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CHAPTER 1

INTELLIGENCE IS KNOWLEDGE

INTELLIGENCE means knowledge. If it cannot be stretched to mean all knowledge, at least it means an amazing bulk and assortment of knowledge. This book deals with only a fraction of the total, but probably the most important fraction. It deals with the part, known to the intelligence trade as "high-level foreign positive intelligence." This phrase is short for the kind of knowledge our state must possess regarding other states in order to assure itself that its cause will not suffer nor its undertakings fail because its statesmen and soldiers plan and act in ignorance. This is the knowledge upon which we base our high-level national policy toward the other states of the world.

Notice what is being excluded. First, all knowledge of our own domestic scene is being left out. Foreign positive intelligence is truly "foreign" in purpose, scope, and substance. It is not concerned with what goes on in the United States or in its territories and possessions. Second, all knowledge of the sort which lies behind the police function is excluded. The word "positive" comes into the phrase to denote that the intelligence in question is not so-called "counter-intelligence" and counter-espionage nor any other sort of intelligence designed to uncover domestically-produced traitors or imported foreign agents. The words "high-level" are there to exclude what is called "operational" intelligence, tactical intelligence, and the intelligence of small military formations in battle known as combat intelligence. What is left is the knowledge indispensable to our welfare and security. It is both the constructive knowledge with which we can work toward peace and freedom throughout the world, and the knowledge necessary to the defense of our country and its ideals. Some of this knowledge may be acquired through clandestine means, but the bulk of it must be had through unromantic open-and-above-board observation and research.[1]

It should be borne in mind—in anticipation of later chapters of this book which deal with intelligence as a process—that the intelligence activity consists basically of two sorts of operation. I have called them the *surveillance operation,* by which I mean the many ways by which the contemporary world is put under close and systematic observation, and the *research operation.* By the latter I mean the attempts to establish meaningful patterns out of what was observed in the past and attempts to get meaning out of what appears to be going on now. The two operations are virtually inseparable, though for administrative and other reasons they are often physically separated. In actual practice there are generally two different staffs each of which cultivates the respective specialisms of surveillance and research. But however far apart they get on the administrative diagram or in the development of their own techniques they are closely bound together by their common devotion to the production of knowledge.

How describe this kind of knowledge? There are at least two ways. One way is to treat high-level foreign positive intelligence as the substance of humanity and nature—abroad. This involves an almost endless listing of the components of humanity and nature. The listings can be alphabetical or topical. Whichever, it runs to hundreds of pages and would ill serve the interests of the readers of this sort of book.

The other way, and the one I have adopted, is neither alphabetical nor topical. It might be called functional. It starts from the premise that our state, in order to survive in a world of competing states, must have two sorts of state policy. The one is its own self-initiated, positive, outgoing policy, undertaken in the interests of a better world order and a higher degree of national prosperity. The other is its defensive-protective policy necessarily undertaken to counter those policies of other states which are inimical to our national aspirations. This second kind of policy might better be called our policy for national security. I make this artificial distinction, between positive and security policies, for purposes of the present analysis.

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[1] Appendix I, offers a brief discussion of all types of intelligence; separates them out from each other in two rather formidable charts, and endeavors to show the interrelationship between the key types.

Consider our positive policy first. To be effective, its framers, planners, and implementers must be able to select the proper instrumentality of suasion from a long list of possibles. Will it be a resolution in the UN, will it be diplomacy, will it be political and economic inducement or threat, will it be propaganda or information, will it be force, will it be a combination of several? The framers, planners, and implementers must also know where, how, and when to apply the instrumentality of their choice. Now neither the selecting nor the applying can be done without reference to the party of the second part. Before the policy leaders do either they would be well advised to know:

> *how* the other country is going to receive the policy in question and what it is prepared to use to counter it;
> *what* the other country lacks in the way of countering force (i.e.) its specific vulnerabilities;
> *what* it is doing to array its protective force; and
> *what* it is doing, or indeed can do, to mend its specific vulnerabilities.

Thus our policy leaders find themselves in need of a great deal of knowledge about 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. To put their positive policy into effect they should first and foremost know about other countries as objective entities. For example, they must know about:

a. the physiques of these countries, that is, their natural topography and environment and the multiform permanent structures which man has added to the landscape (his cities, his agricultural and industrial enterprises, his transportation facilities, and so on);
b. their people—how many; how they are settled; how occupied;
c. the status of the arts, sciences, and technologies of these people (and I would include in this the status of their armed forces);
d. the character of their political systems, their economies, their social groupings, their codes of morality, and the dynamic interrelations which prevail among all these.

Armed with this knowledge the leaders of positive policy may go forward assured at least that, if they fail, their failure will not be chargeable to their ignorance.

Secondly, consider our other sort of policy, that is, our policy concerned with the maintenance of the national security. In the interests of security our policy leaders must make constant provision for the positive policies of *other* states. Some of these policies we will have to regard as hostile to our interests and we must take steps to block them. Some, we may wish to meet half way. To frame and operate this kind of security policy we must have a second large class of information about foreign countries, and again the knowledge must be complete, accurate, timely, and capable of serving as a basis for action. We must know the nature and weight of the instrumentalities which these other countries can summon in behalf of their own policies, and we must know the direction those policies are likely to take. We must know this not only so that we will not be taken by surprise, but also so that we will be in a position of defensive or offensive readiness when the policy is launched. When you know such things you know a good deal about the other country's *strategic stature,* to borrow a phrase I will develop in Chapter 4. And on the theory that there is a relationship between what a country adopts as an objective and what it thinks it can expect to accomplish, knowledge of strategic stature constitutes, in some degree at least, knowledge of the other country's probable intentions.

From the foregoing it can be seen that my first class of information to be acquired is essentially descriptive and reportorial. It is descriptive of the relatively changeless things like terrain, hydrography, and climate. It is descriptive of the changeable but no less permanent things like population. It is descriptive, too, of the more transient man-made phenomena such as governmental or economic structures. With this kind of knowledge our leaders can draft the guide lines of our positive policy, of our peacetime and wartime strategy.

The second class of information to be acquired deals with the future and its possibilities and probabilities: how another country may shape its internal forces to service its foreign policy or strategy; how it may try to use these strengths against us, when, where, and with what effectiveness. Where the first was descriptive, this is speculative and evaluative.

Within these classes of things to be known, then, we may perceive the statics, the dynamics, and the potentials of other countries; we will perceive the established things, the presently going-on things, and probable things of the future. Taken together these make up the subject matter of what I have called high-level foreign positive intelligence, or as I shall call it henceforth—strategic intelligence. Incidentally, they also indicate the three main forms in which strategic intelligence is turned out by intelligence organizations. These forms are: the *basic descriptive form,* the *current reportorial form,* and the *speculative-evaluative form.*[2] Each of these is covered in a succeeding chapter.

In these coming chapters I will give a picture of the diversity and the size of strategic intelligence's substantive content. There is no gainsaying that it is both extremely diversified and extremely large. But this does not argue that the strategic intelligence business is either continuously occupied with every subject in the huge overall content or exclusively responsible for gathering all the data which make up the content. I wish to be clear about these two points.

Intelligence must be equipped to deal with the array of subjects which I will consider, and in the course of the years it may conceivably deal with all of the subjects at least once. It will, however, tend to deal with any single subject only when that subject is part of a threat to our national interest or is required by a prospective course of action. One of the most continuously vexing problems in the administration of intelligence is deciding which particular subjects shall be watched, reported upon, or made the object of descriptive or speculative research. Equally vexing is deciding the order of their priority. The point is that intelligence is always fully occupied, but occupied almost exclusively on a relatively few subjects of real national concern. At the same time intelligence must be ready to handle a large number of subjects.

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[2] Here is the first place where I will depart from some of the accepted usages of the intelligence language. I take this departure, as I have noted in the preface, because of the large confusion one encounters in the lexicon of the trade. In the trade, what I have called the basic descriptive form is variously called basic research, fundamental research, basic data, monographic data, etc. What I call the current reportorial form goes by such names as current intelligence, current evaluations, current appreciations, reports, cable material, hot intelligence, etc. What I call the speculative-evaluative form is known as estimates, strategic estimates, evaluations, staff intelligence, capabilities intelligence, and so on.

On the theory that the consumers of intelligence are interested in things of the past, present, and future, I have adopted the element of time as the element of overruling importance. This permits an easy and consistent arrangement of the subject matter of intelligence and permits one to postpone cataloguing this subject matter according to use-to-be-served, consumer, etc. until a later and more appropriate stage. Few intelligence devotees have done this in the past. Far too many of them in making up their categories of the kinds of intelligence have deferred to several factors of discrimination in the same list. Thus you may find important directives of the intelligence brotherhood which contain a list of the kinds of intelligence looking something like this: (1) Basic research, (2) Strategic intelligence, (3) Technical intelligence, (4) Counter intelligence, (5) Tactical intelligence, (6) Capabilities and estimates intelligence. Such categories are by no means mutually exclusive nor are they consistent with one another.

Collecting the materials necessary to handle this large number is a task which intelligence does not do solo. Intelligence shares the task with a number of institutions—both public and private. Let me confine myself to the public ones.

Although the policy, planning, and operating officers of the federal government (both civilian and military) are the primary users (or consumers) of the finished intelligence product, they themselves are often important gatherers and producers. As men who work in the world of affairs they turn out, as by-products of their main jobs, large amounts of material which is the subject matter of strategic intelligence. The best case in point is the foreign service officer in a foreign post. His main job is representing the United States' interest in that country, but a very important by-product of his work is the informational cable, dispatch, or report which he sends in. Not merely the informational cable but the co-called "operational" cable as well. For in his capacity as U.S. representative he must know much before he takes a stand, and he must explain much to his superiors at home when he has taken such a stand or when he asks their advice. Although the primary purpose of such communications is operational, they are frequently almost indistinguishable from those which flatly state the day's new developments. And thus the foreign service officer, although not specially trained as an intelligence man, is by virtue of his location and talent often a valuable and effective purveyor of intelligence.[3]

There are others in public life, such as members of special commissions, U.S. delegates to international conferences, traveling Congressmen; and that such people make significant contributions to the total task of intelligence must be borne in mind in the following chapters. Nor should the involuntary contributors outside of public life be forgotten: the writers, the newspapermen, the scholars, the businessmen, the travelers and big game hunters, even foreign governments themselves (in their official reports and releases) render invaluable aid. I would have no reader get the idea that intelligence—in shirt sleeves and unassisted, so-to-speak—is obliged to produce from scratch the prodigious body of data that it must have at hand. To make this point, however, in no way derogates the extremely important part of the total which intelligence itself does produce on its own hook. Some of this is confirmatory, and necessarily so; some is supplementary or complementary of that which is in; some is brand new and sufficient unto itself. Some is not merely new and vital, but is the stuff which would not, indeed could not, be turned up by any agency other than intelligence itself. All of it, plus the time and skill intelligence organizations employ in its appraisal, analysis, and tabulation, makes up the substantive content of our special category of knowledge.

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[3] For certain key parts of the world the Foreign Service does acknowledge the need for special training, and the officers which it sends to these areas may accordingly be considered intelligence officers in one sense of the word. Most of even these however will have many non-intelligence duties.

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