August of 1985 warned those who debriefed him that KGB Colonel Oleg Gordievsky was “under suspicion” three months after he fled the USSR. In addition, Cold Warrior suffers from hyperbole; too often, things are described as being a “top defector,” or “top source,” or even a “top Ballistic Missile.” Finally, while Mangold points out that Angleton’s performance as the head of CIA’s Israeli desk would fill a book of its own, within the context of Angleton’s career as a whole, the Israeli connection is not explored adequately.

As a review of James Angleton’s career, Cold Warrior is a chronicle of narrow scope. On the other hand, this book does show that excessive centralized authority without adequate supervisory attention or peer review can do more damage than a string of agents to an organization such as CIA, to which, ironically, Angleton was deeply devoted.

Effective CI is an essential part of the overall intelligence process. By chronicling the manner in which Angleton’s personal character shaped his approach to CI, Cold Warrior contributes meaningfully to the study of the successes, failures, and requirements of CI. The book also demonstrates the important role which CI played and continues to play within Western intelligence agencies during the closing years of the twentieth century.

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It was a tedious job to finish reading this long book. The reader is exposed to a rehashing of old stories, though sometimes in greater detail than has usually been provided. Most of the time, the detail is irrelevant since the authors offer no real analysis.

The main thesis of the book is that Israel has served the US in its struggle against Soviet encroachment and did some of the “dirty” work the Americans were unable or unwilling to do in many areas of the world. Israel began endearing itself to the CIA in the 1950s by providing information acquired by the debriefing of Jewish immigrants coming to the promised land from the Eastern Bloc. The main achievement was the smuggling out of the famous speech of Khrushchev at the 20th Congress of the Communist party in 1956, in which he accused Stalin of many wrongdoings. Since the Cold War, Israel
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has engaged in covert operations for the US in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East. The authors document these actions.

This cooperation has happened indeed, and all of it is rather well-known to those that follow US-Israeli relations. The moral indignation at this aspect of the bilateral relations is an accompanying theme of the book, which indicates a rather naive grasp of what international politics really are. The desire to criticize the US and Israel overcomes the better judgement of the authors. For example, the challenge of Nasser to Western interests in the Middle East is belittled; and Jerusalem is blamed for the outbreak of the 1967 war. Similarly, Israel is portrayed as being the largest weapons supplier to Central America in the early 1980s, while the correct figures allot this achievement to the Soviet Union (through sales to Nicaragua).

Indeed, the book is flawed by many factual mistakes. Only a few will be enumerated here: Israel’s arms sales abroad do not constitute 40% of the country’s exports (p. 7), but 10%; the arms sold to Egypt in 1956 by the Soviets were not rectifying the military balance (p. 58), but constituted a qualitative and quantitative arsenal unmatched by Israel; the seminal meeting discussing nuclear strategy in the early 1960s (pp. 86-87) actually ended with a decision to continue relying on conventional power and Rabin and Sharon were not participants in the meeting; Allon never served as Chief of Staff (p. 142); Rabin did not oppose the decision to take the Golan in 1967 (p. 152), but actually lobbied for it; the Likud did not have a majority in the Knesset in 1984 (p. 339) or at any other time. Using sources such as the works of Shahak and Beth Hallahmi, quasi-scholars and propagandists of the radical left, further undermine the credibility of the authors.

This book is not recommended.

Efraim Inbar
Bar-Ilan University


This is not an easy book, but it is most worthwhile. It is especially recommended to Canadian readers given the current constitutional embroglio in this country.

Using case studies of Northern Ireland and Germany from Weimar to the present, Finn sets himself the task of examining the essence of constitutions and