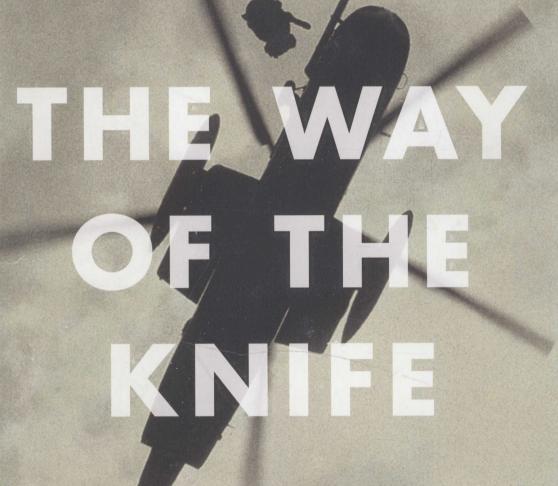
THE CIA, A SECRET ARMY, AND A WAR AT THE ENDS OF THE EARTH



MARK MAZZETTI

WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE

THE WAY OF THE KNIFE

The CIA, a Secret Army, and a War at the Ends of the Earth



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THE WAY OF THE KNIFE

FOR LINDSAY AND MAX

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PRINCIPAL CHARACTERS

THE CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY (CIA)

Charles Allen, Assistant Director, Collection, 1998–2005

J. Cofer Black, Director, Counterterrorist Center (CTC), 1999–2002

Dennis Blair, Associate Director, Military Support, 1995–1996; Director of National Intelligence, 2009–2010

Richard Blee, Chief, Alec Station (bin Laden Unit of Counterterrorist Center), 1999–2001

William Casey, Director, 1981–1987

Duane "Dewey" Clarridge, operations officer and founder of the Counterterrorist Center

Raymond Davis, CIA contractor, arrested in Pakistan in 2011

Porter Goss, Director, 2004-2006

Robert Grenier, Chief of Station, Islamabad, 1999–2002; Director, Counterterrorism Center, 2004–2006*

Michael Hayden, Director, 2006–2009

Stephen Kappes, Deputy Director, 2006–2010

Art Keller, operations officer in Pakistan, 2006

Mike, Director, Counterterrorism Center, 2006-

^{*} Name of CTC was changed from Counterterrorist Center to Counterterrorism Center in 2005

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Ross Newland, operations officer in Latin America and Eastern Europe; later, top official at CIA headquarters

Leon Panetta, Director, 2009-2011

James Pavitt, Deputy Director, Operations, 1999-2004

David Petraeus, Director, 2011–2012; Commander, United States Central Command, 2008–2010

Enrique Prado, operations officer working the Counterterrorist Center and later a Blackwater employee

Jose Rodriguez, Director, Counterterrorist Center, 2002–2004; Deputy Director, Operations, 2004–2007

George Tenet, Director, 1997-2004

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Robert Andrews, Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, 2001–2002

Stephen Cambone, Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, 2003–2007

Michael Furlong, Defense Department official involved in information operations who eventually oversaw private spying operation

Robert Gates, Secretary of Defense, 2006-2011

General Stanley McChrystal, Commander, Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), 2003–2008

Admiral William McRaven, Commander, Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), 2008–2011

Admiral Michael Mullen, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, 2007-2011

Thomas O'Connell, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict, 2003–2006

Leon Panetta, Secretary of Defense, 2011-2013

Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, 2001-2006

THE WHITE HOUSE

John Brennan, Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, 2009–2013

Richard Clarke, Counterterrorism Coordinator, 1998-2001

PAKISTAN

Shakil Afridi, Pakistani physician hired to spy for the CIA

- Lt. General Mahmud Ahmed, Director-General, Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), 1999-2001
- Lt. General Ali Jan Aurakzai, Pakistani military commander responsible for operations in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA)

Raymond Davis, CIA contractor arrested in Lahore in 2011

- Lt. General Ehsan ul Haq, Director-General, Inter-Services Intelligence, 2001-2004
- Jalaluddin Haggani, leader of criminal network based in Pakistani tribal areas who has carried out attacks against American troops in Afghanistan
- General Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, Director-General, Inter-Services Intelligence, 2004–2007; Chief of Army Staff, 2007–
- Baitullah Mehsud, Pakistani Taliban leader after the death of Nek Muhammad Wazir
- Brigadier-General Asad Munir, ISI station chief in Peshawar, 2001-2003
- Cameron Munter, United States Ambassador in Islamabad, 2010–2012
- Lt. General Ahmad Shuja Pasha, Director-General, Inter-Services Intelligence, 2008–2012
- Hafiz Muhammad Saeed, head of Lashkar-e-Taiba ("Army of the Pure")
- Nek Muhammad Wazir, Pakistani Taliban leader in tribal areas

YEMEN

Ibrahim al-Asiri, master bomb maker for al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)

Abdulrahman al-Awlaki, son of Anwar al-Awlaki

Anwar al-Awlaki, radical preacher and member of AQAP who was an American citizen

Ali Abdullah Saleh, President, 1990-2012

SOMALIA

Aden Hashi Farah Ayro, early leader of al Shabaab

Sheikh Hassan Dahir Aweys, leader of Islamic Courts Union

Michele "Amira" Ballarin, American businesswoman and government contractor

Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, Kenyan member of al Qaeda's East Africa cell killed in 2009

Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counter-Terrorism (ARPCT), collection of CIA-funded Somali warlords

Al Shabaab ("The Youth"), armed wing of Islamic Courts Union

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PROLOGUE: THE WAR BEYOND

"Good intelligence work, Control had always preached, was gradual and rested on a kind of gentleness. The scalphunters were the exception to his own rule. They weren't gradual and they weren't gentle either. . . ."

-John le Carré, Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy

scorted by Pakistani policemen, the burly American spy was brought into a crowded interrogation room. Amid a clatter of ringing mobile phones and cross talk among the cops speaking a mishmash of Urdu, Punjabi, and English, the investigator tried to decipher the facts of the case.

"America, you from America?"

"Yes."

"You're from America and you belong to the American embassy?"

"Yes," the anxious American voice boomed above the chatter. "My passport—at the site I showed the police officer . . . It's somewhere. It's lost."

On the jumpy video footage of the interrogation, he reached beneath his checkered flannel shirt and produced a jumble of identification badges from a lanyard around his neck. It was one of the few

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things he had managed to hold on to after the chaotic scene at the traffic circle.

"This is an old badge. This is Islamabad." He showed the badge to the man across the desk and then flipped to a more recent badge proving his employment in the American consulate in Lahore.

A telephone rang, and one of the officers in the crowded room dispatched with the call quickly. "We arrested an embassy man. I will call you back." The interrogation resumed.

"You are working at the consulate general in Lahore?"

"Yes."

"As a . . . ?"

"I, I just work as a consultant there."

"Consultant?" The man behind the desk was skeptical. He paused for a moment and then shot a question in Urdu to another policeman. "And what's the name?"

"Raymond Davis," the officer responded.

"Raymond Davis," the American confirmed. "Can I sit down?"

"Please do. Give you water?" the officer asked.

"Do you have a bottle? A bottle of water?" Davis asked.

Another officer in the room laughed. "You want water?" he asked. "No money, no water."

Behind the chair where Davis had taken a seat, another policeman walked into the room and asked for an update.

"Is he understanding everything? And he just killed two men?"

Raymond Allen Davis—a former high school football and wrestling star from western Virginia, a retired Army Green Beret and onetime private soldier for Blackwater USA, and now a clandestine CIA operative in Pakistan—had hours earlier been navigating dense traffic in Lahore, his thick frame wedged into the driver's seat of a white Honda Civic. A city once ruled by Mughals, Sikhs, and the British, Lahore is Pakistan's cultural and intellectual capital, and for

nearly a decade had been on the fringes of America's secret war in Pakistan.

But by 2011, the map of Islamic militancy inside Pakistan had been redrawn, and factions that once had little contact with each other had cemented new alliances to survive the CIA's drone campaign in the western mountains. Groups that had focused most of their energies dreaming up bloody attacks against India had begun aligning themselves closer to al Qaeda and other organizations with a thirst for global jihad. Some of these groups had deep roots in Lahore, which was the very reason why Raymond Davis and a CIA team had set up operations from a safe house in the city.

But now Davis was sitting in a Lahore police station, having shot two young men who had approached his car with guns drawn, while riding a black motorcycle, at a traffic circle congested with cars, bicycles, and rickshaws. Davis had taken his semiautomatic Glock pistol and blown a handful of bullets through the windshield, shattering the glass and hitting one of the men in the stomach, arm, and elsewhere on his body. As the other man fled, Davis got out of his Honda and shot several rounds into his back.

He radioed the American consulate for help, and within minutes a Toyota Land Cruiser was in sight, careering in the wrong direction down a one-way street. But the car struck and killed a young Pakistani motorcyclist and then left with Davis still standing in the middle of the road. An assortment of bizarre paraphernalia was scattered at the scene, including a black mask, approximately one hundred bullets, and a piece of cloth with an American flag. The cell phone inside Davis's car contained photos of Pakistani military installations, taken surreptitiously.

Within days of the debacle at the traffic circle, the CIA director would lie to Pakistan's spymaster during a phone call and private meeting, denying that Davis worked for the CIA. President Barack

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Obama was vague during a press conference about Davis's role in the country, calling for the release of "our diplomat in Pakistan." The CIA's station chief in Islamabad, who had arrived in the country just days before the shootings, fought openly with the American ambassador there, insisting that the United States give no ground, and cut no deals, to secure Davis's release. The game in Pakistan had changed, he said, and the time of friendly relations between the CIA and Pakistan's spy service had passed.

From now on, things would be handled according to Moscow Rules—the unwritten, unforgiving ways of spycraft practiced between enemies during the Cold War.

In an instant, the bloody affair seemed to confirm all the conspiracies ginned up inside crowded bazaars and corridors of power in Pakistan: that the United States had sent a vast secret army to Pakistan, men who sowed chaos and violence as part of a covert American war in the country. The wife of one of Davis's victims, convinced that her husband's killer would never be brought to justice, swallowed a lethal amount of rat poison.

But the Davis affair also told a bigger story. The former Green Beret hired by the CIA for a manhunt in Pakistan was the face of an American spy agency that has been transformed after a decade of conflicts far from declared war zones. No longer a traditional espionage service devoted to stealing the secrets of foreign governments, the Central Intelligence Agency has become a killing machine, an organization consumed with man hunting.

And just as the CIA has come to take on tasks traditionally associated with the military, with spies turned into soldiers, so has the opposite occurred. The American military has been dispersed into the dark spaces of American foreign policy, with commando teams running spying missions that Washington would never have dreamed of approving in the years before 9/11. Prior to the attacks of September

11, the Pentagon did very little human spying, and the CIA was not officially permitted to kill. In the years since, each has done a great deal of both, and a military-intelligence complex has emerged to carry out the new American way of war.

The historical contours of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq are by now well known. But for more than a decade a separate and parallel war has been waged, a dark reflection of the "big wars" that America began after the September 11 attacks. In a shadow war waged across the globe, America has pursued its enemies using killer robots and special-operations troops. It has paid privateers to set up clandestine spying networks and relied on mercurial dictators, unreliable foreign intelligence services, and ragtag proxy armies. In places where the United States couldn't send ground troops, fringe characters materialized to play outsize roles, including a chain-smoking Pentagon official who teamed up with a CIA figure from the Iran-Contra scandal to run an off-the-books spying operation in Pakistan, and an heiress from the horse country of Virginia, who became obsessed with Somalia and convinced the Pentagon to hire her to hunt al Qaeda operatives there.

The war has stretched across multiple continents, from the mountains of Pakistan to the deserts of Yemen and North Africa, from the simmering clan wars of Somalia to the dense jungles of the Philippines. The foundations of the secret war were laid by a conservative Republican president and embraced by a liberal Democratic one who became enamored of what he had inherited. President Barack Obama came to see it as an alternative to the messy, costly wars that topple governments and require years of American occupation. In the words of John Brennan, one of President Obama's closest advisers whom Obama eventually tapped to run the CIA, instead of the "hammer" America now relies on the "scalpel."

The analogy suggests that this new kind of war is without costs or