

The Human Factor: Inside the CIA's Dysfunctional Intelligence Culture

Ishmael Jones

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American Presidents make decisions on war unaware that the human source intelligence provided by the CIA is often false or nonexistent. From Harry Truman during the Korean War to George Bush during the War on Terror, modern Presidents have faced their darkest moments as a result of poor intelligence. The CIA has assured Congress and the President that intelligence programs in hostile areas of the world are thriving, when they simply do not exist.

The CIA is a broken, Soviet-style bureaucracy with its own agenda: to consume federal funds, to expand within the United States, to feign activity, and to enrich current and former employees. After 9/11, billions of dollars directed by Congress to increase the number of officers working under deep cover on foreign streets have disappeared without the CIA fielding a single additional, productive officer overseas.

The Human Factor makes the case for intelligence reform, showing the career of an accomplished deep cover CIA case officer who struggled not with finding human sources of secret information in rogue nations, but with the CIA's bloated, dysfunctional, even cancerous bureaucracy. After initial training in the US, Ishmael Jones spent his career in multiple, consecutive overseas assignments, as a deep cover officer without benefit of diplomatic immunity. In dingy hotel rooms, Jones met alone with weapons scientists, money launderers, and terrorists. He pushed intelligence missions forward while escaping purges within the Agency, active thwarting of operations by bureaucrats, and the ever-present threat of arrest by hostile foreign intelligence services. Jones became convinced that the CIA's failure to fulfill its purpose endangers Americans. Attempting reform from within proved absurd. Jones resigned from the CIA to make a public case for reform through the writing of this book.

Effective American organizations feature clear missions, streamlined management, transparency, and accountability. The CIA has none of these. While it has always hired good people, it wastes and even perverts employees. The CIA is not doing its job and must be fixed. Until it is, our lives and the lives of our allies are in jeopardy.



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