

Why Does Naval Intelligence Utilize Civilians as Investigators

Naval Intelligence employs approximately 400 civilian agents who conduct the great bulk of our investigations. Both the Army and Air Force, however, rely principally upon military personnel to conduct investigations.

Experience has shown that those men who make the best investigators must be carefully selected, thoroughly trained and supervised, and who make this field their life-time work. Because Navy personnel planning places first call upon combat effectiveness and readiness, we have never created a speciality corps of uniformed investigators. If we assume, therefore, that a Naval officer is assigned a two year tour in the investigative field, it can easily be seen that the largest part of his time is spent in formal and on-the-job training. By the time he is proficient in the art, his tour has come to an end and he is then transferred to a non-investigative billet. It should be pointed out, moreover, that there are fundamental weaknesses in the utilization of enlisted men to investigate senior officers.

Our present policy in this matter is best understood by a brief recital of our experience during the last forty years.

Investigative activity by Naval Intelligence began in World War I. A large number of the persons employed at that time were civilian agents.

When, in the middle 30's, the situation in Europe showed signs of gross deterioration, all U.S. Intelligence agencies used their facilities to cover the potential threat posed by Japanese espionage, Nazism, Fascism and Communism.

Due to the rotation of military personnel, it was found that a corps of qualified civilian investigators was desirable to afford the requisite degree of continuity to intelligence operations. Consequently by 1936 and 1937, men with these qualifications were obtained to work under the several District Intelligence Officers.

There was, prior to World War II mobilization, scant opportunity to call upon Reserve Officers who might be qualified in the investigative field. At the most, it was possible only to use them occasionally on a purely voluntary basis, and in such a way as would not interfere with their civilian pursuits. However, to effect the coverage which was necessary, it was considered that full time employees were required and civilian agents provided the answer.

During World War II, most of these men, who were reservists any way, were mobilized and were invaluable for the indoctrination and training of newly commissioned personnel. It might be noted that by Presidential Memorandum of 26 June 1939, the ONI was named as one of the three U.S. agencies designated to conduct investigations in the fields of sabotage, espionage or subversion. It became necessary, therefore, to insure our capability in this important work by having well qualified, competent and reliable personnel. Responsibilities in this phase of work are still assigned to Naval Intelligence. There are now, however, four agencies by virtue of the Air Force having been accorded separate status through the National Act of 1947.

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There is still the problem of rotation as to military personnel. While a number of naval officers are utilized in intelligence work alone, it is necessary to assign them to various areas of intelligence where the services of military personnel are required. Thus a man who serves for one tour in work related to investigations may have to serve afloat, or as an attache before he again returns to a billet in Counterintelligence.

During the time these tours are taking place, there is a continuing need for trained and qualified men in the investigative and counterintelligence field. About the only way to create the requisite degree of stability is to use civilians who can develop their contacts, including confidential informants, perform continuing liaison with other agencies, keep abreast of procedural changes, policy and related matters, and serve as a representative professional corps to back up the necessary military command.

The importance of intelligence in the world today demands full recognition of the need to utilize all resources available. It is felt that utilization of our civilian agents for investigative purposes serves to complement in an excellent fashion the requirements levied upon Naval Intelligence. The Navy has long prided itself on being a team. Practice has shown the highest degree of cooperative effort exists between civilian and military. The ultimate objective is, of course, the maintenance of our naval security and its relationship to our national security.

Why Is Not the Navy System as Described Above Changed to Correspond With the Army and Air Force Systems

History has proved that every military system requires a corps of expert investigators, just as a large city like New York could not be effectively administered without a police and detective force. Prior to a changed policy of using only military personnel as Navy investigators, it would be necessary for the Secretary of the Navy to create a specialist corps so that officers and enlisted men could spend their entire careers in this work. Without this specialization we would be running the risk of sending out something of a week-end and amateurish agent to perform an expert task in solving cleverly executed crimes.

The Navy use of civilian agents, as pointed out previously, has proved to be highly successful. Both the Army and Air Force are, apparently, realizing the value of our system; they are now believed to be engaged in a program of enlarging their contingents of civilian agents. As will be pointed out below, the Navy also believes it more economical to use civilian investigators as opposed to military personnel.

How Does OSI System Compare With Army and Air Force in the Economical Use of Manpower

Naval Intelligence, as does OSI of the Air Force, utilizes its one group of investigators to inquire into sabotage-espionage-subversive activity and

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