



Enemies of Intelligence: Knowledge and Power in American National Security

Richard K. Betts

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Combining study with experience, Richard K. Betts draws on three decades of work within the U.S. intelligence community to illuminate the paradoxes and problems that frustrate the intelligence process. Unlike America's efforts to improve its defenses against natural disasters, strengthening its strategic assessment capabilities means outwitting crafty enemies who operate beyond U.S. borders. It also requires looking within to the organizational and political dynamics of collecting information and determining its implications for policy.

Betts outlines key strategies for better intelligence gathering and assessment. He describes how fixing one malfunction can create another; in what ways expertise can be both a vital tool and a source of error and misjudgment; the pitfalls of always striving for accuracy in intelligence, which in some cases can render it worthless; the danger, though unavoidable, of "politicizing" intelligence; and the issue of secrecy—when it is excessive, when it is insufficient, and how limiting privacy can in fact protect civil liberties. Grounding his arguments in extensive theory and policy analysis, Betts takes a comprehensive and realistic look at the convergence of knowledge and power in facing the intelligence challenges of the twenty-first century.

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