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978-1-107-02593-6 - Allen Dulles, the OSS, and Nazi War Criminals: The Dynamic of Selective Prosecution

Kerstin Von Lingen

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### Allen Dulles, the OSS, and Nazi War Criminals

This book examines the circumstances surrounding SS-Obergruppenführer Karl Wolff's escape from prosecution for war crimes in 1945. Wolff avoided prosecution because of his role in "Operation Sunrise," negotiations conducted by high-ranking U.S., Swiss, and British officials – in violation of the Casablanca agreements with the Soviet Union – for the surrender of German forces in Italy that enabled the Anglo-American forces to take Trieste. After 1945, Allied officials, Allen Dulles among them, in a move that later helped him ascend to the head of the CIA, shielded Wolff from prosecution to maintain secrecy about the negotiations. "Operation Sunrise" thus relates to the early origins of the Cold War in Europe and had wide-ranging implications, even in the field of justice: New evidence suggests that the Western Allies not only failed to ensure cooperation between their respective national war crimes prosecution organizations, but in certain cases even obstructed justice by withholding evidence from the prosecution.

**Kerstin von Lingen** is Research Group Leader and Lecturer in the Cluster of Excellence "Asia and Europe in a Global Context" and the Department of Contemporary History at Heidelberg University, Germany. She is the author of *Kesselring's Last Battle: War Crimes Trials and Cold War Politics, 1945–1960* (2009, translated from German by Alexandra Klemm). Professor von Lingen has testified in court as an expert witness in recent war crimes trials concerning Nazi War crimes committed in Italy during World War II.

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# Allen Dulles, the OSS, and Nazi War Criminals

*The Dynamics of Selective Prosecution*

KERSTIN VON LINGEN

*University of Heidelberg*

Translated by

**Dona Geyer**



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## Acknowledgments

What reasons could there be to grant immunity to one of the highest-ranking representatives of the inner circle of SS leadership? How could such a person be successfully protected from prosecution for years and by various military and political authorities without making the promise of immunity known to a large group of people? Dieter Langewiesche and my colleagues from the Collaborative Research Center for “War Experiences: War and Society in the Modern Age” at Tuebingen University – my academic home for ten years – encouraged me to pursue these questions and to write this book on the tacit agreement between Karl Wolff and Allen Dulles.

I had the opportunity to present the results of my research in colloquiums at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, in 2006, at Salford University in Manchester in 2007, and at the German Historical Institute in Rome in 2009, and the study certainly profited from each of the ensuing discussions. My stay at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in the summer of 2006 for a workshop on “Intelligence at War” proved crucial for the development of a plausible thesis and for the collection of important archival material.

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DC, and also in the Dulles Papers at the Mudd Library in Princeton and at Columbia University in New York. Stephen Tyas directed my attention to important sources, particularly from the collections of the British intelligence service in National Archives in London. I am very grateful to both of them. During the months of intensive writing, I received much-needed understanding and strong encouragement from my family, particularly my husband, David, and my children, Anastassia and Constantin.

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While examining the protection from prosecution provided to Karl Wolff, I became distinctly aware yet again of where it all began, namely with *Operation Sunrise* in all its facets. Negotiations on surrendering the



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European southern front started on March 8, 1945, in an effort to end the war as quickly as possible. However, the agreement could not go into force until nine weeks later, on May 2, 1945, thus wiping out, as it were, the positive effect that had originally been intended by ending the war early. The guns did not fall silent on the southern front until weeks after the Allies began their spring offensive on March 20, 1945, with a heavy death toll on both sides. This book is dedicated to all of those individuals for whom *Operation Sunrise* came too late.

Heidelberg, September 2012

*Kerstin von Lingen*