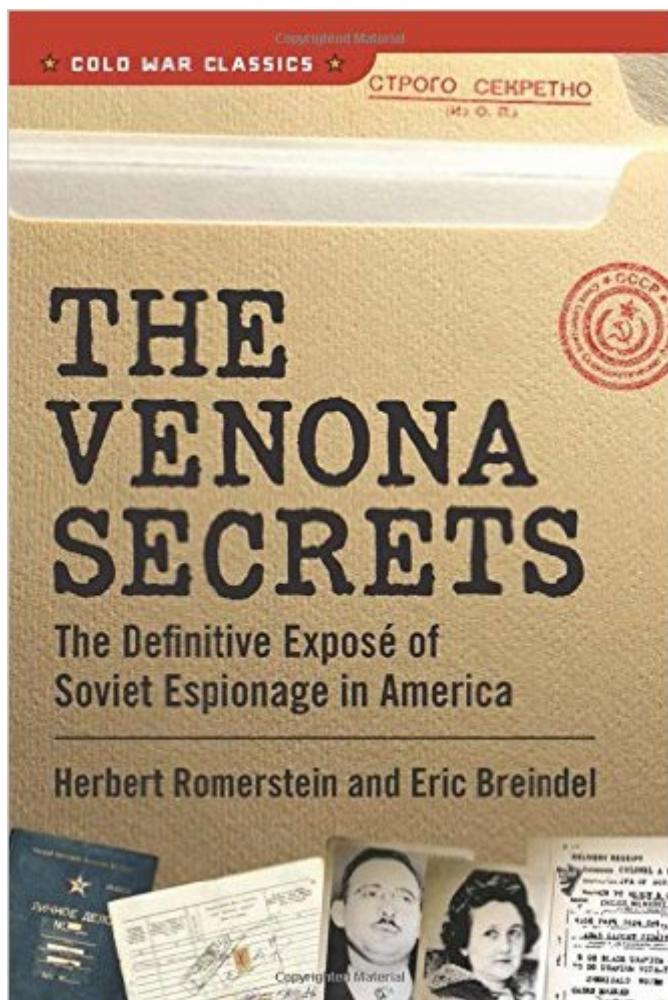


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The Venona Secrets: The Definitive Exposé Of Soviet Espionage In America (Cold War Classics)



Synopsis

The Venona Secrets presents one of the last great, untold stories of World War II and the Cold War. In 1995, secret Soviet cable traffic from the 1940s that the United States intercepted and eventually decrypted finally became available to American historians. Now, after spending more than five years researching all the available evidence, espionage experts Herbert Romerstein and Eric Breindel reveal the full, shocking story of the days when Soviet spies ran their fingers through America's atomic-age secrets. Included in The Venona Secrets are the details of the spying activities that reached from Harry Hopkins in Franklin Roosevelt's White House to Alger Hiss in the State Department to Harry Dexter White in the Treasury. More than that, The Venona Secrets exposes: information that links Albert Einstein to Soviet intelligence and conclusive evidence showing that J. Robert Oppenheimer gave Moscow our atomic secrets. How Soviet espionage reached its height when the United States and the Soviet Union were supposedly allies in World War II. The previously unsuspected vast network of Soviet spies in America. How the Venona documents confirm the controversial revelations made in the 1940s by former Soviet agents Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley. The role of the American Communist Party in supporting and directing Soviet agents. How Stalin's paranoia had him target Jews (code-named Rats) and Trotskyites even after Trotsky's death. How the Soviets penetrated America's own intelligence services. The Venona Secrets is a masterful compendium of spy versus spy that puts the Venona transcripts in context with secret FBI reports, congressional investigations, and documents recently uncovered in the former Soviet archives. Romerstein and Breindel cast a spotlight on one of the most shadowy episodes in recent American history: a past when treason infected Washington and Soviet agents were shielded, either wittingly or unwittingly, by our very own government officials.

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Customer Reviews

The VENONA Secrets offers further analysis of the worldwide WWII KGB/GRU espionage operations described in the encrypted telegrams (called VENONA) decoded after the war by US Army and British codebreakers and made public only in 1995 by NSA. These once top secret messages led to the arrest and conviction of the Rosenbergs and Klaus Fuchs, while providing the basis for shutting down many of the Soviet wartime espionage networks. They also documented the charges of Soviet espionage in America made by former Communist agents Whittaker Chambers, Elizabeth Bentley and a number of others. This book, as opposed to the several others written on the topic, supplies new material in at least three areas. First, author Roemerstein's long experience in the field has allowed him to add documented perspective on the US Communist Party relationship to the Soviet secret services. In at least one case, that of Ruth Olsen, mentioned but unidentified in the VENONA material released, he provides the missing links. He also adds new details obtained from the so-called MAST decrypts that discussed mainly administrative matters between Soviets overseas and Moscow. Second, the authors apply their experience to three cases about which other authors have been more cautious: Harry Dexter White, Robert Oppenheimer, and Harry Hopkins, while discussing new material on Albert Einstein and his tryst with a Soviet agent. Many liberal academics and others who continue to make the argument 'that the Rosenbergs and Hiss were innocent victims of lies told by Chambers, Bentley and the FBI', will scramble to find alternative explanations for the analysis that convinces Romerstein and Breindel that White was a cooperating communist agent before WWII started for America, and that Oppenheimer was the same during the war.

Traitors, of course, imply treason and that is exactly the charge Romerstein and Breindel substantiate in this book. Specifically, that the American Communist Party was a knowing tool for Soviet espionage; that the alleged anti-fascism of American Communists was a facade unsupported by their behavior during the German-Russian Non-Aggression Pact; that American Communists probably supplied Nazi Germany with military secrets during that period; that the U.S. government of the 1940s was riddled with Soviet agents including Alger Hiss and Harry Hopkins, personal friend

and advisor to President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and that J. Robert Oppenheimer was among the Soviet spies on the Manhattan Project. The decoding of Soviet messages from 1940-1948, coupled with documents from the Communist governments of the former Warsaw Pact, provides the evidence for these charges. Romerstein and Breindel write in a clear prose, and this book can be read fairly easily cover to cover in a few sittings. However, its organization seems more that of a reference book for scholars of Soviet espionage and U.S. political history rather than a straightforward narrative. The individual chapters cover the most famous spy rings operating in the U. S. during the years of the Venona message, espionage directed toward stealing nuclear secrets, anti-Trotskyite activities, and co-opting journalists for propaganda purposes. The index is comprehensive and includes listing for the many code names used by the NKVD and GRU. There is some interesting material on the struggle to root Communists out of American unions. The question of Jewish involvement in Soviet espionage is briefly and unsatisfyingly touched on.

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