



**Michael Quilligan, *Understanding Shadows. The Corrupt Use of Intelligence*, Clarity Press, Atlanta 2013, pp 366, \$ 21.95.**

Edward Snowden's revelations have given the public insights into a world that leads a shadowy existence. He has opened a vista to a shadow world that threatens humanity with a new form of totalitarianism, all-encompassing and therefore unique. Compared with this new totalitarianism, the German Stasi and the Soviet KGB were amateurs.

Although Michael Quilligan's book came out before Snowden revealed the criminal machinations of the NSA and its British servant, it gives the readers "a glimpse of hell" into the dirty work of intelligence agencies and their abuse of government secrets. The so-called war on terror and references to "national security threats" or the "national interest" are used as pretexts to cover up

criminal actions such as money-laundering, narcotics trafficking, abduction and murder to the wholesale slaughter for non-combatant civilians or outright wars like in Afghanistan and Iraq and elsewhere across the Muslim world. After having read Quilligan's "Understanding Shadows" I have second thoughts about who the real "terrorists" or "criminal organizations" are.

In seven chapters, the author, a Dublin-born journalist, deals with scandals that are far from over and done. These scandals contain inconsistencies that have not been cleared up to this day. Is it possible that intelligence agencies had their fingers in the pie? Or were the crimes of the secret agencies so big that its disclosure would have lifted the entire political system from its hinges, such as in the case of the assassination of John F. Kennedy? The FBI under J. Edgar Hoover seemed like a privately run "criminal organization" that had dossiers about every president and his men. Hoover knew, inter alia, about President Kennedy's various affairs.

The author describes the wide variety of events, beginning with the Israeli attack on the reconnaissance vessel USS Liberty during the Six-Day War in 1967, about "Londonistan", which refers to the attacks by Algerian Islamists in the early 1990s in Paris, up to the attacks in London in 2005, extend through the U. S. and British pretexts that led to the Iraq war, as well as the mafia-like machinations of the Vatican to the intricacies of the British occupation of Northern Ireland.

In Chapter one Quilligan deals with the attack against the USS Liberty and asks why has the deadly June 1967 Israeli attack against the vessel never been publicly investigated in the U. S.? Why, until quite recently, were all Arabs killed by Israeli military or Mossad death squads referred to without question as "terrorists" by the international press? Not to speak of the many innocent victims of Israel's low-intensity war of attrition against all those it considers enemies. Up till now, U. S. governments have covered up all crimes committed by Israeli governments against the Palestinian people.

This cover-up holds true also for the attack on the USS Liberty. From the Lyndon B. Johnson administration to the Obama administration all U. S. governments have covered up the incident. It seems as if this cover-up is only surpassed by that of 9/11. The author quotes from Livia Rokach's book on Moshe Sharett's diaries who believed that Western morality would not allow a Jewish state to behave

according to “the laws of the jungle”. Quilligan states that Sharett was mistaken. Few years ago Ehud Barak, then Prime Minister of Israel, described the State of Israel “as a villa in the jungle”.

In the chapter “Londonistan”, a portmanteau first used by the French media during the GIA attacks in Paris during the 1990s, referring to the flight of Algerians to the United Kingdom. By now, everybody knows that GIA was infiltrated by French and Algerian secret agents, following the military coup guided by France, Great Britain and the U. S. Thousands of Islamist activists were detained in camps in the Algerian desert. London became a refuge for radical Islamists. In 2005, the London transit bombings happened. Since then, the CIA has a permanent operative presence in the UK, writes the author. To counter the “terrorist threat”, the British increased their secret service personnel in the embassies and at MI5 and MI6. Whether secret service agents prevent or foster terror is an open question. “Those in the West who believe the threat can be imperiously conquered, indeed that this war can be waged by drones, Special Forces ops, quiet assassinations, incarceration and torture, and it can still be won, should visit the ghettos and refugee camps in North Africa, the Middle East, southeast Asia or the Gulf states, and wait, with fear and trepidation, for the terror next time.” This conclusion of the author is not supported by facts, because the poverty in the third world has certainly not generated global terrorism. Did the Afghans attack the U. S. or Germany or was it the other way around? Or do the poor Africans run amok in Europe?

In the chapter “Seeing Things Invisible” Quilligan describes Tony Blair's enthusiasm to belong to George W. Bush's “coalition of the willing” to take down the Saddam regime in Iraq. For the British Prime Minister, no lie was good enough for serving as adjutant to the trigger-happy U. S. President and its neoconservative string-pullers. Beside the American fabricated intelligence, Blair added his own lies and sex-up intelligence about the non-existence of Saddam's WMD arsenal. Because of his lies, hundreds of British soldiers lost their lives. The author describes a session in the House of Commons on September 24, 2002 in which the government lied to members of the House. Saddam's so-called “yellow-cake” purchase in Niger “was included in a review of British intelligence relating to Iraq's WMD program. The five-member committee, chaired by Lord Butler of Brockwell, published its report on 14 July 2004, and claimed that there was sufficient intelligence to make a “well-founded judgment” that Iraq was seeking to obtain uranium illegally from Niger, and also the Democratic Republic of Congo.” These lies led to British scientist and WMD expert, Dr. David Kelly, in July 2003, who had warned that the intelligence was being “sexed-up” to provide an excuse to invade Iraq, writes Quilligan. Dr. Kelly was then found dead, allegedly after suicide.

What “Understanding Shadows” means can best be understood in the case of the assassination of President Kennedy. It's a fascinating chapter that shows how important secret services are and how the corporate media deceives the public.

The readers of this book should understand that hardly any international crisis happened without the involvement of secret agencies or their shadowy contractors. A stimulating reading matter.

Ludwig Watzal

First published here<sup>1</sup>, here<sup>2</sup>, here<sup>3</sup>, here<sup>4</sup> and here<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.international.to/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=35112:the-corrupt-use-of-intelligence&catid=66:oped&Itemid=151](http://www.international.to/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=35112:the-corrupt-use-of-intelligence&catid=66:oped&Itemid=151)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.countercurrents.org/watzal300114.htm>

<sup>3</sup> [http://mwcnews.net/focus/analysis/36006-understanding-shadows.html?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+mwcnews%2FXrew+%28MWC+News+Alert%29](http://mwcnews.net/focus/analysis/36006-understanding-shadows.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+mwcnews%2FXrew+%28MWC+News+Alert%29)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.palestinechronicle.com/understanding-shadows-book-review/#.UutBlj15OSp>

<sup>5</sup> <http://between-the-lines-ludwig-watzal.blogspot.de/2014/01/understanding-shadows-corrupt-use-of.html>