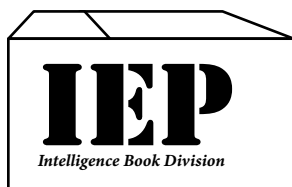


CIA LIFE

10,000 Days with the Agency

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Published by:
Intelligence Book Division, IEP

Library of Congress Control Number: 2003097642

Gilligan, Tom.

CIA Life : 10,000 Days with the Agency / Tom Gilligan.

Second Edition.

ISBN 0-9729659-1-2 (hardcover)

ISBN 0-9729659-2-0 (softcover)

ISBN 0-9729659-0-4 (e-book)

1. Gilligan, Tom. 2. Intelligence Officers — United States — History.
3. United States. Central Intelligence Agency. I. Title.

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Prologue to Second Edition

SEPTEMBER 2003

POST COLD WAR TRANSITION

A DECADE AGO, as the Cold War with the USSR drew to a close, *CIA LIFE: 10,000 Days with the Agency* described the internal factors and external forces undermining the Central Intelligence Agency's ability to meet its responsibilities in Clandestine Collection, Counterintelligence, and Covert Action. *CIA LIFE* closed with a review of "Threats Facing America in the 1990s" that focused on the Agency's limited ability to deal with future supranational threats — of Terrorism, International Criminal networks, weapons proliferation, and nations that support Terrorism. *CIA LIFE*, finally, called for "a new CIA, one that is well led, well staffed and well used to keep the world's barbarians at bay."

Unfortunately, this post-Cold War renewal of CIA did not take place in the 1990s — and certainly not before September 11, 2001 — partly because CIA had gotten away from its core principles and because it had remained in the Congressionally-imposed straightjacket of the 1970s and 1980s. In addition, as *CIA LIFE* describes in detail, the Agency had become bureaucratically rigid as administrative managers had replaced real Clandestine Operations leaders who, in prior decades, made CIA one of the most innovative institutions in Government, not only in the realm of Scientific Intelligence (U-2, satellite reconnaissance, etc.) but also in Human Intelligence Operations (HUMINT) which ran the gamut from penetrating closed societies to running strategically important Covert Action Operations.

By examining the public record of the 1990s, one sees a series of intelligence failures in all major aspects of the work of the Directorate of Operations (DDO), the HUMINT side of the Agency. Underlying the inability to make an effective transformation to the post-Cold War world was lack of reflection on DDO capabilities in light of the new challenges identified in *CIA LIFE* and which, by the way, were well known to the political and intelligence leadership in Washington. Osama bin Laden did not suddenly come to life on September 11 and neither did Middle Eastern extremism, Hussein of Iraq, Weapons of Mass Destruction,

North Korean nuclear blackmail, nor the array of International Money Laundering and Narco-Terrorist networks. Why was America not able to act preemptively against self-declared enemies of the United States? Why was America's watchman, CIA, sound asleep in the watch tower as Terrorists planned their many attacks?

CIA MISSION FAILURES IN 1990S AND BEYOND

CIA DID NOT MAKE an effective internal transition to the post-Cold War world in terms of its Human Agent Intelligence (HUMINT) responsibilities in any of its three basic Clandestine Service missions:

Foreign Intelligence Collection (FI). The catastrophic Intelligence failure of September 11, 2001 stands as the single greatest military or paramilitary assault on America in its two century history — surpassing Pearl Harbor in human loss, dwarfing the Tet offensive in psychological setback for the U.S., and driving America further into recession by the extent of the economic dislocations. What does September 11 indicate on the effectiveness of the Central Intelligence Agency, which played such a strong and active role in winning the Cold War between 1946 and 1991 without another Pearl Harbor-like intelligence failure? Although the Terrorists alone are to blame for these attacks, they could not have succeeded in pulling off the several concurrent hijackings had there not been a systemic failure within the U.S. Intelligence Community, specifically within the CIA and the FBI. The Executive Branch did not know what it needed to know, and should have known, to prevent this massive, coordinated multi-target attack that took many months, several dozens of people, hundreds of thousands of dollars, and even Boeing 757 pilot training at U.S. flight schools to orchestrate.

Counterintelligence (CI): The CI disasters of the 1980s were surpassed in the 1990s in the spy cases of Aldrich H. Ames and Robert P. Hanssen whose treason revealed that the very Counterintelligence structures within CIA, and the FBI, had been penetrated thoroughly by the Soviet KGB and its successor organs. The American spy catchers, it turned out, were essentially under the thumb of the other side. So massive were the CI failures that more CIA senior officers would be officially reprimanded in the 1990s for Counterintelligence losses than in all of the previous four decades of Agency Operations. Internal weaknesses in Counterintelligence proved disastrous for U.S. Intelligence and, most directly, for the large number of executed Soviet agents who had placed their lives in the hands of the U.S. Government.

Covert Action (CA): U.S. Intelligence weakness after the Cold War continued to be reflected in the lack of flexible Covert Action options for recent U.S. Presidents, who have been forced to operate internationally with severely-limited capabilities. The weakened Presidents have continued to suffer the *either-or* syndrome that resulted directly from the Congressional 1970s/1980s assault on both CIA and the Presidency: America could *either* blow away its enemies militarily *or*, send diplomatic protest notes condemning this atrocity or that. In the 1990s, U.S. Presidents had less flexibility to deal with foreign threats than their predecessors — from Truman through Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon — who had a viable CIA to apply unconventional, covert force as and when required. The *either-or* limitation on Covert Action was quite in evidence during the Clinton Administration, which either a) took the military path of launching missiles (Iraq, Afghanistan and Sudan) and sending in U.S. troops (Haiti, Somalia and Kosovo) or b) did nothing meaningful in the wake of a series of al Qaida-sponsored Terror acts — including the 1993 first Twin Towers Attack, the Manila bombing in 1994, the Manila hijacking plot of 1995, the bombing of two U.S. Embassies in 1998, or the USS Cole bombing in 2000.

INTERNAL FACTORS AND EXTERNAL FORCES THAT WEAKENED CIA

THE FACTORS, or pressure points, leading to CIA failures in the 1990s were both internal and external in origin. Internally, as *CIA LIFE* shows vividly, the Agency came out of the 1980s suffering from bureaucratic calcification due to a) the rise of management-and-budget bean counters who imported numbers games from America's declining manufacturing sector and b) the accession of in-house lawyers who made their living telling CIA Operations Officers what they were *not* allowed to do under this or that new regulation, Presidential Finding, or DCI Directive. Also, CIA senior managers by the 1980s had become very cautious following the anti-CIA attacks from Congress and from Justice. A fundamental internal problem for CIA was that it had gotten away from its own principles of sound clandestine Operations which resulted in the Aldrich Ames Counterintelligence failure which reads like an Intelligence horror tale.

Externally, the anti-Agency assaults of the 1970s and 1980s, which came from the Liberal Left in the U.S. Congress, managed to undermine secrecy itself, the bedrock of all clandestine Operations. Consider the