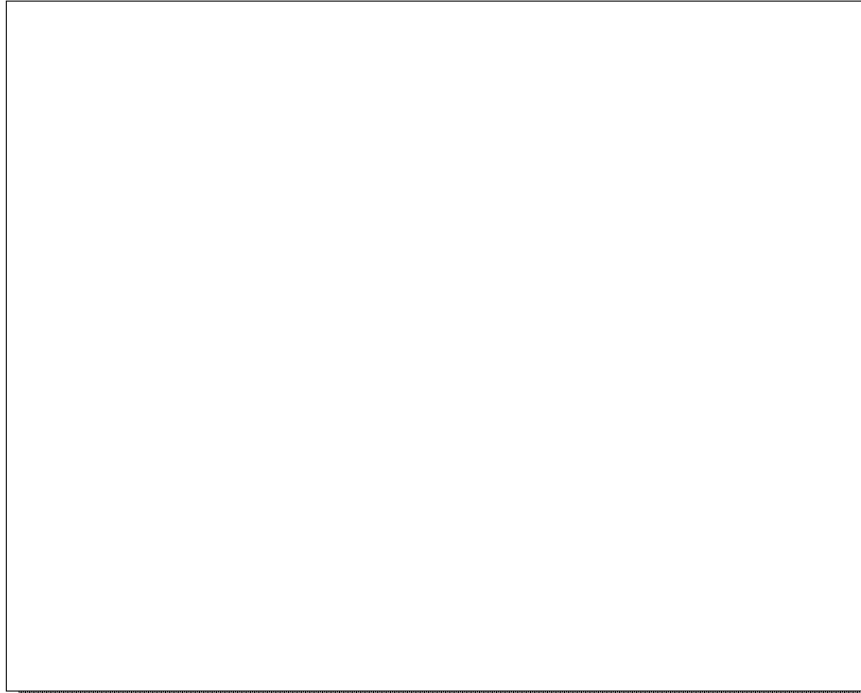




(U) New Painting Unveiled Depicts a “Purely Human Intelligence Operation”



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~~(C//NF)~~ This is about espionage—really, the core business of the National Clandestine Service. There are no guns in this painting. There are no airplanes, “ [redacted] Chief of the National Clandestine Service’s (NCS) Central Eurasia (CE) Division, said to attendees at the unveiling of the new Intelligence Art Gallery painting “Tolkachev: Quiet Courage” on 11 August in the Awards and Events Suite.

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(U) Adolf Tolkachev was a Soviet aviation electronics engineer who, from 1978 to 1985, was a key CIA asset, providing the Agency with detailed information on highly classified future military capabilities being developed by the Soviet Union. In 1985, Tolkachev’s identity was betrayed by two CIA officers working for the KGB—Edward Lee Howard and Aldrich Ames. He was arrested, tried for high treason, and executed in 1986. The volumes of detailed intelligence he passed to the CIA were of immense value to the United States for at least eight to 10 years.

~~(C//NF)~~ [redacted] the former Chief of CE Division, who spearheaded the selection of Tolkachev as the painting’s subject, also spoke at the unveiling. “I thought it was important to have a painting depicting a purely human intelligence operation,” he said. “After all, the CIA is the government’s premier human intelligence organization.”

I thought it was important to have a painting depicting a purely human intelligence operation. [redacted]

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(U) He described the Tolkachev operation as one of the best cases ever run by the CIA—one that was uniquely conducted by the Agency and of great importance to the Cold War. He wanted a painting depicting a Soviet operation because of the importance of those cases, but felt that the case of Oleg Penkovsky was already well known. The Tolkachev case was critically important but not widely known in open sources despite its key aspects having already been declassified.

~~(C//NF)~~ Many officers involved in the operation collaborated with artist Kathy Fieramosca to set the proper mood and tone in the painting and to get the details right. “This painting does something that art is perhaps uniquely suited to do,” [redacted] said, “it honors its subject,” a man acting alone against a totalitarian regime. The painting also includes a realistic depiction of the Pentax 35 millimeter camera that Tolkachev used to photograph thousands of pages of classified Soviet documents. “Taken together, the details of the painting show us what a state of the art CIA espionage operation looked like before the digital age.” [redacted] said.

(U) [redacted] a former senior NCS officer who was involved in the operation, provided

personal reflections on the officers involved. "In understanding any espionage operation, one needs to know that it has an inherent danger wherever it is," he said. "And I think that [redacted] the men and women who worked on this case—demonstrated the great ability of this Agency to run productive operations in difficult areas."

(C//NF) [redacted] said, "The courage and character it took to carry out [Tolkachev's] efforts against the Soviet regime are virtues worthy of our admiration. Fieramosca's painting of him, hanging prominently in the Agency's art gallery, will ensure that Adolph Tolkachev is fittingly honored for the immeasurable contribution he made to the security of the United States of America, and for the ultimate sacrifice he made for doing so."

(U//AIUO) Tolkachev exemplifies the brave men and women—CIA agents—whose sacrifice is honored by the Fallen Agent Memorial on the lobby wall in the Original Headquarters Building. The marble sculpture serves as a reminder of the courage and commitment of those who have silently served the Agency for the cause of freedom. To learn more about the Fallen Agent Memorial, [click here](#).

(U) "Tolkachev: Quiet Courage" is now hanging in the Intelligence Art Gallery in [redacted] Original Headquarters Building. To read the official painting description, [click here](#). To read the Studies in Intelligence article "Tolkachev, A Worthy Successor to Penkovsky," [click here](#).

The courage and character it took to carry out [Tolkachev's] efforts against the Soviet regime are virtues worthy of our admiration.

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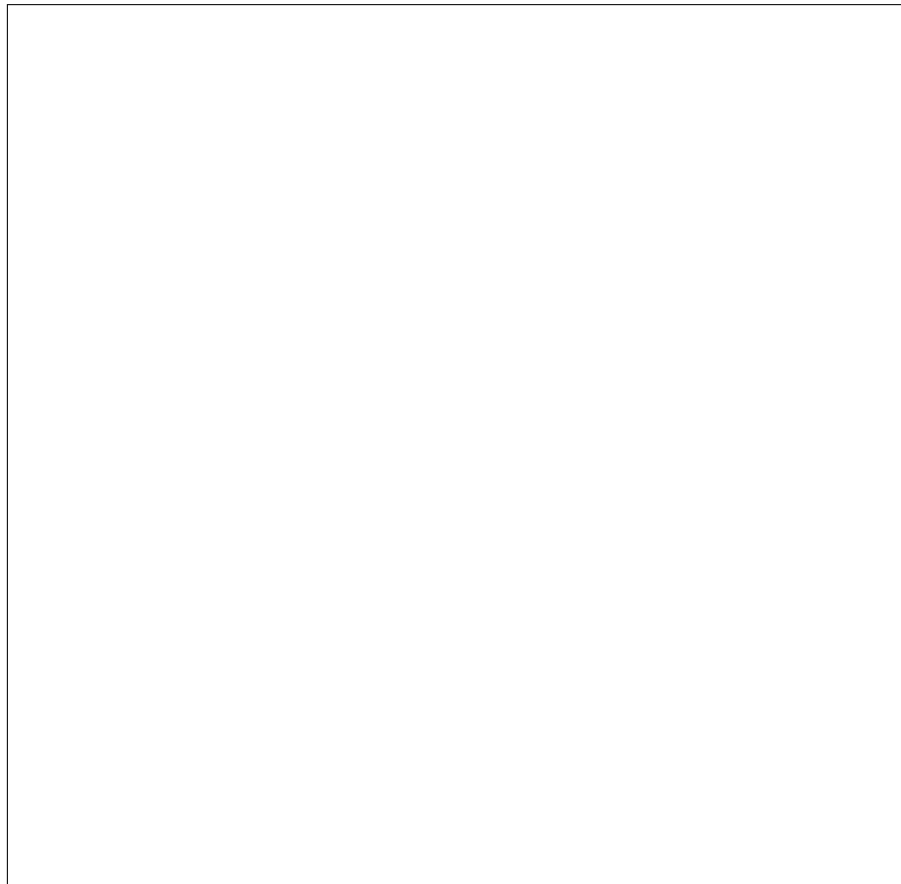
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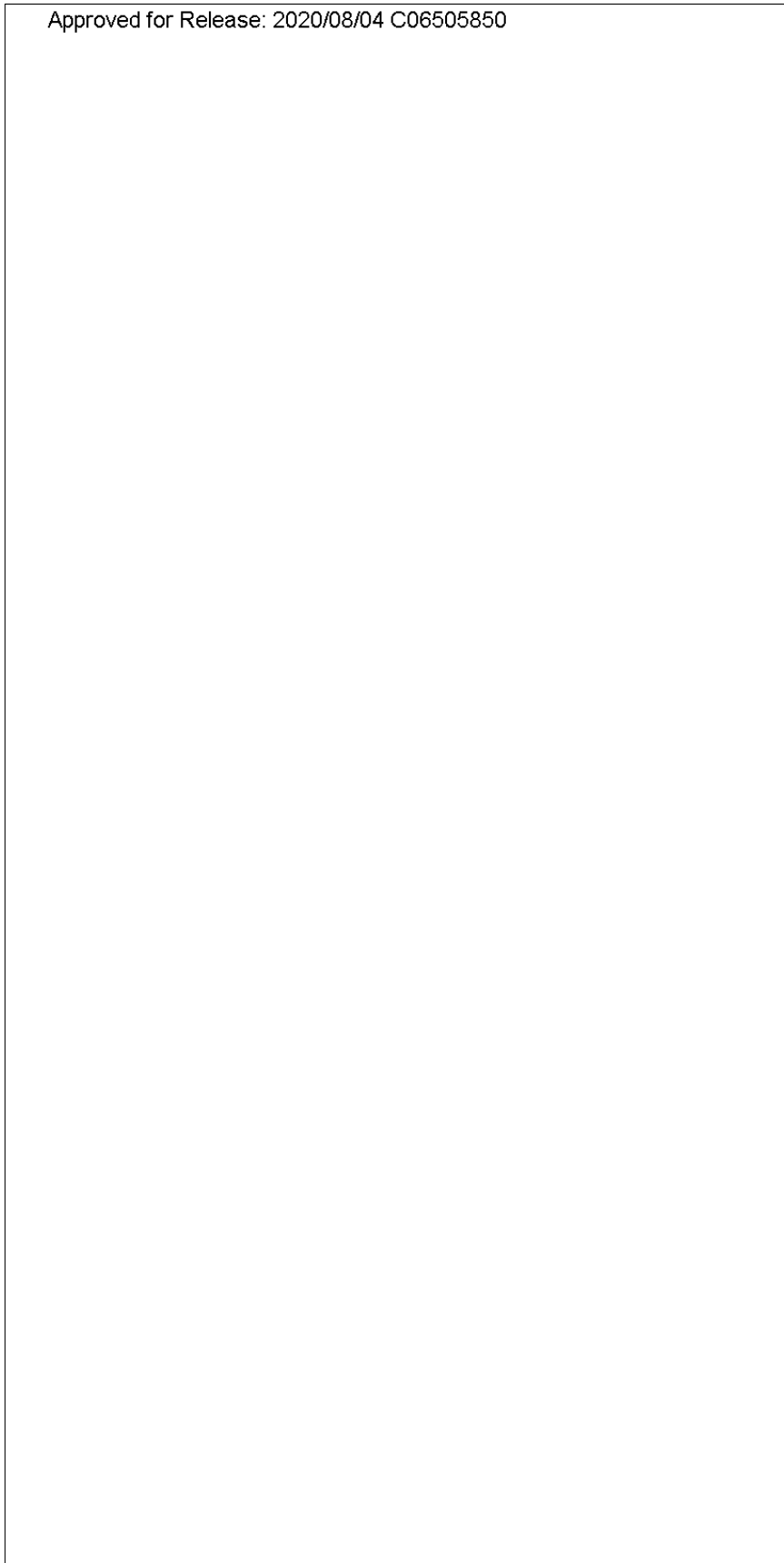
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(This article and the photos are CONFIDENTIAL//NOFORN.)

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