

CHAPTER 2: The History of Intelligence in the United States

Chapter Objectives

1. Explain why the United States did not develop a robust, sustained intelligence capability until the twentieth century.
2. Trace the history of early American intelligence efforts from the Revolutionary War up until World War II.
3. Explain how the “strategic surprise” of Pearl Harbor convinced the United States that it needed to enhance its intelligence capabilities.
4. Describe how the Cold War was a “war of intelligence” and how it shaped the development of American intelligence agencies.
5. Explain how intelligence “failures,” such as the excesses of COINTELPRO and Operation CHAOS, and the spy scandals of the 1980s affected intelligence efforts.
6. Identify some reasons why the United States was not able to anticipate and thwart the attacks of September 11, 2001.
7. Describe how historical events have shaped the American intelligence efforts of today.

Multiple Choice

1. Which of the following was NOT created by the National Security Act?
 - a. CIA
 - b. Coordinator of Information**
 - c. National Security Council
 - d. A and C

2. Which government committee(s) concluded that intelligence agencies had overstepped their legal boundaries by disregarding Americans' Constitutional rights?
- a. Pike Committee
 - b. Church Committee
 - c. Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Committee
 - d. Both A and B**
3. What was the purpose of the Black Chamber?
- a. To monitor Soviet communications until 1980
 - b. To report on British troop movements, carry out various covert activities, and conduct sensitive negotiations with foreign governments
 - c. To provide information about the South during the Civil War
 - d. To decrypt the message traffic of foreign governments**
4. Which of the following statements best describes the relationship between the history of intelligence in the United States and present-day intelligence?
- a. The U.S. intelligence infrastructure today is a product of its history**
 - b. The U.S. intelligence infrastructure is far too advanced today to rely on any lesson learned in the past
 - c. The U.S. intelligence infrastructure is too young to gauge whether or not any lessons were learned from its history
 - d. The U.S. intelligence infrastructure today is not a product of its own history but a product of British history
5. What was the purpose of COINTELPRO?

- a. Investigated suspected domestic dissidents and subversives, including members of the Communist Party, Students for a Democratic Society, the Black Panther Party and Women Strike for Peace
- b. Identified government scientists who had dispersed critical information related to the development of the atomic bomb
- c. Provided judicial oversight over the government's surveillance of foreign individuals in the United States
- d. Established laws relating to intelligence collection and covert activities

Short Answer

1. Which entities were created by the National Security Act of 1947? What restrictions did the act place on the intelligence agency it created and why?
2. What were the findings of the Church Committee? What piece of legislation was prompted by these findings?
3. What were the findings of the 9/11 Commission? What did it recommend the government do to prevent future terrorist attacks?
4. Why was the position of the Director of National Intelligence created?

Essay Questions

1. The Church and Pike Committees introduced an era of increased Congressional scrutiny over intelligence activities. Since that time, Congressional oversight of the intelligence community has spurred controversy. Some argue that such supervision protects citizens' Constitutional rights while others believe it unnecessarily hinders the IC's attempts to collect critical intelligence. Should constitutional protections limit the actions of the intelligence community, or should agencies have the freedom to infringe upon people's civil liberties to ensure safety?

2. Given what you know about the relationship between the United States and the mujahedeen during the Cold War, do you believe Osama bin Laden's reasons for declaring holy war against the U.S. in 1993 were justified? Why or why not?
3. Has the United States' staunch relationship with Israel helped or hurt our national security? Why or why not? Consider past and current events.
4. The text states that the terrorist threat of 9/11 differed from any previous enemies the United States faced. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

Group Activities

1. Divide students into groups, and assign each group an event from the list below. Have each group discuss whether their event constituted an intelligence success or failure, and ask them to identify what, if any, lessons the intelligence community learned as a result.

Bay of Pigs

Cuban Missile Crisis

9/11

WMDs in Iraq

2. Divide the students into two groups. Have one group determine the U.S. intelligence community's greatest historical success and have the other determine its greatest failure. Have each group identify the intelligence efforts that led to the ultimate outcomes.
3. Divide students into two groups. List the following answers on the board. Alternating between groups, ask the following questions. Have students choose the correct answer from the board.

- a. What spy committee did George Washington create during the Revolutionary War?
Secret Committee
- b. Who uttered the words, “I regret that I have but one life to lose for my country”?
Nathan Hale
- c. Runaway slaves who escaped to the North (during the Civil War) via the Underground Railroad to provide information to Harriet Tubman became known as? Black Dispatches
- d. What do we call the series of raids carried out by the Department of Justice to capture suspected anarchists in the early twentieth century? Palmer Raids
- e. What is another name for the Cipher Bureau? Black Chamber
- f. Who famously remarked “Gentlemen don’t read each others’ mail”? Secretary of State
Henry L. Stimson
- g. What was the name of the United States’ World War II intelligence service? Office of
Strategic Services
- h. What is the name of the project responsible for decoding German messages during
World War II via the Enigma machine? Project Ultra
- i. What famous phrase did Winston Churchill use to describe the bipolar political world
during the Cold War? Iron Curtain
- j. What piece of legislation created the CIA? National Security Act