

## Two opposed books

nor of interest, but of evidence. Historical evidence, in any case, is like wildlife; it is an endangered species. It is always partial. Scholars interested in intelligence, aided now by the opening of government archives and private papers after thirty years, by the Freedom of Information Act in the United States, and its equivalents in, for example, Canada and Australia, still face significant constraints — records never being kept, files remaining closed (for example on intelligence operations in peacetime in Britain since 1919), files sanitized, opened selectively, dispersed and gutted by stamp-happy officials and zealous governments. The British Foreign Office files on Herbert Norman, the subject of an inquiry, are empty. Soviet, Eastern Bloc and Chinese archives remain closed and, one hopes, will never become a windfall to historians because of being captured in war. This fact bedevils inquiry into the most routine subjects; it handcuffs research on intelligence. As Gorbachev releases Soviet historians from one of their more difficult tasks, forecasting the past, Soviet archives are being opened selectively. Western scholars of the holocaust are, because of *glasnost*, securing access to the estimated 30 percent to 40 percent of total material on the subject held in Soviet archives. But intelligence files are another matter.

This fundamental problem of the availability of evidence has left intelligence studies largely to writers whose diet of information was the thin but belching gruel of leaks, investigatory commissions, public hearings and hunting expeditions, press stories, scoops and speculations, revelations (was Bill Casey Bob Woodward's "Deep Throat?"), confessions, anecdotes, and of memoirs, apologia, and exposés by agents and defectors, exiles and émigrés of plural motives (Kim Philby, Peter Wright, Philip Agee and Ilya Dzhirkvelov), by the disillusioned and the disaffected, by converts and true believers, writing for their own audiences, largely free from the challenge of corroboration, unlikely ever to be put to searching tests of reliability and thus able to weave fact and fiction, history and novel. There are luridly fascinating and sensational cross currents — money, sexual deviation and behavior modification techniques. These sources and publications in turn produce biographies of dubious value: Anthony Cave Brown on Sir Stewart Menzies, chief of the Secret Intelligence Services (SIS), "C," from 1939 to 1952; H. Montgomery Hyde on George Blake, Clair Sterling's famous but embarrassing *The Terror Network*; and the derivative, quite trivial work of Chapman Pincher (*Their Trade in Treachery* and *Too Secret Too Long*). It remains a growth industry; the appetite for it seems insatiable. There is now a *Spyclopedia*, a comprehensive handbook of espionage, a compendium of spy jargon; there will shortly be an *Encyclopedia of Intelligence*, authoritative and vast.

### Some of the good writing

At the same time, and gathering pace, official histories of great quality (e.g., M.D.R. Foot's *SOE in France* and Sir Harry Hinsley's three volumes on *British Intelligence in the Second World War*) are now being complemented by serious, impressive, scholarly work. A body of literature is emerging that makes intelligence studies academically respectable, identifies intelligence as a discrete sub-field for research and teaching, and demonstrates its indispensability for the study of politics and strategy, to policy formulation and execution (e.g., Richard Langhorne's *Diplomacy and Intelligence During the Second World War*, Ernest May's *Knowing One's Enemies*, Christopher

Andrews's *Her Majesty's Secret Service*; Wesley Wark's *The Ultimate Enemy: British Intelligence and Nazi Germany*; Christopher Andrews's and David Dilks's *The Missing Dimension*, R.C. Williams's *Klaus Fuchs, Atom Spy*, and Robert Manne's *The Petrov Affair*).

Yet, without certain forms of evidence, even the most scrupulous of researchers must leave large questions unanswered (beyond the identification of spies and agents). What precisely is the impact of spying? Even though we know in some detail that Fuchs passed vital, secret scientific information to the Soviet Union, what was the historical significance of his actions, for example, for the development of Soviet and United States nuclear policies? What is the significance of inter-allied intelligence cooperation and its breakdown? What is the value of covert operations (to Ernest May they vary inversely with the need for secrecy)? What is tolerable and what is indefensible in the conduct of state business? And what should the relationship be between executive and legislative branches on these matters? The point is that there are questions not even adequately raised let alone answered. The implication for scholarship and its ethics are obvious and never more compelling when one is dealing with individuals and their reputations, whether alive or deceased, with or without surviving families.

### Dissent and treachery

Dissent about policy is necessary, valuable and honorable. Even if the dissent be misguided and controversial, demanding peace in wartime, preferring socialist, progressive, Christian, humanitarian solutions for the excesses of the free market economies, seeing value in socialism in the face of depression and fascism, that fact is not altered. Treachery, through duplicity, subversion and betrayal, is condemnable. The motives for it are plural — money, advancement, power, moral conviction, idealism and ideology. Those who practise it offer a fascinating mixture of drama and emotion — pathos, risk, tragedy, courage, emotional and moral schizophrenia, arrogance, ego, relief when unmasked, perhaps wanting to be caught, and knowing the inhibitions constraining their prosecutors, even when the practitioners are broken by interrogation and confess. The line between dissent and treachery is clear; the path from dissent to treachery is difficult to trace. Those who publicly and in calculated fashion indict a person, a servant of government, with the charge of treachery, must be sure of their case. Speculation, supposition, inference, educated guessing from circumstantial evidence and innuendo are not enough. This is clear regardless of the social and political atmosphere, and the social/psychological dimensions of the matter. Societies try to explain away national debacles. They look for scapegoats and villains. They long to ferret out mediocrity, arrogance, incompetence, irresponsibility and worse, all the more so among ruling elites and privileged classes, among oligarchies, protected by insidious social and political networks — the likes of Roger Hollis, Menzies and Anthony Blunt — and Canada is not free of this phenomenon. Some of this is necessary, perhaps even healthy, and certainly unavoidable. But it should not provide hunting licences; it is not open season on individuals and institutions.

### Barros book and that of Roger Bowen (*Innocence is not Enough*)

James Barros's book has been reviewed in detail by J.L. Granatstein (*Saturday Night*, November 1986) and Reg