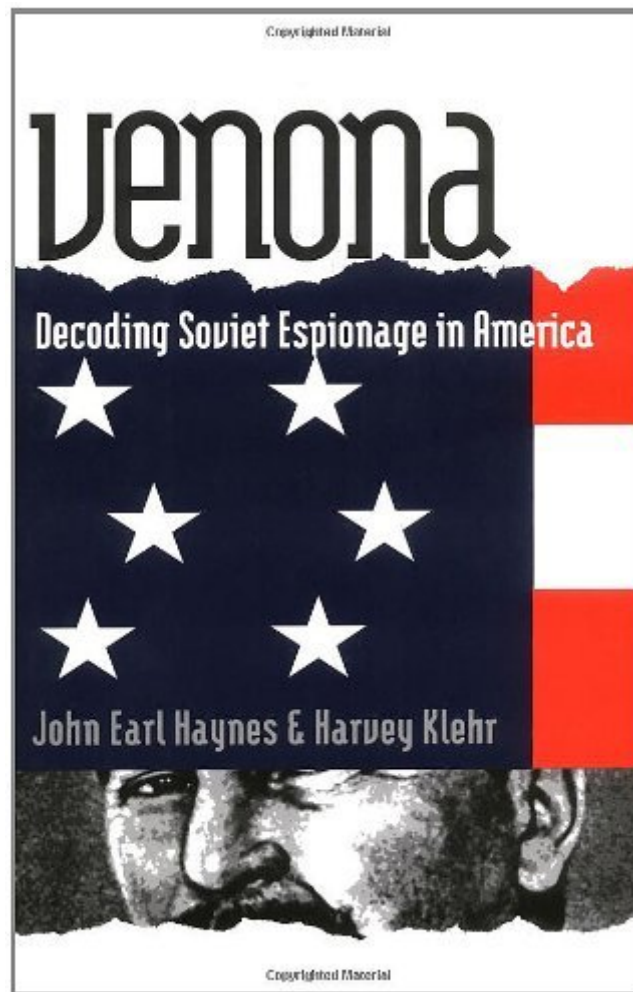




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Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage In America (Annals Of Communism)



Synopsis

For nearly 50 years American intelligence agents had been decoding thousands of Soviet messages, uncovering an enormous range of espionage activities carried out against the USA during World War II by its own allies. This is an analysis of the Venona Project and some of the messages.

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Customer Reviews

I am a bit surprised that there are not more recent reviews of this approx. 20 yrs old book exposing Russian espionage in the US from the 20's through the 60's. The book is well-written and reads like a laundry list of Soviet espionage agents and their collaborators during this time period. The American counterparts in this espionage activity were either naive or delusional--or both--about the nature of Soviet Union during that time period. Many of them admired Joseph Stalin and thought he was a heroic figure. His long list of atrocities that he committed while the leader of the Soviets were believed by the American Communist collaborators to have been fabricated by the Western press and the national leadership. Many of the American Communists during this time were of Russian

Jewish immigrant backgrounds. The early Jewish immigrants often had socialist political views and suffered greatly from the overcrowding in New York City and terrible working conditions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The Bolshevik revolution of 1917 was greeted with great hope by people of the left throughout the world. That dream of a workers' paradise was never to be realized. Unfortunately, many of the Soviet Union's early admirers were slow in catching the news. Living through the Great Depression in 1930's in the US was probably not too likely to change young leftist radicals to a favorable opinion of conservative US Republican business leadership and ideas. The Republican party more or less went into hibernation until the end of WWII when they re-emerged as a competitive party. You also throw in the fact that--believe it or not--that the USSR was a "good" ally of the US during WWII. Consequently, many of the US Communist collaborators could then more easily rationalize their collaboration--and their perfidy. In their eyes, they were creating the seedbed for a better world. Political delusion--or naivete if you like that word--appears to be a common human trait. Why did the most educated and civilized country in the world, Germany, get in line to follow Herr Hitler? Hitler was also very popular with western industrial corporations until the start of WWII. I seem to remember DuPont, Ford, IBM, GE, Union Carbide, GM, and many, many others being very cozy with Hitler and the Nazis. The Duke and Duchess of Windsor, much of the English upper class, the US German Bund, American anti-communists, etc. were also caught up in the great wave of admiration in the '30's for the little man from Austria. The American collaborators in this massive espionage operation by the Russians should have been prosecuted and punished to the full extent of the law--regardless of their degree or lack thereof of political sophistication. Many of them were very well educated, seemingly very intelligent people. And a good many were not of Russian Jewish background, but were US home grown true believers in Stalinist Russia. Emotions often appear to trump intellect--unfortunately. Some reviewers for this book want to restore another Joe's reputation: Joe McCarthy. McCarthy was a drunken bigot, a disgrace to the Senate and Wisconsin. He was right about Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs, however. A broken clock is right twice a day. Both Hiss and the Rosenbergs were guilty. However, I believe the executions of the Rosenbergs were exercises in barbarism. One thing I think you can learn from this book, though, is that nationalism appears to trump all. A Communist Russia is every bit as nationalistic as a modern kleptocratic non-Communist Russia. The KGB and GRU Russian groups of the Stalin era wanted no independent American Communist groups. The Americans were to bow down to the great Stalin and Russia. Some things never change. It will be interesting to see where the Trump investigations go in terms of his and his advisors' alleged collaboration with Russia and Putin. Russia, unfortunately, appears to be a land of gangsters and thugs--regardless of the political leadership at

the helm of that country.

The subject of this book is a shocking fact of American history that, for reasons inconceivable, has been thoroughly neglected by the historical community for more than a decade. The secrets uncovered through the VENONA Project and presented here by Haynes -- all of them factual -- dramatically re-cast American Cold War history, so much so that any American, regardless of political orientation, should and will be shocked by the story Haynes tells. "VENONA: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America" reveals that, all along, the intelligence community had incontrovertible proof of the Rosenbergs' guilt, and that Alger Hiss was unquestionably a Soviet spy. Countless others -- whose guilt has been debated for decades, or outright dismissed by nearly every serious historian as just one more "McCarthy-ite" lie -- were known from the very beginning to be guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, though the government withheld the proof to keep VENONA a secret. This is the story of what was by far the most pervasive and disturbing infiltration of the United States government by hostile foreign elements in history. It is also the story of by far the most important counter-intelligence initiative the United States has ever undertaken. Both of these stories were forgotten and needed to be told. All Americans owe Haynes a debt of gratitude for what he has done here. The truth of the book's claims have been established by the Moynihan Commission, and can be personally verified by any member of the public per the official declassification of VENONA in 1995.

An important story to permit the re-examination of a controversial period of our recent history. However, after a good start, the repetition of details in later chapters gets tiresome.

I enjoyed reading how we were able to catch and understand what happened here. You will want to know and understand the intelligence community to read this book.

Venona is an excellent book by two elite historians. I own Spies and In Denial as well. Personally, I would buy the hardcover version of this book rather than the paperback version.

i enjoyed reading about how the usa broke top secret soviet code writings during the cold war. thank goodness the wall has come down thanks to ronald reagan and gorbachav

Loved the decoded messages and the people involved. It is eye opening who was in the

government and why they were doing what they did, This is a very informative book.

thanx

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