

24 SEP 1972

# Donovan, Marcuse, Schlesinger, Julia Child & Co.

OSS

*The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency*  
By R. Harris Smith  
California. 470 pp. \$10.95

By DAVID WISE

WHAT COULD Clark MacGregor, Herbert Marcuse, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., Julia Child, Benjamin Welles, Pope Paul VI, S. Dillon Ripley, Sterling Hayden, and David Bruce possibly have in common? Or, for that matter, John Gardner, Frank Schoonmaker, the wine connoisseur, SEC chairman William Casey, Douglass Cater, Henry Ringling North of the circus family, Merian Cooper, director of the film *King Kong*, John Oakes, editor of The New York Times editorial page, and Arthur Goldberg?

Answer: all formerly toiled for the Office of Strategic Services, better known as the OSS, the World War II cloak-and-dagger agency that, for better or worse, became the forerunner of today's Central Intelligence Agency.

To get right to the point, in OSS, R. Harris Smith, who served briefly as a research analyst for CIA and then fled to become a political scientist in California, has written the best book about America's first modern secret service. Others have told of their own exploits in General William J. Donovan's colorful, chaotic spy agency; Corey Ford has provided an interesting portrait of Donovan himself, and Allen Dulles, in *The Secret Surrender*, detailed the story of his successful negotiations leading to the surrender of the German army in Italy. But R. Harris Smith has put it all together, and added a great deal more.

No matter that he calls the CIA "the most misunderstood bureaucracy of the American government," for perhaps Smith wishes to keep his friends who still toil invisibly across the river in Langley, Virginia. No matter that the "full" story of OSS cannot be written unless and until CIA unlocks the wartime files of OSS, which it still has squirreled away out there.

For all of that, Smith, combining the style of a journalist with the scholarly

approach of the political scientist, has provided an excellent overview of the role of OSS during the two-front war against Nazi Germany and imperial Japan. He has woven together the richest material from dozens of existing memoirs, books and articles about OSS, all carefully footnoted, but in addition, he has performed prodigious original research, interviewing or corresponding with some 150 former members of OSS,

many of whom, apparently, could hardly stop talking.

The chapter on the OSS's dealings with Ho Chi Minh is especially illuminating. As is well known, an OSS medic saved Ho's life in 1945, and as the war drew to a close, OSS officers maneuvered to aid the Viet Minh against waning French colonial power in Indochina. It was not to be, for Washington would not allow it; but at least briefly the United States was supporting, in Vietnam, what Dean Rusk liked to call "the other side." And Smith notes that Peter Dewey, a young OSS colonel, was the first American to die in Vietnam; the date was September 26, 1945.

"Wild Bill" Donovan's OSS, created with Franklin D. Roosevelt's backing, brought together what surely must have been the most diverse group of spies ever to gather under one cloak for a common purpose. Upper-class WASPS, the adenoidal scions of America's great banking and industrial families, mingled with Communists and crooks, labor leaders and professors—there were a lot of professors—in a bouillabaisse that might have been whipped up by Mrs. Child herself.

And it is the names—the astonishing list of names—that form the strength of Smith's work, even more than the individual episodes of OSS derring-do or failure. With the aid of a special system of footnotes, Smith not only reveals dozens of names but tells us where they are now.

Some of the OSS operators had found their life's calling. Smith makes it clear that the top echelons of the CIA, past and present, were former OSS men, and, scattered through the pages, they are named—Allen Dulles and Richard Helms, who became directors of CIA, Thomas Karamessines, Larry Houston, Tracy Barnes, Lyman Kirkpatrick Jr., John Bross, Alfred Ulmer Jr., and William Colby, all of whom became station chiefs or top officials of the intelligence agency. Others with wonderful reversible names, like DeWitt Poole, Preston Goodfellow,

and Whitney Shepardson, moved out into the universities, the foundations, the banks, and corporations, where many of them could be relied upon to carry water for "the Agency" when asked. Some of these names showed up on the boards of foundations and other CIA conduits two decades later, for they had not forgotten the old ties that bind. Tracing the names, the half-submerged links between the intelligence community and what Richard Rovere has called the American Establishment, is what makes Smith's book so fascinating and valuable.

In a final chapter, Smith accurately points out that there were, and are, many liberals in the CIA, but his effort to portray the Agency as the Virginia chapter of the ADA is not entirely convincing, particularly since Smith himself argues that over the years, "The Agency's covert power was consistently exercised on behalf of political repression and dictatorship." And Smith notes that a dynamic wartime secret service may lead, in peacetime, "to irreparable disaster."

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# Author Reveals Secret Papers Open To Public

By KIP COOPER  
Military Affairs Editor  
The San Diego Union

Top secret government papers are available to anyone who wants to read them in the libraries of major universities, a former CIA employe said here yesterday in an interview.

R. Harris Smith, author of the newly published book "OSS — The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency," said there are "hundreds of boxes of the stuff" at Stanford University where he did some of his research.

He said he saw some documents he considered so sensitive he suggested they be taken out of the public files and properly guarded.

"An enormous amount of top secret and secret information has been deposited in university libraries by former employes of the government," he said.

"You can walk in and read it, anybody can," he said.

## RECENT REPORTS

Smith said much of the material was taken by people after World War II, but that some of it is less than 20 years old and "some of it is very recent." Some of it includes recent CIA reports on the Chiang Kai-shek government, he said.

"They (government employes) just stuffed the material in their cars and took it home with them," he said. "Later, they left it with their papers in bequests to various universities. There's a lot of it floating around. And it still has top secret and secret stamps on it."

Smith said he used classified papers from "five very large boxes" from collections of papers in the Stanford University library.

Some of the collections Smith credits in his book as sources of information are Charles W. Thayer, Preston Goodfellow, Leland Rounds and Milton Miles.

## LEAVES CIA

Now a lecturer in political science at the University of California, Smith resigned from the Central Intelligence Agency in May, 1968 after serving a year as an analyst.

He said the freewheeling activities of the OSS, in which insubordination was a way of life, undoubtedly contributed to French resistance to the U.S. role in Vietnam today.

"The OSS team in Hanoi in 1945 were anti-colonialists who felt that Ho Chi Minh deserved U.S. support," he said. "Some of the French intelligence agents there who were snubbed by the OSS then became high officials in the De Gaulle government and they have never forgotten the OSS role there."

Smith said there is a "very common belief" in Washington that French intelligence agents "are supporting the North Vietnamese" in the current conflict.

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## Top secret papers found 'on public library shelves'

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (AP) — An "enormous amount" of top secret and secret government papers is available to the general public in libraries of major universities, says an author and former employee of the Central Intelligence Agency.

R. Harris Smith, author of the recently published "OSS: The Secret History of

America's First Central Intelligence Agency," said his research for the book included reading classified papers he found at Stanford University.

There are "hundreds of boxes of the stuff" at Stanford, including some documents so sensitive that Smith suggested to university officials they be removed from the public files and properly guarded, he said in an interview Monday.

"An enormous amount of top secret and secret information has been deposited in university libraries by former employees of the government," said Smith, a former analyst for the CIA. "You can walk in and read it—anybody can."

Government employees "just stuffed the material in their cars and took it home with them," he said. "Later they

left it with their papers in bequests to various universities. There's a lot of it floating around. And it still has top secret and secret stamps on it."

Smith said much of the material he saw dealt with pre-World War II topics but that some of it was less than 20 years old and "some of it is very recent."

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JOURNAL

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# From OSS to CIA: An Exciting Record Raises Questions

OSS: The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency. By R. Harris Smith. University of California Press. \$10.95.

By Bill Hibbard  
of The Journal Staff

**T**HOUGH this book is a history of the Office of Strategic Services, its most provocative lines deal with the Central Intelligence Agency, lineal descendant of OSS.

In his painstakingly documented work, R. Harris Smith concludes that CIA, despite its penchant for supporting entrenched dictatorial governments, has not yet become "the reactionary monster the New Left has created as its straw man." But he warns:

"Unless the agency leadership makes a determined effort to renew the OSS passion for democratic dissent in yet another generation of American intelligence officers, the reality of CIA may soon coincide with its sinister image in the intellectual community."

Through the reign of Allen Dulles, Smith writes, CIA possessed a strong intellectual ferment of liberals and conservatives interacting, a basic tenet in the philosophy of William (Wild Bill) Donovan, founder of OSS. Smith quotes Robert F. Kennedy as observing that during the McCarthy era, CIA became a liberal refuge and collected some of the best minds in the country in the process.

And though it has been responsible for some monumental mistakes, such as the Bay of Pigs disaster, and questionable actions, it has at times also produced more accurate information than the nation's other intelligence

agencies, Smith relates. He notes that during the Johnson administration's Vietnam buildup, while other agencies were reporting how well the war in Vietnam was going, CIA reports were pessimistic and actually antiwar.

In his preface, Smith makes a plea that certainly bears heeding:

"For too many years, social scientists have paid scant attention to the broad problem of official secrecy. The majority of American academicians may spend hours denouncing the sinister CIA, yet not a single university in the United States fosters a serious research effort into the organization and activities of the 'intelligence community,' that massive bureaucratic conglomerate that has played such a major role in our foreign policy.

"That vacuum ought to be filled. The academicians should form a partnership with journalists in providing the American citizenry with a reasoned and thoughtful critique of the excesses of clandestine bureaucracy. I offer this book as a first step toward extending intellectual responsibility into a new field of public concern."

Heavily detailed, Smith's account of OSS organization and operations may tell the plain reader more than he wants to know about this amateur espionage, clandestine politico-military machine that, despite shortcomings, emerged with the respect of its foreign competition. But it's fascinating reading for anyone who wants to delve into these World War II years, when OSS helped sow and in the Orient.

Drawing upon the nation's intellectual storehouse, Donovan patched together one of the highest powered brain trusts ever assembled. The organization was peppered with men destined for high political, professional and academic posts, among them



R. Harris Smith

Arthur Schlesinger, Stewart Alsop, John Gardner, Arthur Goldberg, Walt Rostow, David Bruce, C. Douglas Dillon, Allen Dulles and Richard Helms, the current CIA chief. Contributors to OSS during World War II — though not members — were two Asians named Ho Chi Minh and Mao Tse-tung, both of whom were at least partly on our side at that time.

Smith's book, three years in the making, helps us understand how complex the situation was in both China and Indochina as World War II ended and why the muddle has continued.

Despite its massive detail, this is a readable work, and it is likely to become the standard reference work on OSS. The author is a political science lecturer and was briefly a CIA research analyst.

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# Wonderful Wizards of C.S.S.

By ROGER JELLINEK

OSS. *The Secret History of America's First Central Intelligence Agency.* By R. Harris Smith. Illustrated. 458 Pages. University of California Press. \$10.95.

In 1941 a British Naval Intelligence officer named Ian Fleming recommended to Gen. William (Wild Bill) Donovan that he recruit as American intelligence officers men of "absolute discretion, sobriety, devotion to duty, languages, and wide experience." Donovan, a World War I hero and successful Wall Street lawyer, understood the fantasies of writers and Presidents, and in a memo to President Roosevelt promised an international secret service staffed by young officers who were "calculatingly reckless," with "disciplined daring" and trained for "aggressive action."

The Office of Strategic Services came to include such James Bonds as John Birch, Norman O. Brown, David K. E. Bruce, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, William Bundy, Michael Burke, Julia Child, Clark Clifford, John Kenneth Galbraith, John W. Gardner, Arthur J. Goldberg and Murray Gurfein. There were others—Sterling Hayden, August Heckscher, Roger O. Hilsman, Philip Horton, H. Stuart Hughes, Carl Kaysen, Clark M. MacGregor, Herbert Marcuse, Henry Ringling North, Serge Obolensky. And still others: John Oakes, Walt W. Rostow, Elmo Roper, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Paul Sweezy, Ralph de Toledano—to name just a few of the hundreds in this book by R. Harris Smith.

Mr. Smith, who was in the trade himself, resigning in 1968 after a "very brief, uneventful, and undistinguished association with the most misunderstood bureaucracy of the American Government," the Central Intelligence Agency, now lectures in political science at the University of California's Extension Division. "This history of America's first central intelligence agency" is "secret" because Mr. Smith was denied access to O.S.S. archives, and so had to rely on the existing literature supplemented by some 200 written and verbal recollections of O.S.S. alumni.

## Both Ends Against the Middle

The book is densely packed with the bewildering variety of O.S.S. exploits in World War II: spying, sabotage, propaganda, military training missions, politicking and coordinating resistance groups against the Germans. "Casablanca" caught the spirit of the Byzantine plotting in French North Africa, with the O.S.S. trying to undermine the Vichy and German authorities, while various resistance groups in Italy, Yugoslavia, China and Greece, tried to use the O.S.S. for their own ends. O.S.S. agents played both ends against the middle in the virtual civil wars between conservatives and left-wing partisans. In one holy alliance worthy of Graham Greene, the O.S.S. gratefully accepted the contribution of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini, teamed with Earl Brennan, American politician and diplomat (also friend of Mussolini and the Canadian Mafia, and

Japan. Cardinal Montini is now Pope Paul VI.

O.S.S. agents had to compete as much with their allies as with their enemies. In France and Switzerland, where Allen Dulles operated, the British S.O.E. (Special Operations Executive) was especially grudging. In Germany itself, the O.S.S. lost out to more orthodox American military intelligence, though paradoxically they were strongly represented at Nuremberg, where General Donovan was himself a deputy prosecutor—at the same time that the head of the Nazi Secret Service, Gen. Reinhard Gehlen, was under O.S.S. protection in exchange for his intelligence network in Eastern Europe and Russia.

## Role in the Far East

From present perspective the most (literally) intriguing story is that of the O.S.S. in China and Indochina. There were both pro-Communists and anti-Communists in the O.S.S., and most agents sympathized with Asian nationalists, so that the O.S.S. aided Thai partisans against the British and of course more famously, the Vietminh against the French in Laos and Vietnam (an O.S.S. medic saved Ho Chi Minh's life). Mr. Smith's retelling of the tragicomedy of Indochina after the Japanese surrender in 1945, with Vichy and Gaullist French, British, Chinese and the Vietminh jockeying for control, makes a fascinating setpiece.

The book ends with an account of the transformation of the O.S.S. into its "mirror image," the C.I.A. Mr. Smith's admiration for the O.S.S.'s wartime pragmatism, its "tradition of dissent" and its anticolonialism suggests his thesis: that the O.S.S./C.I.A. has been made the straw man of the radical and liberal left. In fact, he asserts, the C.I.A. has been the principal guardian of liberal values in the "intelligence community." He reminds us that the C.I.A. fought Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, and he argues that the C.I.A.'s campaign to fund anti-Communist liberals successfully undermined international Communist organizations and disarmed the paranoid anti-Communism of the F.B.I. and others at home. He notes that C.I.A. liberals worked against Batista for Castro, who betrayed them, allowing the C.I.A. conservatives to plan the Bay of Pigs. Finally, he points to the evidence in the Pentagon Papers that the C.I.A. has been a critic of the Vietnam war from the beginning.

But the question remains whether the O.S.S. "tradition of dissent" is meaningful, whether it doesn't compromise liberals as much as aid them. Mr. Smith's book is full of cryptic references to former O.S.S. agents now prominent in international business and finance. C.I.A. liberalism has not prevented a number of C.I.A.-fomented coups d'état in favor of military regimes. Even C.I.A. liberal criticism of the war in Vietnam seems to have had little effect on policy. All might be fair in time of war, but Mr. Smith ought to have

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**ABSTRACT**

Press comments on SMITH's book published by University of California Press.

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