Wonderful Wizards of O.S.S.

BY RODY JELLINEK


In 1941 a British Naval Intelligence officer named Ian Fleming recommended to Gen. William (Bill) Donovan that he recruit as American intelligence officers men of "abstract morality, devotion to duty, languages, and wide experience." Donovan, a World War I hero and successful Wall Street lawyer, understood the fantasies of writers and Presidents, and, in a memo to President Roosevelt promised an international secret service staffed by young officers who were "calculatingly reckless," with "disciplined daring" and trained for "aggressive action."

The Office of Strategic Services came to include such men as John Birch, Norman O. Brown, David K. E. Bruce, Dr. Ralph J. Bunche, William Bundy, Michael Burke, Julia Child, Clark Clifford, John Kenneth Galbraith, John W. Gardner, Arthur J. Goldberg, and William J. Donovan. There were others—Sterling Hayden, August Horkoscher, Roger O. Hilman, Philip Horton, H. Stuart Hughes, Carl Kaysen, Carroll Kibbee, MacGregor Keng, Marthe Marceuse, Henry Ringling North, Serge Obolensky. And still others: John Oakes, Walt W. Rostow, Etimo Roper, Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr., Paul Sweezy, Ralph de Toledano—to name just a couple of hundreds in this book by R. Harris Smith.

Mr. Smith, who was in the trade himself, resigning in 1968 after a "very brief, uneventful, and undistinguished association with the most misunderstood bureaucracy of the American Government," the Central Intelligence Agency, now lectures in political science at the University of California's Extension Division. "This history of America's first central intelligence agency is "secret" because Mr. Smith was denied access to O.S.S. archives, and so had to rely on the existing literature supplemented by some 200 written and verbal "recollections of O.S.S. alumni."

Both Ends Against the Middle

The book is densely packed with the bewildering variety of O.S.S. exploits in World War II—smuggling sabotage, propaganda, military training missions, politicking and coordinating resistance groups against the Germans. "Casablanca" caught the spirit of the Byzantine plotting in French North Africa, with the O.S.S. trying to undermine the Vichy and German authorities, while various resistance groups tried to use the O.S.S. for their own ends.

In Italy, Yugoslavia, China and Greece, O.S.S. agents played both ends against the middle in the virtual civil wars between conservatives and left-wing partisans. In one hot summer of枯燥无味的

Between the Geneva Conference and the O.S.S. gratefully accepted the contribution of Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini, teamed with Earl Brennan, American politician and diplomat (also friend of Montini) and Mr. Smith, who the book chronicles the need for a permanent bureaucracy part of whose function is officially devoted to clandestine political manipulation abroad in time of peace."