

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE  
UNITED STATES



# CIA

at WAR



Studies  
Intelligence

**Dedicated to the families of CIA officers,  
past and present.**





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The authors thank the numerous dedicated people whose time and talents made this publication possible. All contributors were united by their pride in CIA's history and mission and by their desire to support and thank our families. The outcome is, in the best tradition of CIA, the result of many hands and many hearts giving without expectation of rewards other than those that are found in service to others.

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Articles for *Studies in Intelligence* may be written on any historical, operational, doctrinal, or theoretical aspect of intelligence.

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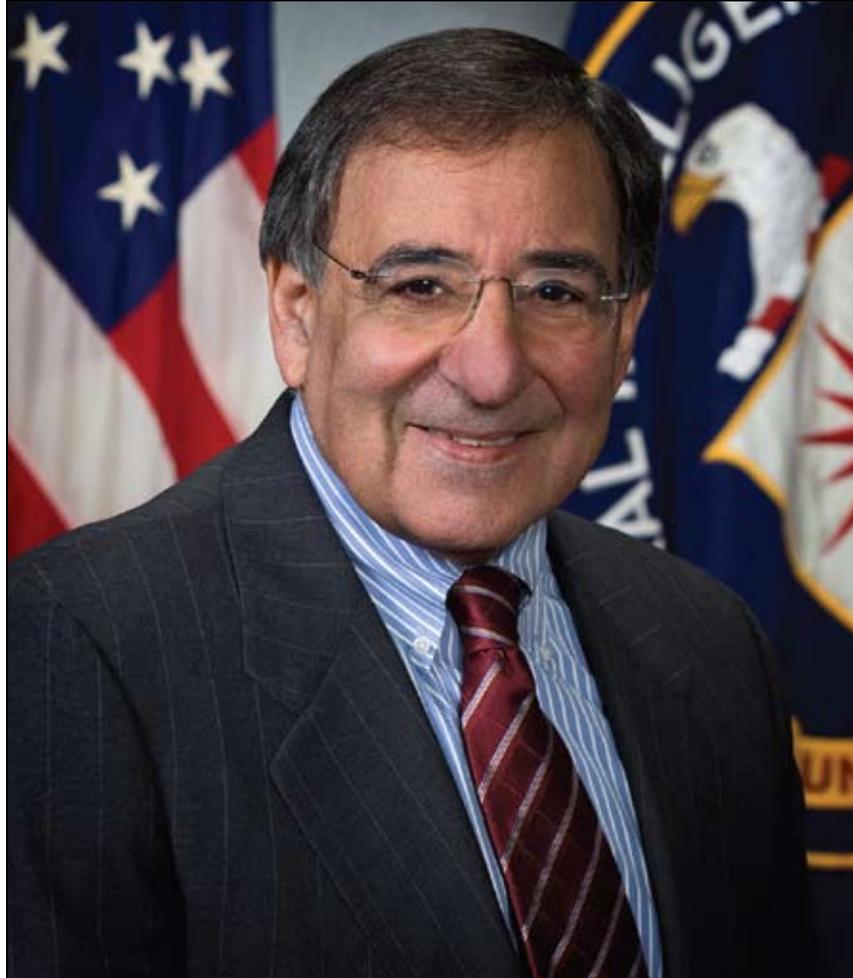
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**Leon Panetta** *Director, Central Intelligence Agency*

**From the very founding of our Agency, the men and women of CIA have served in places of danger. When the United States military is engaged in battle, intelligence is there to provide essential support. Those who make policy in our country count on CIA to be their eyes and ears in the world. In conflicts of every kind, our government has turned to our Agency to gather vital information and advance America's interests.**

Much has changed in the world in the past six decades. But difficult missions still come here. Skill and courage remain in demand. Commitment and loyalty continue to thrive. And, far more often than not, the work of this Agency is done quietly, with precise knowledge of success and sacrifice confined to a relative few. Those are just some of the constants of CIA at war.

The regions where our officers deploy are some of the toughest on the planet. There, they face more than physical hardship and separation from loved ones. They see the unforgiving side of these struggles—the loss, the waste, and the cruelty of those we fight. Generations of American intelligence officers, like generations of Americans in uniform, have emerged from the strife changed in ways both subtle and profound.

I have seen in the war zones and in those who have served there an unbeatable commitment to mission and to colleagues. The premium is on getting the job done, as quickly and efficiently as possible. The emphasis is on team work, with close cooperation across directorate and agency lines a daily fact of life. It is that spirit, energy, and dedication that must flow through every part of this great organization.

Those who have answered the call of duty represent the best of us, and they deserve the best from us. From many backgrounds, they came together, under stress exceptional even in the world of intelligence, to do what had to be done.

In them, pride and grief sometimes coexist—pride in decisive accomplishments, grief for those whose lives were taken in the most noble of causes. Recognizing what they have done is not an obligation. It is a privilege.

The strains of service in zones of war and unrest are borne not just by those who go abroad, but by those who await their return. The hardship is as real as the honor. The requirements of patience, strength, and perseverance apply to all. To those who shoulder the risks and meet the obstacles, we owe our love, understanding, and support.

This book is dedicated to them and to their families, to those my son—who served in Afghanistan—calls the “silent warriors.” It is a tribute to valor, endurance, and devotion, qualities that are found in this Agency on days both ordinary and extraordinary. That, in many ways, is the lesson of both our past and our present, and a sure sign for our future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leon Panetta', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

**Leon Panetta**

*Director, Central Intelligence Agency*



*"Kryptos" by James Sanborn Central Intelligence Agency Courtyard*



***CIA at War* is meant, above all, to be a window into the people and culture of an organization critical to America's security. While many details of its activities are, of necessity, kept from the public at large, the operations of this Agency are carefully overseen inside our government, oversight that is absolutely crucial to the necessary and well-earned place of foreign intelligence in a healthy, open society.**

From every part of that society come the men and women who do the work of intelligence for the CIA and the nation it so proudly serves. Like America herself, they defy stereotype, reflecting an enormous range of experiences and perspectives. As this book makes clear, they and the loved ones who support them share what counts most—a faith in the principles that define our country and a readiness to promote and defend them. That is the core requirement of service with CIA, no matter the place or conditions of assignment. The responsibilities are always real and often unique.

- **Part One—CIA at War: A Photographic Essay**—speaks to the passion and valor of those drawn to the tough, exacting field of intelligence and espionage.
- **Part Two—Museum Curator's Notes**—speaks to the history of CIA, with its lessons of preparation, persistence, and ingenuity, frequently in the face of long odds and daunting obstacles.
- **Part Three—Reflections on Our Officers in War**—speaks to the strengths of those who accomplish the mission in zones of conflict, and the strains that can come with duty there.

The United States expects much from those who act in secret on behalf of the American people. For this Agency, that secrecy is a grant not of power, but of trust. *CIA at War* is designed to provide a glimpse, a snapshot, of how we strive, in situations of stress and hazard, to earn and exercise that trust.



# CIA AT WAR

## A Photographic Essay



*CIA Memorial Wall Original Headquarters Building*

**The following photographic essay tells a story of CIA officers in war. It contains portraits of CIA men and women as well as still-life photographs of historical artifacts. The story begins in WWII and continues through the present.**

While the poses in the portraits and the still-life arrangements were orchestrated by our photographer, the people and objects are authentic. Portrait subjects dressed in their own clothes and were photographed holding the tools they used or personal items from the wars and conflict zones they served in. The still-life tableaux were composed of objects from CIA's museum and private collections.

The curator's notes that follow the photographic essay describe the use and provenance of the objects shown and also as much of their history as can be revealed of the people in the portraits.

As a young man our photographer, Peter Garfield, served with the US Army in Vietnam as a combat photographer. In the course of his work during that war Peter had occasion to fly on CIA's "Air America" and to observe CIA officers in action. His commission for this book was to use his art to reveal the heart of CIA's people and to show our continuity with past generations of officers and families who have served in wars. He could not reveal the identities of most of the people in his portraits, but while interacting with them he learned about their work and their service in war. His response to CIA's people and history is evident in the artistry he brought to creating this photographic essay.

After completing his work, Peter reflected on the experience in the following way:

*The people before me had moving, heroic, and compelling stories. Their stories were personal but also symbolic of many others at the Agency. As I met with*

*each person, it became evident through a gesture, a body inflection, and the inclusion of a significant object or item that he or she would reveal something uniquely personal and human yet also universal about the Agency.*

*The reverence with which a retired officer held the flag that covered the casket of a colleague's repatriated remains, the natural tenderness of the embrace between husband and wife as they posed for a photograph, a towel fluttering in the wind, a dog's leash, sheet metal, wires and a dusty welder's helmet, maps and compasses carried in wars 50 years apart, a calligrapher's hands with her tools nearby—all of these were ordinary people and objects, but the story they tell is sublime.*



**Ursula Wilder**

*Project Leader*



**Toni Hiley**

*CIA Museum Curator*

# PROLOGUE

# OFFICE of STRATEGIC SERVICES

## World War II

“I have often felt that the true act of heroism occurs when a person volunteers for a dangerous mission in the first place. Later on, when the mission itself is under way, all sorts of irresistible factors come into play that require a man to behave bravely—peer pressure, instinct for survival, or solidarity with comrades in dangerous circumstances. But in the tranquility of an office, before any of these factors begin to have any force, a man does measure his courage and decide whether he is willing to risk his life, and why.”

*William Colby, commenting in his autobiography on his service for OSS, leading paramilitary missions behind enemy lines at age 24. In 1973 he became the 10th Director of Central Intelligence.*



NORWAY (NORTH)  
SWEDEN (PART OF)

FOR NORWAY EXTREME N.E.

THE COLOURS IN THIS  
INDEX CORRESPOND TO  
THE COLOURS OF  
THE MAP TITLES

*This is  
No Picnic*

OSS



THIS CORNER OVERLAPS TOP CORNER OF LEFT-HAND

# TRADECRAFT TOOLS

## Cold War

“We were going up against the very best. Lives depended on our skills, training, technique, tools, and tradecraft. There was literally no room for error. The pressure was intense. We would practice day and night for weeks; it had to be perfect every time. We had to be quick and leave no trace. If we failed, people whom we had never met but who were risking their lives for us would die. It was certain.”

*Senior Directorate of Science & Technology officer on  
conducting technical operations in the Cold War era.*



# MISSION

## Vietnam

“Mr. James A. Monroe braved heavy enemy fire from elements of two Viet Cong battalions while conducting two rescue missions to evacuate American civilians trapped in the city....Over the remaining course of the battle, Mr. Monroe provided overall direction and intelligence support to units engaging Viet Cong in the city. The conspicuous courage of Mr. Monroe at the risk of his own life was in keeping with the highest traditions of our service and our Nation.”

*From the Citation for the Distinguished Intelligence Cross.*

“Staff Sergeant Drew D. Dix distinguished himself by exceptional heroism...while serving as a unit adviser...personal heroic actions resulted in 14 confirmed Viet Cong killed in action and possibly 25 more, the capture of 20 prisoners, 15 weapons, and the rescue of the 14 United States and Free World civilians. The heroism of Sergeant Dix was in the highest tradition and reflects great credit upon the United States Army.”

*From the Citation for the Medal of Honor.*



# FLAG

## Beirut

“I do not go one week without seeing those wives—and the kids who were there—when I told them they were widows. Their faces, their eyes...they know, before you tell them, why you are there.”

*Counterintelligence officer on notifying family members of the death of an officer in the line of duty.*



# SHELL Balkans

“Innocence is the first victim of war. Even if the cause is righteous, the instinct of survival drives even the most civilized people to do the most horrendous acts against those they perceive as a threat to their own families and ‘tribes’....This experience eroded my sense of black and white—making many more shades of gray...not necessarily eroding my personal sense of right and wrong...but that there were now many more extenuating causes and circumstances...and more than just one version of the truth.”

*Fifty-six-year-old liaison officer on working with local intelligence services and contacts collecting intelligence for the Balkans Task Force.*



# HUSBAND AND WIFE

## Africa

“When something like this happens, you pull together to make things work. People were amazing....Having my home overnight become the (office) gave me a focus—feeding all these people, taking care of them and my family also—gave me something to do to help, which helped me get through....Our son still remembers that time as exciting but also many of the people killed at the Embassy were local people who he knew well; he was scared then (as a child) and of course is an adult now, but I can see that it still affects him when we talk about it.”

*Wife of senior officer, shown here with husband, regarding the aftermath of a terrorist bombing.*



# THE PRESIDENT'S BRIEFER

## 11 September 2001

"I was huddled with several others in Air Force One's senior staff compartment, a small room with four seats not far from the President's office. Five or six of us...were watching televised news reports. There we watched people jump to their deaths from the top floors of the World Trade Center. We also watched the South Tower collapse and disappear into a plume of smoke and dust. For seconds, no one said a word. Then someone broke the silence by whispering 'my God.'"

*President George W. Bush's daily briefer, shown here, who was traveling with the President on 9/11.*



The President's Daily Briefing  
President Bush

TOP SECRET  
Contains code word material

# NURSE Worldwide

“I remember many unheralded acts of courage that unfolded that day (9/11) in front of my eyes at Headquarters. In the Office of Medical Services (OMS), senior doctors stayed in their offices. The Deputy Director of OMS firmly sent most of his subordinates out of the buildings but remained behind to provide leadership to the skeleton medical team that was assisting in the evacuation, providing support to other stay-behind essential personnel, and, in the worst possible scenario, who would function as “first responders” to the wounded from inside the blast area should the buildings be hit and the doctors themselves survive.”

*Senior DI manager on what he witnessed during the evacuation of buildings on 9/11 in anticipation of a possible attack on CIA Headquarters.*



# TEAM ALPHA

## Afghanistan, October 2001

“We will not tire, we will not falter, and we will not fail.”

*President George W. Bush, 20 September 2001, during a special address to a joint session of Congress regarding the nation’s response to 9/11.*

“In a world described by change, there are things that do not change, grit and courage among them. And the certainty that the strength of American intelligence will remain side by side with the force of American arms.”

*CIA’s Executive Director, highlighting the enduring service of intelligence officers at war to an audience of OSS personnel, their families, and CIA officers, at the commemoration of OSS’s 60th anniversary, June 2002.*



PASHTO

امریکایی یم، ستاسویه ژ به ته پوهیږم. زه تا سوته تا وان نه رسوږ، مگر په  
بیانی کوه ما ته دوی، او به، خای، او د ضرورت و رطبی شیان تهیه کړ  
۱۰۰۰ پاته داسی لاره و ښیته چه خان د ولونه نژدی دهغه هیواد قوا  
مه پلویا نو ځکه ملا ترکوی، ځکه وخت چه ته سره  
۱۰ ته به دهغویرستوبه بدل چه تا سره کوی



RADIO SET, AN/PRC-112  
PART NO. 01-P21261J001  
MSN: 5820-01-279-5450  
MFR: 94990 SER. NO. 3231 A  
CONTRACT: DAAB07-87-C-C249  
US



# WARRIOR

## Afghanistan, Iraq, Worldwide

"I left here some 22 years ago, after a limited tenure, but my stay here had a major impact on me. CIA became part of my heartbeat back then, and it's never gone away....Here service to country comes first. You're ever vigilant, always looking out for the nation's best interest, but rarely getting the credit you deserve. You never sit at the head table, never get singled out, but are there out of love of country. This is the full measure of devotion that you bring to your work, and that Barbara and I tried to in a way bring to ours. And I got some things right, and I'm sure I could have done many things better, but I hope it will be said of my time here and in the White House, that I kept the trust, and treated my office with respect....It's been said that patriotism is not a frenzied burst of emotion, but rather the quiet and steady dedication of a lifetime. And to me this best sums up CIA. Duty, honor, country. This timeless creed of service motivates those who serve at Langley and in intelligence all across the world. It is an honor to stand here and be counted among you."

*George H. W. Bush, 41st President of the United States, Director of Central Intelligence 1976 to 1977, and youngest combat pilot in World War II, remarks during dedication of CIA Headquarters as "George Bush Center for Intelligence."*



# LOGISTICS IN ACTION

## Iraq

“My job in Iraq was to take care of everybody’s basic needs, to set up the infrastructure such as kitchens, sleeping quarters, and showers...getting linens for the beds and food for the table and all the basic necessities and also comfort items flowing in, plus office equipment. To do this I had to arrange for a safe supply pipeline and work with our (allies) on the ground so that we could supply them and exchange with them....I was the ‘logs girl’...the go-to person to fix everyone’s practical problems....It was only afterwards looking back, that I could say, ‘Wow, I was in danger’...which is funny, because there I was, surrounded by paramilitary and Special Forces who were fighting a war, and I was right in the middle of it... but at the time I was just too busy taking care of everybody to think about the danger....I had to do my job so that they could do theirs, and if I did not get my job done, they could not get theirs done.”

*Logistics officer, shown here, regarding her service in Iraq.*



# PARTNERS

## Worldwide

“A colleague was seriously injured when his pod (housing) was hit...When I visited him...and took turns with other colleagues to sit beside him so he was never alone, even when he was unconscious, it made me feel like we really were taking care of each other....My pod was directly across from (the wounded officer’s)....I could tell from the bloody handprints that (the security teams) left on my door that they had broken in to verify that I was not in my pod and not injured. It felt good to be part of a team of people who were looking out for each other.”

*CIA officer, Baghdad.*



POLICE  
K-9  
UNIT



# TECH OPS

## Worldwide

“We routinely stayed up through the night designing and fabricating technical gear, transforming ordinary objects into covert tools to make our world a safer place. Every day we got up and did it again...each blending into the next.... Sometimes things could get a little monotonous, but everyone still gave 110 percent....Whether you thought about your time (in the war zone) as a really fun prison or a really bad summer camp, you had to step back, look at the work being accomplished, and realize you were having the time of your life in the middle of hell.”

*Technical Intelligence Officers, shown here, recently returned from tours in Kabul, commenting on their working conditions in the war zone.*



# CASE OFFICER

## Worldwide

“My deployment to Iraq was the most transformational experience in my life. From a selfish perspective, it greatly benefited my career but, more importantly, greatly benefited my life. As most young men in our career field do, though I have served my entire career in the Near East, I felt like I had not really ‘done anything’ since 9/11. After a very successful year in Iraq, I feel as if I have done more in one year than most of my non-Agency and nonmilitary peers will do in a lifetime.”

*CIA case officer reflecting on effects of war-zone service.*



# CALLIGRAPHER

## Headquarters

“Yesterday, seven Americans in Afghanistan gave their lives in service to their country....These brave Americans were part of a long line of patriots who have made great sacrifices for their fellow citizens, and for our way of life. The United States would not be able to maintain the freedom and security that we cherish without decades of service from the dedicated men and women of the CIA. You have helped us understand the world as it is, and taken great risks to protect our country. You have served in the shadows, and your sacrifices have sometimes been unknown to your fellow citizens, your friends, and even your families.”

“May God bless the memory of those we lost, and may God bless the United States of America.”

*President Barack Obama in a 31 December 2009 letter to CIA workforce.*





# CIA AT WAR

## Museum Curator's Notes



## Historical Background

### OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

WWII

The Special Operations (SO) Branch of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), CIA's predecessor, ran paramilitary operations in Europe and Asia during WWII. As with many other facets of OSS's work, the SO Branch's organization and doctrine were developed based on the British model. The Special Operations Executive (SOE), a British civilian body, was given command of joint US-British missions aimed at subverting Nazi rule in occupied nations. The SOE was founded by wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill as a collection of agents from various countries tasked with conducting communication, sabotage, and subversion operations behind enemy lines in order to, in the words of the prime minister, "set Europe ablaze."

The American SO Branch and the British SOE together created the legendary Jedburgh teams. Most famously, over 90 of these multinational three-man teams were inserted behind enemy lines in the first days and weeks following the Normandy invasion. Typically the teams would parachute into their designated war theater at night during a favorable "moon period" when rivers and lakes could be seen for navigation, hopefully landing in the midst of a welcoming committee of their local resistance partners. Once on the ground, the teams' mission was to provide vital communication links with and intelligence to the Allied command; conduct sabotage and guerrilla operations in tandem with local resistance operatives; provide leadership and expertise; and, most critically, arrange airdrops of arms and ammunition.

Like all Allied forces that operated behind Nazi lines, the Jedburghs were subject to torture and execution in the event of capture under Hitler's notorious Commando Order. A few weeks before the Normandy invasion, the German High Command had broadcast the following warning: "Whoever on French territory outside of the zone of legal combat is captured and identified as having participated in sabotage, terrorism, or revolt remains



*Office of Strategic Services  
featured on page 7*

a bandit or franc-tireur (sniper) and shall consequently be shot, whatever his nationality or uniform.” Because the teams normally operated in uniform, applying this order to them was a war crime. The leader of one of the first Jedburgh teams dropped into Brittany was stopped at a German checkpoint, identified, and shot on the spot.

The Jedburgh teams comprised a leader, an executive officer, and a noncommissioned radio operator who supplied communication expertise. One of the two officers would be British or American, while the other would hail from the country to which the team deployed. The teams’ officers trained alongside enlisted personnel in informal camaraderie because, once inside enemy-held territory, rank was secondary to courage, ability, and mutual trust. Trained in Scotland and at the British SOE’s Milton Hall in the English countryside, the “Jeds,” as they called themselves, were a colorful and capable group that included future Director of Central Intelligence William E. Colby.

After completing his OSS training at Milton Hall, 24-year-old US Army Field Artillery Major Colby was dropped into the heart of occupied France on his first Jed operation in August 1944, along with his two team members—a lieutenant and sergeant in the Free French forces. The three formed “Jed Team Bruce” and were given the following terse orders: “Go in, make contact, report the situation, and build up the resistance strength.” In March 1945, Colby commanded a second group that parachuted into Norway, during which time he led his team, sometimes on skis, on sabotage missions. Colby earned the Bronze Star and the French Croix de Guerre for his work in France and the Silver Star and St. Olav’s Medal for his work in Norway.

### **Photo**

Maj. William E. Colby (left) and Lt. Herbert Helgeson of the Norwegian Resistance Army, partners in Operation RYPE. Thirty-five men working for the OSS trained for three years for dangerous missions behind German lines in Norway. Theirs was the first and only combined ski-parachute operation mounted by the US Army during WWII.

*Loaned Courtesy of the Colby Family*

**Silk Escape & Evasion Map**

In April 1945, as part of Operation RYPE, Maj. William E. Colby led a team of operatives into Norway to sever the Nordland rail line and prevent the redeployment of 150,000 German troops. He carried this silk map issued to aviation and ground personnel to assist in navigating and evading capture. Maps printed on silk were durable and could be easily concealed.

*Loaned Courtesy of the Colby Family*

**Fairbairn-Sykes Fighting Knife**

When OSS began training its agents for overseas operations, British Maj. William E. Fairbairn developed a special close-combat training program for them and recommended use of these special daggers, which he and Capt. E. A. Sykes designed in 1940. This special version became standard OSS issue in 1943.

*Donated Courtesy of William H. Pietsch, Jr.*

**William E. Colby British Special Forces Wings**

OSS personnel who trained in England at the British Special Forces training schools wore British Special Forces wings like those shown here.

*Loaned Courtesy of H. Keith Melton*

**OSS Lapel Pin**

Upon the formal dissolution of the OSS in the fall of 1945, its leader, Gen. William J. Donovan, asked that a lapel pin be designed and made available to OSS personnel so that they might recognize one another and remember the unique experience they had shared in action during World War II.

*Donated Courtesy of William H. Pietsch, Jr.*

**Overseas Parachutist Cap Insignia**

*Donated Courtesy of William H. Pietsch, Jr.*

**“This is No Picnic”**

This restricted publication was written for OSS civilians about to go overseas. It covered such topics as personal security, medical examinations and inoculations, passports and visas, legal affairs, travel, training, and budget allowances. Civilians traveling to the war theater were advised to pack less gear than they could possibly exist on and then to throw 35 to 40 pounds of it out. It was called “living in a thimble.”

*Loaned Courtesy of H. Keith Melton*

**Compass**

Lt. Col. Gustav J. Krause served with OSS Detachment 202 in the China-Burma-India Theater. After first commanding an OSS base in Kunming, China, he next established a new tactical OSS unit that recruited, trained, supplied, and directed numerous guerrillas and intelligence operatives north of the Yangtze River. His teams destroyed two spans of the Yellow River Bridge and cut the Peking-Hankow Railroad in numerous locations. This compass belonged to Lieutenant Colonel Krause.

*Donated Courtesy of the Krause Family*



*Tradecraft Tools featured on page 9*

**TRADECRAFT TOOLS****Cold War**

**Technical support to operations originated during World War II with the Office of Strategic Services' Research and Development Branch. During the Cold War, technical operations, conducted by the Office of Technical Services (OTS) and its predecessor organizations were vital to CIA's success in treacherous intelligence battles worldwide. Fears of a Soviet surprise attack quickly advanced the application of science and technology—emphasizing technical collection with aircraft and satellites as well as developments in sensors and operational “gadgets”—to a position of preeminence among CIA's Cold War operational activities. Some of the tools used to conduct “tech ops” in that era are pictured here.**

The applied use of science and technology to intelligence collection, analysis, and

dissemination continues unabated today. This photographic essay includes on page 31 a portrait of two DS&T officers from today's generation who at the time their photograph was taken had just completed war-zone tours.

### **Motel Kit**

The motel kit is contained in a small leather traveling case. It includes a sensitive transducer that picked up the actual vibration on the target wall coming from sound (conversation) in an adjacent room.

*CIA Museum Collection*

### **Flaps and Seals Kit**

Usually made from solid ivory, these tools in the hands of a skilled operator facilitated the defeat of envelopes, wax seals, and packages. These devices left no tool marks, allowing the envelope or package to be perfectly resealed after their contents were copied.

*CIA Museum Collection*

### **Traveling Tech Kit**

Kit used by a traveling DS&T/Office of Technical Services audio tech (or technical intelligence officer). Tools are commercial; lock-picking items required special membership and an ID card.

*CIA Museum Collection*

### **Subminiature Radio Receiver**

This radio receiver in a Soviet "D" cell battery was designed to be used by foreign "stay-behind" agents. Because of its small size, it could be hidden in a variety of items and be ready for use when the situation required.

*CIA Museum Collection*

### **Minox B Camera**

The Latvian engineer Walter Zapp wanted to create a portable camera that would fit

easily into the palm of the hand and yet take high-quality, spontaneous pictures. The Minox subminiature camera in its various models was for years the world's most widely used spy camera. Considered a marvel of technology when it first became available, the camera was originally produced in 1936 in Riga. It used film one-quarter the size of standard 35-mm film, with 50 frames loaded in a cassette. The ultralight, aluminum-shell Minox B was produced from 1958 to 1972. Because of its small size, it was easy to conceal and operate using one hand. It could take excellent shots of documents at close range and was a natural for clandestine photography.

*CIA Museum Collection*

#### **Concealment Device—Modified Steel Bolt with Tiny Paper Code Page**

Used to store small materials—shown here with a tiny paper code page.

*CIA Museum Collection*

#### **Modular Encoded Satellite Communication Transmitter**

This covert device provided communication of important intelligence information from clandestine positions via satellite to locations around the world. Sources who had access to intelligence were the first link in the chain. The second link in the chain combined tradecraft with applied technologies like this device to provide strategically important secrets to US policymakers.

*CIA Museum Collection*

#### **Film**

DS&T photographic scientists and field operators gained expertise in the processing and handling of film and chemicals from all over the world.

*CIA Museum Collection*

## MISSION

### Vietnam

**During the Tet Offensive of 1968, communist insurgents and North Vietnamese troops staged surprise attacks against allied forces throughout South Vietnam. Two young men, CIA paramilitary officer Jim Monroe, age 27, and US Army Special Forces S. Sgt. Drew Dix, age 23, served together at the time in the isolated provincial outpost of Chau Phu City, population about 25,000, in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam.**

Monroe had been assigned “up country” by CIA as the lone Agency paramilitary officer in the district of Chau Doc on the Vietnamese-Cambodian Border. Operating out of a small compound known as “Embassy House,” his mission was to direct CIA’s rural development and security programs in a region of classic insurgency. Special Forces Staff Sergeant Dix was assigned to the Military Assistance Command–Vietnam/Combined Studies Division, where he reported to Monroe and led a Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU). This was a well-armed force of some 135 fighters drawn from ethnically diverse Southeast Asian groups whose mission was to neutralize the infrastructure and leadership of the Viet Cong.

On the night of 30 January 1968, most South Vietnamese forces were on leave taking advantage of a cease-fire to celebrate Tet, Vietnam’s most important holiday. Alerted by anomalies in recent Viet Cong activity, Dix, accompanied by a US Navy SEAL platoon, was leading his PRU on a nighttime reconnaissance mission along both sides of the Vietnamese-Cambodian border when two Vietcong battalions (about 600 soldiers) infiltrated Chau Phu, seizing the major buildings and trapping a number of US and foreign civilians. Later it was apparent that this operation was part of a larger 70,000-man offensive against 100 cities and provincial capitals.

During the next 56 hours of intense combat in and around Chau Phu, the combined actions of Monroe and Dix turned the tide of the battle in their region—despite the meager resources at their disposal and the overwhelming 30-to-1 odds against them. In constant contact with each other via radio throughout the battle, their united



*Mission featured on page 11*

accomplishments were remarkable. Their alliance and teamwork in this battle embodies the spirit of comradeship, fidelity, and cooperation that CIA officers share with their brothers and sisters in the US military when they serve together in war.

### **Viet Cong Flag**

Viet Cong flag captured by S. Sgt. Dix moments before he attacked enemy troops who had entered the residence of the Vietnamese deputy province chief. Drew successfully rescued the official's wife and children.

*Loaned Courtesy of Drew Dix*

### **Insignia**

Solid gold unit insignia presented to S. Sgt. Dix by his Chao Duc Provincial Reconnaissance Unit fighters.

*Loaned Courtesy of Drew Dix*

### **Patch**

Unit patch for the Chao Duc Provincial Reconnaissance Unit led by S. Sgt. Dix.

*Loaned Courtesy of Drew Dix*

### **Distinguished Intelligence Cross**

The Distinguished Intelligence Cross is the Agency's highest award for extraordinary heroism involving the acceptance of existing dangers with conspicuous fortitude and exemplary courage. In 1970, CIA recognized Jim Monroe's contribution with one of its highest awards for valor—the Intelligence Star. After a successful career as a paramilitary officer, he retired in 1998. Following the attacks of 11 September 2001, Jim returned to the Agency, continuing to contribute his expertise to unconventional operations in war zones. Nearly 40 years later, after more extensive accounts of his action came to light, the Agency upgraded his Intelligence Star to its highest award for extraordinary heroism—the Distinguished Intelligence Cross. Only 30 Distinguished Intelligence Crosses have been awarded in the Agency's history, one-quarter of those presented posthumously.

## Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor is the highest award that can be bestowed upon an individual serving in the armed services of the United States in action against an enemy force. It is generally presented by the President in the name of Congress. Since World War I fewer than 1,000 Medals of Honor have been awarded—246 of those for action during the Vietnam War, 60 percent of which were posthumous. This Medal of Honor has a unique inscription on the back: SST Drew Dix MACV-CSD (Military Assistance Command Vietnam Combined Studies Division). CSD was part of the CIA rural pacification program. Sergeant Dix was the first US Army Special Forces enlisted man to receive the Medal of Honor.

*Loaned Courtesy of Drew Dix*

## FLAG

Beirut

**Following the Beirut Embassy bombing in 1983, Richard L. Holm, then chief of CIA's Counter Terrorist Group, asked his deputy, William F. Buckley, to assume the role of Beirut chief of station. Mr. Buckley, whose career at that time spanned four decades, agreed without hesitation to take on what was acknowledged to be one of the most dangerous CIA field assignments in the world. Reflecting on these events many years later, Mr. Holm described Mr. Buckley as a profoundly dedicated professional and patriot, who took service to country to heart, and states that while some may have had second thoughts about going to Beirut at that time, Bill Buckley did not falter.**

Bill Buckley was abducted on 16 March 1984 by armed Lebanese extremists and died in June 1985 while being held captive under the harshest conditions. Six years later, in December 1991, his remains were discovered wrapped in a blanket along a road leading to the Beirut airport. For his exceptional valor and effectiveness in daunting circumstances, Buckley was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Intelligence Cross, the Agency's highest honor for courage and bravery. He was laid to rest with full military honors in Arlington National Cemetery. In the image above, Holm holds the flag that covered the



*Flag featured on page 13*

casket of his friend and colleague on its 1991 flight home. The flag is part of the CIA Museum's permanent collection.

Mr. Holm was severely wounded in 1965 as a young case officer when his plane crashed in the Congo while on a reconnaissance flight. Azande tribespeople sheltered him and provided care and rudimentary medical treatment while the uninjured pilot of the plane sought help, eventually returning in a Belgian helicopter nine days after the crash to rescue Mr. Holm. Following his 28-month recovery, Mr. Holm returned to duty. He retired in 1996, a much-decorated and honored CIA officer.

Each morning in retirement, Mr. Holm places an American flag on its bracket in honor of his friend Bill Buckley and another friend and colleague, Mike Deuel, who died in a helicopter crash while on assignment in South Asia. Both men are commemorated by stars on CIA's Memorial Wall.



*Shell featured on page 15*

## SHELL

Balkans

**Monitoring developments in the Balkans was one of the highest intelligence priorities of the 1990s. Intelligence analysts were involved in all aspects of evaluating and reporting on the volatile, ingrained conflicts in the region, including providing warnings to policymakers in late 1990 that the breakup of Yugoslavia was not only inevitable but also imminent and would likely be brutally violent. The analysts' mission was to write authoritative assessments on current events in the Balkans using their expertise on the history of the region and also on worldwide political, economic, and social patterns.**

Dedicated CIA analysts, working with counterparts in sister organizations such as DIA, NRO, and NSA, contributed to the protracted, exhausting, complicated enterprise of keeping abreast of events in the Balkans. In support of this mission, many analysts traveled to the hazardous and unstable Balkans region to provide around-the-clock, immediate, expert

analysis to our nation's political leaders and policymakers in Washington, and to military leaders in both Washington and in the region. These "on-location" analysts strove diligently to make sense of centuries-old, entrenched, ethnically and religiously charged hatreds while bearing personal witness to the harrowing results of these hatreds on the peoples of the region.

### **Artillery Shell**

A Directorate of Intelligence (DI) analyst brought this example of battlefield art back from Bosnia-Herzegovina in 2000.

*Private Collection*

### **UCK Insignia**

Insignia belonging to the Albanian Rebel Group, the Kosovo Liberation Army or KLA (*Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës*, or UÇK).

*Loaned Courtesy of Andreas M.*

### **Various Insignia**

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) is a NATO-led international force responsible for establishing and maintaining security in Kosovo. Before the KFOR presence, Kosovo was facing a grave humanitarian crisis claiming many innocent lives: military and paramilitary forces from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) were in constant combat, ethnic tensions were at their worst, and nearly one million people had fled the region, creating a refugee crisis in the already politically unstable border region.

*Loaned Courtesy of Andreas M.*

A DI analyst recovered the following items following the reoccupation of Kosovo: Serbian Security or paramilitary forces lapel pin; Yugoslav Army officer epaulette; Bosnian Croat Second Guards Brigade insignia; Bosnian Croat Army patch; Krajina Serb Army patch; Milicija insignia.

*Loaned Courtesy of Andreas M.*

**Lapel Pin - VZ Orao**

VZ Orao is the Bosnian Serb aviation firm implicated in arms sales to Iraq in violation of the UN embargo. NATO Stabilization Force (SFor) seized documents in October 2002 during a search that proved its activities.

*Loaned Courtesy of Chris S.*

**Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) Manual 1974**

Yugoslav Manual on improvised mines.

*Loaned Courtesy of Chris S.*

**Yugoslav Military Manuals**

Various instruction manuals for the M-79 grenade launcher, M-80 grenade, and 7.62mm x 54R PKT machine gun.

*Loaned Courtesy of Chris S.*



*Husband and Wife featured on page 17*

**HUSBAND AND WIFE**

Africa

**The senior officer pictured here with his wife provided the following reflections over 10 years after a local terrorist strike:**

“The passage of time makes it difficult to disentangle my immediate thoughts and emotions in the wake of the bombing of the Embassy, but a few clearly stand out: a huge support mechanism instantaneously was mobilized to support us; we were asked what we needed, not told what to do; and the resources to meet those needs began arriving almost immediately. We rightly take pride in our ability to respond quickly and decisively to crises, but crises inevitably wane or end. What remained long after the bombing was the remarkable strength, resilience, courage, and commitment of our officers in Africa and the unwavering support of our colleagues in Washington and around the world.”

## THE PRESIDENT'S BRIEFER

11 September 2001

The binder the President's briefer holds in this photograph contained the first *President's Daily Brief* (PDB) presented to President George W. Bush in 2001. The PDB is an exclusive publication for the President, Vice-President, and senior advisers. It includes analysis and intelligence reports critical to national security.



*The President's Briefer* featured on page 19

### History

For most of its history, the PDB was prepared by the CIA. President Harry S. Truman asked for a briefing that he could carry with him, then called the *Daily Summary*. President John F. Kennedy's CIA briefing was known as the PICL—the *President's Intelligence Checklist*. Gerald R. Ford was the first President to receive regularly scheduled, in-person briefings from the CIA. President Barak Obama is continuing the tradition of a daily intelligence briefing. Since the creation of the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) in 2005, the DNI has managed PDB production, and nearly all members of the Intelligence Community (IC) contribute. Nearly all the PDB products are coordinated among the IC members and many are jointly prepared.

### Daily With the First Customer and Other Principals

Six days a week, as most Washingtonians are enjoying their first cup of coffee, a small team of senior officers drawn from around the IC climb into the backseats of official vehicles whose drivers sit waiting to navigate the early morning traffic between CIA Headquarters and "principals" at the White House, Pentagon, Foggy Bottom, or one of several other locations where national security decisions are made at the highest level. Locked in their top secret briefcases is the PDB, the most exclusive and sensitive daily publication in the world. The PDB is the ultimate repository for the best intelligence the IC can collect—synthesized and analyzed by hundreds of expert IC analysts working at various domestic headquarters and deployed overseas.

The President is traditionally referred to as the "First Customer" of the PDB. Before they are

placed by the briefer in the President's embossed leather binder, each of the articles the President will see in that day's PDB goes through an intense process of review and quality control. Authors of the articles come in early to answer any questions the President's and other principals' briefers may have. The briefers themselves start their shifts very early each day to preview the PDB and anticipate what their principals might ask during the briefing. Intelligence collectors will have sent in overnight updates and new intelligence that the briefers must assess and incorporate to tailor their briefings to each principal's particular needs.

The PDB goes wherever the President goes. The First Customer's briefer travels with the President aboard Air Force One, reaching back to CIA's Operations Center via secure telephone to get the latest information on a breaking crisis for the President and his team during a domestic or foreign trip.

#### **With the President on 9/11**

It was on just such a trip that the President's briefer found himself on 11 September 2001. What began as the second day of a routine, overnight swing through Florida for a few presidential political events would quickly become one of the most eventful and consequential days in American history.

As the briefer was prepping for his meeting with the President at a hotel in Sarasota early that morning, 19 terrorists were boarding aircraft in Boston, Northern Virginia, and Newark, New Jersey, intent on destroying the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and targets in the Washington area such as the Capitol, White House, and CIA Headquarters. By evening, many hours later, when the briefer finally met up with his CIA car and driver at Andrews Air Force Base, the world had changed. During that intensely tragic and harrowing day, he would have flown on Air Force One with the President to an Air Force base in Louisiana; up to the underground bunker of the US Strategic Command in Omaha, Nebraska; and finally, under fighter and AWACS escort, back to Washington, where the President was determined to return despite the objections of the Secret Service. Throughout the day, the briefer

provided the President and his advisers with updates and analytic perspectives, drawing on the furious efforts of Headquarters analysts, who had quickly linked some of the names on the flight manifests of the crashed airplanes to al-Qa'ida. He also shared, on a human level, with all the passengers on this most exclusive of aircraft the pain of witnessing fellow Americans under attack.

Over the next three years the nation would become involved in open warfare in Afghanistan and Iraq and would expand efforts to disrupt terrorists around the globe. Hundreds of CIA analysts volunteered to join their counterparts in some of the world's most dangerous locations to serve as targeters, briefers, and field-deployed analysts. Their analytic mission continues today where their contribution is vital to the work carried out by CIA in war zones and beyond.

## NURSE

Worldwide

**Beginning with CIA's predecessor, the Office of Strategic Services in WWII, and continuing through today, a dedicated medical staff has supported each generation of CIA officers. The reach of this cadre is global. Wherever CIA officers and their families travel and live in order to pursue their mission, medical officers such as physicians, medics, nurses, psychologists, and psychiatrists, are present to provide care to their CIA colleagues while also sharing with them hardships, risks, and successes.**

In the course of CIA's first six decades, medical officers have received numerous commendations for bravery and devotion to duty. Since 9/11 these commendations have included three Intelligence Stars awarded to medical officers and the Distinguished Intelligence Cross conferred on a physician assistant for his valorous actions during the attempted rescue of a mortally wounded paramilitary officer overwhelmed by hostile forces.



*Nurse featured on page 21*

This portrait of a CIA nurse was taken a few months before her retirement. Her final international trip for CIA was to Kabul, where she was a member of a medical clinic serving officers and locally hired people. This was her fourth trip for CIA since 9/11 to staff medical clinics in the war zones of Afghanistan and Iraq.



*Team Alpha featured on page 23*

## TEAM ALPHA

Afghanistan, October 2001

**In the weeks after the 9/11 terrorist attacks joint CIA and Special Forces teams were inserted by helicopter into Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. Once on the ground, these combat-seasoned teams quickly adopted the preeminent form of local transport—horse and wooden saddle—dubbed by their regional ally and tribal leader General Dostam his “armored personnel carriers,” testing cavalry skills last used by American forces in war theaters more than half a century ago.**

### Map

Team ALPHA, the second CIA team inserted into Afghanistan, was led by a skilled CIA officer and former US Army Ranger fluent in Dari, Pashto, and Farsi. He carried the map shown here, and in the snapshot he is seen riding the chestnut stallion. The officer riding the white horse to his right became the first combat fatality in Operation Enduring Freedom—the first fallen officer listed in CIA’s memorial Book of Honor in the wake of 9/11.

*Donated Courtesy of John R. Seeger*

### Tassels: Afghan Saddle and Horse Blanket

A CIA communications officer obtained this saddle and blanket for the CIA’s Museum in 2002. The Afghan colleague who negotiated the purchase was killed a month after the CIA officer returned to the United States.

*Donated Courtesy of Timothy S.*

**Schrade Tool**

The Team ALPHA medic carried this multipurpose tool and used it to perform numerous surgical procedures, including three lower-leg amputations on local civilians and fighters wounded in the war.

*Donated Courtesy of CIA Medic Glenn R.*

**Escape and Evasion Kit**

Designed circa 1995 for use by special operations personnel, this kit contains a number of survival tools, including a diamond wire to cut metal, fishing equipment, a ceramic blade, a can opener, lock picks, a compass, and a mini-multipurpose tool.

*CIA Museum Collection*

**Blood Chit**

Blood chits are carried to request aid from local inhabitants in enemy territory. An unspecified reward is promised to anyone helping the holder to safety. This blood chit is made of waterproof Tyvek for use in Afghanistan.

*CIA Museum Collection*

**Survival Radio**

The PRC-112B1 is a hand-held radio providing line-of-sight voice, text, and data communications in the VHF and UHF ranges. It contains a Global Positioning System receiver, enabling it to transmit the user's geographic location. Military pilots, aircrews, and Special Operations Forces use the PRC-112B1 as a survival radio. CIA Special Operations Group officers use it to communicate between teams and with military recovery forces.

*CIA Museum Collection*



*Warrior featured on page 25*

## WARRIOR

Afghanistan, Iraq, Worldwide

**From its beginning, the CIA has included a group of highly expert and dedicated officers devoted to covert action programs. The specialized capabilities and extraordinary military skills they bring to CIA's mission have played critical, often wholly unseen and unacknowledged, roles in policy implementation in countless large and small combat arenas, as well as in other hazardous non-war-zone environments.**

Special Activities Division (SAD) is home to the National Clandestine Service's covert action infrastructure. SAD officers serve globally and are called upon to respond to critical operational needs with speed, skill, and the utmost secrecy. They routinely demonstrate ingenuity, courage, and perseverance under adverse and isolated conditions. They serve and sacrifice in silence. As of the date of this publication, 57 officers from SAD and its predecessor organizations have been killed in action in the course of CIA's history.



*Logistics in Action featured on page 27*

## LOGISTICS IN ACTION

Iraq

**The logistics officer pictured here received a call one day from CIA Headquarters as she was serving in a city overseas. The voice on the other end asked her to travel immediately to a country near Iraq when war in the region was imminent. Within a week she was running logistics and support operations at a CIA desert camp. When another logs officer was unable to deploy into southern Iraq at the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the officer received a second call from Headquarters asking her to take his place. Within 24 hours she was heading into southern Iraq to set up a CIA base. Her swift, unhesitating acceptance of wartime duties exemplifies the valiant "can do" attitude typical of CIA's logistics and support officers.**

Her mission in southern Iraq was to set up the infrastructure of her base. She established a ground- and air-supply pipeline and inventoried and obtained critical equipment, includ-

ing sensitive spy gear, weapons, vehicles, security/safety equipment, and office supplies. She also set up the “quality of life” infrastructure for the officers at the base, including living quarters, dining facilities, a laundry, and a bathing facility.

When a Special Activities Division paramilitary officer was wounded in an ambush during the second week of the Iraq War, she arranged for critical medical care, took possession of his gear and weapons, ensured he received better meals in the hospital (vice military MREs), and arranged for his evacuation to the United States. In this photograph she is wearing earrings that she designed and had fashioned out of gold and shards of shattered glass she collected from the ambushed vehicle.

In addition to carrying into the war zone expertise, steadfastness, and a sense of humor, she also brought her personal, luxurious, green bath towel. She carried it each time she walked, fully dressed, to and from the solar field shower, along with the firearm she was issued and that CIA officers are required to carry at all times in war zones.

## PARTNERS

Worldwide

**Commissioned in 1991, CIA’s K-9 Explosive Detection Teams routinely serve on the front lines in war theaters, where their job is to detect and defuse a wide range of hazardous devices and materials before these dangers get close to their CIA colleagues. In both war and peacetime, they are a critical part of the protective perimeter that surrounds CIA officers and facilities worldwide, shielding them from enemies intent on inflicting harm on the innocent.**

The K-9 teams form very strong cross-species partnerships. After dog and handler are paired, they complete the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms’ rigorous 10-week training program during which human and dog learn to rely on each other and to work as a cohesive unit to locate and identify a wide variety of harmful materials. These highly



*Partners featured on page 29*





mobile human-dog partners continue to train every day together in the course of their careers.

Officer Patrick and his yellow Labrador partner, Rammo, have been a team for three years. Their assignments have included war-zone tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. In addition, as part of the Federal Law Enforcement cadre, they and other K-9 teams at CIA are called upon to perform a wide range of challenging and potentially dangerous domestic duties. For example, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, CIA K-9 units performed search and rescue missions at the Pentagon and also at Ground Zero in New York. CIA's K-9 units assisted during President Barack Obama's inauguration.



*Tech Ops featured on page 31*

## TECH OPS

Worldwide

**Technical Intelligence Officers (TIOs) of CIA's Directorate of Science and Technology**

**(DS&T) must be exceptionally creative yet at the same time disciplined and pragmatic.**

**Their mission is to apply scientific knowledge to engineer devices, tools, and methods for use in operations.**



In war or combat, TIOs practice their craft on tight timelines, in the presence of dangers to themselves and others, all the while knowing that any technical mistakes or even unforeseen "glitches" can cost lives. DS&T professionals also engage enemies in the cyber realm, using technical means to subvert or disrupt efforts to wage war against the United States and its allies online.

A senior TIO characterized his vocation as follows: "Tech ops are really equal parts art and science. People expect technology to solve all their problems; the pressure can be incredible. There is no textbook, you are in the middle of the action, 24/7 worldwide, and you're expected to have the answer. You need to be part engineer, part case officer, part ninja, and part magician. You and your team need to make it happen. There are no

second chances. The risks are great but the results could possibly win a war. Never mind the bombs.”

## CASE OFFICER

Worldwide

**The mission of officers in CIA’s National Clandestine Service (NCS) is to collect human intelligence and conduct covert operations. The NCS pursues its mission worldwide.**

In this portrait, a much-decorated case officer stands over a flag captured from a particularly ruthless Peruvian terrorist group in a 2008 raid in Peru’s Huallaga Valley. The officer has had a varied and distinguished career serving in multiple dangerous locations in the Western Hemisphere and is currently deputy chief of the Latin America Division of NCS. He also has had overseas tours in war zones such as Iraq, exemplifying both the deep regional expertise and the readiness to serve globally that characterizes NCS officers.



*Case Officer featured on page 33*

## CALLIGRAPHER

Headquarters

**The Memorial Wall and Book of Honor are some of the first sights greeting visitors entering the Original Headquarters Building in Langley, Virginia. As of the date of this publication, the Memorial Wall contains 102 stars etched into the marble, one for every CIA officer who gave his or her life in service to our country. The effect created by the unnamed constellation engraved into the white marble is one of reverence.**

The Book of Honor rests below the engraved wall. Gold stars are inscribed in the book marking the death of each officer. The years in which the officers fell are inscribed in black ink, beginning in 1950. The names of only 63 of the 102 fallen officers are also inscribed, publicly commemorating them for giving the last full measure of devotion to their country. There are no names entered next to the remaining 39 small gold stars, however, for these



mark the loss of officers whose identities must remain covert. This secrecy, even in death, represents a final act of fidelity to the people who trusted them, to the national security programs they participated in, and to the craft and disciplines of intelligence work. The full roll call of all CIA's fallen officers is read aloud once a year at CIA's annual memorial ceremony.



*Calligrapher featured on page 35*

This image shows CIA's calligrapher practicing inscribing gold stars in the Book of Honor. She is seated at an artist's table and working with her usual tools—pens, sample paper, and pots of ink and gold paint. Soon after this photograph was taken, she would be called upon to enter 12 new stars in the Book of Honor, including those marking the loss of the seven officers who fell at Khowst on 30 December 2009. They are the subject of President Obama's letter of support and condolence sent to CIA's workforce on New Year's Eve, 2009, quoted opposite the photograph on page 35.

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND



# CIA AT WAR

Reflections on Our  
Officers in War



## Tempered by Fire: The Lives of CIA Officers in War

*“War-zone duty forces (officers) to face themselves, both the good and the bad, just as they will witness the full unvarnished range of human behavior, the very best of people—at their most courageous, creative, self-sacrificing—and the very worst of people—at their most vulnerable, afraid, and confused.”*

*Chief, Special Activities Division, 2009*

The work of an intelligence officer in a combat zone differs in many ways from that of a traditional warfighter, but much of what they think and feel is universal to life in the front lines. Anyone in war’s crucible quickly learns the full extent of his or her strengths and vulnerabilities.

Between 2008 and 2010, CIA conducted several studies that shed light on the challenges our officers face in the war zones and the ways in which they respond. The studies spanned different regions and conflicts, but the results were consistent. They highlight the wisdom and capability gained in wartime, as well as the hard realities of both front-line service and reassignment to a “normal” job.

This section captures the insights of CIA staff psychologists, operations officers, and support specialists working with Agency personnel and families. It features quotations from CIA war-zone veterans who discuss their experiences—both positive and negative—at war and after their return. They are a group of Americans who regularly face the intensity of war, but whose stories are seldom told outside the Agency.

## In the War Zones

**For most officers, serving at the front clarifies the mission and inspires profound commitment.**

They see their work as having a direct and immediate benefit to their country. It is not unusual, for example, for a case officer to collect information from a source, write an on-the-spot intelligence report, and get it disseminated to senior policymakers—all in a day's work.

*"This one-year assignment in the war zone was the most rewarding and challenging year of my career. I've never felt closer to the mission, being able to see tangible results from our work. The commitment and teamwork exhibited by all officers was an inspiration and a motivation."*

*"My three (deployments to the war zones) were the best thing I have ever done, and I would go again in a heartbeat. Although it is hard to give up creature comforts—like sleep—and be assaulted nonstop by (indirect fire)...the feeling of contributing to the mission, to serving my country, made it all worthwhile."*

The emotional rewards of teamwork and shared success run deep. Many officers find it difficult to leave their post for the next assignment.

**War's high stakes and danger create an intense work tempo and collective energy that is difficult to duplicate elsewhere.** Officers in the war zones typically work seven long days a week—sometimes for months on end—yet they become accustomed to the hectic pace. Veterans often say that a colleague has not truly come aboard until the moment the new officer realizes that he or she has unwittingly worked through several shifts.

*"I did my one-year tour, but stayed an extra few months to help out with (the) transition of new officers. I wanted to leave knowing that I gave an extra bit beyond what was required of me....I feel like I participated in history and supported my country. I stopped a car*

*bombing, and that one thing made my whole time there worth it.”*

**A sense of absolute urgency inspires officers to be highly flexible and creative in getting things done.** They become more accustomed to experimenting and taking risks, trying new ideas, and to being assertive and creative in overcoming obstacles. Some discover a previously untapped talent for innovation.

*“Never before—and probably never again—did I have such breadth of freedom and resources to carry out the CIA mission. I felt that I was very effective in my efforts, and I developed tremendous respect for the overall Agency dedication and accomplishments...I also developed a deep respect for the dedication and courage of many of the local (employees and sources) that I worked with.”*

**Officers often leave war zones more aware of the potential for growth and adaptability in themselves and others.** They are more willing to take on unfamiliar roles and tasks, both to lend a hand to colleagues and to advance CIA’s mission, in war zones and other assignments.

*“A lot of us, with very little experience, were asked to perform in what turned rapidly into an extraordinary environment. I’m proud of my service and thankful for the amazing experience I had.”*

*“I believe that my confidence and sense of utility to CIA both improved greatly from my war-zone tours. I think almost everyone who comes back shows a new sense of purpose and can add much more to the mission from Washington in terms of creativity and efficiency.”*

**War-zone service strengthens an officer’s readiness and capacity to lead.** Regardless of rank, men and women serving at the front lines enjoy a great deal of autonomy, carry critical responsibilities, solve complex problems, and make important decisions.

*"My war-zone experiences offered me tremendous leadership and tradecraft opportunities that I would not have received in other assignments. The camaraderie with my colleagues was strong, and my sense of loyalty and professional bond with them remains strong."*

For many, the experience teaches them to trust their judgment and act decisively. The added confidence and capability benefit them—and the Agency—throughout their careers.

**Shared hazards and hardship require officers to rely on one another for both job-related and emotional support.** Mutual dependence and collective achievement forge relationships that can last a lifetime.

*"When your efforts directly contribute to saving a life or lives, it is a great feeling. The shared experience with colleagues in a war zone created lasting friendships, too....Nothing creates a better bond. I so appreciate the opportunity I have been given and hope I can do many more."*

Relative to a typical workplace, there is less emphasis on self-advancement and more on close teamwork, even when the inevitable personality conflicts arise. When people face dangers and adversaries together, an atmosphere of reciprocity and mutual protection prevails.

**Despite such concentrated ties of friendship and loyalty, loneliness remains a difficult aspect of war-zone service.** It is hard to cope with separation from friends and family. Loved ones back home can seem very far away and relationships with them remote, even while those in the war zones deepen and intensify.

*"I was unprepared emotionally for the realities of serving in a war zone over the long term. You are placed out in the middle of nowhere in harsh conditions and under constant threat of attack by either gunfire or mortars....Mental and physical survival in this type of*

*environment is based on how well you get along with your colleagues—especially when under daily war-zone related stress for days, weeks, and months on end.”*

*“While the professional experience was rewarding, the living environment and hardship of separation from my family were very difficult issues.”*

**Fear, too, is elemental to war.** CIA officers under fire show great courage—defined not by an absence of fear, but by discipline and perseverance in spite of it. Such experiences can take an emotional toll long after the danger has passed.

*“There is nothing you can do to stop a mortar or rocket once it’s on its way to you. This was no reflection on the quality of security measures or of the foreign military forces that hosted us. When I slept, it was almost always on the floor next to my desk. At least I had an office—one guy even slept in a closet. No one complained, no one fought, no one freaked out.”*

*“Now that more than a year has passed since I was wounded, I am learning to let go of the negative aspects of the ordeal, but it continues to be a struggle. The reminders are everywhere.”*

**Along with fear there is anger—anger at the human costs of war, anger at its waste, and anger at those who don’t appear to grasp the intense level of commitment and sacrifice that war demands.** Even the most even-tempered officers often have to work at controlling their emotions when facing the extreme pressures of life at the front.

*“I’m proud of my service and thankful for the amazing experience I had, but even I... was unprepared for how this experience affected me emotionally. My temper was short, my patience was nonexistent, and I was physically exhausted by the time the year was up. I was very fortunate to have a strong social and family network that was patient with me, and I slowly came down back to normal.”*

**Guilt and self-blame also take their toll.** Like their partners in the military, CIA officers are bound by honor to protect each other. In the intelligence profession, that same sense of responsibility extends to the foreign sources who provide sensitive information on the enemy—and who face constant danger. Those concerns, along with being absent from loved ones and important events back home, can weigh heavily on an officer.

*"Many of us returning to Headquarters are already suffering from guilt at having left our colleagues in the war zone (and) have difficulty reconnecting with family and friends."*

*"People around me were injured/killed by (indirect fire)...It was extremely stressful in every way. It also shaped me, refined me, taught me."*

Dealing with one's mistakes is difficult enough under normal conditions. In war, both the consequences and self-reproach are greatly magnified. Human beings are not perfect, but those assigned to war zones desperately want to be.

**Some withdraw into themselves rather than respond outwardly to the pressures of war.**

Numbing one's emotions is a way to manage feelings too painful to revisit. This method of coping distances officers from those around them. It can happen during or after a tour.

*"Our location received regular incoming fire, and direct fire (daily)...I became rather desensitized to the threat...Even after only being deployed for less than six months...my wife commented upon my return that I had grown detached. I did not realize it myself until I went to visit my extended family a few months later."*

## After the Return

**Most CIA war-zone veterans adjust well to returning home or starting work at a new post.**

Deeply proud of their war service, they also are satisfied to tackle other duties and enjoy

the ordinary pleasures of family and community life. Still, every officer deals to some extent with a process of reacclimatization, learning to return both psychologically as well as physically to peacetime rhythms.

*"To this day, I relish the time in (the war zone). It strengthened my relations with my wife and kids and was overwhelmingly positive for us, but readjusting...took time. Far more painful was returning to a traditional environment where none of what I did or learned in (the war zone) applied; frankly, though I have a good job, I hated it in the first four months....I knew readjustment would be challenging, but had no idea it would be so rough; thankfully, my management was very open and supportive (but) no briefing or discussion could have prepared me for my re-transition."*

The transition from a war-zone assignment affects life at both work and home. Returning officers say there are positive steps that can help ease them through this natural time of change and adaptation, recognizing also that their loved ones are also adjusting to their return.

## Common Transition Challenges

**Letting go of the war can be a major hurdle.** So many intense experiences in a relatively short period leave a deep imprint that takes time to subside. Grief—over the wounding or loss of colleagues, over leaving behind close teammates, over profound changes in one's own outlook, or over missed family events—can temporarily isolate an officer from friends and loved ones.

*"The most difficult adjustment I had upon returning from my war-zone tour was reconnecting with my family and getting reacquainted with my 'normal' life...interacting with friends outside of work, remembering my hobbies, etc. I am a very social person, but I just wanted to be alone after I finished my tour, and it took me much longer to feel*

*'normal' than I would have anticipated."*

Even if some are energized by their war-zone experience, others are emotionally and physically drained. Getting back to where they were before they left doesn't happen overnight.

**Many officers miss the cohesion and close team spirit that war inspires.** Behavior that appears motivated by self-interest or office politics—aspects of working life that are typically eclipsed on the front lines by teamwork and the immediacy of the mission—comes across as especially petty.

*"I didn't volunteer for the money or awards or a bigger and better position. I did it because the Agency needed volunteers and because our officers were tired and needed breaks; so I volunteered so someone else could come home. I received all the glory I needed as I saw what we were doing out there and the people we supported. The mission was succeeding!"*

Returning officers must reconcile themselves to the fact that it is difficult, if not impossible, to re-create the same intense level of solidarity and collaboration outside the war zones. In fact, attempts to duplicate war-zone intensity elsewhere may prove counterproductive to both individuals and groups.

**Some officers also become impatient with jobs that lack the excitement and fulfillment of a front-line tour.** Accustomed to being at the vanguard of CIA's mission, officers can be frustrated by the slower pace of a new assignment.

*"I have noticed in myself—and I have talked to others who have noticed in themselves—a slight difficulty in concentrating, occasional 'attention deficit disorder,' and reduced patience or tolerance for bureaucracy and 'administrivia' following my returns from war zones."*

*"It's very frustrating sometimes to try to work with people in Headquarters who have no idea what officers encounter on a daily basis in the field in all areas, to include logistics, administrative, time-sensitive issues, etc."*

**Likewise, few assignments can match the high degree of autonomy and responsibility associated with war-zone duty.** After the rapid personal and professional growth that many officers experience on the front lines, almost any other job is bound to feel less satisfying, at least initially.

*"Everyday in the field, I was able to make countless decisions....I was able to make these decisions with minimum interference, minimum paperwork/red tape, and minimum oversight. If it worked, then we kept doing it; if it didn't, then we came up with something else."*

*"Returning from a positive war-zone experience made my follow-on assignment seem less professionally rewarding, since my follow-on assignment...seemed further removed from the 'point of the spear.'"*

## **Easing the Transition**

**A self-imposed deadline for adjustment adds unnecessarily to the pressures on war-zone veterans.** Those who have served in the front lines often return with high expectations for themselves and others, holding on to wartime standards of sacrifice, camaraderie, self-discipline, autonomy, and leadership. Those are important strengths, but they should not interfere with understanding a basic fact: Returning officers need to acclimatize themselves to their new assignment, to family life, and to living in communities at peace instead of at war. The time it takes varies widely and cannot be rushed.

*"Becoming reacquainted with life in America takes time, but it gets easier with repeated deployments....The greatest challenge was reintegrating with my spouse. Over time, we came to the conclusion that it takes as much time to reacquaint and reintegrate with each other as we were apart, e.g., a 90-day deployment has a six-month impact on the marriage."*

*"Understanding that there is an intense reintegration process for civilians who are not (used to) operating in a combat environment is key to managing future years of a cadre who have experienced something as unusual as serving in a war zone."*

**Despite the strong inclination of many officers to go directly to their new jobs, experience shows that a decent period of uninterrupted home leave makes for a smoother transition—at home first, and later at work.** Taking leave allows for vital rest and relaxation, helps make up for time spent away from loved ones, and offsets the culture shock of returning from a war zone. Officers can absorb what they experienced in war and appreciate life in peace on its own terms, instead of judging themselves and others solely by war-zone standards.

*"My primary motivation is the mission against the enemy. I am devoted to my family and have always feared the consequences of too much travel on my wife and children, but I have found that matters are going very well (after returning)...A good deal of the credit for this goes to the concern of managers and coworkers that I pace myself and tend to my family when in the country."*

*"It took a couple of years outside the war zones (after back-to-back long-term deployments) to downshift and return to a point where I felt comfortable engaging 'normal' people. Those same couple of years were required to overcome the war-zone adrenaline addiction at work."*

**War service should not be seen as the culmination of an officer's career, but as the gateway to one that can be even more meaningful and complete.** It is never cost-free but very often instills confidence, insights, and perspectives that better prepare veterans for virtually anything that follows.

*"During my war-zone deployment, I felt like I was able to achieve my life's goal of saving (at least) one person from being killed or injured. I am now much more satisfied with my life, and I know that my war-zone tours will be two of the most definitive and important experiences in my entire life. Serving in a war-zone...challenged and changed me."*

*"This (war zone tour) was the hardest, yet most professionally fulfilling and memorable 14 months of my life and career to date....I felt that I was a part of history every day of my tour....It engendered in me a sense of both personal and professional pride, in myself and for my colleagues."*

### **A Final Word: The Agency Family**

Because of their unique and often hazardous mission, the secrecy necessary to their work, and the bonds of trust on which each relies, the men and women of CIA consider themselves part of an Agency family. It includes the family of every officer—those whose support and sacrifices enable CIA to make essential contributions to the nation's war effort. Our families shoulder the burden of seeing their loved ones off to war, and they offer the two most comforting words heard by CIA officers upon return: "Welcome home."



## **A Message to the Family Members of CIA Officers Serving (or Who Have Served) in War Zones**

*From a former DCOS, Baghdad and former COS, Kabul*

**I wish I could tell you everything. I wish I could tell you exactly what your loved ones in war zones do every day, and how well they do it. I wish I could give you a specific accounting of their acts of courage, their shared hardships, and the dangers of their everyday lives. If I could tell you everything, I believe you would be even more proud of their service than you already are. Your loved ones are making America safer each day, with every task they complete and calculated risk they take.**

When they signed on with CIA, they knew they would be asked to forego a great deal: there would be no public acclaim, no parades, no keys to any city. The work of silent warriors must remain secret, and all of the amazing things your loved ones do will remain largely hidden from public view. Sometimes it seems that only our mistakes get aired. In spite of this, your loved ones carry on.

On 16 January 2010, I attended the funeral of one of our fallen officers from Afghanistan. The event was heavily attended by CIA colleagues, from the most senior leaders to more junior officers, some of whom had served with the fallen hero on previous assignments. Seeing the quiet dignity and courage of the family members and close friends under these tragic circumstances was heart wrenching and humbling. I want all of you to know that we will never squander or take lightly the resource we hold most precious—the lives of our colleagues.

You also need to know that we recognize your loved ones could not do what they do for our country without your support. You, too, are silent warriors. You, too, sacrifice and serve. The American public will never fully know or appreciate your sacrifices. But we know, and we do.

The deaths of seven of our brave and dedicated colleagues in Afghanistan in December 2009 only strengthened our resolve. Yes, we held the memorial services and ceremonies befitting such a tragedy. But the greatest tribute we can offer the fallen—and the families and friends they left behind—is to complete the current mission and continue to do everything we possibly can to defeat terrorists around the world.

The officers who have served with me in war zones are some of the most extraordinary people I have ever known in a career that has spanned 30 years. I am incredibly proud of these officers and know that you are as well.

Thank you for supporting their service.

## Reflections from a CIA Wife and Mother

*April 2010*

**My husband served as Chief of Support in the war zone for a year. During that time I stayed home with our three young children. Having been through lengthy work-related separations before, I was prepared for the challenges of single parenting, lonely weekends, and irritating household problems, although the longer duration definitely took things to a new level.**

Over the year my husband was away, as light bulbs went out one by one I chose to ignore this minor household chore. It was amusing to envision him returning to a dark house without one working light. We also joked that we really missed Dad because he did all the laundry. With Mom in charge of that task, we all got used to going down to the basement couch to rummage for the clean clothes piled up there. One household chore my husband was able to do from the war zone was pay the bills. Yes, he is an “admin guy” at CIA and yes, he did not trust me to do it, but who cares? Perhaps not having the burden of bill paying along with everything else convinced me that I had some spare time, because that was the year we got a puppy. This provided some long-distance comic relief for my husband as he missed the “fun” of training a tiny animal that required more care than a newborn and had the same sleep patterns. During their first home leave meeting, my husband and that dog fell in love.

My husband and I would have long-distance debates about which one of us had the tougher job while he was away. He would say I did, being home alone, raising our three children and dealing with a myriad of issues. I would counter with the fact that yes, it was busy and challenging but no one was lobbing bombs and rockets at my head, which was occurring regularly at his location. I believe I won that debate.

Our children made us very proud during their father’s time away. They missed him very much, and my son and oldest daughter certainly had an awareness of where he was.

My youngest simply missed her Dad and got really good at marking the intervals between his times of home leave. He and I wonder what our children's memories of that year will be when they grow up. Hopefully, it will not be just of Mom yelling a lot (nothing different than any other year), and they will have a deeper understanding of the important part they played in supporting their father and his mission.

While our family gets through most challenges with a lot of humor, the seriousness of having a loved one in a war zone was evident right away. At home, conflicting emotions and thoughts were our family's everyday reality. We were worried, proud, excited, scared. Time flew by and time crawled by. We did not think about it and we constantly thought about it. We were convinced nothing bad would happen and we knew something bad was sure to happen. It was a surreal time, living our lives normally in a typical neighborhood in Virginia, going to school events, socializing with neighbors—and all the while knowing that the faraway war we saw on television directly affected our family. This was something you could not explain to people unless they had gone through the same experience.

When my husband returned home we were lucky that things returned to normal quickly. It was very clear to us that he valued his service in the war zone as perhaps the most fulfilling time of his career and that we at home had a large part to play in that service. We are proud of our family and we are proud of all the families who have also served like us.

Thank you all, officers and families alike.

# EPILOGUE: TWO LETTERS

IN HONOR OF THOSE MEMBERS  
OF THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
WHO LIVES IN THE SERVICE OF THEIR COUNTRY

