

Guest Author's Letter

Dr. Jan Goldmanⁱ

When I was in college in 1979, my undergraduate International Relations course required a term paper. But first, the paper's topic had to have the approval of the professor before it I could begin the research. The professor for this course had a long and distinguished background working under President John F. Kennedy and President Lyndon B. Johnson. He was intimately involved in the planning and execution of U.S. military operations in Southeast Asia during the 1960s. A "Cold War" perspective shaped this background. Everyone's perspective was formed by the political dichotomy formed by the Soviet Union and the United States, the Warsaw Pact and NATO, Western Europe and Eastern Europe, communism and democracy. The tensions between the two countries were neatly divided between "them" and "us."

Nevertheless, the topic for my term paper was to deliberate the role of political resistance and independence in the Soviet Union. I wanted to write a paper specifically on countries such as Albania, Yugoslavia, and Romania that would no longer be governed or indirectly ruled by leaders in Moscow. The term paper would have been based on the assumption that the Soviet Union would no longer have the power to control these countries sometime over the next fifty years. I was wrong ...it only take a little more than a decade.

Yet, according to the professor, it was an idealistic and unworkable topic. At the time we had witnessed the Soviet Union's involvement in crushing rebellions in Hungary (1956) Czechoslovakia (1968) and at the time I was enrolled in this college course, the Soviet military had conducted an invasion in Afghanistan. The professor did not want me to waste my time (and more importantly his time) writing a "fictional" research paper. I was instructed to find a topic that could withstand the test of time (or at least a topic that would allow me to pass this course.) I do not remember what was finally chosen, but, I do remember watching on television the demolishing of the Berlin Wall that would allow Germans to reunite in 1989. My "fictional research paper" was becoming a reality.

As the Soviet Union collapsed the political landscape has changed so much that world maps were redrawn. The rise of political sovereignty has created new problems and issues around the world. Some, if not all of this fallout, has had a direct effect on all democratic institutions. These issues include an increase in poverty, terrorism, economic warfare, ecological degradation, migration,

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transnational and international criminal activity, the rise of nationalism and the possible un-restricted accessibility of weapons of mass destruction.

A quick review of the geographic area known as Southeastern Europe shows many nations bordering the Mediterranean Sea. It is here that we can view the results of the fragments of the post-Cold War era. In the past, these nation-states either voluntarily or involuntarily relied on the paternalistic clout of the Soviets or the Americans. Economic and military security was a two-way street within each community. This reciprocity no longer exists, and these countries have become untethered and unafraid as we rush into a new era of solvency and national independence.

Over the years as an intelligence analyst working in Washington, DC, I would witness the rippling effect of personal, political and economic freedom in the Balkan region. The news of the war in Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina saw the attempted emergence of the United Nations seeking to fill a void from the ethnic tension that was suppressed for over 40 years.

Most policymakers depend on intelligence to form the basis of their decisions. Evidence-based research relies on the past, while intelligence assessments for national security must be forward-looking. To be a good intelligence analyst, you need the ability to form objective judgments by sifting through evidence that may never be understood as either true or false. Good intelligence allows policymakers the ability to decode and interpret the perception of fact or fiction. Over the years the threat has changed from a bi-polar threat environment to a multi-non-state actor threat environment. Technology and the elasticity of political boarders as a result of the worldwide internet have made this a more dangerous and unstable world as we become more connected and interdependent upon each other.

Over the last three decades, I had the opportunity to witness an amazing growth of internal changes in the intelligence community. The once all white-male dominated national security community, has seen an increasing number of women and minorities hired to perform intelligence functions at all levels. The intelligence community, similar to every other evolving profession, has learned that a person's ability is not restricted to someone's race, gender or nationality.

So, what does anything I mentioned so far has to do with this journal?
First, until this first issue, this publication used to focus on the Mediterranean-Balkan region. It is this portion of the world that has been and will always be an important harbinger of international power. This region is an indicator of change as evident from the fall of communism and the rise of ethnic and political nationalism. It is because of these aforementioned international players and volatile politics in the world that the journal needed to expand its footprint to address change. The Journal of Mediterranean and Balkan Intelligence (JMBI) is transitioning into the more inclusive and diverse Journal of European and American Intelligence Studies (JEAIS); this is important since it is crucial to

think outside of the box in order to craft new knowledge that academia has not yet considered important or relevant – much like the example of the term paper. Secondly, this publication is about intelligence. Recently, we have witnessed the weaponization of information that we could have never imagined in the past. Any scholar involved in International Relations or Intelligence Studies needs to know what is happening in the many different regions of the world and from diverse and innovative perspectives. This journal aims at providing a window into Intelligence Studies by showcasing the latest intelligence research outside of the British and American contexts. Finally, this publication is edited by two smart and thoughtful individuals. Efren and Daniela are both young and talented professionals. They have the energy to publish a periodical that is worthy of the interest and respect needed for understanding intelligence from a global perspective. **I wish them both the best of luck.**

Dr. Jan Goldman has 30+ years of experience working as a practitioner and educator in national security. He is the founding editor of a series of textbooks on intelligence and national security and the author or editor of numerous books. His most recent books include War on Terror Encyclopedia: From the Rise of Al Qaeda to 9/11 and Beyond, and Intelligence and Information Policy for National Security: Key Concepts and Terms.