

2009

## Nexus: Strategic Communications and American Security in World War I

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### Recommended Citation

Rielage, Dale C. and Winkler, Jonathan Reed (2009) "Nexus: Strategic Communications and American Security in World War I," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 62 : No. 2 , Article 16.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol62/iss2/16>

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of intelligence prevents her from presenting real insights, which readers must find for themselves. Still, the depth of the author's research and her superior understanding of the German psyche are definite enablers for an astute reader.

On the basis of extensive archival research as well as interviews with former officers, the author describes how the Stasi succeeded in stealing technical plans, equipment, and software. Attempting to gain an economic edge on the West, East Germans spent thousands of marks to steal millions of marks' worth of technology. Macrakis also describes the ultimate futility of this effort: East Germany could not incorporate the technology faster than the West could innovate and thus lagged farther and farther behind. Stealing technology is relatively simple, but incorporating that technology and making it an effective part of a national economy is not.

Another major challenge for the Stasi was Western technology-control regimes. While imperfect and implemented long after the Stasi had begun its operations, these regimes significantly increased the effort required. Eventually, the cost of stealing and the inability of East Germany to integrate what it took doomed the Stasi's efforts to failure.

Contemporary critics of current technology-control regimes should note that many nations have learned from the Stasi's mistakes and now make the transfer of "know-how" a key element of their technological-industrial-economic espionage programs. Those charged with enforcing technology-transfer laws can also learn lessons from this work.

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Winkler, Jonathan Reed. *Nexus: Strategic Communications and American Security in World War I*. New York: Harvard Univ. Press, 2008. 358pp. \$55

In March 1921, the U.S. subchaser SC-154 fired on a cable ship attempting to land a transoceanic cable near Miami, Florida. The cable to South America would have been operated under foreign control. While the ship was undamaged, the cable never reached land. The lessons of World War I had left the United States willing to use force rather than allow a new foreign-controlled communications link to North America. In his excellent study, Jonathan Winkler recalls these episodes, describing the international and naval communications structures of the era, their influence on the war, and America's recognition of its dependence on foreign communications systems. The Navy, with a cadre of technical experts and the need to command and control a worldwide fleet, played a central role in shaping a U.S. communications policy intended to reduce these vulnerabilities.

The years before World War I represent the start of our networked world. Trade, overseas news, colonial administration and the coordination of far-flung military forces all became dependent on a web of undersea communications cables, supplemented by a limited number of long-range radio stations. Understanding this dependence, both Great Britain and Germany entered the war with contingency plans to cut enemy

cables at sea. However, British naval superiority ensured that damage from German attacks could be quickly repaired. Despite later German successes in using submarines to attack undersea cables, geography and infrastructure left Great Britain as the hub of the remaining international communications system. While some of this story will be broadly familiar to readers of Barbara Tuchman's classic study *The Zimmerman Telegram*, Winkler moves well beyond Tuchman's work, describing how Britain's information blockade emerged as a coordinated effort that complemented and reinforced its naval and economic blockades of Germany.

Initially, many in the U.S. government and Navy were sympathetic to British efforts. Even while neutral, the U.S. Navy cooperated, by closing German wireless stations in the United States. However, the British stranglehold on German communications had the effect of leaving the United States dependent on British cables to Europe and Latin America. British monitoring of cable traffic, a valuable source of military intelligence, also yielded commercial information that was used to further British trade—often against U.S. commercial interests. Reliable reporting of news from Germany became impossible, leaving the neutral American press dependent on British reporting of the war. The divergence of American and British interests forced the U.S. Navy's realization that control of communications had become an essential part of control of the seas in the modern age.

In response, several U.S. government agencies moved to build an American cable network, but they were hampered by British control of raw materials. Others turned to emerging technology.

Largely through Navy efforts, the United States ended World War I with the largest radio network in the world. However, the lack of a coordinated U.S. strategy and poor interagency coordination ultimately prevented the nation from dominating the international communications system after the war. Winkler asserts that the lessons learned from this failure provided the impetus for American dominance of international communications in years following the Second World War.

This is an excellent book with a compelling story. Winkler deftly handles a complex topic that cuts across issues of naval history, intelligence, economics, and technological change. *Nexus* is well worth the time of any naval officer contemplating the sources of American dependence in a networked age.

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Kershaw, Ian. *Hitler, The Germans, and the Final Solution*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 2008. 394pp. \$35

This insightful collection of essays from the leading scholar of the Third Reich is a must-read for any serious student of the Second World War. Kershaw's mastery of the intricacies of the Nazi regime is second to none, and he approaches the historical controversies surrounding its reign of terror in as calm and deliberate a manner as the topic permits. Kershaw's essays cover a variety of topics, but he frequently returns to the questions surrounding Adolf Hitler's direct involvement in implementing the