

Washington Talk: Briefing; C.I.A. Secrets

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There is no shortage of memoirs and books by former intelligence officials. But when Graham Fuller retired from the Central Intelligence Agency, leaving his post as national intelligence officer for the Near East and South Asia, his first publication had nothing to do with cloaks, daggers or nasty deeds in back alleys.

Mr. Fuller's book, titled "How to Learn a Foreign Language," suggests a practical approach to a topic that has confounded generations of American high school and college students. Mr. Fuller said he had studied 16 languages and was fluent in several, including Russian, Turkish, Arabic and Chinese. He said he was also competent in French, German and Farsi, the language spoken in Iran that is known by few Government analysts.

"It's really not that difficult," he insisted. "If you know Arabic and Turkish, Farsi is a cinch." The book is being published by Storm King Press and distributed by Random House.

Mr. Fuller's name came to public attention last year when it was disclosed that he was the author of a "think piece" circulated in the intelligence community in May 1985 suggesting the possibility of pursuing openings in Iran.

The study was instrumental in persuading some top-ranking Reagan Administration policy makers to begin considering covert contacts with Iranian leaders. It eventually led to the covert sale of United States weapons to Teheran in what became the Iran-contra affair.

Mr. Fuller is now a senior political scientist with the Rand Corporation, the research and consulting organization.

Drawing

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