

Institution: University of Warwick		
Unit of Assessment: C19 – Politics and International Studies		
Title of case study: From Closed Past to Open Future: Strengthening Formal and Informal Oversight of Secret Intelligence		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2010 – 2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Names: Professor Richard J. Aldrich Dr Christopher R. Moran	Roles: Professor of International Security; Reader in US National Security	Periods employed by submitting HEI: Aldrich Since 2007; Moran Since 2008
Period when the claimed impact occurred: September 2013 – December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>As leading interdisciplinary researchers on the changing landscape of secret intelligence in the age of 'Big Data', Professor Richard J. Aldrich and Dr Christopher R. Moran have become the 'go to' authorities for a variety of national and international stakeholders. Throughout the REF reporting period, in both governmental and non-governmental contexts, there has been a strong appetite to understand the drivers behind this challenging new environment, as well as demand for tailored advice on how to adapt. Building a network of high-level relationships, Aldrich and Moran have achieved policy impact by influencing the formulation of new working practices and legislation by UK Defence Intelligence and the German Parliament, resulting in greater openness and more robust formal oversight of intelligence by public bodies. They have achieved capacity-building impact by shaping the training of national security practitioners in the US, Europe and Africa, leading to improved competencies around the importance of democratic control of secret agencies. They have also achieved cultural impact by changing the way that TV producers and museums represent intelligence to their audiences, resulting in more thought-provoking and accurate portrayals that improve public understanding and therefore cultivate informal oversight by a better-informed citizenry.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Working at the interdisciplinary intersection of Intelligence Studies, International Security and Diplomatic History, Aldrich and Moran have established a body of policy-relevant, public-facing and prize-winning research that falls into the category of applied contemporary history, distilling 'lessons learned' from the secret past to illuminate and inform the handling of contemporary challenges. Supported by two large AHRC grants (including one specifically for impact), a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowship (Moran) and a Leverhulme Major Fellowship (Aldrich), this research is distinctive in its efforts to capture the essence of how intelligence is changing in the twenty-first century. Achieving recognition in the form of the 2017 ISA Intelligence Studies Section Distinguished Scholar Award (Aldrich) and the 2014 St Ermin's Intelligence Book of the Year Award (Moran), its core claims can be grouped into three, with each grouping inspiring a distinct area of their impact activities.</p>		
<p>A and B – Claims underpinning policy impact and capacity-building impact</p> <p>Intelligence agencies are losing market share in the knowledge business, overtaken by corporations including banks, ISP providers, social media, even supermarkets, who own most of the data on society [3.1, 3.2]. They are also under greater scrutiny owing to whistleblowers, journalists and civil society activists who represent the new 'shock troops' of accountability, distinct from formal oversight provided by parliaments, committees and the judiciary [3.3, 3.4, 3.5].</p> <p>The significance of the Edward Snowden leaks has been misunderstood. While the media jumped to frame the episode around an 'End of Privacy' and 'Big Brother' threats to civil liberties, our detailed research shows that the real crisis relates to official secrecy, which is being eroded by Information Age technologies as well as by cultural changes within the once highly-compartmentalised security realm, including the extensive use of private contractors and IT specialists who are ethically uncomfortable with traditional ideas of state secrecy. In short, the key transformation has not been secret government looking at the public, but the public looking at secret government [3.3, 3.4, 3.5].</p> <p>In this new intelligence ecosystem, where 'spying' is no longer the sole preserve of specialist government departments, but instead is owned more diffusely by the private sector, agencies should embrace formal oversight by official bodies and proactively manage their public profile –</p>		

evidencing the extent to which they behave legally, proportionately to the level of threat and in accordance with democratic values. Aldrich and Moran argue that it is counterproductive for agencies to operate in complete secrecy. The absence of public trust damages efficiency, morale and recruitment. Suggesting that a balance can be struck between total disclosure and total secrecy, their research proposes that agencies can accelerate the declassification of older historical records; raise the visibility of spy chiefs; engage with universities; and produce more 'on-the-record' work, including authorised histories, memoirs and informative websites [3.3, 3.4, 3.5].

Security practitioners, from the leadership to the rank-and-file, are struggling to keep abreast of the oversight pressures and responsibilities placed upon them by a bewildering array of formal and informal forces [3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5]. This is especially true beyond the Anglosphere, where there is a particular demand for training on this subject [3.6].

C – Claims underpinning cultural impact

Blending education with entertainment, TV documentaries and museums are uniquely positioned to publicise the uses and abuses of intelligence and the risks and rewards of secrecy. By bringing the past to life and shining a light on the present, they operate as facilitators of informal oversight, giving citizens a framework to critically assess the policies that are carried out in their name [3.4].

3. References to the research

3.1 Aldrich, *GCHQ: The Uncensored Story of Britain's Most Secret Intelligence Agency* (London: William Collins, first edition 2010; second edition, 2019), 700pp.

3.2 Aldrich, *The Black Door: Spies, Secret Intelligence and British Prime Ministers* (London: Williams Collins, 2016), 606pp, with R. Cormac.

3.3 Moran, *Classified: Secrecy and the State in Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 434pp. **St Ermin's Intelligence Book of the Year Award 2014.**

3.4 Moran, *Company Confessions: Revealing CIA Secrets* (London: Biteback, 2015; New York: St Martin's Press, 2016), 346pp.

3.5 Aldrich and Moran, "'Delayed Disclosure": National Security, Whistleblowers and the Nature of Secrecy', *Political Studies*, 67:2 (2019), pp. 291-306.

3.6 Aldrich, 'Escaping from American Intelligence: Culture, Ethnocentrism and the Anglosphere', *International Affairs*, 88:5 (2012), pp. 1009-1028, with J. Kasuku.

4. Details of the impact

A – Policy impact: increasing the visibility and accountability of secret intelligence

[Text removed for publication].

In 2015, Aldrich was commissioned as the only UK-based academic to assist the German Parliament in their landmark inquiry into the Snowden Affair, an investigation that has revealed in unprecedented detail how mass surveillance is conducted and how well it has been hidden from official supervision. Along with producing a 20,000-word study, Aldrich gave expert evidence to the Bundestag six times to elaborate on his findings. He was also called to give formal oral testimony. Despite attempts by the Federal Government to obstruct the Inquiry, the Parliament succeeded in publishing a report of 2,000 pages, containing 25 citations to Aldrich's study and testimony [5.2a]. One of the report's chief recommendations – that precise legal regulation is needed with regards to international intelligence sharing, to safeguard against the unlawful transmission of citizen data to partners abroad – is taken almost verbatim from his written evidence (p. 273). Revealing grave democratic deficits regarding the governance of digital surveillance, the report has led to significant new regulations about the authorisation, use and oversight of Germany's Federal Intelligence Service, the Bundesnachrichtendienst (BND), to minimise the potential for wrongdoing. Johannes Ahlefeldt, Political Adviser to the Social Democratic Party Parliamentary Group, has described Aldrich as 'a key academic partner for the German Parliament as it looked to learn lessons from Snowden'. In particular, Ahlefeldt thanked Aldrich for 'facilitating a more comprehensive understanding of the British system of intelligence oversight' [5.2b]. Owing to these insights, on 19 May 2020 the German Constitutional Court 'explicitly referred to the UK model when it called for better oversight and more effective control mechanisms' [5.2b].

Aldrich and Moran's research on accountability has benefitted the framing of other important security conversations. In 2016, Aldrich was approached by the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT) to provide expert opinion on CONTEST, the UK's counter-terrorism strategy. Following three meetings, he was thanked by the Review Leader for alerting OSCT to the

'importance of the future challenge of widening ownership' of intelligence, which highlighted to officials that a joined-up and transparent approach to counter-terrorism was essential, with buy-in not only from the agencies but the public [5.3]. In 2019, Aldrich and Moran were asked by the Parliamentary Defence Committee Inquiry on UK Response to Hybrid Threats to submit written evidence. This evidence, which claimed that plausible deniability in 'grey area' warfare is difficult to achieve because of eroding official secrecy, was welcomed by the Committee for revealing the dangers, for UK policy-makers, of using this new alluring tool of statecraft [5.4]. Their publications on secrecy have also been cited in official US foreign policy documents and hearings: *Classified* [3.3] in the U.S. State Department's *Foreign Relations of the United States Series* [5.5a]; and 'Escaping from American Intelligence' [3.6] in the U.S. Congress's 'United States-China Economic and Security Review' [5.5b].

B – Capacity-building impact: fostering awareness and acceptance of oversight among national security practitioners

Aldrich and Moran have delivered bespoke training to a range of practitioners who value independent evidence-based perspectives on their work. This training has been important in strengthening the understanding and responsiveness of intelligence professionals to the demands of oversight, especially among professionals from states transitioning from authoritarian rule, looking to operate within democratic frameworks. In 2019, they presented at the International Intelligence Directors Course at MOD Chicksands to some 30 spy chiefs from around the world, including directors from the Global South eager to learn about Western models of accountability. Commissioned by John Kasuku, National Security Adviser to the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Aldrich and Moran's 78-page training manual on cybersecurity has embedded oversight principles within the Congolese intelligence community. To quote Kasuku, 'The authoritative guide you put together has provided an important framework for us as we think about the challenges and opportunities presented by cyber in the national security realm', noting that he was especially grateful for the 'insights into the importance of building a cyber security strategy in Congo that operates within the rule of law and with appropriate accountability' [5.6]. Following Aldrich and Moran's input, a new strategy was launched that included a commitment to the creation of an independent oversight body to monitor and regulate cyber programmes, a stunning demonstration of transparency by a security regime notorious for excessive secrecy and political repression.

One measure of the reach and significance of Aldrich and Moran's capacity-building impact is the sheer number of international stakeholders who have requested training, including repeat invitations. From September 2013 to December 2015, Aldrich provided 10 workshops for two Swiss inter-governmental foundations, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) and the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP). Funded by the United Nations, these sessions were organised specifically to support the development of parliamentary intelligence oversight in the Balkans, with the final session, in Ljubljana, held at the request of the Intelligence Oversight Committee of the Kosovo Parliament. Antje Fritz, DCAF Deputy Head of Operations, confirmed that Aldrich's training has been instrumental in improving the strength and sustainability of 'the governance of the security sector through inclusive and participatory reforms based on international norms and practices' [5.7]. In 2017, Moran was a keynote speaker at the 'Intelligence in the Knowledge Society' training event and conference in Bucharest, organised by Romania's National Intelligence Academy in part to help practitioners from the former Eastern bloc, looking to shake off the legacy of authoritarianism, to develop stronger forms of oversight.

In the Anglosphere intelligence community, Aldrich and Moran have been repeatedly asked by agencies to deliver training on oversight. In 2019, they gave a two-hour session to the CIA's Office of Public Affairs, at CIA Headquarters in Langley, Virginia, characterised as being a 'very valuable discussion' [5.8a]. Also in 2019, they visited National Defense University, the United States's leading professional joint military/education institution, to deliver a workshop described by one officer as being 'essential for our students who are all senior military officers or national security professionals [and] who will have to operate in the future environment you describe' [5.8b]. In 2018, Moran delivered a session at the U.S. State Department, attended by 51 officers from the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the Department's official liaison with the US intelligence community. Praised by the Department's Chief Librarian for giving 'a new perspective that will enrich their work', the session was recorded for future training purposes and distributed on BNET,

the internal broadcast channel for officers based in Embassies and missions worldwide [5.8c]. Three times a year since 2013, Aldrich has led a session at the Cabinet Office for managers from MI5, MI6, GCHQ, UK Borders and the National Crime Agency. In 2020, he gave a session at the Downing Street Policy Unit, specifically for intelligence officers seconded to Number 10. In December 2020, Aldrich and Moran's extensive programme of capacity-building impact contributed to the University of Warwick being recognised as an 'Academic Centre of Excellence' in Cyber Security and Intelligence Education by the National Cyber Security Centre and its parent organisation, GCHQ.

C – Cultural impact: building informal oversight through TV and museums

Alongside their efforts to promote the formal oversight of intelligence and to convince agencies to be more open about what they do, Aldrich and Moran have enriched public understanding of intelligence from another direction, by impacting practitioners within the creative industries, principally TV producers and museum curators. The goal here has been to manifest informal oversight by a more learned citizenry, using direct impact upon TV and museum professionals to do so. Aldrich's three-part Channel 4 series – 'Spying on the Royals', 'D-Day: The King Who Fooled Hitler' and 'The Queen and the Coup' – attracted four million viewers in the UK, placing it (to quote producer Paul Elston) amongst 'the most highly viewed programmes on BBC2, Channel 4 and Channel 5'. The ten-part Sky History series 'Secret Wars Uncovered', which Moran was consulted on and featured in, held the prime-time Friday night slot for six weeks.

After working with the International Spy Museum in Washington, DC on their 2012 exhibition 'Exquisitely Evil', in an example of enduring connectivity between an academic and a non-academic stakeholder, Moran was asked by the Vice President of Exhibitions and Programs in 2013 to help with a \$162 million museum redesign. With over 350 hours of meetings with staff, including 16 separate trips to Washington, Moran played an important role in rethinking and reworking a new museum to promote deeper understanding of the world of intelligence. Foregrounding active, interpretive engagement rather than the traditional model of museum experience as passive observation, the new museum, which has moved to non-profit status to maximise investment in its educational mission, uses immersive visitor experiences to ask questions about why and how nations spy, and what trade-offs are acceptable in pursuit of security. 'You have been such an asset to all we do', acknowledged lead curator Alexis Albion, 'playing a valuable role as an advisor as we developed our concept plan, taking part in brainstorming meetings, and by providing helpful research'. Moran was especially influential in ensuring that the museum confronted the subject of oversight – 'a theme which runs through several exhibits' (Albion) – and for generating exhibition material that encourages visitors to weigh up whether agencies have appropriately drawn the line between secrecy and openness. In Albion's words, 'Your books were particularly helpful, framing the ideas which came to shape our Top Secret exhibit, which explores important questions about the role of secrecy in a democracy' [5.9]. Following its opening in May 2019, the museum has been praised by high-quality outlets such as *The New York Times* for being more international in coverage; more inclusive; and refusing to 'flinch from the Darker Side' by addressing sensitive topics of public interest like intelligence failures, the ethics of surveillance and the politics of whistleblowing. As a more intellectually challenging site of heritage preservation, the museum has seen its visitor numbers increase by 16.7% (pre-Covid). While closed for three months in 2020 because of the pandemic, the redesign allowed the museum to offer virtual programmes that found audiences in 60 countries.

Domestically, Moran was the lead curator for the exhibition 'Spy Oxfordshire', which opened at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, in Woodstock, on 28 October 2020. With its close links to Blenheim Palace and Winston Churchill, this local museum attracts a high footfall and plays an important part in community life by celebrating a collective heritage. Inspired by *Classified* [3.3], which revealed the hidden history of Oxford dons who worked for wartime British intelligence and who after 1945 flouted the rules of secrecy by publishing best-selling memoirs, the exhibition, the largest and most expensive in the museum's history, uses the stories of these spies as a vector to encourage critical thinking about the role that intelligence plays in defence of democracy and the merits and demerits of secrecy. As well as writing many of the 24 displays, Moran was responsible for acquiring around half of the exhibition's 110 objects (valued at GBP250,000) by reaching out to private collectors. Museum Director Ursula Corcoran has written of his

involvement: 'Your knowledge of the subject areas and guidance in interpreting the themes into illustrative panels, which are both informative and enjoyable for our visitors, has been of enormous value in progressing this exhibition'. She thanked him for 'brokering new partnerships for the museum which has enabled us to loan objects' and praised the 'manner in which you reviewed and helped our volunteers with their own research and in providing a critical eye to their work' [5.10].

In sum, while intelligence services are notoriously slow to change, and while there is still much to do in persuading them to adapt to the new environment in which they find themselves, Aldrich and Moran's three-pronged approach of targeting **policy impact**, **capacity-building impact** and **cultural impact** has strengthened formal and informal oversight of secret intelligence, globally.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

5.1 [Text removed for publication].

5.2 a) Letter, Johannes Ahlefeldt, Social Democratic Party Parliamentary Group, 28.08.2020; b) Deutscher Bundestag Report, 23.06.17 [*in German*].

5.3 Letter, Home Office, 26.10.2016.

5.4 Written evidence to Parliamentary Defence Committee Inquiry, 28.02.2020.

5.5 a) *History of the Foreign Relations of the United States Series Bibliography*, p. 13; b) 'Hearing before United States-China Economic and Security Review', U.S. Congress, 09.06.2016, p. 37.

5.6 a) *Cyber Security and the Global South: A Governance Guide* (Warwick, 2018), 78pp; b) Letter, John Kasuku, Office of the President, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 30.03.2019.

5.7 Letter, Antje Fritz, DCAF, 01.02.2020.

5.8 Letters, a) David Robarge, CIA, 09.01.2020; b) David Oakley, National Defense University, 06.12.2019; c) Julie Arrighetti, U.S. State Department, 10.05.2018.

5.9 Letter, Alexis Albion, International Spy Museum, 09.09.2019.

5.10 Letter, Ursula Corcoran, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, 08.09.2020.