OPINION

Column by Matthew Hensh

Honesty Is Still the Best Policy

The CIA now is probably the best of America's intelligence organizations. That isn't saying much. Other organizations, notably those run by the Defense Department services are notorious for fraud, accidental deception, and general incompetence. The CIA, although frequently ignored, has often been right. If not for failing to predict the collapse of the Soviet Union, it might even rank as mediocre.

A really complete picture of America's intelligence underworld, though, has always evaded public analysis. With the release of these formerly secret files, some significant questions about America's role in the Cold War may finally be answered.

Much of the files — name of agents, etc. — will likely still be blocked out by the black magic marker, but they will probably still shed a lot of light on a fabulously bizarre period of American history. The files will, as one CIA spokesperson declared, make the Agency look really, really bad.

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