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Recent Books

C. I. A. By Joachim Joesten. (Munich: Isar. 1958. Pp. 192. DM 12.80.)

Two distinct and somewhat ill-fitting Parts make up this book by the German-born U.S. journalist Joesten, and the less valuable of the two has imposed its title upon the composite. Part II, "[Episodes] from the Duel between the [Soviet and U.S.] Clandestine Services," is devoted almost entirely to the story of two Soviet spy rings in the United States, the one centered on Jack Soble and the one headed by Colonel Abel. These stories the author puts together from public sources, chiefly the indictments against the principals and their own published testimony and statements.

In this Part Joesten adheres, if somewhat loosely, to his documentary sources, employing literary license mainly to endow his characters with personality and play them through his pages with dramatic finesse. The reader feels he has got personally acquainted with Martha Dodd Stern, Jack and Myra Soble, George and Jane Foster Zlatowski, the ignoble hero Boris Morros, Colonel Rudolph Abel, the degenerate Reino Hayhanen, Sgt. Roy Rhodes, and their supporting casts — at least he has got acquainted with the Joesten characters representing them — and finds himself emotionally involved in their adventures. There is probably not another so readable account of these two espionage nets extant.

To these stories of Soviet spying Joesten adds a weak afterbalance in a chapter on Soviet public exposure of U.S. spies, and finally he describes, by way of wry comic epilogue, the battle fought among U.S. agents over the defectors Barsov and Pirogov at "The Three Musketeers" restaurant in Washington. Part II logically includes also the book's *Vorspiel*, staging the scene in which USAF Captain French "lost the biggest gamble of his life" when his flier offering the Soviet Embassy nuclear weapons data found its way to the FBI.

Part I, which gives the book its title, purports likewise to rest on open documentary sources, or at least public information, in its description of CIA's organization and activities; but here Joesten has either used his sources too uncritically or embroidered on them too freely. Interwoven into a generally sound synthesis of what is publicly known about the Agency are extravagances and misinformation like the following:

The most minor CIA official gets a salary which would look like a golden dream come true to the best paid of freelance journalists. . . .

CIA has a language school at its disposal . . . [where] hundreds of young men and women sit . . . learning little-known Soviet languages like Azerbaldzhani. . . . Beginners learn in six to eight weeks to read *Pravda* fluently and monitor Radio Moscow. . . . Compulsory for all [new CIA employees] is the Russian language and in addition one other Soviet Bloc language. . . .

It can be stated without exaggeration that any person who is in any way in the public eye in any country today is under CIA surveillance. . . . All his activities, the good and bad aspects of his character, his financial involvements, the company he keeps, his sex life, his habits (especially drink and drugs) — everything is down in his file. . . .

By and large . . . the daily CIA report to the President is based chiefly on information from secret agents in the adversary's territory, while the much more comprehensive weekly and monthly reports contain predominantly material . . . distilled from newspapers, periodicals, books, radio broadcasts, etc. . . . The Office of National Estimates issues a weekly review of the U.S. international political and strategic position . . . wherein the development of American nuclear might is weighed against the country's vulnerabilities. . . .

Within the CIA Operations Branch is a special section . . . called by the initiated the "Department of Dirty Tricks." In the usual abbreviation of this name, DDT, lies an unintentional but nevertheless neat pun. . . .

"AWD," as the chief is called orally and in writing by his subordinates, . . . is not easily upset and almost never makes a public statement. . . . He called together 500 of his main supervisors and declared, "Anyone who gives McCarthy any information will be dismissed on the spot." . . .

If a CIA employee has an accident, no ordinary doctor can be called, nor can the injured man be put into a hospital to which the general public has access. . . . If he dies, no coroner's examination can be made, no death certificate can be issued, and no burial in an ordinary cemetery can take place. . . .

Joesten's book was criticized for German readers on 22 May of this year by another journalist, the Washington correspondent of the Hamburg *Die Welt*, Herbert von Borch, as "amateurish" and written with a "cheap sensationalism" which misrepresented the facts about CIA operations. Von Borch's heavy-handed attack was apparently inspired, however, not so

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much by misrepresentations like those cited above as by the central theme which serves to integrate Joesten's two dissimilar Parts — namely, that the necessary secrecy of intelligence operations creates an unchecked center of power in the U.S. Government which poses a potential threat to Western democracy.

Joesten bolsters this warning with authorities — Senator Mansfield's "If secrecy becomes inviolate, it will lead to abuse"; the *New York Times*' "As things stand now, CIA is in practice above the law. . . . No one in Congress knows whether . . . it is in the process of establishing a bureaucratic world government, . . . whether it perhaps arrogates to itself the determination of U.S. foreign policy"; Senator Morse's declaration that the organization in its present form is incompatible with the U.S. constitution; Senator Mansfield's fear that "the whole system [of checks and balances] may break down and the door be opened wide to tyranny."¹

Joesten himself realizes that his warning may be misinterpreted. He writes in a postscript:

One should not conclude from the fact that the American clandestine services now show an ominous similarity with the Russian ones that the United States and the Soviet Union are spiritual twins. . . . America remains, in spite of its all too frequently evident blemishes, . . . a country in which the freedom and dignity of the individual is guaranteed by its constitution. . . .

But. . . the showdown with the East must be held in the ideological arena. I have indicated to what extent the United States . . . has taken up the weapons of the cold war. The reader . . . can see how dangerous these weapons . . . could become if ever the essence of the contest lost its ideological character. . . . Every war is a thing of evil, including the "cold" war, a craft which may easily get out of hand. . . .

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