



World Affairs Council of Charlotte Speaker Series Luncheon
The Westin (Uptown Charlotte)
September 30, 2008 at 12:00 PM
Member Rate: \$ 40 / Non-Member Rate: \$ 50



Tim Weiner is a Pulitzer Prize winning journalist who has reported on American intelligence from around the world for more than 20 years. He is the author of three books, including the National Book Award winner LEGACY OF ASHES, which was a *New York Times* best-seller, and appeared on many "Best Books of 2007" lists in the U.S. and the UK.

As a reporter for *The New York Times* since 1993, he has traveled to some of the world's hotspots investigating CIA covert operations firsthand, and has worked as a foreign correspondent in eighteen nations including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Kenya, Liberia, Cuba, Mexico, and throughout Latin America covering wars, coups, and the foreign policies of the United States. He spent 10 years as a Washington correspondent covering national security and the CIA, breaking more than 100 page-one stories during the last seven years.

From 1981-1982, he was a reporter for the *Kansas City Times* where he led coverage of Hyatt Hotel collapse, which killed 114 people. There he shared the 1982 Pulitzer for Hyatt Hotel investigation, and has also won many state and local awards. After he left the *Kansas City Times*, Weiner worked as a Foreign correspondent in Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Philippines, among other nations for the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (1982-1992) and covered national security issues in Washington, as well as white-collar crime investigations which put dozens of fraudulent businessmen in jail. As an investigative reporter at the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, he was awarded the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for national reporting, in recognition of articles exposing the secret spending of the Pentagon and the CIA. In 1990, those articles grew into his first book, *BLANK CHECK: The Pentagon's Black Budget* (Warner Books, 1990). His second book, *BETRAYAL: The Story of Aldrich Ames, an American Spy*, was published by Random House in 1995.

Weiner's third book, *LEGACY OF ASHES: The History of the CIA* (Doubleday, 2007) won the 2007 National Book Award for non-fiction. In this book, Weiner offers the first definitive history of the CIA—and everything is on the record: based on more than 50,000 documents, primarily from the archives of the CIA itself, and hundreds of interviews with CIA veterans, including ten Directors of Central Intelligence. It takes the CIA from its creation after World War II, through its battles in the cold war and the war on terror, to its near-collapse after 9/11. For the last sixty years, the CIA has managed to maintain a formidable reputation in spite of its terrible record, burying its blunders in top-secret archives. Its mission was to know the world. When it did not succeed, it set out to change the world. Its failures have handed us, in the words of President Eisenhower, "a legacy of ashes."

FROM LEGACY OF ASHES...

Legacy of Ashes is the record of the first sixty years of the Central Intelligence Agency. It describes how the most powerful country in the history of Western civilization has failed to create a first-rate spy service. That failure constitutes a danger to the national security of the United States. Intelligence is secret action aimed at understanding or changing what goes on abroad. President Dwight D. Eisenhower called it "a distasteful but vital necessity." A nation that wants to project its power beyond its borders needs to see over the horizon, to know what is coming, to prevent attacks against its people. It must anticipate surprise. Without a strong, smart, sharp intelligence service, presidents and generals alike can become blind and crippled. But throughout its history as a superpower, the United States has not had such a service.

BETRAYAL...

Aldrich Ames, according to this account by a team of *New York Times* reporters, was an incompetent, office-bound, alcoholic spy in the middle of an undistinguished career. Even so, he was promoted to lead the counterintelligence branch of the CIA's central Soviet division, and there, in 1983, he began calling for the files on every important CIA operation involving Soviet spies in every corner of the world. He sold these files to the Soviets in order to fund tastes not appropriate to his salary; dozens of U.S. operatives were exposed, and many were killed. Until his arrest and conviction for espionage in 1994, Ames received nearly \$3 million for his treason, about which he was quite unsubtle. Yet the CIA took years to wonder why Ames could afford an expensive home in a Washington, D.C., suburb and frequent weekend trips to Europe. The agency was so slow to act, the authors suggest, because its leadership was more concerned with institutional self-preservation than with doing its job properly. This suspenseful book draws on interviews with Ames himself to show that major housecleaning is in order at Langley.

BLANK CHECK...

Based on a Pulitzer Prize-winning series of articles, this is a thorough, astonishing expose of the "Black Budget"--a 36-billion-dollar cache used by the Pentagon to fund its own agenda of top-secret weapons and wars.

ABOUT WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL OF CHARLOTTE - The [World Affairs Council of Charlotte](#) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization supported by funding from individual and corporate member dues, foundations and contributions. By serving as a regional center for education and discussion of world affairs, WACC seeks to provide leadership for global thinking, believing that a broad perspective is necessary for effective competition in the global economy and for responsible citizenship in an increasingly interdependent political world.

For more information regarding the **WACC Speaker Series Luncheon**, please contact Charlotte Klopp, Director of Programming and Development at 704-687-7759 or e-mail cklopp@worldaffairscharlotte.org