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Masters of Deceit

By J. Edgar HOOVER

New York, Henry Holt and Co., 1958 374 pp Index

J. Edgar HOOVER, the <sup>Director</sup> head of the FBI, states in his foreword that he has written this book so that every citizen will learn about the menace that threatens his future, his home, his children and the peace of the world. The threat <sup>to which</sup> he refers ~~is~~ is Communism.

He gives a short sketch of the Russian Revolution, and analyzes, with equal brevity, Communism as a so-called "science". He then gives an authoritative account of how Communism took hold in the United States, the ~~unprecedented~~ <sup>rise</sup> rises and falls in its fortunes, and explains the menace it presents to a people who have perhaps grown too confident in the earthly stability of democratic institutions. For, he says, "The Communist Party is a highly disciplined tool of the Soviet Union in the United States. In the thirty-eight years since it came into being, it has developed a trained and potentially effective leadership that, <sup>overnight,</sup> ~~overnight,~~ should the situation become favorable, could expand ~~overnight~~ into a mass organization of great potential power. No longer does it need to send its promising young leaders to Moscow for training, because its own educational system is now performing that function."

Mr. HOOVER makes an interesting distinction between Communism and liberalism. He states that the concept that Communism is a new world of liberalism is false, a trap used to catch non-communists. Liberalism means increased rights for the citizen and a curb on the powers of the

private citizen, curtailment of freedom of speech and press and worship of God. The state becomes all-powerful, the absolute reverse of American tradition.

In a chapter devoted to "espionage and sabotage", the author touches briefly on how Comintern ~~experts~~ <sup>representatives</sup> used the American Communist Party to initiate a Soviet spy system in the United States. These were ~~but~~ bumbling efforts, and not too difficult to forestall. However, he warns the reader that things have changed. "Soviet espionage is no longer a clumsy, crude affair, as it was in the days of the rollicking 'reps', but a deadly efficient profession, skillfully directed from Moscow, with well-trained agents supplied with money, modern technical equipment, and experience. To the Soviets, espionage is a part of over-all state policy."

Their spy system is a disciplined structure, composed of many networks, both illegal and legal—legal in the sense that they are controlled by legal representatives of the Russian government, such as diplomat<sup>s</sup>. The author refers to Harry GOLD, Julius ROSENBERG,

Yuri V. NOVIKOV et al and shows how they fitted into such a structure.

But he does not analyze a single espionage case <sup>in</sup> depth. His book

is meant as a warning to the American public <sup>obviously</sup> not as a book of instruction for the Soviets.

HE DOES NOT REVEAL ANY FBI SE

According to Mr. HOOVER, sabotage is espionage's twin partner, but he does not believe that the Communist Party (USA) has reached the point where preparations for sabotage are vital to its future plans. Its small numbers, fear of FBI penetration of its inner discussions and federal laws against sabotage and insurrection militate against such plans. At this point Mr. HOOVER seems to contradict himself, for he says that Communists are pursuing a program called colonization, designed to place concealed members in strategic positions in basic industries and defense facilities. "In <sup>the</sup> event of an emergency these colonizers, because of their key ~~key~~ positions and concealed capacities, would be able to commit sabotage." He is, it would seem, introducing delicate nuances in a potentially dangerous situation. The thought that trained Communists may be manning switches capable of disrupting the economic system is not one conducive to ~~general~~ complacency.

Nor is Mr. HOOVER complacent. He calls on American citizens to ~~contribution~~ contribute to ~~them~~ the preservation of national security. Members of a trade union or any civic, fraternal, or social organization can help by spotting, exposing, and opposing communist efforts to infiltrate and capture that organization. Also, there might be occasions when anyone might have the opportunity to help expose and prevent attempts at espionage, sabotage, and other types of subversive activity. No one should hesitate to report information to the FBI, but Mr. HOOVER ~~is~~ cautions against the reporting of rumor or idle gossip, and tale bearing should always be avoided. For "hysteria, witch hunts, and vigilantes weaken ~~our~~ our internal security."