

1974

KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Agents

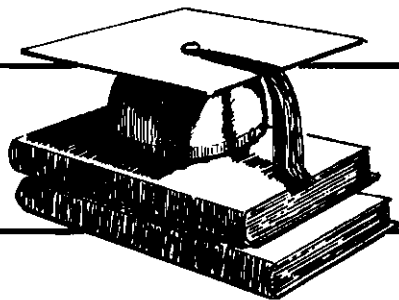
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PROFESSIONAL READING

Barron, John. *KGB: the Secret Work of Soviet Agents*. New York: Reader's Digest Press, distributed by Dutton, 1974. 462p.

It is a pity that this valuable volume did not appear at the height of the spy-story vogue; it would probably have gained much greater review exposure than now. The author, a prize-winning journalist and a senior editor of *Reader's Digest*, served in the Navy during the 1950's. He attended the Intelligence School, gained a specialty in the Russian language, and then performed a 2-year tour of duty in Berlin. In addition to this field experience, he has been able to make use of the *Digest* editorial offices around the globe and also succeeded, with the assistance of several foreign and American security services, in interviewing all but two Soviet agents who have defected to the West since the close of the Second World War. His book includes an extensive bibliography, detailed chapter annotation, 4 charts, 42 unusually clear photographs of people and places, and 4 appendixes. These last are attention-getters all by themselves.

The first two appendixes trace the rise of the Soviet security apparatus in general and of military intelligence in particular. The fourth is an alphabetical roster of Soviet citizens engaged in clandestine operations overseas—a zesty dish for an attaché to dip into as occasion may warrant. However, it is the third appendix that makes for the most compelling perusal: the translation of a classified Soviet document entitled

"The Practice of Recruiting Americans in the USA and Third Countries." Sampling this manual is akin to seeing ourselves in the distortion mirrors at the local amusement park's fun house.

Mr. Barron's style is flat, but the outlandish content of his book compensates for this deficiency. The coverage is global, with special attention to the Western Hemisphere; the treatment is topical; the time frame primarily from the decade of the 1950's on. It is the author's opinion that the U.S.S.R. "today embodies the last of the great nineteenth-century colonial empires" and that an analysis of its state security organ demonstrates "how little the basic structure of Soviet society has changed in more than half a century." Just as in the Romanov era, the paranoid suspicion of foreigners persists, so that each and every visitor "unknowingly passes through... an invisible KGB cocoon that effectively shields him from what the KGB does not want him to see or hear." The tools of character destruction and/or assassination remain standing procedures, although we are advised that the leadership recently directed the KGB "that henceforth people would be liquidated in peacetime only in special circumstances."

The author advances a variety of recommendations for our people serving in Communist lands. His basic tenet is an insistence on appropriate allotment: in 1971, for example, why should there be only 108 Americans in Moscow with diplomatic immunity while there were 189 Soviets in Washington? And the

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corollary thereto is that under no circumstances should our embassies employ indigenous personnel for any task, however menial (an example of drivers is given). Also, why do some Western powers continue to accredit Communist "diplomats" already expelled from another nation? Since "by Soviet definition, the truth is whatever enhances Soviet interests of the moment," democratic governments should enforce "the message that the price of the benefits of membership in civilized international society is civilized behavior."

To students of the subject, there is much in *KGB* that will come as no surprise. But there is enough that is novel to warrant the suggestion that the book would do well in the hands of every young naval officer embarking on foreign assignment. And if he lets it out of his hands, this should be to pass it on to a colleague.

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Hoopes, Townsend. *The Devil and John Foster Dulles*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1973. 505p.

Townsend Hoopes has neither written nor tried to write a definitive history of America's foreign policy from 1953 to 1959. He has, instead, focused on one of the key elements of that policy, the character of John Foster Dulles and, in that respect, has produced a solid psychohistory based on the Dulles papers themselves.

Mr. Hoopes' main thesis is that the Eisenhower administration pursued a rigid and shortsighted foreign policy, one designed during the Truman years to combat a monolithic Soviet threat, and one which failed to recognize how this threat had been altered by Stalin's death.

The author's first premise, not original, is that John Foster Dulles was foreign policy in the Eisenhower administration. His second premise, obvious in

the title, characterizes John Foster Dulles as more of a religious zealot on crusade than a pragmatic diplomat representing national policy, a man who believed himself to be the champion of good, battling immorality and evil.

To support these premises, Hoopes gives an accurate rundown of Dulles' career, starting with his family background (a combination of churchmen and Government officials) and following through his political allegiance to Dwight Eisenhower. He does not, however, fully discuss the development of Dulles' devil-theory view of the Soviet Union, instead simply stating that as early as 1946 the future Secretary viewed the onsetting cold war as "a moral rather than a political or economic conflict."

Dulles' view of Soviet actions was based on a literal interpretation of Lenin's "armed camp" writings. The Secretary of State refused to acknowledge that any softening in the Communist position—any detente—was possible and attributed gaps in the Soviet hard line to a zigzag policy. Such gaps were to be exploited rather than explored.

The Secretary of State is portrayed as taking an equally dim view of relations with China, the puppet of Moscow, "composed about equally of sentiment and illusion." Hoopes suggests Dulles missed an opportunity to lessen the Sino-American split during the relatively calm years between 1955 and 1957 and that the "brilliant" 1958 exercise in brinkmanship was necessitated only by "years of mismanagement and errors of omission."

Dulles' motivations were not limited to a hatred for communism. He also had an intense desire to remain Secretary of State and as such pandered to the right wing of the Republican Party headed by Joseph McCarthy. This, Dulles believed, was the one force that could cost him his secretaryship. Drawing from this relationship, Hoopes accuses Dulles of allowing a "reign of terror" to proceed