



Near and Distant Neighbors: A New History of Soviet Intelligence

By Jonathan Haslam

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Jonathan Haslam

A uniquely comprehensive and rich account of the Soviet intelligence services, Jonathan Haslam's *Near and Distant Neighbors* charts the labyrinthine story of Soviet intelligence from the October Revolution to the end of the Cold War.

Previous histories have focused on the KGB, leaving military intelligence and the special service--which focused on codes and ciphers--lurking in the shadows. Drawing on previously neglected Russian sources, Haslam reveals how both were in fact crucial to the survival of the Soviet state. This was especially true after Stalin's death in 1953, as the Cold War heated up and dedicated Communist agents the regime had relied upon--Klaus Fuchs, the Rosenbergs, Donald Maclean--were betrayed. In the wake of these failures, Nikita Khrushchev and his successors discarded ideological recruitment in favor of blackmail and bribery. The tactical turn was so successful that we can draw only one conclusion: the West ultimately triumphed despite, not because of, the espionage war.

In bringing to light the obscure inhabitants of an undercover intelligence world, Haslam offers a surprising and unprecedented portrayal of Soviet success that is not only fascinating but also essential to understanding Vladimir Putin's power today.

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Editorial Review

Review

“Undaunted, Jonathan Haslam has inspected the workings of the Soviet Union’s entire spying machinery from the October Revolution to the end of the cold war, and produced, in *Near and Distant Neighbors*, an account of the KGB and its military counterpart, the GRU, that is, he says, “about as comprehensive as can be contained within one volume, given prevailing restrictions.” Certainly, one would not ask for more. Haslam’s book is full of colorful characters who excel in stealing secrets and killing people, including their own colleagues. Haslam writes that in 1938 Pavel Sudoplatov, arguably the most talented of the KGB’s assassins, murdered a Ukrainian nationalist in Rotterdam with an exploding cake. These accounts of early Russian derring-do could spawn a shelf of noir paperback thrillers.” ?Robert Cottrell, *The New York Review of Books*

“Intelligence was central to Soviet security policy, and yet until now we have lacked a comprehensive history of it. This Jonathan Haslam has given us, with extensive research and penetrating analysis. From the internal intrigues to the foreign exploits, the story is as fascinating as it is important” ?Robert Jervis, author of Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War

“A meticulous survey of Russian and Western sources makes for a lively account of the history of all the Soviet intelligence agencies--the first time anyone has succeeded with this.” ?Robert Service, emeritus professor of Russian history, St. Antony’s College, Oxford University, and author of Trotsky: A Biography

About the Author

Jonathan Haslam is the George F. Kennan Professor at the School of Historical Studies, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. He is also a fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and a professor emeritus of Cambridge University.

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