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The Spymaster Who Radiated Good Will

By S. L. A. Marshall

MY FRIEND, the late Allen Dulles, was an individual with a superabundance of charm, character and courage.

There was not a touch of the sinister in his makeup. Seen and heard at close range when he engaged in man-to-man conversation, he fairly radiated good will toward all people.

Among obit writers, when a monumental figure from the community of intelligence and espionage passes on, it is customary to make of his life a great mystery, seen through a glass darkly.

Such a profile of Allen Dulles would have been a distortion beyond recognition. That the press almost invariably wrote of him in terms of affection does credit to its instinct.

Inevitably, his activities as a secret agent and as head man of the century's largest intelligence-gathering establishment made him seem remote and enigmatic to the millions who shudder when they read about characters such as Richard Sorge and Mata Hari. The Be-

ular. The mind was orderly and the memory was capacious. When satisfied to a particular course, his mind seemed to lock down on it and thereafter he would not look back.

Yet mixed with his sophistication were broad streaks of naivete. Despite long association with military people, any of his ideas pertaining to that profession, its way of thinking and of operating were overlarge simplifications.

I cannot imagine him comprehending the factors that were written into the plan for the Bay of Pigs. Though he was top man in CIA and hence the blame for the fiasco had to fall part way on him, he would have had to take someone's word for the practicality and sufficiency of what was being undertaken.

The odd part of that episode is that they everyone who was identified with management was no better qualified. Throughout, the blind led the blind.

Allen Dulles' zest and enthusiasm best measured by the fact that after retirement and into his 70s he authored books that sold well nationally, and continued to sell. He went at writing glad-

working partner in the field, our group of four having paired off. Among other things on that Department of Defense mission we were checking out the state of Code of Conduct training in U.S. forces afloat and at Pacific bases. This subject is currently very much in the public eye because of the Pueblo incident. We had found that the programming was quite weak.

Gout had hit Allen Dulles shortly after we had flown west from Los Angeles in a government aircraft. It got him in the fingers and wrists. His hands had become knotted up into little balls turned inward.

In terrible pain, he should have gone to a hospital, but no amount of urging would influence him. Though he could not write or even grasp a pencil, he refused to be invalidated. The man, then 68, continued to bucket about in comfortless cargo aircraft. He would hold to the schedule, and when the business was complete he would deal with his personal problem.

rias and Canarises of this life are not counted among the beautiful people.

In contrast, Allen Dulles seemed as a person the last man for his task. He detested subterfuge, double talk and play acting. Loving the friendly game of conversation, when relaxed he preferred to talk anything but shop. He agreed warmly and disagreed fairly, and he lived eagerly, as if determined to make the best of every hour, lest it be his last.

One simply could not imagine him as the central figure, or even a bit player, in a James Bond movie. He placed too high a value on human life, and ruthlessness was counter to his nature. In that respect, his career was a continuing contradiction. The only plausible explanation of why he stayed with intelligence is that he was good at the game.

Few men ever to serve government have possessed a more imposing front. He had the size and the look of the big-time operator combined with the dress and manner of the gentleman. Though he would speak vehemently when roused, he was not dogmatic or or-

ly and truly enjoyed a new career. Had he lived, he would have continued to produce, for his talent was considerable, he had quickly mastered a style and he had many things to say. He kept perspective; recollection did not markedly magnify certain things while diminishing others.

Once, in reviewing one of his books, I alluded to him as "that avuncular figure." He promptly wrote me asking: "Tell me about the word, is it good or bad?" He did have the way of a kindly and considerate uncle.

Several pictures of him remain indelible in my memory. We flew into Iwo Jima one time at 3:30 a.m. He insisted on taking a jeep ride at once to the top of Mount Surabachi where Old Glory flew in a spotlight. There he knelt and prayed.

Before that we had worked together at Kontum, South Vietnam. Our trip there coincided with a visit by the late President Diem and an official party. We met either at the airport or the town square. After the party was over, I was able to shake hands.

For some days he had been my