

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.

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The Dynamics of Selective Prosecution

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Translated by
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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.

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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