

Hot & Cold Running Wars

Washington, London, Naples and The Fort

Tightening the Belt



(Swiss Cottage Tube Stop, Jubilee Line, London. Photo London Transit System.)

If I was not in the act of taking notes, this would have been an ordinary late afternoon on a work-day, seated at the bar at Willow, drinking. Instead, we were continuing the oral

history interview with Mac, which lent the enterprise a certain high-minded quality. Liz-with-an-S, the lovely afternoon slack-time bartender approved, and was solicitous. When the shift changed, and Peter and Jim arrived to service the industrial strength crowd, we had ventured a little off track.

“So,” I said, taking a sip of my refreshing white wine, “The draft proposal of the President’s bipartisan commission on reducing the federal debt calls for deep cuts in domestic and military spending, starting in 2012. That is going to screw the business climate for contractors.

“I presume the assumption is that the current economic crisis and the wars will be over, and enable us to do even more irresponsible things in 2011.”

“Like extend the Bush tax cuts, which would let me try to keep paying down the hit I took on real estate in the bubble. I have never missed a payment but I can’t qualify to refinance because the loan-to-value ratio has

“Reform like the report recommends won’t happen,” said Mac, raising his amber glass of Bell’s. “It is a draft. A trial balloon to see what gets people all riled up. We have been talking about fixing the tax code for a generation and it just gets more convoluted. From what I read, the changes would erase nearly \$4 trillion from projected deficits through 2020. I will be 101 that year.”

“I heard the plan is going to reduce Social Security benefits to all of us Boomers, though the people that don’t pay taxes now- the poor ones, not the rich ones- will get higher benefits. They also propose eliminating the cap on the FICA deductions from our paychecks. Bastards. That means whatever the benefits I get back are just about what they take away to begin with.”

“It is all in the art of the budget. They are going to promise you that with some current sacrifice, Social Security will be solvent for at least the next 75 years.”

“They never seem to do the sacrifice,” I said. “It is always us. You will be 176 then,” I said, making a calculation on the napkin. “You have been drawing Social Security for 26 years.”

“Pays to have your timing right,” said Mac with satisfaction. “But you get what you pay for.”

The notes, as I review them this morning, begin in an organized enough fashion. We plowed a little familiar ground to get calibrated. I was prepared to listen to 1953, and

settled into the rhythm of the long ago.

Mac wed Billie in 1948, an excellent year for new beginnings, and elected to stay in the Navy. After a period at the Pentagon writing the Political Cable, he was transferred to the European Navy headquarters, CINCNELM, which had taken over Ike's old SHAEF headquarters on North Audley Street near the Embassy in London.

I had intended to discuss the great tides in international affairs that were going on then; the Greek Crisis, the impact of the Marshall plan, the strange events in Iran.

Instead we got off on beds, though not literally, of course.

Mac and Billie did not take much to England except their beds and the 1948 Mercury sedan. It had been a bad war for the British, and they accepted a lot of things we wouldn't as a matter of necessity. Rationing was still in effect, though of course the Yanks managed to have their own supplies.



(The Showers' residence on Maresfield Court. The third floor flat must have been tiny- Mac and Billie liked the one on the first floor).

For one thing, the British slept on appalling mattresses, or at least that was the word in Washington before they decamped for London, and the beds were shipped to a row-house located at 18 Maresfield Gardens, near the Swiss Cottage Tube stop.

“The station was opened just as the war was starting in late 1939 on a new section of deep-level tunnels constructed between Baker Street and Finchley Road. They used them as shelters during the Blitz. It is named for a nearby pub, an old one that dates from

before the battle of Waterloo. It was originally called The Swiss Tavern, and later renamed Swiss Cottage. The pub is still there, or at least it was in 1950.”

I made a note to check, and did this morning. It is. “What sort of place did you live in,” I asked, spilling a little wine on my note-napkin, making the ink bleed.

“It was a nice place. It had been an imposing three-story home that had been divided into

three flats. We had the ground floor, with the garden, and with the good American mattresses beneath us, life was pretty good.”

“What was interesting was that Sigmund Freud, the pioneer psychotherapist, had lived just two doors down the row. He was dead, of course, the cancer having taken him in September of 1939, the just a couple months before the tube station opened. He had to get out of Austria with the growing madness there, and lived the last year of his life in the relative safety of London.”



(Ana Freud, Mac and Billie’s neighbor in Swiss Cottage. Photo Bettman Archives.)

“The house survived the Blitz, and his daughter Ana lived there most of the rest of her life. The house is a museum now, but in my time, it was just Ana's residence, where she carried out her life's work refining the principles of her father. “

“Freud didn't exactly invent the idea of the conscious versus unconscious mind,” I said, working my slow way into unconsciousness, “but he certainly was responsible for

making it popular. He also famously asked the question: “What do women want?”

“He never got a satisfactory answer,” said Mac. “But Ana had some ideas about it, and so did Billie.”

In a round about fashion we had got onto the topic of bagpipes, which means one of my napkins might have gone missing. We were moving backwards in time, or maybe the notes are out of order. The pipes, and piping, were funded in Mac’s home state of Iowa through the Department of War. The mechanics of playing the bagpipes involved both the Conscious and Unconscious minds, which had to be trained to work in concert.

Mac said you have to squeeze the bag with your left arm while blowing into the pipe and fingering the chanter. I thought that it sounded a lot like trying to strangle a cat while getting it to purr, but that in turn, was tied to life on a farm in Iowa, in the Great Depression.

We had jumped right across the war and into a time when the banks were closed, and there was no money at all.

“Imagine an America without cash!” said Mac. “That is a “Black Swan,” even for you! Everything was done in barter, vegetables and meat for dental services, professionals and farmers alike getting by as best they could.”

That was where the pipes came in, since Mac played for three years in the Drum and Bugle Corps at the University of Iowa before he had to drop it to assume the duties of City Editor at the Daily Iowan, the campus newspaper. He might have been a reporter, if the world had not lost its senses to the Monsters.

There was another glass of wine, and a Bell’s IPA in there somewhere, though my notes are not clear as to the timing.

What is clear is Mac's recollection of change. His first president was Herbert Hoover, who inherited the first three years of the national disaster after the stock market crash in 1929. Those of us that did not live through it tend to see the thirties in scratchy black-and-white, flickering images of marching Germans and indomitable Franklin Roosevelt propped at a podium, easing the crisis with bold new programs like the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration.

“I was an FDR supporter,” he said. “But I still went down to the depot to watch Mr. Hoover's campaign train come through, and listen to a speech the president gave in his

doomed campaign for reelection in 1932. He didn't have a prayer, any more than this bipartisan panel's recommendations do. We could save ourselves, but I suspect we won't."

"That is the way I feel," I said, drawing a line under the words "mortgage interest deduction."

"Hoover was trying his best to turn things around, and he might have succeeded, since all these great economic things are cyclical, and largely beyond the power of any one President to alter. Mr. Roosevelt was selling hope, and change, and that is exactly what people wanted. That is how Obama got elected and why the Republicans took back the House."

"It is all about the public's conscious mind," I said. "But Dr. Freud could tell you a lot about all the seething Id down below. "

Eventually we got to the point where my notes no longer make any particular sense. The bar at Willow was filling up with vibrant pre-weekend noise, and it was time for us to move on.

I walked Mac out to his gold Jaguar, and we made arrangements to meet again next week.

I walked across the street to the office tower where I had to retrieve the '04 P71 Crown Vic Bluesmobile from the garage under my office and re-enter the world of now.

The prospects were not encouraging. The cleaning crew, all Hispanic, was in the office when I ducked in to grab my briefcase and check the last e-mail of the day. It didn't make any sense, and I shut down the computer. 2012 looks like it is going to have some challenges. I wondered if I should go home, or just go back to the Willow and get ready.

I think you know that I did the right thing.

Slivovitz



I had lunch with Annie, the den-mother of our fractious group of brash officers who inhabited the back room at the Navy Office of Legislative Affairs in the Pentagon. There were some stories to be had in that office, let me tell you. They were about the trips we arranged for Congressional members and their staffs, and tales about all of us, and what astonishing things we had done representing the Department of the Navy on behalf of you, the taxpayer. We talked about some of that, but we talked mostly about Annie's Mom, a marvelous lady to whom I had been introduced a decade or so ago. I had a chance to meet a decade ago. Like Mac, she is gone now, and I am glad I had a chance to meet her when I did, and hear some of her story. See, she was living in Belgrade, capital of Jug-Land, when Mac and his party were dining with Tito over at the White Palace. She was the only other person I will ever meet that has that distinction, except of course Annie herself, who was sitting across from me at the Two Chefs Restaurant on Lee Highway. It was a great lunch. Annie has some stories herself, and who knows, maybe she will share them some time.

Did you ever hear of Slivovitz?

It is a plum brandy that is made in Eastern Europe, and notably Yugoslavia. Rene LaPlante, Annie's Dad and Assistant US Army Attaché could have told you about it, since it is one of the tools of the trade. "Plum brandy" sounds like something your great aunt might break out with the holiday fruitcake, and she might, if she was a heavy-duty woman.

What she would be bringing out was rocket fuel. Distilled properly, slivovitz is more than a hundred proof, and can have the impact of be pure grain alcohol. It has loosened more tongues than anything this side of fiery Italian grappa, which is how it relates to Evelyn and Rene, and the story I just heard from my pal Mac, who is a long-retired Spook.

Slivovitz and Tito is where the story goes, but it is very strange and needs a bit of context to really appreciate.

Evelyn LaPlante got out of the spy business in 1947, just ahead of the “*Informbiro*.” That is the term the Jugs use for the breakdown in relations between Stalin and Josef Broz Tito. The word is shorthand for the Communist Information Bureau, the Soviet-dominated propaganda organization that set the policy line for the new Soviet satellite states of Eastern Europe.

Some of the clients had actually wanted to attend the Paris Conference on the Marshall Aid Plan, and Stalin obviously could not countenance that.

The Bureau had a brief run in Belgrade, but by 1948, it packed up and left. Tito was officially denounced by Moscow, and accused of “departing from Marxism-Leninism” and “exhibiting an anti-Soviet attitude.”

These were serious accusations, though they sound a bit quaint today. If you add a *lot* of slivovitz they drip with menace. That was reflected in the situation that convinced Evelyn that Stateside was the place for her and her little daughter Ann. Tito would open and close the border capriciously, in tune with a rhythm of the dance with Moscow. She got out when the opportunity presented itself in 1947, the year the Information Bureau was established and things were very edgy.

Stalin contemplated sending assassins to take out Tito. It was said when the charismatic leader in Belgrade was informed of the plot, he smiled grimly. He told his advisors that if anyone came for him, there would be two Jugs headed tight back for Moscow, and that would be the end of *that*.

There was a lot of bravado contained in that threat, and Tito cast about for the pivot point in the crisis with the Russians. Ann's Dad, Warrant Officer Rene LaPlante stayed in Belgrade as the crisis deepened, and was sent home when the Informbriro was expelled, and party purges of alleged Titoists throughout Europe began. Rene's services were needed elsewhere.

It took a lot of slivovitz to consolidate good order in the new Soviet empire, and nearly three years for Tito to culminate a bold strategy to balance the power of the East with the

Power of the West. That is how my pal Mac entered The Balkan Problem came in 1951.

At the time, Mac was on the staff of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Element-Europe. The command was normally located in London, in Ike's former headquarters on North Audley Street. At this moment, though, it had re-located to Naples, where he and his family lived in an elegant if somewhat threadbare apartment on the Napolitian economy.

The Jugs approached the Americans in Belgrade, and indicated that Tito wanted to talk.

Something dramatic was cooked up in short order. In December, 1951, Mac was a Lieutenant Commander, and he was nominated for the special collection mission by the SIXTH Fleet intelligence officer, CDR Fred Welden. With LT Art Newell, Mac reported to the fleet flagship, the heavy cruiser USS Des Moines.



(USS *Des Moines* (CA-134) in the Adriatic, 1951. Photo USN).

Vice Admiral Matthias Bennett Gardner flew his Fleet Commander's flag on the 17,000-ton cruiser. She was a remarkable floating statement. Roomy enough to handle the requirements of the embarked staff, she cut a suitably martial profile. She bristled with a main battery of nine improved eight-inch guns, twelve five-inch turrets on the superstructure forty-four assorted anti-aircraft guns.

With a bone in her teeth, she could make thirty-three knots and keep up with fast carrier, and carried a crew of 1,800 officers and Sailors.

She was just the platform for this special assignment. She was about to make the first American naval visit to Yugoslav waters since the end of World War II. It was a ceremonial visit, which Tito intended to stick right in Uncle Joe Stalin's teeth. It was a bold move for the Jug leader, taunting his former mentor in Moscow, and the US Navy was happy to accommodate him.

Just before Christmas, the Cruiser got underway and made for the ancient Croatian port of Rijeka, sometimes known by its Italian name of Fiume.

There was going to be a mission of extraordinary daring, and it would feature slivovitz before dinner, slivovitz during dinner, and slivovitz toasts of friendship in the drawing room after.

That is the story that became a chapter in Mac's biography, how Mac came to have dinner with Marshall Tito, the leader of all the Jugs, and the extraordinary party at the residence of the Naval Attaché the last night Des Moines was in port.

The power of slivovitz cannot be underestimated. Diplomacy used to be a lot more muscular, and certainly a lot more fun, you know?

The Revolt of the Admirals



(Convair B-36 Peacemaker, 1949. Official Air Force picture.)

“The Bomb got us all home,” said Mac. “It saved us the hundreds of thousands of casualties, American and Japanese, that would have come if we had executed Operation OLYMPIC. That is certain. But once the bomb was used, the genie was out of the bottle.” Mac looked down at his ginger ale a little pensively.

“James Forrestal began to agitate about the threat from the Soviets while the war was still raging. He visited Ike in England during the war to emphasize his concerns about the Soviets. Apparently Ike agreed with him, though he had to walk the line in the Alliance. The Soviets had sacrificed so much, on the East Front it was difficult not to accept that they had a moral justification for what they were doing to Germany.”

“And it was better for German and Russian kids to die for their countries than ours. Didn't

Patton say something like that?”

Mac grimaced at my paraphrase of the quote from Old Blood and Guts. “Victory is victory. But Forrestal certainly was proven right by the Communist political campaigns against the elected governments of Greece, Italy, and France after the war. The Truman Administration did not agree with Forrestal’s concerns, though that was what drove Naval Intelligence to begin to track what the Soviets were up to. It was still the deepest secret in the OPINTEL business that our former Allies were the most important target. It was at the heart of everything in the struggle about unification of the services.”

“So what was it like?” I asked. “Was the controversy as big as when Secretary Gates suggested eliminating the Marine Corps?” I could feel the effect of the happy-hour-priced *pinot grigio* and my scrawl in the notebook was getting wilder and wilder. Peter offered to top me off, and I put my hand over the top of the glass. This was important and I wanted to get it straight. I wanted a cigarette, too, but those days are long gone in Virginia’s bars and restaurants, as gone as the 1940s themselves.

“You have no idea. Now, remember I was just a fresh-caught Lieutenant Commander then, but there were some amazing shenanigans here in Washington. It wound up in 1949 with the firing of the SECNAV and the CNO.”

“Wow. You said it was about the budget more than anything.”

“Of course. Everything here is driven by money. Anyone who tells you it is not the green-eyeshade crowd that drives strategy is a fool. The "Revolt" had been building for several years, but it climaxed the year we moved Y-Branch to the Armed Forces Security Agency at Arlington Hall Station.



(Chief of Naval Operations Louis E. Denfeld)



(Secretary of the Navy John L. Sullivan)

“The drive for unification began in 1943, and the National Security Act of 1947 made it formal. The generals of the new Air Force announced that strategic bombing, particularly with nuclear weapons, was the sole decisive element necessary to win any future war; and was therefore the sole means necessary to deter an adversary from launching a Pearl Harbor like surprise attack or war against the United States.”

“That is a breathtaking assertion,” I said. “Like some of the things Secretary Rumsfeld used to say.”

“Well, it certainly was a transformational doctrine. The Air Force leadership proposed that it should be funded by the Congress to build a large fleet of long-range strategic heavy bombers, beginning with the B-36 Peacemaker bomber.”

“I have seen the one they have at Wright-Patt Air Base. It is impressive.”

“You can imagine that SECNAV Forrestal was opposed to that, and he continued to oppose it when he became the first SECDEF. The Navy’s position was that the triumph of the aircraft carriers in the Pacific War demonstrated the importance of fielding a new class of super-carriers, the first of which was to be the USS United States.”

“So the fight was between weapons systems? I said.

“Only so much money to go around,” said Mac. “Something had to give, and when Truman appointed Louis Johnson to replace Forrestal, the balance shifted to the Air Force. The Navy leadership believed that wars could not be won by strategic bombing alone, and that preemptive use of the A-bomb was immoral.”



(USS *United States*, pictured in drydock with her keel laid. Official Navy Photo)

“Though the carrier would have carried atomic weapons, of course.”

“Of course,” said Mac. “Less than a year after he took office, and without consultation with the Congress, he cancelled the *United States*. Then he announced that all the aircraft in the Marine Corps would be transferred to the Air Force, just as the Army’s had.”

“Good golly. That must have caused an uproar in Congress.”

“It did, and several admirals resigned in protest. See, the Air Force could not control Naval Aviation, and Johnson sought to shut down procurement of new platforms not controlled by the blue-suiters.”

“Obviously the Navy couldn’t take that laying down,” I said indignantly.

Mac clasped his hands. “They didn’t. A little group called OP-23 was stood up by 31-knot Burke, the destroyer hero from the Southwest Pacific. Arleigh was just a Captain then, and the group began to quietly collect operational intelligence on the flight characteristics of the

B-36. What do you know, an anonymous document then hit the offices on The Hill, claiming that the B-36 was a "billion-dollar blunder" and alleging fraud on the part of B-36 contractors.”

“Nothing has changed, has it?” I said, smiling. “Do you think the Good Doctor will ever finish the biography of Admiral Burke?”

“Maybe. But this is part of that story, too, and gets better,” said Mac. “The document accused Secretary Johnson of having a direct conflict of interest, since he had been on the Board at Convair, the airplane manufacturer that built the Peacemaker.”

“That is hardball,” I said. “Amazing.”

“RADM Dan Gallery, the guy who captured the German U- Boat 505 and the Enigma coding machines, went on the offensive, too. He published an series of articles in The Saturday Evening Post. The last one was called "Don't Let Them Scuttle the Navy!" It was so inflammatory that Johnson wanted Gallery court-martialed for gross insubordination. CNO Denfeld got caught in the crossfire and was dismissed, and SECNAV Sullivan was asked to resign.”

“I wondered why Gallery never got beyond two stars,” I said. “I never heard that he had been tried in court.”

“He wasn’t, but the articles ended his career, even if he was one of the more noted heroes of the surface Navy.”

“So what happened to resolve the revolt?”

“A circus in Congress in 1949. The House Armed Services Committee found no substance to the charges against Johnson, that the anonymous paper was erroneous about the B-36, and the Navy civilian who penned it should be fired. The Committee held that the Army and Air Force were not qualified to pass judgment on aircraft carrier design. Arleigh Burke and Op-23 were not fingered, so the greatest CNO in Navy history kept his career, and eventually transformed the service into a modern force.”

“And this probably suggested to someone that the Joint Chiefs be strengthened to keep the children from fighting.”

“Omar Bradley, the last five-star of the nine appointed, was Chairman. He called the Navy a bunch of “Fancy Dans.”

“I imagine the whole argument shifted when the Soviets detonated their first bomb in December.”

“And it completely changed the next year when the North Koreans came south. But Service unification really didn’t really come to pass until Goldwater-Nichols was passed thirty five years later,” said Mac. “But at the time, I was more concerned with shipping my car to England to worry too much about the next class of Aircraft carrier, but of course, you know which one she was, and for whom she was named.”

I nodded. “CV-59, the USS *Forrestal*. My home from 1988 to 1990.”

Peter put the black folder with the tab on the table in front of us. Mac reached for his wallet, but I grabbed the check. “You had three ginger ales, and I got all the wine,” I said. “I was up in Philly a few weeks ago and was surprised to see that *JFK* and *Forrestal* are up there at Pier 4 at the Naval Shipyard. I hear FID is going to be sunk as a fishing reef.”

“Easy come, easy go,” said Mac, as we rose to leave.

“I still want to hear about your meeting with Eisenhower.”

“Then I imagine we will have to come back, won’t we?”



(USS *Kennedy* (CV-67) left, and USS *Forrestal* (CV-59) right, being prepared for scrapping. Navy photo.)

Liking Ike



(First Supreme Commander, Allied Forces Europe Dwight Eisenhower in his office in Paris, 1951. US Army photo.)

Monday is a fine day to stop at Willow after work in early October, and I had a lot of questions for Mac. He enjoys the \$5 bar menu and a ginger ale or two, and he is hungrier now that he has engaged a personal fitness trainer. He is determined to get out and about more, now that his arm has healed, and though he drives to the restaurant from the Madison Assisted Living high-rise across the street, he is looking fit and feisty these days.

Mac favors an aloha shirt under his sport coat, sort of Hawaii business casual, and he was seated at the corner of the bar next to Old Jim, who is probably twenty-five years younger than Mac. Big Jim the burly bartender was talking about what the Steelers did yesterday.

They won, 28-10, over the Browns, and for the record, he was feeling pretty expansive about it.

I slid onto the stool next to Mac and asked Jim for a glass of their cheapest white, which is our joke about the very good quality wine they pour at special happy hour prices. I noticed that Sabrina was looking good, all in black, which is Tracy O'Grady's uniform for the bar staff. The wait-staff in the dining room wear white

shirts, which helps me sort out where I am after several stories and the accompanying beverages.

Peter patted me on the back as he went by to serve a table of smartly dressed professional women.

“So you never got around to telling me how you met President Eisenhower,” I said, opening my notebook next to my right hand and producing a pen.

“Well,” said Mac, “I met all the Five Star Generals or Flag Officers. Ike was special though. He *was* President, but not of the United States. He had been recalled from his position as the chief executive of Columbia University to become the first Supreme Commander of Allied Forces Europe, the new NATO command in Paris.”

“There wasn’t an issue with him being recalled from civilian life?” I asked, making a note.

“No. Five-star officers were never considered to have left active duty. They retained military aides as long as they lived, as Admiral Nimitz did. Omar Bradley was the last of them alive. He died in 1981.”

“Was there an issue with Eisenhower being on active duty when he was elected President?” I asked. It had never occurred to me that there was an issue in that regard.

“No, Ike resigned his commission to serve as President. JFK recalled him to “active” duty when he took office to replace him, with a date of rank restored to the day he resigned.”

“Far out,” I said. “So what was the reason for your visit? It was in Paris?”

Mac nodded. “Ike arrived in Paris on New Year’s Day, 1951, and set up shop with his Planning Group at the Hotel Astoria. It was a nice location in the 8th Arrondissement, near the embassy and the Champs-Elysees and the Opera. Ike had a strange long office, with his desk in the middle. When we were shown in, he got up and walked toward us. He stuck out his hand and said “Eisenhower,” which was a bit surreal.”

“I imagine. He might have been the most famous American alive at that moment.”

“Indeed he was, and that is why they wanted him to be the first NATO Military Commander. There were a lot of details to be worked out, but with the Berlin Airlift just concluded the year before, the new battle lines of the Cold War were in place.”

“From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic an “iron curtain” has descended across the Continent,” I said, quoting Churchill’s words from the speech at Fulton, Missouri.

“And that is exactly why we were there to see him. We needed to get his permission to take a look behind the curtain. We could never do what we did without specific authorization.”

“And what was that?” I asked, thinking about the kinds of special reconnaissance programs that existed in the world before whizzing satellites.



(CINCNELM HQ, 7 North Audley Street, London, UK.)

“Well, that is a story all in itself. I got to London in 1950, and picked up my car at Southampton and got Billie settled in a flat not far from 20 Grosvenor Place, where the Navy had their headquarters.”

“I have been there a couple times,” I said. “The Fleet Ocean Surveillance Facility Europe was there before the consolidation with the Royal Navy’s facility at Northwood. We used the entrance on North Audley Street. You know the Navy moved out in 2009.”

“Pity. We had the building for a dollar-a-year lease that dated from 1942 when Admiral Stark moved in to establish COMNAVEUR. Ike briefly had his headquarters there before D-Day.”



(Ike's Statue gazing at his former Headquarters building.)

“I have a picture of his statue in the square, placed so he is looking at the building.”

“Better than looking at that ugly Embassy building. The Brits used to call it “Rooseveltplatz,” because it was so ugly.” Big Jim refreshed my wine and Mac took a sip of ginger ale a little wistfully, since the Quacks had restricted his alcohol consumption due to his medication. “Here was the situation. After the war, the primary Navy mission in the occupied countries was to disarm the Germans and round up the war material. There was a huge Scientific and Technical mission to assess the state of the art. There were some astonishing things in Hitler’s bag of tricks. Hydrogen Peroxide-powered subs were just one of the breakthroughs that never made it into the war. Jet bombers. Ballistic missiles. All manner of things that we scooped up, along with the German engineers who had created them.”

“Werner Von Braun and his team were collected under Operation Paperclip and relocated to Huntsville, Alabama,” I said.

“Yes. And the Russians were vacuuming up Eastern Europe, too. All the harbors had been cleared of mines and debris and the geographic area of responsibility had been dramatically expanded. So, the command’s name became was changed to Commander

in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. That was the command I reported to. Admiral Robert Carney became CINCNELM in December 1950.”

“So, what was it that Admiral Carney had to ask General Eisenhower’s permission to do?”

Mac smiled. “A thing called the Peacetime Aerial Reconnaissance Program.”

“PARPRO,” I said. “Flying around the periphery of the iron curtain to collect intelligence. That was around in my time, too.”

“Well, sometimes around it,” said Mac. “And sometimes right into it. But that is going to take another ginger ale. And what we told Ike helped mold his vision for what he was going to do as president.”

“Which was?”

“Open skies,” said Mac. “And in more ways than one.”

“They tried to change the name of the program a few years ago. They wanted to call it ‘PRCSO,’ or Peacetime Reconnaissance and Sensitive Operations. It was an unfortunate acronym, since it came out “prick-so.””

Mac smiled. “They also called it “SENSINT,” and you would be surprised at what went on.”



I wrote it down in capital letters. “Tell me more, Sir.” And so, he did.

(Navy PARPRO P2V2 Mariner. Oil painting.)

"In those days, the military was still filled with combat veterans who understood how to successfully approach a target. We knew that the electro-magnetic response to perceived threat could be mapped and plotted. Sometimes we would run attack profiles on Russian installations to see what would happen, breaking off before we broke the sovereign territory. Although it was peacetime, we felt we needed to be ready for war at

any moment, and the more we knew about where the Soviet radars were located would enable successful strikes. If we needed to do it, that is." He looked across the bar to the well-stocked liquid reserve behind it.

"We flew specially-configured aircraft along the Soviet littorals, and those of their Warsaw Pact satellites to see what lit up and how their air defense command reacted. The dramatic developments around the successful penetration of the Manhattan Project made the interior of the Soviet Union a most important target, and there was talk of a growing "missile gap" in terms of capability between what would become the binary super powers. And that led to one of Ike's biggest crises."

"You mean the U-2 shoot down in 1960?"

Mac nodded. "Not a good morning for anyone after that. I was back in the States by then, but the fact that the Soviets had developed a surface to air missile capable of reaching the U-2 at altitude changed everything."

"I read that Lee Harvey Oswald had been a radar operator assigned to Atsugi, Japan, where the missions originated. He would have been able to tell them just how high and fast the U-2s could go."

"That would be an interesting aspect of his defection to the Soviet Union in October of 1959. I have some thoughts about all that, and the Crown Jewels and LBJ. We can talk about that sometime."

I nodded, wondering if Mac knew something about one of the other great mysteries of the American Century. "Thankfully we had developed an on-orbit capability by then," Mac said. "And no one ever was able to bag one of the CIA OXCARTs. Those and the SR-71 Air Force sisters are the most amazing airplanes that ever flew."

Mac nodded in agreement and took a sip of ginger ale. "I am tired of the medication that makes me drink this stuff instead of beer," he said. "But like Ike, sometimes you just have to do what you have to do."

Witch Hunts



(Senator Joe McCarthy is advised by attorney Roy Cohn during Senate hearings).

There is a lot of talk about Russian interference in the US election recently- the cyber hacks that CIA insists were a Russian job and the FBI which has a more cautious view on the ability to attribute the thefts to Moscow. It will be a political football for the incoming Administration (assuming it does) with the idea that Mr. Putin wanted Mr. Trump to win the election, and took action to muddy the electoral waters.

I don't know how that is going to turn out, but it is nothing new. The Soviets had been inside the United States government for decades, we still recall the witch-hunts that followed. Maybe we can have another one.

I remember talking with Mac at Willow sometime in March of 2012. There had been a flurry of news about an ancient Army counter-intelligence program called VENONA. We were trying to get him out when he felt up to it, and he is a rock star to the Regulars at the Amen Corner. I did not bother to take notes. My leg was bothering me still, and we talked about the future rather than the past, which included plans for the 70th anniversary celebration of the Battle of Midway, and whether or not we should wear tuxedos for the Ball (Mac said he wouldn't). He is at an age where he gets to establish the dress code, and

we all supported him.

We had been talking about the great pivot in his career- the chance meeting with Admiral Forrest Sherman in the passageway at Main Navy which stood over on Constitution Avenue, now the site of the Vietnam Memorial.

Mac had come back to DC from Hawaii in 1946, and the transfer to the Restricted Line-Special Duty Intelligence occurred just as the Admiral had told him. He joked later that he never ran into the guys whose name was dropped from the list. He married Billie, and served for a year in the Pentagon and at Foggy Bottom as an editor on the Diplomatic Cable, a summary product of the War Department, Navy and State. That written product is the lineal antecedent of today's National Intelligence Daily, the famous 'NID.' I don't know if President Truman got a daily brief on its contents (the literature suggests the Arlington Hall VENONA decryptions were not passed to FDR while he was alive, nor to Truman, though one would think that at least the magnitude of the penetration of the Roosevelt Administration by Communists and Fellow Travelers would have contributed to Harry's muscular response to Uncle Joe Stalin in the great defense re-organization that culminated in the passage of the 1948 National Security Act.

Then there was the VENONA matter, which we touched on often on the way to understanding the immediate post-war challenges to the code-breakers in the Army and Navy, who would be brought together by President Truman in the Armed Forces Communications Agency, headquartered at Arlington Hall Station across the street from where I live. It was a spectacular breach of the Soviet clandestine communications security, brought about by the exigencies of the German advance on Moscow: the print plant that produced one-time-use keys had screwed up and some 35,000 duplicate key number pages. The pads were distributed to Soviet NKVD agents in North America, among others, and made their communications vulnerable to cryptanalysis.

VENONA

~~TOP SECRET~~



- 2 -

3/NBF/T1795 (of 12/7/66)

- [i] KAL'MARO: X Unidentified covername. This is presumably the same word as French CALMAR, Spanish CALAMAR, Italian CALANARO, Russian KAL'MAR = SQUID. Possibly a dialectal form. Also occurs as an addressee in MOSCOW's Nos. 424 and 427 of 28th April 1946 (3/NBF/T1797 and 1798).
- [ii] FINO: X Unidentified. This could be
(a) a covername FINAUD = CRAFTY
(b) the common French surname FINOT.

(1966 Analyst notes on a declassified VENONA intercept).

Nothing is easy, of course, and the body of the messages contained more code names for actual agents, but the stage was set for a serious controversy in the secret world. Army's Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence (G-2) Carter W. Clarke, a fierce anti-communist with no love for Uncle Joe and the sneaking suspicion that he might strike a separate peace with Hitler. Clarke initiated the program in 1943 to examine the cables sent in 1942 and the end of the war, when Human Intelligence about the compromise was received from an NKVD asset in the G-2 organization. The pads were recalled and replaced by the NKVD, but there was enough material for hundreds of analysts to work for four decades on the identities of the Russian Agents.

Mac did not work on the project directly, but he had a knowledge of it from his time at Arlington Hall later, before moving the Navy element to Fort Meade. VENONA also set the stage and context for the Red Scare and the witch hunts to come, with a commie under every bed.

The slight problem was that the Soviets might not have been under every bed in Washington, but some of the ones they *did* hide under contained some very important people. Moscow had people in strategic places across the Agencies, and was tipped to the vulnerability fairly early on. The bulk of the successfully decrypted messages were harvested only up to 1945. An Army officer named Bill Weisband, a native Russian, was the mole who probably disclosed the success of the operation to his handlers in Moscow.



(William Weisband)

From 1941 to 1942, Weisband was an NKVD agent and handler of other moles in government and industry after service in North Africa and Italy. He was a gregarious fellow, and made fast friends in the community. Assigned to the Soviet Section at Arlington Hall in 1945, his fluent Russian made him valuable to both his ostensible and real employers. Weisband had access to all areas of Arlington Hall's Soviet work, including the Western atomic scientists who cooperated with the Soviets at least as early as 1944.

The Soviets apparently had monitored Arlington Hall's "Russian Section" since at least 1945. Weisband's earliest reports tipped off the Russians, and accordingly, Soviet authorities changed their diplomatic code and the VENONA Project decrypts dried up. He and Mac were posted to London at about the same time. Weisband never was accused of espionage, for fear that he would publicly disclose VENONA's existence.

The massive number of cables archived were still very useful and helped investigators to build evidence against the Rosenberg Atom Ring and British spies Klaus Fuchs, Donald McLean and Guy Burgess. The sensational trials that ensued were based on evidence and identity provided by the cryptologic source that had to be protected. The ambiguity of the code names in the VENONA documents made complete certainty on other suspected Soviet assets like Alger Hiss, organizer of the 1945 founding conference of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, or Presidential Adviser Harry Hopkins problematic until the material was eventually released

The issue was an uncomfortable one for Progressive New Dealers who had supported our wartime Soviet ally and who had become embedded throughout the government during FDR's long tenure in office.

As professionals in the business, I do not have to delve too deeply into the Sources and Methods aspect of the story, and a lot of the bar-room conversation had a sort of cryptic wink-and-a-nod aspect to it. VENONA was a gift that kept on giving. Although only the years 1942-44 yielded much actionable data, the files were worked all the way up to 1980 before cryptologic resources were moved on to more pressing issues.

As professionals, we have all followed the remarkable opportunity for the analysts to cross-index the code-word agents with the Archives of the KGB in the early 1990s, smuggled out of Russia by former archivist Vasili Mitrokhin about his thirty years in the First Directorate Records Section.

That is the correlation between Alger Hiss and former Communist Whittaker Chambers in the Pumpkin papers and the Trial of Some Other Century. Enter Tail Gunner Joe, Dick Nixon and Ray Cohn the great witch-hunt, the real dimensions of which would have startled Old Joe, had he known the extent of all the networks. All the players in the witch hunts would take their turns on the stage as Mac was off having lunch with Tito (among others) during his assignment with CINCNELM in Naples and London.

The ambiguity of guilt became a litmus test of political views across Our Fair City, since the very basis of the then-available evidence was likewise ambiguous. Senior army officers, in consultation with the FBI and CIA, made the decision to restrict knowledge of VENONA within the government. Army Chief of Staff Omar Bradley was concerned about the White House's history of leaking sensitive information, leading to the conclusion that senior aids to FDR were also Soviet sources,

The consensus today, after 40 years of analysis, is "yes." in the person of Harry Hopkins and with Hiss at State and Harry Dexter White at Treasury, the Soviets had their bases thoroughly covered. Based on the news, I guess they still do.

Bradley decided to deny President Truman direct knowledge of the project, and the "fact of" (absent the proof of the decrypts) in the CI and Intel summaries contributed to the...ambiguity. To some degree, Bradley's decision to keep the secret was counter-productive; Truman was distrustful enough of J. Edgar Hoover at FBI, and suspected the reports of Soviet penetration were exaggerated to obtain political leverage for the Bureau.



(Alger Hiss testifies in the Pumpkin Papers trial).

As we knew at the Willow Bar, Alger Hiss dined out on his persecution by McCarthy for decades, maintaining his innocence to the end. Only with the Moynihan Commission in the 1990s did the truth come out that Hiss was in fact identified as a Soviet agent through VENONA. In a crowning burst of rhetoric, hired legal gun Bill Kunstler made one of his last great quotes in 1995 (he died that year) when the Commission on Government Secrecy reported out. He claimed the Army had forged the whole VENONA project to discredit honest Americans.

I miss Senator Moynihan. He was a reliable Democrat, of course, but he was also a legislator who thought, and was not afraid of where the facts might lead his formidable intellect. We all have our limitations, though. Legislative insiders advised to try to do necessary business with the Senator before lunch on a working day.

I liked that version of Washington a lot better than today's edition, though it appears that some of the players are constant. At least it was a lot slower back then, and less daily evil could be accomplished.

Mac and Liz



(Elisabeth-with-an-S, a known attorney and mixologist, with Mac at the Willow Bar, 04 November 2010. Photo Socotra)

Approaching from the west on Fairfax Drive, I saw Mac's champagne-colored Jag parked in the premier spot at the curb directly in front of Willow's patio. It had been raining all day, grim and gray and persistent, and the umbrellas were pulled down, somber, and water puddled the red paving bricks.

It was a good day to be indoors, and in a place that was nice and dry. I needed to get away from the roar of the industrial fan that has been blowing cold air to dry the seams in the parquet floors at Big Pink since the flood. It was like living on the ship, working or sleeping near one of the great ventilators that forced air deep into the steel leviathan.

Unplugging the thing brought on a sudden silence that did not

bring relief. Instead, it made me uneasy, just as it did on the ship when things went silent and that meant trouble.

There was no trouble at Willow, though. Old Jim was parked in his usual place at the corner of the bar, contemplating a cold long-neck Bud with earbuds from his iPod plugged into both ears.

I slapped him on the shoulder as I slid into the stool on the other side of the corner. "What did you do with Mac?" I asked. "His car is out front."

Jim scowled at me and unscrewed one of his earpieces. "What?" he said.

I repeated my question and he shrugged. “Don’t know. I don’t have the duty today.”

“What are you listening to?” I asked. “You come to a bar to have some human interaction and then tune us out.”

“I am listening to Joan Baez,” he said with dignity. “And *you* just got here. Cool your jets.” I looked up and saw the Admiral opening the outer door to the bar. He was wearing a bright red sweater and an amiable grin under his tan windbreaker.

“I wondered where you were,” I asked. “I saw your car and thought you were here already.”

“I was having a radio moment. Have you heard about the engine problems on the new mega-Airbus?”

“Between the cargo bombs from those jerks in Yemen and the Rolls-Royce engine problems, I am staying away from cargo jets and any airplane that has more than 400 seats.”

“How goes the flood?” asked Jim, rolling up the cords to his earphones.

“The rug guys are coming tomorrow morning to pick up the waterlogged tribal,” I said as I slid down a seat to let Mac sit between us. “Things may work out on that front. The plumber installed an aircraft-grade braided stainless feed to the ice-maker to replace the plastic one that failed. “

Mac smiled. “The lesson, which we learn again and again, is to *never* go low-budget on things that handle water or electricity. The effects can be catastrophic.”

I grimaced. “There are undoubtedly plastic connectors in the units above me. That’s the hazard of an older building that has had significant and undisciplined modifications,” I declared. “All of them at ‘lowest cost, technically feasible,’ if I can borrow from government language. And of course the phrase is nonsense.”

Peter slid gracefully down the alley behind the bar with a sparkling tulip glass and a bottle of the Happy Hour loss-leader white. He knew what I would be having and did not have to ask. Mac leaned forward and said “I will have a Bell’s, Kalamazoo’s finest.”

I started to sing the lyrics to the old song as I saw foppish John-with-an-H enter the bar with a poker face. He stopped by Jim, handed something over, and then disappeared to his customary seat down the bar without a word.

“Did he pay up?” I asked. Jim smiled broadly. There had been a C-note on the outcome of the election in Nevada, and Jim was dead-on about Harry Reid, the fall of the House and the Democrat defense of the Senate.

“Damn straight,” he said. “The man may be an idiot, but he is an honorable one. Unusual here in Washington.”

I took a sip of white wine and felt my mood rising. That was accompanied by a glimpse of Elisabeth-with-an-S who was working the restaurant side of the bar this afternoon. She is-hate to say it- a willowy young woman with a graceful swan-like neck and auburn hair usually pulled back in a pony-tail.

She is a graduate of one of the Case Western Reserve Law School, and she is bar-tending and working the tables just until she pays off the tuition bills, which she calculates will be by early 2032. “Hey, Elizabeth,” I called out. “There is someone you need to meet.”

I introduced her to Mac, who beamed with approval. He may be getting on in years, but he is still dapper and likes the ladies. He was proud of the new crimson sweater he purchased at Macy’s that day to start the cool weather season. “Elisabeth was part of that crazy Halloween party. She wore a pink camouflage mini-dress with a matching fore-and-aft cap that was disturbing on several levels.”

Mac smiled. “Pleased to meet you,” he said, contemplating the image.

“Likewise, I am sure,” responded Elisabeth, sticking out her hand to take his.

“The Admiral is one of the last survivors of Fleet Admiral Nimitz’s staff in World War two, and one of the architects of the victory at Midway.”

“I was a code-breaker,” said Mac. “They don’t teach the history of Midway in the schools any more.”

“I have heard about the battle,” she said, smiling. I suspect she humors us just like Peter and Big Jim and Sabrina do. “I have to set up for the dinner service. I will be seeing you boys around the restaurant.”

“The pleasure is ours,” I said, suddenly remembering that there was a point to our meeting at Willow. I reached for my notebook and pull out my Pilot G-2 micro-fine gel pen. Serious business calls for serious tools.

“I wanted to talk to you about 1950, and why you were transferred to Naples and back to London, and the best job you ever had in the Navy.”

Mac looked thoughtful. “That would be my time as a liaison officer at the British Admiralty with Nick. Nick Cheshire, that is. He was the greatest Russian naval analyst the Brits ever had. Spoke Russian, since his father had married a lovely Russian lady.”

“How did you wind up at the Admiralty?” I asked, writing hastily.

Mac paused to let my pen keep up with his words. “Captain Ford was the N2. I was sent to relieve Ted Rifenburgh as the CINCNELM Current Intelligence Officer. Later in his career, Ted wound up commanding the Naval Investigative Service, but while I was en route to London with Billie, Ted managed to wrangle a six-month extension to line up for another set of orders.”

“So there was no job for you when you arrived.”

“Correct. Captain Ford decided he would rotate me through the elements in the Intelligence Division a couple weeks at a time. Those were Current Intel with Ted, Technical Intelligence, Merchant Shipping, Political Intelligence and Admiralty Liaison.”

“Which did you like best?” I asked.

“Oh, Admiralty liaison beyond a doubt. That was one of the highlights of my career, working with Nick on the Russian Navy problem. Nick understood the Office of Naval Intelligence Y1 organization and our intelligence products. When I got to the Admiralty there were two other Americans embedded there doing merchant ship activities.”

“That was a prototype for the modern mission, right? Like integrating Lloyds shipping data with operational reporting?”

“Close. Remember, we were working on five-by-eight index cards to keep our records. I got a chance to work direct with Nick on the Russian Current problem.”

“That would have meant looking for intelligence on the new Russian Cruisers, right? Was Commander “Buster” Crabb murdered by the Russians while you were there? The Crabb Affair has never been solved for sure.”



(Commander Lionel “Buster” Crabb in Gibraltar. Photo Imperial War Museum.)

“No, that happened later, in 1956, when he tried the under-hull scuba swim when the *Sverdlov*-class cruiser *Ordzhonikidze* made a port call in Portsmouth. But we certainly were hungry for any information we could get. The *Sverdlov*-class cruisers were the first post-war construction Soviet warships, and it was clear that Stalin was committed to supporting Admiral Gorshkov in building a world-class fleet.”

“Those must have been heady times,” I said.

“Nick Cheshire wanted me to stay. But that was when Admiral Carney had to deal with the establishment of NATO, and the new structure of the Alliance in Europe. That is why we moved CINCNELM to Naples. I was picked to be Rudy Fabians’s Deputy, and so off we went. Best tour in the Navy, though, working at the Admiralty.”

“How did you get the family to Naples,” I asked.

“We drove. But that is going to take another Bell’s.” The Admiral waved to Peter, and I took a pause to drink some of that marvelously crisp white wine.



(Sverdlov-Class Cruiser *Sverdlov* underway in the Black Sea. Official US Navy Photo.

Regime Change



(Demonstration in Tehran, 1953, opposing Operation AJAX. Photo Public Radio International).

“I told you the other day that I was sent to London in May of 1950 from DC.” I nodded in agreement, and got out my pen and prepared to take notes. “I rented the flat, picked up our 1949 Mercury four-door sedan at Southampton. We drove it to get around in London, and then took it on the car-ferry across the Channel to France and drove down to the Alps and the Italian frontier. Then, a year or so later, when we were in Naples and getting ready to go back to London, we had the start of the troubles with Iran that are still going on today.”

“I was in the *Midway* battle group when they seized the U.S. Embassy in November of 1979, so I have been glaring at them in repressed anger my entire professional career,” I said grimly. “Assholes.”

“It goes back further than that, probably to about the time you were born,” said Mac with a laugh. Big Jim deposited a ginger ale in front of him on the rich dark bar and a tulip glass half-filled with whatever Willow was pouring for happy hour white. It was always good, and I just had to specify the color.



(Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mossaddegh, 1951).

“Here is how it started, as I recall. It caused quite a stir at the time. With the near unanimous support of the *Majlis*, the Iranian parliament, Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh nationalized the British-owned Anglo-Iranian Oil Company. We knew it as AIOC.”

I took a deep swig of wine and said “They always seem to be taking things from somebody.”

“Well, in fairness, the 1933 agreement under which AIOC was operating was widely regarded as exploitative and an infringement on Iran's sovereignty. That was in 1951.”

“That was the British Empire, and it was the very year I was born,” I said with wonder. “That is a long time to hold a grudge.”

“Consider the grudge the Shias have for the Sunnis, and vice versa for enduring hostility. With the British Services, we overthrew the Mosaddegh government and installed the Shah, who ruled for a quarter century.”

“I recall that vividly, Sir. And the Iranians at naval Air Station Pensacola who were being trained to fly the F-14 Tomcats and F-4 Phantoms we sold him.”

“We were deployed to the Indian Ocean during all that,” I said. “We all thought the Carter Administration demonstrated weakness in dealing with it. The overthrow of the

Pahlavi dynasty in February 1979 made everyone in the region nervous. We wound up there twice in little more than a year. It was the start of the bad blood.”

“Well, from the vantage point in Europe and Washington, the 1953 coup looked justified. But for many Iranians, the coup demonstrated duplicity by the United States. They called us hypocrites for presenting ourselves as defenders of liberty, but willing to use treachery to suit our own economic and strategic interests.”

“If we don't who will?” I replied. “But is the Iranian reaction why Ike was soft on the Suez Crisis a few years later?”

”I don't know about that. For context, you have to remember that Iran's oil was the British government's single largest overseas investment. The Brits had played fast and loose with the terms of the concession that dated back to before the war. The Iranian workers who produced the crude were poorly paid and lived in slums. There was skullduggery, too. The Brits owned 51% of the company and bankrolled disruptive tribal elements and bribed officials to get what they wanted.”

“The Iranians blamed Britain for most of its problems and public support for nationalization was passionate.”

“Death to Britain,” I said, raising a fist. Big Jim the bartender raised his right arm in solidarity.

“It was quite the affair. The Brits imposed a worldwide boycott of Iranian oil to pressure them economically, though the Attlee Government decided not to land troops to seize the refineries. With Churchill back at Number 10 Downing Street and Ike in the White House, opinion opposing a coup faded and they decided on what we call ‘Regime Change’ to oust Mossadegh.”



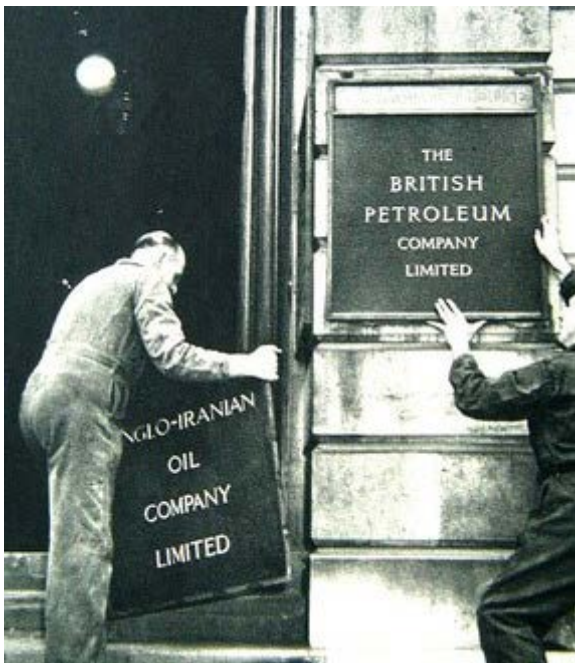
(Shah of Shans, Reza Pahlavi).

That must have been something to watch from London,” I said, swirling the pale golden wine in my glass.”

“Yes indeed. The coup was known as Operation AJAX, and required the Shah to dismiss Mossadegh from office. His family had to be bribed lavishly to get him to do it, but he came through in August of 1953 and got rid of him. The CIA’s candidate, General Fazlollah Zahedi, was installed as Prime Minister “

“And they have hated us ever since,” I said. “It is amazing it has been going on this long, and it looks like they will continue to export terror.”

“I wouldn't be surprised in the slightest,” said Mac, and the conversation meandered along through other times and places as it always did at the bar of the fabulous Willow restaurant.



("Under New Management.")



The White Palace

(The White Palace, Belgrade, Serbia. Photo AP)

I looked down at my notes spread across Willow's rich wood bar. The happy hour wine made me mellow, and Mac's stories were washing over me, not sepia toned at all, but real, as if no time had passed at all since those people and those events occurred.

"The Peacetime Aerial Reconnaissance Program- PARPRO- issue was part of what we did out of North Audley Street at CINCNELM in London," said Mac. "But it wasn't *all* of it by any means. There is all sorts of spooky stuff involved, and some activities that did not happen in the sky are still locked away in vaults."

"I know," I said. "I wonder if anyone still has those indoctrination sheets we signed, saying we would never reveal those programs under penalty of law?"

"If they still have any of mine, I would be surprised," he said, with a dismissive wave. "Paper disintegrates. Suffice it to say that Ike's feelings about the U2 program were shaped by his experience with the PARPRO missions in Europe, and the urgent necessity to assess what the Kremlin was up to with heavy bombers, rockets and atom weapons. As President, he supported all the technology that eventually made the US over-flights of denied territory unnecessary."

"Too bad that Gary Francis Powers had to get bagged on the last U2 flight over the Soviet Union," I said.



(Admiral Robert Bostwick Carney, USN. Official Navy Photo).

Mac frowned. “Too true. But it was not supposed to be the last flight, though we were trying to stop. Tensions were high about the matter. And of course we were not in London for long. Admiral Carney became CINCNELM in December 1950, after I bounced around the staff for about six months. In June 1951, Carney assumed additional duty as Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe and CINCNELM Headquarters was moved from London to Naples to become CINCSOUTH. I had to find a new place for my family to live.”

“Italy is funny,” I laughed, thinking of the renowned hooker Humpty Dumpty, who sat on the wall next to the road between the Naval Support Activity, Naples, and AFSOUTH HQ plying her trade with the Campfire Girls.



(Humpty Dumpty, the Neapolitan Ambassador of Goodwill).

"Well there is that. People said she and her comrades had been working that location since the Germans built the compound in WWII. But there were more strange customs. For example, when people moved out of rental quarters, they take the light fixtures out of the walls. I had to run around Naples to find replacements to mount so Billie and I could see. Did I tell you about having lunch with Tito?"

"You have mentioned it in passing, but how on earth did that happen? You were just a Lieutenant Commander, having lunch with the most powerful figure in the non-aligned world."



(USS *Des Moines* (CA-134). Official Navy photo).

Mac smiled. "Special opportunity. It was December, 1951. Lieutenant Art Newel and I were sent from Naples to the northern Adriatic Sea. It was approaching Christmas, and we embarked in the Heavy Cruiser USS *Des Moines* (CA-134), Flagship of the SIXTH Fleet. We were headed for a berth downtown in the splendid Adriatic port of Rijeka. We are riding a mountain of gray steel bristling with guns, and it is the first to visit Communist Yugoslavia since World War II."

"The people of the city are still getting used to the name Rijecka," I said. "Sort of like Ho Chi Minh City for the old Saigon. The Italians who had seized it at the Treaty of Rome in 1924- those that were still left- called it Fiume. When Tito's partisans arrived in 1945, 58,000 of the 66,000 Italian speakers fled the city, choosing exile to Communism."

"Summary executions of hundreds of alleged 'Fascists' followed the occupation, and there was a well of bitterness filled that only the strong man in Belgrade could keep from overflowing. The Croats walked tall in the picturesque city, having thrown off decades of enforced Italianization."

“Rijeka then had the hallmarks of a great port, desired by all the powers. By turns, it had been Roman, Croatian, Hungarian, Yugoslav, Italian, German and then Yugoslav once more. It was Tito's deepest incision into the European continent. An international force including American doughboys had even occupied the port briefly in 1919. Now we were back, eighteen hundred SIXTH Fleet sailors ready to go on liberty in a city that, until the day before, had been behind the Iron Curtain.” Liz-with-an-S came by to top off my white wine and Mac smiled.

“There was plenty of potent slivovitz- plum brandy- waiting for our sailors ashore, and pretty girls and the other delights of the harbor that warm the hearts of all seafaring men. But of course Art and I were *not* going on liberty. We waited impatiently for the brow to go across from the high gray hull down to the quay. We had an airplane to meet, since the Major General who commanded Military Intelligence was coming by DC-3 to escort us to Belgrade.”

“See, the real meaning of this port call was a state luncheon with Marshall Josef Broz Tito, which would help broker a deal to try to help Tito balance the naval might of the SIXTH Fleet against the massive presence of the Red Army to the north and east.”

Photo # NH 81907 VAdm. Matthias B. Gardner on board ship at Nice, France, circa 1951-1952



“Vice Admiral Matthias Bennett Gardner, USN, was in command, and Art and I were hand selected to provide intelligence support to the mission. Admiral Carney, CINCNELM in Naples, had authorized us to go with Gardner as his representatives,

though he was confident that the SIXTH fleet commander could negotiate adroitly.”

I was scribbling furiously.

“Gardner was uniquely qualified in that regard. He was not only a naval officer, but a naval aviator. The innate traits of each reinforced each other, and gave him the confidence to make big decisions without a lot of fuss.”

“In 1945, while at a conference at a military conference at the Cairene Hotel in Egypt, he had selected the border between Russian and American-occupied Korea by gesturing at the 38th parallel. That matter was under armed discussion at the same time that *Des Moines* arrived in the harbor.”

“Rijeka's airport is still awkward to get to even today, being located on an island adjacent to the city. There are distinct advantages to bringing your own boats to visit, and I highly recommend it if you have a ship large enough to carry one. It provides a lot of flexibility.”

"I will remember that," I said taking a sip of wine. "But I think it is highly unlikely I will ever embark a gray hull again. Cruise ship, maybe, though I have never completely accepted the idea of going to sea for fun."

“The General's DC-3 swept down out of the gray skies and picked us up, quickly turning around for the flight to Belgrade.”

“There were three days of talks in the capital, and we took up residence at the home of the American Legation United States Naval Attaché, or ALUSNA for short. He was a destroyerman by training. I will not mention his name, for reasons that will become plain enough, and he was an efficient and tightly-buttoned academy type. He was a prototypical Blackshoe, or ship-driver, just as Vice Admiral Gardener was an Airdale, or dauntless bird-man.”

“Oil and water, or water and air, are those types. In those days, only two types of warriors earned special golden badges that proclaimed their specialties: submariners and aviators. The bubbleheads drove diesel subs and wore their golden dolphins with grim pride. They smelled bad when they got back- if they got back- from their dangerous undersea patrols. The Aviators wore the Wings of Gold, and smelled a lot better after an arrested landing on a pitching deck, provided they had not soiled themselves in fright.” Mac smiled at the memory. “I started out as a Deck Officer, which is what they called Surface War as you know, and our blouses were unadorned with golden warfare devices. We were what the Navy did for a living, nothing particularly onerous, unless you consider dealing with

high-pressure steam propulsion and high explosives an inconvenience.”

“In Belgrade, once the sedans whisked us away from the airport, there was the official call on the U.S. Ambassador and the Chief of Mission, all of it leading up to the big lunch with the Marshal himself.”

“The situation in Belgrade was tense, and the *Informbiro* crisis still reverberated as a threat to the regime. Tito was under intense pressure from Stalin to toe the Moscow line, and he was not going to do it. He was confronted with the threat of invasion, or assassination, and he desperately needed a card to play against the Kremlin. The US Navy would provide him a jujitsu move, pitting the great continental land power against the undisputed ruler of the seas.”

“Belgrade was a depressing place in winter, dark and chill, filled with an air of sorrow tinged with manic tendencies. Art and I did not even want to go out shopping, which is one of the great skills of sailors assigned to the Mediterranean Fleet.”

“Like I said, we were billeted at the house of the ALUSNA. His long-suffering minion, the Assistant, was a Lieutenant named Mayo. He had to schlep the bags. Visiting delegations are the bane of overseas duty, and the more senior the members, the more stress. With VADM Gardener there was an emphasis on protocol, since he was the Fleet Commander, and Mayo’s boss the ALUSNA were both thoroughly old school.”

“The State Lunch was at the White Palace in the former royal compound in the exclusive Dedinje neighborhood. It was an imposing neo-Palladian pile, and is still so today if the pictures from the air campaign in the Balkans are to be believed. Famed architect Aleksandar Djordjevic designed it to the specification of the King and completed in 1936, though he never got to enjoy it. The King of the Croats, Serbs and Slovenes was murdered in 1934 while on a visit to Marseilles. The Queen and the children lived there until the war came, and her taste was reflected in the English Georgian and 19th-century Russian antiques she filled the place with. Tito took the place as his official residence when he took over, and he maintained the décor, which had been provided by the Jansen firm in Paris.”

“It was good stuff. Jackie Kennedy used Jansen when she redecorated the White House in the Camelot days, if I recall properly.”

“There was trouble in Camelot, from my experience, and there was trouble at the White Palace, too. As our sedans pulled up in the circular drive with the American diplomats and the naval officers in our Dress Blue uniforms, Tito's protocol officer nearly had a meltdown. VADM Gardner had a fat golden stripe and two smaller ones above it on his sleeves. The ALUSNA had four narrow gold stripes, indicating he was a Captain. I was wearing the two-and-a-half golden stripes of a Lieutenant Commander. There was a crisis of protocol.”

"I can only imagine. I have seen those tempests in teapots before," I said underlining the name of the architect of the White Palace on the bar-napkin I was using to take notes.

"What was this issue?"

"The burning question was this: was I too junior to dine at the same table with the Marshal of the Jugs?"

"The mission was in jeopardy, since the table had been set, and the slivovitz had been poured. The ALUSNA- the Naval attaché- was at his diplomatic best, though, and saved the day. "When I was a mere Lieutenant," he said primly, "I had dinner at the White House with *President* Roosevelt."

"FDR had been elected President four times, and the protocol people knew that Tito had only been elected once, on a yes-or-no basis. The ALUSNA's declaration sealed the deal. I was permitted entrance to the vast oval table in the formal dining room. The delegation was carefully seated by seniority, alternating Jugs and Americans, and based on my junior status, I was astonished to find myself placed directly opposite the Marshal's empty chair, the best seat in the house."

"Precisely in keeping with protocol, Tito swept in, severe in his unadorned gray tunic, accompanied by his senior staff and translator. He was in his prime in 1951, handsome and chiseled, and still with a martial carriage that reeked of authority."

"You have to remember, this was the man who had faced down Uncle Joe Stalin, alive and in the flesh. It was pretty impressive. Introductions were made, and the toasting began. Slivovitz plum brandy to start, plum brandy with food and wine, and plum brandy toasts after lunch. Diplomacy is hard business."



(Marshal Josef Broz Tito, 1951.)

“I noticed that the Marshal seemed to speak perfectly good English, even if the formal conversation had to go through the herky-jerky of translation. The Marshal laughed at the punch-lines to VADM Gardner's jokes before the translator could get to them.”

“The Marshal had a key question, and all the ceremony on both sides was just the scaffolding to hold it up for consideration. “What can you do for me?” Tito asked, waiting for the words to bubble through the translator.”

“VADM Gardner answered promptly, and with confidence. “We will send you an aircraft carrier, and put it Dubrovnik the second you need it. We will take you out on her, and show you flight operations. We will guarantee the security of the Adriatic.”

“Tito nodded. The matter was resolved, and the dining and jokes and toasting went on. Best Friends, forever. What do you call it on the internet? BFF?” I nodded and laughed at the notion, and Mac's knowledge of current social slang.

“Later in the Balkan afternoon, the gray sky was already darkening as the Marshal bade farewell to us and retired for a nap. The sedans pulled up and collected us for return to our billets at the ALUSNA's quarters on the hill.”

“Chief Yeoman Quinley was the OPSCO, the operations coordinator, enjoying the shore duty, and with the luncheon with Tito a grand success, he ensured that a celebration was in order.”

“The ALUSNA waved at the messman for whiskey, and our group settled down to discuss the future balance of power in the Eastern Mediterranean. We would be on an airplane back to Rejika in the morning, after all, and the heavy lifting was done. Only the reports remained to be written, and we juniors could handle that chore.”

“The whiskey on top of all the slivovitz might not have been the best of ideas. Somewhere along the course of the strategic discussion the matter of special compensation came up. The ALUSNA announced that he thought the concept of “Flight Pay,” a special bonus paid to aviators, was an affront to *real* Naval Officers, and should be immediately terminated.”

“As a Naval Aviator, VADM Gardner, was naturally interested by the assertion. He grew more and more engaged as the ALUSNA warmed to his topic, eventually becoming quite fixated. As the level of the whiskey in his glass went down, the attaché's voice went up in volume and he went on ranting for an astonishing length of time. Eventually Admiral

Gardner put his glass down and called for his car, saying he needed to call Washington.”

“When he got to the Embassy, he actually made *two* calls. He told the Chief of Naval Operations that he had secured a deal with the Jugs that was going to poke Uncle Joe Stalin right in the eye. It was a triumph of naval diplomacy. Then he placed a call to BuPers, and told the Chief of Naval Personnel to get that son-of-a-bitch attaché the hell out of the country.”

“When we arrived at the airport the next morning, we were a little under the weather, what with all the plum brandy and the whiskey on top. But not nearly as much as the ALUSNA, who had been directed by Washington to be on the plane that had already departed into the cloudy Balkan sky.”

There were smiles all around, and we dug in our back pockets to get our wallets and get on with the rest of the evening.

When I got back from Willow I did some research about the figures in Mac’s tale, which is how these things worked. Mac was so kind with his time, and patient with the questions posed by his impertinent interlocutors that we could go over the stories as many times as necessary to get it straight.

Uncle Joe Stalin died on the fifth of March, 1953. He might have been poisoned, and he might not. His successor, Nikolai Khrushchev, once he was convinced that the monster was really and truly dead, denounced him. He reconciled with Tito in 1956, and the Marshal had a lively career as an independent and mostly benevolent despot thereafter.

He was a considered a Father figure by most Jugs, and they sung rousing songs about him, and every year on the Marshall's birthday, a child was selected to make a small speech, hand him flowers, or present the ceremonial *stafeta* at the end of a relay race.”

“Of course there were problems, given the history of the region. But the Marshal maintained the semblance of unity by sending dissidents to work camps, or demoting them from positions of power.

With his death came the start of the horror of dissolution of the national agglomeration called Yugoslavia, created by the caprice of the Treaty of Versailles

Slobidon Milosovich lived in the White Palace for a while, but he is elsewhere now, and it has been given back to the Royal Family.

The ALUSNA in Belgrade was (eventually) rehabilitated, and continued a distinguished

career. He served another attaché tour, this one in Moscow. He died in 2007, then the oldest living graduate of Annapolis. He outlasted VADM Gardner by many decades, but never had a kind word for aviators or their flight pay.

USS *Des Moines* was laid up long ago. The Navy considered her too expensive to operate. After years of disintegration in the yard at Philadelphia, she was considered as a candidate to be a memorial ship in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The effort failed, since there was no public sentiment supporting the heavy cruiser's placement on the waterfront, and no apparent connection to the Badger State. She was cut up for scrap in Texas in 2008.

The US SIXTH Fleet continued to call on the Jugs, mostly at Dubrovnik, on the Dalmatian Coast, for the next fifty years. My pal Chuck was there for several visits in the Nineties, before and after things fell apart. He saw the graceful medieval Mostar bridge that unified the Muslim and Orthodox Christian sides of town, when it was up, when it was down, and eventually when the graceful structure was reconstructed.

He says the real thing was a lot better, but then, you would expect that. He was a SIXTH Fleet sailor, and thus a most discerning tourist.

We were just happy that Mac was still going strong, stronger than I am. He was 91 that Fall, though only slowing down on the consumption of slivovitz, at least on weeknights.

The High Line



(USS Des Moines, CA-134, in rising gale. Oil painting.)

Peter is a real pro of a mixologist, and the heart of the spirit of Willow's bar. He snuck up in his unflappable way and filled my tulip glass to the precise level for easy listening to Mac's story of lunch with Marshall Josef Broz Tito, Emperor of the Balkans and the Dalmatian Coast.

"The weather was crappy," said Mac. "But the Jugs were determined to get Admiral Gardner and our party back from Belgrade to his flagship in order to get the heavy cruiser

Des Moines underway from Rijeka on schedule.”

“The port visit was scheduled for four days, and four days only. Tito’s people were very strict about that. With the ALUSNA on his way back to Washington on the early flight to receive his dressing down, we boarded the plane and waited for a break in the clouds. The wind was freshening, and when we got airborne, it was a short but bumpy flight.”

“If *Des Moines* left on the 23rd, she had plenty of time to get to her next appointed mission, which was a Christmas Day visit to Athens. The intent was to buck up the liberals, who were having their problems with the local Communists. 1952 looked to be an unsettled year in Greece, and the presence of the big warship was just the right statement about America’s resolve.”

Mac looked at his Virgin Mary a bit pensively, and stirred the concoction with the celery stalk that rose from the red depths.

“Sedans were waiting at the airfield and whisked VADM Gardner and our party back to Des Moines with time to spare, and check the block for “Mission Complete.” At least it was “MC” for *him*. Art Newel and I still had to get back to Naples in order to make the Holiday with our families.” He took a sip of tomato juice. “Therein lies another tale.

“The notes of the meeting with Tito merited our expeditious handling in order to get them to Higher Headquarters. Admiral Gardner was once more insulated by the blue-tile linoleum of the Flag Spaces on the cruiser, and the unusual intimacy with us required by the mission was abruptly terminated once we crossed the Quarterdeck of the big ship. The icy remoteness of rank and command were once more imposed.”

“I hear that,” I said, taking a long swallow of pinot. “Traveling overseas with Congressmen, I actually came to believe they were real people. Unreasonable, but real.”

Mac smiled. “Rank in the Navy, as you know, is a thing of wonder. We live in such forced proximity at sea that the barriers between us consist of vertical social stratification, from the mess decks north through Officers Country to the Flag spaces in the superstructure.”

“*Des Moines* had her engineering plant on the line in preparation for getting underway, and we pulled out of the old Italian port that had become property of the Jugs, and proceeded into the teeth of a rising gale in somber colors: gray skies; gray ship, gray sky, gray water

topped by white foam. Despite her bulk, the ship moved around briskly in response to the power of the storm.”

“The warship was bound on important business for the United States; thus the need to get Art and me to the nearest friendly airfield at Trieste or further transportation to AFSOUTH Headquarters at Naples was only a tangential requirement that would be accommodated while underway to Athens.”

"We never got to that port in our Med Cruise on *Forrestal*," I said. "I wish I could have gone to the Acropolis."

Mac nodded, having been just about everywhere. “So, once in international waters, the cruiser hoisted ball-diamond-ball on the mast to signal ‘restricted maneuvering’ and set a course as steady as she could in the heavy seas. A plucky destroyer came alongside in the swells, and the deck party prepared shot lines to go across and set up a Hi-line transfer.”

“Oh man,” I said, taking a sip of Happy Hour white. “Once, out of boredom and curiosity, I stationed myself in the background as the bridge team aligned my carrier *Midway* to come alongside a fast stores ship for underway replenishment. We were going to take on provisions, fuel and ammunition through VERTREP- vertical replenishment- by helicopter and by underway replenishment direct from the stores ship via lines stretched between the ships. It took miles to set up the position properly, and the consequences of failure were grave for the hapless young OOD.”

“That is one of the things we do well as a Navy, and the Chinese and Indians will have to get good at, if they are to be real Blue Water navies. Without replenishment, the great ship lose their military value swiftly. I will bet that your UNREP was in the gentle swells of the Pacific.”

I nodded in agreement. “Smooth as silk and still hairy. I was standing behind one of the lines and a Chief yelled at me to get clear, since if the line parted, the bitter end would snap back and cut me in half.”

“As we closed, and the destroyer they were going to hi-line us to fell into formation, I could see the front third of her full coming out of the water alongside. Art and I were directed to the weather deck. I could feel the crackling tension in the deck crew as they prepared the shot for the messenger line. Art and I were in our Service dress blues with the gold braid on

our combination covers pulled down as chin-straps to keep them from blowing away in the gale. We had our little duffels clutched to our orange Kapok life vests.”



(A Destroyer alongside for replenishment in heavy seas. Official Navy Picture)

“A rudder casualty or other navigational mischance would could the ships to plow into one another, and there would be hell to pay, at least for the destroyer. Damage and lost careers at a minimum, death maybe, with me or Art in the middle.”

“That day before Christmas Eve, only a hundred feet separated the two ships. The heavy cruiser at 17,000 tons displacement handled the rising seas well; the DD bobbed wildly, plunging in the waves. The process for us was the same as when the ships transferred inert mail and movies. First the deck gang fired the guns with the messenger line attached.

“One or two tries might suffice to get a line across. Sometimes, more attempts were needed. Once across, and assuming no one on the receiving ship actually got hit, the light steel line was hauled in and secured, followed by another, heavier line and rigged with the sling in which we were supposed to ride. The changing tension on the wire caused it to rise and fall like a yo-yo, sometimes dipping into the waves far below.”

“It was the only time I had to do it,” he said. “Thank God. It was a terrifying and foam-flecked adventure. Done expeditiously,” he said, “the evolution might take an hour in peacetime. There were those on the bridge of the cruiser who had done this in the war, when enemy aircraft might suddenly appear and they viewed this as an excellent

opportunity for training the crew for emergency break-away. They hauled us with alacrity and a minimum of immersion, but it is not something you want to do while attired in Service Dress Blue.”

“The breakaway, once the transfer was complete, was done with élan. Not to mention relief on the part of the bridge team that could then concentrate on navigation without the consideration of having *Des Moines* cut them in two. The skipper on the tin can then could move on to the next item on the Schedule of Events, which was a brief stop at Trieste for fuel and to disembark me and Art. All business, no liberty for the crew.

“We snagged a driver and a duty car at Fleet Landing, and made our way to the airport, where a Navy Air Transport Service C-47 *Dakota* was to pick us up. Despite the weather, NATS made gave it the old college try. We could hear the engines of the transport at the appointed minute of its arrival, though that was as close as it could get due to the thick clouds over the field. There was no instrument assistance at Trieste, and the plane circled above in the thin gray light. There was no hole to pick in the thick gray wool below the *Dakota*, and no way to land safely.”

“The pilot was ordered to return to base in Napoli, sans PAX, and mission complete for him and his crew, if not for me and Art.

“For our part it was another ride in the duty car, this time to the train station in the old central city. The great waiting area was thronged with holiday travelers. At the ticket office we bargained in broken Italian and English for first class tickets to Roma, via Rapido, with onward transportation via the *Metropolitana* line to Naples. There was salt crusted on our uniform pants.”

“Seated in first class, we realized we were exhausted after the adrenaline rush of the hi-line transfer and the confusion at the airport, dress blues wrinkled, the overnight journey did not seem so bad. The rains had been awful that December, and the North of Italy was flooded. Shortly out of the station, we had one or two snorts from the bottle of brandy Art had secured while I negotiated the tickets. Then the brakes failed on the only first class car. The smell of burning asbestos pads filled the train, and with confusion and great show of energy, we eventually found ourselves in the only seats available, the hard wooden benches in the unheated Third Class car.”

“No amount of brandy could warm the seats, and the coffee we bought to doctor the liquor

with was gone. Our blues, which had looked so trim and proud with Marshall Tito at the White Palace, were now wrinkled and our once-snowy white shirt collars were gray as the skies. We were looking pretty drab, only a day away from dining with the Ruler of all the Balkans.”

“We shivered through the night, passing through Rapido, where a dining car was added to the train.”

“An Italian businessman in a well-tailored car coat boarded the train there, headed for Roma, his mistress and his holiday, in that order. He looked us and took pity. "Ah," he said in gently rounded English, "You are officers, and should not be in such conditions. Join me, and let us share this journey in a civilized manner! It is my gift to you!"

“In the dining car there was civilization aplenty: white tablecloths and heavy silver, gleaming china, steaming coffee and a breakfast that stretched elegantly into lunch, the waterlogged countryside in muted green rushing by, clickety-click.”

“Eventually the ancient ruins of the massive aqueducts began to appear, marching toward the Imperial City, and soon enough we were on the platform, watching our elegant benefactor disappear into the holiday throng, his smartly tailored overcoat draped over his shoulders, Continental-style.”



(Mt Vesuvius looms above Naples.)

“Another train, this one not so long, took us down to *bella Napoli*. The Bay was the color of gun-metal in the dying light, and Vesuvius loomed darkly under the low skies. When we pulled into the grand old pile of the train station, we climbed down off the train and walked

out to the street, stiff, tired and relieved to be done with it.”

“I told Art I would see him at the headquarters in a day or so, and secured a cab. I directed the driver to the apartment block where I had secured a genteel residence for my little family. It was a curious place up the stairs that had seen better days, but it was good enough for us.”

“You said you had to purchase your own light and bathroom fixtures when you moved in?” I asked.



(Humpty Dumpty’s daughter, circa 1986. Copyright David Coleman 2010)

“That was just part of the merry anarchy of Naples. Those were the days when the original Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall soliciting business outside the base at Bagnoli, on the way up the hill to AFSOUTH.”

“She and her daughter were known to generations of sailors,” I responded with a shudder. “I may not have seen Athens, but I did see her.”

“Eventually the taxi wound its way through the traffic and pulled up in front of the apartment. I fished the last of my lira out of my wallet and paid off the cabbie. Then I trudged up the grand staircase to our place that looked down on the inner courtyard. I put my key in the lock. Inside, Billie had some holiday candles going and the place was warm. I sailed my combination cover across the room toward the chair near the coal fire. Sounds came from the kitchen that sounded like dinner, and a small voice could be heard yelling from the direction of the bedrooms.

"Billie," I said. "I'm home! Marshal Tito sends his regards!"

The Clip-on Bow Tie



(Willow bar. Mac and Vic normally set up camp at the two stools to the front left. Photo courtesy Tracy O’Grady.)

Mac took what appeared to be a satisfying sip of his glass of Bell’s dark lager. “So, where was I? Billie and I went to London in May of 1950. We rented a flat, picked up our 1949 Mercury four-door sedan at Southampton and had transportation, so we could get around, even though the London public transportation was excellent.”

“And instead of relieving Ted Rifenburgh as the Current Intel Officer on the CINCNELM Staff, you wound up with Nick Cheshire at the Admiralty,” I said, glancing at my notes.

“Yep. Ted was in the first class at the Naval Intelligence School. He was an outstanding officer. Captain Eismarsh had founded the Naval Investigative Service- what you know as the NCIS today.” Mac frowned. “I was offered orders there in 1948, but turned them down to work on the Cable in the Pentagon. Wyman Packard’s book "A Century of Naval Intelligence" explains the politics of the establishment, which Admiral Ernie King supported to professionalize the business. Forrest Sherman did, too.”

“Useful thing, professionalism in your Spook Corps,” I said. "I heard Wyman got some stuff into that massive book that some people probably wanted to keep secret."

Mac nodded. “Wyman was a good man, and he wanted the whole story, as much as he could, to be documented. Eismarsh was a pompous guy, the senior academic in the Navy and he never let you forget it. He was a Harvard language professor ONI hired during the war, and after it was over Navy decided to establish an intelligence school after the war. The Naval Intelligence School was housed at Anacostia in a bunch of temporary World War Two buildings. Where the park is now.”



(Anacostia Naval Station, circa 1947. Official US Navy Photo)

“I think that is where my Grandfather camped when he came here with the Bonus Army in 1932 and General MacArthur burned down his camp and ran the marchers out of town.”

“I met the MacArthur once. He came to Guam for the morning meeting one time. He was another pompous guy, though Admiral Nimitz forbade us to ever say so.”

“Yeah, you said you met all the five stars.”

Willow's bar was filling up with regulars and strap hangers. Both the Mike's were there, Short and Long-haired versions propping up the Amen Corner end of the bar.

Peter and Jim were solicitous, filling up my tulip glass with a crisp and impertinent white wine as I scrawled notes. Foppish John had departed for dinner at the Lyon Hall, the new restaurant that occupies the art modern façade where Dan Kane's trophy shop had been located for years in Clarendon, across from the big Agency facility where I used to work. He made a point of telling Peter he would not be dining at Willow on the way out.

He used to work on the Hill, and never lets you forget it.



(The neon glow of the Lyon Hall Restaurant in the old Dan Kane Trophy Shop building. Classic Arlington architecture recycled. Photo Lyon Hall.)

“They should have named the place “The Trophy Shop,” said Old Jim.

“I don't think the feminists would appreciate that,” said the shorter Mike.

I looked up pensively. “So your two year tour in London was actually a little over six months on the front end, ten months in Naples with Admiral Carney to set up Allied Forces Southern Region as a NATO command under General of the Army Ike Eisenhower, who was in Paris as the Supreme Allied Commander.” I had to raise my voice to be heard over the din.

“Right,” said Mac. “AFSOUTH. That was before the French threw NATO out and the Headquarters moved to Brussels.”

“Then you did the trip to visit Marshall Tito?” Mac nodded as I ticked down the list in my notebook.

Dapper Jon-with-no-H arrived with his hand-tied bow tie and blazer, looking like he had just come from a day at the races and ordered a dirty martini.

“I love the way you tie that tie,” I said to Jon. “I wear clip-ons. It is a personal fashion statement. At my old company they had a dress code that said you didn’t have to wear a tie unless you were with customers. When I joined my current outfit, they said we were professional, and wore a tie ever day. I said, “Fine.”

“So what did you do?” asked Mac.

“I went on eBay and bought thirty vintage clip-on bow ties in very strange patterns. It is my way of sticking it to The Man.”

“But aren’t *you* The Man?” asked Jon, tugging on one side of his rep-stripped tie.

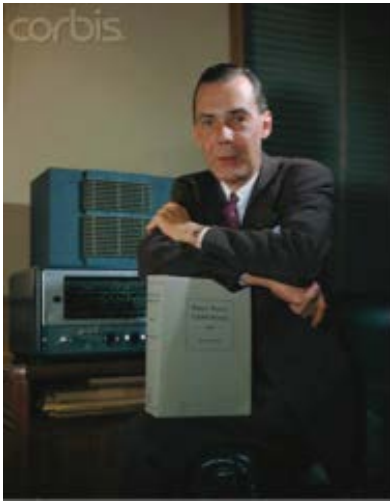
Mac laughed, he being the one grown up in the group who had actually *been* The Man.

“That clip-on thing reminds me of the trip to see Marshall Tito. We wore mess-dress to the luncheon, the uniform with the little jackets and formal shirts, cufflinks and studs. Well, it turned out I had forgotten to pack the black tie. I was pretty frantic about trying to find one in Belgrade on short notice, but Art Newel suggested that I ask the Ambassador to borrow his. I was a little nervous approaching George V. Allen, but he was a North Carolina gentleman and very kind. We went up to his quarters and he rummaged around in a bureau and found one. He handed it to me, and I opened up the butterfly hinges to clip it on.”

I looked at him expectantly, wondering what the point was. Mac smiled.

“The Ambassador’s mouth fell open. He had owned the tie for years and had no idea that it folded open. He must have ruined dozens of shirts trying to get it on closed up.”

“We have rocket scientists in the diplomatic corps,” growled Old Jim.



(Ambassador George Venable Allen. Photo Corbis Images from the Bettman Archive.)

I was starting to lose the thread of my narrative as Big Jim the bartender topped off my glass again. The notebook was getting a little blurry, but he had mentioned an epic trip across the Middle East while he was in Naples. “You mentioned the other day that there was that wild odyssey with Admiral Carney across his area of responsibility. You said you flew from Naples through Turkey and Bahrain and Saudi Arabia and Egypt and Morocco.”

Mac nodded again. “We were running the oil trap-lines where the Soviets were meddling. The Admiral wanted to get a sense of what was really happening on the ground over which he was supposed to be able to operate if the balloon went up.” teetotalers who refused the whiskey after dining with the Saudis got sick. The Arabs never washed anything. That wasn’t true in Iran, of course, but there was trouble brewing and we have not seen the end of that yet.”



(Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh. Photo Life Magazine.)

“He was overthrown by MI-6 and the CIA, right?”

“Well, Pahlavi had some help. But that happened in 1953, and I was back in Washington then, teaching at the Intelligence Schoolhouse on Naval Station Anacostia. But we could all see there was going to be trouble.”

“End of the colonial age,” I said, underlining the word “Shah of Iran.”

“Not the way the Iranians look at it,” said Mac. Then he finished his beer and gave us a thin smile. “Two is my limit, Boys, and I think I will be moving along. I can tell you more next time.”

And he did. But in the meantime, the usual suspects at the Amen Corner closed ranks and saluted as Mac left the bar and walked slowly but resolutely toward his champagne-colored Jaguar.

The Usual Suspects



(From left to right, The Lovely Bea, Old Jim, Jon-without and John-with).

I was going to talk to you about a couple other things this morning, but then the news of Frank Sinatra’s death spread, and I had to draft an obit about his life and times, and I put aside an analysis of the origins of the Occupy Wall Street movement.

It is all quite curious, and worth some discussion about the usual suspects. There will be time for that- the coming cold weather will drive the kids off the pavement soon enough, and it may be that this is just a dry run for the big demonstrations that will happen in the

run up to the election next year.

I have seen this movie before, as many of you who are a certain age, and remember it well, since most of us were participants in the last widespread street actions in the waning days of the Vietnam conflict.

Mostly for fun, which is why a lot of the kids are doing it now, I suspect. But there is time to get to that in the next thirteen months.

Thoughts about the American Family Party, a front group of ACORN and the SIEU, were driven from my mind as the other news spread. about the Iranian plot to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador here in DC. The plot involved bombing the Peking Gourmet Restaurant over on Route 7, which is where the family celebrated Mac's 92 birthday.

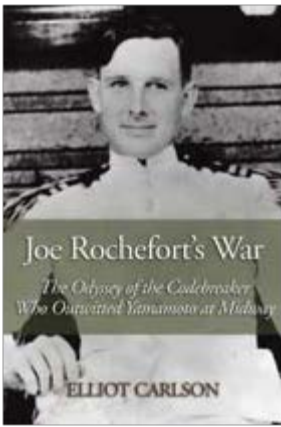


Peking Gourmet Restaurant- target of al Quds Force? The Bush Presidents dined, like Mac, behind the screen at the rear where the Saudi Ambassador would be seated. Photo PGR.

When the al Quds Force is planning on bombing restaurants that serve exquisite Peking Duck, this gets personal. That is, if this is not a “Wag the Dog” moment presaging lobbing some cruise missiles at Baby Food factories.

I don't know what to think at the moment, though I probably will once I am on the road to Michigan again to deal with the Raven Affair this Friday.

In the meantime, we wound up at Willow last night. That will come as no surprise, but we had a bunch of folks over at the office for a late meeting, which I avoided, and instead swung by The Madison to have my copy of the new book by Elliott Carlson signed by Admiral Mac.



“Joe Rochefort’s War” is one of those books that is absolutely definitive about a deep secret that proved to be the margin of victory in the titanic struggle of the Pacific War.

Mac wrote the introduction to the book, which I read in the advance copy in his apartment last week. Carlson had given him a couple copies in recognition of the more than forty interviews he contributed to the burgeoning narrative over the years.

“It is incredibly thorough,” Mac said. “Carlson went everywhere to talk to the families of the men who have died, and to those few of us who are still around.” I read him the words he had written as the forward to the book, and Mac smiled. “Those words are right from the heart,” he said. “Now, you have to remember, this is embargoed until the 15th of this month. But take a copy with you to get started.”

“I will replace it,” I said, and slipped the thick volume into my briefcase.

I ordered the book from Amazon when I got home, figuring that it would probably show up a couple weeks after the embargo date.

I was amazed that Amazon paid no attention to the embargo date, and happily shipped it to me over the weekend. Accordingly, I decided to take his copy back and have him sign mine before heading over to Willow last night.

Mac is a little more frail than usual- it is either part of an inexorable process, or more likely, the insidious medication he has been prescribed for the slow cancer that all men will get, if we are lucky to live long enough. I read what he wrote on the flyleaf of the thick book, and thanked him for his friendship.

“I am sorry you can’t make it to Willow tonight, Admiral.”

“I know. Me too. If we can fix the medication maybe we will all be there again.” “I sure

hope so,” I said. “I will stick my head in here before I leave for Michigan.”

“Sounds good,” he said, and picked up his magnifying glass to continue to check the footnotes. “And good luck with that. It is never easy.”

I nodded, slipped the signed copy of the book in my briefcase and headed for the elevator, and the bright lights of Willow across the street.

The usual suspects were there, and more. I passed the book around, and Jim Champagne looked at the words that Mac had penned.

“He is an American Original,” he said. “And not just one of the usual suspects.” Then he ordered another Budweiser.



Some of the other unusual suspects, with Willow Fish and Chips. Photo Socotra.

Let's Get Ready (For School)



It was a Thursday afternoon at the Willow fine-dining and drinking establishment on Fairfax Drive in the Ballston neighborhood of Arlington.

Big Jim and Liz-with-an-S and the irrepressible Jasper were attempting to manage the crowd at the Amen Corner at the street-end of the bar near the cocktail nook. Jon-without and John-with were enjoying drinks next to Old Jim, and Long Hair Mike was chatting up Jarhead Ray as they immersed themselves in the wonderful world of post-work at the Qualcomm building across the street.

I was meeting the Admiral for one of our weekly sessions, not that I wasn't there more than a few times a week. It was a cast of characters who had become, over the course of the decade we occupied these stools, a family of sorts. We had got up to the point when Mac was recounting coming home with his family from Europe in 1953. The Korean conflict had raged while he was in Europe, and it was time for the military to adjust to the end of a war that had sucked five million Americans into the whirling vortex on the Peninsula.

I had two pens and remembered a notebook for a change. I got a crisp happy hour white from Liz-S, and opened the notebook to the last scrawled note halfway down the page. "OK- back from Europe and back to the grind here in Washington." My pen hung above the notebook as I let some cool refreshing wine swirl on my palate from the tulip glass in the other hand.

Mac cleared his throat and prepared to resume the tale. "So, I had a total of about two and a half years with the Commander in Chief, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (*CINCNELM*),

a year of it in London and a year in Naples, then six months back in London before I returned to the U.S. in December or January of 1952-1953. I left in December and we arrived back here in January. When I left London to come back to Washington, I had orders to return to the Special Intelligence Section, Y1, and I was looking forward to it. I was obviously comfortable with operational intelligence (OPINTEL), and there were new threats to deal with as the Soviets became more truculent in their approach to diplomacy."

"Funny that we can look back on it with a certain fondness. But you missed the Korean War?"

"Yes, I did miss it. The war was over on the Peninsula in July of 1953, and my time overseas almost coincided with the entire duration of the conflict. So I never include it on my biography, even if the experience in the Police Action diverted attention from a growing Soviet threat, and framed many of the intelligence issues of the day. So, despite not having been there, Korea was a factor in everything: Rising Red China, Russian proxies and surrogates, all the things that were going to happen in the Cold War," said Mac.

"After the ship docked in New York, we drove down to Washington and I stopped to call the head of "Y" branch, who I think was then-Captain Bruce Weber and told him I was in the country and was going on leave, that I would be reporting in by such and such a date. He said, "I'm glad to hear from you; I'm glad to know all that, but your orders have been changed. You aren't going to be working for me; you're going to the Naval Intelligence School in Anacostia."

"My Grandfather knew the place in the 1930s," I said. "That is where he and his Bonus Army comrades camped when they were demanding Government benefits for their wartime service."

"Anacostia had not changed much. Still flat and green and prone to flooding. The school was located in one of the World War Two splinter-ville wooden buildings. I felt that the bottom had dropped out of my career. I had been rail-roaded out of the OPINTEL I loved so much. Instead, I was being sent to a back-water job that I had earlier turned down as being undesirable, and as far as I was concerned, was *still* undesirable. The only saving grace was that Captain Sam Frankel, a dear friend that I'd served under before at JICPOA in Hawaii. He was the Director, and I would have been happy to serve with him again in the right billet. I did call him up, and he was very gracious. He invited me and the family to stay at his home until we got settled, which wasn't necessary because we were going on leave to Billie's home down in southern Virginia. We got ourselves settled in, but I still was disappointed to not be going back into ONI and OPINTEL. Instead, I was going to be exiled to the wasteland of the basic school."

"I can imagine the disappointment you felt after operating on major four and five-star staffs in real combat situations, or having lunch with Marshal Tito. The Schoolhouse would seem like a back-water."



(RADM Samuel Frankel. In his military career, he served in the USS *Trenton* (CL-11), *Augusta* (CA-31), *Chester* (CA-27), and *Chaumont* (AP-5). Following this sea duty, he was Russian language student in Riga, Latvia, 1936-1938. He then served in the USS *Ellet* (DD-398) as gunnery officer and XO. He was Assistant Naval Attaché, Moscow, and Assistant Naval Attaché for Air, Murmansk-Archangel. In that connection with Lend-Lease shipments to the Soviet Union, he directed repairs to U.S. vessels, salvaging stranded and abandoned ships, and supervised hospitalization and repatriation of survivors of Nazi U-Boat attacks. Later, he rose to become Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence, and his last job on active duty was as Chief of Staff at

DIA, the same job Mac held years later).

“I made an appointment and told Captain Frankel of my misgivings, my concern and my general lack of interest in educational matters. He appreciated it and he was very accommodating. He said, "I'm going to give you six weeks to look at the curriculum and find out what we're doing and then I'm going to let you pick the part that you'd like to be responsible for. So I did that. I sat in the lectures and looked at the curriculum and it became evident to me, and fairly soon, that despite the changes made by Captain Hindmarsh and Captain Layton, and the good work that Captain Frankel was doing, the program was still weak on OPINTEL, or at least the way I understood it from wartime operations. There were limitations on what we could teach, since we could not talk about Communications Intelligence, which was still heavily classified.

“COMINT,” I said. "But the Russians knew all about it. They had intelligence collectors everywhere in the government, and penetrated the Manhattan Project and just about everything else we were doing."

He nodded, still passionate about the times and his tour. “The Russians were superb in their Human Intelligence capabilities. Still are, for that matter. Back then, our students were not cleared. I don't believe there were any clearances provided for the school staff, and certainly not among the students, most of whom were brand new to the Navy. So you couldn't talk about COMINT as being a major source of what we called OPINTEL in the Navy. Instead, we had to talk about the other sources, so it made it a very artificial to try to emphasize the importance and significance, and the role of OPINTEL in supporting fleet activities and fleet operations in command decisions when you couldn't talk about the main ingredient of intelligence.”

“By the time I went through the basic course, they had decided to send us all through the Armed Forces Air Intelligence Training Center at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver. It was a weird relic of Vietnam and the Cold War. We had to be in class at 0600 in the morning and they let us go at lunchtime, just as if there was another class coming in behind us in the Afternoon, which there hadn't been since Saigon fell. Was there ever any thought to establishing a sub- curriculum at the school for people who were heading for OPINTEL billets?”

“Not at that time. Of course, many years later all these things developed more realistically, particularly when they merged the All-source and Air Intelligence communities together in

1968. I think, now, students in many of our schools are cleared for COMINT and other compartmented subjects. At that time, in 1953, there were no clearances for instructors or students.”

“At Denver, they worked our tickets in parallel with the course, and it was a big deal when we were getting to the Strategic block that they gave us our Top Secret Special Compartmented Intelligence Clearances. It was pretty cool. We thought we were real hot-shots. I am sure you could have done a lot more if the students had been cleared. But the school was really concerned with giving everybody a common baseline of capabilities, right?”

“That’s right, but it turns out tat what was needed was even more simple than that. What I was trying to do was identify the areas where I felt that the curriculum was weak, and to contribute to the development of Operational Intelligence. I found two main areas of concern. One was naval communications, and the other was the ability to write succinct messages and to handle them properly, Naval Communications traffic was not a subject that was taught at the school at all. This was important because, at that time, the Naval Intelligence School was running two six - month classes per year , and eighty percent of our input were from Officer Candidate School and were mostly Ensigns.”

“Just like you were when you reported to Station HYPO,” I said, laughing. “What was your throughput? “How big were the classes? What was the through-put?” I asked, thinking of my little class of twenty or so students at the Armed Forces Air Intelligence Training Center at Lowry AFB in Denver.

“Our classes averaged 80 or so officers per class. In my two years, I was privileged to work with and instruct perhaps 300 or more officers.”

I whistled at the number.

“Probably half or two thirds of those officers were Ensigns who had been commissioned in the Officer Candidate School at Newport and were now coming through Intelligence School. The balance of the class was composed of unrestricted line officers who were taking on intelligence as a subspecialty, and they ranged in rank from Lieutenant to Commander. Each faculty member was assigned a proportional number of students for whom he was class advisor.’ So, in addition to working with the class as a whole, each instructor worked

intimately with perhaps fifteen or so individual students for whom he was faculty advisor."



(Naval Intelligence School at Anacostia, circa 1960).

"How skilled were they?" I asked. Mac had the grace to humor me. "Our students had just come into the Navy; they'd been through OCS; and now they were coming to learn about intelligence, and among other things they needed to know about communications, and the very basic ingredient of OPINTEL."

"They didn't know anything about naval communications either. Not how it worked, or how you wrote messages to effectively much less explain complex issues in a briefing format. The other thing I inserted into the course was what I called "observation and reporting." "

"Useful topics for people who are supposed to be collectors of information," I remarked. "They used to work us over on sample briefings on Soviet military capabilities to the class at Denver. But the good news was that any classified research had to be done at the library, which was cleared for Secret. We couldn't take anything home for study and after a while, some of the people in my class would just go to the Officer's Club at lunch and stay until Happy Hour."

"I see some things haven't changed. We couldn't do that due to the clearance problem. What we came up with was a work-around that was useful to show the Ensigns how to do basic unclassified research. But we liked a hands-on approach. We used to take the school on field trips. One destination was the base at Quantico where the Marines put on some magnificent demonstrations of amphibious warfare capabilities. We also took them to Patuxent River to let them see the Naval Air Test Center, and to the David Taylor Model Basin where they test hull designs. A lot of the installations around here that show the exotic function of naval warfare, which we felt was a necessary part of the basic education in intelligence. We also encouraged them to look at the field trips the way a Soviet agent would. We wanted the students to observe and report, and they had to actually write on

some aspect of something they observed in the course of these trips.”

“The Navy had figured that out by my time to be educated in the mysteries. They sent all of us new guys from the schoolhouse to aviation squadrons to cut our teeth on how the strike and power-project mission was really accomplished. We learned more about our Navy than the Soviets in that tour.”

“Not much different that reporting to HYPO from Public Affairs school in Seattle,” laughed Mac. “We'd get these intelligence reports in from the field trips, and I would have to review and grade them. That led to the realization that most of the Ensigns of the 1950s that were coming out of college and into the Navy couldn't spell, and they didn't know English grammar.

“Still a problem today,” I muttered. “Only it might be worse.”

“You better believe it. When we went to Patuxent, you should have seen the variety of ways the word "helicopter" was spelled. It was just absolutely unbelievable. It was so bad that it led me to start a course in military terminology, spelling, and grammar. It actually was a course in collecting and writing intelligence reports. The librarian at the Intelligence School told me that, under the terms of reference to the school, I could not write a manual on basic English grammar and spelling. What we did had to directly be related to our profession.”

You would think that effective written and verbal communicating would be the main skills required in the intelligence business.”

“I could not agree more. The Main Battery of intelligence, in fact. So, I wrote a little manual that we reproduced in pamphlet form called ‘Writing for Intelligence Officers,’ or something like that. But it was purely an effort to try to teach these college graduates- even the ones from the Ivy League schools- the English language. Those were the kinds of things Captain Frankel let me do. He was a good guy. He made flag, by the way, so his work was rewarded.”

“Making Flag was never anything I had to worry about,” I said. “Too much baggage. But I would be interested in finding a copy of the pamphlet, since the problem has not changed one iota since 1953.” We both shook our heads at the sad state of public education. I looked up the Willow Bar, and things were just transitioning from the happy hour rush to the

crowd that was going to be there for the long-haul of evening. I sighed. That was not going to be me, tonight, and we settled up our tabs with Big Jim, and I walked the Admiral out to his champagne-gold Jaguar.

"Next time we are going to finish off the 1950s," I said hopefully.

"You might be careful with that. There was a lot of stuff going on then. It may take you a few more glasses of happy hour white than you anticipate." Then he climbed into his Jag and motored off sedately down Fairfax Drive.

Tradecraft



(1966-vintage shrapnel from a rocket attack in Saigon).

Willow was quiet, but it was a wary quiet, awaiting the arrival of people who would drink away the stress of the day. Old Jim was listening to music on his MP3 Player, Mac was dressed casually in an aloha shirt and slacks. Jasper was holding down the bar, waiting on Big Jim to arrive to handle the Happy Hour crew. Heather 2 was on the wait-staff, though they had been auditioning her to work the bar as a fill-in, due to the loss of Briana-saurus Rex, who had left Willow for what we understood were “creative differences” with management about the cut of her tight Lycra top stretched over her imposing and legendary *décolletage*.

There is always a moment of silence when one of the bartenders departs the family, and Briana had been warmly welcomed, at least at our end of the Willow bar.



(RADM Donald "Mac" Showers in his customary aloha shirt).

I was in my grown-up work clothes with a jaunty bow tie. The Admiral fished in the front pocket of his slacks and brought out two objects. One was one I recognized immediately- it was a battered Zippo lighter with the squadron logo of Fleet Aerial Reconnaissance Squadron ONE, the West Coast intelligence collection aviation unit. The other was something I did not recognize- a nasty looking twisted piece of metal that despite its tarnished exterior radiated a passive hostility.

“OK, I’ll bite. I recognize the lighter and have dozens of them. I used to collect them, in fact. But what is the other thing?”

“Well, you can add the Zippo to your collection, and we are going to talk about VQ-1 one of these afternoons. The other thing I thought you might find interesting. I found it the other days going through an old box. It is a piece of shrapnel from a VC rocket that was used to attack the Meyercord Bachelor Officer’s Quarters one night in Saigon while I was there. I walked through the wreckage the next morning and picked it up as a souvenir.”

I picked it up from the bar. It was as ugly a thing as I have seen. The edges were still razor sharp where the high explosives that the steel shell casing had enclosed had turned it white hot, twisting and ripping as the missile tore into the cinder-block façade of the BOQ.

“That would get your attention right quick,” I said, putting it down before I nicked my finger on the sharp edges.

“You bet. Particularly traveling at more than a thousand feet a second. No one got killed in

that attack. Not any of our guys, anyway. But that was the Saigon experience.”

“I only visited that town once, Admiral. Much later, of course. But it was an amazing trip.”

“Oh,” he said, brightening a bit and leaving Saigon behind. Or ahead, if you were trying to follow the wandering Willow narrative. “After our talk last week, I was thinking about my tour at the Schoolhouse. I look back at it- the tour I didn’t want to do, and upon reflection, it was one of the best and most satisfying of my Navy career. After talking about it with you last week, I thought of some other memories of that time. I was almost discouraged about having had my orders changed and having been sent to an environment with which I was totally unfamiliar. I hadn’t asked for it, hadn’t thought about it, and didn’t really care much about it.”

“What was the course work like? What did you try to teach the new Ensigns if you couldn’t use classified information to teach them?” I decided I really liked this version of the Happy Hour white. Curiously refreshing, and I almost lost track of educational challenges in the Intelligence Community. Mac was able to drag me back.

“Well, that was one of the challenges. “In the course of the two years that I was there, I instructed four classes, four complete classes, start to finish.”

“I remember the courses at Denver started out with ship recognition and some basic photo interpretation. It was fairly basic stuff until our clearances came through and the instructors could talk more freely about what we were really going to be doing.”

Mac nodded. “In my time the basic course started out with Professor Francis “Frank” Decelles. He was, incidentally with the Naval Postgraduate School system, which had jurisdiction over us, He was the senior professor in the Naval Postgraduate School system. He was one of our links to Monterey. During our six-month course, would hold forth for the first six weeks full-time. All lectures. Essentially, he really lectured for about four hours in the morning. In the afternoon, then, we would have discussions, seminars, and various other activities to give some variety. But the first six weeks were devoted to Professor Decelles lecturing on world politics and the political scene, history, geography, whatever.”

“It is a wide world out there and a lot of folks don’t pay much attention until they actually have to visit it.”

“I never did take the Decelles course, so I can't tell you exactly what he covered. I used to sit in on some of his lectures. He was a good lecturer; a flamboyant man who just *loved* to talk. He did this over and over, course after course. When the curriculum was expanded from six months to twelve, Frank's courses simply expanded to eight weeks instead of six, so he could talk more.”

“I have shared the misery of having to listen to military people who thought they had a lot to say, and plenty of PowerPoint slides to back it up,” I said, wincing at the memory.

“It can be painful. Then, after Decelles' course was finished, we started our instruction in various aspects of naval intelligence techniques and tradecraft and so forth. Field training was essential. As I mentioned last time, we'd go to Quantico, or Patuxent River, or David Taylor Model Basin, and we'd put them in the role of an attaché -- a foreign attaché-- observing a U.S. base or activity as an exercise in tradecraft. They would even take pictures, like the Moscow attaches would on Schmidt's Embankment in Leningrad, the only place we could get a look inside the doors of the covered building halls where the new generations of Soviet submarines were being constructed. Satellites could not see through the roof, after all. Sometimes low-tech is the only way to collect effectively. After we returned from the trip, the students had to write a report. They would try certain little techniques of discreet activities not to get “caught” collecting. Some worked well and some didn't. I think that's something that an individual designs himself and picks up rather than gets taught.”

"I completely agree. When was your tour up at the school?" I asked, underlining the word "tradecraft" on the napkin in front of me.

"January, 1957, two years almost on the nose. We had just graduated a six-month course before Christmas. I am glad we talked about it. In thinking back, and I still look back on it to this day, it was one of the most rewarding tours that I ever had in Naval Intelligence. I think it was mainly because I was working with a large number of people, and getting acquainted with them. Wherever I went and whatever I did for years afterward, I would encounter these people in various pursuits, assignments, and walks of life. They didn't all stay in the Navy, obviously. They would remind me that I was one of their instructors in Naval Intelligence School, and frequently they would remember, and I wouldn't -- mainly because there were so many students and I didn't get that close to all of them. “

“I had the same thing happen after I was the junior Assignments Officer. I always

wondered if one of my former clients find me in an alley or a dark parking lot and try to beat the crap out of me.”

“Apparently I did a better job at the Schoolhouse,” he said with that twinkle in his eye. “It happened to me all over the world for many years, and it still is rewarding that we were able to make an impact on so many lives. An example of that is Senator Dick Lugar. He went to OCS and came to us as an Ensign; he did his time in the Navy and then went back to Indiana politics, became mayor of Indianapolis, and whatever, House of Representatives, and then a United States Senator. Many years later when I was with the Director of Central Intelligence, I was testifying before the Senate Intelligence Committee, and Senator Lugar came up to me and reminded me I had been one of his instructors at the Naval Intelligence School. He was not one of the students for whom I was faculty advisor, and frankly I didn't remember him being there. But that's one of the gratifying things that grew out of those orders to Anacostia. And we might have taught those officers how to read and write, which certainly worked out for Dick.”



(A young Senator Richard Lugar, R-IN).

“As a general proposition, I believe in literacy for our public servants, Admiral.” I took a deep pull off my Happy Hour White, put it back down on the bar and tried to remember what I had thought we were going to talk about. “But weren't we going to talk about your time at FIRST Fleet out in San Diego? That was my favorite place to live in all the United States.”

“In those days I would have tapped a cigarette out of the pack and flipped open my Zippo to light it.”

“I remember those days,” I said, having had a Marlboro on the walk over from the office. “I guess the world has moved on a bit, wouldn't you say? Now, about FIRST Fleet...”



The FIRST Fleet



(COMNAVAIRPAC Headquarters, Naval Air Station North Island, Coronado, CA).

Boomer was behind the Willow bar, and she was pouring with abandon. I had not had a good day at the office, and it was a relief to her about what her kids were up to, how her Dad was doing, and the rest of the maelstrom that is her life as a single Mom and breadwinner for her family. And living down by the Occoquan River, and don't get me started on *that*.

Mac Showers was dressed in a jacket and bright shirt and looked comfortable despite the sweltering heat outside. I was completely unprepared, which made me feel vaguely unprofessional, a sensation that I hate.

“So you picked up your family and moved to the West Coast?”

“We did, indeed. We went to San Diego and settled in Coronado because the headquarters then was in a building on North Island Naval Air Station. I relieved Captain Wyman Packard, the first of two or three times when I relieved him.

“It was a small Naval Intelligence community then, Sir.”



(CAPT Wyman Packard, later the historian of Naval Intelligence, as a Midshipman).

“It certainly was. The most interesting aspect of going into the tour was that at the time I got my orders, Wyman and some of the staff, including the admiral, were deployed. That was the first, and I believe the only time, that Commander, FIRST Fleet ever was deployed in an operational role. They were gone for several months. I think they deployed in mid-1956 and did not get back until the end of the year. They were deployed to Southeast Asia because of the French problems in Vietnam.”

“No kidding. You could have been part of the first American intervention in Vietnam!” Mac smiled and nodded. “I suppose that is true,” he said. “I always like to be ahead of the game when I can. That was at the time of Dien Bien Phu, after which the French pulled out from Indo-China. But there was the concern that the French, because of their problems, might request U.S. assistance, so the U.S. Navy was prepared to set up a Southeast Asia Command that would have been a joint staff with Army and Air Force officers assigned. And to be ready for that contingency, FIRST Fleet went forward with part of his staff.”

“But what forces did he have to influence anything?”

“I don't know the details, since I was a non-participant and this is just what I got from Wyman when we turned over. I understood that the Admiral borrowed some ships from

SEVENTH Fleet. They had a couple carriers and supporting ships that operated in the South China Sea and were prepared to assist the French if they asked for help.”

“There has been some controversy over that. The accounts I read suggested that the weather was too crappy to provide close air support.”



(A bad day for the French at Dien Bien Phu).

“Probably true, but in the end, the French decided to abandon their empire and went home. They had problems much closer to home in Algeria, which was considered a part of metropolitan France at the time. That was far more emotional than far-off Indo-China.”

“Funny you say that, Admiral. I was in Tokyo and drinking at the greatest bar in town at the Old Sanno Hotel, the place the military appropriated during the Occupation. You could see just about any old Asia Hand in there at one time or another. Anyway, I was sitting next to a guy a little older than myself and we got to talking. He had been Special Forces, and was interested in the military history of the French and American wars. He told me that in 1969 he had arranged for an insertion mission at Dien Bien Phu so he could see it.”

“I guess that is what you call a combat tour!” laughed Mac. “I suppose I am not surprised, since all the regular Vietnamese forces were pulled south to replace all the VC who were killed in the Tet Offensive the year before.”

“It certainly blew my mind, but another pal who was in the Special Operations Group said they went north of the DMZ frequently and it was safer up there if you minded your own business.”

“Well, that opens up a couple cans of worms, but that takes us forward to Vietnam and I thought you wanted to talk about FIRST Fleet.”

“Well, my interest stems partly from the fact that I was on the THIRD Fleet Staff twice, with radically different missions. The first time, in Hawaii, we were ashore at Ford Island and supposed to be the Theater Anti-submarine Warfare Commander. Our main mission was targeting Soviet boomers. The second time we were in San Diego like you were, but although we had a flagship, we mostly did training and certification for deploying Strike Groups.”

“I will beg ignorance of what the THIRD Fleet people are doing now, but we were primarily responsible for the same thing: training and readiness among type-commanders who were then resident on the West Coast.”

“Same deal for us. AIRPAC and SURFPAC are still there. They used to each have an intelligence Captain billet, and some of our crusty old guys would trade jobs every three years because they liked living in San Diego and wanted to stay there. We called it the Senior Circuit.”

“I was a Commander then, but we had a lot more opportunity for officers who wanted to stay away from Washington. In addition to the Airdales and the Black Shoe Type Commanders, we had the Cruiser-Destroyer people, the Amphibs, and even SUBPAC and Service Forces had reps there from Hawaii where they were headquartered.”

“Wow, I had no idea they had actually streamlined things. It was a bewildering mass of competing equities even in my time.”

“Under guidance from PACFLT HQ, we were responsible for herding the cats through unit, type and inter-type training of the non-deployed Fleet forces, preparing them for contingencies, emergencies and the deployment rotation to the SEVENTH Fleet AOR.”

“There are some constants in the Navy,” I said, taking a sip of vodka tonic. Mac looked at me with a questioning glance. “I know. I normally don't drink hard liquor when I am out for Happy Hour at Willow, but it was a bad day at the office. Not as bad as a Comprehensive Training Exercise off Camp Pendleton, but you know what I mean.”

“FIRST Fleet was a great tour, great quality of life, but as you probably know better than most, there isn't a whole heck of a lot of intelligence going on. Our division was a very small office, The N-2 had one assistant and a yeoman, and that was it. The Assistant N-2

was normally an aviator and a sub-specialist. As one of my collateral duties, I was the Special Security Officer- the assistant normally was not cleared for COMINT. Those were the days when COMINT clearances were tightly controlled and extended only to a few people. I had a large double-door safe in my office that I inherited from Wyman. I kept all the COMINT materials in there, the studies, messages and background papers. I was the sole custodian, and I had to open up in the morning and close it at night, and remember to lock it up if I was going to lunch or make a head call. The only ones on the staff who were cleared were me, the communications officer, the Admiral and the Chief of Staff. Ops, Deputy Ops and the Plans guy.”

“So, it sounds like a great tour to be with the family in San Diego. It sure was for us.”



(VADM Sol Phillips in Command).

“Oh my, yes. It was marvelous. Coronado Island is one of the great places on earth. But I should tell you about our Admiral- “Sol” Phillips. He was one of the great characters I knew in the Service.”

It looked like Mac was ready to tell the story, but I was confronting the bottom of my glass, and decided that the three of them had been plenty, since Boomer does a great pour and I had to drive. “I will catch that one next time, Sir. I am just amazed that our experiences were so similar in times so far apart.”

“I don’t think the missions were any different for any modern Navy,” said Mac. “You fight like you train, and that is what sets apart a first class Navy from all the rest.”

“Amen, Sir.”

Old Navy



Mac did not have a good weekend, nothing particularly bad, but the Docs had taken beer away from him again. Boomer had the shift off to do family business, and Big Jim was covering for her along with Liz-with-an-S. There was energy in town, the elections and the partisans on both sides had become irritating. It looked like a time to move forward, perhaps to Mac Shower's time as the Pacific Fleet Intelligence Officer, the job once held by his old Boss, Eddie Layton. That was not going to happen. Perhaps the Virgin Mary that Big Jim assembled for him was not exactly what he wanted, or something else had driven a mildly pensive mood to the afternoon. I was fairly upbeat, since the day had gone as well as could be expected at the office, and we had actually won a task order from the government on the big open-ended contract I allegedly manage for the company.

I was having the Happy Hour white, and I expected to have a few of them while we talked.

"So, on to the Pacific and Vietnam," I said, lifting my pen.

"Not so fast. You got me thinking about the the last genuine character in the U.S. Navy: Vice Admiral William Kearney Phillips. He was a colorful gentleman from Texas and a delight to work for at FIRST Fleet."

"Admiral Nimitz was a land-locked Texan when he started as well. Is there something about the Lone Star State that makes for great Naval leaders?"

"Admiral Phillips was as authentic as they come. He wore a Silver Star for valor and had, at various times, commanded a submarine, destroyer and a cruiser. I think he was Annapolis Class of '17, and had World War one service on a cruiser. He was assigned to intelligence duty in the Panama Canal Zone, so he knew a little bit about what we do, and in the second war he was in command during the Gilbert and Marshall Islands campaigns, the first battle

of the Philippine Sea and the later strikes again Guam and Saipan. And you might be right about Texas. I have worked often with the nice folks at the National Museum of the Pacific War, which is located in Fredericksburg, the boyhood home of Admiral Nimitz. Not many of us left who actually knew him."

"I actually had an interaction with them when I was at THIRD Fleet the first time," I said, taking a pallet-cleaning sip of wine. "They were looking for a piece of the *Arizona* to display in Texas. One of the Pearl Harbor secrets is that the wreckage cut off the ships after the attack was taken to the Waipio Peninsula and stacked in pieces according to what ship it came off of in case it was needed later. There apparently had been periodic attempts to purchase the pile of rusting steel that had been Arizona's superstructure. I suppose the buyer wanted to make souvenirs out of the steel- key chains, maybe."

"Clearly an inappropriate use of parts of a war memorial," said Mac firmly.

"For sure. But I wound up with the chart of where the pile of Arizona steel was, and the museum sent someone out to look at it for something that would be immediately recognizable as being part of a ship. They found a hatch and frame that would do nicely, once cleaned up and painted haze-gray."

"I dont recall seeing something like that the last time I was down in Fredericksburg."

"No, I don't imagine you did. Someone stole it from the warehouse while it was in transit to Texas. So maybe there are some keychains out there we don't know about."

"Sol Phillips would never have put up with it," said Mac. "Like I said, he was a character. Destroyer-man in the Big War, much in the manner of 31-knot Arliegh Burke and his Little Beavers. Wyman Packard knew him better than I did, since he had been at FIRST Fleet for a couple years when I showed up. He was given a fourth star when he retired and went home to Texas. But my favorite story about him is what shows the kind of guy he was- real Old Navy. When he arrived to take command, Wyman scheduled him to be indoctrinated for communications for the first time."

"Imagine that- a three star admiral and combat hero and no Special Intelligence background? That is how commanders make uninformed decisions."

Mac nodded in agreement. "That is why it is important for the Admirals to know about all

the arrows in their warfare quivers. But since Admiral Phillips had never had access to Special Intelligence before, he had to have a background investigation. The Navy insisted."

"I hate those things," I said with sigh, thinking back to the time I got in trouble for falling asleep during a lie detector exam. Not to mention the urine tests and all the rest of that nonsense. Like it stopped Snowden or Manning from walking off with the whole data base."

"It is what it is," Mac said. "Has been since the beginning. Anyway, since a background investigation of the Fleet Commander was required by regulation, the machinery began to grind on. Forms were filled out and submitted and the Navy investigators began their work."

"I am actually kind of looking forward to not having a clearance," I said. "The five-year general updates, the five year polygraph cycle and the two-year Top Secret in-status limit. I am tired of my own government following me around."

"You have to be careful with the Crown Jewels," said Mac. "But remember, the very existence of COMINT was not declassified until the early 1970s, and it was a very big deal when I was at FIRST Fleet."

"I understand. So how did the Admiral take it?"

"He told a story that he heard back from a buddy in Texas while the investigation was in progress. What he heard was this: "Sol, you ought to know the 'Feds' were here asking all kinds of questions about you. And I didn't know what you were up to so I told them everything I could to steer them wrong. I hope they never find you."

"Did he get his clearance?" I asked.

"Eventually, he did, and Wyman read him into the program, and he continued his command tour. He used to have a sign in his office that read: "They who go around in circles shall be known as Big Wheels."

"Our pal Jake had an inflatable cow head mounted on the wall in his office as the Director of DIA."

"I would expect nothing less," and he took a sip of tomato juice. "Did I mention the best restaurant in Coronado, the Mexican Village?"

"It was still open down by where the ferry landing was. I heard that before the bridge was opened, people would get the cars in line to board the next one to go to the San Diego side and have a margarita or three while they waited."



"We called it the Mex-Pac, in honor of where the fleet units were deploying. Great place and great food."

"It was. So much is gone now." I thought about the other little bar just up Orange Avenue from Mex-Pac, the one that opened at 0600 to catch the Chiefs trade before morning quarters. "So, what does a fleet commander concentrate on when he is home-ported in San Diego?" I asked. "I know what we were interested in when I was there, and that was mostly Soviet ballistic missile submarines."

"Admiral Phillips concern was primarily Southeast Asia. He had just returned from there, as I mentioned, and I think he saw that there would be a wider conflict presently. He wanted to be fully prepared if he was ordered to deploy again and set up a joint staff to manage operations in Vietnam."

"What sources of information did you use to keep the Admiral up to speed?"

"All sources, attaché reports to COMINT. Communist expansion in the region was a concern, and a primary one for the Admiral. But we also kept an eye on the Soviets and particularly the Soviet Pacific Fleet."

"It became an all-consuming effort," I said, finishing my glass of Happy Hour white. "But working for a commander who understands what is going on and has a vision to deal with it

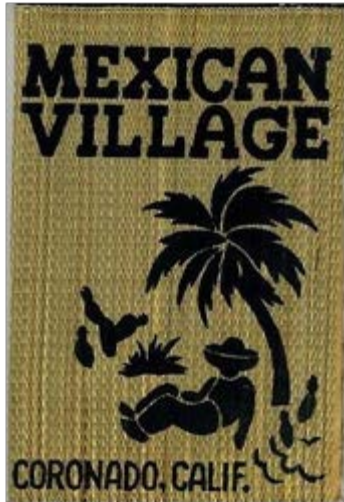
is pretty special."

"You bet. We could level with Sol Phillips and tell him what we really thought. Sometimes you have to do that. Admiral Phillips was a great man to work for, and we were sorry when he retired."

"I bet. Is that going to get us to Vietnam?" I said hopefully.

Mac shook his head side to side. "No, that is going to mean a trip to Arlington Hall Station and Fort George Gordon Meade first."

I picked up my pen again and waved at Big Jim down the bar for reinforcements.



DET ALPHA



(Sabrina, spiritualist and vendor of spirits- both liquid and other- behind the Willow Bar).

Sabrina was on duty behind the Willow bar. She is an intensely spiritual mixologist, and you can always get your palm read or get an account of the full karmic impact of whatever is happening on our side of the bar from her. Saturn was apparently in the 11th House, and from what I could gather, that was important because of that planet's influence "on the right ear, the spleen, the bladder, the phlegm, and the bones." I knew I was going to be needing all of them, and I thanked her for the information.

I enjoyed the first sip of wine for the day as I waited for my weekly interview, eager to get on with the story of the late 1950s, and hoping to arrive in Vietnam before I ran out of the ability to safely consume the Happy Hour White. RADM Mac Showers arrived presently as we discussed what Saturn might mean for the rest of the week. The Admiral was looking dapper, and he almost asked for an Anchor Steam beer because he was feeling so good. I got organized next to him- white wine where I could reach it, plenty of cocktail napkins on which to take notes and a working pen in my hand. As with nearly all of these discussions, I had hoped to start one place and we wound up somewhere completely different.

"We talked about FIRST Fleet the last couple outings," he said. "But there was another aspect of readiness and training that I developed while I was on the staff. That is the one I would like to talk about in some detail. In talking to the various elements of the fleet about readiness for deployment to the Seventh Fleet and what they would be requiring once they got to WESTPAC, we realized that the aviators were drastically short of adequate target

materials in order to carry out the nuclear strikes for which they were responsible, and for which they were doing a considerable amount of training. They simply didn't have the materials for training purposes, or, once they were deployed, they didn't have good target materials to carry out long-range overland strikes into the interior of China or the Soviet Union. So, this became one of my missions, to find out what they needed and to take necessary steps or to have developed better current updated target materials. With the assistance of my aviator assistant N-2, we took it upon ourselves to visit the bases and training facilities of all of the aviation groups that had nuclear strike responsibilities where they were based on the West Coast and where they were carrying out their training activities. Working with them and through AIRPAC, we conducted an extensive series of interviews of the pilots themselves, as well as the squadron and air group officers, to find out exactly what they needed in an ideal situation to carry out their strikes, and we then used this information to devise a target folder that would include all the materials they needed."



"That can be a challenge. I had an A-7 pilot on the Forrestal Med Cruise in '90 who didn't like the satellite image we were able to get of one of his targets. He said he would be approaching from the other side of the power plant he was assigned to take out, and asked if I could get him a picture of the target from the other direction. I realized I couldn't do it-not while we were on cruise, anyway. It would have meant getting a target nomination up through SIXTH Fleet, and into the scramble for priority with the Imagery Committee back in DC. Who did you go to for support?"

"We worked with a number of people. We worked with our fleet Weather-Guesser, who was actually assigned in the plans division of the staff. We worked with the other officers in the Plans Division, who included an Air Force officer as well as an Army and Marine officer. Through the Air Force officer I even made a trip to SAC to find out generally the types of materials they put in o their target folders for their strategic bombers. This gave us a lot of ideas about photography, aim-points, check-points, turn- points, all the things you needed to get an aircraft from a carrier 'feet dry' and into his target. Of course, the Navy delivery tactics and platforms were substantially different than the Air Force was using with their high-level, long-range strategic bombers. So, we had to modify our target folders accordingly. We did that, and we established in detail the materials the pilots wanted in order to carry out their missions. Having done that, we *then* encountered the problem of how to produce these target folders. We had the target list. We knew what the targets were, and where they were. We just needed to get the images, charts and check-lists to the pilots who had to fly the missions."



(AD-J Skyraider in flight, one of the slowest aviation delivery platforms for nuclear weapons. Dad told me that straight and level, ye could outrun a P-51 Mustang, and carry more ordnance that a Flying Fortress. If I was going to light up a target in the Soviet Far East Military District, I think I would like to have a jet under me).

“So, who were the people who designated the targets? Was that done at the national level or with the Strategic Air Command?”

“Oh yes- it was all part of the Single Integrated Operational Plan.”

“I knew the SIOP. The people in Omaha were always running drills during their work-day, which as a pain in the butt when you are in the Far East someplace. They would go all night sometimes when we had the Emergency Action Message watch on the ship.”

“The detailed information was held at PACFLT and at FICPAC intelligence-wise, not by us. In fact, it was with only with some difficulty that we were able to penetrate the bureaucracy surrounding the list.”

“Did you succeed?”



(Admiral Felix Stump).

“To some extent, we did. But I was extremely fortunate in having Captain Rufus Taylor as the N-2 at PACFLT, and he was extremely cooperative and helpful in opening the doors for me. The Plans Officer at PACFLT at that time was then- Captain Grant Sharp who later became Commander-in - Chief at PACFLT and then the theater commander at PACOM.”

"Some people just can't bear to leave the Islands!"

"He was the Plans Officer at PACFLT at the time and Admiral Felix Stump was the Commander-in-Chief. We had to convince each one of these officers through a series of briefings about what we were doing, what we needed, and what type of information to which we had to have access. With their cooperation and a lot of pushing by Captain Taylor, and extensive briefings, we did, in fact, push forward to gain access to the necessary information simply to be able to devise target folders. But then the physical production on these targets became the next problem. First Fleet did not have the manpower nor the facilities, nor the information in San Diego, to do this job.”

“Who did? The Fleet Intelligence Center at Pearl Harbor?”

“Just so. The information was held in Hawaii; the raw material was largely held at FICPAC, where there were a large number of people working over photography and various other things that were needed in these folders. They had the photo-interpretation facilities and all of the equipment, none of which we had in San Diego. But despite the fact

that the information and facilities existed in Hawaii but not in San Diego, CINCPACFLT still said it was a FIRST Fleet responsibility, because it was a readiness responsibility, and they said, "You proceed to do it, plan it, and do it, and we'll support you."

"Sounds typical. So, who did?"

"In the end, the solution was to create a new organization in Hawaii that was co-located with FICPAC, which became known as FIRST Fleet Detachment Alpha, or just "Det A" for short. That was created and billets were procured from thither and yon within the Pacific Fleet and the air organization and FICPAC and PACFLT and so forth."

"Birth of a new command billet. Who got the rose pinned on him to take charge?"

"An aviator named Jack Fitzgerald. Jack was a gung-ho aviator who had been in our Readiness Division on the FIRST Fleet staff for more than a year. He and I had become close friends. We had taken several trips together. He had assisted us in devising the content of these target folders as we developed them. When we reached the point of creating First Fleet DET Alfa, he was eagerly anxious to head it. It was a natural; he was an aviator, and he knew the problem. He was interested and competent, and he wanted to move to Hawaii. So we did; he became the officer-in-charge.

He moved to Hawaii, and he was the only billet that we gave up to form the Detachment. All the other billets, and I think we got twenty or thirty people who made up this detachment, came from within PACFLT resources. They used FICPAC's materials, photos, graphic materials, and used FICPAC's equipment, photo-interpretation equipment, drafting tables, and so forth."

"And we literally, physically, produced target folders, one by one, by one for the designated targets, including the materials that we had identified that needed to be provided to the aviators so that they could study their en route targeting, their check points, their delivery points. all of which was an art form that had been developed for nuclear bomb delivery in those days. Of course, it was different for different types of aircraft. We had the A-3s that were large twin-engine jet bombers, and we had the ADs, which were a single-engine, propeller-driven plane that would fly long legs at low altitude and deliver their bombs by a pop-up mode; an 'over-the-shoulder' delivery it was called in those days. So we had to devise slightly different target folders for different types of aircraft."



(A-3 Skywarrior).

“Those were the days of the Navy's first adventure with cruise missiles, the subs that carried the Regulus missiles. Did you also have to produce targeting material for them?”

Mac sighed, remembering. “Yes. We tried, but we didn't really ever get into that because they didn't need anywhere near the amount of information, and the type of information that a live pilot flying an airplane had to have. I don't recall where their targets were designated. We didn't do that; we didn't designate the Regulus targets. But I believe that they were provided with target materials by whatever authority was designated their targets. That was never a very extensive program, and they didn't have very many targets since they didn't have very many weapons.”



(USS *Grayback* (SS-574) underway on Regulus missile patrol).

“Well. There were not that many Soviet targets in the Far East beyond Vladivostok and the cluster of submarine targets on the Kamchatka Peninsula.”

“True. As I recall, the ones we were generally concerned with were operating near Petropavlovsk, and in the northern reaches of the Soviet Union. The ones around Vlad in the Sea of Japan were air targets.”

“We mostly worried about Petr, where their front line boomers and attack subs were based.

But it sounds like this was the birth of the target folder era for the carrier pilots.”

“Yep. The target folder program and the creation and management of First Fleet DET Alpha was really a major development and became a leading steady-state activity in the intelligence division during the two years that I was there.”

“I know generations of intelligence officers who have spent time helping to build those folders, Admiral. It was the main part of any squadron or Air Wing job.”

"It was a stimulating tour. It was a job in which, for the first time, I really felt like I was given a free hand and very good support in developing some innovative things -- mainly these target folders, which had not existed previously. It was unbelievable to me when I realized what the Navy pilots were expected to do and how little they had to do it with. When we used to sit down with pilots who were flying these planes, and told them that we would provide them target materials so that they could do their job, they were just astounded. This was the first time anybody had come to them and said, "I'll help you."

“Better than telling them to ‘fly west 'til you see a naval base,’ I suppose.”

“That is for sure. It was also heartening to know that we were doing something that somebody really appreciated. Of course, the program was still going on in high gear when I left, and I don't what the eventual outcome of it might have been. Except that I *do* know that a few years later when I got back out to PACFLT as the N-2, I discovered that DET Alpha had been disestablished, and FICPAC had, in fact, taken over the target folder preparation, and they were doing it, which they really should have done originally.”

"You almost had the tail wagging the dog, didn't you?," I said, waving to Sabrina down the bar for emergency replenishment of the Happy Hour white and some positive psychic energy. Talk about nukes always leaves me a bit drained.

The Admiral gave me a thin smile of satisfaction. “Well, I don't know what FICPAC was doing at the time that was so all important, but 'Rufe' Taylor said that he simply couldn't take on this mission as an additional function and that he would help us create Det. Alfa if we would get the people and staff it. Well, we did. He helped us get the billets, he provided the spaces, and we got photo interpreters from various fleet units. We found them were scattered around the Pacific Fleet and many were not even working in rate looking at imagery. So we were able to beg, borrow, and steal photo-interpreter talent and got them

assigned to our detachment.”

How much support did you get from the Office of Naval Intelligence back in Washington? That seems like it would be a national mission.”

“Very little. It wasn't their concern; it was really a Pacific Fleet show. I worked with an organization in San Diego that...” Mac looked up, a bit startled that his memory had failed him. “I can't remember the acronym for it, but it had control of all personnel assigned to all ships and units in the Pacific Fleet, and if I said I wanted to find out where all the Photo Interpreters are, they could give me a computer printout of a hundred or so photo-interpreters who were scattered throughout the fleet. It was a success story. I never did know if the people on the Atlantic side ever did anything like this. We were pretty autonomous.”

“OK,” I said, putting down my pen to concentrate on the wine for a moment. “Two great Fleets, Atlantic and Pacific, separated by a common Navy. So that about covers your time in San Diego. What was next?”

“Back to Washington. And back to Special Intelligence and Y-1, finally. After having left Y-1 back in 1950 to go to London, I now had orders to come back and *head* Y- 1. I was delighted to come back because I really felt like I was coming home after having been around the world in Europe and detoured in the Intelligence School then out to San Diego. It was with great delight that in 1957 I headed back to Washington. As a matter of fact, I had the family already back there because the house that we owned at that time had been rented to a Navy Commander and his family, and they left in December on assignment and we decided to let the house stand vacant until we got back.”

“Ah, the joys of the military move!”

Mac laughed and reached for his Virgin Mary.



Vigilantes



(An RVAH-12 RA-5C beginning a reconnaissance run over Vietnam, 1967. Photo USN).

Mac was waiting patiently at Willow, half way down the bar that Old Jim anchored at the Amen Corner. I was a little flustered. A subcontractor to us on a counterintelligence contract down at the Russell Knox Building at Quantico had some people working who got bored and staged an "unattended package" prank on a co-worker. When it was discovered, the building was evacuated- the whole thing, not just the people working on our little task order.

The end-of-day calls revealed that the Government was expecting to be reimbursed for the lost time of everyone in the building, and that I was generally responsible for all of it. This was going to be a mess for a couple weeks until we could unscramble everything. Sometimes I hate this business. I called Bronco to express my outrage and vent on the situation.

Bronco is one of my earliest Fleet buddies. He was one of *Midway's* Air Wing FIVE Landing Signals Officers, and he flew with our version of the Vigilantes to stay current. Later, he had his own Squadron and Deep-Draft command tours before he retired from the Navy as XO of the *Saratoga*. A gifted fighter pilot and exceptional officer, Big Navy retired the last of the conventionally-powered carriers, and without the nuclear power certificate, he got aced out of a chance to command for command of one of the Nimitz-class boats. No question in my mind, he would have made Flag in a walk.

In the world of retirement, he wound up like I did- as a Parkway Patriot, working on bid-and-proposal tasks and wearing a goofy bow tie like me. It was a fashion statement that shouted out: "GFY." When he has business in the Willow neighborhood, he will stop by for

a beer. When I finished venting, I told him Mac would be at Willow that evening, he said he would be there. Which actually is what made this tale from Mac's memory happen the way it did.

After I dodged death to cross Fairfax Drive against the rush hour traffic, the cool darkness of Willow was a relief. I stopped to exchange greetings with Jim, who was content to sip his long-necked Bud and listen to old jazz on his MP3 player. I promised we would catch up after my chat with Mac. I walked down the bar and pulled out one of the stool and sat down after shaking his had. I started to gather the critical materials I needed to conduct the interview- a pen from my jacket pocket, a stack of cocktail napkins and my smart phone in case we needed information on the fly. I don't know how people did histories before smart phones. Honestly.

Mac was dressed neatly in a sport jacket and tie. I told him that Bronco might be joining us. Mac brightened when he heard that he was a Vietnam-era fighter pilot. "We will talk about airplanes, then. We were talking about FIRST Fleet the other day. We were in the process of trying to make aerial reconnaissance reflect the changing nature of the Cold War. Advanced surface-to-air missiles were changing the equation for strike targeting purposes, and recce to assess the Bomb Damage Assessment. I was thinking about the RA-5C Vigilante program after we talked."

I had my pen out and wrote the subject of the meeting when Bronco appeared at the door and peered in, looking for us. I waved, and he came down and took the stool on the other side of Mac. I made the introductions and he asked for a craft beer from Liz-S behind the bar. I took a sip of Happy Hour White and said: Bronco, we were talking about the RA-5C. We did not have them on Midway. Too big a jet for too small a flight deck. We had to use the Marine RF-4 Phantoms with camera capability to do our post-strike and recce missions. The RF-8 Crusaders were out of the Fleet by then."

"I can give you some context on that," said Mac. "The RA-5C program was derived from the attack version of the jet, which was intended to be a supersonic deep penetration aircraft that would keep Navy in the nuclear strike business and not let the Zoomies claim that all nuclear warfare could be done by the Air Force."

"I heard that didn't work out that well. For survivability, the strikes were supposed to be a Mach speed, and the weapon was deployed out the after end of the jet. Problem was that at speed the bomb would follow right along in the vortex."

"You are correct on that, Vic. The Vigilante was built by North American in Columbus, Ohio. The program had its beginnings when I was in Y-1 and when Rufe Taylor, as a Captain, was head of the Intelligence Division of ONI. All of us were involved in the planning and structuring of the RA-5C program."

"You were providing the requirements for recce, right, like for the satellites?"

Mac nodded. "We even made trips out to Columbus where it was being built, to work with the contractor. Of course, it was both a strike aircraft as well as a reconnaissance aircraft. We were concerned with the reconnaissance configuration; it was the RA-5C and had a canoe-like pod attached to the underbelly that would hold the sensors. The whole program, of course, was to have a platform that could be carried on a carrier, and launched to conduct its collection mission in a tactical environment and return to the carrier with the yards and yards of film from the canoe. It would be read out on light-tables right there in the Integrated Operational Intelligence Center. Not exactly near-real-time, but that was the best we could do for the crews that had to carry out the strike missions. Completely organic, and on the carrier. We did not have to wait for the Fleet Intelligence Center to turn it around to us. And remember, there was no imagery except hard copy."

"I remember the Special Access package that FICPAC or the 548th Reconnaissance and Targeting Group (RTG) at Hickham would provide. It was the only satellite imagery we had for the cruise, unless something came up important enough to fly it out. We were literally cut off while we were at sea for most things."

"Different world now, I imagine," said Mac. "We never had anything fancy like that, and that was just the way it was." He took a sip of his Virgin Mary. The Oncologists had him on the wagon again. I took a sip of Happy Hour white, swirling it on my tongue while thinking what version of the riot act I was going to read to the subcontractors who had played the prank. And made a note to talk to the lawyers at Corporate. "When I was in PACFLT after 1962, the RA-5Cs began deploying. I want you to note this," he gestured at my napkin, "because, on one occasion when I was N-2, my friend, Gene Fubini, who was then Director, Defense Research and Engineering (DDR&E) in the Pentagon, came out to Hawaii on a trip."

"A boondoggle," I said. "Seems we had a lot of Washington people come to Hawaii for critical meetings in January and February."

Mac smiled. "Gene visited our headquarters for briefings, and, as I was seeing him off from the quarterdeck of the headquarters, the USS *Constellation* (CV-64), was moored right down at the foot of the Makalapa Hill at the Carrier Pier. Connie had an RA-5C sitting on its flight deck, clearly visible. Gene was a great advocate and supporter of the RA-5C program, and he looked down there, saw that aircraft and he said, "Mac, now that we have that aircraft deploying, we'll be able to decommission the VQ squadrons."

And I said, "Dr. Fubini, that will never, never happen." He was convinced it *would* happen though, and *should* happen, and I was convinced it wouldn't because the two programs were so different in mission and capabilities. His concern as DDR&E was that a lot of research and development money had been put into the Vigilante system; it was new; it was a tactical support system; and I think he felt genuinely there wouldn't be a need for VQ collection after the RA-5C program was deployed."



(EP-3 displaying radome and special antennas. Photo USN).

"He probably would have liked unmanned drones, too," I said.

Bronco had been listening intently, and cleared his throat. He spoke quietly. "In 1972, I escorted a Viggie on a recon mission from Ranger-Maru over The North. The Viggie was so clean- little drag- that it could easily go the "speed of heat." The pre-flight brief with the Viggie driver was said that if we got shot at, he would only use basic engine (no afterburner) and I would be able to use burner to keep up. Didn't turn out that way. We were poking along at about 450 knots when we did get lit up by a fire control radar."

I stopped writing, thinking about what it had been like having nothing but some aluminum between your butt and an SA-2 Guideline. I put down my pen as Bronco continued, looking across the bar.

“Well, the *Viggie* immediately lights the his burners. I light mine and try to keep up, but it was futile. After all, I have four pylons, a centerline tank, two Sparrows, and four Sidewinders out “in the breeze.” After a couple of minutes, the *Viggie* was a supersonic dot on the horizon. I said: “screw this” and headed for the coast—and started asking for a tanker.”

I felt like I wanted to shiver. Mac smiled, remembering Naval Aviation stories from long ago.

“By the way,” Bronco continued, “the *Viggie* was also a very intimidating bird coming aboard—for a LSO like me under training. It was so big, so fast, and—would you believe—so fragile that the LSO and the driver had very little margin for error. I am still surprised that the CAG LSO ever let me wave them at night.”

Bronco had once invited me out to the LSO platform to observe a night recovery. There is something very intense about watching jets make that approach and plant themselves with such precision in the landing area. One nugget was having some problems with line-up and glide slope, and I leaned forward in fascination as the dance as done to bring the jet aboard. “Wow, I said, that was close!” I looked around to see the LSO team’s reaction. There was no one there but me. They had all jumped to the netting below the platform because they knew what disaster had been so close. I respect those who know the potential consequences of what they are doing and do it anyway.

"Well, I'll be the voice of history tell the rest of the story." Said Ma. . The RA-SC program worked effectively for a few years, the VQs continued, the RA-SCs are now museum pieces, and the VQs still continue to fly."

"They are going to replace them with a jet in a few years, but some of the EP-3 *Orions* still flying were manufactured well before the *Vigilante*."

"That's right. As good an idea as the RA-5C and the IOIC program was, in the totality of naval intelligence, I think, it was just a passing fancy."

“It had passed by the time I got to Midway in 1978. We worked in what was called the Carrier (CV) Intelligence Center- IC. The nickname was “CIVIC.” The Vietnam-era pilots still knew the IOIC by the nickname “101 Clowns.””

"The basic RA-5C airframe had problems that made it difficult to use as a bomber, and it took up so much room and was just so limited in its applications that it couldn't continue to compete for space on the carriers. Plus, the things that it did, or was designed to do, were taken over by satellites so effectively, and in even better time-- closer to real time -- than what the RA-5C could do that it became superfluous."

"I knew we all got confused. My F-4 Phantom squadron dated back to World War 2, and our call-sign was the "*Vigilantes*."" I looked at Liz-S behind the bar hopefully. "We got confused with the recon guys all the time when the Cruise Boats would come out from the West Coast."

"It can be a confusing business," said Mac. "I am just glad to be here to put things straight."

Bronco smiled, and finished off his beer.



Why One



Peter was behind the bar, which means that this undated interview happened sometime before he either got fired or decamped downtown on his own volition. There is no one who could pour a more infuriating martini- the surface tension alone held the precious liquid in the glass, making it almost impossible to take the first sip with any grace. Normally I would use one of the small cocktail straws to draw down the level a bit and make in manageable, even if I had to hunch over the bar like Quasimoto to accomplish it.

I miss Peter and whoever his little assistant was- I remember they dressed up as Batman and Robin on one of Tracey O'Grady's spectacular Halloween parties. He was the first of the long-time bartenders to depart and make our little circle of barflies smaller. So, given the bar staff, I have to guess that this was a conversation in 2008 or 2009, back when Mac Showers and I were just getting rolling on the project.

He talked a lot about Arlington Hall Station, and it resonated with me, since the station is just across the street from the building where I live, and the cemetery just up the road contains the graves of many Japanese-Americans, which Mac explained was not unexpected, since the neighborhood was a nest of spies for years, since the Army took over the former girl's school to make it their number one code-breaking installation, the book end to Navy's occupation of the academy for young women on Nebraska Avenue.

I learned my lesson on Peter's martinis, which were as potent as they were full, and was careful to stipulate the Happy Hour white wine, which in this case was a nice Flora Springs Napa Valley Chardonnay, 2004. At five bucks a glass, it was a good deal and kept us all coming back. Well, that might not have been the reason, since Jon-Without-an-H drank

vodka and soda and Old Jim would not tolerate anything but Budweiser in a long-neck brown bottle. No accounting for taste.



(Headquarters Building at Arlington Hall Station, Arlington, VA).

Confirming that it was a Napa wine by the color of the stains on the napkins on which I had taken notes. I honestly do not know how we got to taking about the Navy code-breakers who had moved into Arlington Hall after the war. The new and chilling relation with the Soviet Union brought the National Security Act of 1948, and a new consolidated organization to handle the COMINT missions of the military departments. The new organization was dubbed the Armed Forces Security Agency (AFSA), and was stood up in DoD on May 20, 1949."

"I have visited the Key West White House where Mr. Truman worked on the Act. I think I would have just stayed down there. Was the process as confusing as I think it was?"

"Short answer is 'Yes,'" Mac said. "In theory, the AFSA was to direct the communications intelligence and electronic intelligence activities of the military service signals intelligence units, which now included the brand new Air Force. In practice, the AFSA had little power, its functions being defined in terms of activities not performed by the service components. The answer, it appeared, was the creation of the National Security Agency, which sprang full-blown from the forehead of Walter Bedell Smith in a December 1951 memo to James B. Lay, Executive Secretary of the National Security Council. The memo observed that "control over, and coordination of, the collection and processing of Communications Intelligence had proved ineffective" and recommended a survey of communications intelligence activities. The proposal was approved on December 13, 1951, and the study authorized on December 28, 1951."

"Aha!" I said triumphantly. "Our first Blue Ribbon Panel on intelligence failures! Weren't

some of those Navy Radio Intelligence guys who screwed Joe Rochefort part of the leadership?"

"Yes. They certainly were. And that certainly was not the last of those things in my career," Mac said with an ironic smile. "The report was completed by June, 1952. We called it the "Brownell Committee Report," after the chairman. The thing was a survey of the history of U.S. communications intelligence activities. It came to the conclusion that there was a need for a much greater degree of coordination and direction at the national level."

"Time for a name change, which is often the only way to move the deckchairs around on a sinking ship. The role of NSA was clearly going to extend far beyond the armed forces, and the facilities at Arlington Hall were not going to be adequate to the scope of the new mission." At least that is what the histories say. I preferred just hearing it from a guy who was there.

We may have gotten to this since I had been relating a story that Louie, the former Chief of Staff at DIA, had told me about being a young analyst at Arlington Hall. When DIA was just starting and housed on the Arlington Hall campus, he worked in the Soviet Shop with a Navy Commander who had the irritating habit of removing his shoes when he came in the office, only putting them back on when the work day was done. When it came time for his to execute his Permanent Change of Station orders, Louie got even by nailing the empty shoes to the wooden floor of the 'temporary' office building. Mac was mildly amused, and mentioned that the windows on the Secure Compartmented Information Facility were drafty- the only time he had that problem with a SCIF. I asked him about his experiences at Arlington Hall.

"Well, I worked at Y-1 I worked in Y-1 between '46 and '48. Admiral Frost was the DNI when I came back to Washington from FIRST Fleet, and I had worked for him, of course, when he was a Captain. He was originally Y-1 in 1946, and I saw him frequently until I went to London. Admiral Frost, in the mean time, had gone off to do fleet duty or whatever. It was non-intelligence assignment, and then he returned after making admiral as the DNI. I am not sure of the year. But he was the DNI when I returned to Washington in the spring of 1957 to take over Y-1. I found Y-1 much as I had left it, except enlarged. There were more people, different people, although some were the same. Maury Hellner and Ed Nielson were still there, Dr. Ed Haff was there. All of them had been hired into Y-1 as civilians; those three were civilians when I was there the first time, and they were *still* there. Maury stayed there during most of my tour, and Ed Nielson continued for a

little while. Ed Haff had, I think moved over into the Pentagon into "F" branch just after I got there. But all those three people, who became high level analysts and well-recognized in ONI were first hired in naval intelligence service in Y-1 and cut their teeth doing Y-1 analysis. They did a creditable job all the time. The active duty officers assigned there were, of course, rotating, so the fact that I had been gone from Y-1 for seven years meant only the civilian cadre remained. Well, except for LCDR Barbara Conard- her married name was 'Moore,' if you want to check her out. But she too had other assignments while I was gone before returning. She was one of the original Y-1 group that we had at Nebraska Avenue in 1948."

"I knew one of the women who worked there in the war. She wouldn't talk about it, and freaked out that I knew about it, even though her work had been declassified decades before. Was she an intelligence officer by designation?"

"No. Barbara was a WAVE. And you don't use that term anymore, I don't believe. You call them "women officers."

"They changed that to General Unrestricted Line- pronounced "GURL," which seemed mildly sexist to me when I was in the personnel business, and trivialized the contributions of the WAVES. But now everyone can be a warfare specialist, even the Spooks. They even have a little badge to wear that says so."

"I started as a Deck Officer, so I understand. But Barb was a Wave. She did not have a Special Duty- Intelligence designator. She had been on an assignment in New York and someplace else and then she came back to Y-1. I think she had been there about a year when I arrived back in 1957, and she stayed another year and then she received another assignment. But, other than that, a lot of the people were new. We had two or three Ensigns who were Naval Academy graduates but because of physical deficiencies, mainly eyesight, had been commissioned as intel and then had gone through Intelligence School. That program started when I was at the Intelligence School, and it had continued with three or four such officers a year. Some of them were on duty in Y-1, and some of them became career intel officers. That includes Admiral Bob Schmitt, who first worked in Y-1 as an Ensign, as did future DNI RADM Torn Brooks. And we moved to Fort Meade. The organization was larger, but the organizational structure that we had originally created still existed. There were some additional mission areas and simply more people assigned to do the increased volume of work. The products being put out were increased because of increased personnel, and the growing volume of raw material being provided."

"What accounted for that, Sir? New collection systems coming on line?"



(GRAB Satellite, forerunner of orbital ELINT collection systems).

"Yes. There were land-based sensors that provided comprehensive HF/DF information and information on Soviet radar emissions and communications. Navy was the first of the Services to go to space with the 1960 launch of the Galactic Radiation and Background (GRAB) satellite, the cover name for the first of the ELINT collectors. POPPY was the follow-on system, which might have still been on orbit when you joined up. That was the mainstay of the U.S. Navy's orbital ELINT collection capability for almost 15 years. It started out as a general search system whose mission was to map out the locations and capabilities of Soviet radar systems, but gained capability and data volume over time as new electronic systems were added to each launch."

"It became a sea of data and now they are talking about it all floating around in a cloud. I am glad I no longer have to deal with it," I said, sipping some of the Flora Springs.



(NSA's Operations Building #1, Fort Meade, MD).

"So it was not hard to fit right back into Y-1 when I returned, and we lived in North Arlington, so the commute was a breeze. The first issue I was confronted with after reporting was the fact that we were soon going to move to Fort Meade. I had no prior knowledge that NSA was building a headquarters building at Fort Meade and all that went with that. But when I arrived there in the spring of 1957, the construction at Fort Meade was well along. The headquarters building was due to be occupied later in the year. Many elements of NSA had already moved. When they created the NSA compound at Fort Meade, the first thing they constructed was the barracks for the Marine guards. These were three or four reinforced concrete, two-story buildings near the NSA headquarters building. Several elements of NSA were temporarily housed in these barracks buildings until the headquarters was completed. So, at the very beginning of my tour that Spring, we had to make liaison visits to some of the NSA elements at Fort Meade, and we went out on a few occasions and worked with the NSA people in these barracks buildings, which was rather disorganized and temporary, but nevertheless NSA was already operating on a split basis. So, we continued our planning for the move through the year, and, in December of 1957, we actually made our physical move. All the rest of NSA moved, and Y-1 moved along with it, in December 1957 and everybody took up full residence at the new headquarters building at Fort Meade at the same time. That opened a new era of activity with Y-1, which in the meantime had been re-designated the "Navy Field Operational Intelligence Office." I always have to stop and think because of the difficulty of that title and the artificiality of it. I still to this day refer to the activity as Y-1, and I believe I always will. It's an easier thing to say."

"I totally agree about NFOIO's name. But we had to acknowledge and use it, since they were the Gods of OPINTEL when I was out in the Pacific. What they said about the Soviet subs and merchant shipping was considered authoritative, and us Spooks out in the hustings were just the Junior Varsity."

"That was the nature of the Ocean Surveillance Information System."

"I am proud that I got to be part of the OSIS system," I said, "We used to say that working at one of the Centers or Facilities was like trying to write a newspaper on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange."

"Dave Rosenburg wrote a book about it called 'The Admiral's Advantage,' said Mac. "He talked to me extensively on the origins and function of the system. We had the intelligence nodes of the system around the world- London, Rota, Pearl and Kami Seya. Sitting on top was Y1. You should be proud that you got to see one of the finest OPINTEL systems ever devised. But as to the NFOIO name, it was all Beltway politics and centers of gravity. At that time, Fort Meade was outside of what was defined as the metropolitan area, Washington, D.C. Fort Meade was geographically within the area of the Severn River Naval Command. I don't know whether the Severn River Naval Command, as an administrative organization, still exists.

"Most of those commands have long gone away," I said, wondering if there was a good time to step out and grab a smoke.

"I haven't heard of the Severn River Command in years, but it was real, and led by the Superintendent of the Naval Academy. He was double-hatted to run the Naval Academy and the Severn River Naval Command. We fell within his geographical limits, so that was the reason that the activity was designated the field office of ONI located outside the Washington metropolitan area and why I was given additional duty orders to report to the Commandant of the Severn River Naval Command, who technically was my military superior."

"And with whom you had very little business?"

"Almost nothing. I did go down to Annapolis to show we could play nice. I took Commander Ed Cummings with me, he was Y-IE, my production manager, and he was an Academy graduate. I'd never been to the Naval Academy before. I didn't know my way

around, so I figured I could use a ring-knocker to keep me on course."

"Just to stay calibrated on this napkin, where were you in your career? Did you have your twenty years at that point?"

"Right on twenty in that tour, and just made Captain, so I had no thought about retiring. I was having too much fun. So, I took Ed with me to make my call on the Superintendent and to do all the necessary protocol niceties. And we did that; we had a nice discussion with him. We couldn't tell him very much, because he wasn't indoctrinated for our business, but he wasn't overly inquisitive, so I'm sure he had many things of his own concern, and we were not very important to him. But he said he would designate one of his staff officers to be our point of contact for whatever business we might have. He designated Captain "Lucky" Fluckey who had already had some intelligence duty. I think that's why he designated him.

"That would be "Lucky" Fluckey? The submariner who landed a sabotage party ashore in Japan to blow up a train during WWII?"

"And later Director of Naval intelligence. I knew him slightly at that time, and he was on duty in the Academy's Electrical Engineering Department. So we continued our call and went over to see Captain Fluckey, and he was very receptive to us, very helpful, and said he would do anything that we needed help with. The only direct contact of a continuing nature we had with the Naval Academy was to transfer some funds from ONI for Severn River Naval Command, since we had to be paid by them, and they, of course, had no budget to cover our activity. So ONI transferred funds annually from the ONI budget to the Severn River Naval Command supply officer or comptroller, and he would issue the paychecks for our civilians.

"At Y1, were you working directly for the DNI? In terms of the content of your work, there was no intervening command? Did anyone at NSA check your work?"

"Absolutely not. We worked directly for the DNI, as we had been part and parcel of ONI. In fact, we still showed the Y-1 organization with the Y-1 designators on the ONI directory, the ONI Roster, with NFOIO simply put in parenthesis after my name. So, for all practical purposes, we were still ONI. But the important thing was, and this became significant later to other people, the important thing was that the personnel in Y-1 no longer counted against the headquarters establishment of OPNAV. It became significant because it

led people to discover that you could create field activities and move them out of the immediate area, or out of the Pentagon, and thus reduce your OPNAV manpower ceiling while still having the organization in place, effective, and working for you. Since we were the first field activity of ONI, and we were created because of our geographic separation, it became a forerunner of what is now effect, field activities of ONI."

"And you also provided a template for how other offices in the Pentagon to do such things?"

"Right," he said with a slight grimace. "We are responsible for the sprawl. Little by little other activities were moved out of the Pentagon to the Hoffman Building in Alexandria and out to Suitland and were created as field activities of ONI, and subsequently NAVINTCOM was created to be the umbrella over all of these field activities representing the DNI."

"Was being at Fort Meade any more of a handicap in getting your needs across and getting your support to the DNI?"

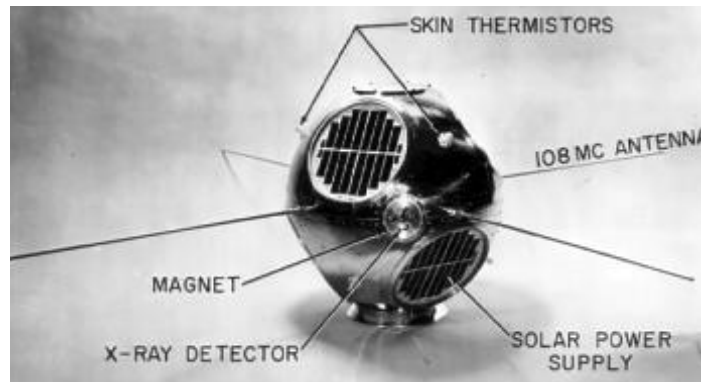
"No, it was no handicap because I continued to live in North Arlington. I started out each day from Arlington and returned to Arlington each evening, and, if need be, I could start my day in the Pentagon or finish my day in the Pentagon and not be grossly dislocated because I could simply change my schedule. In the beginning, most of our other officers also lived in the Virginia area, where we had all been in order to work at Arlington Hall. Some of the people relocated their households out to the Maryland countryside or to the Laurel vicinity. There were no quarters available on the Post. Many people continued to live in Northern Virginia. I found it quite convenient to do so because I would, whenever necessary, spend a half a day in the Pentagon, either in the morning or in the afternoon or conceivably all day. But the wildest commute was that done by Captain Bill Hatch. He was determined to raise his family away from the big city and owned a farm out in Leesburg. He would drive to Arlington long before dawn and we would car pool to Ft. Meade."

I gave a low whistle. "That might be the worst commute in Washington," I said.

"And remember: it was before the Beltway, which didn't get finished until 1964, and by that time I was on my way to Pearl Harbor again. Remind me to tell you about what the commuting was like one of these afternoons."

"Yessir." I asked Peter for the check, and counted myself lucky that I might have made my last drive to Fort Meade. At least on official Business, anyway.

Space Age



(GRAB reconnaissance satellite, circa 1961. One of them hung for years in a stairwell at the Office of Naval Intelligence).

It was winter, and that meant that the sky outside Willow was dark as we arrived, and the little vestibule between the inner and outer doors to the bar side of the restaurant was welcome to prevent the chill wind from blowing in.

It seemed to be a Wednesday, for some reason best known to itself, and at the office across the street there were five proposals in progress with the capture guys screaming at the Proposal Managers, the day workers being expected to contribute deathless technical prose in the hours after the day-job was wrapped up.

There is nothing I hate quite as much as proposal writing, and it was hard to change gears and just talk to Mac. I actually had a decent notebook with me, for a change, since the big IT conference in Detroit that summer had provided fancy wire-backed hard cover books that we could fill up with all sorts of interesting information. I brought it with me and was proud to be half-way prepared for a session with Mac Showers.

“So, last time we talked you were the head of Y Branch in the Pentagon. Can you tell me what was going on in 1961?”

“Space Age. We had a significant role in the development, launch and operations of the Navy's first ELINT satellite activities.”

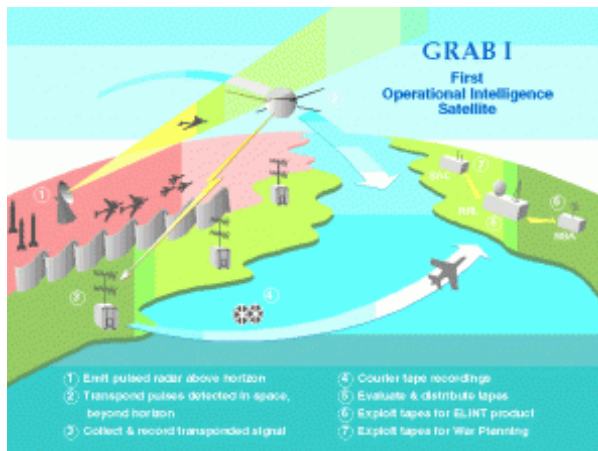
“There is a big exhibit I saw out at the National Reconnaissance Office about GRAB and

POPPY vehicles. That was amazing that Navy was first into orbit for satellite recce. POPPY was still in orbit when I joined the navy almost forty years ago.”

“There was no NRO then as we know it today. GRAB- the Galactic Radiation and Background collection satellite- had been launched by the Naval Research Laboratory early in 1961 and was actually orbiting and collecting ELINT over denied areas. I think this may still be classified, because this satellite was launched under the guise of a solar radiation detector. It was openly advertised satellite for the purpose of collecting solar radiation measurements.”

“Did it?”

“Yes, and very well. But, more importantly, it also collected ELINT from the Soviet landmass.”



I took a long refreshing pull from my glass of Happy Hour White. It was particularly crisp- Willow uses the low special hour price as a loss-leader to get people to drink more and order from the bar menu. “Electronic Intelligence, like radar and other signals the Soviet ships would put out while operating on the high seas.” I remembered the old watchword from the Ocean Surveillance System: “Live by ELINT, die by ELINT. “In my day, we had a thing called “hull-to-emitter-correlation” where we could actually identify the exact ships by their unique frequency signature.”

Mac nodded and took a sip of Anchor Steam beer. He was in a better mood than I was since the Docs had given special dispensation for him to have a real beer for a change. “Over time, several of these satellites were launched and did collect intelligence effectively, and the results were analyzed. They turned out to be a very productive platform, and I'm certain they were the first ELINT satellites owned by anybody of any country.”

“Admiral, I was a budget guy like you at the end of my career, and wound up funding all sorts of strange things. How were the satellites paid for if they were a clandestine program? Was "Y" Branch a money manager as well as a substantive material and program manager?”

The Admiral looked into space for a moment, collecting his thoughts while appearing to examine the rows of Willow’s fine wines on the shelves behind the bar. “We probably had a hand in justifying the need for the collection in order to obtain the money, but it was Navy Research Lab money and we probably assisted, as I recall, on that as well as other projects. We helped NRL justify the need for the funds, but the money came out of research and development capital. Of course, there was the issue of divided chains of command. Since NRL was a laboratory, it reported up to the Assistant Secretary for R&D. That whose pot of money paid for the that project, plus the development of what we called the Big Dish at the Naval Security Group station at Sugar Grove, West Virginia.”

“I have been there when it was active and Byrd was pushing for more government activities to move out there. We had to respond to questions about the alternate Atomic Clock, and the FBI fingerprint labs I heard it was for sale to private owners once Senator Byrd was no longer the Chairman of the Appropriations Committee.”



(NSGA sugar Grove's Big Dish. It is for sale).

“Bobby Byrd was a magician in getting the bacon home to West Virginia. We tried to support other schemes, too, and spent many hours briefing people at the Pentagon and the

government. The money was coming from Navy R&D to NRL for the construction of the Big Dish, which was to be a moon-bounce ELINT interceptor, a moon-bouncing communications ELINT and communications interceptor using the moon as our satellite, so to speak.”

“It is only fair, I suppose. Sugar Grove used to advertise that it was in a radio silence’ zone due to the mountains and the terrain. No interference from other terrestrial signals.”

“That's how it was advertised by NRL. But it never panned out because the cost escalated to the point that it was shelved. It started out being about a \$150 million dollar project, and then it crept up to \$160, \$170, \$180 and began getting shaky when it went over \$180, and as it approached \$200 million, they killed it.”

“I hate it when that happens,” I said. “And that was in 1961 dollars. That was a pricey capability.”

“You mentioned Senator Byrd. There were some political aspects of that too, with all that money flowing into West Virginia; it tended to have some inertia to folks on the Hill.”

“I hate to think back on the number of things that went to West By God over the years he was in the Senate. I think a good deal of money has since flowed into West Virginia for similar purposes, but that didn't happen on my watch. The "Y" Branch role in the NRL solar radiation satellite was to perform the tasking.”



(Senator Robert Byrd, perhaps the most effective productive pork producer in U.S. Senate History).

“I remember the fights to get targets in the Soviet Far East into the collection deck for the imagery satellites. How did it work for Y Branch, translating technical collection requirement into instructions on the bird in orbit?”

“We had an outfit called "TOG," which stood for "Technical Operations Group." It was a very simple acronym, and was supported by the Naval Security Group, NRL, the Navy’s master engineer Howard Lorenzen, by the Science and Technical Intelligence Committee (STIC) in the form of Bill Howe, and by "Y" Branch’s Fred Welden before me, and then eventually myself. We met once a month to develop the tasking schedule for the on-off times for the sensor package to optimize collection on what we were interested in. We were restricted in what we could do, since to protect the secret of GRAB's real mission, we couldn't operate the satellite full-time when the bird was over the Soviet landmass. We had to operate it on a random and part-time basis so that we didn't disclose the fact that it was collecting against certain targets at certain times.”



“Yeah. I was riding in a bus in an exercise and they parked us over a highway overpass to hide when the Soviet Satellites were scheduled to come overhead.”

“Yes- vulnerability to satellite reconnaissance, or SATVUL times. So the purpose of TOG was to work out the schedule and submit it to the operators of the satellite and the intercept stations who were copying the downlink at the Naval Security Group stations at Bremerhaven and in Japan.”

“This was science fiction stuff for the World War Two generation. Were you guys supposed to be experts on orbital mechanics and the operating characteristics of the satellite?”

“We did indeed. I even went down to Cape Canaveral and watched one of the launches. That was the first time I'd ever seen a launch. But I just recite that as one of the interesting things that made my year as head of "Y" Branch absolutely fascinating. One of the finest

short tours of duty I ever had. But, early in that tour, and I'm talking now in late 1961, within a few months after I reported, I was called in by Rear Admiral Vernon L. Lowrance, who had become DNI, and he asked me if I thought I could handle the job of Fleet Intelligence Officer, CINCPACFLT.”

“What an opportunity to serve in Eddie Layton’s old office! What did you say?”

“My answer to Admiral Lowrance was that I was way too junior, I still only had a year in grade. I thought I was too junior to handle an assignment like that.”

“Funny about that. Your Boss in WWII, Admiral Nimitz, said the same thing when they picked him to go receive Husband Kimmel after the attack on Pearl.”

“You are quite right on that. But a Chester Nimitz only comes along every couple generations.”

I nodded in agreement. Mac finished the last of his second beer, and announced that he needed to get to the dinner service back at The Madison across the street.



I waved at dark-haired Serena behind the bar to see if we could get the check. Mac got off lightly, since the night Liz-S awarded the admiral an official document saying he would henceforth be drinking for free at Willow. It is a much better deal than I am ever going to get! Old Jim has calculated our monthly tabs, and he claimed we pay about \$1,400 a month

in rent for the stools on which we sit, with alcohol included, of course.

Thank goodness, it is *not* in 1961 dollars.

Blue Ribbon Panels



Willow was just starting to take on the energy of the post-work Happy Hour Crowd. Liz-with-an-S was behind the bar, and working some of the questions for admission to the Virginia Bar. She is already admitted to the New York and New Jersey ones- but that wasn't quite good enough to crash the protective gates of the Lawyers Lobby here. We were pulling for her to get out of Food and Beverage and get back to being an officer of the Court the way she had intended- and maybe whittle down some of the student debt that she had amassed getting through Law School.

I had given her a set of flash cards I found on the web to drill on likely questions she would encounter in the exam- and take a new direction in her professional life. In between tulip glasses of Happy Hour White, of course.

Old Jim was seated in his usual place at the apex of the Amen Corner. He was a constant fixture at Willow, at least when he was not involved in a boycott resulting from overfamiliarity, since he lived with his bride Chanteuse Mary just down Utah Street and with his bum leg, it was just about the right distance for him to travel. Even Uncle Julio's up the block was a little far to hike. Anything else- The First Down or The Front Page, for example- were a cab ride away, much less the bright lights of Clarendon, the next stop on the Orange Line route into town.

Mac was prompt and nicely turned out in a jacket and sport shirt. I had no idea what I

wanted to cover in this chat. When we had talked about his time at Fort Meade with the Naval Field Operational Intelligence Office we had got to the point of talking about one of the first major controversies at the national level of the Intelligence Community- the amount of money we spend to do things like miss the collapse of the Soviet Union. That sort of thing.

But this was before the trauma of the Vietnam conflict, which I hoped to get to in the next few weeks. I picked up my pen, now that Liz-S had me set up with a full glass of wine and a ready supply of cocktail napkins. "OK," I said. "You were just getting to the first of the big Blue Ribbon Panels in which you participated. I remember you mentioning the Schlesinger Panel, the Church and Pike Commissions and all the rest. What was this one called again?"

"It is a recurring phenomenon in the Government. Something happens, everyone agrees it looks bad, then they call in some smart people and make recommendation that may or may not be helpful. Early in my tour at NFOIO, our Director Admiral Frost became involved with what became known as the Robertson Committee," said Mac. "Mr. Robertson was an Assistant Secretary of Defense -- and was charged by the Secretary of Defense to find out what communications intelligence was costing the United States government."

"That has got to be a huge amount," I said. "The whole NSA and all the activities the Services had embedded in their structures. I doubt if anyone could track it all down."

"Robertson tried. This was the beginning of serious budget concerns in the intelligence and the COMINT business. So the Robertson Committee was formed of Army, Navy, Air Force -- the intelligence agencies and the cryptologic agencies of Army, Navy, Air Force -- and NSA, and it was monitored by State Department and CIA and other people in the government who used COMINT. It became a large committee that worked for several months to price out costs of COMINT, to find out where there might be duplication, where there might be wasted effort, where there might be gaps. Their ultimate outcome was to come up with the first consolidated cryptologic program and in fact, still exists."

"But this was before Vietnam. Before the major expansion of everything and they already were wondering what they got for their money?"

"!958, I think things really got rolling, or late in 1957. Shortly after reporting as chief of Y1

in March 1957, Admiral Frost called me in to his office in the Pentagon to ask me to Backstop him as a member of the Robertson Committee. As Assistant Secretary of Defense, he had been charged by SECDEF to convene a group of authorities and over time to examine and price-out the total cost to the Defense Department of all the cryptologic activities then ongoing. Admiral Frost was a member of the group as the DNI, and I was his backup. He probably had backup from the Naval Security Group as well, since that is where the equities were located. It was a large committee: Army, Navy, Air Force, various elements of the Defense Department, the budget people, of course, and the Armed Forces Security Agency, or National Security Agency, which it probably was called by then. We even had State with at least observer status, the CIA, and the other elements of the government who were users of the cryptologic product. It was a large committee, and it consisted of the committee of Principals and then there was a working group for those of us who were the backup would meet to do our spade work."

"Sounds like the Deputy's Committee where real work gets done. You never get anything effective with just the grownups there."

"Well, we sat for several months, certainly the better part of a year. I don't recall the full extent of it. but the result was the creation of the Consolidated Cryptologic Program (the CCP), which since then is still the cryptologic program that carries the budget program for all cryptologic activities in the Defense Department. In those days, it was managed then by the Director, Defense Research and Engineering within the Pentagon. DDR&E was the Pentagon point of contact for all cryptologic activities under the responsibility of the Secretary of Defense, and DDR&E was, in effect, the office of the SECDEF which was designated as being responsible for the activities of the National Security Agency. I mention this because it was the birth of the CCP and the first time that anyone had attempted to put the cryptologic budgets together into one package, which happened then and has continued since and has also been applied to other types of activities and programs in government."

I do recall that the total bill the magnitude of the program and it turned out to be an astounding figure. This surprised everybody. I don't recall what it was at that time, but, when it was all put together and added up, it was an amazing number. That effort took a good deal of my time because this committee or the working group met in lengthy sessions at least weekly, if not more often, in the Pentagon. I was at Arlington Hall for the first nine months of that tour, so that was not too much of a dislocation, but, after we moved to Fort Meade in December 1957, this increased the commuting time and the commuting activities.

I, however, lived in Arlington at that time so, if there were meetings to be attended in the Pentagon that were going to go all day or a good portion of the day, I could go from home to the Pentagon or I could go from Fort Meade to the Pentagon and then come home from there. So it wasn't too inconvenient for me. That's all I'm going to say on the Robertson Committee, since there were things that I still can't talk about."

Was there anything else you wanted to know about my time at NFOIO? I think we've talked about the rest of my tenure as Y1, or more formally OP-922Y1. I wrote about it for the Naval Intelligence Professionals, but that was probably before your time as editor."

"I will track it down, Sir. Should be interesting reading with a little perspective."

"The article I wrote pretty much covered the tour of duty there, including the organization and functions of the office, some of the things we did, and our relationships with the National Security Agency. I didn't go into those relationships in detail because they might include some subjects that would still be classified. In fact, I *know* they would. In a classified session, there may be some things that would be worth reporting as a result of that - particularly our role in working with the National Security Agency."

"Let me see what I can find regarding the article. If I have questions, I am sure we can sort it out over an Anchor Steam Ale and some Happy Hour White."

"I would be delighted. I just have to get the Doctors on the same sheet of music as Willow."

Liz-S came down the bar with a flash-card. "Does *Atkins v. Virginia* strike any chords?" she asked. "The defense apparently relied on a single exculpatory witness for a capital murder case."

Mac pursed his lips. "I think I actually remember that one," he said. "No Blue Ribbon Panels, though."

"No," said Liz-S. "The question is about the execution of mentally retarded persons and whether it is "cruel and unusual punishment" prohibited by the Eighth Amendment."

"It may be cruel," said Mac. "But in my experience, it is hardly unusual."

Higher Education



(Panoramic View of the Naval War College campus at Newport, Rhode Island).

Willow was quiet that afternoon. It was a bit early for Old Jim to limp down the block for happy hour, and Mac Showers and I had were the only customers inside. A couple tables were full out on the patio, but the sultry August weather had everyone at a low ebb. If there were ceiling fans inside, the dust motes would have danced in the breeze. it would have been a setting out of any classic film noir movie. Mac was in an aloha shirt, no jacket, and I was still in my work clothes. We ere talking about the early 1960s, times that we overlapped in this world and which, on a good day, I vaguely recall. Behind the bar was Tex, the former Marine who stands about six two and has put on a little weight since he got out, but is always jovial and usually seems happy to see us. Tex was an interesting guy. He has some sort of a sinus problem that causes him to snort once in a while, and a cheerful indifference to the niceties of some social conventions. Which led to an unusual transaction at the bar one afternoon that will have to remain between the two of us.

But I was not there for commercial activity, regardless of how gratifying. I wanted to get through Mac's time in the Y1 organization and get back to the Pacific, where I had some major questions to ask. So, without much ado, I launched right into it with my trusty pen in one hand and a glass of almost-Happy Hour white wine in the other. "So, with part of your organization co-located with NSA, you must have had a lot of interaction with The Fort."

Mac nodded in agreement. "There were many interesting liaison activities that I conducted as Y1 with NSA, some on very friendly and beneficial terms, not always at loggerheads with them, like the submarine program seemed to be. One at which I am not prepared to go into detail was the attempt between the Navy Research Laboratory and ONI on the one hand and NSA on the other to try to understand and capture the Soviet short-signal a burst transmission -- which was just coming into use in the late '50s, and surprising to say, we did succeed with great satisfaction in doing that. That was when I first met Dr. Gene Fubini, who NSA called in by NSA as a consultant to try to understand the electronic mechanics of the signal. I appreciated from the outset that Gene was a genius in these matters, and he and I subsequently became very close friends in many endeavors that the

Navy had underway. He, of course, took up positions in the Pentagon -- DDR&E, etc. -- and I might comment that he was also is my neighbor, just around the corner when I was still in the house in North Arlington."



(Dr. Eugene Fubini, the legendary Navy electronic wizard).

"I remember the di-graph for the classification, Admiral. So, you were still doing SIGINT in Y1?"

"We did in the organization, yes, absolutely. You could not get away from it."

"That makes sense, since Naval intelligence has always been focused to a large degree on being able to locate shipborne radars and communications. It was our bread and butter and still is." "Okay, let's move on to my detachment from Y1 in the summer of 1960, relieved by Captain John Q. Edwards, who has subsequently written in the Quarterly about some of his experiences in Y1. I was selected to attend the senior course at the Naval War College in Newport, which I did.

"I love military higher education," I said with a laugh. "Were you a Commander or Captain?"

"I had been deep-selected for Captain, but I only made my number days before being detached from the Pentagon. I was happy to arrive at the War College in Newport as Captain rather than as a Commander, which was useful from the standpoint of getting better quarters and accommodations. I looked on my year at Newport as a sabbatical after all hard

work and long Pentagon hours. It turned out not to be so relaxed, because I became so enamored with the academic community, and I got reintroduced to a delightful library where I could go and contemplate the things I had seen. The library at the War College is open 24 hours a day. You can go there any time to read or research, or whatever. Each student, of course, was assigned the writing of a term paper. My term paper was on the general subject of "Soviet Submarine-Launched Cruise Missiles," which were just coming into the inventory and in testing testing stages at that time. So I did a research paper on those for which I fortunately got an outstanding grade. I had some help from my old shipmate Art Newell, who was the intelligence specialist assigned to the War College faculty at the time, and coincidentally was also my faculty advisor. But the War College turned out to be truly a delightful experience."

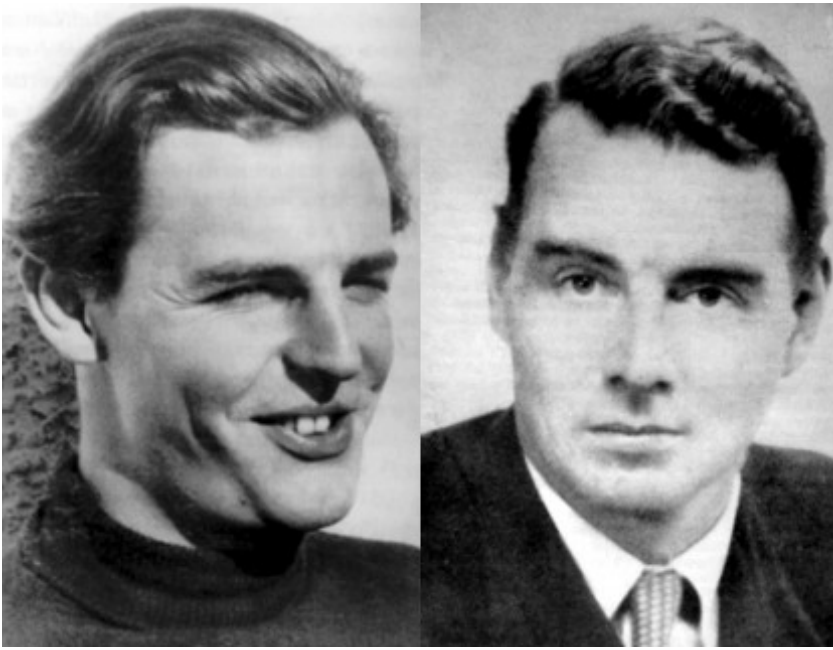
"I never had to worry about early selection. But I agree. I felt the same way about the Industrial College when I finally got a chance to go to school. Who would have imagined getting full pay and allowances while getting your masters degree?"

"The War College was not a degree-granting institution then. They worked out something with the Salve Regina College across the road to accept the War College curriculum as meeting their standards for a degree later, but it didn't exist then. Higher military education was certainly a change of pace for me and the family. We were at Newport when the Bay of Pigs raid occurred."

"1961, right? That That would have been the Cuban Crisis period," trying to get my recent history straight. "The Cuban Missile Crisis was in 1962. The Bay of Pigs was right after JFK came into office, which would have been January of that year."

"Yes. I was at the War College at the time of the Bay of Pigs. John Edwards was in Y1, because he mentions some of this incident in his account. I also was at the War College when the two Brits defected.

"Burgess and McLean, right?"



(British traitors Guy Burgess and Alistair MacLean).

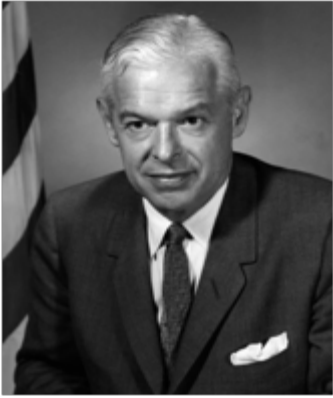
Mac gave me a thin smile. "At the time, I was absolutely astounded to read The New York Times about the Soviet accounts of the debriefings in Moscow after they arrived in Moscow. That was really the first time that U.S. and U.S./British SIGINT activities were openly made known to the Soviets, as far as we knew."

"We seem only to keep secrets from the people who pay for them. The Soviets had moles everywhere, and there was not much they did not have. Down through the years, we have certainly had a lot of people willing to give things up to them, either out of ideology or for cash." Mac nodded gravely.

"Yes, it was all printed for the general public. They were absolutely astounding accounts. I was sitting up in Newport reading about all this, knowing I was going back to the Pentagon to head "Y" Branch and deal with what had been exposed to the Soviets. Anyway, the year at Newport was interesting. That was the year that John Kennedy was elected. One of our speakers at the War College was Paul Nitze, who at that time was campaigning for John Kennedy. I remember his talk about naval activities and naval operations. During the question and answer period, there had just been an incident where a Soviet SIGINT trawler had attempted to recover a missile being tested off Cape Canaveral. And the question was asked of Paul Nitze, who was preaching the more aggressive nature of military operations that would come into being during a Kennedy Administration.

One of the questions was, "If you were Secretary of the Navy, what would you have done about that SIGINT trawler that attempted to recover the missile?" And he shot

back, "I would have sunk the son-of-a-bitch!" And he got a standing ovation. Two or three hundred students in the auditorium, very impressive then, and of course, Nitze later *did* become Secretary of the Navy. I don't recall him sinking any trawlers, though."



(The Honorable Paul Nitze as SECNAV).

"The OpNav Staff must have told him there was a State Department?."

""Right. Among other things. Anyway, on completion of my War College work, I was ordered back to the Pentagon to relieve Captain Fred Welden as head of 1Y Branch. I reported in August 1961 and was delighted to be there. I felt that I had finally arrived at the epitome of OPINTEL in the Navy and was in the billet I had long admired and sought after.

"This was in the D-ring on the fifth floor of the Pentagon?"

Mac nodded. "The D-ring on the fifth floor. The area was blocked off at both the 7th and 8th corridors, I believe. We had an enclosed hallway in which we had the parts of "Y" Branch that were not at The Fort: Y-2, Y-3, and Y-4 .

"What did each of the groups do?" I asked, taking a sip of wine and letting the pen rest on the bar where it was safe.

"Well. Y-1, or the Naval Field Operational Intelligence organization was still at Fort Meade, under John Edwards. Y-2 was responsible for briefings to the Chief of Naval Operations...."

"What we knew as CNO Intelligence Plot. Jake tried to detail me there one time."

Mac nodded, "We called it that, too. I'm trying to distinguish between Y-3 and Y-4." His

face was screwed up in thought. “Y-4 was ELINT and was responsible for the peripheral collection activities, mainly of the VQ squadrons- the electronic collection P-3 Orion aircraft. This was really the Washington contact point over the activities of the VQ squadrons, and Y-4 was mainly manned by aviators that had been in the VQ squadrons and understood the avionics of flying those airplanes. Y-3 then, I can't recall. It might have been collection management.” \

“You had this whole empire?”

“Yes I did. The whole shooting match, and I should be able to recall. It seems to me that Y-3 had something to do with collection activities involving the U-2 because, on this tour of duty for the first time, I was briefed among other things on the U-2 operation and also, before the tour was over, on the advent of satellite operations. They were collecting photography of military installations in denied areas.”

“Which would have been useful before Gary Francis Powers was shot down over the Soviet Union. That is about as denied as you can get.”

Mac smiled. “That was why we moved things onto low earth orbit. Not that many Russians there in those days.”

“And now we get our rocket engines from them.”

“It is a strange world, isn't it?” asked Mac as he contemplated his Virgin Mary.

Way Down Yonder (In Vietnam)



(Boomer behind the bar at the Amen Corner. Photo Socotra).

Willow was bustling, and it was with good reason. The last Friday night of the month was the fabulous Buffalo Night, in which Tracy O’Grady re-creates the most famous sandwich to ever come out of Buffalo, New York: the astonishing ‘Beef on Weck.’

BOW is composed of a slow-cooked locally-raised grass-fed steamer round of beef, thin sliced and piled high on one of Kate Jansen’s amazing Kemmelweck Kaiser rolls, topped with fennel and sea salt. They are so good I normally ordered two in advance to prevent being disappointed when they sold out. I would normally eat one at the bar and take the other one home to snack on the rest of the weekend.

Mac normally dines at The Madison across Fairfax Drive where he lives, but he could sense the excitement as the Regulars filed in and asked Big Jim behind the bar whether the “beef was resting” prior to being carved up into succulent slices.

Mac was dressed in a natty coat and tie, since Buffalo Night we all come straight from the office and look vaguely professional. Boomer was behind the bar, and bantering with the regulars as she normally does in the brassy manner that endeared her to us.

I picked up my pen and slid a stack of napkins over to where I could get at them. “I am afraid we are getting to your return to O’ahu in the early 1960s.”

“Why do you say it that way?” he asked, having a sip of Virgin Mary, since the Doctors were being cruel to him this week.

“Because I am starting to remember some of the events you are describing and it doesn’t

seem that long ago,” I said with a laugh.

“You are not going to pin me down like that. I will tell it the way it actually happened, and to do so I have to go back a year before I took the family to Hawaii. It was 1961 when I returned from the senior course at the Naval War College in Newport. After graduating in the summer, I was ordered to ONI again to be the Head of "Y" Branch.”

“Which was the Special Intelligence Division, right?” I asked. “It had become something else by the time I was around.”



(RADM Vernon L. Lowrance as DNI. A World War Two submariner, Lowrance had been awarded the Navy Cross for gallantry. Navy photo).

“Yep. We had a suite in the Pentagon for the various components, not far from Rear Admiral Vernon L. Lowrance’s office as the DNI. Shortly after I arrived and got settled in the building, I had a session with the Admiral in which we discussed my future career. I told him that I would like to branch out of Naval Intelligence to do some things other than pure OPINTEL to broaden myself. I told him I was in a rut and I would like to try something different like an attaché assignment or some other form of Naval Intelligence service.”

“Sounds like fun being a diplomat and open-source intelligence collector going to cocktail parties, but a lot of Attachés got passed over later for being away from the Navy too long.”

“I know, but I was restless. The DNI was sympathetic to my request, but he said "You're in a rut that an awful lot of people would like to be in with you." And then he said, "I don't have a lot of sympathies for your desires to go elsewhere."

“I told him, if I was to stay in that line of work, that my ultimate desire was to get Eddie Layton’s job as the Intelligence Officer for the Pacific Fleet. That was my desire, and had been ever since the war. My time in Europe and the growing realization of the Soviet Threat never kept me from keeping a fond eye on the activities at CINCPACFLT and who got the jobs as the top Naval Intelligence officer in the Pacific, which was viewed as a job that could be a springboard to selection for Flag. I wanted a shot at it, eventually.”

“You can imagine my surprise when just a few months later, the DNI called me to his office on the fifth Deck and told me he was prepared to send me to CINCPACFLT in the near term if I really wanted to go. I had some misgivings. I only had two years in grade as a Captain, and the job was really for a mid-to-senior officer. I questioned whether I would really be acceptable to the Fleet Commander being that junior, and he assured me "that's no problem, I'll take care of that."

“Always take a challenge” said Mac, as Boomer came by, inspecting the level of liquid in everyone’s glass. “That was my motto, and I told him, "Yes, I'd love to go. So, I agreed, he agreed, and orders were cut to detach from the Pentagon in the summer of 1962 and relocate to Pearl Harbor, where I reported in August.”

“Just in time for the World Series. Didn’t the Yankees beat the San Francisco Giants?”

Mac smiled. “I never had much time to follow baseball, and there is a six hour time difference, remember. It made listening to the games too hard, and who cares about the Yankees, anyway. I had a big job to start. I really was the assistant chief of staff for intelligence when I reported. Three years later I was selected for admiral, and I made my number in December of 1965. That promotion made me the senior Division Chief on the staff for my last six or seven months in the job.”

“How did you feel about that? Your staff during World War II was fighting a global war, was all over the Pacific, and Eddie Layton was about the only Captain that you dealt with. Did you feel that there had been a grade creep out there at that point?”

Mac furrowed his brow. “Well, I think there was a grade creep everywhere. But, I think it was a necessary evil, since Admiral Nimitz had kept his PACFLT staff during the war a very lean organization. The number of officers in the Intelligence Division could practically be counted on the fingers of one hand. But there was the huge organization of JICPOA and the Fleet Radio Unit to back up the Intelligence Division. After those large organizations

were done away with in 1941, the intelligence staff itself became larger. And that was true, more or less, of all the divisions on the staff. The staff grew in numbers, because it was an creature unto itself, rather than being supported by a number of subordinate organizations. I don't remember the numbers in the Intelligence Division, but we must have had 30 or 35 officers in the various sections. It was a large and very busy organization." Mac paused to wet his whistle and munch on a stalk of celery that stood proudly in his glass.

"Of course, the Vietnam War was just cooking off, and there were many things that had to be done. I mentioned outside organizations that supported us. We did have the Fleet Intelligence Center over on Ford Island to support us, but FICPAC was of relatively little direct support to the staff. FICPAC instead was supporting the fleet, mainly with photography work and with producing targeting materials. Those kinds of things could be produced on a production line basis. What we were doing at the Headquarters, where I was responsible for figuring out what it all meant with analytical work and current reporting and responding to the daily crisis, whatever it was."

"That hadn't changed, Sir. Same deal, different year." I looked at my notes. "The first American casualty of the war was in the 1950s, I said taking a sip of Happy Hour white. "But you were there when things were just starting to get hot. When I worked there, we still had your Vietnam work-week: half day on Wednesdays and they expected a half-day in Saturdays, too."

"We felt we needed the continuity on the mission and didn't want to lose details if the analysts were off the whole weekend. We were busy. We were setting up field activities in the Philippines. In hindsight, I think we responded to Fleet requirements one at a time. It was like this In 1961, when I was back in "Y" Branch in Washington. We had commenced a series of peripheral intelligence collection patrols along the Soviet and Chinese coasts known as the DeSoto Patrols." Ed Nielsen and I originated DeSoto patrols, but I am tired and that is going to have to wait to another session."

Boomer came down the bar and slid one of the fabulous beef sandwiches in front of me. Mac looked on with interest as she topped off my wine.

"There are other important issues to talk about right now. Do you think the Beef on Weck sandwiches are sold out yet?"



(Willow's Beef-on-Weck comes on that fabulous Kaiser-style Kimmelweck roll, pierced by a garnish of three deep-fried olives, a side of caramelized onions and Tracy O'Grady's traditional creamy horseradish sauce. The one I take home can make three or four weekend lunches).

Crusades



Mac had some back problems last week, but he came roaring back and was ready to hit the bar at Willow on Monday. The weather was loosening up just like his sacroiliac- unseasonably warm in Arlington, and the rising temperature featured the best of both worlds- the ladies shed their coats to revealing advantage but kept their tall leather boots with the spike heels.

“I was admiring the view on the way over,” I said. Mac had beat me to the bar by minutes, and he was sitting by Old Jim and Mary, who stopped on her way back from the office downtown.

“There was a cracked rail on the Metro,” she said. “Things were a mess all day.”

I nodded, grateful that I do not have to travel far to get to the office. I looked around for a pen, found that I had conveniently forgotten mine, and borrowed one from Katya, whose dark-eyed beauty graced the business end of the bar along with Tinkerbelle and Jasper and the lovely Liz-with-an-S. “So,” I said to Mac, grabbing a stack of napkins, “Where were we?”

The door to the bar swung open with a rush and in walked Point Loma with Jiffy, another Midway sailor in tow. I knew this was going to get complicated, particularly with both Johns, with and without H’s, and The Lovely Bea.

Mac is a babe magnet, for sure, and he was in fine fettle and thoroughly enjoying the first of his two Race 5 India Pale Ales. He cleared his throat and said, “I don’t know. What do you want to talk about?”

“Well, the big news is about Hawaii, and where we should stay if we go for the 70th anniversary of the Battle of Midway this summer.”

“I don’t know,” he said. “The Hale Koa is all the way downtown, and the events are supposed to happen at Pearl Harbor.”

“I like the Rainbow Tower of the Hilton, too. That is where the Navy used to put us when they tented the houses to kill the monster cockroaches. The housing area at McGrew Point was built on landfill, and there was no way to really eradicate the things. They just moved from house to house.”

“I was always in quarters at Makalapa, on the rim of the Crater. It was nice to walk to work.”

“I bet. Kimo is out there now, in your old job as the Fleet Intelligence Officer. It will be good to see him again back in his element. And Admiral Paul, who works up at the PACOM HQ at Camp Smith. This will be fun if we can pull it off.”

“We will see,” said Mac. “Paul was leaving on official travel to Thailand, I think.”

“Should be time for COBRA GOLD,” I said, thinking of the best joint naval exercise in the world, since it normally came with a four-day port visit in Pattaya Beach. Colonel Ike was further down the bar, huddled with Jake. I pointed at him, saying: “Ike just got back from Cambodia. I have always wanted to go there.” Katya topped up my white wine. “And Laos, of course. Damn, there is a lot to see.”

Mac smiled. “I was one of the last Americans on the Plain of Jars,” he said. “That was the trip with Lt Gen Bennett when I was Chief of Staff at DIA. We were visiting the Ambassador, G. McMurtrie Godley, which made things confusing since we were both known as “Mac.” Everyone else knew him as “The Field Marshall,” since he was involved in everything going on in the country, political or military.”

“So, you were there just ahead of the Pathet Lao guerrillas?”

Mac nodded. “It seemed like a good idea to see the place while we could.”

“And now we can again,” I said. “I sort of feel like just heading west from Hawaii this summer.”

Mac took a sip of beer. “I think I have been to SE Asia for the last time,” he said. “That was the same trip we saw Admiral Rex in Saigon, and had dinner with him and Admiral Bud Zumwalt.”

I picked up my pen. “Wait,” I said, scribbling. “That is impossible. He was not Zumwalt’s Intelligence Officer. I have talked to the guy that relieved him the year before. Rex was back here, working collections issues.”



(VADM Earl “Rex” Rectanus in Vietnam).

“That may well be, but when General Bennett and I walked into Zumwalt’s quarters, he was there, big as life. I sat between him and Bud.”

I screwed up my brow in puzzlement. “If he was there, and I believe you, Sir, that means something had caused him to be sent temporary duty from Washington, and it must have been something big that he did not mention to you.”

“Like the case of the missing Jack Graf,” said Mac. “But we have been down this rabbit hole before.”

“Jack’s loss was a major crusade for Rex in his later years. I learned a lot helping to research the available evidence on his POW-Missing in Action status. A lot of the Naval Intelligence guys obviously followed the case pretty closely, and they came close to rescuing him at least once, with the camp where they held him showing signs they had only left hours before.”



(CDR George “Jack” Graf on his second in-country tour as a Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer- NILO).

“Torture can make anyone talk,” I said. “I heard the SEALs even found some of the Viet Cong interrogator’s notes.”

Mac nodded thoughtfully. “That is why the whole shot-while-trying-to-escape and Jack’s body being buried in a place where the river washed it away is an interesting story.”

“Yeah. When I found out that Jack had been to the Kodak School to learn about how they were going to do electro-optical imagery from earth orbit before he went back to Vietnam I was stunned. They never let people with those clearances get far out of Saigon for fear they would be captured and compromise the biggest secret in the Intelligence Community. And then Jack parachutes down right into the middle of them after he got shot down.”

“Do you think Rex was in Saigon to do a damage assessment on his loss?” asked Mac.

“I don’t know, and if Jack was traded to the Soviets, we have lost our window of opportunity to find out from the KGB files.”

“I don’t suppose we will ever know the answer, but to get a technician who knew how the spy satellites really worked would have been worth a lot to the Russians.”

Mac shrugged. “Case closed, as far as the POW-MIA folks are concerned. But it would explain why Rex was there. The Navy would have been embarrassed at the screw-up that put Jack in a place where he could be captured.” Then we drifted away from mystery, and talked about other ones, cancer being one of them, according to my notes, and then about Mac’s top-ten recipes. “Eggplant Parmesan, hands down,” he aid. “I did all the cooking

for the last few years that Billie was still living at home. I got pretty good at it. The stuff they serve at The Madison is abysmal. They don't have a clue."

I scribbled frantically. "I need the recipe," I said. "I would like to try it. What else did you have in the rotation?"

"Chili con carne," he said. "I have a recipe I invented myself. Spaghetti, apple crisp as a dessert."

"No pear pies, like the ones from the C-rations on Guam."

"No, definitely not. I don't think I have had a pear of any kind since the War. And tenderloins. I would get the big ones from the Commissary- I would toss one in the oven at 400 degrees for an hour, then turn it off and let it rest for an hour. Couldn't miss. Perfect every time."

"That sounds delicious," I said.

"The kids liked a thing we called 'Porcupine Balls.'"

"That doesn't sound very appetizing," I said.

"Actually quite tasty. We used a pressure cooker. Dangerous things, and you had to watch them closely. I would take hamburger and shape them into meatballs mixed with regular white rice. When they cooked under pressure- I don't recall how long, but not too long- the rice stuck out like the quills on a porcupine."

I wrote it down. There were several other conversations in progress. Point Loma was talking about Ops Officers he had known on *Midway*, and Mary was saying why Bob Ryan the weatherman had changed stations, and why he got eased out of his old job at Channel 7.

The threads were all interesting, and I decided to stop writing and concentrate on the wine. Mac smiled. "Good, now that you are not writing things down, I have a story for you that you can't tell."

I put down my pen. "I am all ears," I said.

It was an interesting story, and it is too bad I can't tell you. But I promised. Life is interesting, you know? And like the Jack Graf story, it doesn't always make a lot of sense.

"What did Shakespeare say about life?" I asked Mac.

He smiled broadly. “A tale full of sound and fury,” he said.

I gestured at my notes. “And told by an idiot,” I said. “Who would be me.”

Desotos



(Boomer takes that critical first Happy Hour order. Photo Socotra).

The people and employees at Willow seem to blend together into an ersatz, if quite real, family. When things were going well at the restaurant, all was right with the world. When there was a shake-up in the personnel line-up behind the bar, it was like losing part of the family.

Peter, Big Jim, Tinkerbelle, Liz-S, Boomer, Tall Sammy, Briana, Marvin...the departure of each had special circumstances and a certain period of mourning.

The bartenders were the highest visibility members of the crowd, of course, and Old Jim who holds court at the Amen Corner of the long bar. Boomer was still working there and had not moved down to Shooter McGee's on Duke Street, and she was big and bold as life there at Willow this afternoon.

Mac and I had made plans to meet and talk about technical intelligence collection operations in the Vietnam conflict. He was still off alcohol (on Doctor's orders, dammit!) and just sipping a bit of his first Virgin Mary about halfway down the bar when I slid onto a stool next to him.



We exchanged pleasantries but didn't talk about the election, or the economy or the prospects for World Peace breaking out. I had my pen, and I actually remembered to bring a notebook. No napkins this afternoon, and I looked at the Admiral expectantly, and he knew just where to start.

“It was 1961. In order to cope with expanding threats all over Asia, we had commenced a series of peripheral intelligence collection patrols along the Soviet and Chinese coasts known as the “DeSoto Patrols.”

“Ed Nielsen and I originated the concept back in Washington before I went out to Hawaii. It was a valuable concept that got us unique intelligence on all sorts of emitters, communications and military training. In fact, using the Desoto platforms soon had them on station from the Bering Straits to the Java Sea and through the Malaka Strait. We were trying to patrol and collection in limited areas from the Arctic Circle to south of the Equator.”

“For example, when the Indonesians acquired SAM-2 GUIDELINE missiles from their cozy relations with the Soviets, we mounted DeSoto Patrols off the Indonesian coast to try to intercept the electronic signals from the missiles. That was some of the first SAM-2 missile ELINT that the United States ever obtained. Unique stuff and very useful.”

“We used to have pre-configured vans we could load on ships. Did you use the existing electronic warfare fit on the destroyers, or did you have them take on board special equipment?”

“No real difference except for the sophistication of the equipment. We put a hut on the limited deck-space available on the destroyers to house special. Our concept for the DeSoto Patrols was to take ships

from the fleet, add equipment that the Naval Security Group would configure, and NSG would put a team onboard to work inside the hut. The intelligence collection mission was accomplished entirely from the hut by the NSG Ship-riders. They were just augmentees to the regular crew for the length of the patrol. It worked well.”

“It sounds just like some of the operations we conducted off Nicaragua with the USS *Sphinx* (ARL-24) when I was at Third Fleet, I said. “They pulled her out of the inactive ship facility at Bremerton to refurbish and patrol off the coast during the Contra war.”

“Sphinx was with us in Vietnam, too. Want to know how the program got its name?”

“You were interested in defunct American cars?”

“Close,” laughed Mac. “When I was head of Special Intelligence Branch at ONI in the latter part of 1961, we received a message one morning from COMSEVENTHFLT.”

“I am proud to have been a 7th Fleet sailor, Admiral. My son was, too, after he did his time out there in Yokosuka.”

“I quite agree. But you asked about where the name came from. In those days, Navy messages were had a standard slug to put in the subject line. In the case of this message stream, the subject line was: **DeHaven Special Operation Off Tsingtao.**

The 7th Fleet Staff was proposing a special collection effort by USS *DeHaven* [DD-727], with NSG shipriders to operate off the People's Liberation Army base at Tsingtao because there was some unusual training activity happening there. Ed Neilsen and I read that message early one morning in the Pentagon, and I said to Ed, "This is going to be voluminous; this operation which will create a ton of message traffic. And among, other things, we can no longer deal with that long slug line every time we have to write a message on the subject."

"So, I took my pencil and I underlined the initial letters "DeHaven Special Operation off Tsingtao" and I abbreviated it, "DESOTO." That, I guarantee you, is the source of the name for Desoto Program, which ultimately became extensive, successful, and eventually controversial."

"*Totally* controversial after the attack on the *Liberty*, not to mention the loss of the *Pueblo*."



(USS *Liberty* (AGTR-5) receives assistance after she was attacked and seriously damaged by Israeli forces off the Sinai Peninsula on 08 June 1967. An SH-3 helicopter is near her bow).

"That is what takes us back to the Vietnam War, finally. It was a Desoto Patrol that created the Gulf of Tonkin incidents. *Turner Joy* (DD-951) was on a Desoto patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin when she was allegedly attacked by North Vietnamese torpedo boats.



(USS *Turner Joy* (DD-951)).

“I have wandered into the continuing academic debate about the Gulf of Tonkin incident and I am pretty sure there are still parts of me missing. Now, you say "allegedly." Most people feel there is no doubt about the first of the two incidents, but obviously there is considerable controversy over the second.”

Mac gave a grim smile “I say "allegedly" because of the controversy. I am personally convinced there were two attacks, but, I say "allegedly" so I don't get in trouble with the True Believers who maintain there was only one. Life is too short for that.”

“Amen,” I said, putting down my pen and raising my now-empty glass to get Boomer's attention.

“Bottom line,” Mac said, “was that SECDEF McNamara reviewed the purpose and efforts of the Desoto patrols in view of the *Turner Joy* incident and issued an edict that, henceforth and thereafter, DeSoto Patrols were terminated. The program ended because of the Gulf of Tonkin incident -- and I thought at the time it was a rather short-sided view. The DeSoto program had been extremely effective. Sure, *Turner Joy* ran into a little trouble, but that was essentially one of the purposes of the program. What do you smart computer guys call it? ‘Not a bug, but a *feature*?’ ”

“I am a Luddite, myself, Sir. But I take your point. Presence has a certain imperative all its own.”

“Exactly. We were operating with a warship near the periphery in order to stimulate reactions and activities for intelligence collection purposes, and it worked like a charm. But here is where things went wrong. We stopped using real warships for a variety of reasons and went with platforms that had more deck-space, were cheaper to operate, and were not needed on the Gun Line in the South China Sea.”

“That was part of the Soviet intelligence collection scheme. They labeled some big auxiliaries as “AGI's,” or Auxiliary General Intelligence. They were unarmed but awesomely capable of sucking every electron out of the spectrum, and they could hang around ports like Pearl for weeks and weeks.”

“We bought into the concept that our collectors should be unthreatening. We decided to use dedicated auxiliaries as collectors instead of warships. We configured the *Pueblo* (AGER-2), *Banner* (AGER-1), and *Palm Beach* (AGER-3) as essentially unarmed platforms that

would be non-threatening and non-provocative to continue the Desoto-type of intelligence collection. You remember what happened as a result of that. The North Koreans were able to pick off the *Pueblo*, steal the radios and crypto gear, seize the ship and hold the crew hostage for eleven months.”

“It was a mess. I understand that some people say the point of the capture was to give the radios on *Pueblo* to the Russians, which allowed them to reverse-engineer the devices so they could use the keying material that John Walker started providing them around the same time. Having both the device and the key-code gave them access to our tactical communications in Vietnam. It was still going on as late as the 1980s.”

“If we had to fight them at sea, we would have had a worse situation than the Japanese when we penetrated their JN-25 communications,” said Mac. “If you have no secure communications, the enemy knows your intent.”

I allowed myself a little shiver. “I was out there then, and that would not have been pretty.”

Mac shook his head in agreement. “I was part of the *Pueblo* damage assessment later at DIA. I wish that had been one of the key conclusions- that our communications had been massively compromise and we might have changed the radios sooner. I will have to tell you about it, and how I met Wanda, who wound up in the Front Office at DIA for the next thirty-odd years.”

“I have always respected her,” I said. “ She was always kind and always professional.”

“And remember, it was the age of the mini-skirt,” laughed Mac.

“I just wish I could have met her when you did, Sir!”

Mac just smiled.

April Fool's Day 2010



(ADM Thomas Moorer in 1964. Photo USN).

It was April Fool's Day, 2010. I saw in the morning traffic that the town of Topeka, Kansas, had decided to re-name itself "Google" for some reason best known to the Mayor and the city council. Mac Showers was feeling a little housebound and was available to chat, and on a splendid day in the northern Virginia Spring, he decided to fire up the champagne-colored Jaguar saloon and drive across the street to the only saloon I have, the fabulous Willow Bar.

My only prank in honor of the spirit of the day was to show up at the office and pretend to work. Things had been busy in that curious way of the contracting business. One moment we had five proposals going to try to win work at the Defense Intelligence Agency, and then they were all submitted and most of us were still walking around with slack jaws and fatigue in our eyes. It is a strange business, and totally dependent on a bunch of GS-13 government drones.

I had a copy of a picture that Mac had given me when we were talking about the DESOTO patrols he had developed and the events that surrounded the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

"Admiral You showed me a photograph a few minutes ago of your Situation Room at CINCPAC. Admiral Tom Moorer was there, you were there, and a whole bunch of other

people were hanging out. It is obviously off-duty hours, because one officer is in a very Hawaiian shirt. You said that it is a picture of the night that you were all waiting for word from Washington after the Tonkin Gulf incident. I wonder if you could give me some more context for all that- the things I have heard all concentrated on the events in the Gulf, not the reaction of the US Government and the Navy staffs that had to take action in response."

Mac was wearing his aloha shirt under his sport jacket, an affectation that he preferred to demonstrate that he had spent the better part of a decade working in Pearl Harbor. He took a sip of Virgin Mary and said: "You'll have to verify the date that the picture was taken, but I do recall that it was the date that we mobilized the staff in the evening that the reporting about the incident was available

"I looked it up, I must have been around August 8th, 1964, right?"

"That certainly would fit. That was about mid-tour for me at PACFLT, and Admiral Moorer was the commander-in-chief."

"Mr. Rumsfeld told us we couldn't say that any more. His position was that there was only *one* Commander In Chief, and he lives on Pennsylvania Avenue. I still can't keep it straight."



"Mr. Rumsfeld was a character even the first time he was SECDEF in the Ford Administration. We knew that President Johnson was going to attempt to get the authority to order retaliatory strikes against North Vietnam, so we pre planned that the staff would be mobilized and we'd all be present in the Op Center that evening. We had all the staff division heads there. The gentleman in the aloha-shirt was our assistant chief-of-staff for logistics. The Plans Officer was there and the Operations Officer was there with all of his

officers. I was there with one or two assistants, and all other key members of the staff were present. The picture was taken at the time in which we were maintaining our Seventh Fleet and air status board awaiting the word from Washington to launch the strikes. That word did come during the evening in Hawaii so it obviously was late at night in Washington. The strikes were launched, and the President, as I recall, wanted an immediate report on the effectiveness of the bombing. So, we stayed there, essentially all night, until the aircraft were recovered and we were able to provide reports back to Washington on the effectiveness of the strikes."

"I was always a Bomb Damage Assessment guy. They must have used Viggies to get the post-strike imagery. Were the targets selected at COMPAC....hell, CINCPACFLT, then?"

"Yes, I think we selected the targets, coordinated with Washington, of course, but I think we nominated the targets and carried out the strikes. This type of mobilization in the evening for these strikes obviously didn't continue. I think we did do it two or three times in the beginning because we didn't know what kind of reaction we would get. We knew the North Vietnamese were not able to react against our fleet units, but we didn't know who else might react against our fleet units. So, we were prepared for any kind of reaction. That's why we had the full staff mobilized and ready to do whatever was necessary. Over time, obviously, as these strikes continued and were repeated, they became routine and it wasn't necessary for the PACFLT Op Center to be fully mobilized. Instead, it was done by the Seventh Fleet and carried out routinely."

"So, the night of the picture you still that feeling of, "Crap, here may go the start of the war." That must have been fairly alarming?"

"Vic, you are a master of understatement."

"That's your third war?"

"I missed the Korean War in that I was in London. I was about as far away from that as one can get. I was just as happy about that. It was an ugly one."

"You don't count the Cold War as one of them? I do."

"Point taken. But really, the one that counted was 1941-45 for me."

"Trust me, Admiral. You didn't miss a *thing* in Korea."

What Nedzi Knew



Lucien N. Nedzi
of Detroit (14th Dist.)
Democrat—5th term

(Rep. Lucien N. Nedzi, 1969 from Congressional Pictorial Directory.)

Mac was just back from the beach on the annual Shower's family reunion, and I was just returned from the First Congressional District of Michigan, and it was clearly time to get together at Willow and talk about what happened to the Intelligence Community in the Ford Administration. He was intimately involved in all of it from his new perch on the IC Staff at CIA.

It was the organization that acted in the CIA Director's community role as the pater familia of the fractious agencies allegedly under his charge. In that role, he was known as the "Director of Central Intelligence," not the Director of CIA.

I know, I know, small difference semantically, but large in terms of authority.

It was 2011. In the decade-long series of interviews, we had arrived at that strangest part of American political life, or at least the strangest until Donald Trump's candidacy.

I was interested in the Michigan congressional delegation, since I could use my parent's address in The Little Village By the Bay for voting purposes, provided I didn't also try to vote in Northern Virginia. I had not gotten around to changing things since I had voted

there (absentee) for most of my military career.



(Trooper Bart Stupak. Photo House of Representatives.)

“Trooper Bart” Stupak was my Congressman from Michigan’s First District then,, a ruggedly handsome former State Patrol officer. He was a Democrat, and a relatively conservative one as reflects the philosophy of the First District, who are country working people, though he went with his party on 96% of his votes.

At the end of his elected time, he came in conflict with the leadership of his party on the healthcare debacle, largely over the issue of Choice, which was a hot button Up North, and ultimately impacted his decision to leave the Congress. I saw him dozens of times when I worked on the Hill, and met him on at least one occasion. It is not that unusual to run into celebrities here in town, or at least the political versions.

When I marched up and introduced myself as a constituent, he seemed vaguely alarmed.

His unease probably stemmed from the fact that folks from the second-largest Congressional district east of the Mississippi get down to the nation’s capital get down to bother him. The First, as you know, encompasses the entire Upper Peninsula, and depending on the population level, a good chunk of the lower one, too.

That includes the Trolls who live in the Little Village By the Bay. I say “trolls” because that is what the independent-minded residents of the proud Upper Peninsula (the “UP”) call all of us who live “below the bridge” at Mackinaw. For our part, the only things in the UP worth knowing are Lake Superior, the pasties, iron ore, moose, wolves and the odd bear. And snow, of course. That goes without saying.



(Former President Jerry Ford as a WWII naval officer).

We had our favorite sons. Jerry Ford was a Michigan grad and a Navy vet from Mac's war. He represented Michigan's Fifth District for a quarter century, the one with all the block-headed Dutch in it. His last eight years in Congress were as the Republican Minority Leader in the House when that seemed like a permanent position.

He was a reliable enough apparatchik to be pulled onto the Warren Commission whitewash of the Kennedy killing, remember?

When Betty Ford passed away it brought the Ford Administration to a final end, with many of those loose ends still unraveled. My son and I went down to the National Mall the night after Jerry passed, and his funeral cortege made the pilgrimage in front of our vantage point near the Washington Monument, passing his former homes in Alexandria and the national sites on the mall.

Between the Warren Commission, the pardon of President Nixon and the conquest of the Republic of Vietnam nine months into his unelected Presidency, you would think he would be a more controversial figure than history has cast him. But I say the hell with it.

He was a good congressman for us in Grand Rapids, when the Socotras lived there, and people genuinely liked him.

During Ford's time in the Oval Office, foreign policy was characterized in procedural terms by the increased role Congress began to play in that sand-box, and by the corresponding curb on the powers of the President. That is what ultimately brings me around to the matter of Lucien Norbert Nedzi (born the year after my Dad). He was the Democratic Congressman from the 14th, later the 1st, between the special election in 1961 and the time

he threw in the towel in 1980 and did not seek re-election.

Nedzi may be the last guy in a position to know what was going on then, besides Mac. Nedzi was born in Hamtramck, the Polish enclave surrounded by Detroit. He was a Wolverine, like President Ford and me, and went to the U-of-D law school in between stints in the Army in the Pacific War and his recall for Korea. Bummer for those guys who got called back to active duty from their civilian jobs and new families. My Dad would have been recalled, but all the Reserve squadrons east of the Mississippi were devoted to the Russian threat in Europe and stayed home.

I think that is why Mom lid down the law and made him get out.

Getting recalled to Asia to face hoards of Commies was a tough blow for a lot of GI's and sailors, but they just sucked it up and did what they had to do.

Like I said, Nedzi was elected as a Democrat in 1961 after Thaddeus Machrowicz died in office. The key to his being remembered at all is the curious thing that happened in May of 1973. Lucien had the unique position to be a member of the House Armed Services Committee, and Chairman of the Special Subcommittee on Intelligence.



(CIA Director William Colby).

Director Colby at CIA had inherited the toxic “Family Jewels” from Jim Schlesinger which detailed the activities conducted by the CIA that might have “exceeded the charter of the Agency,” in the delicate terminology of the day.

Colby was summoned to discuss the matter with Nedzi on the Hill in an extraordinary session detailed by a declassified Memo-for-the-Record drafted by CIA Inspector General William Broe. I asked Mac about it, and he beamed in remembrance over his Virgin Mary

at the long mahogany Willow bar. He even had a copy of it, printed off years later when it entered the public record.

The two hour-session included a discussion of the full report, item-by-item, including the sensitive portion that remains redacted to this day.

According to Broe, the congressman found it found sobering. Some of the topics included:

- a. Alien documentation furnished to the Secret Service. Nedzi desired more information concerning the reason why issued, the use, and how controlled.*
- b. Financial support to the White House in connection with the replies to letters and telegrams as a result of the President's speech on Cambodia in 1970. He requested more information on this subject.*
- c. Beacons furnished to Ambassadors. He was interested in the number issued to Ambassadors and the position the State Department took on the use of these beacons. He was interested if the Department of State was pushing this program, as he believed they should be.*
- d. Logistics' acquisition of police equipment. He questioned whether LEAA, Department of Justice, should not be doing this rather than the Agency.*
- e. He noted Logistics furnished telephone analyzers, and desired to know what they were and how used.*
- f. [redacted]*
- g. OER's crash project concerning Robert L. Vesco requested by the DCI. The Congressman was interested in who outside the Agency instigated the project and why was it stopped.*
- h. Several ORD projects indicated research done without knowledge of the host system or on unwitting subjects. He was of the opinion that this was risky and recommended it be terminated. He stated he would like to see a directive go out to the researchers concerning these practices.*
- i. John Dean's request re Investors Overseas Service. He reviewed the six reports that had*

been furnished. He noted, however, that the item stated “there were multiple channels to the Agency from the White House” and requested information concerning these channels.

j. Alien passports. Mr. Colby advised that he planned to review this whole subject and the Congressman agreed with the need to do so.

The Congressman asked Mr. Colby if the Agency had considered how much of the information just reviewed with him could be made public. Mr. Colby stated this had not been done yet, and spoke to the question of sources, methods, and the impact on the institution. The Congressman stated that in the current climate he felt it was necessary to open up more information to help clear the air.

Mr. Colby stated the Agency would give the matter deep consideration, and added he had been thinking of a general statement along these lines to be used at his confirmation hearing.

The cat was about to come out of the bag- or at least part of the cat out of one of the bags. Tip O’Neil acquiesced when Nedzi demanded to be placed in charge of a Select Committee to formally “clear the air,” a position he assumed in February, 1975, and which he abruptly resigned in June.

I wondered about that, since Otis Pike replaced him as chair for a tumultuous and shocking set of disclosures about what had been going on for years. I will be interested to see what Mac has to say about that. I wonder if Nedzi found out something about the IC that he did not want to have on his permanent record. After all, he was in a position to suddenly be investigating the work he should have been doing as the senior oversight official on the IC.

I know this: in the Congressman’s remaining three terms in Congress, he never got closer to the intelligence community than the Joint Committee on the Library. I am not going to speculate any further, though.

There is a way to find out, though. Like Trooper Bart, Nedzi didn’t return to Michigan when his congressional time was done. He went into the lobbying business, and lived right here in next-door McLean, and his number is in the phone book.

If he is not in the same boat as my Dad was, he might have been able to answer a few questions if I called him up. You never can tell. Thank God we had Mac to ask. He leaned over one time and whispered, *sotto voce*: “LBJ did it.”

I just nodded and made a note on the cocktail napkin.

The Hatch Way



(LT Bill Hatch, Mac's car pool buddy on the daily pre-Beltway slog to NFOIO in pre-Beltway days).

It was a curious coincidence. I was going to a funeral on my birthday. CAPT William Hatch had passed away on the on the 6th of June, the sixty-second anniversary of the landings at Normandy. When he died, he was the oldest living naval intelligence officer. Now it was our pal Mac Showers, and as our friendship deepened, I offered to drive him to the ceremony out in distant Leesburg.

I did not know him personally, but I edit a journal that is devoted to the study of the profession, and I felt an obligation to provide a presence from the organization. People of his vintage are getting scarce, and it is imperative to honor them before their families and keep the memories alive while we can.

The memorial service was held at Saint James Episcopal Church out in

Leesburg. Bill Hatch and his lovely wife Nancy had purchased a working dairy farm out in Loudoun County back in 1950, when the memories of the Civil War were still alive, and Leesburg was remembered as the place of the great victory against the invading Yankees at Balls Bluff, just outside town.

There is a postage-stamp national cemetery there, home to the dead of that day long ago. It is now in the middle of a suburban subdivision, and the last time I was there, the Confederate battle flag was flying from a staff in the middle of it.

The battlefield would have been pretty much the same as it was when the Yankees were hurled back into the river when the Hatch's and their five children moved in. It was a different Virginia then.

Mac and I navigated out the Dulles Access Road, and then the Greenway Toll road. We made excellent time from Arlington, and I wondered how Bill Hatch had done it. He did not retire until 1973, and there were years of the commute from the farm down to the Pentagon on two lane blacktop roads.

Mac laughed and began to tell me some commuting stories that made my toes curl. "We used to drive across Constitution Ave to get to Ft. Mead. Bill would come in from Leesburg, we would jump in one car in Arlington and race for The Fort."

Living in Loudoun County was a statement in those days, when sensible people thought that the site of Dulles International was only a little bit closer to town than Mars. Admiral "Shap" Shapiro worked directly for Bill in Washington when he was the Deputy Director of Naval Intelligence, and he said once that try as he might, he was never able to get to work ahead of him, and that was after he had milked the cows, done the chores and driven down to the Pentagon.

It was a pleasant day for a drive. High thin clouds, blue above, a little cool for a day in early June. I took Business Route 15 into the historic district of the city. Leesburg is the County Seat, and the courthouse and downtown buildings square off across narrow streets. They were filling up with weekend tourists as I passed through. I had excellent directions from the Church website, and pulled up in front with plenty of time to spare.

St. James' Episcopal Church is a massive structure of stone hewn from the

bedrock of the county. It has expanded over the years, with the present main church laid down in 1895. Shelburne Parish traces its history back much further, to colonial times, when it was carved out of the western portion of the Parish of Cameron in 1769, when the Church of England was still the established state religion. The first church in Loudoun County was built in 1733, and called the "Chapel of Ease for the comfort of the people above the Goose Creek."

Before 1769, the Chapel of Ease was served by visiting ministers. The first resident rector was the Rev. Dr. David Griffith, a distinguished churchman, who served from 1771 to the year of the declaration of Independence in 1776. His service lasted past the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, and the disestablishment of the Anglican Church. Three years after independence, in 1786, he was the first man elected bishop in America.

Unfortunately, funds for his travel to England could not be procured, and he died, unconfirmed.

Captain Hatch had a lot of friends. Mac Showers is a former Deputy Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency who served with Chester Nimitz in the war in the Pacific. He made an eloquent statement the day after the news began to circulate of Bill's passing. That was basically what I knew about him, except for the excerpt from an ancient Blue Book that he was the senior living intelligence officer.

Now it is Mac.

Mac said that he had been in declining health for some time, but remained at the farm south of Leesburg. His eldest daughter had informed him that Bill me died peacefully with his children in attendance.

I walked up the street to the formal entrance to the church. Bob Juengling was standing on the porch, looking up and down the street to see who was approaching for the service. Like me, he was there to honor the memory and service, and to sit in the back of the church. Bob is a little older than me, and he retired with 33 years service. He would have stayed longer, too, if they had let him.

We chatted on the porch, making ourselves useful by opening the door for the

family and friends arriving, including Admiral John Marocchi and his wife. They seemed a bit frail, but still independent. John is now the second oldest surviving officer, and one of the last with World War Two service.

We like to be useful. We greeted people and gave directions and information from the porch, and held the door for folks with canes. A Navy Captain in dress blues strode briskly up to the steps. I did not recognize him, and when I introduced myself, he said he was a local reservist, and had seen the notice in the paper. He said it was only appropriate that someone was there, in uniform. It was the least he could do.

Bob told me what he remembered about Bill, between opening the door for people, and saying “Good morning!” He had been an icon in our community. A gentleman, and a family man who with his lovely wife Nancy set a standard for Naval Intelligence couples to follow. There was a generation of “Hatch-trained man,” and Admiral Shapiro considered himself one of them. His first assignment under him was in the Soviet (Y) Branch in the office of Naval Intelligence, which Bill headed, and in 1968 he was his deputy at the US Navy headquarters in London on North Audley Street.

I will always remember that building fondly, and the pubs around it. It was where Ike Eisenhower had his headquarters before he crossed the Channel in 1944.

In London, Bill had been the intelligence officer for Admiral John Sidney McCain, the father of Senator John McCain. The Admiral became Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet after London, and it was then that his son was shot down and captured by the North Vietnamese. Some say the only reason that John got enough medical treatment to live was the fact that his father was the Admiral in command of the naval forces off the coast.

We passed the minutes with small-talk as the time for the service grew closer. The breeze was fresh, and smelled of rolling fields and rich grass. With about five minutes to go, we entered the church and greeted the family in the vestibule, introducing ourselves and saying that we were there from the old organization to honor Bill.

Inside, the church felt massive and secure. Flags from the State and the Parish hung from the rafters, and a few others. The one across from our pew at the rear of the church was of plain red, with five white stars. I realized with a start that this was the Church were General of the Army and Secretary of State George C. Marshall worshipped.

Bill Hatch was in good company indeed.

The program contained a rich biography which I scanned as the celebrants assembled at the rear of the church.

William Nagel Hatch was born on June 20, 1918, in Stockton, CA, or as it was formerly known, Muddville, in the San Joaquin Valley of California. His Mother and father were both second generation Californians, and the family had a connection with the sea: they owned the Monticello Steamship Company, which ferried passengers between Berkeley, Vallejo, and San Francisco.

His father died in England while serving on active duty in the Navy in the great influenza pandemic at the end of World War I. Bill never met his father. His mother later married another naval officer, a nautical engineer.

With the marriage came two step-brothers, and the life of a Navy family, moving between Mare Island, Pearl Harbor, and Portsmouth in Virginia. Bill met his future wife Nancy there, though his step-father's career had him graduating from Ionlani High School in Honolulu.



Bill was off to college when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, and he immediately dropped out to join the Navy. He began his career as an underwater demolition expert, helping to clear the mines laid by German Unterzeeboots at the entrances to the Chesapeake Bay and Charleston harbor.

A young man with obvious potential, he was selected as a '90 day wonder,' attending a three month commissioning program at the U.S. Naval Academy.



He and Nancy married at Tampa's Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church on July 22, 1943. Bill was then deployed on a U.S. minesweeper with a crew from the Russian Navy, home-ported at the northernmost Soviet Naval base in Murmansk. Duty in those frigid waters meant certain death if the ship went down, and the Germans prowled the arctic sea to sink the merchant ships in the convoys, trying to shut the vital lifeline that kept the Soviets going through the dark days of the Nazi invasion.



Based on his EOD experience and language skills, Bill was transferred to the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. When the war ended, Bill was one of the original group of Naval Reserve officers to be selected for transfer from the Reserves to the Regular Navy. In 1946, he was designated a Special Duty Officer-Naval Intelligence.

Bill's knowledge of Russian and his wartime experience in the Soviet Union qualified him as the Navy's first designated Soviet Navy expert, and the Soviets were quickly changing from wartime ally to implacable opponent. His initial assignment in this role was with the Navy Security Group at the Nebraska Avenue Security Station, where the Department of Homeland Security now

resides.

In 1950, Nancy and Bill decided to purchase the Mill Road Farm, a working dairy concern in rural Loudoun County. Nancy came from a Navy family, too, and based on their vagabond upbringing, they wanted some stability for their children. It was an island of stability, as Bill's career took the five children to London, England, Naples, Yokosuka and Newport.

He had begun his connection to this church shortly after purchasing Mill Road Farm. He was on the Calling Committee for the Rector, Rev. Frank Moss, to whom he confided: "I have five heathens, do something with them."

The inevitable occurred. Having identified a requirement, Bill rose to meet it. By the end of 1954, Bill was superintendent of St. James' Sunday school, Nancy was a member of the Altar Guild, and the children had all been baptized.

The farm was always in the middle, and that is where Nancy and Bill retired in 1973, the same year I graduated from college, his professional life concluding and mine just beginning.

I finished reading as the organ began to swell and the formal service began. Rev. John Ohmer, Rector, strode down the central aisle with dignity and an immense strength. His hair was cropped short, his body powerful, harking back to a robust sort of Christianity that used to be practiced in these parts.. His homily spoke of the time, five years ago, when Nancy passed away. He said he had a hard time keeping a stoic face when he arrived at the farm. The connection between Nancy and Bill was so deep, so profound, that the sorrow of being present at the parting made him want to weep.



He said Bill took off his wedding band, and asked him to make sure that it went with Nancy to the funeral home. “Till death do us part,” he said. And that is when Rev, Ohmer lost it and began to cry himself.

As for me, I waited until they sang the Navy Hymn at the end. It always gets me. I can't help it.

Mac I and I hung out in the Fellowship Hall, and he paid his respects to an old shipmate. When we drove back to Arlington on the Green Way to the Dulles Access Road and eventually to I-66, I marveled that this is what a commute was like, in the times before the Beltway and all the inter-state highway system. Those guys were *tough*.

Green Eye-Shades



The sun was golden on the patio at Willow, filtered through the abundant greenery of the trees overhead. It was so pleasant a July day that all the tables were occupied and Jasper the bartender was running around in his manic manner, keeping the patrons well lubricated.

Mac was wearing a jacket and tie due to a medical appointment but looked cool but proper. I was wearing a jacket and clip-on bow tie, having strolled over from the office, and was happy we were in the cool darkness of the Willow's long bar.

“We were talking about the transition from being at DIA in uniform and joining the Intelligence Community Staff as a career civilian. What was that like? I noticed the cultural change immediately when I went to Langley for my last tour in the Navy.”

Mac cleared his throat and reached for his Anchor Steam Beer. He had bullied his doctors into permitting him to have a couple beers, an act of courage for which he was quite proud.

“When I got to Bolling in 1966, I got tagged with the Program and Budget nonsense. DIA had been charged to do build and present to the Congressional Committees a consolidated strategic intelligence budget between Army, Navy, Air Force and their subordinate elements.”

“That was Major Force Program 3, I said. I had to learn about all that crap when they sent me to be the budget staff director at Bolling. The Services still had to do their tactical intelligence- Program 2- submissions through their parent services. Everything else strategic came up through our staff.”

Mac nodded. “Yes. Title 10 and all that. Well, the Congress expected the Director of Central Intelligence to do the same thing for the whole community, and that is one of the reasons Bronson Tweedy had his eye out for me. He thought I knew what I was doing.”

“Apparently they were under the same illusion about me,” I said shaking my head. “It was mind-numbing, and I don't think I really ever did understand it.” The happy hour white was a *pinot grigio*, crisp and refreshing. I had a new pen, a Pilot G-2 that made incredibly fine letters on the napkin in front of me.

“It may seem odd nowadays, since the establishment of the office of the Director of National Intelligence, but Congress really only thought the IC Staff was about the budget, not policy. Once I reported to Langley as a civilian, I got involved in the program and

budget review work. My account was NSA. They initially considered having me be responsible for the DIA portfolio, but they thought better of it.”

“We called it the General Defense Intelligence Staff when I was at DIA. We found the Community Management Staff- your old IC Staff- to be irritating busybodies.” I glanced down at the bar where Liz-with-an-S was attending to some self-important-looking gentlemen in suits and caught her eye to request a re-fill.

Mac took a sip of beer. “That is the nature of Washington, to be irritating. It was decided that since I had just come from being chief of staff for DIA, that this might be a mistake, since I had just been there doing the budget. Plus, they thought I might not be able to work effectively if I was put in a position of conflict with the Agency where I had been the Number Three. Because of my long-time association with SIGINT and SIGINT activities, they gave me the NSA account.”

“That is where my former Deputy Senior Executive Jerry wound up. He was a holy terror in oversight for the Fort. They feared him. Big job. Lot of money in play.”

“I was extremely comfortable because I had many friends at NSA, and from my time working at Ft Meade in the Naval Intelligence Field Office, knew how their system worked. I was an advocate of many things that NSA was doing, but I also was a critic of what wasn’t going that well. So, I felt good about handling the NSA account.”

“Who got DIA,” I asked. “I had once assembled a list of all the GDIP Staff directors, and posted pictures of the ones I could find in the office in the Pentagon. All got lost in the 9/11 attack. The jet almost hit the staff offices head on. We were lucky the whole staff wasn’t killed like the people in the spaces in the next Wedge.”

“A good day to not be in the Pentagon. A young Air Force vet named Marty Hurwitz got the DIA account,” he said.

“Marty! I actually know him. He must have moved down from Langley to take the job. He was there for, like, 20 years. A real pro, and a good friend to the Commands outside DIA when the Agency didn’t want to play nice.”

“If you want a friend in Washington,” said Mac with a droll smile.

“I know. I ought to go to the pound. I am glad I am not doing that any more.”

“I didn't really care for that type of work. And even though I enjoyed my new role with the IC staff and my work with NSA, I still never really liked the program and budget cycle and the ridiculously complex process arduous nature of what the U.S. government forces itself through each year.

“It certainly taught me more things I didn't want to know than any other job I have had.” I rolled my eyes thinking about the tiny interior office in the Pentagon and the endless hours at the desk or in meetings.



Liz-S clearly recognized my distress and topped my glass off. “There, there,” she said smoothly. “No bad eyeshade people are going to come and take you away.”

“Thankfully I only had the NSA account for two cycle. Even though I did it reasonably well, I never felt comfortable.”

“It was way out of my comfort level, and when you talk to people about the endless racking-and-stacking drills about requirements and available cash to meet them, their eyes cloud over.”

“With good reason. What happened next?”

“Well, in the latter part of 1973 -- after Bill Colby became DCI and Sam Wilson became the Director of the IC staff- there was a new problem the community had to deal with, and they needed a go-fer. I kind of became a jack-of-all-trades and a floating representative on the IC Staff, as did Jack Thomas.”



(Major General Jack Thomas, USAF-Ret.)

“General Thomas was there when I arrived at Langley twenty years later, I said with a start. The General was an amazing guy, quiet and kind, and he must have had more than a half-century in the business.”

“At least. He was one of the first Air Force general officers who was not a rated pilot. I managed to get out of being a go-fer after a couple years, trying to damp down the mistrust of the IC Staff. People thought we were scheming to undermine the authority of the Agencies. But then something else came up. In 1975, I became a special assistant to Sam Wilson who, in effect, was working with Colby to set up a special project. It is still around and still working. But that is one of the things we agreed not to talk about,” said Mac. “I still have friends up there and they might not approve hearing about it from the Willow.”

Old Jim put down his Budweiser long-neck firmly on the bar at his place at the Amen Corner and growled that he swore he would never disclose a thing, so long as we quit talking about the budget.

I think Mac and I were both happy to do that.



Whim-Icks (and Office Politics)



(A WWMCCS console in the early 1970s. The old Joint Staff Command Center in the Pentagon bristled with this Space Age equipment when I arrived in 1990).

It was oral history night at the Willow bar. Owners Tracy O'Grady and Kate Jansen operate a place with style, and some well dressed people were thronging the long bar after work. Well, there is them and us, and Old Jim is not above barking at them if they get too close to him. I had my weapons of mass dissemination laid out on the bar: pen, tulip glass of the loss-leader happy Hour White, and a fresh pen. "We are not going to be able to dive too deep into your "post-retirement" career at the Central Intelligence Agency," I said, restating the groundwork. But can you give me an overview of what was happening then?"

Mac was bright and alert and the oncologists had backed off when he confronted them about the desire to have a beer once in a while, and was enjoying an Anchor Steam carefully poured by Big Jim, the Pittsburg bartender and Willow's current liquor manager.

Mac looked at the rich amber in the glass, the perfect foam topping, and the dancing motion of the bubbles throwing themselves toward the surface like reverse depth-charges.

"Shaaah," said Jim, and he lumbered up the bar to see if Old Jim needed another Bud.

"I would prefer not to go into some parts. But I think there are some broad-brush topics and personalities we can talk about all you want.

"Works for me. I don't want to get into some beef with the Agency at this late date. But you were removed from active duty in the Zumwalt purge of every flag officer that had been senior to him when he became Chief of Naval Operations." I was doodling on the bar napkin in deep black ink. I underlined the words: 'Stuff We Can Talk About.' "So what are you willing to say about starting work at Central Intelligence?"

"You referred to it as my post-retirement career. I simply called it my second career, and as I later got ready to leave the CIA and the government and undertook some consulting

contracts, I set up a file in my filing cabinet which I labeled "A Third Career" and pursued that with some minor details for awhile."

"I thought the Third Career was helping your wife Billie when she got sick?"

Mac smiled ruefully. "That was actually a fourth career and the most important one. It opened my eyes to a lot of things. Plus, I got my diagnosis of prostate cancer in all that personal chaos and wound up as a mentor and volunteer for the support groups for people who were just starting down those difficult paths. I am glad that sometimes I can still have a beer."

I raised my glass in agreement. "OK- we talked about your getting recruited by Bronson Tweedy to come work for Director Helms- that was like the Monday after you retired from the Navy, right?"

"Yes. I was on active duty in DIA as chief of staff in 1971, and I was considered during the later months of 1971 as a candidate to become Deputy Director of DIA. That would have gotten me a third star and increased responsibilities. I won't go into detail on how that procedure worked. I think it's generally known how the Joint Chiefs of Staff make their selection for those jobs, and then there are interviews held throughout the Pentagon with certain officials. Recommendations are made, and finally a selection is made. Even to those of us involved, I sense that it is a very ethereal process, and I'm not sure I understand completely even yet. But I was nevertheless a candidate to become deputy director of DIA, and the only interview that I went through was held by the Director, Defense Research and Engineering, or DDR&E."

"I am glad that I had 28 years speaking in acronyms. I can actually understand what you are saying without the explanation." I took a sip of wine to help me focus. Actually, I wasn't quite sure what any of that alphabet soups meant any more. "Who was it?"

"I can't recall who DDR&E himself was at that time, but one of his principal deputies was a gentleman named Gardner Tucker who was on detail to DDR&E from IBM."

"I worked for IBM for a surreal year a decade ago," I said. "I liked them. And I liked the Big Blue motto: THINK."

"Trust me, we did. I had come to know Gardner Tucker rather well, because I was a

member of the vendor selection committee for the Joint Chiefs of Staff computer program in a prior year or so, and Gardner Tucker, as a computer expert from IBM, was one of the key participants in that effort. It was when JCS was trying to select a computer program to support its command and control system: WWMCCS. I was a member representing DIA on the WWMCCS Vendor Selection Committee."



(A title slide from one of the Pentagon PowerPoint Rangers detailing the acronyms of the coming digital age, this one being WWMCCS-SSS).

"I am going to bet that was the Worldwide Military Command and Control System. I think it was pronounced "Whim-Icks." It was supposed to connect all military units worldwide in one network. What year would that have been?"

"Probably 1968 or 1969. I think it was while I was Assistant Chief-of-Staff for Plans and Programs for DIA rather than Chief-of-Staff, which I was during 1970 and 1971. But I was interviewed by DDR&E, and one of the questions they asked me, was "If you were deputy director of DIA and a dispute should ever arise, or an issue should ever arise between the Secretary of Defense and the JCS (the OSD Staff on the one hand and the Joint Chiefs of Staff on the other hand), which faction would you likely favor?" I promptly responded "the Joint Chiefs of Staff."

"I completely agree. But that is sort of honest for Washington, isn't it?"

Mac laughed. "Yes, but my reason for doing so was because the Joint Chiefs, in my view, were responsible for the operating military forces of the United States. And if an issue should arise they would need direct and timely support. As I recall, the interview was terminated very shortly after that, and I was no longer, to my knowledge, a candidate for Deputy Director of DIA. I believe the DDR&E authorities were sufficiently

disenchanted with my response to that question. I fell out of contention very rapidly. Another element true at the time was that Vice Admiral Noel Gayler from the Navy was Director of NSA; Admiral Harold Bowen was in the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Intelligence office, and Admiral Rufe Taylor was at CIA as the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence. The Air Force had suddenly dug in its heels, saying, "All these three star intelligence billets are being given to the Navy, and we will be *damned* if they will get the deputy directorship of DIA as well."

"The Air Force invested a lot of resources in standing up DIA at the beginning, so I am not surprised by their reaction. I think they thought of the joint activities as their natural habitat."



(Lt. Gen. Jamie Philipott, USAF. Photo DoD).

"Possibly. So, I may have lost out on purely inter-service political grounds because the gentleman who was appointed deputy director at that time was Lieutenant General Jamie Philpott, USAF. He became General Bennett's deputy, and I became the Chief-of-Staff."

"Was he any good?" I asked.

"No. A waste of space, in my opinion. He used to have an impeccably clean desk that he would put his feet on. When the Director was traveling, you could be sure no decisions would be made until he got back. I tell that story because that pretty much marked the end of any reasonable possibility in that time frame for me get a third star and advance into further participation in intelligence work, national, naval, or whatever. Instead, I became DIA Chief-of-Staff, and I had served for nearly two years in that position."

“That job had a lot of influence as the third senior in the Agency.”

Mac nodded. “Then, in the fall of 1971, what was known as the Schlesinger Report came out. It was named after James Schlesinger who had chaired a study group on reform to the clandestine services. He recommended major changes to the intelligence community.”

"Well hush my mouth," I said, "and stop me if I have heard this before," I laughed. "We are always moving the deckchairs around after the boat already hit the iceberg." Mac smiled knowingly, and I thought about having another glass of wine. Mac's story was really about creating the world that the rest of us live in.

Going Ashore



June, 2011. It was a delightful afternoon at the Amen Corner of the Willow Bar. The usual suspects were drifting in and Old Jim anchored the bar at his customary stool at the apex. Mac had driven his champagne-colored Jaguar sedan across the street from his apartment in The Madison, the assisted-living high rise across Fairfax Drive.

We could have talked about Midway, since it was the anniversary- the 69th- of the Battle that made Mac’s team of code-breakers into legends in the Intelligence Community. But we

had pretty much beat his war time stories to death and I wanted to hear about what came after Mac's active duty time. I had a stack of pristine cocktail napkins and a pen. A glass of Willow's Happy Hour White was near my right hand, and a thirst for both stories and some life-giving alcohol.

Mac was in his usual aloha shirt topped with a sport jacket, looking quite dapper as usual. He was on the wagon again due to the drugs the oncologist had prescribed him for the prostate thing and his heart, and Willow tried to make up for it by making his Virgin Mary into a veritable cornucopia of jumbo olives, celery, cherry tomatoes and a pickle spear.

"That looks like a salad more than a glass of tomato juice," I said.

"Mac smiled. "I won't have to have dinner at The Madison tonight, that is for sure," he said with a chuckle.

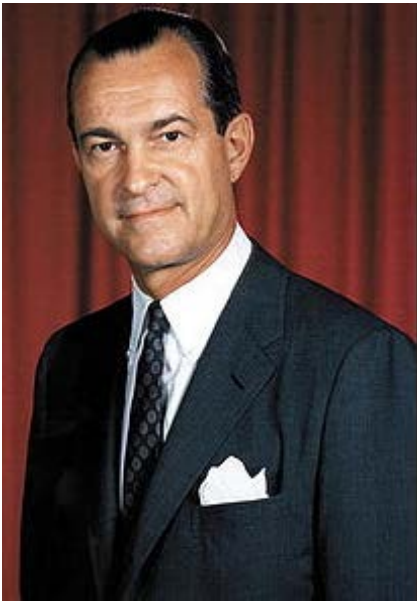
"It is time to hear about your life after the Navy, after Bud Zumwalt made you go ashore and retire. We agreed we are not going to talk about the details of your second career, right?"

"Mostly. We can talk about the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court and things like that, but there are some matters that are still a little sensitive after all these years."

"Like Project JENNIFER?" I said, using the code-word people know about from the press and not the *real* name of the program.

Mac would not bite and shook his head. "Nope, not going to go there. But I can talk about Bronson Tweedy. He was old school, and the strong right arm to Director Helms."

"Helms was Director for longer than most, wasn't he?"



(CIA Director Richard Helms. Photo CIA).

“Yes. Mid-sixties right up to 1973. He was old school. He had been Naval Intelligence in New York City, working on the Eastern Sea Frontier plotting U-boats when a friend approached him to join the OSS’s Morale Operations Branch. They did the black propaganda. He was a Spook the rest of his life.”

“It is interesting that the Navy Reservists in New York were in the middle of everything, isn’t it?”

Mac smiled. “They were their own Navy, that is for sure. They ran the Lucky Luciano connection with the Mob to keep the docks safe from Axis saboteurs.”

“In real life a lot of them were prosecutors and cops and stuff, right?”

“It was all mixed up together, military, law enforcement and justice. It was actually sort of a parallel universe.”

“In addition to the usual counter-intelligence work, they ran the scientific exploitation of the former Nazi scientists out on Long Island after the war.”

“Yes, the projects that came out of the Castle were of extraordinary value to CNO Arleigh Burke, who was creating the Nuclear Navy.”

“But you went to work at F Street at the IC Staff?”

“Not at first, and that wasn’t the name. I think we were in the Original Headquarters Building at Langley. Long before there was a new one.”



(CNO Admiral Elmo “Bud” Zumwalt. Photo USN).

He took a sip of his Virgin Mary and seemed to be concentrating on something far away. “I was still on active duty in the fall of 1969. Bud Zumwalt was on a tear to get every admiral who had been senior to him to retire.”

“I have heard about Zumwalt and his Z-grams and whiz kids. He really shook things up in the Navy after he was put in charge.”

“I didn’t want to go ashore, but the CNO wanted my number to promote my friend Rex to flag rank and that is just the way it was. There was no animosity between us; Rex was Zumwalt’s guy from his days at NAVFORV (Naval Forces Vietnam), and that is who he wanted to be the Director of Naval Intelligence (DNI).”

“It was in October 1969 that I was approached by Bronson Tweedy, who was Helm’s Deputy and a career Spook very much like him. He was born in London to American parents; he went to school there in the 1930s, and lived with a family in Germany to get acquainted with their customs, language and culture. He arrived to start his visit the day Adolf Hitler became chancellor. He was a Princeton guy with a degree in European history, and went into the advertising game at Benton and Bowles on Madison Avenue before the war. In 1942, he volunteered for Naval Intelligence and served in North Africa and Europe

interrogating captured German U-boat crews.”

“Naval Intelligence again,” I said in wonder. “Was he part of that secret POW camp the Army ran down at Fort Hunt?”

Mac nodded. “I am not sure, but it would have been Bronson down to the ground. That was the interrogation program code-named ‘P.O. Box 1142’ used against prisoners who were deemed ‘high value,’ like U-boat commanders.”

“I have walked around the grounds where the camp was located. You would not have known anything happened there, since they tore everything down right after the war except the old Coastal Artillery batteries. It is an interesting story, and it was also probably a violation of the Geneva Convention. You know, there are still things that people don’t want to talk about that went on at the intersection of operations and maritime intelligence.”

“I agree. I touched a live wire one time from the early 1950s,” I said. “I was working on a story about a counterfeit ring in France in the 1950s a while back with Tom “Big Smoke” Duvall and touched a live wire. Tom told me to back off and tell the story the way he wanted it or drop it. It might have had something to do with the intelligence connection to Lucky Luciano and the Mob, but I don’t know for sure and I was smart enough not to ask.”

Mac nodded. “After the war, Bronson briefly returned to advertising before being recruited by the CIA. He served in Switzerland, and DC just as the Agency was being formed, and he was Chief of Station in Vienna and twice in London. Then he founded the Africa Division, which was a result of Eisenhower’s dislike for Patrice Lumumba.”



(Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba. Photo AP).

“Did he have anything to do with the coup and Lumumba’s death? I remember the revelations about the rubber gloves and lethal toothpaste they were going to slip into the Congolese President’s bathroom. It was as cool an idea as the poisoned cigars they were going to try to get Castro to smoke.”

“I assume that is the case, but I didn’t have anything to do with it personally. And the toothpaste ploy makes sense. Lumumba did have a brilliant smile, from what I recall. He died right before John Kennedy was inaugurated, and Bronson was in Leopoldville around that time, but we never talked about the list of shady things that later came to be known as being part of the Agency’s Crown Jewels. After that, he was tapped to head the Eastern European Division. When Dick Helms was confirmed as Director in 1966, Bronson moved up to be Deputy.”

“There was something going on in those years,” I said. “I mean, someone got away with killing the President of the United States. The Warren Commission had so many glaring flaws that everyone suspected it was not the open and shut lone gunman that the Report claimed it was.”

“We have talked about that before,” he said, looking around to see if anyone seemed particularly interested in the topic. “I think there was a Texas connection. When Nixon came into office in 1968, his people immediately focused on the Intelligence Community. Henry Kissinger thought he had all the answers and viewed the Agency with condescension.”

“He still does, from what I hear.”

“He thought the boys from Langley were not sharing all that they knew with the Administration. Nixon felt that steadily increasing capabilities and costs directed toward IC functions should be yielding better analysis. Plus, the coup in Cambodia in ’70 caught

everyone by surprise, and Nixon hated being surprised. “



(James Schlesinger as SECDEF, 1970. Photo DoD).

“Since there did not appear to be a direct link between level of effort, and the money spent to produce it, Nixon commissioned James Schlesinger to conduct a survey of the IC. His chartered goal was to identify problems within the IC and recommend ideas for improvement.”

“I have been to that movie before. I think they are doing it again now,” I laughed.

“So all that is swirling around while I figure out what to do as I am being I am being pushed out of the Navy. Bronson must have heard about it on the grapevine. He gave me a call in October of 1969, and asked me to come down to the City Tavern Club on M Street and talk about a proposition he had for me.”

Prep work for the dinner trade complete, Willow Co-owner Tracy O’Grady came out to press the flesh with the usual suspects before the kitchen got busy with the dinner trade. She worked the Amen Corner there by the front window for a while as Old Jim showed her his latest flight of blank verse from the notebook he kept in his corduroy jacket. Jim is still quite the poet. My pen was still poised. “Ok, Sir, you retired in 1971?”



(CIA Deputy Bronson Tweedy).

“Yes. November of 1971. Bronson Tweedy called me and asked if I could meet him for lunch at the City Tavern Club on M Street in Georgetown, which I agreed to do. He liked

that place- very traditional Washington institution. At lunch he said, "In view of the Schlesinger study making these demands on what the newly established Director of Central Intelligence is supposed to do, the DCI has decided reluctantly that he will have to expand his budget staff to carry out more coordination of the intelligence community. And among other things we'd like you to come and work for us."

"I asked him at that point if he wanted me to come in uniform or if he wanted me to come as a civilian. He said, "We want you as a civilian.""

"When was that, Admiral?"

"This was probably the first week of November. Bronson said: "We'd like to have you on board by the first of December." I told him that I doubted that I could get "unhooked" from the Navy that quickly, but I would try. After a pleasant lunch, I returned to the Pentagon and made inquiries, and the first thing I was confronted with was that General Bennett, the Director of DIA, was away on a trip. I was told that there was no way that I could send my request for retirement without his endorsement and agreement, which was obvious. So, it being readily apparent that I couldn't carry get on the retired list by the first of December, the earliest I would be able to do it would be the first of January the following year. That was agreed to, and that's what happened. As soon as General Bennett returned from his trip, I had my letter on his desk requesting retirement. He endorsed it, I went through the necessary procedures, and I was retired as of the 31st of December 1971 and went on the retired list on the 1st of January 1972."

"I was still worried about the Draft then," I said with a sigh. "I was dodging the draft and hoping I wouldn't get nailed as soon as I graduated. Did you have any regrets about going to the CIA after all those years in Naval Intelligence?"

"No. It was a good offer. I don't remember the pay scale at the time, but Bronson Tweedy's offer to me was that, "We will take you on as a contract employee. We'll give you a one-year contract renewable. And we will pay you the equivalent of a GS-16 salary."

"That would be a General Schedule employee equivalent to a Rear Admiral, right?"

"Yes. The concept of the Senior Executive Service did not exist then. Compensation was about the same as what I was making from the Navy. I knew that I would have to forego part of my retired pay. I think the formula at the time was that I'd have to lose half of my retired Navy pay while I was in government employ and have that restored to the full annuity upon leaving government service. But I would concurrently be getting a full civil service salary or salary from the DCI, which would really give me a pay-and-a-half and make me a real true "double dipper," a status for which I was accused of many times."

"It always seems to irritate some people around here when somebody in the military finally gets a decent salary. With full military retirement and a job, you can actually afford to live

in DC. At least you did not have to go into bid-and-proposal work with the rest of us Beltway Bandits.”

“I am thankful for that,” he said, taking a nibble of the celery stalk in his Virgin Mary. “New Year’s Day of that year fell on a Sunday, so we had Monday off to observe the holiday. I believe I retired on a Friday, and went to work at CIA headquarters on Tuesday. I know I had a three-day break between careers Time enough to have a New Year’s party and recover from it.”

“That only means you were not trying hard enough,” I said with a snort. “You told me about the party the senior officers had at Joe Rochefort’s house during the War after the word came back that Station HYPO had been right, and the Japanese were shattered at the Battle of Midway.”

Mac nodded solemnly. “We did not see some of them for a few days. But this was no war and we were all a little older. When I arrived at the DCI headquarters, I first went into a group that was headed by J.J. Hitchcock, who was one of my previous friends in naval service.”

“More Navy” I said, underlining my notes.

“Yes. I had first met J.J. at the Naval Security Station back in ’47-48 when he was doing some research work on indications and warning. J.J. had become the I&W expert for the DCI over the years. He was instrumental in setting up the Watch Committee and doing the Weekly Review of worldwide Indicators and he issued the weekly Watch Report that was a major instrument of power in the government during those years. By then, though, J.J. wasn’t doing that kind of work any longer. He was simply doing staff work.”

“Did you work on the 6th Floor at Langley? That is where we had our offices on the Community Management Staff after they changed the name again.”

Mac looked contemplative. “Could have been. That seems right.”

“That is the subject of the first major review of the way the Intelligence Community worked. There was some thought that once the war in Vietnam was transferred back to the Republic of Vietnam, there would be plenty of budget authority to transfer to other more strategic tasking.”

“I have heard about the Williamsburg Conference when the big post-Vietnam drawdown was going on. The military divided up all the responsibilities for the DoD components of the IC.”

”That came later,” said Mac. “Once we had pretty much extricated our forces in the field in 1973. The Schlesinger report landed on our desks for implementation, with some lofty observations. It claimed the line between ‘military’ and ‘non-military’ intelligence had

faded; scientific and technical intelligence with both civilian and military applications had become the main battery for the community. All the other stuff was sorted according to the people that used it. The strategic stuff was for the national decision makers, and the tactical stuff they didn't care about was for the regional and functional Joint Commanders."

"Like CINCPAC and the strategic Air Command?"

"Precisely. The President and the National Security Council with Kissinger were served mostly by CIA for the national-level stuff, though NSA was the critical collector for special SIGINT. But there was more, and it was urgent. The rate at which the Soviets were cranking out innovative technology revolutionized the intelligence cycle."

"We called it Tasking, Production, Exploitation and Dissemination," I said. "TPED for short. I don't know what they call it now. Find, Fix, Finish, Exploit, Analyze, and Disseminate?"

"I can't keep up with it," said Mac with a lopsided smile. "That is the same concept we used starting with Operation intelligence in the Pacific War. Nothing changes except the acronyms."

"So that is the 1970s under Richard Nixon at Langley."

"Yep. Before we moved downtown and the two Congressional Panels blew the bottom out of everything. That is worth a conversation all on its own."

I underlined a couple of Mac's quotes on the square white cocktail napkin in front of me, and added the Congressional Pike and Church Commissions to my notes. "I will do my research, Sir, and be prepared to discuss them when you feel up to it."

"I am always ready," said Mac. "Those were some interesting times."

I smiled and waved at Big Jim the bartender for the check. "Isn't that a Chinese curse, Admiral?"

"Only if you are uninterested," he said with a grin.