

**McCarthy, Shaun P. The Function of Intelligence in Crisis Management: Towards an Understanding of the Intelligence Producer-Consumer Dichotomy. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1998.**

**Melvin A. Goodman**

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Intelligence is an indispensable component of decision-making in national security policy, particularly in times of war and crisis management. As the late Sherman Kent opined in *Strategic Intelligence for American World Policy*, "policy leaders find themselves in need of a great deal of knowledge of foreign countries. They need knowledge which is complete, which is accurate, which is delivered on time, and which is capable of serving as a basis for action." Nevertheless, the burgeoning of intelligence literature in recent years has given very little attention to the vital role of intelligence in crisis management.

Shaun P. McCarthy's *The Function of Intelligence in Crisis Management* is an attempt to repair this breach in the literature, but the author chose issues that are difficult to analyze and the book as a result is too narrowly focused.

McCarthy argues correctly that intelligence often fails in warning of a crisis but pays rich dividends in its ability to describe and analyze key events in an ongoing crisis. The best examples of this phenomenon are the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 and the October War of 1973, when intelligence played an essential role in decision-making. Both events were classic failures of premonitory intelligence, but it would have been difficult for the Kennedy and Nixon administrations to deal effectively with these crises without the timely assessments of the intelligence community, based in part on collection from U-2 flights and communications intercepts.

McCarthy argues his thesis with events that were less susceptible to intelligence exploitation: the bombing of the US embassy and the Marine barracks in Lebanon in 1983, the kidnapping of CIA station chief William Buckley in Beirut in 1984, and the hijacking of TWA 847 in 1985. Intelligence, unfortunately, is far less useful in tracking the violent and psychopathic actions of terrorists and nihilists in the Middle East than in monitoring arms control agreements and ceasefire violations. The typical terrorist organization is small, operationally independent, and obsessively concerned with security and lines of communication. McCarthy fails to acknowledge that these characteristics confront intelligence organizations with unique problems.

McCarthy usefully documents the tensions between the producers of intelligence in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) and the consumers of intelligence in the White House, the corrupt alliance between the White House and the CIA that led to the Iran-contra affair, and William Casey's politicization of intelligence on sensitive issues dealing with the Soviet Union, the Middle East and terrorism. Casey and his deputy, Robert Gates, ultimately undermined the credibility of the agency throughout the policy community on issues dealing with crisis management. Secretary of State George Shultz told Gates in 1987 that the CIA had become "an alternative State Department with its own strong policy views. I want to have my confidence rebuilt. I wouldn't trust anything you guys said about Iran no matter what." Ironically, President Ronald Reagan appointed Casey as

director of central intelligence in 1981 in order to revive the morale of the CIA and to restore intelligence capabilities against terrorist organizations.

Gates once remarked that he watched Casey "on issue after issue sit in meetings and present intelligence framed in terms of the policy he wanted to pursue." McCarthy reveals that the White House and National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane wanted a national intelligence estimate to justify arms sales to Iran, and that Casey and his National Intelligence Officer for Iran, Graham Fuller, conspired to prepare such an estimate in 1985. Casey and Fuller disregarded the overwhelming opposition of intelligence analysts. McFarlane, in turn, used the estimate to overrule the objections of Shultz and Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger to such sales.

The efforts of McFarlane at the NSC and Casey and Fuller at the CIA to improve relations with Iran undercut the efforts of Shultz and Weinberger to counter Iran's support of international terrorism. McFarlane, Casey and Fuller strongly believed that the United States could work with so-called moderates in Iran to arrange the release of American hostages held by Hizb'allah. McCarthy reveals that Casey's successor, William Webster, conducted an independent investigation into the CIA's directorate of intelligence and determined that Fuller's memorandum on Iran was inaccurate and highly politicized. The investigation also concluded that the Fuller initiative "had seriously undermined agency morale and that many senior analysts wanted to resign over the politicization of analysis under Casey and Gates."

The origin of the misuse of intelligence in crisis management in the Middle East took place in 1981, when Casey and Secretary of State Alexander Haig demanded a national intelligence estimate that documented the role of the Soviet Union in the orchestration of international terrorism. Intelligence documents could not support these views but Casey and Gates eventually rolled over the directorate of intelligence and produced the estimate that was required to support the existing policy bias. Once managers of intelligence agree to support the consumer by skewing their analysis or placing a slant on specific factors, it is very difficult to reverse the process and adhere to a moral compass. In the case of the CIA, the politicization of intelligence on terrorism and the Middle East led to the politicization of intelligence on the Soviet Union and the failure to monitor the ultimate collapse of the Soviet empire.

Unfortunately, McCarthy's solution for the problem of politicization virtually guarantees more politicization of intelligence in the future. He believes that intelligence analysts must pursue a more activist role with policy makers so that the "intelligence community can learn decision-makers' policy preference." The real challenge in the relationship between intelligence producer and consumer is to develop reasonable safeguards while permitting intelligence producers and consumers to interact. According to Richard Haass, "guarding against political pressure, guarding against parochialism is a powerful argument for maintaining a strong centralized [intelligence] capability, and not leaving decisions affecting important intelligence-related questions solely to the policy-making departments."

President Harry Truman, in fact, created the CIA in order to establish distance between policy and intelligence and to make sure that "policy preferences" did not contaminate the analysis of the intelligence community. The new verification role for the CIA in the Wye River Memorandum could once again lead to the politicization of intelligence if clandestine collection serves only the parochial interests of policy makers. It is too bad that McCarthy's understandable exasperation over the misuse of intelligence during various crisis points in the Reagan administration leads him to the conclusion that administrative barriers between intelligence producers and consumers should be knocked down. Thus, while making wide use of the writings of Sherman Kent, he has not learned Kent's basic lesson regarding the need for some barriers to protect the substantive integrity of the intelligence process.

Melvin A. Goodman  
National War College, Washington, DC