findings has been proposed by DFI to DPMO.

No evidence was located in any archive in Germany or from any witness that supports the assertion that over 20,000 American POWs were transferred to the Soviet Gulag at the end of WWII.

On October 31, 1994, the third DoD-sponsored POW/MIA project officially ended. DFI International, which refused to pay Mr. Richthammer for his services, was sued by Mr. Richthammer. Shortly before the case was to be heard in a court in Arlington, Virginia, DFI International settled with Mr. Richthammer.

For reasons known only to DPMO, DFI International was awarded a no-cost extension through December 31, 1994, even though DFI had made no such request. A “no-cost extension” meant that the end date of the project is extended, even though no new money was allocated. There was no apparent purpose for this extension.

After accusing me of supererogation, which contributed to getting me fired, DPMO advised me that they wanted to have me do some additional, unspecified work in Germany. DPMO advised that they would ask me to return to Germany the first week of February 1995, for an unspecified purpose.

Nothing ever came of it. The attempt to collaborate with DFI International had been a great error. Our association with DPMO had been even worse.

* * *

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

1. Evidence of direct, systematic contact between Soviet forces and American POW/MIAs during the Korean War is sufficient to conclude that this reflected Soviet policy. This evidence is both archival and derived from eyewitness testimony, primarily from Russian sources.
2. DFI has recommended the change of casualty status for 28 American POW/MIAs from the Korean War. In these recommendations, there is at least one case of an American listed as KIA who the Soviets claim to have captured alive. There are also two cases of Americans who died in captivity after direct interrogation by Soviet forces.
3. If proper research is permitted in Russia's archives, the fate of many more American POW/MIAs from the Korean War may be determined with a high degree of certainty. Russian claims that the "answers are in China and North Korea" are misleading.
4. Soviet Air Force records located in Russia have been shown to be particularly useful in the effort to determine the fate of American aircrews lost over the People's Republic of China during the Korean War.
5. The archives located in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia contain information about American citizens on Soviet territory during the Cold War, but thus far there is no evidence of POW/MIAs. There are no barriers to research in these countries.
6. Archives located in Ukraine contain information that shows that American servicemen in Poltava were under Soviet surveillance during WWII. These archives may be of particular value in the effort to resolve the fate of American POWs who were liberated by Soviet forces but not repatriated. The Ukrainian research team estimates the possible field of Americans in this category is between 1000 and 2000.

7. Archival evidence in Germany demonstrates that there was Soviet involvement in the transport of German POWs from Vietnam to GDR territory in the 1950s. The methods and transport routes for this transfer, which required Soviet and Chinese cooperation, are clearly documented.
8. Eyewitnesses have placed American POW/MIAs from the Korean War on GDR territory. These servicemen were allegedly transported from Korea to the GDR.

WORLD WAR II

The assertion that over 23,000 American POWs were shipped to the gulag after WWII, never to be heard from again, is objectively false. The explanation, however, is not as concise.

The assertion that American servicemen, hundreds or as some claim tens of thousands, had been abandoned in the Soviet Gulag is sometimes presented as a conclusion, as if the matter were a metaphysical certainty that was not subject to dispute. A salient example of this type of was the testimony of Mr. James D. Sanders during a Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs hearing:

There was a huge hostage crisis during the closing months of World War II. Up to 23,500 Americans and 31,000 British and Commonwealth POWs were kept by the Soviet Union and shipped to the gulag, along with at least 2 million other slaves, Germans, Austrians, French, Eastern Europeans and anti-communist Soviet citizens who had fled to the West. [...]

The U.S. Government decided to develop a, quote, cynical attitude, unquote, towards the loss of POWs to the gulag, and President Dwight D. Eisenhower ordered it covered up. [...]

The U.S. Government has always known what happened, and generally who the Soviets kept. The Government has deliberately lied to the American people, press, and POW families. Whenever a threat surfaced with a potential to discredit and destroy the Government's revisionist version of the truth, it has been actively countered by a cynical bureaucracy.⁴

This position was presented not just as an uncontested fact; rather, it was presented as an uncontestable fact. Anyone who disagreed with this assertion ran the risk of being smeared as an incompetent or, worse, smeared as an incompetent participant in an evil conspiracy.

If tens of thousands of US POWs had been captured by the Germans, released from German POW camps, then transferred to the USSR, the evidence had to be somewhere, in some form. Perhaps the evidence of this activity could be found in Moscow or in the republics of the former USSR.

The results of this research did not favor the conspiracy theorists.

The assertion that more than 23,000 American POWs had been transferred to the Soviet Union after the end of WWII is not supported by any of the KGB records, military intelligence and secret police archives, and witnesses interviewed in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Moscow, and East Germany, nor was any evidence to support the allegation located in Mongolia.

Evidence located in these sources indicate that a small number of American citizens and several American POWs who had dual citizenship or what the Soviet security services considered to be “suspect” names were detained by the Soviet government after WWII. This group consisted of no more than 200 individuals.

Records located in the US archives, which provided no support for the accusation, undermined and contradicted the validity of the assertion as well.

The following five examples summarize the case against the assertion.

First, the CIA interviewed prisoners released from Soviet prisons, including gulag camps. In 1953, “a xxxxxx [Exemption 25X1⁵] prisoner of war, recently repatriated from POW camp no. 21 at Khabarovsk (N48-30, E 135-06), where he was held from 1950 to 1953, reported that”:

- (a) He heard from a Soviet guard in October 1952 that two Americans had been brought to Khabarovsk and were being investigated as spy suspects.
- (b) He heard from Soviet guards, prisoners, and laborers in April and May 1953 that 12 or 13 American, crew members of a military plane shot down by the Soviets, were in Khabarovsk prison.
- (c) He heard from prisoners in 1951 or early 1952 that an American fisherman, captured in the Gulf of Alaska, was brought to the Magadan (N 59-34, E 150-48) region.
- (d) He heard from a guard on a Soviet prisoner train at No. 2 station, Khabarovsk, in about June 1952 that there was a prison camp in the USSR for Americans only. The location of the camp is unknown xxxx xxxxxx. [Exemption 25X1]

1. Another xxxxx [Exemption 25X1] prisoner of war, recently repatriated from various unspecified locations in the USSR, reported that he heard from the chief of the POW Camp at Debin (N 62-21, or N 62-55, E 148-56) in October 1953 that an American Air Force officer is in a military hospital near

Narionberugu (xxxxxx [Exemption 25X1] phonetic spelling, location not identifiable), 500 kilometers north of Magadan. He further reported that the officer had been sentenced to 25 years in prison in 1953 as a suspected spy and that he was said to have participated in the bombing of Japan in World War II. The officer knew almost no Russian.⁶

In addition, the US Army Technical and Interrogation Service “interviewed approximately 40,000” Japanese POWs who had been repatriated from Soviet POW camps in “the Soviet Far East...during 1946, ‘47, ‘48, and ‘49.”⁷ There is no evidence that any of the more than 40,000 repatriated Japanese POWs produced any evidence that over 23,000 American POWs were held in the Soviet Gulag as alleged.

No POW debriefing from any source has produced a single witness who saw any of the American prisoners or heard second-hand rumors concerning more than 23,000 American POWs held in the gulag.

Second, the release of American servicemen from captivity in any communist country was the top priority for the US military. The following memorandum from General N. F. Twining, Chief of Staff of the USAF, to Allen W. Dulles, the Director of Central Intelligence, stated this position with no ambiguity.

1. An unknown but apparently substantial number of U.S. military personnel captured in the course of the Korean War are still being held prisoners by the Communist Forces. These individuals will not necessarily be retained in North Korea or Manchuria, but may be held elsewhere within the Soviet orbit.
2. While it is possible that the release of some or all of these prisoners of war may eventually be effected through diplomatic negotiations, the fact that to this day apparently large numbers of German and Japanese prisoners of war from WWII are still in custody must be accepted as a Communist pattern. Today, for the first time, U.S. personnel in any quantity are coming into contact with this pattern. It is a fundamental obligation of the U.S. Government to vigorously pursue every authorized means to recover its fighting men being held hostage by anyone under any circumstances whatsoever.
3. The recovery of even a single individual in this category would have a salutary effect upon the morale of U.S. military personnel in contact with Communist Forces in the event of future hostilities, and would be of inestimable value in our National psychological program to expose for the world at large to see and understand the true nature of the Soviet-directed world Communist plot.

4. It is therefore requested that requirements be placed on appropriate operating organizations for clandestine and covert action to locate, identify, and recover those U.S. prisoners of war still in Communist custody. This action should take precedence over all other evasion and escape activities currently being planned or undertaken by the Agency in support of military requirements. It is further requested that any information collected pertaining to U.S. and other United Nations prisoners of war still in Communist custody be immediately forwarded to this Headquarters.⁸

The probability that US military or intelligence services would be aware of “large numbers of German and Japanese prisoners of war from World War II” still in Soviet custody in 1953, yet completely oblivious to more than 23,000 American prisoners, is non-existent.

Third, after 72 years, the people responsible for the accusation have not produced the name of any of the more than 23,000 US POWs allegedly transferred to the USSR from Germany. Not a single case has been verified or corroborated from any source other than the material produced by those who have made this allegation.

Fourth, following the general amnesty that occurred following Stalin’s death on March 5, 1953, when thousands of prisoners were released from the gulag, no American POWs were released, and no other prisoners provided any evidence that over 23,000 American POWs had been held. On May 5, 1953, the CIA produced an estimate entitled “Probability of Soviet Release of Some World War II Prisoners.” The estimate stated:

There are also indications that POW’s will be repatriated from other parts of the Orbit. Reliable reports suggest that Hungary is planning to return 257 German prisoners and Communist China has already repatriated about 15,000 Japanese POW’s in a manner calculated to enhance the prestige of Communist China and the Japanese Communists. Some non-Orbit nationals may also be released as a result of amnesty decrees now being effected in the Satellites.

During World War II, Soviet forces captured about 7,000,000 prisoners. Of this total, about 50 percent were Germans, 20 percent Japanese, and the rest Italians, Austrians, Finns, Rumanians and Hungarians with small numbers of French, Dutch and Spanish.⁹

This CIA estimate includes an appendix, entitled “Chronology of Events Dealing with Prisoners of War in the USSR,” that contains no reference to more than 23,000 American POWs.

Fifth, an unintended positive consequence of the end of the Cold War was the end of travel restrictions throughout the former Soviet bloc. For the first time since the end of WWII, it was possible to search for the missing on the territory of countries that had been off-limits for almost half a century. Over the nearly three decades since the end of the Cold War, no traveler has produced any evidence from Russia or any of the 14 non-Russian former republics of the USSR that suggests in any way that over 23,000 US and 31,000 British and Commonwealth POWs were held in the USSR after the end of WWII.

* * *

History is not about establishing truth; instead, history is about establishing credible probability that a particular event occurred as described. The more enthusiastic proponents of the proposition that tens of thousands of American POWs were abandoned in the gulag or Chicom hell-holes emphasized that the “government’s” inability to disprove the assertion validated it. The truth of the matter is not, of course, so simple due to the venerable doctrine of *argumentum ad ignorantiam* (absence of evidence is not evidence of absence). In other words, a proposition is not necessarily true because it has not been proven false. The problem arises from the fact that the onus of proof is on those who assert a proposition is true. One is never obligated to prove that a false allegation is untrue.

No evidence was located in Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Ukraine, Moscow, Germany, or Mongolia that supported the accusation that tens of thousands of American POWs had disappeared into the Soviet Gulag system after WWII. No other researchers have produced any evidence to the contrary from these or any other sources in the former Soviet Union.

We therefore concurred with the finding of the research teams that the assertion was not just “highly improbable”; rather, it is demonstrably false.

This was a prime example, however, of the disproportionate and massive amount of time, energy, and resources that are required to refute a false claim.

KOREAN WAR TRANSFERS

Lines of circumstantial evidence from several separate sources point to a single conclusion: During the Korean War, American POWs and/or deserters were transferred to the territory of the USSR. This section summarizes the separate lines of evidence that derive from multiple independent sources:

On December 20, 1992, Senator Robert Smith (R-NH) and Kang Sok-ju, the DPRK Supreme People's Assembly's Vice Chairman of Foreign Affairs, "cordially exchanged views" in Pyongyang. Dr. C. Kenneth Quinones, an American diplomat who was a participant in the meeting, reported:

[The North Koreans] confirmed what Smith had learned earlier in Moscow – some US Army and Air Force personnel were sent to Russia for interrogation. Some 26 US Army and 15 US Air Force Personnel were returned from the Soviet Union to POW camps in China and North Korea, the North Koreans claimed.

This was the most specific information concerning the number of American POWs transferred to the territory of the USSR during the Korean War.

DPMO's *77-Page Report* concluded:

U.S. Korean War POWs were transferred to the Soviet Union and never repatriated. [...]

The range of eyewitness testimony as to the presence of U.S. Korean War POWs in the GULAG is so broad and convincing that we cannot dismiss it.

Missing F-86 pilots, whose captivity was never acknowledged by the Communists in Korea, were identified in recent interviews with former Soviet intelligence officers who served in Korea. Captured F-86 aircraft were taken to at least three Moscow aircraft design bureaus for exploitation. Pilots accompanied the aircraft to enrich and accelerate the exploitation process. [...]

The Soviets transferred several hundred U.S. Korean War POWs to the USSR and did not repatriate them.

In August 1993, DPMO issued the *77-Page Report* that included "Appendix B." Appendix B was entitled "31 Missing USAF F-86 Pilots Whose Loss Indicates Possible Capture."¹⁰

General Georgi Lobov, commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, stated that he had “heard rumors” that American POWs had been transferred to the USSR. General Lobov also stated:

I can testify to the following: I know that in summer 1952 at least 30–40 American POWs were placed in a separate and closely guarded carriage, attached to a goods train, and sent to the USSR. The most ‘valuable goods’ on this train was the American pilot of Russian origin Colonel Mahurin – he was a wing commander in the USAF, and by Soviet standards a ‘wing’ amounts to almost a division.¹¹

The US side of the USRJC quoted General Lobov, as stating that “he knew that at least forty American POWs were sent to the Soviet Union.”¹²

Former Chairman of the KGB Vadim Bakatin stated in response to the question of whether American POWs had been transferred to the territory of the USSR during the Korean War, “There weren’t many, were there? About thirty as far as I know.”

The CIA stated that the agency had located some of the Americans who had been transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union.

The SSC’s investigator in Moscow, Mr. Al Graham, testified before the Committee in November 1992 where he stated:

Although we have no direct evidence to prove it, there appears to be a strong possibility that at least a handful of U.S. POWs, possibly more, were transferred to Soviet territory during the Korean War.

The US side of the USRJC concluded:

The Committee has reviewed information and heard testimony which we believe constitutes strong evidence that some unaccounted for American POWs from the Korean Conflict were transferred to the former Soviet Union in the early 1950s.¹³

DPMO’s Mr. Norm Kass stated during a House Subcommittee meeting in 1996:

Mr. Dornan: Is there hard evidence to you (sic) that American prisoners were taken to Russia during Korea?
 Mr. Kass: There is certainly evidence. I would consider it significant evidence.

- Mr. Dornan: Not hard, OK. Significant.
Mr. Kass: Really it is quibbling over the adjective, but I think there is compelling – I would consider it strong evidence to suggest that, yes.
Mr. Dornan: And Vietnam, any evidence that people from Vietnam went to Russia?
Mr. Kass: There is evidence of that, as well.
Mr. Dornan: As compelling, or about the same?
Mr. Kass: I cannot discuss the details of that with you.
Mr. Dornan: Excellent. You can with me off camera. How about Russia after World War II?
Mr. Kass: With regard to the transfer of Americans onto Soviet soil or the presence of Americans on Soviet soil, we already know existed following World War II. We found that out through the Commission and other sources, as well.¹⁴

In my testimony before the SSC, I stated:

- Chairman Kerry: Do you accept that? About people who were transferred [to the Soviet Union during the Korean War]?
Dr. Cole: Small numbers, sir.
Chairman Kerry: A small number?
Dr. Cole: Yes.
Chairman Kerry: What are we dealing with, do you think, based on the evidence?
Dr. Cole: I'd hate to put a figure on it, so if you'll accept this generality right now, at least less than 100, and probably half of that.¹⁵

Others who testified before the same committee confirmed my findings.

- Chairman Kerry: Mr. Cole yesterday testified that it was his belief that some people indeed were transferred to the Soviet Union. Is that correct?
Mr. Sanders: Yes
Mr. Brown: Yes

- Mr. Ashworth: Seriously understated.
- Chairman Kerry: Fine. But the basic premise remains the same. He understated the numbers based on his model. He said somebody else may be able to come up with another model. So he is not part of a cover-up; he said some people were transferred to the Soviet Union. It seems to me he is arguing the same theory you are.¹⁶ [...] There is no question in my mind that people, numbers of prisoners were transferred. I am convinced; the evidence is there.¹⁷ [...]
- Mr. Al Graham
[Senate Select
Committee
Investigator Posted
to Moscow]: Although we have no direct evidence to prove it, there appears to be a strong possibility that at least a handful of U.S. POWs, possibly more, were transferred to Soviet territory during the Korean War.¹⁸

Finally, Sergei Zamascikov weighed in with his personal assessment:

I have no proof that POWs were brought into Russia. However, knowing how the regime and its special services worked, they could have transported some of the US guys, IF THEY FELT THE NEED FOR IT.

So, in looking for the answer one should consider why would they need some guys from Korea or Vietnam in Moscow?

1. Intelligence/recruitment.
 - (a) Possible, but more logically to do this outside the USSR in order to minimize exposure. (Example: George Blake)
2. Technical expertise.
 - (a) My cousin Leonid [Bondarenko] and our comrade Ben [Lambeth] believed that pilots have very little to add to the technical information that had been stolen.
3. Propaganda.
 - (a) Most likely scenario, but [Colonel] Mahurin Colonel Mahurin he was never used for this, was he? Maybe they did it with other guys.

Thus, these three scenarios do not really provide justification for bringing POWs in.

On the other hand, the Soviets often did things that look strange to outsiders...

Who knows, maybe Stalin or Beria wanted to talk to the live Americans...¹⁹

This is an important observation from someone who was raised in the Soviet system. The answer could be as simple as, “Maybe Stalin or Beria wanted to talk to the live Americans.”

Hannah Arendt’s intellectual legacy that explains totalitarian governments in terms of the “banality of evil” may be the answer. According to Arendt’s analysis, high-ranking Nazis such as Adolf Eichmann were not abhorrent monsters on the fringes of humanity; instead, he was a bureaucrat whose only desire was to please his superiors. Whether Eichmann was required to do good or evil was quite irrelevant to him.

The Soviet system could not have functioned without tens of thousands of little Eichmanns. Every totalitarian regime has them. They provide whatever the dictator desires. Bear in mind that the following is a partial list of what little Eichmanns are capable of doing to support their leader.

- Saddam Hussein, Iraq’s supremo, who had 27 liters of his blood drawn over two years so that a Quran could be written with it, used chemical weapons to murder Iraqi Kurds.
- Saparmurat Niyazov, the President for Life of Turkmenistan whose little Eichmanns built an ice palace for him in the capital of his desert country, ordered the murder of thousands in 2005.
- Gaddafi, the “Brotherly Leader and Guide of the Revolution” who ruled Libya for 40 years, kidnapped and raped hundreds of teenagers in specially built sex dungeons.
- Mobutu, the dictator of the Democratic Republic of the Congo who included the name “Kuku” in his new African name, ordered that the evening news had to begin with an image of Mobutu descending from the clouds.
- Erich Honecker, East Germany’s penultimate dictator, who acquired a massive collection of pornographic films that had been made in America and Germany, ran a government that routinely harvested and then sold the internal organs of political prisoners, then after cremating the remains mixed the cremains with the cement used to build official buildings such as the Volkskammer (East Germany’s parliament building).

- Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania's "Genius of the Carpathians" who spent ten billion dollars on a palace, oversaw a program in which orphan infants were injected with a concoction including sheep placenta that spread the HIV to thousands of children.
- Idi Amin, the Butcher of Uganda who wrote love letters to Queen Elizabeth II, was responsible for the deaths of over 250,000 Ugandan citizens.
- North Korea's Kim Jong-il, who claimed to be the world's greatest golfer in addition to inventing the hamburger, ordered the kidnapping of Japanese and South Korean artists and actors to make movies such as the remake of *Godzilla (Pulgasari)*.
- Mao Zedong, the architect of China's Great Leap Forward and the Cultural Revolution, was responsible for causing over 30 million deaths, the majority by starvation directly attributable to the Chinese Communist Party's adoption of Lysenkoism.

Stalin, the five-foot, four-inch-tall Soviet dictator who President Truman referred to as "a little squirt" and Khrushchev denounced as "violent," "despotic," and "capricious," used pressure and terrorism to solve problems. During the Great Terror of 1937–1938, on Stalin's order 1.5 million people were arrested and over 700,000 shot. Russian journalist Andrei Zhukov's work in Soviet archives produced a list of over 40,000 little Eichmanns who acted as willing, if not enthusiastic, executioners.²⁰

Beria, the depraved head of the NKVD chief who raped hundreds of teenaged girls, relied on his little Eichmanns to bring young girls to him, a half-dozen at a time. He would force them to strip, then select one using what he called the "Flower Game" to be raped, then thrown out or murdered so that he would not be disturbed as he drank a glass of cognac by the fire. Thousands were executed by little Eichmanns in the dungeons of Lubyanka on nothing more than the wave of Beria's hand (Fig. 15.1).

In the context of totalitarianism in general, and the despotism of the Soviet dictatorship in particular, the idea that American POWs could have been transferred to Moscow for no other reason than to satisfy the whim of Stalin or Beria to speak to an American appears both tame and entirely plausible.

If the transfers occurred for this reason, it would be a repulsive confirmation of the banality of evil.

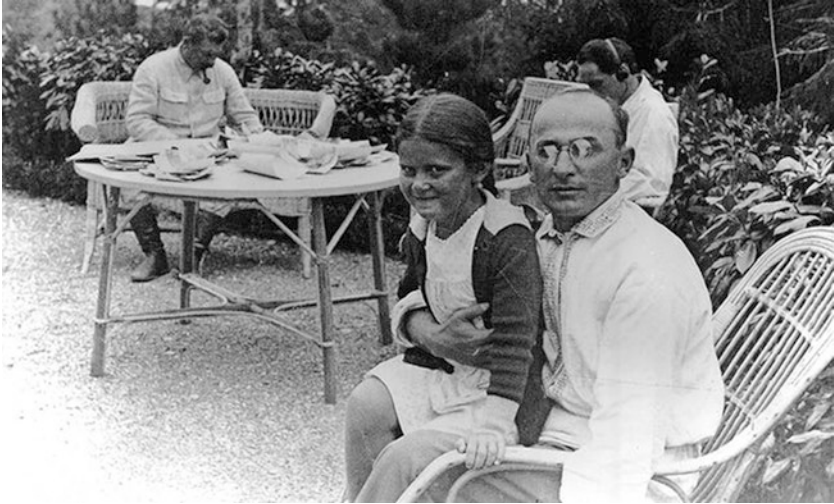


Fig. 15.1 Stalin (L) and Beria (R) with Stalin's daughter Svetlana (Photo: BBC)

The circumstantial evidence that American POWs were transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union during the Korean War appears to be convincing. This case, however, is similar to a murder trial without a body.

If it is true that American POWs were transferred to Moscow during the Korean War, the only outstanding issues are:

- How many were transferred?
- Did some of the Americans go voluntarily, for example, deserted?
- Were the American held against their will, including deserters who changed their mind?

The window of opportunity that would have allowed these three questions to be answered using sources controlled by the Russians has slammed shut, perhaps forever.

There appears to be little doubt, however, that Americans were transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union during the Korean War.

One POW may have made a round-trip.

* * *

THE STRANGE CASE OF COLONEL WALKER “BUD” MELVILLE MAHURIN

During our initial research visit to Moscow in December 1991, one of the first Russians Sergei and I met was a retired aerospace engineer who mentioned that as a young man he had been assigned to a secret Mikoyan-Gurevich aircraft design bureau. In that capacity, he told us that during the Korean War, he had attended a lecture in Moscow concerning the F-86 Sabre jet fighter.

This revelation didn't strike either of us as being particularly noteworthy or unusual. Aerospace engineers attend lectures concerning aircraft on a routine basis. This wasn't a formal interview, so the conversation was not recorded. As we had just one tape recorder and only a limited supply of microcassettes, the recorder could not be on all the time. In retrospect it was an oversight of note, but under the circumstances was unavoidable.

The engineer mentioned that the man who presented the lecture was named “Mahooren.” The name meant nothing to either of us, as this “Mahooren” could have been another Russian aerospace engineer who presented yet another lecture about yet another airplane. What was out of the ordinary, however, was that the engineer mentioned that the “Mahooren” who presented the lecture was an American pilot. Neither Sergei nor I gave much thought to the man's statement at that time, as it was made in an informal setting. We thought our local partners would arrange formal interviews with people we needed to interview later.

The “Mahooren” the engineer mentioned turned out to be USAF Colonel Walker “Bud” Mahurin. This was the first, but not the last time, we would hear Mahurin's name in Moscow. It was also not the only time that other researchers would speak to Russians who claimed to have had contact with Colonel Mahurin in Moscow.

Despite the fact that he was rather famous as well as an eminent fighter pilot, I was unaware of Colonel Mahurin or his well-earned reputation. Then-captain Mahurin had become the first American “double ace” during WWII. By October 1943 he had shot down five German fighters. Captain Mahurin made his tenth kill on November 26, thus becoming a double ace. In March 1944, Captain Mahurin was shot down in France, managed to evade capture, and then with the assistance of the French Underground made his way back to England. For security reasons Captain Mahurin, who was not permitted to return to the European area of opera-



Fig. 15.2 Colonel Walker “Bud” Mahurin (Photos: (L) Public Domain (R) Public Domain)

tions, was transferred to the Pacific theater where he finished WWII as a P-51 fighter pilot. Captain Mahurin was the only US fighter pilot to shoot down enemy aircraft in both the European and Pacific areas of operation (Fig. 15.2).

Following WWII, after a couple of years pushing pencils in the Pentagon, Colonel Mahurin organized a transfer to the Korean War. Under the call sign “Honest John,” Colonel Mahurin shot down 3.5 MiG-15s during the Korean War. (Pilots were awarded a fraction of a kill when multiple aircraft were involved in the same engagement.) All together Colonel shot down 23.25 enemy aircraft during combat operations in Europe, the Pacific, and Korea.

Colonel Mahurin’s luck eventually ran out in Korea.²¹

* * *

During the Korean War, Soviet forces made extensive efforts to capture an F-86 as well as the aircraft’s specialized equipment such as the radar gun sight, which General Lobov said they were eager to capture “at any cost.” As soon as the F-86 appeared in the Korean area of fighter operations:

The Soviets immediately set out to learn everything they could about the new enemy fighter. In the months that followed, Soviet intelligence agents monitored F-86 radio transmissions, interrogated Sabre pilots who had been shot down and taken prisoner, and reported their findings to the Soviet leadership. Premier Joseph Stalin himself gave the order to capture an F-86.²²

The Soviet Armed Forces and intelligence services were also focused on capturing Sabre pilots. They succeeded in both efforts.

USAF Second Lieutenant William N. Garrett was shot down by Soviet Air Force Captain Konstantin Shebertsov on October 6, 1951. Captain Shebertsov recalled:

This F-86 was descending at an angle of 45–50 degrees with black smoke [trailing]. I started chasing him at the maximum speed. I caught up with him at an altitude of 1005 meters [3,300 feet] and from a distance of 300–350 meters [975 to 1,150 feet] opened fire.²³

After Second Lieutenant Garrett ditched his F-86 in the coastal mudflats, Soviet forces salvaged the fuselage, removed the wings, then shipped the aircraft to Moscow. “The captured Sabre, serial number 49-1319, arrived at the Air Force Research Flight-Test Institute at Zhukovsky, 22 miles southeast of Moscow, in October 1951.” Seven months later, the Soviets had another opportunity to grab an F-86 aircraft and pilot.

In May 1952, Soviet forces retrieved a new F-86E. Its pilot, 34-year-old Colonel Bud Mahurin, was the commander of one of the two American F-86 wings in South Korea.²⁴

In a BBC documentary, Colonel Mahurin described how he was shot down and captured.

As I circled the target I saw a truck going down the highway and, and I thought well, I’ll just go down and shoot that truck up and then go home and I’ll have a big-time story to tell the people at the bar. And unfortunately I got slowed down, and just as I started to fire at the truck it turned off the road and I got hit with what I assumed to be 40 millimeter cannon fire.²⁵

Colonel Mahurin stated that when his brand-new F-86E, which had only “five or six” hours on the clock, struck the ground, it broke into two pieces before coming to a rest upside down in the coastal mudflats. Colonel Mahurin stated that after the wings broke off of his aircraft:

I rolled over twice and I ended up upside down, with the canopy gone. All I had to do was unfasten my safety belt and I fell out into the mud.²⁶

He was captured by North Koreans who turned him over to the Chinese. The capture of a WWII double ace who was a colonel in command of a USAF wing of F-86 fighters attracted significant attention within the Soviet command and intelligence structures.

Shortly after Colonel Mahurin was captured, a high-priority message was flashed to Moscow. General Lobov, commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, sent an urgent telegram to Moscow stating:

Colonel Mahurin was captured and taken prisoner. The F-86 plane is almost completely intact.²⁷

A few days before Christmas 1954, General Slyusarev, General Lobov's successor as commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, sent a long, encrypted telegram to Moscow. Addressed to the Soviet Minister of Defense Marshal of the Soviet Union N. A. Bulganin and to the Commander in Chief of the Air Force Marshal of Aviation P. F. Zhigarev, the message outlined the accomplishments of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps in the Korean War. According to the US side of the USRJC:

Buried in this rather lengthy report was a brief, matter-of-fact statement, "During this period of (the Korean War), 262 American flyers, shot down in air battles or by anti-aircraft artillery, were taken prisoner and processed through an interrogation point." [...]

The aforementioned report to Marshal Bulganin makes special mention of Colonel Walker, "Bud" Mahurin, "commander of the 4th Fighter Aviation Group."²⁸

US ground control intercepted a Soviet message on May 16, 1952 that was transmitted "over its administrative link." The Soviet message stated that "Mahurin" had been captured and an interrogation had been conducted. The US message, classified "TOP SECRET CANOE," "suggested" that Soviet Lieutenant General of Aviation Vladimir Razuvaev was present during Mahurin's interrogation. General Razuvaev was the Soviet Ambassador to North Korea as well as the over-all commander of Soviet aircraft participating in the Korean air war.

The fact that Colonel Mahurin was captured is not in dispute.

The open questions, however, are whether Colonel Mahurin cooperated with Soviet intelligence and, of far great importance, whether he was transferred to Moscow. There is evidence to support and refute each point.

The evidence and suggestions that Colonel Mahurin had contact or cooperated with Soviet intelligence come from Soviet or Russian sources, all of whom recalled Colonel Mahurin's name independent of one another.

General Lobov made the unambiguous statement that he was personally aware of Colonel Mahurin's collaboration with Soviet intelligence.

I know that Mahurin agreed to work with our intelligence people, and he helped us a lot. In particular, he explained details of the 'Sabre', which we were greatly interested in at the time.²⁹

The other sources including the following:

- Soviet intelligence interrogator Monkuyev
- Soviet electronics expert Miskevitch
- Soviet intelligence officer Plotnikov
- Soviet intelligence officer Bushuyev

One of the most important Soviet interrogation points was located in Andung, China, across the Yalu River from North Korea. Colonel Mahurin's name appears on the list of USAF personnel who passed through an interrogation point. The possibility that Colonel Mahurin had been interrogated and imprisoned in China, rather than North Korea, cannot be excluded.

According to various Russian sources, Colonel Mahurin willingly cooperated with Soviet intelligence, which would not have been unusual or inconsistent with the conduct of other POWs. There was a precedent for this scenario. Colonel Stuart Herrington participated in the military contingent that received repatriated American POWs as they returned from captivity in North Vietnam. Colonel Herrington recounted an interesting story concerning one of the repatriated POWs.

On September 15, 1965, Captain James Bond Stockdale, who was the Commanding Officer, VF51 and Carrier Air Group Command, was catapulted from the deck of the USS *Oriskany* for a mission over North Vietnam.³⁰ Captain Stockdale's A-4 Skyhawk was hit by anti-aircraft fire. After he ejected, his back and knee were injured. Captain Stockdale became the highest-ranking naval officer to be held as a POW in Vietnam. During seven years as a POW in the infamous Hoa Lo "Hanoi Hilton" prison, Stockdale was "kept in solitary confinement for four years, in leg



Fig. 15.3 (R) Admiral Stockdale as a POW (Photo: Public Domain)

irons for two years, physically tortured more than 15 times, denied medical care and malnourished (Fig. 15.3).”

Admiral Stockdale’s extraordinarily brave and heroic conduct as a POW is a matter of record for which he was recognized when President Gerald Ford awarded the Medal of Honor to Admiral Stockdale in 1976. Captain Stockdale’s courage and devotion to his fellow POWs and his country are beyond question. According to Colonel Herrington, however, Admiral Stockdale’s story had another dimension.

After his release in 1973 during Operation Homecoming, he spoke with Colonel Herrington “Welcome home, Sir,” Colonel Herrington said. According to Colonel Herrington, “the first words Stockdale said were, “Am I going to be court-martialed for what I have done?”

Colonel Herrington told me that Admiral Stockdale described how he had been interrogated by Russians in the Hanoi Hilton. Stockdale told

Herrington that he had given the Russians more information than he should have and regretted doing so. The deal that was struck between the Navy and Captain Stockdale was that in exchange for his silence concerning the presence of Russian interrogators in the Hanoi Hilton, the Navy would take no disciplinary action and keep Stockdale on active duty. Vice Admiral Stockdale retired from the Navy in 1979.

* * *

An important feature of Soviet intelligence operations was their consistency. Soviet operatives tended to use the same methods repeatedly. The way they conducted themselves once was a reliable preview of how they would do it the next time.

Captain Stockdale was debriefed on February 19, 1973, less than one week after his repatriation.³¹ Revealed during the debriefing and according to declassified records, Captain Stockdale was able to send and receive coded messages. One of the first references Captain Stockdale was able to send out of prison was the phrase “darkness at noon.” This was a reference to *Darkness at Noon*, a 1940 novel by Arthur Koestler that dramatized Soviet show trials and the torture that went on in Soviet prisons. Captain Stockdale’s wife concluded that he was referring to torture taking place in the Hanoi Hilton. What if, however, Captain Stockdale was actually referring to the presence of Russians as well as to torture? Perhaps the answer might be found in Captain Stockdale’s debriefing or in his deposition that was taken by the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs.

As Captain Stockdale told his debriefers, he was driven to the point that he was ready to say anything to stop the pain even if it meant disloyalty.

In Colonel Mahurin’s opinion, he was not sure what he was authorized to reveal to his interrogators.

Every time we would go to a [pre-flight] briefing, the [Air Force] intelligence sources would brief in a different way. One guy would stand up and say, ‘boys, only give them name, rank and serial number.’ The other intelligence officer would stand up and say, ‘I don’t know what to tell you.’ And then the third would say, ‘talk if you have to, and give them misleading information.’ And then the fourth would say, ‘don’t tell them anything that will harm your fellow pilots.’³²

With regard to his confession in which he admitted that the American forces had engaged in chemical and biological warfare, Colonel Mahurin

stated that the confession was so far-fetched that he doubted that any reasonable person would believe it.

In response to the question, “If the Soviets released your interrogation report, what would you expect to see in it?” Colonel Mahurin replied:

Don’t have any idea. I don’t have any idea. But I know I didn’t give them any information that would be harmful to anybody on my side.³³

Thus far, no primary source evidence has been produced that indicates or suggests that Colonel Mahurin provided any information to Soviet intelligence that would have been “harmful to anybody” on the American side. As in the case of Admiral Stockdale, it would have made equal sense for other American POWs such as Colonel Mahurin to tell the Russians anything they wanted to hear.

* * *

In contrast to the multiple Russian and Soviet sources who recalled having contact with Colonel Mahurin, only two sources claim that Colonel Mahurin was transferred to the Soviet Union.

General Lobov stated that Colonel Mahurin had been transferred to Moscow. In an interview with Russian journalist Mr. Igor Morozov, General Lobov described how Colonel Mahurin, in General Lobov’s view, had been transferred to Moscow. General Lobov stated:

I can testify to the following: I know that in summer 1952 at least 30–40 American POWs were placed in a separate and closely guarded carriage, attached to a goods train, and sent to the USSR. The most ‘valuable goods’ on this train was the American pilot of Russian origin Colonel Mahurin – he was a wing commander in the USAF, and by Soviet standards a ‘wing’ amounts to almost a division.³⁴

The US side of the USRJC concluded that General Lobov’s comments had been reported accurately.

[T]he U.S. side of the [USRJC’s Korean War Working Group (KWWG)] believes that the [Morozov] interview with General Lobov accurately reflects what the General knew to be the case, i. e., the Soviets indeed sent some American POWs from Korea to the Soviet Union.³⁵

Sergei and I met an aircraft engineer who stated spontaneously that he had attended a lecture by Colonel Mahurin in Moscow concerning the

flight characteristics and controls of the F-86. One of the Russian participants in a BBC documentary who claimed to have attended a lecture at an aircraft design bureau in Moscow delivered by an American F-86 pilot said that the pilot was an Air Force captain of approximately 26 years of age. At the time of his capture, Colonel Mahurin would have been 34. The participant said he had heard that the American had been brought to the lecture from Lubyanka and was returned there after the lecture was completed.³⁶

Did Colonel Mahurin make a round-trip from Korea to Moscow and then back to Korea?

Colonel Mahurin stated emphatically that he had not been taken to Moscow.

From my memory, I never talked to anybody that came in sort of uniquely from the outside and started to interrogate me. And the questions they asked were not the sort of questions that an educated person who was familiar with flying operations, aircraft and what not, would even...they were all dumb questions, so to speak.

I talked to some people in Washington, and they also wanted to know if I had been taken to Russia and I said absolutely not. Well, obviously, I would know if I went across the Yalu River, because it's a big river. And if I had gone across on a truck or at night or whatever else I would have known that I went across that river, because once you're a POW you're keenly aware of everything that goes on around you, every sound, every nuance, and every inflection in a voice, and all that, because that's all you have to live for.

Never happened.

I was in solitary the entire time. I never talked to other POW's, and so I couldn't have gone with a group of other people anywhere or I would have known it. I was interrogated by North Koreans predominantly, and my assumption is that it was about two months worth of interrogation and at that point Chinese interrogators took over, and initially it was sort of superficial until all of a sudden the context of the interrogation changed. It began to be an allegation that we had waged germ warfare against the enemy.³⁷

Taking Colonel Mahurin to Moscow would have created risks such as significant dimensions that approval for such an operation would have been required from the top of the Soviet government. Deputy Russian Foreign Minister George Kunadze stated that "such an operation would have been approved at a level 'no lower than Beria.'"³⁸

Mr. Valerii Musatov, who was the First Deputy Head of the CPSU's International Department of the Central Committee, speculated that approval for such an operation would have been required "from the top, such as a top body like the Politburo." Mr. Musatov added:

It could have been some very important leader, like a General Secretary, especially if it were not a document but a phone conversation. In the time of the Korean War, when Stalin was alive, such a decision would have been made personally by Beria.

In any case, I can tell you that the Party apparatus was not involved in such operations. If it was something concerning some technical or defense problem it would be either the KGB or the Ministry of Defense which was very much interested in such things. Or even it could have been the Military Industrial Commission.³⁹

Allowing him to make a round-trip from Korea and then return to the United States to tell about the experience would have been a high-risk operation for another reason, that being Colonel Mahurin's state of mind. Colonel Mahurin stated:

[If I had been taken to Russia,] I would have blabbed like crazy about being in Russia and what I saw and heard when I got back home in spades.⁴⁰

Perhaps Colonel Mahurin was unaware that he had been taken to Moscow.

The division of labor with regard to exploiting POWs fell into three broad categories. The Armed Forces fought, the GRU (Soviet military intelligence) interrogated, and the KGB was responsible for moving prisoners across international borders. At least two Russian intelligence sources advised us how a prisoner could be moved great distances without being aware of any movement. The prisoner would be held in solitary confinement in a small stand-alone cell, though the prisoner would be given the impression that the cell was part of a large facility. The prisoner would be sedated, then the cell with the same guards would be moved by train or plane over a certain distance. The cell would be set up in the new location, then the operation would be repeated as many times as required. The prisoner would be unaware that he had been transported closer to the experts in Moscow who were needed to complete an interrogation of a prisoner of particular value.

* * *

US military intelligence was alerted to the possibility that American servicemen in POW status could have been approached or recruited by hostile intelligence services. The Army G-2 (Intelligence) service looked for evidence of recruitment during the debriefing of repatriated American POWs.

All reports of espionage activity detected among repatriated US POWs were forwarded to the US Army's G-2 Security Division under the title of "RECAP-WW." By June 1954, the Army reported that:

Evidence had been uncovered which concerned the assignment of Sabotage and Espionage missions to repatriated American prisoners of the Korean War during 'Big and Little Switch' and that recently new cases of this type had been discovered.⁴¹

In 1954, former Korean War POW Corporal Claude J. Batchelor was convicted by court-martial on charges that he, among other crimes, participated "with the enemy in planning for the formation of subversive organizations of secret agents to be sent to the United States for communistic work."

Efforts by Soviet intelligence to recruit assets from among the POW population during WWII were documented by French researcher Dr. Pierre Rigoulot. In 1944, a group of French prisoners held by the Soviets was released. Dr. Rigoulot determined that not only had Soviet intelligence organs attempted to recruit French POWs, Soviet intelligence agents who Dr. Rigoulot concluded were associated with the NKVD contacted many of the repatriated prisoners as long as ten years after their release from the Tambov prison camp.⁴² The same pattern of recruitment of US POWs by Soviet intelligence that made follow-up contacts occurred after the Korean and Vietnam Wars has been documented.

Army intelligence concluded that:

In many instances, little or no coercion was applied to captives who revealed military information and signed confessions concerning alleged activities, or acts, of which they had no knowledge, or which were completely false.⁴³

Colonel Mahurin signed a bogus confession that admitted the United States had used chemical and biological weapons during the Korean War. After the war, he stated that the confession had been so ludicrous that he did not expect any reasonable person to believe it. He explained that he had done so in the hope that he would be released early, which did not happen. The Soviets may have concluded that Colonel Mahurin would become a senior commander in the USAF. Could it be that Mahurin agreed to become a sleeper agent to obtain relief from the tedium and agony of his confinement? Could it also be that Colonel Mahurin exagger-

ated his willingness to spy in the same way that he had inflated his confession concerning chemical and biological warfare? Perhaps Colonel Mahurin made the equally preposterous pledge that he would blow up the Golden Gate Bridge as well.

* * *

The answer to whether Colonel Mahurin collaborated with Soviet intelligence or was transferred to Moscow could lie in the records of the debriefings of 235 USAF POWs who were repatriated after the Korean War armistice went into effect. Colonel Mahurin was debriefed shortly after his release when aboard a hospital ship that took 26 days to get back to the United States.

I repeatedly searched for the USAF POW repatriation debriefing reports at NARA, but found nothing. An archivist suggested that the records might be in a massive record group that would take a couple of weeks to search. I prepared a proposal that was supposed to be submitted to DPMO through a group called Iris, a consulting firm owned by Dr. Rebecca Grant, a former colleague from the RAND days who agreed to submit the proposal. After several weeks, I called Dr. Grant to inquire about the status of the proposal. She simply said that she had changed her mind and therefore had not submitted it without letting me know.

I then sent a letter to DPMO, which by this time was headed by retired USAF brigadier general DASD/DPMO James Wold, to offer my services to search for the elusive debriefing records. DPMO replied with a letter asking whether I could “guarantee” that the records would be found. My reply stated the obvious that it would be foolish as well as unprofessional to guarantee that records that had been missing for three decades would definitely be found. DPMO replied that my proposal (there had been no proposal, just my letter) was rejected on the grounds that I could not “guarantee” that the repat debriefing records would be found.

I heard through the grapevine that the USAF POW repat debriefs were eventually located and taken to DPMO where the records were destroyed in the name of “privacy.”

* * *

There are also three clues that may shed light as to whether Colonel Mahurin cooperated with Soviet intelligence: one concerning the condi-

tion of the F-86, the second relating to rivets, and the third derived from USAF intelligence records.

Shortly after Colonel Mahurin was captured, a high-priority message was flashed to Moscow. General Lobov, commander of the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps, sent an urgent telegram to Moscow stating:

Colonel Mahurin was captured and taken prisoner. The F-86 plane is almost completely intact.

The fact that the fuselage of Colonel Mahurin's F-86, serial number 51-2789, which was more advanced than Second Lieutenant Garrett's F-86A, was "recovered and dismantled, and the parts were sent to Moscow," is not in dispute.⁴⁴

An extensive citation from the DPMO *77-Page Report*, "The Transfer of U.S. Korean War POWs to the Soviet Union," is relevant to this discussion.

On 30 March 1993, Task Force Russia in Moscow (TFR-M) interviewed a retired KGB lieutenant colonel, Yuriy Likianovich Klimovich, who had served in Korea and recounted that there was an effort to capture intact F-86s. He also stated that he knew of an F-86 that had been forced down on a beach and transported to the Sukhoi Design Bureau in Moscow for exploitation.

Klimovich had appeared on the Ostankino 1 TV News Magazine show "Chorta S Dva" and told of two F-86 "Sabre" fighters being brought to Moscow in 1951/52. Klimovich told TFR-M that a very close friend and confidant, now deceased, had confided to him that a U.S. F-86 and an American pilot had been brought to Moscow. His friend reportedly told Klimovich that one of the aircraft was in excellent condition and was disassembled at the Sukhoi Design Bureau in an attempt to copy it. Klimovich said that neither his friend nor he knew what happened to the alleged American pilot since he fell immediately into KGB hands.

Lieutenant Colonel Klimovich then escorted Task Force Russia interviewers to the Sukhoi Design Bureau where they met designers who clearly remembered that an F-86 had been brought to the bureau during the Korean War. These designers confirmed Klimovich's assertion that two F-86s had been brought to Moscow, one in good shape and the other in poor condition. [...]

The Task Force Russia interviewers then visited the Zhukovskii Central Aerohydrodynamics Institute (Tsentral'niy Aerogidrodinamicheskiy institut imeni Professora N. Ye. Zhukovskogo-Tsagi, formerly MiG Design Bureau) on 1 April 1993 escorted by Lieutenant Colonel Klimovich. There

they spoke to Professor Yevgeniy I. Rushitskiy, Chief of the Institute's Information Division and Chairman of the History Section.

During the course of the interview, Professor Rushitskiy confirmed that an F-86 had been delivered to the institute to be disassembled and copied. [...] One of the designers distinctly remembers an American pilot having been available at another location for follow-on questions. This story was repeated by other personnel from the Design Bureau.⁴⁵

An examination of the fuselage of Colonel Mahurin's F-86E by a Russian aeronautical engineer confirmed that:

The wings were torn off from the fuselage on impact, along with the wing-housing and located about five to six meters away. The left wing sustained damage, the leading edges were bent, the aileron was torn off.⁴⁶

Colonel Mahurin, however, stated that his F-86E fuselage was not intact after impact.

When the aircraft hit the ground it broke into two pieces. It was torn all apart. They had other F-86's that had crashed that would be in a lot better shape than mine was because a lot of guys had been shot down before me. And mine was in two pieces, bent, with the fact that it had a fire and that the engine was gone. And at one point then, I think this is not news, but at one point the peasants got into the cockpit and fired the ejector seat. So that was gone. Then they destroyed the IFF set, so that was gone. That happened while I was near the scene of the crash.⁴⁷

The condition of the fuselage of Colonel Mahurin's F-86E, which he described as "pretty bad," might be relevant for two reasons. First, the fuselage of Colonel Mahurin's F-86E, which was shipped to Moscow, was in fact "almost completely intact." BBC researchers found photographs of the fuselage, which matches the description provided by General Lobov and the Soviet aircraft engineer closer than the description provided by Colonel Mahurin.

Second, an aeronautical engineer who inspected the fuselage in the 1950s described how fascinated, if not envious, the Russians were by the small size and great strength of the rivets used to hold the F-86 fuselage together. When we heard this remark in 1991, Sergei and I did not pay much attention to it. Neither of us is an engineer; thus a reference to a rivet did not strike us as particularly significant.

Forty years after he was shot down, Colonel Mahurin was advised by the BBC that the fuselage of his aircraft had been transported to Moscow. After describing the condition of the aircraft as “pretty bad,” Colonel Mahurin stated:

That doesn’t mean to say that they couldn’t tell how the riveting was and how the structure was and all that.⁴⁸

Two references to rivets by two aeronautical engineers, one Russian, the other American, 40 years apart from one another could not be a coincidence. Or could it?

Third, another source of information concerning Colonel Mahurin’s alleged cooperation with Soviet intelligence is found in a USAF intelligence assessment.

On June 14, 1954, the chief of the Counterintelligence Division, Directorate of Special Investigations, the Inspector General, Department of the Air Force, submitted a memorandum to the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 Intelligence, Department of the Army:

Of paramount importance would be any information available to you which might indicate that there are Air Force personnel who might have received assignment by the Soviets or Chinese Communists to conduct Sabotage or Espionage missions on their return to the United States. As you know, this Directorate conducted detailed interrogations of our POW’s following their release from Communist captivity. During these interrogations no confirmatory information in regard to subject matter was disclosed.⁴⁹

If Colonel Mahurin had gone to Moscow and done the other things that various Soviet sources reported, the chief of the Air Force’s Counterintelligence Division had no “confirmatory information,” perhaps due to the distinct possibility that the alleged events had not occurred.

* * *

If Colonel Mahurin had been transferred to the territory of the Soviet Union and returned, it would be the only example where the name of the POW who had such an experience has been established.

Colonel Mahurin died on May 11, 2010, at his home in Southern California.

* * *

NOTES

1. The MGB was one of the precursors of the KGB.
2. The MVD was the Ministry of Internal Affairs, more or less the secret police.
3. June 13, 2000.
4. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, WWII POWs, Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, November 10–11, 1992, pp. 268–9. http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/pow/senate_house/pdf/hear_11_92.pdf
5. “Exemption 25X1: reveal the identity of a confidential human source, a human intelligence source, a relationship with an intelligence or security service of a foreign government or international organization, or a non-human intelligence source; or impair the effectiveness of an intelligence method currently in use, available for use, or under development.” 32 CFR 2001.26—Automatic declassification exemption markings. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/32/2001.26>
6. Central Intelligence Agency Information Report. Country: USSR, xxxxxx [Exemption 25X1] Subject: American Prisoners-of-War Held in the USSR SECRET/CONTROL – US OFFICIALS ONLY December 29, 1953. (“xxxxx” indicates redacted material). <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80-00810A003200410002-9.pdf>
7. Memorandum For: Chief FI, DDP From: FI Staff, SR Division xxxxxx Chief, SR/7 Subject: Request for Renewal of Project AEACRE for the Fiscal Year 1957 SECRET July 1, 1956, p. 12. https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/AEACRE%20%20%20VOL.%201_0027.pdf
8. Memorandum for the Director of Central Intelligence. From: General N. F. Twining, Chief of Staff, United States Air Force Subject: (Unclassified) US Prisoners of War Remaining in Communist Custody After Termination of Exchange of Prisoners Under Terms of Korean Armistice Agreement SECRET March 16, 1954. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP80R01731R000800120028-5.pdf>
9. Central Intelligence Agency, Office of Current Intelligence “Probability of Soviet Release of Some World War II Prisoners,” SECRET SECURITY INFORMATION May 5, 1953. <https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/docs/CIA-RDP91T01172R000200300006-2.pdf>
10. *77-Page Report*, op. cit., Appendix B, pp. 57–67.
11. Quinones, C. Kenneth, “Building Bridges – The US – DPRK 1994 Agreed Framework and The US Army’s Return to North Korea,” East-West Center—Honolulu, Hawaii, undated though file properties indicate the document was created on April 3, 2008, p. 10. <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.543.2556&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

12. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission On POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 139.
13. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, WWII POWs, Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit., p. 36.
14. *Status of POW/MIA Negotiations With North Korea*, Military Personnel Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security. House of Representatives, June 20, 1996, p. 82.
15. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, and WWII POWs, Hearings before the Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit., p. 101.
16. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, WWII POWs, Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit., pp. 301–302.
17. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea, WWII POWs, Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit., p. 314. http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/pow/senate_house/pdf/hear_11_92.pdf
18. *Hearings on Cold War, Korea and WWII POWs, Hearings before the Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs*, op. cit., p. 361.
19. Email, Zamascikov to Cole, June 25, 2017.
20. “Stalin’s secret police finally named but killings still not seen as crimes,” Shaun Walker, *The Guardian*, February 6, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/feb/06/stalin-secret-police-killings-crimes-russia-terror-nkvd>
21. Colonel Mahurin’s version of these events appears in *Honest John: The Autobiography of Walker M. Mahurin*, Walker Bud Mahurin. Originally published in 1962 by G. P. Putnam’s Sons. Republished in 2011 by Pickle Partners.
22. “To Snatch a Sabre,” Ralph Wetterhahn, *Air & Space Magazine*, July 2003. <http://www.airspacemag.com/military-aviation/to-snatch-a-sabre-4707550/?all>
23. “To Snatch a Sabre,” op. cit.
24. *Spy Flights of the Cold War*, Paul Lashmar (Published in the United Kingdom by Stroud: Sutton Publishers Ltd., 1996, Published in the United States by the Naval Institute Press, 1996), p. 55.
25. *Russia’s Secret War*, op. cit. Used with permission.
26. *Russia’s Secret War*, op. cit. Used with permission.
27. *Spy Flights of the Cold War*, Paul Lashmar (Published in the United Kingdom by Stroud: Sutton Publishers Ltd., 1996, Published in the United States by the Naval Institute Press, 1996), p. 55.
28. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., pp. 181–182.

29. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., pp. 363–365.
30. “Stockdale Center For Ethical Leadership,” United States Naval Academy, citing excerpts from the Official Site for Admiral James Stockdale. <https://www.usna.edu/Ethics/bios/stockdale.php>
31. “Spy In The Hanoi Hilton,” produced by Pulse3 TV and Smithsonian Networks, David Taylor, Producer. © SNI/SI Networks LLC, 2015.
32. *Russia’s Secret War*, op. cit. Used with permission.
33. *Russia’s Secret War*, op. cit. Used with permission.
34. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs*, op. cit., pp. 363–365.
35. *Comprehensive Report of the U.S. Side of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission On POW/MIAs*, op. cit., p. 365.
36. *Russia’s Secret War*, op. cit. Used with permission.
37. *Russia’s Secret War*, op. cit. Used with permission.
38. *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 156. Author’s interview with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister George Kunadze, December 18, 1991, Moscow.
39. *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., pp. 156–157 Author’s interview with Mr. Valerii Musatov, March 29, 1992, Moscow.
40. *Russia’s Secret War*. Used with permission.
41. *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 92.
42. *Volume 2: WWII and Early Cold War*, op. cit., p. 21.
43. *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 92.
44. “In the F-86A model, cables connected to hydraulic actuators moved the control surfaces, but the –E eliminated the cables in favor of a completely hydraulic system for operating control surfaces. The –E also used an all-moving horizontal stabilizer. The combination improved maneuverability at high speeds without the need for trim tabs. Artificial feel was built into the aircraft controls using weights and bungee springs, which let the pilot feel normal stick forces that were still light enough for superior combat patrol.” “To Snatch a Sabre,” op. cit.
45. *77-Page Report*, op. cit., pp. 12–15.
46. Paul Lashmar interview with Colonel (ret.) Walker “Bud” Melville Mahurin, *Russia’s Secret War*, Orange County, California, 1994. Used with permission.
47. Paul Lashmar interview with Colonel (ret.) Walker “Bud” Melville Mahurin, op. cit.

48. Paul Lashmar interview with Colonel (ret.) Walker “Bud” Melville Mahurin, op. cit.
49. *Volume 1: The Korean War*, op. cit., p. 92, citing: Memorandum to Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2 Intelligence, Department of the Army (SECRET), from Gilbert R. Levy, Chief, Counterintelligence Division, Directorate of Special Investigations, The Inspector General, Department of the Air Force, subject: Espionage and Sabotage – Espionage Missions Assigned Repatriated Prisoners of War, WAR CRIMES, June 14, 1954.

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