Writing Project #1: Weeks 1-3. Background Memo

The topic of this paper will be a major American counterintelligence failure taken from the following list of major cases:

– Christopher Boyce and Daulton Lee
– John Walker and Jerry Whitworth
– Ronald Pelton
– Wu-Tai Chin
– Aldrich Ames
– Ana Montes
– Rafid Ahmed Alwan (AKA: “Curveball”)  
– Edward Snowden

– Clayton Lonetree
– Edward Lee Howard
– Jonathan Pollard
– Clyde Lee Conrad
– Robert Hanssen
– Wen Ho Lee
– Chi Mak

Use the following format:

Executive Summary. Include an executive summary (in lieu of an ‘abstract’ commonly done for social science papers). It should briefly summarize the purpose of the memo, what you intend to discuss in it, and brief background on the case you have selected for your topic. Although it will come at the beginning of your memo, it works better to write it after you have drafted the full memo.

Discussion: Your background memo should succinctly describe the failure (the who, what, when, where and how). It should also answer the following questions:

- What espionage tradecraft did the spy (or spies) and their handlers use?
- How was the spy (or spies) discovered?
- What tradecraft, if any, identified in Johnson’s Thwarting Enemies At Home and Abroad, was used to uncover the failure?
- What mistakes were made or shortcomings revealed within the U.S. Government or the specific agency’s counterintelligence program that led to the failure?
- What were the consequences of the failure?
- What policy/procedural changes, if any, did the United States Government take following the event?

This will be a memo of approximately 6-8 pages in length, worth 200 points toward your grade.

Due date: It is due at midnight, Friday, September 15th.
The background memo must follow APA Publication Manual guidelines and be free of typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. **The use of critical and creative thinking skills is essential.** It will be graded using the HLS Writing and Analysis Rubric that can be found in the “Course Documents” section of Blackboard.

The assignment should consist of a title page, the background memo itself (6-8 pages of double-spaced text), and a list of references. The 6-8 pages of text do not include the title page or reference list.

**Writing Project #2: Weeks 4-7. Decision Memo**

**Background:** Eighteen months ago, evidence began to accumulate that there was a deep penetration (mole) within the U.S. Intelligence Community providing highly-classified information to an adversary nation. In a very sensitive counterintelligence investigation, a team of FBI special agents and CIA officers was carefully vetted and tasked to identify the mole.

You are the National Counterintelligence Executive (NCIX) working for the Director of National Intelligence. It is Sunday evening. Earlier that afternoon, following an unprecedented series of security precautions, you were taken to a safe house in Falls Church, Virginia. You were joined by your boss, the directors of the CIA and FBI, the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence, the Deputy Attorney General, and the Assistant to the President for National Security (the official title of the President’s national security advisor). No aides were present. The FBI and CIA directors briefed the group that just hours ago, they had successfully identified the mole, a senior officer within CIA’s National Clandestine Service.

The FBI and CIA directors advised that neither the mole nor his handler have been detained, nor does it appear that either is yet aware that they have been exposed. Therefore, the United States Government (USG) has a variety of options on how to proceed. The National Security Advisor has directed you as the NCIX to write a decision memo outlining the options and your recommendations for what action the U.S. should take with the mole and with the handler and the advantages and disadvantages of each.

The mole and handler are both currently under around-the-clock surveillance, but events are moving quickly. Therefore time is of the essence. The memo will be reviewed and discussed at a meeting tomorrow at 11:00 a.m. by the officials who attended the Sunday briefing. Then they will join you in briefing the President at 1:00 p.m. in the White House Situation Room.
Additional considerations:

- At the briefing, the FBI Director was strongly of the view that the mole (a U.S. citizen) and the mole’s handler (a foreign national operating in the United States but not under diplomatic cover), should be arrested and prosecuted.

- The CIA Director expressed deep concern about whether there are any other penetrations of U.S. intelligence. Therefore, he believes it is vitally important to collect as much information as possible from them.

- The Deputy Attorney General cautions that the conduct of any interrogation of the mole and the handler must be handled with care and in accordance with law or it could jeopardize any future prosecution of them.

- The National Security Advisor noted that five percent (5%) of Americans trace their ancestry to the country whose intelligence service was running the mole. Although born in the United States and a U.S. citizen, the mole is a member of that ethnic community. The National Security Advisor asks the team if this is a relevant consideration. You should address this in your paper. If you believe it is a relevant consideration, then explain why. If not, why not?

- The CIA Director also informs the team that the government of the adversary country to which the mole was passing classified information, recently tried and convicted three of its own citizens who were caught spying in a network run by the CIA. It is expected that they will be executed within weeks. Does this impact your recommendations? If so, why? If not, why not?

As the student writing this decision memo, you will have days rather than hours to complete the task. Drawing upon the class readings and outside research, identify and evaluate the range of options available to the USG. Make your recommendations for what should be done and explain the rationale for them. Use the following format:

Executive Summary: Include an executive summary (in lieu of an ‘abstract’ commonly done for social science papers), which succinctly summarizes the background, context, decision that needs to be made, and the options that your memo will present and evaluate. Although it will come at the beginning of your memo, it works better to write it after you have drafted the full memo.

Options: Make a separate heading for each one. First, describe the option. Then analyze the option in terms of advantages, disadvantages, risks, and consequences. Finally, outline what actions (next steps) would need to be taken to implement it. The latter issue may be included with your discussion of the pros and cons of an option since the issues are often co-mingled.
Recommendations: Identify the action(s) you are recommending to the President and supporting argument(s).

This will be a memo of 9-10 pages in length worth 400 points toward your grade.

**Due date:** It is due at midnight, Friday, October 13th.

The memo must follow APA Publication Manual guidelines and be free of typographical, spelling, and grammatical errors. **The use of critical and creative thinking skills is essential.** It will be graded using the HLS Writing and Analysis Rubric that can be found in the “Course Documents” section of Blackboard.

The assignment should consist of a title page, the decision memo itself (9-10 pages of double-spaced text), and a list of references. The 9-10 pages of text/analysis do not include the title page or reference list.