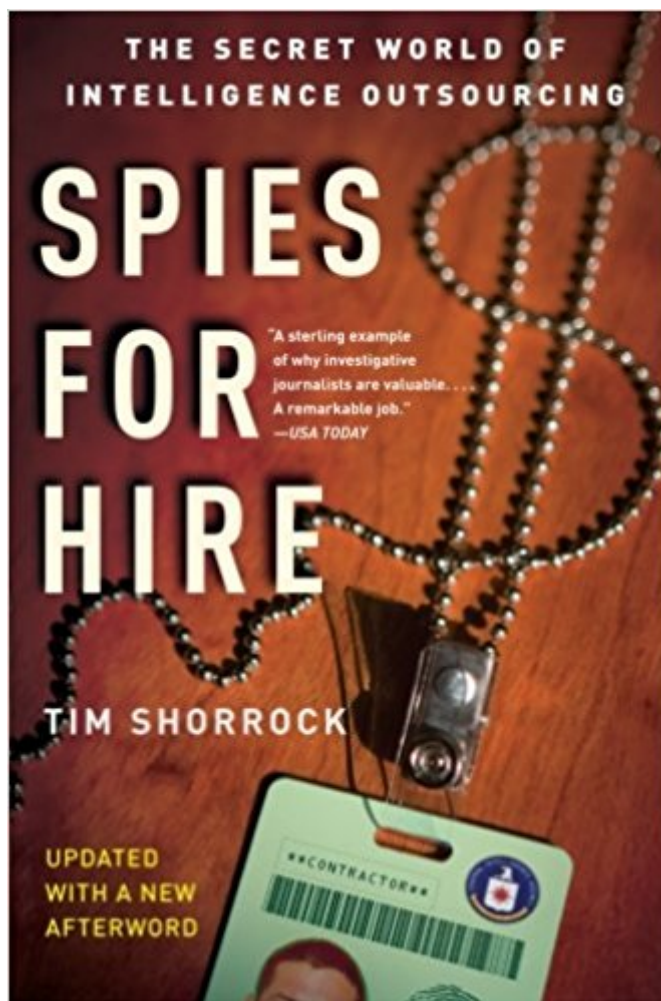


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Spies For Hire: The Secret World Of Intelligence Outsourcing



Synopsis

Now in paperback, and with a new, updated Afterword, this acclaimed investigative report is the first to expose the massive outsourcing of top-secret intelligence activities in the wake of 9/11. A major story the government doesn't want us to know about: Almost everything about the outsourcing of spying activities is classified. Shorrock lifts the veil off this disturbing story for the first time. Vital tasks outsourced: Running spy networks overseas, interrogating enemy prisoners, eavesdropping on phone calls, tracking al Qaeda operatives, analyzing intelligence—these vital tasks, traditionally performed by government, are now being outsourced to companies answerable to investors rather than to Congress. Authoritative: Shorrock has spent four years researching this new phenomenon, drawing on interviews, government documents, and industry contacts. He takes readers inside the intelligence contracting industry, which is worth more than \$50 billion a year.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Edit of 4 Jun 08 to strongly recommend Retired Reader's review as a companion to my own observations. I sat down with this book today and found it absorbing. It is perhaps the best overview for anyone of names and numbers associated with the \$60 billion (or more, perhaps as much as \$75 billion) a year we waste on the 4% we can steal, and next to nothing on Open Source Intelligence (OSINT). The book loses one star for failing to integrate over 300 relevant books (see the annotated bibliographies to my first two books), and for failing to apply any visualization at all.

This book is a mass of facts and figures, names and places. With or without visualization, it is a seminal reference point and recommended for all university and public libraries. The book focuses mostly on technical waste--the inputs--and does not cover outputs nor constituencies. The reality is as General Zinni has put it so well: the IC produces 4% of what is needed, at a cost so horrendously wasteful as to warrant severe outrage among all taxpayers. Having read the book, I can state that the author's agenda, if he has one, is to expose the risk to our civil liberties of creating a national surveillance state in which the bulk of the expertise is outside the government and subject to corruption and cronyism as well as lack of oversight. Here are three tid-bits that strongly support the author's general intent, and some links. 1) Secret intelligence scam #1 is that there is no penalty for failure. Lockheed can build a satellite system that does not work (for NASA as well as the secret world--two different failures--or get the metrics wrong so priceless outer space research does not deploy a parachute--}and get another contract.

Rather than reinvent the wheel, I'm going to quote liberally from an excellent full-length review of this book from blogger Meteor Blades at Daily Kos: "Spies for Hire is one of those books so brimful of detail, including mergers and acquisitions by intelligence companies, that one wishes for coded links and two or three charts illustrating the career trajectories and corporate genealogy of a couple dozen of the key players." Another reviewer told an unsourced anecdote about an intelligence contractor who was downsized into driving a limo. Well, consider the story of neocon visionary Stephen Cambone. A charter member of PNAC, Cambone was appointed as the undersecretary of defense for intelligence at the Pentagon, a position of immense power and influence, which was forged from the conflict between Rumsfeld and the CIA. "Among his other duties was overseeing "Copper Green," the interrogations, much of them by private contractors, of Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib. Cambone was so widely despised and feared at the Pentagon that an Army general had jokingly said that "if he had one round left in his revolver, he would take out Steve Cambone," according to the Washington Post's Thomas Ricks. "When Rumsfeld was forced out of his job, his loyal retainer, Cambone was shown the exit a few months later, in January of 2007. However, Cambone did not end up driving a limousine: "In January 2008, the Pentagon's Counter-Intelligence Field Agency granted a \$30 million contract to the Missions Solutions Group of QinetiQ North America...Just two months before that contract was awarded, QinetiQ hired a new vice president for strategy. His name is Stephen Cambone." So, why is this book a must-read?

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