



# EYES ONLY



## Are there any CIA Agents?

When questions are asked about CIA intelligence agents' competencies, foreign intelligence experts have definite opinions.

Brigadier General Mohammed Yousaf, a member of Pakistan's Interservice Intelligence Agency, clearly described the fifty-year old CIA analysis problem: *"It was during (a) visit that my suspicions that the CIA gave undue weight to the opinions of desk bound analysts were verified. Firstly (I was placed in a) conference room to be briefed on Afghanistan. (I was being briefed by a female military analyst)...the woman was nervous and shaky, reading from her notes-a sure way of alienating her audience, but a practice many Americans seemed to accept (although it indicated that) the speaker has not mastered the subject. And so it proved on this occasion. When she had finished I asked what she meant when she (opined that the) Mujahideen had suffered heavy casualties in a particular battle. What percentage did she consider heavy, 10 percent, 20 percent or 50 percent? (She) immediately flummoxed. She was similarly confused when I pressed her for the numbers of who actually fought in the battle. Her male companions (then tried to) come to her rescue. Later, I was told that she had been working on Afghanistan since the Soviet invasion and had obtained a Masters Degree in (Military Affairs before) joining the CIA. Of course she had no practical experience of war, and never would have. Without this experience, or first-hand knowledge of the battlefield, even the best analyst is apt to draw the wrong conclusions from his facts and figures.*

*The next example involved a CIA man considered to be an expert on Soviet tactics. After listening for a while to his discourse on what seemed to be an explanation of how the Red Army*

*would advance across the north European plain, I queried the relevance of what he had said to the terrain in Afghanistan. That (was the end of) him because he didn't speak again."*

Who are the people that work for the CIA? Pakistani General Yousaf has described typical CIA personnel groupings," The largest group was those who joined the Agency fairly young and had made it their career, gaining balanced experience between field and (headquarters) posts. The second category included those recruited in their thirties or forties from outside the service for their particular expertise, They were the experts and analysts. To me these people's opinions and recommendations seemed always to carry weight with the decision makers and they were able to reach higher grades more quickly than field operators. In most cases these officers had a strictly limited military background, yet played a key role in military matters. The third group was drawn from the Armed Forces, normally at the major level. Some were on attachment to the CIA; others belonged permanently. They were usually the weapons experts, or trainers and I noticed a deep-seated professional jealousy between them and the civilian experts."

The venerated leftist intelligence expert, Seymour Hersch, recently discussed the level of competence of current CIA personnel in the New Yorker magazine. ("What Went Wrong? The CIA and the Failure of American Intelligence.") He pointed out "the CIA hires computer geeks without the balls or ability to carry out deep hard dirty work, with tough people going down dark alleys with good instincts." This glaring CIA personnel weakness can be attributed to the almost total elimination of an emphasis on HUMINT in favor of traditional CIA bureaucratic unwillingness to take risks. This is a weakness that is exacerbated by the CIA's continued reliance on foreigners for intelligence and, of course, technical intelligence. The CIA has no deep cover agents.

Most CIA officers live in suburban Virginia. They are bureaucrats who are unaccountable for the over thirty billion dollars a year that they spend. According to Hersch, the modern CIA is composed of too many affirmative action know-nothings who spend most of their time weaving "racial diversity quilts." They are the type of men who wince when they make verbal statements and are ever ready to apologize to minorities with ritualistic ass kissing.

The popular image that CIA (agents) are unobtrusive flies on the walls of foreign enemies on four continents is a grotesque mistake. There are no CIA espionage agents! Some 98% of CIA case officers operate under "official cover" as employees of other U.S. government agencies. Their identity as collectors of information for the government is thus declared, the range of their contacts is accordingly narrow, and most lack the substantive knowledge and language skills to get much beyond the cocktail circuit. Unlike the Drug Enforcement Agency, the CIA does not employ individuals with plausible access to the kinds of people about whom it seeks information.

Most CIA "intelligence" is generated by analysts who write intelligence reports after studying data extracted from foreign newspapers, magazines and US TECHINT. CIA intelligence analysts are employees of the CIA Directorate of Intelligence. Such analysts generally hold undergraduate or advanced degrees in academic fields, and they are supposedly selected for their clear analytical thinking. They are journalistically trained in briefing senior decision-makers and writing, for publication, finished intelligence reports. Most of them have never met a real live "asset" (a spy), and they almost certainly have no experience in directing clandestine operations in the field.

However, the business of espionage is much too important to be left to the grubby paws of feral twenty year-olds. According to the Soviet intelligence chief Orlov: "... (intelligence) resources should be concentrated upon obtaining information... about the secret intentions, capabilities and strategic plans of other states." Information about secret intentions, capabilities and strategic plans is not revealed from open sources, and is only partially revealed by technical sources. Secret information can only be obtained by mature, intelligent, and sophisticated espionage agents. Too bad the USA doesn't have any.

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