



The Sword And The Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive And The Secret History Of The KGB

By Christopher Andrew, Vasili Mitrokhin



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The Sword and the Shield is based on one of the most extraordinary intelligence coups of recent times: a secret archive of top-level KGB documents smuggled out of the Soviet Union which the FBI has described, after close examination, as the "most complete and extensive intelligence ever received from any source." Its presence in the West represents a catastrophic hemorrhage of the KGB's secrets and reveals for the first time the full extent of its worldwide network. Vasili Mitrokhin, a secret dissident who worked in the KGB archive, smuggled out copies of its most highly classified files every day for twelve years. In 1992, a U.S. ally succeeded in exfiltrating the KGB officer and his entire archive out of Moscow. The archive covers the entire period from the Bolshevik Revolution to the 1980s and includes revelations concerning almost every country in the world. But the KGB's main target, of course, was the United States. Though there is top-secret material on almost every country in the world, the United States is at the top of the list. As well as containing many fascinating revelations, this is a major contribution to the secret history of the twentieth century. Among the topics and revelations explored are: The KGB's covert operations in the United States and throughout the West, some of which remain dangerous today. KGB files on Oswald and the JFK assassination that Boris Yeltsin almost certainly has no intention of showing President Clinton. The KGB's attempts to discredit civil rights leader in the 1960s, including its infiltration of the inner circle of a key leader. The KGB's use of radio intercept posts in New York and Washington, D.C., in the 1970s to intercept high-level U.S. government communications. The KGB's attempts to steal technological secrets from major U.S. aerospace and technology corporations. KGB covert operations against former President Ronald Reagan, which began five years before he became president. KGB spies who successfully posed as U.S. citizens under a series of ingenious disguises, including several who attained access to the upper echelons of New York society.



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Editorial Review

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In early 1992, a Russian man walked into the British embassy in a newly independent Baltic republic and asked to "speak to someone in authority." As he sipped his first cup of proper English tea, he handed over a small file of notes. Eight months later, the man, his family, and his enormous archive had been safely exfiltrated to Britain. When news that a KGB officer had defected with the names of hundreds of undercover agents leaked out in 1996, a spokesperson for the SVR (Russia's foreign intelligence service, heir of the KGB) said, "Hundreds of people! That just doesn't happen! Any defector could get the name of one, two, perhaps three agents--but not hundreds!"

Vasili Nikitich Mitrokhin worked as chief archivist for the FCD, the foreign-intelligence arm of the KGB. Mitrokhin was responsible for checking and sealing approximately 300,000 files, allowing him unrestricted access to one of the world's most closely guarded archives. He had lost faith in the Soviet system over the years, and was especially disturbed by the KGB's systematic silencing of dissidents at home and abroad. Faced with tough choices--stay silent, resign, or undermine the system from within--Mitrokhin decided to compile a record of the foreign operations of the KGB. Every day for 12 years, he smuggled notes out of the archive. He started by hiding scraps of paper covered with miniscule handwriting in his shoes, but later wrote notes on ordinary office paper, which he took home in his pockets. He hid the notes under his mattress, and on weekends took them to his dacha, where he typed them and hid them in containers buried under the floor. When he escaped to Britain, his archive contained tens of thousands of pages of notes.

In 1995, Mitrokhin, by then a British citizen, contacted Christopher Andrew (*For the President's Eyes Only*), head of the faculty of history at Cambridge University and one of the world's foremost historians of international intelligence. Andrew was allowed to examine the archive Mitrokhin created "to ensure that the truth was not forgotten, that posterity might some day come to know of it." *The Sword and the Shield* is the earthshaking result. The book details the KGB's foreign-intelligence operations, most notably those aimed at Great Britain and the "Main Adversary"--the United States. In the 700-page book, Andrew reveals operations aimed at discrediting high-profile Americans, from Martin Luther King to Ronald Reagan; secret arms caches still hidden--and boobytrapped--throughout the West; disinformation efforts, including forging a letter from Lee Harvey Oswald in an attempt to implicate the CIA in the assassination of JFK; attempts to stir up racial tensions in the U.S. by sending hate mail and even bombs; and the existence of deep-cover agents in North America and Europe--some of whom were effectively "outed" when the book was published.

Mitrokhin's detailed notes are well served by Andrew, who writes forcefully and clearly. *The Sword and the Shield* represents a remarkable intelligence coup--one that will have serious repercussions for years to come. As Andrew notes, "No one who spied for the Soviet Union at any period between the October Revolution and the eve of the Gorbachev era can now be confident that his or her secrets are still secure." --*Sunny Delaney*

Review

...a sweeping, densely documented history of the K.G.B. and its predecessor incarnations.... The overall impact of this volume is convincing, though none of the material will send historians scurrying to rewrite their books. -- *The New York Times Book Review*, Joseph E. Persico

The book is astounding.... Beyond being essential reading for students of international affairs, Andrew and

Mitrokhin's book belongs on the shelves of anyone who wishes to plumb the depths of intrigue and indeed evil in the modern world. -- *The Los Angeles Times Book Review*, Timothy Naftali

About the Author

Christopher Andrew is Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at Cambridge University, a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society, and guest lecturer at numerous American universities and the CIA. His most recent book is *KGB*. He lives in Cambridge, England, and is a frequent host of BBC TV and radio programs on history and world affairs.

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