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### **The Lion's Den**

I never did the second half of Spyglass. In the summer of 1949, I received a telegram from headquarters which diverted my attention to quite different matters. The telegram offered me the SIS representation in the United States, where I would be working in liaison with both CIA and the FBI. The intention was to upgrade the job for a significant reason. The collaboration between CIA and SIS at headquarters level (though not in the field) had become so close that any officer earmarked for high position in SIS would need intimate knowledge of the American scene. It took me all of half an hour to decide to accept the offer.

It would be a wrench to leave Istanbul, both because of its beauty and because it would mean leaving a job considerably less than half accomplished. But the lure of the American post was irresistible for two reasons. At one stroke, it would take me right

back into the middle of intelligence policy-making and it would give me a close-up view of the American intelligence organisations. These, I was beginning to suspect, were already of greater importance from my point of view than their British opposite numbers. I did not even think it worth waiting for confirmation from my Soviet colleagues. The event justified my action. No doubt was expressed anywhere of the unlimited potentialities of my new assignment. It was arranged that I should leave for London at the end of September and, after a month's briefing at headquarters, sail for America at the end of October,

In London, I found that Jack Easton had the general supervision of relations between SIS and the American services, and it was from him that I received most of my instructions. I appreciated, not without misgiving, his command of the elusive patterns of Anglo-American cooperation. But the range of collaboration was so wide that there was scarcely a senior officer in the whole organisation who had not got some axe to grind with me. I was lunched at many clubs on business pretexts. The discussions over the coffee and port covered many subjects, but all my hosts had one thing in common—the desire for a free trip to America. I did not discourage them. The more visitors I had in Washington, the more pies I got my finger into. That, after all, was my aim in life.

Apart from these diverting interludes, my briefing caused me serious preoccupation in more than one respect. It became clear from Easton's succinct expositions of the situation that my path in Washington was likely to be thorny. I was to take over from

Peter Dwyer, who had spent several years in the United States. I knew him for a brilliant wit, and was to learn that he had a great deal more to him than just wit. During the war, he had succeeded in the prickly task of establishing close personal relations with many leading figures in the FBI. These relations, maintained after the war, had given the SIS representation in Washington a bias towards the FBI at the expense (so some thought) of CIA. As the FBI, taking its cue from the prima donna Hoover, was childishly sensitive on the subject of CIA, it was extremely difficult for Dwyer to keep a balance without exposing himself to snarling charges of double-crossing his old friends.

One of my new jobs was to tilt the balance in the opposite direction. CIA and SIS had agreed to close collaboration over a wide range of issues which inevitably meant more day-to-day contact than SIS would have with the FBI. Nothing about this change of policy could be acknowledged, of course. My assignment was therefore to tighten links with CIA and loosen those with the FBI without the FBI noticing. It did not take much reflection to convince me that such a task was impossible and absurd. The only sensible course was to get in with CIA on subjects of common interest and take on the chin the unavoidable resentment of Hoover's men. A corollary of this was that it would be dangerous to be too clever since the cards would be stacked too heavily against me. It would be better to play it silly and be ready to apologise freely for the bricks which my position would force me to drop from time to time.

My briefing on the counter-espionage side also aroused grave anxiety in my mind. This was given me by the formidable Maurice Oldfield, and included a communication of the first importance. Joint Anglo-American investigation of Soviet intelligence activity in the United States had yielded a strong suggestion that there had been a leakage from the British Embassy in Washington during the years 1944-45, and another from the atomic energy establishment in Los Alamos. I had no ideas about Los Alamos. But a swift check of the relevant Foreign Office list left me in little doubt about the identity of the source in the British Embassy. My anxiety was tempered by relief, since I had been nagged for some months by a question put to me by my Soviet contact in Istanbul. He had asked me if I had any means of discovering what the British were doing in a case under investigation by the FBI—a case involving the British Embassy in Washington. At the time of asking, there was nothing that I could have done. But it seemed, after my talk with Oldfield, that I had stumbled into the heart of the problem. Within a few days, this was confirmed by my Russian friend in London. After checking with headquarters, he was left in no doubt that information from the FBI and my own referred to one and the same case.

A careful study of the files did something to allay my immediate fears. As SIS was not supposed to operate inside the United States, investigation of the leads provided by the source was in the hands of the FBI. Characteristically, they had put in an immense amount of work resulting in an immense amount of

waste paper. It had so far occurred neither to them nor to the British that a diplomat was involved, let alone a fairly senior diplomat. Instead, the investigation had concentrated on non-diplomatic employees of the Embassy, and particularly on those locally recruited, the sweepers, cleaners, bottle-washers and the rest. A charlady with a Latvian grandmother, for instance, would rate a fifteen-page report crowded with insignificant detail of herself, her family and friends, her private life, and holiday habits. It was testimony to the enormous resources of the FBI, and to the pitiful extent to which those resources were squandered. It was enough to convince me that urgent action would not be necessary, but that the case would require minute watching. Something drastic would certainly have to be done before I left Washington. Heaven knew where my next appointment would be; I might well lose all control of the case.

My last call in London was at the Chiefs office. He was in the best of form, and amused me with malicious accounts of the stickier passages in Anglo-American intelligence relations during the war. This turned out to be more than just pointless reminiscence. He told me that the news of my appointment to the United States appeared to have upset Hoover. I was then rated a fairly senior officer in the service, which Dwyer (most undeservedly) was not. Hoover suspected that my appointment might herald unwanted SIS activity in the United States. To allay his fear, the Chief had sent him a personal telegram, assuring him that there was no intention of a change of policy; my duties would be purely liaison duties. The Chief

showed me the telegram, then gave me a hard stare. "That," he said, "is an official communication from myself to Hoover." There was a pause, then he continued: "Unofficially . . . let's discuss it over lunch at Whites."

With my briefing as complete as could reasonably be expected, I sailed on the S.S. "Caronia" towards the end of September. I had a memorable send-off. The first thing I saw on the foggy platform at Waterloo was an enormous pair of moustaches and behind them the head of Osbert Lancaster, an apparition which assured me of good company on the voyage. Before we sailed, I was called to the ship's telephone. Jack Easton was on the line to tell me that Dwyer had just telegraphed his resignation. It was not clear why, but I had been warned. Finally, a case of champagne was delivered to my cabin with the card of a disgustingly rich friend. I began to feel that I would enjoy my first Transatlantic crossing.

I made my first slip almost immediately after entering American territorial waters. An FBI representative had come out in the pilot's launch to greet me. I gave him a glass of Tio Pepe which he sipped unhappily while we made polite conversation. I was later to learn that the men of the FBI, with hardly an exception, were proud of their insularity, of having sprung from the grass roots. One of the first senior G-men I met in Washington claimed to have had a grandpappy who kept a general store at Horse Creek, Missouri. They were therefore whisky-drinkers, with beer for light refreshment. By contrast, CIA men flaunted cosmopolitan postures. They would

discuss absinthe and serve Burgundy above room temperature. This is not just flippancy. It points to a deep social cleavage between the two organisations, which accounts for at least some of the asperity marking their exchanges.

My FBI friend saw me through the landing formalities and bedded me down in a hotel with a view of Centra] Park. Next day at Pennsylvania Station, I boarded the train for Washington. The sumach was still in flower and gave me a foretaste of the famous fall, one of the few glories of America which Americans have never exaggerated because exaggeration is impossible. Peter Dwyer met me and explained, over our first bourbon, that his resignation had nothing to do with my appointment to succeed him. For personal reasons, he had long wanted to settle in Canada, where a congenial government post was awaiting him. The news of my posting to Washington had simply determined the timing of his northward move to Ottawa. So we started on a pleasant footing. Nothing could exceed the care and astuteness with which he inducted me into Washington politics.

It is not easy to make a coherent picture of my tour of duty in the United States. Indeed, such a picture would give a wrong impression of the type of work I was engaged in. It was too varied, and often too amorphous, to be reduced to simple terms. Liaison with the FBI alone, if it had been conducted thoroughly, would have been a full-time job. It was the era of McCarthy in full evil blast. It was also the era of Hiss, Coplon, Fuchs, Gold, Greenglass, and the brave Rosenbergs—not to mention others who are

still nameless. Liaison with CIA covered an even wider field, ranging from a serious attempt to subvert an East European regime to such questions as the proper exploitation of German documents relating to General Vlasov. In every question that arose, the first question was to please one party without offending the other. In addition, I had to work in with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and with individuals in the Department of External Affairs who were dicker-ing with the idea of setting up an independent Canadian secret service.

Where to begin? As the end of my story chiefly concerns the FBI, I should perhaps concede to CIA the beginning. The head of the organisation when I arrived was Admiral Hillenkoetter, an amiable sailor who was soon to give way to General Bedell Smith without leaving much of a mark on American intelligence history. The two divisions with which I had most to do were the Office of Strategic Operations (OSO) and the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). In plain English, OSO was the intelligence-gathering division and OPC was charged with subversion. There was also a little work with the planning division, associated with the name of Dick<sup>1</sup> Helms, who recently succeeded Admiral Rabone as head of the whole organisation and promptly fell foul of the Senate.

The driving force of OSO at the time was Jim Angleton, who had formerly served in London and had earned my respect by openly rejecting the Anglo-mania that disfigured the young face of OSO. We

<sup>1</sup> Richard Helms, the present director of the CIA.—*Eds.*

formed the habit of lunching once a week at Harvey's where he demonstrated regularly that overwork was not his only vice. He was one of the thinnest men I have ever met, and one of the biggest eaters. Lucky Jim! After a year of keeping up with Angleton, I took the advice of an elderly lady friend and went on a diet, dropping from thirteen stone to about eleven in three months.

Our close association was, I am sure, inspired by genuine friendliness on both sides. But we both had ulterior motives. Angleton wanted to place the burden of exchanges between CIA and SIS on the CIA office in London—which was about ten times as big as mine. By doing so, he could exert the maximum pressure on SIS's headquarters while minimising SIS intrusions into his own. As an exercise in nationalism, that was fair enough. By cultivating me to the full, he could better keep me under wraps. For my part, I was more than content to string him along. The greater the trust between us overtly, the less he would suspect covert action. Who gained most from this complex game I cannot say. But I had one big advantage. I knew what he was doing for CIA and he knew what I was doing for SIS. But the real nature of my interest was something he did not know.

Although our discussions ranged over the whole world, they usually ended, if they did not begin, with France and Germany. The Americans had an obsessive fear of communism in France, and I was astonished by the way in which Angleton devoured reams of French newspaper material daily. That this was not a private phobia of Angleton's became clear at a later

date when a British proposal for giving Alexandre Parodi, head of the D'Orsay, limited secret information, was firmly squashed by Bedell Smith in person. He told me flatly that he was not prepared to trust a single French official with such information.

Angleton had fewer fears about Germany. That country concerned him chiefly as a base of operations against the Soviet Union and the socialist states of Eastern Europe. CIA had lost no time in taking over the anti-Soviet section of the German Abwehr, under von Gehlen, and many of Harvey's lobsters went to provoke Angleton into defending, with chapter and verse, the past record and current activities of the von Gehlen organisation.

We also had many skirmishes over the various Russian emigre organisations, of which more later in this chapter. There was the People's Labour Alliance (NTS), which recently achieved notoriety in the case of poor Gerald Brooke. There were the Ukrainian Fascists of Stepan Bandera, the darlings of the British. Both CIA and SIS were up to their ears in emigre politics, hoping to use the more promising groups for purposes analogous to those for which we had used Jordania. Although the British put up a stubborn rearguard action in favour of the groups with which they had been long associated, the story was one of general American encroachment in the emigre field. The dollar was just too strong. For instance, although the British had an important stake in the NTS, SIS was compelled by financial reasons to transfer responsibility for its operations to CIA. The transfer was effected by formal agreement between the two

organisations, though the case of Brooke, an Englishman, suggests that SIS is not above playing around with the Alliance under the counter. Such an action would be quite in keeping with the ethics of secret service.

We had much else to discuss about Germany, since both SIS and CIA could afford to spread themselves on occupied territory. Secret activity of all kinds, including operations directed against the German authorities themselves, were financed by the Germans, as part of the payment for the expenses of occupation.

Apart from Angleton, my chief OSO contact was a man I shall refer to here as William J. Howard. He was a former FBI man whom Hoover had sacked for drunkenness on duty. The first time he dined at my house, he showed that his habits had remained unchanged. He fell asleep over the coffee and sat snoring gently until midnight when his wife took him away, saying: "Come now, Daddy, it's time you were in bed." I may be accused here of introducing a cheap note. Admitted. But, as will be seen later, Howard was to play a very cheap trick on me, and I do not like letting provocation go unpunished. Having admitted the charge of strong anti-Howard prejudice, it is only fair that I should add that he cooperated well with SIS in the construction of the famous Berlin tunnel.

As I have already said, the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC) was concerned with subversion on a world-wide basis. Its head was Frank Wisner, a youngish man for so responsible a job, balding and running self-importantly to fat. He favoured an oro-

tund style of conversation which was disconcerting. I accompanied a mission which he led to London to discuss with SIS matters of common interest. When the discussions touched on issues of international concern, the Foreign Office sent representatives to watch the proceedings. At one such meeting, attended on behalf of the Foreign Office by Tony Rumbold, Wisner expatiated on one of his favourite themes: the need for camouflaging the source of secret funds supplied to apparently respectable bodies in which we were interested. "It is essential," said Wisner in his usual informal style, "to secure the overt cooperation of people with conspicuous access to wealth in their own right." Rumbold started scribbling. I looked over his shoulder and saw what he had written: "people with conspicuous access to wealth in their own right = rich people."

My relations with OPC were more active than those with OSO, which were confined mostly to finding out what they were up to. Shortly before my arrival in Washington, the American and British governments had sanctioned in principle a clandestine operation to detach an East European country from the socialist bloc. The choice fell on Albania for several reasons. It was the smallest and weakest of the socialist states. It was bounded on the south by Greece, with which Britain and the United States were allied and which was still technically at war with Albania. Its northern and eastern frontiers matched with Yugoslavia. Our experts considered—quite wrongly, in my opinion—that Marshal Tito, after his break with the socialist bloc, would adopt a hands-off policy towards any

changes in Tirane. Albania, therefore, looked conveniently isolated and, moreover, it was within easy reach, by sea and air, from Malta. Owing to the many political implications of such a project, the State Department and Foreign Office insisted on maintaining close supervision of the operation. Subject to that supervision, the execution was the responsibility of SIS and OPC.

Both the British and the Americans were in touch with Albanian emigre groups; both sides undertook to rally their contacts in support of the counter-revolution. The British were to provide Malta as a forward base of operations, and the small boats required for the infiltration of seaborne agents. The Americans supplied most of the finance and logistical support and the use of Whelus Feld, in Libya, as a rear base and supply depot. King Idris was not let into the secret; he was then only an Amir. In the prolonged Anglo-American wrangling that followed, Malta was our trump card. "Whenever we want to subvert any place," Wisner confided to me, "we find that the British own an island within easy reach."

The wrangling concerned the political leadership of the counter-revolution. We were in the pre-Dulles era. The United States had not yet come out in open support of extreme reaction everywhere. The State Department was anxious to give the counter-revolution a democratic aspect. To this end, they stole a march on us by railroading a handful of Albanian refugees in New York into forming a National Committee and electing as its head a certain Hassan Dosti. Dosti was a young lawyer who, according to OPC, had an

impeccable record as a democrat, though I failed to see what evidence there could possibly be for such an assertion. Despite repeated requests, I never came face to face with Dosti. OPC, I was told, had to handle him very carefully because he scared easily. Fine leadership material!

If the National Committee in New York filled me with misgiving, I was just as depressed by the British nominee for the leadership. He was a petty tribal chieftain named Abbas KUPI, an old friend of Julian Amery. From his photographs, I knew him to be be-whiskered and habitually armed to the teeth—made to measure for the exercise of British paternalism. I had no doubt that he could equal the feats of his ancestors in raiding unarmed caravans or sniping at heat-stricken Turkish infantrymen plodding hopelessly through the gorges. But I never shared the bemusement of the British gentleman at the sight of a tribesman. I am sure that tribal courage is legendary only in the sense that it is legend, and that the wild mountaineer is as brave as a lion only in the sense that the lion (very sensibly) avoids combat unless assured of weak opposition and a fat meal at the end of it. In short, if Dosti was a young weakling, Abbas KUPI was an old rascal. The interminable Anglo-American argument on their rival merits was intelligible only if one ignored the merits of the case and regarded it as a contest to decide whether the British or the Americans would dominate the counter-revolutionary government—if it was ever formed. When the British and Americans finally tired of the argument and looked around for a compromise, it was

found that Dosti and Abbas KUPI had been so hardened in their attitudes by their respective sponsors that neither could be induced to serve under anyone else.

The day-to-day control of the operation was in the hands of a Special Policy Committee (SPC) which met in Washington. It consisted of four members, representing the State Department, the Foreign Office, OPC and SIS. The State Department appointed Bob Joyce, a convivial soul with experience of Balkan affairs; Earl Jellicoe, of the British Embassy, another convivial soul, represented the Foreign Office; Frank Lindsay, of OPC, was yet a third convivial soul; finally, there was myself. It is clear, from such a membership, that our meetings were less than formal. Lindsay set the tone by remarking, at our first meeting, that the first Albanian he ever saw was hanging upside down from parallel bars. Even in our more serious moments, we Anglo-Saxons never forgot that our agents were just down from the trees. Although I have said that the SPC was in control of the operation, we could never act as free agents. Headquarters never allowed me to forget SIS's commitment to Abbas KUPI, and, behind headquarters, there loomed the Bevin formula for veto: "I won't 'ave it." Doubtless, Frank Lindsay was similarly inhibited.

In such circumstances, it is perhaps surprising that the operation ever got off the ground. We did finally succeed in landing a small party on the Albanian coast with instructions to work their way inland, spy out the land, and then move southwards into Greece. It was hoped that the information they gathered on



the way would help us in launching more ambitious schemes at a later date. The operation, of course, was futile from the beginning. Our infiltrators could achieve something only by penetrating the towns, which were firmly under Communist control. For bare survival, they had to hide in the mountains, where their presence would have been useful only if the country was seething with revolt. That, perhaps, was the unspoken assumption behind the whole venture, just as it was assumed more recently (when people should have known better) that a landing in the Bay of Pigs would set Cuba on fire. In the end, a few members of the party did succeed in straggling through to Greece, where they were extricated, with immense difficulty, from the clutches of the Greek security authorities who would have shot them for tuppence. The information they brought was almost wholly negative. It was clear, at least, that they had nowhere found arms open to welcome them.

In due course, the operation was quietly dropped without having made any noticeable dent on the regime in Tirane. It was just as well for the British and American governments that their squib proved so damp. In the event of success, they would have had endless trouble with their new protege, not to mention serious difficulties with Greece and Jugoslavia and possibly Italy as well. Within a few years, Enver Hoxha<sup>2</sup> had done the job much more effectively, and the headache is felt in Peking. The

<sup>2</sup>A Russian-trained Albanian partisan leader who, after the war, defeated a nationalist faction and took power.—*Eds.*

moral seems to be that it is better to cut ones losses than give hostages to fortune. The same moral could be applied today to South-East Asia.

Political cross-purposes also bedevilled Anglo-American plans of greater potential importance than the Albanian venture; for instance, projects for the penetration and subversion of the Soviet Union itself. Both SIS and CIA had their Baltic puppets, whose rival ambitions were usually quite irreconcilable. It was with some relish that I watched the struggling factions repeatedly fight themselves to a standstill. On one occasion, the position got so dangerous that Harry Carr, the North European expert in Broadway, was sent to Washington in a desperate bid to stop the rot. His visit ended disastrously, with both Carr and his opposite numbers in CIA accusing each other, quite justifiably, of wholesale lying at the conference table. Disagreements over the Ukraine were even longer drawn out and just as stultifying.

From the years before the war, SIS had maintained contact with Stepan Bandera, a Ukrainian nationalist of marked Fascist views, and the collaboration had developed since the war. The trouble was that, although Bandera was quite a noise in the emigration, his claims to a substantial following inside the Soviet Union were never seriously tested, except in the negative sense that nothing much ever came of them. A first party, equipped by the British with W/T [wireless/telegraph] and other clandestine means of communication, was sent into the Ukraine in 1949, and disappeared. Two more parties were sent the follow-

ing year, and remained equally silent. Meanwhile, the Americans were beginning to nurse serious doubts about Bandera's usefulness to the West which the failure of the British-sponsored parties to surface did nothing to allay.

The American attack on the alliance between Bandera and SIS gathered strength in 1950, and much of my time in the United States was spent in transmitting acrimonious exchanges between Washington and London on the rival merits of obscure emigre factions. CIA proffered three serious objections to Bandera as an ally. His extreme nationalism, with its Fascist overtones, was a handicap which would prejudice Western dealings with other groups inside the Soviet Union, for example, the Great Russians. He was alleged to have his roots in the old emigration, and to lack all contact with the new, "more realistic" emigration which the Americans were busy cultivating. Finally, he was accused flatly of being anti-American. The British plea that Bandera was being used solely for the purpose of gathering intelligence, and that such a use could have no real political significance, was brushed aside by the Americans, who argued that, whatever the nature of the connection, its very existence must inflate Bandera's prestige in the Ukraine. They professed fears that any reinforcement of Bandera's following must risk splitting the "resistance movement" in the Ukraine, with which they were themselves working.

The weakness of the American case was that it rested on bald statement, and very little else. The results produced by the "more realistic" emigration,

and by the "resistance movement" in the Ukraine, were scarcely less meagre than the results of the British-Bandera connection. It is true that CIA claimed to have received some couriers from the Ukraine in the winter of 1949-50, but the wretched quality of their information suggested rather that they were tramps who had wandered into the wrong country. In 1951, after several years of hard work, CIA were still hoping to send in a political representative, with three assistants, to establish contact with the "resistance movement." They had also scratched together a reserve team of four men, to be sent in if the first party vanished without trace.

In order to resolve Anglo-American differences on the Ukrainian issue, CIA pressed for a full-scale conference with SIS, which was duly held in London in April, 1951. Rather to my surprise, the British stood firm, and flatly refused to jettison Bandera. The best that could be agreed, with unconcealed ill temper on the American side, was that the situation would be re-examined at the end of the 1951 parachute-dropping season, by which time, it was hoped, more facts would be available. Within a month, the British had dropped three six-man parties, the aircraft taking off from Cyprus. One party was dropped midway between Lwow and Tarnopol; another near the headwaters of the Prut, not far from Kolomyia; and a third just inside the borders of Poland, near the source of the San. In order to avoid the dangers of overlapping and duplication, the British and Americans exchanged precise information about the timing and geographical coordinates of their

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operations. I do not know what happened to the parties concerned. But I can make an informed guess.

Some eight years later, I read of the mysterious murder of Bandera in Munich, in the American zone of Germany. It may be that, despite the brave stand of the British in his defence, CIA had the last word.