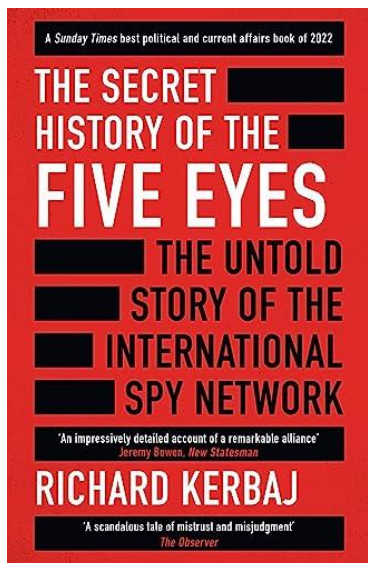




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The Secret History of the Five Eyes: The untold story of the shadowy international spy network, through its targets, traitors and spies

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Steeped in secrecy, the partnership transformed spy warfare by evolving beyond its signals-sharing heritage to form a parallel – and yet unwritten – pact between its human-intelligence and law-enforcement agencies, including the CIA, MI5, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). The partnerships among some of the human-intelligence (HUMINT) agencies pre-dated the signals-intelligence (SIGINT) agreements within the alliance, but it is when the two sides started working more closely together that some of the greatest operational achievements were realised. Together, the Five Eyes have weaponised hacking and agent-running in an intelligence arms race which has spanned the Cold War, rendition and torture of Guantanamo detainees, the battle against Isis, the attempt to disrupt Moscow and Beijing's meddling in Western democracies, and supporting Ukraine in its fights against the 2022 Russian invasion. At the heart of this alliance are complex and, at times, flawed personalities whose achievements and failures have helped guarantee the Five Eyes's evolution since its formation. And it is through such personalities that this book is defined; I wanted to explore the stories of the people, rather than the policies which are still largely classified.

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MI5 had its origins in the Secret Service Bureau (SSB), created in 1909 in response to Germany's threat to Britain's national security and economy. Germany's aspiration under its ruler Kaiser Wilhelm II had been to become a world power through economic and military domination, which threatened peace and stability on the continent. The English Channel separating the United Kingdom from mainland Europe was hardly a buffer against the threat and so it fell to the 'domestic arm' of the Security Service Bureau – later named MI5 – to investigate German espionage in the lead-up to and during World War I. Under its founding director, Major General Sir Vernon Kell, MI5 had a proven track record in hunting spies – and on the eve of Britain going to war in August 1914, its officers orchestrated the arrests of 22 suspected agents of the Nachrichten-Abteilung, Germany's naval intelligence department. Among them was Karl Gustav Ernst, known as the 'Kaiser's postman' for handling all correspondence between the head of Germany's intelligence service and its British-based agents. As part of his cover, Ernst had worked as a hairdresser at a barbershop in north London in the lead-up to his arrest.

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Among the dozens of messages that had been sent by German spies via Jessie were a series of letters from 'Crown', including one dated 17 January 1938, which seemed to outline a sinister, but overambitious, plot to steal US military secrets. The plot aimed to target the 'secret plans relating to the defence of the Atlantic coast of the USA' held at the office of Colonel Eglin, the commander of Fort Totten military facility in New York. 'Crown' proposed to set up an 'emergency staff meeting' at a hotel in Manhattan, inviting the Colonel to bring the defence plans, at which point 'Crown' would 'overpower' the Colonel and steal his defence plans 'by force'. Guy Liddell had been briefed on the plot by his MI5 investigators, and while he deemed it 'extremely crude', it was too important to dismiss. He carefully mulled over the impact it would have on MI5's ongoing investigation. A tipoff to American authorities through the US embassy in London could compromise MI5's case against Jessie without even ensuring the arrest of Crown, whose real identity was unknown to the agency. However, Liddell and his team made a decision almost a fortnight later that would step up and reform the basis of intelligence-sharing between British and US authorities, unknowingly contributing to the foundation of what would become the world's most powerful spy network – the Five Eyes.

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The failure in the Rumrich case became a symbol of the FBI's early inexperience in counter espionage, but heralded the growing influence of William J. Donovan, the former assistant attorney general who had appointed Turrou to the bureau in 1929. Like Hoover, Donovan was a shrewd political mind who recognised the importance of being in Roosevelt's inner circle. Once rivals from opposite political parties, Donovan ultimately gained Roosevelt's trust to create America's first intelligence organisation – one which closely reflected MI5's sister spy agency, MI6. The key person who helped Donovan set up the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) – predecessor to the famously known Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) – was neither American nor British. He was a wealthy Canadian with investments in various entrepreneurial ventures, including pressed steel, which ostensibly had nothing to do with the business of spying.

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A month later, Stephenson claimed to have obtained the balance sheets of steel factories in Ruhr, Rhineland, which revealed that the Nazi regime had spent around £800 million on what clearly appeared to be military preparations, including strategic roads. The London-based Canadian businessman passed the information onto Admiral Hall and Churchill in an intelligence exchange that drew Stephenson into the future prime minister's inner circle, and would ultimately transform him into a kingmaker of spies. Canada would have been unaware at the time that through one of its citizens, it had made a contribution to British intelligence almost two decades before the formation of the Five Eyes alliance. Britain's foreign intelligence service, MI6,

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The 'Quiet Canadian', as Stephenson had at times been known due to his listening skills, was neither a traditionally trained agent handler nor an intelligence analyst – and, aged 43, he would hardly have qualified as a fresh-faced recruit. But his lack of tradecraft skills was counterbalanced with personality, charm, and an unusual access to the White House corridors of power through a former American boxing world champion, Gene Tunney. The pair had formed a friendship around two decades earlier after watching each other box – and with a heavyweight title to his name, Tunney had been elevated to rarefied social circles where he often rubbed shoulders with the high and mighty, including FBI director J. Edgar Hoover.

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An additional problem for Menzies was that the US ambassador to Britain, Joseph P. Kennedy, was an 'appeaser' who could not be trusted for many reasons. The father of future president, John F. Kennedy, had helped convince Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain to trust Hitler and sign the Munich Agreement which, along with approving Germany's annexation of Sudetenland, a part of Czechoslovakia, exposed the UK's weakness. Ambassador Kennedy then publicly declared that the Fuhrer would defeat Britain, triggering a hostile response from the Foreign Office, reversing their previous policy of sharing confidential information with senior US Embassy officials

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Donovan had been Roosevelt's classmate at Columbia Law School at the early turn of the century. But the pair never interacted then, and became political rivals before being united by a common purpose. After a brief stint as assistant attorney general with the Justice Department in the late 1920s, Donovan made an unsuccessful run against Roosevelt for New York governor in 1932, before setting off on regular trips around Europe and Asia, ostensibly in pursuit of commercial opportunities. However, Donovan's travels were part of a secretive network of businessmen and lawyers, known as the 'Room', which traded intelligence about the developments on the European continent. He met with senior statesmen, including Benito Mussolini, presenting himself to the Italian prime minister as a Republican envoy keen to further his party's understanding of Italy's war with Ethiopia. However, Donovan's primary focus was to gather intelligence on the military capabilities of potential future enemies. By 1940, Donovan's sheer determination and ambition had elevated him to the country's elite foreign policy and business circles. It may have seemed a remarkable achievement for the son of a railroad superintendent from an Irish neighbourhood in Buffalo, New York, but Donovan's true path to greatness would begin in June of that year, when Roosevelt appointed Frank Knox, a newspaper publisher and senior member of the Republican Party, to Secretary of the Navy. Along with being a fellow Republican, Knox respected Donovan's judgement and grasp on global affairs and convinced President Roosevelt to draw on the lawyer's knowledge. Donovan's ascension to an informal presidential adviser that summer coincided with William Stephenson's arrival in New York to set up MI6's US bureau. The two had a lot in common, beyond growing up in tough neighbourhoods and relative poverty. They shared an appetite for risk-taking and had known each other for over two decades, having first met during the Great War in which both had become decorated flying aces. There was something mutually beneficial to the roles they now occupied: Stephenson would double his access to the White House, which had initially been limited to going through FBI director J. Edgar Hoover; and Donovan would develop a direct line to Winston Churchill and the British intelligence community through his Canadian friend.

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Donovan's pursuit of new measures to help his country defeat Nazi Germany without direct involvement in the war led him on yet another intelligence-gathering journey to Britain in December 1940, this time joined by MI6's established US representative, William Stephenson. The trip was paid for by MI6 in the interest of a much greater goal. The British agency ultimately wanted to help the US create an intelligence service in its image, over which it could have some influence. The intelligence cooperation between the two countries was rapidly developing, but Donovan was not the only official from the other side of the Atlantic who was close to the president and had his mind set on creating an intelligence agency. J. Edgar Hoover had his own ambitions to expand his counterespionage reach – and in the same month Donovan met with MI6 in Britain, Stephenson helped the FBI director separately dispatch two of his detectives to London to meet with British spymasters, including MI5's Guy Liddell. Liddell made sure the FBI special agents, Hugh Clegg and Clarence Hince, received a series of high-level briefings about 'tactics, techniques, wartime policing' relating to MI5's work and even organised for them to meet with MI6, Bletchley Park code breakers, and other authorities, including the fire brigade. The bilateral intelligence cooperation between Britain and the US was rapidly growing in depth and coverage and had developed a third, and more secret, dimension. The British government had opened up a new frontier to lobby for American support in the summer of 1940 through its ambassador in Washington, DC, Philip Henry Kerr, Marquess of Lothian. Kerr informed the US War Department of his country's proposal for an 'interchange of secret technical information', including gains that had been made by Britain during the previous nine months in penetrating the ultra-wave radio technology of its enemy. Kerr's aide-memoire of 8 July offered Britain's 'fullest cooperation, to be perfectly open with you and to give you full details of any equipment or devices in which you are interested'. However, the offer was intended to be more of a bargaining chip than a cry for help, stating what Britain 'might' include should the deal be agreed to. Among the inclusions that he teased in his correspondence were the 'method of detecting the approach of enemy aircraft at considerable distances, which has proved so successful; the use of short waves to enable our own aircraft to identify enemy aircraft, and the application of such short waves to anti-aircraft gunnery for firing at the aircraft which are concealed by clouds of darkness'.

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The Sinkov Mission in the winter of 1941 exposed an element of early distrust between Britain and America – a problem that had not been limited to the code-breaking community. Not long after William Stephenson became MI6's head of operations in the United States and Mexico, he lost the trust of J. Edgar Hoover after manipulating the flow of British intelligence to his bureau. The fallout threatened to derail cooperation between their two countries and steeled the FBI director's intelligence overreach: he was no longer happy just being close to MI5 and MI6. He wanted Bletchley's secrets. Arthur McCaslin Thurston was about 28 years old, with less than five years of experience at the FBI, when he joined the law-enforcement organisation's Special Intelligence Service, located at the Rockefeller Center in New York. Despite his relative inexperience, he had proven himself a few years earlier at the bureau's San Francisco office, during an investigation into a German diplomat suspected of trying to extort military secrets from soldiers. The case led to the diplomat's expulsion and brought Thurston to the attention of J. Edgar Hoover. On a personal, and perhaps more important level, Thurston was appointed as Hoover's driver during the director's visits to the FBI's office on the West Coast. The car journeys to meetings and social outings also included stopovers at the 'Nude Ranch', where a famous burlesque dancer and stripper, Sally Rand, performed. The time spent behind the wheel at Hoover's service elevated Thurston into the boss's circle of trust.

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Thurston would no doubt have been familiar with the BSC because its headquarters were located in the Rockefeller Plaza, the same building as his office, and it had been running political warfare operations against the Nazis since its creation the previous year. Among its activities, the BSC had been organising mass propaganda campaigns in the American mainstream media, including the Herald Tribune and New York Post, by feeding pro-British and anti-German stories to journalists. It had an estimated 1,000 agents and sub-agents working for it, including broadcasters, political activists and operatives who specialised in document forgery, poll manipulation to misrepresent public opinion, and the planting of false news into US media to undermine the Nazis. In some cases, the fake news was also intended to boost the morale of Allied troops through fictitious feature articles that lauded heroic military raids by members of their forces which had never taken place. Although its main mission of pushing the US into war by influencing public and political opinion had effectively been made redundant by Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, the BSC had become Stephenson's lifeblood for continued relevance in intelligence circles and corridors of power, including the White House. The operations of the British Security Coordination

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The BSC had also been withholding operational information from Hoover, and had even been spying on one of his most senior staff members, Percy Foxworth, director of his Special Intelligence Service. Hoover had become even more enraged by Stephenson's secondary role at the BSC: Britain's representative was effectively the conduit for all of his country's intelligence exchange with the US and the FBI director suspected him of withholding intelligence between his bureau and MI5. Hoover's suspicion was confirmed in the summer of 1942 following a meeting in Washington, DC, with MI5's head of counterespionage, Guy Liddell. The pair discovered that intelligence they had shared with each other's organisations through the BSC had not been respectively received. It was Liddell's second major visit to the US to meet with the FBI, following his trip four years earlier to help on matters relating to the Bureau's investigation into the Rumrich case.

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The FBI strongman was also not holding his breath because his nemesis, William Donovan, President Roosevelt's former adviser on intelligence, had received a major promotion three days earlier. Donovan had already served around one year as the US's Coordinator of Information (CoI), leading a team of about 100 civilian officers to collect and analyse intelligence relating to national security for the purposes of keeping Roosevelt fully briefed. On 13 June 1942, the CoI became the Office of Strategic Services – the country's first, primary secret intelligence service with a wide-ranging remit, including sabotage operations in Axis countries and the training and financing of opposition groups there. Donovan's expanded organisation had been set up in the image of MI6 and with the help of William Stephenson who transferred some of his BSC agents to work for it. Stephenson and Donovan had become so close that they had even become known as 'Little Bill' and 'Big Bill', respectively, because of the disparity in their physical sizes. Their friendship was a threat to Hoover who perceived Donovan as a rival and suspected Stephenson of being disloyal to him. It was clear to Liddell that 'Hoover hates Donovan's guts'. But even more so, Donovan's new high-profile role as OSS director appeared to undermine Hoover's goal of becoming an espionage czar alongside his existing role as the nation's crime-fighter-in-chief – but he refused to be steamrolled out of the intelligence game by Donovan and Stephenson.

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The intelligence helped the FBI's Secret Intelligence Service at Rockefeller Plaza to 'control the movements of its double agents and ensure they were successful in penetrating German intelligence' and ultimately became the bureau's 'most significant sources of intelligence in World War II'. Along with successfully seeing out his boss's demands, Thurston had created the FBI's first bureau in Britain which would play a defining role in strengthening ties between the US law-enforcement organisation and British intelligence agencies until this day. The young Colorado native, who had given up on a scholarship to Harvard Business School in 1938 to join the FBI, had perhaps proven to himself that he had made the right choice. As for Hoover, his organisation's access to Ultra had confirmed that the FBI also belonged in the intelligence game.

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Having survived the hazardous journey navigating U-boats across the Atlantic aboard the Queen Elizabeth ocean liner, Alan Turing arrived in New York in November 1942 to be confronted with a bureaucratic nightmare. The British mathematician was questioned by 'snooty' US Immigration Authorities at Ellis Island for 'carrying no orders and no evidence' to connect him with the British Foreign Office, his 'official's passport insufficient in itself' to allay concerns about his identity. The port authorities did not know that the fresh-faced 30-year-old was a signals intelligence officer; a celebrity among fellow cryptographers at Bletchley Park, whom he had led in the cracking of Hitler's Naval Enigma, leading to the Allied victory in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Turing's showdown with the port authorities, conveyed in a report he wrote from Washington, DC, to his bosses in London a fortnight later, was just one of several irritations he endured during his trip to America, where he had travelled to lend his expertise and assess the US development of the first two Bombe machines – called 'Adam' and 'Eve' – based on his designs. Unlike the rather seamless cooperation between their political leaders – Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt who had signed the Atlantic Charter several months earlier to outline their shared vision for World War II and beyond – the US and British intelligence communities were still struggling to completely trust each other. In fact, some American officials were strongly of the opinion that British code breakers had been aware of Japan's intention to attack Pearl Harbor, and that Churchill had suppressed the intelligence to force President Roosevelt into the war – a theory which had never been proven. That bit of US suspicion was a hang-up from World War I, which the US had entered in 1917 after Bletchley Park's predecessor, Room 40, decoded the Zimmerman telegram – a diplomatic cable in which Germany sought a military alliance with Mexico in exchange for US territory. Turing's visit was supposed to improve intelligence cooperation and allay tensions between his agency and its US counterpart – but it had its challenges. US officials initially refused him access to Bell Laboratories in New York, which specialised in the research and development of telecommunications products. Named in honour of Alexander Graham Bell, the British engineer who invented the telephone, Bell Laboratories had been developing a top-secret speech and call scrambling device. The device – known by its cover name 'SIGSALY', written to resemble an acronym even though it was not – had been used to safeguard Allied communications, including calls between Churchill and Roosevelt, from the Axis. When Turing was denied access to the voice-coding technology, Field Marshal Sir John Greer Dill, chief of the British Joint Staff Mission in Washington, DC, intervened on his behalf with a barely concealed threat. Dill sent a letter to General Marshall, on 7 January 1943, warning about the potential consequences of diminished intelligence-sharing. 'This is [...] contrary to the spirit of existing agreements,' said Dill. 'It would seriously disturb our people at home and would of course also involve the US Navy who are very much dependent on free exchange with our people. Dr Turing was sent out from England for this one task as our expert representative, and if he is to return empty handed, it could not fail to have an unfortunate effect. I am sure you will agree with me that it is of the utmost importance in this vital matter not to allow any feelings of mistrust to arise.' Turing's visit to Bell Laboratory was approved two days later. Yet the US Army had reserved its right to 'refuse to permit the "exploitation" of these secret devices by the British', reinforcing the distrust that continued to unfold between them.

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The cooperation between US and British agencies continued to expand, even outside of BRUSA's signals intelligence, after President Roosevelt authorised the formation of a new spy agency, the OSS – Office of Strategic Services – which by the summer of 1943 had around 5,000 people working for it. The organisation and its director, William Donovan, were much better liked by the British intelligence community than by the US Army and Navy. It was no surprise to William Donovan that the top brass at the US Army and Navy resented his disregard for military protocol and his organisation's cloak-and-dagger take on warfare. But as far as he was concerned, the relationship between the OSS and the armed forces was mutually beneficial, despite its tensions. His agency provided them with useful intelligence from its officers who were busily recruiting and training thousands of spies around Europe and Asia in the art of stealing secrets, gun-running, blowing up enemy bases and killing Nazis. He had a global vision for intelligence – far beyond the conventional methods of the US military. He wanted his officers to engage in heroic adventures, to push the boundaries of psychological warfare – and he could think of nowhere better to look for inspiration than Britain. Having created the OSS with the help of William Stephenson in the summer of 1942, Donovan turned to his friend again to train some of his officers. Through his directorship of the British Security Coordination in New York, Stephenson had oversight of a training facility in Ontario, Canada, which had been initially set up by the UK and Canada in 1942 to train members of the Canadian forces. It was there at Camp X, located along the north shore of Lake Ontario, that trainees learnt about explosives, small arms, parachute jumping, withstanding interrogation, faking documents and infiltrating enemy lines while being shot at. Donovan sent around a dozen officers there to become acquainted with subversion, sabotage, and guerrilla operations – before they themselves went on to train many others.

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On the following morning, 18 August, Kolbe provided Kocherthaler with three German Foreign Office documents, including one revealing the Nazi plans to penetrate American and British operations in North Africa. As he had been rebuffed by the British, Kocherthaler showed the documents to US Embassy officials in Bern. Among them was Allen W. Dulles, head of the OSS's field station in Switzerland, who had been pre-warned by MI6 not to trust German officials claiming to be anti-Nazis. However, Dulles had also been under pressure from his boss, Donovan, to produce better quality intelligence – and Kocherthaler's approach was too good to pass up. Several hours later, Dulles met with Kocherthaler's 'source': Kolbe. During the meeting, Kolbe told him he would not accept money, saying he was motivated to spy for patriotic reasons because he believed that defeating the Nazis was an imperative for the sake of peace in his country and the rest of the world.

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Elizabeth Terrill Bentley had been a Soviet spy for seven years when she divulged her secrets to the FBI. Her affiliation with the Communist Party had been known to the US law-enforcement agency, as had her connection to a former NKVD agent, Jacob Golos, who had run a travel firm and a shipping company in New York which doubled as fronts for Soviet espionage. An FBI investigation into Bentley in 1941 failed to uncover any evidence against the former school teacher from Connecticut who had been recruited by Golos three years earlier. It later emerged that Golos had been her handler and lover. One of her missions was to travel between New York and Washington, DC, as a 'courier' to collect a variety of confidential material from agents, including documents and microfilms containing secrets about US troop deployments, technology relating to Air Force fighter planes, and assessments on the state of economies in Asia and Latin America. Bentley's spying activities were in line with Moscow's aims for its US-based agents. During the war, Stalin wanted to be informed about American intelligence relating to Hitler's plans against Russia; secret military plans between Washington and London; the potential for Western allies to broker a peace deal with Germany; and American scientific technology, especially in the field of nuclear development. Bentley helped fulfil such Soviet aims for Golos – for whom she worked until his death from a heart attack in 1943. By helping him recruit spies from within the US Communist Party ranks, she had also familiarised herself with the structure of Soviet espionage in America and knew the identities of its agents, including those who were government officials and it was that information that she wanted to trade with the FBI in the autumn of 1945 in return for protection and immunity from prosecution. At 37, Bentley had survived more than a decade of alcohol abuse and depression. She was less confident, however, about surviving the NKVD, who had questioned her loyalty to Russia, stripped her of her network of agents, and found her irrepressible personality difficult to handle following Golos's death. During an interview with FBI officers in New York on 7 November 1945, Bentley defected from the Communist Party – and over several weeks, provided the authorities with the names of dozens of spies, including Lauchlin Currie, a White House economic adviser, and Duncan Lee, a senior intelligence official at the OSS who had leaked her information about some of the agency's top-secret missions in Europe and its internal spy hunt to identify Communist sympathisers. Bentley's information dovetailed with that provided by Whittaker Chambers and Igor Gouzenko regarding the magnitude of Soviet espionage in the US. Her information, which would not be made public for three years, had been shared by the FBI with MI5 because it implicated Britons, including Cedric Belfrage, a film critic and author who had been hired by the British Security Coordination in New York to work in its propaganda division. Bentley claimed he was providing the Soviets with one of Scotland Yard's instruction manuals for British agents.

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The new agreement was signed between the London Signals Intelligence Board and the State-Army-Navy Communication Intelligence Board on behalf of their respective nations' signals authorities. UKUSA was an expansion of BRUSA, the wartime framework for intelligence-sharing, and had been under negotiation since the summer of the previous year, shortly before the Japanese surrender. The Truman Administration and Attlee government approved the idea of post-war intelligence-sharing to combat a range of threats, including Soviet espionage, the emergence of a nuclear arms race, and potential surprise attacks by future enemies.

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Despite being called an agreement, UKUSA was merely a deniable and non-binding memorandum. It was not defined by the nine pages it was written on, but by the feats and failures of code breakers and other intelligence officials on both sides of the Atlantic throughout World War II. While the UKUSA, like its predecessor, was centred on signals intelligence (SIGINT), it ultimately became a beneficiary of, and benefit to, human-intelligence (HUMINT) and law-enforcement agencies, including MI5, MI6, the FBI, and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), which was created in 1947 as a successor to the OSS. The agreement reinforced the Special Relationship between the intelligence communities in Britain and the United States at a time when members of the public in their countries, and in Canada, had turned against the Soviet Union. The solidarity they felt with their wartime ally had started to rapidly give way to a fear of Communism destabilising Western democracies, a fear compounded by the international headlines that followed the conviction of Dr Alan Nunn May, in May 1946. The physicist was sentenced to ten years of hard labour for providing the Soviet Union with nuclear secrets. At the time, the FBI was still investigating

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Compounding Australia's position was that neither its Labor government – suspected of being soft on Communism – nor its amateurish security service had been told of Venona's existence. In contrast, Britain had been brought into the loop by Arlington Hall in 1945, a year before Bletchley Park's Government Code and Cypher School changed its name to the Government Communications Headquarters – GCHQ. In 1947, Gardner briefed his British code breakers on Venona decrypts which revealed that Australia's security had indeed been compromised. GCHQ passed the information onto MI5, where Guy Liddell had been promoted to deputy director-general. Liddell was determined to reform Australia's intelligence organisation, the Commonwealth Investigation Service (CIS), into which the Commonwealth Investigation Bureau (CIB) and the Commonwealth Security Service (CSS) had been merged in February 1947. 'Some

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An experienced counterespionage officer from MI5, Robert Hemblys-Scales, had been approved by the Australian prime minister to assist the CIS, as the Australian agency had been regarded as too incompetent to run its own investigations. MI5 also dispatched two reinforcement officers in January 1949, including Roger Hollis, to provide advice on the creation of a new organisation and to showcase a series of Venona material, including copies of decrypted telegrams relating to Australia. Chifley's plans to strip the CIS of counterintelligence responsibilities in favour of creating a new body had gathered pace. He wanted to allay Washington and London's concerns, despite his initial reluctance to cave in to such external demands. On 2 March 1949, he announced the formation of a new agency which would go on to become the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation – ASIO. His government also informed the FBI, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and New Zealand's police commissioner of ASIO's creation to kick-start its cooperation with the partner organisations. At its inception, ASIO had 15 officers on its staff, along with an MI5 liaison officer who had been provided to help the agency get on its feet. Its mission, which would expand over time, was to 'undertake intelligence activities for the protection of the Commonwealth against espionage, sabotage and subversion'. Australia's efforts to bolster its security in early 1949 coincided with the formation of a military treaty in the West to stymie Soviet expansionism. One year after Britain signed the 1948 Brussels Pact, a defence alliance that included European nations such as France and Belgium, Clement Attlee understood that Stalin's threat could only be robustly confronted by a union between Western Europe and the United States. In April 1949, 12 nations including Britain, the US, and Canada signed a transatlantic defence pact – the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO ensured collective defence for its member nations: an attack against any of them would be 'considered an attack against all' and could result in a military response. Beyond NATO, Canada had been eager to shed its status as a secondary partner to the UKUSA Agreement following its enormous intelligence contribution through the Gouzenko Affair in 1945 and the creation of its signals agency, the Communication Security Establishment, a year later. It no longer wanted to be treated as a mere British dominion. Ottawa wanted to exchange intelligence with Washington without the 'requirement for UK approval before sharing signals intelligence bilaterally'. On 29 June 1949, an agreement was signed between the Communications Research Committee of Canada, representing all Canadian Communication Intelligence authorities, and its American counterpart, the United States Communication Intelligence Board. Having lobbied the US for three years, Canada was finally granted an 'equal partnership' in the UKUSA Agreement through its new bilateral deal with Washington. Two months to the day after Canada was ushered into the UKUSA Agreement, the Soviets successfully conducted a nuclear test, illustrating a monumental step-change by the Stalin regime. NATO moved to create a military command structure in response to the heightened threat which had ended the US's nuclear monopoly, forcing the Truman Administration and its allies to re-evaluate their foreign policies towards the Soviet bloc. But it also intrigued US intelligence officials who suspected that the bomb had been created with the help of Western spies. Alan Nunn May, the British physicist exposed by Russian defector Igor Gouzenko for leaking nuclear secrets to the Soviets, was still in prison after being convicted three years earlier. But another British physicist had emerged as a suspect during an investigation into the Venona decrypts by FBI Special Agent Robert Lamphere.

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Within two days, he identified a suspect – Klaus Emil Julius Fuchs, a British scientist of German origin who had authored the scientific paper leaked to the KGB. Through his investigation, Lamphere learnt that Fuchs had embraced Communism while studying physics and mathematics at the University of Leipzig. His fears of being targeted for his ideological views after Hitler came to power had been reinforced when the Reichstag building, home to the German parliament in Berlin, was set ablaze in late February 1933. The attack, later revealed to be a Nazi plot, had been blamed on Communists. Fuchs had no future under the Third Reich as a Communist, and at 21, he had become so enamoured with Marxist views that he was far too idealistic to renounce them for the sake of appeasing the Nazis. He ultimately fled the country for England via France in the summer of that year. Four years later, he graduated with a PhD in physics from the University of Bristol before going on to earn another doctorate in science from the University of Edinburgh.

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But Kim Philby, who had been posted to the US the previous year to become MI6's bureau chief, supported MI5's view on allowing the FBI access to Fuchs and feared that if it could not be agreed, the bureau's director J. Edgar Hoover 'was quite capable of reducing our liaison to a pure formality, regardless of the loss that it might be to his own organisation'. Perhaps Philby, who had secretly been liaising with the Kremlin, wanted to leverage Fuchs to preserve his links to the FBI, including Lamphere. After all, Philby had successfully sought information about the Venona secrets and other FBI investigations from Lamphere who remained completely unaware of his Russian connections. Following an intervention by Prime Minister

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ASIO shared 52 reports with Western agencies, according to its official history, varying from the Kremlin's espionage operations in Sweden, to Soviet activities in the US and Britain. It also passed information to NATO and helped with intelligence inquiries from allies, including the provision of analysis by Petrov and his wife of 5,079 photographs and names of alleged Soviet operatives around the world – of whom they exposed more than 500. The FBI, which had largely been dismissive of ASIO in the past, changed its tone in recognition of its success. J. Edgar Hoover praised Spry in a personal message and posted one of his representatives to Australia in August 1954 to speed up intelligence-sharing between his bureau and ASIO. 'The FBI had previously expressed scepticism about ASIO's ability,' noted MI5's liaison officer in Australia, Derek Hamblen, in a letter to his head office in London. 'There has certainly been a marked change in the FBI attitude to ASIO since the Petrov affair – even the correspondence now marked by personal and friendly tone [...] Mr Hoover was personally concerned in all matters of liaison!' With an eye to bringing ASIO closer to the US, Spry had offered to provide the bureau with 'direct access to the Petrovs' and continued building on his relationship with Washington following a trip in 1955 on which he met with the CIA's director, Allen Dulles. The personal bond between Spry and Dulles shaped their intelligence-sharing in years to come. Spry may well be accused of being a stooge of the Menzies government, but his political wiliness in exploiting Petrov's disclosures for ASIO's interest put Australia's intelligence community on par with the US and Britain. Petrov's seniority made his defection of greater value than that of Igor Gouzenko, the GRU cipher clerk, who had sought political asylum in Canada in 1945. And much like Ottawa had leveraged its intelligence fortunes to work its way into the UKUSA Agreement in 1949, Australia was on the road to receiving the same treatment. Petrov's defection was a shift in Australia's intelligence history that still resonates to this day, according to ASIO's current director-general, Mike Burgess. 'In our business, especially in the countries that trust each other or are developing trust for each other, there is nothing like an operational gain to actually bring you closer together,' he said. 'Because you can see the potential knowledge, advantage, the capability-win in terms of the information you find when you do damage to someone like the Soviets at the time. The Petrov case was significant in terms of being a very early win in ASIO's history; it was significant in terms of the information advantage it gave the Allies; and it was significant in the way it helped bring us closer together as international partners. So it played a critical part in the wider Five Eyes story.'

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The intelligence among the alliance's members was stamped 'AUS/ CAN/NZ/UK/US EYES ONLY' and specifically related to signals intelligence. No equivalent agreement had been created for the human-intelligence and law-enforcement agencies within the five member countries even though cooperation between some of them, namely MI5 and the FBI, had pre-dated the foundational signals arrangement between London and Washington during World War II. But the story of the Five Eyes is less about the non-binding, memorandum of understanding between its nations and more about the personalities that helped shape and nurture it. And some of those personalities were from the human-intelligence communities. Guy Liddell of MI5, William Stephenson of MI6, William Donovan of the Office of Strategic Services, Robert Lamphere of the FBI, and Ron Richards of ASIO, could not have imagined how their historical contributions would ultimately underscore the future cooperation between their agencies and evolve the Five Eyes into something much greater than the sum of its signals-intelligence parts. In the same month that the Five Eyes had been officially formed in 1956, the alliance underwent its first stress test when Britain joined France and Israel in launching Operation Musketeer – a secret invasion to capture the Suez Canal that had been historically pivotal for British and French trade. The invasion outraged US president Dwight D. Eisenhower, whose administration had been concurrently dealing with an anti-Soviet revolution in Hungary where a single CIA officer, Geza Katona, had been left in charge.

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In early 1956, Dulles had been overseeing a CIA and MI6 plot to overthrow the government of Syria through a series of conspiracies, including the proposed creation of paramilitary factions in the country and the staging of civil unrest in neighbouring states, including Lebanon and Iraq, with the intention of blaming Damascus. Syria had fallen foul of the US and Britain after refusing to sign up to the Baghdad Pact, a military alliance that included Turkey, Iran, Pakistan and the UK, which had been set up a year earlier with the support of Washington to help degrade Moscow's influence in the Middle East. However, the Soviet Union quickly countered its creation by buying up the loyalties of Egypt and Syria, two of the pact's opponents with whom it had close strategic relations, through multi-million-dollar arms deals. The resulting tensions between the two Middle Eastern regimes and Washington also placed the CIA's sister organisation, the National Security Agency (NSA), on alert. In coordination with its military signals division, the Army Security Agency (ASA), and Langley, the NSA started expanding its visibility of the region where it had been heavily reliant on coverage from Britain's signals intelligence organisation, GCHQ. In the spring of 1956, the NSA tasked more than 40 signals specialists, along with Arabic linguists, to monitor the growing Soviet influence in Egypt and Syria. Moscow's reach into the two countries was a security threat that Dulles had been determined to subvert through unconventional warfare, including the plot to overthrow Syria's regime which he had been finessing in the autumn of that year. During the same period, his agency's newly deployed Lockheed U-2 spy planes, which had revolutionised high-altitude reconnaissance through their ability to obtain imagery from around 70,000 feet above ground, identified French fighter jets in Israel. The 60 Mystere jets were more than twice the number of French fighter bombers that Paris had said it agreed to sell to the country.

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The timing of the Hungarian Revolution in late October favoured Eden's plot as the White House and the CIA became absorbed by the threat of a Soviet invasion in Budapest. Operation Musketeer was launched on 29 October with an attack by Israel on Egypt that paved the way for an intervention by Britain and France who issued an ultimatum for a ceasefire the following day, in line with their tripartite plot. The conspirators had anticipated Nasser's refusal of the demand, but any hope for the US support that Eden and his plotters had anticipated or hoped for was dashed. Eisenhower was outraged. He condemned the attack on Egypt and expressed deep concerns about the wider impact it could have on further destabilising the region and playing into the hands of the Soviet Union. He also told Britain and France that the US could not be relied on for military aid. President Eisenhower's concern was largely ignored by Eden who seemed hellbent on reversing Britain's declining role on the global stage. On 31 October, the same day the US called for a UN Security Council resolution that London and Paris voted against, Britain launched an aerial attack against Egypt ahead of deploying British and French troops. Eisenhower and Dulles were seething for different reasons over the Suez Crisis: the president claimed he had been caught unawares by the military attack against Egypt while his CIA director insisted that the agency had repeatedly provided warnings in the lead-up to the invasion that had been largely overlooked by the White House.

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The Suez Crisis led to Eden's resignation, but far worse, it diminished Western influence in the Middle East, furthered Moscow's credibility and reach among Arab leaders, and turned the region into a stage for ongoing proxy wars between the Kremlin and Washington. It also damaged intelligence operations, costing GCHQ its signals base in Ceylon, modern day Sri Lanka, which had proclaimed its independence from Great Britain eight years earlier. The Ceylonese government forced GCHQ out of its base in Perkar, on the country's northwest coast, after it discovered that Britain had used Ceylonese ports to refuel its ships on the way to invade Egypt. It was the Five Eyes's most crucial SIGINT site in the Indian Ocean. The Suez Crisis also increased hatred for British imperialism in Iraq – and against its ruler, King Faisal II, who was a friend of the United Kingdom. In 1958, the king was murdered during a coup by his army, which then seized control of a British military site in Habbaniya, near Baghdad – a secret signals intelligence base for GCHQ. The British signals analysts who had been effectively kicked out of their bases in Ceylon and Iraq had to retrench and limit themselves to GCHQ's other sites, including those in Cyprus, Malta, Gibraltar and Ascension Island.

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Britain's imperial ambition to impose its rule on foreign countries through clandestine operations could hardly be criticised by US intelligence agencies, and particularly the CIA. Allen Dulles's joint operation with MI6 to overthrow the government of Syria, which had been delayed because of Suez until 1957, backfired after the regime's intelligence service uncovered the plot. The regime's henchmen arrested and effectively beat a confession out of the CIA's man in Damascus, Rocky Stone, regarding his agency's proposed mission. The regime then exposed the CIA's plot in the press, expelled Stone from the country, and sentenced his Syrian co-conspirators to death. The CIA's botched operation magnified the already growing anti-Western sentiment in the Middle East, but it failed to stop Dulles's determination to pursue regime change in other parts of the world, until four years later when the CIA tried to overthrow Fidel Castro in Cuba by secretly arming and financing Cuban exiles with the promise of US aerial support. Similar to the CIA's record during the Hungarian Revolution, its promised support for the Cuban exiles never came. A false-flag operation on 15 April 1961, in which American fighter jets were painted to look like Cuban air-force planes, failed in their mission to destroy Cuban airfields. News of the attack, along with photographs of the repainted planes, exposed America's support for the invasion and led President John F. Kennedy to call off a subsequent air strike. Within 24 hours of the attempted Bay of Pigs invasion on 17 April, around 1,200 deserted Cuban exiles were captured and more than 100 were killed by Castro's armed forces. The botched CIA operation forced Dulles's resignation. Through all the ups and downs, political shenanigans and willful deceit at the hand of British political and intelligence officials and their counterparts in the US, the burgeoning Five Eyes alliance remained intact. GCHQ's official history reveals that Suez undermined trust between the UK's signals community and its opposite number in the US, despite the assurances it had given to the NSA that it did not share any intelligence with France during the invasion. However, an NSA history views the episode through a more sober lens, saying the crisis had been regarded as a 'high-level tiff that did not affect day-to-day relationships' between its agency and GCHQ.

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The tensions between Britain and the US over Suez were short-lived and overshadowed by the ongoing Soviet threat against the Five Eyes, until the early 1970s when Britain and Australia separately questioned the value of their alliances with the United States. Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam clashed with the White House, wanting to sever Australia's intelligence ties with the US and accusing the CIA of interfering in his country's political system. In Britain, newly elected Prime Minister Ted Heath wanted to establish closer ties with Europe and to be less deferential to his counterpart in the Oval Office. Heath put the Special Relationship in jeopardy when he withheld details of an MI5 operation to expel Kremlin spies from Britain with the help of a Soviet defector.

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Whitlam came to power. Of equal importance, at least in the minds of the CIA's top brass at Langley, was that Canberra's inclusion in the Five Eyes had reinforced a separate military treaty with the US and New Zealand, known as ANZUS, which had been signed in 1951 to protect the security of the Pacific. To the CIA, the ANZUS pact was an additional insurance policy to safeguard and cushion Washington's dealings with the new Whitlam government. Langley had become aware of Whitlam's intention to reassess security agreements his predecessors had signed with Washington, which permitted the US to build 'military and scientific installations' in Australia. But the agency hoped, and perhaps even expected, that Whitlam would rise above his left-leaning politics when scrutinising the ostensibly mutually beneficial joint-ventures. Among them was a SIGINT base in Western Australia, known as North West Cape, that had been created in 1963 for the US Navy to communicate with its nuclear-armed submarines in the Indian Ocean. Other agreements between Canberra and Washington included US satellite intelligence facilities: Pine Gap, in Australia's Northern Territory, which had been set up in 1966, and Nurrungar, in the South Australian desert, created three years later by the US Air Force (USAF) to detect Soviet missile launches. Pine Gap, the most secretive surveillance base in Australia, was part of ECHELON – the codename for a surveillance programme that had been formed by the US and Britain under the banner of the Five Eyes in the 1960s initially to eavesdrop on diplomatic and military signals traffic. The programme's reach through strategically positioned spy bases in Five Eyes countries was eventually expanded to spy on the telephone, fax, and online communications between both public and private organisations, as well as ordinary citizens worldwide. Of all the bases feeding into ECHELON, Pine Gap was arguably the most important to the CIA. Previously known as the Joint Defence Space Research Facility, but since 1988 officially called Joint Defence Facility Pine Gap (JDFPG), its stated mission was rather generic: to support the national security of both countries. But the unstated and real purpose of Pine Gap, as it became commonly known, was to serve as a ground station for the control of US spy satellites and to intercept a range of targets, including commercial communications, and tests of Soviet intercontinental ballistic missiles designed to carry nuclear weapons. Covering four square miles of desert outside

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Kissinger's paranoia may have been somewhat warranted because unbeknown to him, Britain's Joint Intelligence Committee had at the time been deliberately withholding from the US most of the information it had obtained from Paris. American officials were beginning to question whether Britain was actively colluding with France to undermine US foreign policy, especially after January 1973, when it joined the European Economic Community, which was later incorporated into the European Union.

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Unknown to the outside, the US intelligence agency had been secretly arming, training, and financing Afghan rebels, the Mujahideen, for around six months before the Soviet invasion. Brzezinski had correctly predicted that the CIA's clandestine programme, codenamed Operation Cyclone, would not only support the insurgency but ultimately bait Moscow into a battle in Afghanistan. Brzezinski had been in the role for almost three years at the time of the invasion, but he had proved to be a seasoned opportunist. He spotted the 'compensating factors' Afghanistan had and questioned whether it could ultimately become a 'Soviet Vietnam' by embroiling the Red Army in an unwinnable war against the Mujahideen. His assessment was made in a memorandum to US President Jimmy Carter, urging him to provide greater support to Afghan rebels, who for almost two years had been ramping up their fight to overthrow successive Soviet-backed regimes in Kabul. 'This means more money as well as arms shipments to the rebels, and some technical advice,' according to the declassified missive written by Brzezinski, dated 26 December 1979. He told the president that the US 'might be in a position to exploit' the outrage felt by Muslims towards the Soviet invasion and should 'connect with the Islamic countries in both a propaganda campaign and in a covert action campaign to help the rebels'. Brzezinski's hatred of the Soviet Union and his ambition to aid in its destruction, had its origins in the Red Army's 1939 invasion of Poland, his country of origin, at the beginning of World War II. As the son of a Polish diplomat, Brzezinski had grown up with an acute interest in geopolitics and became devoted to studying the Soviet Union. After gaining a doctorate in political science from Harvard University in the early 1950s, he had become a US citizen and actively thrown himself into furthering the foreign policies of his adopted nation. Over the following two decades, he lectured and wrote about the threat of Soviet expansionism and advised two White House Democratic administrations in one capacity or another before being appointed National Security Advisor by President Carter in 1977. Two years into his high-profile role – in which he held a similar sway over US intelligence agencies and global affairs as Henry Kissinger had done in the two previous White House administrations – Brzezinski became increasingly suspicious of the Soviet Union's scaled up military aid and influence drive in the late 1970s extending from South America, through Africa and the Middle East.

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In January of 1979, Islamic revolutionaries in Iran overthrew the regime of Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, who had been installed by a joint CIA and MI6 sponsored coup 26 years earlier. The Shah's removal eventually placed religious fundamentalists in power and robbed the US of a strategic ally in the Middle East, where it had operated monitoring sites to spy on Soviet missile activities. Two months later, a Kremlin-backed coup overthrew the government of Grenada, in the Caribbean – and in Nicaragua, central America, socialist rebels, the Sandinistas, deposed the regime of President Anastacio Somoza, which had been closely allied with Washington. The Kremlin's growing dominance in the Third World was reinforced by its provision of military weapons to client states, including Cuba and Libya, which heightened the White House's concerns and led to the collapse of a proposed arms limitation treaty between Washington and Moscow following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In his memorandum to President Carter, Brzezinski said the 'Soviets are likely to act decisively' in Afghanistan – and he was right. On 27 December, less than 72 hours into the invasion, Soviet forces killed the Afghan president Hafizullah Amin, a pro-Moscow leader who had only been in power for three months. The Kremlin had feared that Amin's background, including the time he had spent in New York studying at Columbia University in the late 1950s, meant that he could ultimately turn his back on Moscow to align himself with the West. Based on this assessment, and the KGB's suspicion that he had been a CIA agent, the Soviet leader, Leonid Brezhnev, approved his assassination. A day before Amin and some of his supporters were lined up and shot, Brzezinski had urged Carter to be firmer with Moscow, instead of issuing 'expressions of concern' over its actions in Afghanistan which would largely be disregarded by its leadership. He said America's unwillingness to meaningfully stand up to the Kremlin could backfire domestically: 'Soviet "decisiveness" will be contrasted with our restraint, which will no longer be labelled as prudent but increasingly as timid.' Brzezinski's warning arguably became a turning point in Carter's approach to Moscow. But instead of taking unilateral action, the president turned to his closest ally in the Five Eyes – Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Margaret Thatcher. During

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The Western press had become a major front in undermining the Soviet armed forces in Afghanistan, particularly for MI6 and the CIA. Intelligence officials on both sides of the Atlantic wanted to draw public support for the Mujahideen and briefed their respective press contacts accordingly. The chief of MI6, Dickie Franks, even hosted a dinner party for media editors to extol the bravery of the battle-hardened Afghan men who were resisting Soviet troops. Franks told the editors that the unconventional fighters were not rebels as Moscow had pejoratively described them, but rather 'freedom fighters' and that the Kremlin was flouting international laws. The melodic phrase, 'freedom fighters', had already

gained some traction and eventually became the defining attribute of the Islamic insurgency in the eyes of both the Western world and Muslim nations. It had lived up to Brzezinski's appeal to President Carter to reinforce the covert operations with a 'propaganda campaign'. The Mujahideen became a vehicle for Washington and London in their attempt to defeat the Soviet Union by proxy, and the glowing media campaigns favoured the Islamic insurgents and masked their nasty side, which included their appetite for violence, subjugation of women and disregard for human rights. The manipulation of the media also related to the stated date of the CIA's intervention in Afghanistan which had given the impression that it came after, and not before, the Soviet invasion. 'According to the official version of history, CIA aid to the Mujahideen began during 1980; that is to say, after the Soviet army invaded Afghanistan on 24 December 1979,' Brzezinski recalled years later. 'But the reality [...] is completely otherwise'. While the US did not push the Russians into intervening, 'we knowingly increased the probability that they would. That secret operation was an excellent idea,' Brzezinski said. 'The effect was to draw the Russians into the Afghan trap.' Brzezinski's influence over the US intelligence agencies during the Soviet-Afghan War had been somewhat curtailed by President Carter's single-term presidency. But the national security adviser's robust use of covert operations against Moscow was far from disregarded on Ronald Reagan's entry into the Oval Office in 1981. The new president scaled up Washington's offensive against Moscow to defy Soviet-backed aggression through the provision of more financial and armed support to the Mujahideen in Afghanistan and resistance movements in pro-Communist regimes across the globe, including Libya in North Africa, and Nicaragua in Latin America. President Reagan's aspirations of deposing Nicaragua's leadership were shared by the head of Argentina's ruling military government, President Leopoldo Galtieri. The Argentinian leader had been embraced by the White House for providing financing and training to the Contras, the right-wing opposition rebels who had been fighting the Sandinistas in Nicaragua since the socialist militants seized control of the nation in 1979. Galtieri soon realised that his closeness to Washington did not transcend the Special Relationship with the United Kingdom when he ordered the invasion of the Falkland Islands, in the South Atlantic, on 2 April 1982.

The US intelligence reports aided Britain in the Falklands after Margaret Thatcher had rebuffed Washington's suggestion of resorting to a diplomatic settlement with Argentina. The British prime minister had rejected a peace plan proposed by the Reagan Administration by which a third country, such as the US or Canada, would handle the negotiations with Buenos Aires and ensure the withdrawal of Argentine forces.

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The CIA's concerns about Moscow's ambition to draw Wellington closer coincided with the Kremlin's unrelenting effort to infiltrate Western government agencies, including in Britain, where an MI5 officer, Michael Bettaney, had been sentenced to 23-years' imprisonment in 1984 after trying to offer his services to the KGB. Bettaney's potential damage to British intelligence was curtailed by a tipoff from the deputy station head of the KGB in London, Oleg Gordievsky, who had been working as a spy for MI6. Gordievsky's motivation to become a double agent followed the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops in August 1968 – an event which like the Hungarian Revolution 12 years earlier helped Moscow reinforce its grip on the Eastern Bloc, displaced hundreds of thousands of people, and resulted in no active support from the West. Gordievsky had already been disillusioned with the Soviet regime's aggression by that point. But the Kremlin's crushing of anti-Moscow resistance by Czech protestors during the 'Prague Spring' ultimately led him to begin spying for MI6 in the early 1970s. Before defecting to Britain in 1985, Gordievsky had provided his British handlers with intelligence that the Kremlin had misinterpreted Operation Able Archer, a military exercise between the US and its NATO allies in 1983, as preparation for a pre-emptive nuclear strike against Moscow. His intelligence was shared with the White House and CIA to help illustrate the paranoia of the Kremlin's leadership. And it was against the backdrop of that atmosphere of extreme distrust between the East and West that Langley wanted to expand its covert operations in Afghanistan where the Red Army was still locked in battle with the Mujahideen. By the mid-1980s, the CIA was ploughing around US\$700,000 a year into supporting the insurgency – more than MI6's entire agency budget. The British agency was still in the game, however. Through Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence, which had maintained its stranglehold on covert action in Afghanistan, MI6 was providing the Mujahideen with limpet bombs to blow up Soviet barges. It reportedly also lent a helping hand to the Pakistanis and the CIA in conducting guerrilla operations in neighbouring Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The operations targeted Soviet troops through whom Moscow had been funnelling supplies to the Red Army in Afghanistan. MI6 efforts in propping up the insurgency in Afghanistan had not been overlooked by the CIA, but the British agency's commitment paled in significance to that of its US counterpart. MI6 provided ineffectual 'Blowpipe', shoulder-fired surface-to-air missiles, and had only been able to supply 500,000 rounds of ammunition for imperial-vintage British rifles used by the Mujahideen, despite the CIA's request for 400 million of such bullets. A year later, in 1986, the CIA armed the Mujahideen with 'Stinger' surface-to-air missiles. It was a strategy that would change the course of the war in Afghanistan.

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Zbigniew Brzezinski, who had long retired from his role as the White House's National Security Advisor, maintained his support for the US strategy in Afghanistan, despite the growing number of Islamist terrorist attacks around the world. In January 1998, when asked by a French publication, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, if he had any regrets about the way he had supported 'Islamic fundamentalism' during the Soviet– Afghan conflict, he said: 'What is more important in world history? The Taliban or the collapse of the Soviet empire? Some agitated Muslims or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the Cold War?' Seven months after the interview, one of those 'agitated Muslims', Bin Laden, orchestrated the bombing of the US embassy in Tanzania, killing more than 224 people, including 12 Americans. Three years later, the Al Qaeda leader would initiate the biggest terrorist attack on a Western nation to date. The 11 September 2001 attacks on the United States – the worst on its home soil since Pearl Harbor in 1941 – killed around 3,000 people and exposed monumental failures within the country's intelligence agencies. Bin Laden had drawn the Five Eyes into a new conflict: the War on Terror.

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ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2001, three British intelligence officials arrived at Brize Norton air force base in Oxfordshire, northwest of London, hoping to travel across the Atlantic. Their unannounced arrival caught the base commander by surprise. As did their proposed destination, the United States, which seemed like an impossible mission as the North American airspace was closed in the wake of the previous day's terrorist attacks on the US. The station commander was sceptical about who they said they were despite introducing themselves as Richard Dearlove, chief of MI6, Francis Richards, head of GCHQ, and Eliza Manningham-Buller, deputy director-general of MI5. 'The commander refused to believe who we were,' said Manningham-Buller. She had joined Dearlove and Richards on the mission that day in lieu of MI5's director-general who was required to remain in London to brief prime minister Tony Blair about the threat of Al Qaeda. Aside from her seniority and operational experience, Manningham-Buller was the most suitable MI5 representative to be included on the US trip because of the close working relationships she had established in Washington's intelligence community over the previous two decades.

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The British delegation was flown on a VC-10 airplane which was ultimately escorted by several F-16 fighter jets to Andrews Air Force Base (Joint Base Andrews), outside Washington, DC. From there, they were taken by motorcade to the CIA headquarters at Langley. During a meeting hosted by George Tenet, the CIA's director, and attended by high-ranking officials, including NSA director-general Michael Hayden, they discussed the deployment of joint capabilities against Al Qaeda. Much like President Roosevelt's emissary, William Donovan, who had travelled to Britain at the beginning of World War II to determine the support required by Prime Minister Winston Churchill, or the Sinkov Mission in 1941 which kick-started the exchange of signals intelligence between Arlington Hall and Bletchley Park, Manningham-Buller, Dearlove and Richards were to make history. The Special Relationship between London and Washington was about to be intensified and so was the information sharing and operational coordination between the Five Eyes.

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On returning to Britain, Lamb travelled to Chequers, the official country residence of the prime minister in Buckinghamshire, southeast England, to brief Tony Blair on his findings. He told Blair that every official he had met during his US visit had been 'emotionally compromised' by the terrorist attacks on their country. Lamb is said to have told the prime minister that people 'don't make good decisions when they're emotionally compromised'. He was correct. The decisions around the plan of retaliation against Al Qaeda were not made by sober military and intelligence assessments. Even worse, they were heavily influenced, and arguably, dictated, by political leaders – namely Tony Blair and George W. Bush – who always thought they knew better than the intelligence and military officials advising them. 'Whether it's the military or intelligence communities, they are made up of departments working for a political authority,' a British official said. 'Decisions made by them are inbuilt with bias towards their master's opinion.'

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On 24 September, Blair addressed parliament to outline his fears about the dossier's findings which he said had raised a 'current and serious threat to the UK national interest'. The prime minister said the dossier was 'extensive, detailed and authoritative' and it had concluded that 'Iraq has chemical and biological weapons, that Saddam has continued to produce them, that he has existing and active military plans for the use of chemical and biological weapons, which could be activated within 45 minutes, including against his own Shia population, and that he is actively trying to acquire nuclear weapons capability'. Blair also assured parliament that the threat from Saddam was 'not imagined' and that his weapons were real, not based on 'American or British propaganda'. The British leader said he was not after military conflict but rather a UN-led 'process of disarmament' and believed that the 'ending of this regime would be the cause of regret for no one other than Saddam

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Vladimir Putin maintained his nation's diplomatic ties with the West despite his suspicions of its intelligence agencies and its political leaders. The Russian leader arrived in London in the autumn of 2005 to meet with British Prime Minister Tony Blair. According to a statement by the Kremlin, published on 5 October, shortly after the meeting at Number 10 Downing Street, the two leaders discussed cooperation in a range of areas, including 'joint efforts in counterterrorism'. It was Putin's second trip to the country in as many years, after an historic state visit in June 2003 that marked the first such occasion by a Russian leader since Tsar Alexander II in 1874. During his October 2005 visit, Putin was also briefed by Eliza Manningham-Buller, director-general of MI5, who had been dealing with the aftermath of the London bombings – a series of coordinated suicide attacks by home-grown terrorists which had killed 52 innocent people and injured almost 800 three months earlier. The meeting had been arranged at Blair's request and held at the Cabinet Office's Briefing Room 'A', or COBRA, which is usually reserved for the British government's emergency-response committee to convene during a national crisis. 'It was during the autumn after the London terrorist attacks and at that stage we were really trying to be friends,' said Manningham-Buller of her meeting with the Russian leader and her agency's attempt to maintain a cordial working relationship with its counterparts in Moscow. However, Putin seemed to show little sensitivity over what London had been through and, instead, criticised MI5 over the deadly attack. 'He said, "It is the duty of the security service officer to put themselves between the terrorist and the victim",' Manningham-Buller recalled. 'The implication there was that we failed in our job – which to some degree was true – but it was a hostile statement for him to make.' Britain's cooperation with Russia on counterterrorism continued nonetheless. In early 2006, a team of British intelligence officials travelled to Moscow to meet with the SVR, Russia's external intelligence service, to discuss issues relating to Afghanistan, Iran and Al Qaeda. During the bilateral talks, which focused on intelligence assessments and judgements – rather than sharing or exchanging secrets – the SVR warned Britain about its involvement in Afghanistan, which had been ongoing for almost five years. 'They spoke about their own experience in Afghanistan in the 1980s and told us that we were unlikely to defeat the Taliban,' said a British intelligence official who was on the visit. 'They said, "Even when you think you've driven the insurgency away, they'll eventually come back – and that will continue happening time and again."' The SVR's advice was somewhat prophetic, for the Taliban would return to rule Afghanistan 15 years later in 2021 – despite a 20-year military campaign by the US and its allies to keep the militants away. After the talks in Moscow in early 2006, the British officials invited their hosts to repay the visit, with the view to welcoming them to the UK later in the year. But the invitation was effectively torn up once the Russian state proved its disregard for British sovereignty by killing one of its dissidents, Alexander Litvinenko, in London. The former FSB officer had sought political asylum in Britain in 2000 after fleeing Russia with his wife and son. Despite fearing retribution, he continued to publicly criticise the FSB of widespread corruption, including connections to the mafia and orchestrating bombings in Russia in 1999 to create a pretext for the Putin regime's war against Chechnya. Litvinenko's knowledge of the FSB gained him a role as a paid consultant to MI6. In November 2006, a few weeks after he and his family had become naturalised as British citizens, Litvinenko was killed by two FSB assassins who had laced his tea with polonium-210, an invisible and almost virtually undetectable radioactive substance. Although Putin denied Russia's involvement in his killing, a counterterrorism team from Britain's Scotland Yard uncovered insurmountable evidence which tracked the assassins back to Moscow. 'To take the risk of carrying out such an attack in the UK suggested that they had trialled the method successfully elsewhere and were given approval to hit Litvinenko on that basis,' said Eliza Manningham-Buller. The killing of Litvinenko severed all intelligence cooperation between London and Moscow and led to a public inquiry in Britain which

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Even after being exposed twice in as many years for its spy operations in Five Eyes countries, the Kremlin remained unflinching in its eagerness to pursue its aggressive foreign policy agenda. A decade after Litvinenko's murder, the Kremlin had maintained its campaign of disregard for the sovereignty of nation states, annexing Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 before deploying its cyber warriors to target the US presidential election two years later. It became publicly known by the summer of 2016 that Russian cyber-spies had accessed thousands of emails by hacking the computer networks of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee and the Democratic National Committee. The stolen emails had been strategically released to various online platforms, including WikiLeaks, by 'Guccifer 2.0' – a moniker purporting to be a Romanian hacker who the FBI rightly suspected to be a front for the Russian military's intelligence arm, the GRU. Five Eyes intelligence officials were hardly shocked when the Putin regime denied its role in the hacking campaign against the US Democrats. Their shock emerged eight days after Donald Trump had been officially confirmed as the Republican Party's nominee when he publicly urged Russia to hack into the email accounts of his Democratic rival, Hillary Clinton.

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members. That same day, the Republic presidential nominee's words also provoked the Australian High Commissioner to Britain, Alexander Downer, to contact the US Embassy in London with a view to disclosing details relating to his meeting with the Trump campaign adviser, George Papadopoulos, that had taken place two months earlier. With the US ambassador on vacation, his deputy, Elizabeth Dibble, who had been left in charge of the embassy, was briefed by Downer on 28 July about his meeting with Papadopoulos. Within hours of Downer's briefing, a select few people at the FBI headquarters in Washington, DC, were provided with the Australian High Commissioner's account by email. Among them was Peter Strzok, deputy director of the organisation's counterintelligence division, who was immediately intrigued by the timing of the meeting that had taken place between Downer and Papadopoulos. The fact it had been in May 2016 suggested that Trump's adviser had been aware of Russia's planned election interference one month before the issue had become publicly known. It also suggested that he had been aware of the proposed meddling into Clinton's campaign even before the FBI did. The political sensitivity of Downer's briefing meant that the FBI had to act with urgency but also ensure that only a handful of its officials were briefed on the case to prevent any potential leaks. A seasoned investigator with 20 years of experience at the FBI, Strzok was tasked with probing the Trump campaign's ties to Moscow. By the time he flew from Virginia to London with a colleague to interview Downer on 2 August, he had initiated the investigation into Russian meddling, code-naming it 'Crossfire Hurricane'. It was a reference to a song by the Rolling Stones, 'Jumpin' Jack Flash', which opens with the line: 'I was born in a crossfire hurricane.' It was a prescient codename for what would become a major political storm in US history. Downer's tipoff to the Americans had been shrouded in so much secrecy that even the Australian prime minister, Malcolm Turnbull, had no idea that the High Commissioner had informed the US Embassy about it – let alone agreed to a meeting with the FBI – until Strzok had landed in London. Turnbull was uniquely positioned as a national leader in the Five Eyes: he was a shrewd political operator who understood the importance of cultivating Australia's historical connection with the United States, but also understood the nuances of intelligence matters and the potential they had for backfiring if not delicately handled. As a former lawyer in the 1980s, Turnbull had defeated the British government's attempt to stop the Australian publication of a book revealing embarrassing secrets about MI5, including the uncorroborated claim that one of the agency's former directors-general, Roger Hollis, had been a KGB agent. While *Spycatcher*, the memoirs of former MI5 officer Peter Wright, had already been banned in the UK, the Thatcher government failed to achieve the same result in Australia – in large part due to Turnbull's courtroom battles – and ultimately lifted its ban in Britain. So Turnbull knew a thing or two about dealing with sensitive cases, and while he appreciated that the information that Downer had provided the US was 'important', he questioned the manner in which it had been handed over.

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The so-called 'Steele Dossier' had been prepared by Christopher Steele, a former MI6 officer, on behalf of Trump's political opponents, including the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton. Long before Steele admitted that 'not everything in the dossier is 100% accurate', Trump was criticised by the CIA's outgoing director, John Brennan, for likening his intelligence officers to Nazis over the leaking of the dossier to the online newspaper BuzzFeed, which published an article about it on 10 January 2017. 'What I do find outrageous, is equating an intelligence community with Nazi Germany,' Brennan told Fox News. 'I do take great umbrage at that, and there is no basis for Mr Trump to point fingers at the intelligence community for leaking information that was already available publicly.' Trump's hostility towards the US spy agencies over allegations of Russia's interference in the presidential campaign, had been intensified after the US Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) revealed its findings several days earlier on 6 January. Drawing on intelligence gathered by the FBI, CIA and NSA, the ODNI stated with 'high confidence' that Putin had 'ordered an influence campaign in 2016 aimed at the US presidential election' and that together with his government 'aspired to help President-elect Trump's election chances when possible by discrediting Secretary Clinton and publicly contrasting her unfavourably to him'. Moscow's goals were to 'undermine public faith in the US democratic process, denigrate Secretary Clinton, and harm her electability and potential presidency'. Trump completely rejected the ODNI's

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Trump initially claimed that he had dismissed the FBI director over his handling of an investigation into the deletion of emails from Hillary Clinton's private server. His stated reasoning made little sense to Five Eyes officials because the media storm surrounding the thousands of missing emails had politically benefited Trump, who, during the presidential campaign, had even praised Comey for pursuing his Democratic rival. Intelligence chiefs in London, Canberra, Ottawa and Wellington considered Trump's justification for firing Comey a mere smokescreen to take down an incorruptible FBI boss who wanted to preserve his organisation's independence from the White House and continue his investigation into Russian interference. Trump's disruption of the FBI investigation somewhat paralleled President Nixon's attempt to stop an inquiry by the law-enforcement organisation into the Watergate break-in. Much like Nixon's request for the CIA to block the FBI investigation into his administration had been rebuffed, Trump's sacking of Comey backfired. On 17 May 2017, the week after Comey's departure, Robert Mueller III, former director of the FBI, was appointed as a special counsel by the US deputy attorney general to investigate whether there had been any links between the Kremlin and Trump's presidential campaign. Peter Strzok, the FBI investigator who had been told by the Australian High Commissioner Alexander Downer about potential Russian interference, joined Mueller's team. As the investigation carried on, Russia struck again – but this time, against Britain.

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On 14 July 2019, two months after his team clashed with Pottinger in London, Ciaran Martin travelled to Washington with Britain's national security adviser, Sir Mark Sedwill, to meet with US officials at the White House. The meeting had been specifically organised to discuss Huawei, and among those present was Pottinger once more, along with Sedwill's counterpart, John Bolton. Notably missing was Britain's ambassador, Kim Darroch, who had been handling the crisis behind the scenes, but had been forced to resign a few days earlier after leaked emails revealed he had described Trump as 'incompetent', 'insecure' and 'inept' in cables he had sent to London shortly after the president had been elected to office. During the hour-long meeting at the White House, Bolton reassured Martin and Sedwill that he was sympathetic to the UK's assurances and said he would task members of his own security council to devise a plan that would help resolve their differences over Huawei. Pottinger seemed largely deferential to Bolton during the meeting, and the aggression he had showcased a month earlier in London had all but disappeared. Perhaps it was because he knew that the US had a trick up its sleeve that would ultimately force Britain to back down. The UK's newly elected prime minister, Boris Johnson, had supported Ciaran Martin's recommendations on dealing with the Chinese telecommunications giant – as had Johnson's predecessor, Theresa May. In
