

# 2009



## H-Diplo Article Roundtable Review

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Roundtable Web Editor: George Fujii

Introduction by Thomas Maddux

Reviewers: Bruce Craig, Ronald Radosh, Katherine A.S.

Sibley, G. Edward White

Response by John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr

*Journal of Cold War Studies* 11.3 (Summer 2009)

**Special Issue: Soviet Espionage in the United States during the Stalin Era**

(with articles by John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr; Eduard Mark; Gregg Herken; Steven T. Usdin; Max Holland; and John F. Fox, Jr.)

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Introduction by Thomas Maddux, California State University, Northridge

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On May 20-21<sup>st</sup> the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and the Cold War International History Project hosted a conference on “Alexander Vassiliev’s Notebooks and the Documentation of Soviet Intelligence Operations in the United States, 1930-1950.”<sup>1</sup> In its summer issue, the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Vol. 11:3, has a special issue on “Soviet Espionage in the United States during the Stalin Era” which includes most of the presentations from the conference, most notably

- John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, “Alexander Vassiliev’s Notebooks and the Documentation of Soviet Intelligence Activities in the United States during the Stalin Era”
- Eduard Mark, “In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB”<sup>2</sup>
- Gregg Herken, “Target *Enormoz*: Soviet Nuclear Espionage on the West Coast of the United States, 1942-1950”
- Steven T. Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed: Industrial-Scale Conventional and Nuclear Espionage”
- Max Holland, “I.F. Stone: Encounters with Soviet Intelligence”
- John F. Fox, Jr., “What the Spiders Did: U.S. and Soviet Counterintelligence before the Cold War”

As Mark Kramer, editor of the *Journal of Cold War Studies*, emphasizes in his introduction, and Haynes and Klehr develop in their article, the notebooks of Alexander Vassiliev provide significant new information on Soviet espionage activities in the U.S. from the 1930s into the early 1950s. They provide informative background information on how the 1,115 pages of notes and transcribed documents from the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Archive (SVR) were produced by Vassiliev between the summer of 1993 to the spring of 1996; how he acquired access to the documents, made handwritten notes initially to be used in an SVR cooperative project with a Western author, Allen Weinstein, for a book on KGB activities in the U.S.; and how Vassiliev prepared summaries on his notes that a SVR committee reviewed before releasing them to Weinstein who ultimately produced, with Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood: Soviet Espionage in America—The Stalin Era* (1999). When the SVR turned against the cooperative project in 1996, Vassiliev left Russia with only his summary chapters and did not retrieve his original handwritten notebooks from Moscow until 2001 when friends sent them to him in London through DHL.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Please see <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topics/docs/A.VassilievNtbksConf.Agenda.pdf> for details on the conference.

<sup>2</sup> Shortly after the conference Eduard Mark died. Dr. Mark was a frequent contributor to those H-Diplo roundtables and reviews that focused on the origins of the Cold War and other related topics. We appreciated his close attention to primary sources, his willingness to question existing interpretations, and his many scholarly publications. *Passport: The Newsletter of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations* will have an obituary on Dr. Mark in a future issue.

<sup>3</sup> See Vassiliev’s account “How I came to Write My Notebooks, Discover Alger Hiss, and Lose to His Lawyer,” in John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), xxvii-liii. In the fall H-Diplo will have a roundtable on *Spies*.

Vassiliev turned over the original notebooks to the Library of Congress where they are available for research. The Cold War International History Project has available online on its webpage at

<http://www.wilsoncenter.org/index.cfm?topicid=1409&fuseaction=topics.documents&groupid=511603> PDFs of the scanned original handwritten notebooks, transcriptions into word-processed Russian, and translations into English. The site also has Haynes' 184 page concordance, *Alexander Vassiliev's Notebooks: Provenance and Documentation of Soviet Intelligence Activities in the United States* which cross-indexes proper names with code names to assist researchers. As Kramer, Haynes and Klehr emphasize, the notebooks are openly accessible to all researchers and, despite the lack of access to the SVR archive to validate Vassiliev's note-taking, the notebooks have lengthy quotations from contemporary KGB documents with citations to specific documents, KGB files numbers, and pages which represent "accounts of the successes and failures of the KGB by the KGB itself."<sup>4</sup> The authors also emphasize that the notebooks may be compared with other sources such as the National Security Agency's Venona project released in the mid-1990s and other declassified documents for those who wish to test their validity.

The Vassiliev notebooks have significance for not only understanding Soviet espionage activities in the U.S. and the response by U.S. counterintelligence but also for assessments of Josef Stalin's foreign policies. As Haynes and Klehr conclude, this new source provides the "real names to 61 previously unidentified cover names that emerged from the Venona cables and includes information on more than 50 other individuals who cooperated with Soviet intelligence. The notebooks contain additional information on familiar subjects such as Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs and also reveal new and important Soviet sources in the Department of State, on the Manhattan Project, and several postwar recruits in the Justice Department and William Weisband in the U.S. Army Signal Security Agency. While depicting aggressive and extensive Soviet espionage activity extending from nuclear activities to military and industrial espionage, the notebooks also reveal how Stalin undermined his initial success in the 1930s with a destructive purge of his security services, and the success of the KGB in rebuilding during WWII its espionage activities which unraveled with the defection of Elizabeth Bentley in the fall of 1945 and prompted the KGB to withdraw most of its officers as well as deactivate its agent networks.

At the CWIHP conference and in the commentaries, some of the familiar debates on the innocence or degree of involvement of Americans with Soviet espionage persisted. Nevertheless, consensus has emerged on the importance of the Vassiliev notebooks and their value to historians even if disagreements and qualifications will persist as indicated in the roundtable commentaries:

- 1) In her assessment on Panel 1: Provenance of the Notebooks and their use in *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America*, Katherine Sibley emphasizes the value of Vassiliev's

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<sup>4</sup> John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, "Alexander Vassiliev's Notebooks and the Documentation of Soviet Intelligence Activities in the United States during the Stalin Era, *JCWS* 11:3(Summer 2009), 9.

Notebooks and *Spies* in confirming previous evidence on Americans involved in Soviet espionage activity, affirming that several suspects such as J. Robert Oppenheimer rejected Soviet entreaties, and providing important new details on individuals such as Lawrence Duggan, chief of the State Department's Division of the American Republics. Sibley refers to considerable discussion at the conference over the "standards of proof required by historians (as opposed to government prosecutors) to adequately demonstrate espionage." (2) She also reviews different assessments presented on American counterintelligence from relative neglect by the FBI until the mid-1940s to suggestions by John Fox that the Vassiliev Notebooks reveal increasing success in disrupting KGB plans, monitoring American agents, and catching spies even if successful prosecution proved illusive. "If half of the industrial and technical spy groups were compromised, delayed, or otherwise diverted from their goals," Sibley concludes, "this was no small victory for American security in a porous period." (4)

- 2) Edward White and Bruce Craig address the important subject raised by the notebooks and discussed at the conference: the standards of evidence that historians should use for accusations of espionage. Both White and Craig tend to agree that Vassiliev's notebooks represent, as Craig states, "one of the most insightful and useful records of KGB espionage activities in American available to date." (2) They also agree that it would be most helpful but unlikely for scholars gain access to the KGB archives in order to validate Vassiliev's note-taking and to explore records that have been omitted. They disagree the most on whether or not historians should rely on their normal standards of judgment in dealing with espionage or, as Craig suggests, should rely on "some of the basic legal standards that are accepted in every court of law ... and should be applied when historians assess certain types of historical evidence relating to espionage cases." (6) For example, Craig suggests that *Spies* and several of the papers "tend to give equal weight to all types of statements" as opposed to relying on Federal Rules of Evidence that require original sources. This suggests that "all conclusions made based on evidence in the notebooks should be viewed as tentative and potentially suspect and always subject to corroborating documentation by a reliable independent source." Craig also ranks the evidence in the notebooks with respect to reliability from highest — "First hand statements made by Moscow Center officials with access to documentary file evidence" to lowest — "Hearsay statements by agents or sources based on hearsay statements collected by Soviet agents and/or sources." (6)
- 3) White emphasizes the differences between the standards of a criminal law trial and the standards used by historians for historical authenticity. Historians try to find "information that supports or undermines interpretive hypotheses about the episodes in the past," White suggests with reference to several authors. "Often there will be conflicting information about 'what happened' and 'why it happened'. In such cases historians are expected to choose what they believe to be the most plausible explanations and to advance arguments about why they believe their explanations, rather than others, are plausible." (2-3) With respect to Craig's recommendation, White argues that the application of the hearsay rule to historical documents in espionage history and reliance on a standard of beyond a reasonable doubt would transform the writing of history.

- 4) In his comments on Panel 3: Atomic and Technical Espionage, Ronald Radosh focuses on the essays dealing with Soviet atomic espionage on the Manhattan Project and the Soviet network established by Julius Rosenberg. Radosh suggests that the notebooks provide new details on the activities of Rosenberg, enhancing his importance, the full involvement of his wife, Ethel Rosenberg, as well as the important activities of David Greenglass. Furthermore, Radosh points out that the notebooks provide substantial information on the Rosenbergs' network involvement in the KGB's quest for scientific, technical, and industrial data.
- 5) Craig expresses the most reservations and disagreements over the interpretation of the evidence presented in the Vassiliev notebooks by the papers and in *Spies*. Craig, for example, questions Haynes and Klehr's depiction of Harry Dexter White, assistant secretary of the treasury, as "the most highly placed asset the Soviets possessed in the American government."<sup>5</sup> Craig does note examples in the essays that he considers more persuasive such as John Fox's study of counterintelligence and Eduard Mark's confirmation on Hiss' connection with Soviet intelligence, although Craig suggests that the "exact nature of that relationship in the lexicon of Soviet intelligence" is undefined. (4) Disagreement emerged at the conference particularly over whether the journalist I.F. Stone acted as a Soviet agent from 1936 to 1938 as discussed in Max Holland's paper. Craig concludes that Stone acted more as a journalist than as an espionage agent exchanging information with Vladimir Pravdin, who used a cover as a Tass correspondent. Haynes and Klehr view Stone as a minor figure who was recruited in 1936 and assisted Soviet espionage as something of a talent scout for new contacts into 1939. In their response, Haynes and Klehr provide detailed citations from the Vassiliev notebooks on White's involvement with Soviet KGB agents.

### Participants:

**John Earl Haynes** is Modern Political Historian in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress. He received his Ph.D. in 1978 from the University of Minnesota and a B.A. from Florida State University in 1966. Dr. Haynes is the author of eleven books including *Spies: the Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (coauthors Harvey Klehr and Alexander Vassiliev, Yale University Press, 2009); *Early Cold War Spies: the Espionage Trials that Shaped American Politics* (coauthor H. Klehr, Cambridge University Press, 2006); *In Denial: Historians, Communism and Espionage* (coauthor H. Klehr, Encounter Books, 2002); *Venona: Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (coauthor H. Klehr, Yale University Press, 1999); *Calvin Coolidge and the Coolidge Era: Essays on the History of the 1920s* (editor, Library of Congress and the University Press of New England, 1998); *The Soviet World of American Communism* (coauthors H. Klehr and Kyrill Anderson, Yale University Press, 1998); *Red Scare or Red Menace? American Communism and Anticommunism in the Cold War Era* (Ivan Dee Pub., 1996); *The Secret World of American Communism* (coauthors H. Klehr and Fridrikh Firsov, Yale University Press, 1995); *The American Communist Movement: Storming Heaven Itself* (coauthor H. Klehr, Twayne Pub., 1992); *Communism and Anti-*

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<sup>5</sup> See *Spies*, 258-262. According to the authors, "the evidence is overwhelming. Harry Dexter White assisted Soviet military intelligence in the mid-1930s and the KGB from 1943 to 1945 and perjured himself in his congressional testimony."

*Communism in the United States: An Annotated Guide to Historical Writings* (Garland Pub., 1987, editor and compiler); *Dubious Alliance: The Making of Minnesota's DFL Party* (University of Minnesota Press, 1984). He has also authored more than seventy-two published articles and essays.

**Harvey Klehr** is Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Politics and History at Emory University. He received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Along with John Haynes and Alexander Vassiliev he is the author of *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (Yale University Press, 2009). He and Haynes have also written *The Secret World of American Communism* (1998), *Venona, Decoding Soviet Espionage in America* (1999) and *In Denial: Historians, Communism and Espionage* (2002).

**R. Bruce Craig** (Ph.D.) is a professor of History at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada, where he teaches American history and serves as the Maritime Representative for the Canadian Association For Security and Intelligence Studies (CASIS). Prior to moving to Canada Craig was the director of the National Coalition for History, a Washington D.C.-based advocacy organization that represents the historical and archival community on Capitol Hill. While there he led the successful effort to unseal the records of the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). His suit "Craig v. USA" paved the way for unsealing grand jury records for the purpose of scholarly historical research. To that end, last year, he prepared the lead historical brief for the National Security Archive's successful effort to unseal the grand jury records of the Ethel and Julius Rosenberg espionage case. Craig has written extensively on Cold War espionage and is the author of *Treasonable Doubt: The Harry Dexter White Espionage Case* (University Press of Kansas; 2004). He is currently writing a biography of American State Department official and alleged Soviet spy, Alger Hiss.

**Ronald Radosh** is Professor Emeritus, City University of New York. Radosh has published a number of books on American communism and Soviet espionage, most notably with Joyce Milton, *The Rosenberg File* (1997), *Commies: A Journey through the Old Left, the New Left, and the Leftover Left* (2001), *Red Star Over Hollywood: The Film Colony's Long Romance with the Left* (2005), and *Spain Betrayed: The Soviet Union and the Spanish Civil War* (2001). He is currently the author with Allis Radosh of *A Safe Haven: Harry S. Truman and the Founding of Israel* (2009).

**Katherine A. S. Sibley** is professor and chair of the History Department at Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. Her most recent book is a revisionist biography, *First Lady Florence Kling Harding: Behind the Tragedy and Controversy* (2009). She is also the author of *Red Spies in America: Stolen Secrets and the Dawn of the Cold War* (2004); *The Cold War* (1998) and the prize-winning *Loans and Legitimacy: The Evolution of Soviet-American Relations, 1919-1933* (1996). Sibley edits a book series, the *History of International Relations, Diplomacy, and Intelligence*, with Republic of Letters Publishers in the Netherlands, and serves on the editorial boards of *Diplomatic History* and *American Communist History*, as well as on the Historical Advisory Committee for the U.S. State Department. She received her PhD at the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1991.

**G. Edward White** is the David and Mary Harrison Distinguished Professor of Law at the University of Virginia Law School. He received a Ph.D. at Yale University (1967) and a J.D. at Harvard Law School (1970). White's 13 published books have won numerous honors and awards. These include final listing for the Pulitzer Prize in history, the Silver Gavel Award from the American Bar Association, the James Willard Hurst Prize from the Law & Society Association, the Littleton-Griswold Prize from the American Historical Association, the Scribes Award, and Association of American Law Schools's Triennial Book Award, and the Association of American Law Schools's Coif Book Award. White's books have garnered 14 such honors and awards since 1976. White is the author of *History and the Constitution* (2007); *The American Judicial Tradition: Profiles of Leading American Judges* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; 2007); and *The Constitution and the New Deal* (2000); and *Alger Hiss's Looking-Glass Wars: The Covert Life of a Soviet Spy* (2004)

Before delivering my comments on these papers, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the conference organizers—John Haynes and Harvey Klehr in particular—for inviting me. I am actually rather surprised, after all, in their tendentious book *In Denial: Historians, Communism & Espionage* I'm characterized as that person who crafted "the most sophisticated and detailed effort to justify Soviet espionage" written to date—*Treasonable Doubt: The Harry Dexter White Spy Case*.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps that is a portent of comments to come! But in all seriousness, I am pleased to be here today to comment on these papers and the important new evidential revelations provided us by Alexander Vassiliev's work in the KGB archives.

There is insufficient time to address in detail many of the allegations and conclusions advanced in the papers today and I do not intend to use my very limited time to argue whether, for example, the evidence advanced by Max Holland is sufficient to warrant the conclusion that I.F. Stone was a Soviet spy, or whether Edward Mark has made a strong enough case to conclude that we have a "final verdict" on the case of Alger Hiss. That is a chore for future researchers who, at this moment, I'm sure are critically pouring the over 1,115 pages of notebook transcriptions that Vassiliev generously donated to the Library of Congress. Though some of us may take issue with aspects of the Haynes/Klehr/Vassiliev read on the evidence, I'm sure we all can agree that Vassiliev deserves our thanks for the donation and making his research notebooks available without restriction.

Suffice it to say, that in preparing my comments I have studied not only the papers delivered today and relevant chapters in *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America*<sup>2</sup> but also every scrap of the raw data evidence that Vassiliev has recorded on I.F. Stone, Ernest Hemingway, Harry Dexter White, Michael Straight, and of course the subject of the biography I'm working on, Alger Hiss. I found it particularly revealing to name-search each individual, then print out all the relevant citations to that person, organize the citations chronologically, and then study them in detail. By doing so, I got a very different read on some of these individuals than did Haynes and Klehr—especially with respect to Harry Dexter White, I.F. Stone, several other of the so-called "journalist spies," and a number of minor characters discussed in chapter four. In summary, while it may not be reflected in the pages of *Spies*, the Vassiliev notebooks provide ample opportunity for disagreement over the interpretation of evidence.

Much of what appears in *Spies* and two of the papers presented today is not new but was first revealed by Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev in *The Haunted Wood* a decade back. Granted citations have been more thoroughly fleshed out and there is a greater richness in detail in *Spies*. What I find interesting though, is that, from hindsight, because of the release of the Vassiliev notebooks, we now know that many of the criticisms advanced

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<sup>1</sup> John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, *In Denial: Historians, Communism & Espionage* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2003), 212.

<sup>2</sup> John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), hereafter *Spies*.



by critics of *The Haunted Wood* were well founded: that Professor Weinstein was working in the dark, so to speak—that he never saw a single document; that he had access only to document summaries compiled by Vassiliev and that these sixteen essays (or rather) “sanitized chapters” were written by Vassiliev and approved by an SVR declassification committee” before being turned over the Weinstein for rewrite.<sup>3</sup> Given these shortcomings and today, with ready access to the Vassiliev notebooks themselves, *The Haunted Wood* is perhaps best relegated to the dustbin of history.

Frankly, from my perspective, the field of espionage history is greatly enriched not so much by the two books generated to date based on the Vassiliev materials, but rather by the Vassiliev notebooks themselves. Though Vassiliev was selective in what he chose to record in his notebooks, though reflective of an incomplete documentary record in which entire paragraphs and pages of a single document are not transcribed, and though the summaries can never be considered 100% reliable due to possible transcription errors, nevertheless, they do provide us with one of the most insightful and useful records of KGB espionage activities in America available to date.

To this end, I join the *Spies* authors in their recognition that the ideal situation would be for the KGB’s First Main Directorate successor organization—Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR)—to open its archives of KGB documents so that researchers can gain access to the actual documentation<sup>4</sup> rather than deal with Vassiliev’s incomplete transcriptions and mere summaries of the originals he thought important enough to note. Why is this so important? Because the notebooks alone are not and never will constitute “definitive evidence” for any thoughtful professional historian who abides by the canons of his/her profession. Section 2 (“Shared Values of Historians”) of the *American Historical Association Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct* (2005) provides that “historians believe in honoring the integrity of the historical record,” which, in our profession translates into making it possible for all historians to have access to the primary documentation used by a particular historian (in this case Vassiliev) to reach his/her conclusions. With respect to the notebooks, this is not possible nor is it likely to be in the near future. This creates huge problems.<sup>5</sup>

Herein lies the problem we face with the Vassiliev notebooks: because no historian can check the raw documentation seen by and only by Vassiliev, no scholar of espionage worth his salt can, in all good conscience, ever consider any conclusion based *exclusively* on the unverifiable evidence gleaned from the Vassiliev notebooks as “conclusive.” Evidence found in the Vassiliev notebooks is best used with and/or as corroborative of other verifiable evidence.

Another problem I see in *Spies* (and frankly because of its selectivity this applies to the notebooks as well) is that the narrative serves to exaggerate KGB successes. As examples, the evidence of alleged espionage presented on I.F Stone, Michael Straight, Bernard

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<sup>3</sup> *Spies*, xiii.

<sup>4</sup> *Spies*, xii.

<sup>5</sup> For the standards see <http://www.historians.org/pubs/Free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm>.

Redmont, and Ernest Hemingway for whom a new category of Soviet agent status has been created—“Dilettante Spy”—hardly seem convincing. Regarding Ernest Hemingway, the notebooks suggest that meetings with ARGO [Hemingway] were conducted “with the aim of studying him and determining his potential for our work” and that “throughout the period of his connection with us ARGO did not give us any poli. Information.” And then we have the authors’ own conclusion that “there is no evidence that Hemingway did any actual work for the KGB.” How then is it that they can possibly justify branding Hemingway as a spy?<sup>6</sup>

On to the papers....John Fox’s “What the Spiders Did”<sup>7</sup> provides an excellent example of the type of work that hopefully will emerge from the Vassiliev notebooks. This paper is rich in historical context and with the evidence garnered, Fox neatly puts counterintelligence (CI) into more nuanced perspective. His use of the Vassiliev notebooks is exemplary.

Edward Mark’s paper “In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict”<sup>8</sup> perhaps would be better titled, “Why ALES is Not Wilder Foote” as the author focuses not so much of the evidence in the Vassiliev notebooks that address Alger Hiss’s connections to Soviet intelligence, but rather he narrowly focuses on two inter-related questions: Was the former diplomat ever a spy for the Soviet Union? and (in a spirited and convincing response to Kai Bird and Svetlana Chervonnaya recent article<sup>9</sup>) “Was he the ALES of Venona’s Cable No 1822?” Mark’s conclusions confirm long-standing charges that Hiss indeed did have some connection with Soviet intelligence, and to this end, Mark concludes that there is a final answer: “Alger Hiss was an agent of the GRU in the 1930s.”<sup>10</sup>

If we take the Vassiliev notebooks literally though, what they actually demonstrate is that the KGB *was under the impression* that Hiss was connected to “the neighbors” —the KGB’s fraternal military intelligence organization, the GRU. Though I personally find Mark’s overarching conclusion convincing, the notebooks do not provide sufficient independent corroborating evidence (other than a few hearsay statements—see discussion below regarding problems in interpreting hearsay evidence) to establish the nature of his connection with the GRU. The notebooks certainly suggest that there was a relationship of some kind (perhaps a relationship described by Max Holland in his paper as (in Russian) *istochnik razvedyvatelnoy informatsii* or literally meaning a “source of intelligence information.” But as to the exact nature of that relationship in the lexicon of Soviet intelligence—(i.e. confidential source, confidential contact [“less than an agent but something more than a source”<sup>11</sup>], “agent of influence,” or full-red-blooded “probationer”—well, because of the paucity of information we are left pretty much in the dark.

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<sup>6</sup> *Spies*, 152-155; “throughout the period...quote at 154; “there is no...” quote at 153.

<sup>7</sup> John Fox, “What the Spiders Did: U.S. and Soviet Counterintelligence Before the Cold War,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*: 11:3 (Summer 2009): 206-224.

<sup>8</sup> Edward Mark, “In Re Alger Hiss: A Final Verdict from the Archives of the KGB,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*: 11:3 (Summer 2009): 26-67.

<sup>9</sup> See Kai Bird and Svetlana Chervonnaya, “The Mystery of ALES,” *American Scholar* (Summer 2007).

<sup>10</sup> Mark, paper, 28-29; “Alger Hiss...quote, 37.

<sup>11</sup> Max Holland, “I.F. Stone: Encounters with Soviet Intelligence,” *Journal of Cold War Studies*: 11:3 (Summer 2009): 159, and discussed in his footnote 13 at 147.

Max Holland's paper<sup>12</sup>, advances an allegation that I.F. Stone had a "meaningful relationship" with the Soviet underground.<sup>13</sup> Holland tells the story well, pointing out the inconsistencies of the tales told by Oleg Kalugin (who shared the knack of many former KGB agents for tailoring his story according to what he believed his audience wanted to hear), especially his various contradictory statements regarding his relationship with Stone. In his discussion of the evidence provided by the Venona decrypts, Holland also seems to agree with Haynes and Klehr's concession in their fine book on *Venona* that there is no evidence in VENONA that Stone was ever recruited by the KGB. Holland is thus left with the burden of having to present new evidence from the Vassiliev notebooks to support the Right's age-old generalized thesis regarding Stone.

The problem is that the bold categorical assertions that Holland makes are not sufficiently supported by the evidence. For example, that "Stone passed along *privileged information* [emphasis added] that might be deemed useful for intelligence purposes"<sup>14</sup> is a statement marginally justified on the basis of the contents of two passing Vassiliev notebook references discussed in the paper—that Stone passed to a KGB operative gossip about his nemesis William Randolph Hearst and that Stone had the ability to connect the son of an American ambassador to Germany with an anti-Fascist organization in Berlin<sup>15</sup>—such communications (in my mind at least) hardly can be construed to impart information that would be particularly useful for intelligence purposes. No, the totality of potentially damning new evidence relating to Stone boils down to the contents of one uncorroborated message where one reads that, "relations with Pancake [Stone] have entered "the channel of normal operational work"—language strongly suggestive that Stone indeed had entered into agent status.<sup>16</sup>

Now, I find it hard to believe that Stone would *not* have met with and shared information with Vladimir Pravdin who, after all fronted as a Tass correspondent. In Stone's line of work, interaction with Tass and other nations' American correspondents would be part and parcel with his day to day professional activities; the contents of the two memos are the type of information that journalists would share and discuss while having a coffee at some greasy spoon restaurant or while sipping on a vodka at a sleazy bar. Bottom line, to conclude that Stone was a Soviet agent relying on this one suggestive message seems highly suspect.

And herein lies the heart of the problem with much of the evidence cited from the Vassiliev notebooks—questionable and at times faulty interpretation of what constitutes historical fact. It is especially challenging, for example, to determine who actually was in an "agent" status at a particular time when so often the notebook entries reflect contradictory evidence relating to the exact status of an individual (such as Stone) who from time to time

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<sup>12</sup> Max Holland, "I.F. Stone: Encounters with Soviet Intelligence," *Journal of Cold War Studies*: 11:3 (Summer 2009): 144-205).

<sup>13</sup> Holland, paper, 145.

<sup>14</sup> Holland, paper, 144.

<sup>15</sup> Holland, paper, 162-165.

<sup>16</sup> Letter dated 20.5.36, KGB file 3463 v. 1 p. 283, in Vassiliev Black notebook, 23; see also *Spies* at 150 and Holland paper, 162-163.

is characterized as both a “source” and/or an “agent”. Holland’s use of the notebook “evidence” is illustrative of the inherent difficulties in interpreting piecemeal, incomplete documentation.

Because so much in the Vassiliev notebooks is reflecting hearsay evidence, in order to help establish what can be relied upon as fact in the notebooks, I see a need for historians of espionage to consider applying a higher level of historical proof than many historians are perhaps used to. Since lives and reputations are on the line, before branding someone a communist, an espionage agent, or treasonous—well, we had better be sure we have reliable evidence to justify such allegations and/or conclusions.

As I wrote in *Treasonable Doubt*: “The American legal system employs two basic standards of proof: “proof beyond a reasonable doubt” and proof based on “the preponderance of evidence.” The former generally applies in criminal cases, the latter in civil suits. In cases of suspected espionage, application of these standards often proves difficult given the indirect nature of the evidence that the historian of espionage often has to grapple with and assess.... To this end the historian’s charge is to establish that the preponderance of evidence directly links the accused with evidence suggestive of espionage...and...he must demonstrate that the collective evidence, comprised of direct and indirect evidence (including circumstantial evidence) is ‘clear and convincing’...[thereby establishing ] that the accused engaged in a criminal act.”<sup>17</sup>

To me, the standard of proof that scholars of espionage should strive to meet in determining guilt or innocence in espionage should begin with the presumption that one cannot be found guilty of a crime without sufficient proof: that standard of proof being independent corroboration by at least two eye-witness (or first person) accounts or one eye witness account plus independent corroborating written evidence (such as the documentary evidence that the Baltimore Papers provided in the Alger Hiss case). Evidence such as this was presented during the Hiss perjury trials and was clear and convincing to the jurors and ultimately resulted in Hiss’s conviction.

Lawyers know that eye-witness accounts are often unreliable and cannot be taken alone at face value. In the realm of historical espionage research, eye-witness accounts often take the form of memoirs often written years after the events being remembered actually occurred. At times, faulty recollections are innocent enough, but especially in the genre of espionage, memoirs also reflect hidden agendas and motives. They can and do contain deliberate lies, false and questionable statements. As examples, we need look no further than the memoirs of Communist agent runners including Markus Wolf and Vitali Pavlov.<sup>18</sup>

In law school, I was taught that among the best evidence is *circumstantial* evidence. It can take the form of *direct* and at times *indirect* evidence but in both cases evidence is relatively

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<sup>17</sup> R. Bruce Craig, *Treasonable Doubt: The Harry Dexter White Spy Case* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 265-66.

<sup>18</sup> See Markus Wolf, *Man Without a Face: The Autobiography of Communism’s Greatest Spymaster* (New York: Random House/Times Books, 1997) and Vitali Pavlov, *Operatsia Sneg* (Moscow: Gaia Iterum, 1996).

free of human opinion or subjectivity. Though John Haynes cringes when we periodically discuss this issue, I have long held that some of the basic legal standards that are accepted in every court of law can and should be applied when historians assess certain types of historical evidence relating to espionage cases. Certain guidelines basic to the criminal court system—such as Rule 30 of the Federal Rules of Evidence relating to presumption of innocence—can easily be applied when assessing the charge of espionage. I’m not suggesting that we make historians into judges and lawyers when assessing evidence, but I am suggesting a common sense approach that would enable us to avoid giving too much credence to potentially misleading questionable historical evidence.<sup>19</sup>

To this end, if we slightly modify and apply a few basic common sense principles of legal evidence assessment to the Vassiliev notebooks, one can more easily separate the wheat from the chaff, determine fact from fantasy and separate truth from fiction.

Here are my modest suggestions: First, Rule 1002 of the Federal Rules of Evidence provides for the “requirement of the original” in which “to prove the context of a writing, recording, or photograph, *the original* [emphasis added] writing, recording or photograph is required.” In the case of the Vassiliev notebooks, we have no original documents; all that is presented to us is a highly selective and incomplete record of select documents in the KGB archives. Hence, our first guiding principle should be that all conclusions made based on evidence in the notebooks *should be viewed as tentative and potentially suspect and always subject to corroborating documentation* by reliable independent sources.

What I’m suggesting is that a stronger case for reliability of evidence reflected in the Vassiliev notebooks can be made when it is corroborated with evidence found in other independent sources (i.e. the VENONA decrypts) or first person memoirs. A conclusion based on a hearsay statement or two in the Vassiliev notebooks alone is insufficient proof.

Second, by combining aspects of Rule 602 Federal Rules of Evidence relating to “lack of personal knowledge” and Rule 801-802 relating to “hearsay” (“a statement other than one made by the declaring”) the principle we should apply in assessing the reliability of an account in the notebooks is that a “witness has personal knowledge of the matter.” This relates to a foundation principle in the American system of justice: except in a handful of situations, “hearsay” is inadmissible. With respect to the interpretation of statements in the Vassiliev notebooks, we are confronted with a major problem in that most of the evidence is hearsay in nature. I suggest then that we need to recognize that there exists a hierarchy of hearsay evidence that reflects the relative potential accuracy of witness statements.

Let me explain....There seems to be several types of evidence presented in the notebooks with each possessing varying degrees of reliability:

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<sup>19</sup> For the discussion that follows, see “Federal Rules of Evidence,” Cornell University Law School Legal Information Institute at <http://www.law.cornell.edu/rules/fre/rules.htm>.

1. First hand statements made by Moscow Center officials with access to documentary file evidence;
2. First hand statements made by Soviet spymasters in KGB field offices who are actually running agents;
3. Hearsay statements by Moscow Center officials and Soviet spymasters;
4. Hearsay statements by field agents and/or their sources;
5. Hearsay statements by agents or sources based on hearsay statements collected by Soviet agents and/or sources (I characterize this particular type of hearsay evidence as “third-hand hearsay revelation” and it is, obviously, they are the least reliable of all.)

Each of these statement types are found in plentiful numbers in the Vassiliev notebooks. When evaluating Vassiliev’s notebook evidence the source of each statement can and should be evaluated and objectively tested for its potential reliability. Common sense dictates that a first hand statement based on a personal interaction by a spymaster with the agent he is running is likely to be far more accurate than third-hand hearsay statement reported by a source or probationer far removed. The problem in *Spies* and several of the papers presented at this conference is that they give equal weight to all types of statements; therein lies a serious potential pitfall in document interpretation.

For example, the Hede Massing’s report that states that “[Hiss] is a communist.” In the transcription of “Redhead’s message, we can see at the beginning of this message that this message constitutes a “Note from “Redhead” who states, “Our friend Ernst [Field] ...related to me the following incident.” Here we have a classic example of the least authoritative type of transmission—a third-hand hearsay revelation—a report by a spymaster [Iskhak Akhmerov] filtered through the eyes of Hede Massing who is relating what she supposedly heard from her source, Ernest [Noel Field].<sup>20</sup>

Another example, this one from *Spies* occurs in the author’s discussion of Michael Straight. In one message, recruiter/spotter Anthony Blunt characterizes Strait as “an extremely devoted member of the Party and completely dependable.” However, Akhmerov relates a different story to Moscow Center: that “Nigel [Straight] is not so firm and established a Party member as you write about him.” Vasily Zarubin (who has no recent first-hand knowledge at all) then weighs in and comments on Straight by stating his opinion that “he [Straight] is a very valuable source who has vast connections in the U.S. industrial financial and political circles” and then urges the KGB field office to “cultivate these connections.”<sup>21</sup>

So who are we to believe, Blunt, Akhmerov, or Zarubin? Well, in this case we are fortunate to have Akmerov’s (who is in personal contact with Straight) summary assessment—that “NIGELS behaviour indicates that he is trying to get rid of us...he has turned into a

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<sup>20</sup> See ‘Note from “Redhead” appended to a KGB New York letter, 26 April 1936, KGB file 36857, v.1 at 23 and reverse Vassiliev, Yellow notebook #2 at 4; see also *Spies* at 6-7 and Mark, paper at 33.

<sup>21</sup> *Spies*, “an extremely devoted...”, quote at 245; “Nigel is not so firm...”, quote at 247-48; “he is a very valuable source...”, 250.

bourgeois apologist with liberal-progressive phraseology”—a blunt way of stating that Straight isn't agent material any more, if he ever was.<sup>22</sup>

Clearly Akmerov's description of Straight's status with the KGB is based on his repeated first-hand contact with the potential agent and is probably a pretty reliable report. Yet, in a later message the still hopeful Akhmerov continues to characterize Straight as a probationer: “Nevertheless, we are trying to keep him as our probationer in the hope of deriving some benefit from him.”<sup>23</sup>

This statement I think raises another fundamental problem I alluded to earlier in my comments with respect to the interpretation of just who and what is a probationer (agent) versus a “source” or potential recruit. Suffice it to say, the Vassiliev notebooks document that KGB officers and agents often used these terms loosely (often interchangeably) thus creating problems in keeping straight who is in what type of source or in what type of agent status at a particular time. The result is that like passages of the Bible, we can't take everything in the Vassiliev notebooks too literally. Max Holland addresses this potential pitfall in his paper admirably and since my time is running short, I best stop here.

I'm sorry to dwell so long on the challenges in interpretation of the contents of the Vassiliev notebooks, but I think these points are important to discuss, as they reflect some of the problems and pitfalls in not approaching historical evidence with a sufficiently skeptical and critical eye.

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<sup>22</sup>*Spies*, 251.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

The area of investigation by the authors on the panel on “Atomic and Technical Espionage”—Steve Usdin, Gregg Herken, and Roberts S. Norris, that will produce much commentary concerns Soviet atomic espionage at the Manhattan Project, and includes new material on the work carried out by the Soviet network established by the atomic spy Julius Rosenberg. Despite much new material released in the years since the very first Venona release in 1995, which has led even Robert and Michael Meeropol, the Rosenberg’s sons, to acknowledge that their father was obviously a Soviet spy, the defenders of the Rosenbergs have developed a new fallback position. They argue, as do the Meeropols, that their mother was innocent, and although their father served in a Soviet network, he produced nothing harmful and only passed on seemingly insignificant industrial espionage. Principally, they assert he was not an atom spy, and that he and their mother were framed in order for the U.S. government to provide a scapegoat for the actual spies like Klaus Fuchs, whom they were not able to prosecute in America. Hence, they were still victims of a political witch-hunt against the anti Cold War left-wing.

Here, I take exception to Greg Herken’s view that Rosenberg was simply bumbling and was “executed for the wrong thing.” I do not think he should have been executed, but although most of his work was on radar fuses and the like, he headed the ring, and his compatriots reported to him. So he was, in fact, an atomic spy.

First, the authors reveal that Rosenberg had recruited another atomic spy than his brother-in-law David Greenglass. A hitherto unknown engineer named Russell McNutt was not only brought into espionage by Rosenberg, but he instructed him to seek work in the area of atomic energy and the bomb. While Greenglass was by chance assigned by the Army to work on the bomb assembly, McNutt was recruited on Rosenberg’s “initiative ...to cultivate ‘Enormous.’” (the Manhattan Project) where he worked on the design of the massive K-25 uranium separation at the Kellogg design office in New York—which had the contract for building the massive atom facility at Oak Ridge, Tennessee. An agent who lived undetected, he later became a Vice President of Gulf-Reston and helped develop the planned community in Reston, Virginia. He ended his career as a chief engineer at Gulf Oil. Some spies did very well in America.

The files also reveal that Ethel Rosenberg was fully involved in the recruitment of her sister-in-law and brother, and was not an innocent figure. As for David Greenglass, it has long been claimed that whatever information he gave the Soviets was primitive and hence inconsequential. New evidence is provided proving this completely false. While not as important as that given to the Soviets by Fuchs and Theodore Hall, both physicists, KGB chief Leonid Kvasnikov noted that the information provided by all three “mutually overlap.” A report from the New York KGB station revealed that Greenglass gave them a floor plan and sketches of buildings, material on preparation of a uranium bomb, calculations on a structure solution for obtaining U 235 which they called “highly valuable,” and a description of the bomb. As the authors write: “It was an impressive list of materials from an Army sergeant with only a limited technical education.” Moreover, citing a report



of Anatoly Yatskov, they reveal for the first time that Greenglass gave Rosenberg, while on furlough in September of 1945, the actual “model of ... a detonator” for the fuse of the bomb’s explosive substance that was built in his workshop. He did not give them, as previously thought, only a primitive sketch of the mechanism. So Julius Rosenberg *was* an atomic spy, contrary to those who minimize his network’s importance, and his brother-in-law David Greenglass gave the Soviets valuable and important material.

Once Greenglass was arrested and became a cooperative witness, the KGB developed the entire American left-wing defense strategy that would be employed to the letter by the Rosenberg defense group. The KGB instructed that “it would be preferable to publish articles about the trial first and foremost in the non-Communist press,” and to emphasize the trial as an exercise in “coarse anti-Soviet propaganda” and to shift blame for the Korean war away from the United States and “onto Jews and Communists,” as well as an attempt to turn America into a fascist country. They also suggested emphasizing the horror of the planned execution of a mother of two “because of some villainous brother’s slanderous denunciation,” thus emphasizing the immorality of the death sentence. They also said defenders should develop the argument that there are no real atomic secrets. Such advice came from a nation that executed “enemies of the people” and threw dissenters into the Gulag without a trial, and that sought by every means to steal the atomic secrets that supposedly did not exist.

Moreover, the Rosenberg network was a key part of the Soviet’s so-called “XY line,” the KGB’s name for networks seeking scientific, technical and industrial data. It was in this area that Morton Sobell, who recently confessed that he was a spy, and others previously unknown like Nathan Sussman, worked. The group gave the Soviets data on radar, radio, aerodynamics, sonar and jet fighters. Physicist William Perl in particular gave them documents on long-distance jet fighter planes, and blueprints of the Lockheed P-80 jet fighter. His data was used to jump-start Soviet jet fighter development that surprised the American Air Force in Korea when they faced highly effective Soviet MIGs.

Material found by Klehr and Haynes in Vasiliev’s notebooks also confirms a point that was made by us in *The Rosenberg File* in 1983, and for which we were severely condemned. We argued that the evidence suggests that while he was working at Columbia University, scientist William Perl, a part of Rosenberg’s ring, took classified data from Herbert Von Karman’s safe, copied it and returned the material to the safe, and transmitted it to the Soviets. The KGB files prove that this indeed was the case.

In a review of *Spies* in *The Nation*, D.D. Guttenplan revels in the fact that the 1930s offered a chance for activism by “unabashed radicals who realized that the machinery of the state was available for what seemed like revolutionary ends, and proceeded to use it.”<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, though, rather than work on fixing problems at home in America, a good number of these radicals—men and women like Lawrence Duggan, Abraham Glasser, Martha Dodd, and Alger Hiss, to name a few—were more eager to use their government access to assist the Kremlin in pursuing *its* “revolutionary ends.” Ironically, just as they did so, the Soviet state was turning “counter-revolutionary”; by 1937 it was busily cutting off own limbs, as the Notebooks show, in a “wrecking” enterprise that sent Soviet intelligence agents around the world, mostly decent men carrying out the bidding of a flawed state, to the Gulag, their deaths, or both, flummoxing many of Russia’s loyal American acolytes. And when Stalin actually experienced *real* counterrevolutionary agents bent on his destruction in 1941, to rebuild their espionage efforts he and his government had no choice but to rely on those “radicals” who’d stuck with them through the dark years of Pactdom, people like Julius Rosenberg, a find indeed, but also the more mercurial Communist Elizabeth Bentley— whose later betrayal helped to gut the entire effort.

“We now know” so much more about this work of the 1930s and 1940s thanks to the transcriptions of intelligence agent and journalist Alexander Vassiliev, whose notebooks and the works they have inspired both in print and at this conference give us a much fuller picture of Soviet espionage than we have ever had before. Not only do the Notebooks give a nail-in-the-coffin confirmation that certain controversial figures spied (Hiss, for instance) but they convincingly show that they spied *longer* than we had realized, and, that there were more of them than we ever knew: Russ McNutt, Boris Podolsky, and Nathan Sussman, in the atomic and aviation worlds, to name three of the discoveries here. We learn, too, that other less known spies, like Ludwig Lore and David Salmon, spied for the money—Soviet spies of this era were thus not *only* driven by their “unabashed radicalism”, à la Julius and Ethel. And we now have the fullest understanding yet of J. Robert Oppenheimer’s relationship to the Communist party, which never included espionage. John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, who have now published Vassiliev’s findings in a new book, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America*, tell a page-turning story here, making their characters come to life. Thus, we read of Lawrence Duggan’s demons; Elizabeth Bentley’s loneliness; William Wiesband’s arrogance; and Nathan Gregory “the madman” Silvermaster’s passions (of many kinds). Such details, corroborating what is already known from FBI files and Venona, as well as other sources, make the Notebooks’ veracity compelling. So too does their provenance, coming from the pen of a Russian intelligence agent with privileged access to KGB files who knew little at the time of what American scholars knew of Soviet espionage—yet has names and dates and deeds which fit in glove-like fashion. Controversies remain, of course, over the interpretation of these findings, as well as over the standards of proof required by historians (as opposed to

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<sup>1</sup> D.D. Guttenplan, “Red Harvest” *The Nation* (May 25, 2009), 33.

government prosecutors) to adequately demonstrate espionage, as the conference proceedings' lengthy discussions revealed.

The “hesitations” of spy Lawrence Duggan,<sup>2</sup> chief of the State Department’s Division of the American Republics, are an example of this rich biographical detail in the Notebooks, and help underline the importance of these new materials. Hearing of the heads rolling at the top of the Red Army in early July 1937, Duggan was quite logically alarmed, worried that his materials had been going into hands of traitors—men who could now expose him. How could he now trust the Soviet government, allowing such treasonous people into its ranks—what an “incomprehensible nightmare” it all seemed to him. Reassured by his handler, Norman Borodin, that the bad hats were gone, Duggan grudgingly agreed to continue, “palpably ambivalent.” As Borodin well knew, Duggan couldn’t be pushed too hard; appeals to his “moral obligation” would appall his sense of rectitude and send him running.<sup>3</sup> But he was burned all the same—if not by those phantom crooks in the Gulag. In October, 1939, he was confronted by the evidence of Whittaker Chambers, a true defector, whose testimony to Adolf A. Berle, assistant secretary of state in charge of security, revealed Duggan’s work for the Soviet Union. Berle told his fellow Harvard alum to find another job—all very gentlemanly. But Sumner Welles, Duggan’s old mentor, intervened, and Duggan stayed on. Still, the quality of his output declined on the topic of American military sales abroad; Duggan continued to require much handholding—six hour meetings sometimes, to settle him down. His angst did not go away, either; in November 1940, while Duggan consoled himself that the FBI were “like children lost in the woods,” he nonetheless continued to worry that “all the phones in Washington are tapped.”<sup>4</sup> Duggan’s anxieties give us a window to a struggling U.S. KGB station in the dark days of the Nazi-Soviet pact era, as it tried to hang on to its spooked American contacts while many other “countrymen” jumped ship, and its own intelligence staffs were gutted.

As Duggan’s worries illustrate, the Notebooks also give us a fuller picture of American counterintelligence from the perspective of its Soviet targets, a subject that drew diverse reactions among the panelists at the conference. Haynes, Klehr, and Vassiliev suggest in *Spies* that the FBI did not “turn its full attention to the Soviet intelligence threat” until the mid 1940s, and that American “incompetence and indifference” were responsible for so many spies getting away with it, resulting in the FBI “devot[ing] scant resources to counterintelligence.”<sup>5</sup> Steven Usdin goes further, and calls the government’s response to Soviet agents an “immense failure...embodied in the Rosenberg case.” Yet as Haynes and Klehr’s article itself suggests, the Notebooks also highlight the KGB’s *own* failures in the face of an American response. For instance, they note that the FBI’s “initiatives” required the KGB to recruit Judith Coplon to redress in 1945. And Usdin himself points out that the

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<sup>2</sup> Vassiliev Notebooks, *Yellow #2*, 19.

<sup>3</sup> Vassiliev Notebooks, *Yellow #2*, 15, 29.

<sup>4</sup> Vassiliev Notebooks, *Yellow #2*, 15, 28

<sup>5</sup> John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 547, 484.

Notebooks show that U.S. surveillance made the KGB “jittery”<sup>6</sup> – perhaps for this reason a Jello Box top truly was an appropriate recognition device at Los Alamos.

John Fox goes further, showing an increasingly effective response to Soviet inroads as a consequence of the evolution of American counterintelligence practices during the war.<sup>7</sup> Fox concedes that the Bureau’s successes were often limited, and indeed the FBI did miss much, a consequence of limited staff and a low priority given to Soviet espionage in the White House. All the same, its efforts had some results, and it is the Vassiliev Notebooks—which I wish I’d had access to a few years ago, when all they’d let me look at were materials from the 1920s, and dry ones at that—are compelling evidence of this.

Of course, Harry Gold, the Rosenbergs and Greenglasses, Morton Sobell, Max Elitcher, and the newly named Russell McNutt, all eluded discovery during the war. So did Ted Hall, Max Saville, and of course, Klaus Fuchs, all while the FBI and military intelligence obsessed about J. Robert Oppenheimer. And William Perl and Alfred Sarant and Joel Barr went on their merry way as well, the latter to the strains of Messiaen. Some record of intelligence gathering.

But...not so fast. Julius Rosenberg *was* shut down, we learn here. His party membership raised red flags for the “Hut,” or FBI, who told Army officials to pull him from his position in the Signal Corps when his card-carrying came to light in late 1944, despite his earlier denials. He easily got another job—engineers were in high demand in war time—from whence he stole a large fuse for his handler, Alexander Feklisov. All the same, Soviet intelligence worried that he was now on the FBI’s radar, and thus put in danger any intelligence work he might do; “the competitors (FBI) could have in their possession other incriminating information about him,” they noted, and its officers deactivated Rosenberg in March 1945 and reorganized his network.<sup>8</sup> This was over-hasty; the FBI had no notion of his espionage; indeed, disregarding the clues that Elizabeth Bentley gave the Bureau later that year about him and his whereabouts, agents did not storm Knickerbocker Village until the Fuchs case broke in 1950.

Even if Rosenberg’s involuntary hiatus in intelligence gathering did not stop him from getting another job in a sensitive post, or returning to espionage later, his being put on ice surely has to suggest that American counterintelligence was not completely “incompetent” in hampering the progress of Soviet agents in the United States during World War II. And the Notebooks show too that this was no isolated incident for the Bureau. In *Spies* there are numerous examples of counterintelligence efficacy: in the case of spies who were watched without KGB knowledge (e.g., Andrei Shevchenko); spies who worried about FBI

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<sup>6</sup> John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr, “Alexander Vassiliev’s Notebooks and the Documentation of Soviet Intelligence Activities in the United States,” *Journal of Cold War Studies* 11:3 (Summer 2009): 7, 14; Steven Usdin, “The Rosenberg Ring Revealed: Industrial-Scale Conventional and Nuclear Espionage,” *ibid.*, 23, 28.

<sup>7</sup> Fox, “What the Spiders Did: U.S. and Soviet Counterintelligence before the Cold War,” *ibid.*, 21. Here he confirms the work of Raymond Batvinis, *The Origins of FBI Counterintelligence* (Lawrence: The University Press of Kansas, 2007).

<sup>8</sup> Vassiliev Notebook, *Black*, 132; Haynes, Klehr, and Vassiliev, *Spies*, 340.

monitoring even when it was not present (thus implying the Bureau's influence, if nothing else, e.g. Duncan Lee); and most importantly, spies who were in situations that the KGB determined were risky to exposure or even failure, and thus called for temporary or permanent severing of contact with them (for example, Abraham Glasser).

Taking a look at the chemists and engineers and scientists of the XY line, abashed and unabashed, we can see this. *Spies* Chapter 6 includes sections on twelve groups and individuals: the Rosenberg ring; Feklisov's other sources, "Block and Serb"; "Solid" (James Hibben); "Talent" (William Malisoff) and his sources; "Good Vibrations" (the musician, Leon Theremin); "Blerio" (Stanislav Shumovsky) and his network; Arseny (Andrei Shevchenko at Bell Aircraft); Thomas Black; Richard Briggs and Alfred Slack; the vengeful spy, William Stapler; Armand Labis Feldman's group; and Vendor's Group. Of these dozen groups all told, fully half (Rosenberg's group, Malisoff's, Shumovsky's, Shevchenko's, Stapler's, and Feldman's) were delimited, deactivated, or otherwise distressed by FBI efforts. Bungling and incompetent the gumshoes and G-men may have been in catching spies—but this record is no "failure."<sup>9</sup> If half of the industrial and technical spy groups were compromised, delayed, or otherwise diverted from their goals, this was no small victory for American security in a porous period.<sup>10</sup>

And when the atomic spies and those who serviced them are added in, characters like Steve Nelson, Clarence Hiskey, Arthur Adams, Semyon Semonov, Joseph Woodrow Weinberg, Giovanni Rossi Lomanitz, David Bohm, Gregori Kheifetz, Zalman Franklin and Vassily Zarubin, were all monitored, muted, or otherwise reassigned (Weinberg, Lomanitz and Bohm, off the Manhattan project; Kheifets and Semyonov, back to Russia; Hiskey, to Yukon). This group of 10, added to the 20-odd identified in the XY line chapter, makes a total of at least *thirty* spies whose industrial and atomic work would have otherwise gone further to assist the Soviet cause if the FBI had been more somnolent or the KGB less sensitive to its powers. Indeed, beginning with the arrest of Gaik Ovakimian in 1941, to the successful "sting" operation of Andrei Schevchenko in 1944, American counterintelligence had not such a bad record in catching spies, even if American legal system, as Haynes and Klehr have pointed out elsewhere, made it almost impossible to prosecute them successfully, as Gregg Herken's discussion of Joseph Weinberg's case makes clear.

In 1940, their staff leadership slashed by the Purges, KGB officers at the American station reported that "spy mania", a "defense boom" occasioned by the national emergency of 1939 following the outbreak of war in Europe, and the efforts of the anti-subversives on the Dies Committee and the concomitant "spread of American patriotism" all made it difficult to get

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<sup>9</sup> Athan Theoharis, *Chasing Spies: How the FBI Failed in Counterintelligence but Promoted the Politics of McCarthyism in the Cold War Years* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002), 34.

<sup>10</sup> These would include: Rosenberg, Gaik Ovakimian, three unnamed Malisoff agents—and William Malisoff himself; Jones Orin York (as early as 1939); Amadeo Sabatini, Ben Smilg, Frank Ullman, 2 unnamed sources, Gifted and Shrewd (connected with Smilg), S-2 (the Goddard spy); Loren Haas (with Shevchenko); "Electric Pole"—recruited by William Stapler; Stapler himself; and Maurice Bacon Cooke (who was surveilled meeting with Ovakimian). Others mentioned in this chapter were compromised by their connection with this group, including Abraham Glasser (who Feldman knew).

their jobs done.<sup>11</sup> Once the war began, a warming trend in Soviet-American relations created many opportunities for increased espionage, not surprisingly, as well as legal technology transfer through Lend Lease; many of those formerly abashed supporters of Communism could embrace the Soviet leadership again in fighting fascism, working for the Soviets in war industry and government agencies like the OSS, as the Notebooks show. Nevertheless, American counterintelligence strength expanded at the same time, and not just against the Germans and Japanese. During the war spies were caught and foiled by double agents, Soviet representatives were harassed and driven home, and the radicals of the 1930s, like Elizabeth Bentley, an “ardent and idealistic communist” who “saw something very wrong in America” in the 1930s, now abandoned by her Soviet “family,” turned on them with a vengeance, and went with her story to the FBI.<sup>12</sup> As the Notebooks indicate, her defection was perhaps the worst thing that ever happened to Soviet intelligence, at least until John Walker’s ex-wife put down her cocktail glass and picked up the phone.

To conclude, then, the Notebooks are full of surprises, even as they corroborate much of what we already knew. There are more spies here than historians had realized; those we did know about were doing more than previously understood; and we also learn something else. Despite working for an oppressive, obsessive, not to mention racist autocrat, J. Edgar Hoover’s staff was more effective than we’ve typically given them credit for. And meanwhile, their foes, unabashed idealists as they might be, by arrogating so much of American foreign policy to themselves, as Usdin notes, helped sow the seeds for a “spy mania” like none they’d ever imagined, orchestrated by a numerically challenged anticommunist who went even too far for Hoover—Joseph McCarthy. And as the Notebooks show, the Soviets knew by 1950 that their agents, the Rosenbergs and Greenglasses, were in big trouble if they did not get to the border with Mexico...and even if they did get there, as Morton Sobell’s fate makes clear.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Vassiliev Notebooks, *Black*, 102

<sup>12</sup> Kathryn Olmsted, *Red Spy Queen: A Biography of Elizabeth Bentley* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 17; Lauren Kessler, *Clever Girl: Elizabeth Bentley, the Spy who Ushered in the McCarthy Era* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004), 31, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Sobell was not mentioned in Venona and used this as a means to continue to trumpet his innocence in the mid 1990s. However, after the release of the Rosenberg Grand Jury records in 2008, he finally acknowledged his service to the Soviets. His name and code name, “Senya,” appear in Vassiliev Notebooks, *Black*, 120. Sobell’s admission is in the *New York Times*, September 11, 2008, see <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/12/nyregion/12spy.html>.

I noticed, after attending the opening session on Wednesday featuring John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, that several attendees at the conference had come with distinct agendas that they were determined to communicate, whether relevant to the subject matter of the panels or not. The result, for me, was that the questions from the audience were a mix of challenging scholarly inquiries and diffuse, sometimes ad hominem speeches.

One example was some of the questions put to Vassiliev, which were personal and contentious to the point of being inappropriate. This is not to say that no personal questions to Vassiliev were outside the boundaries of the conference. For example, I was surprised that no one asked him about his current relationship with Russian officialdom. At one point he said that he felt that he had “betrayed the trust” of the people who gave him access to the archives, and he repeated in his remarks the comment in his introduction to *Spies* that he thought of Hiss, Stone, *et al.* as heroes because they supported the Soviet cause. I would think some questions about his current relationship remain. Assuming that he knew that the “chapters” he supplied to Weinstein for *The Haunted Wood* would be declassified, and that he made decisions not to give Weinstein some information, why did he retain the information he didn’t vet? When he left Russia in 1996, some of the material he supplied to the SVR declassification committee, and brought with him, had not been cleared, and some involved archival files that neither the declassification committee nor Weinstein knew that Vassiliev had copied and retained in his possession. What did he plan to do with that material? Why, when *The Haunted Wood* was published in 1999, was he described as a former KGB agent living “in Western Europe,” as if a more precise description of his address might be dangerous for him? As the conference proceeded, I thought more than once about the evolution, and the future of Vassiliev’s relationship with Russia.

I approached the conference having read *Spies* and the papers, and hoping that 1) the panelists would not repeat what they had already written, and 2) that what they said would be at a comparable level with their written work (which, on the whole, I thought quite good). Some panelists did not repeat their written work, and a few of those gave presentations of comparable quality; some simply read their remarks or read from their papers. Reading a paper that is or will be available in print is a particular peeve of mine, since I believe the oral and written mediums of communication are fundamentally different and require different approaches, and interested members of the audience can always get access to the printed version. This made the panels less interesting, substantively, than they might have been. The questions for the audience were even more uneven. Some, such as Barton Bernstein’s question at the first panel session on the second day, raising the issue of potentially different standards of evidentiary “proof” for the “guilt” of persons accused of espionage, were first-rate. Some were mere diatribes or defenses of a person’s own written work. In general, I like questions from the audience at conferences, especially if panelists have not engaged with one another or have tended to be boring or repetitive. But although the question portions of the sessions were “entertaining,” they were too often

random, disconnected, and self-absorbed. One expects some of that in any conference, but in this one it was accentuated.

The two most interesting issues at the conference, for me, were the implications of the fact that Vassiliev's notebooks are serving as a surrogate for KGB files that will probably never be released to non-official scholars, and the claim by Bruce Craig that (apparently because espionage and treason convictions can be life-threatening), the standards for historical "proof" that someone has committed espionage or treason should resemble the standards of proof of conviction at a criminal trial, including the evidentiary rules governing such trials (hearsay evidence being ruled out, the testimony of persons who cannot be cross-examined being inadmissible, etc.) [For examples of the application of that standard in Alger Hiss's trials for perjury, see the discussions in several sources, including Allen Weinstein's *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case* (1978), Irving Younger's "Was Alger Hiss Guilty," 60 *Commentary* 23 (1975), and pages 71-81 in my *Alger Hiss's Looking-Glass Wars: The Covert Life of a Soviet Spy* (2004)]

On the first issue, Vassiliev pointed out that when he began reading files and making notes in connection with the Crown books project that resulted in his gaining access to KGB archives, he was largely uninformed about Soviet intelligence and espionage in the United States in the 1930-1950 period, and thus in many cases did not understand the implications, from the point of view of American scholars, of much of what he copied down. He was primarily interested in matching the real names of agents with their code names, and in identifying as many agents or operations as he could. That is why he asked that operational and personal files be sent to him, figuring that the relevant data would most likely be in those (something he knew from his previous work as a KGB analyst.)

Vassiliev's lack of knowledge about Soviet espionage in America in the 1930s and 1940s provides an argument against the suggestion that he invented material for his notebooks that was not in the KGB files. So does the fact that he held back giving material to the declassification committee and Weinstein because he felt supportive of Soviet efforts or because he thought the committee would censor some of the material. Finally, the information that Vassiliev has made available in the notebooks matches regularly with information in sources outside Russian archives, serving to confirm the identification of Soviet agents whose code and real names had previously come to light in those sources. So one is forced to conclude either that Vassiliev was simply recording what he saw in the KGB files, or that he was so familiar with the non-Russian sources identifying agents that he created the matching files himself. In light of Vassiliev's status as a non-specialist, the latter explanation seems implausible. Even if it were possible, why would the declassification committee have permitted such information to be released to Weinstein, whom some people in Russian intelligence believed was an agent for the CIA?

So all one can do is what the other authors of *Spies* and others are already doing: treat the Vassiliev notebooks as a plausible surrogate for some KGB archives and check the information they contain against other sources. We are not likely to get any better access to the archives in the foreseeable future.



On the second issue, the issue raised by Craig is provocative, but ultimately neither novel nor tenable. Checking archival sources, or surrogate sources in archives and private papers, such as oral history interviews in archives from deceased subjects, is what historians do. They do such searches because they are trying to find information that supports or undermines interpretive hypotheses about the meaning of episodes in the past. Often there will be conflicting information about “what happened” and “why it happened.” In such cases historians are expected to choose what they believe to be the most plausible explanations and to advance arguments about why they believe those explanations, rather than others, are good ones. There is no “standard of proof” for that exercise. “More probable than not,” the standard of proof in civil trials, approximates the standard for historical authenticity, but it is not identical to it.

Take, as an example, hypotheses advanced by historians about the interaction of western Europeans and Amerindian tribes in the northern American continent in the 15th and 16th centuries. We simply do not know, for example, what the population of Amerindian tribes was before the first Europeans who chose to settle on the North American continent arrived, or what the population of those tribes was after Europeans had been residents of North America for two or three decades. Nor do we have written records indicating how the tribes reacted to the presence of Europeans *from the perspective of the tribes*. This is because most tribes had no written languages, and those that did left only the most fragmentary records. This massive deficiency in evidence has not precluded colonial scholars from advancing hypotheses about “what happened” when the first significant encounters between Europeans and Amerindian tribes took place on the North American continent, or how the tribes reacted to those encounters. Some of those hypotheses have recently received a good deal of attention, and some of them “revise” earlier interpretations. When one finds a particular hypothesis engaging and potentially plausible—such as the imaginative claims made in William Cronon’s *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (1983) and Daniel K. Richter’s *Facing East From Indian Country: A Native History of Early America* (2001)—is it because the hypotheses in those works are “more probably accurate than not”? If Cronon or Richter were attempting to prove a causal connection between some evidence and a conclusion of law in a courtroom, they couldn’t possibly satisfy the standard of proof. Could one say that their hypotheses have established factual or legal (“proximate”) causation between the existence of some data and an interpretive historical conclusion? Of course not, because it is equally probable that other non-conforming data, or alternative hypotheses, exist.

Does this mean that colonial scholars dismiss Cronon’s and Richter’s works out of hand? To the contrary, both works are currently regarded as highly statured among colonial specialists. The standard for “statured work” is thus not the equivalent of the standard of “proof” in a civil trial. It is more amorphous, resting on elements of plausibility, persuasiveness, and cultural resonance.

So the claim, which Craig initially put forth in his dissertation on Harry Dexter White, would create a special category of “espionage” history governed by the legal standards of proof *in criminal law trials* that not only deviates from other *legal* standards of proof, it deviates from the evaluative standards for history generally. Imagine what would happen

if the “hearsay” rule governing legal trials were adopted in assessing the relationship between evidence and interpretation in historical scholarship. Under the hearsay rule, a great many sources of evidence are deemed inadmissible in a courtroom because the persons making the statement cannot be examined or cross-examined in court (being dead, not amenable to suit, etc.). Think about the application of the hearsay rule to historical interpretations. And think about the application of that rule, and other legal rules limiting the admission of evidence and regulating the weight of that evidence in a courtroom, to a case where the standard of proof is “beyond a reasonable doubt.” Every day criminal charges against defendants whose commission of crimes seems plausible—indeed who have admitted committing the crimes—are dismissed because of the inadmissibility of incriminating evidence. Are we to say that unless historical “facts” supporting interpretations can be “proved beyond a reasonable doubt,” the interpretations must be rejected? And why should we just do this in espionage history?

A dwindling number of scholars and other commentators have apparently become fixated on the “innocence” of Soviet agents in America because they have found the public careers, or personalities, of those agents admirable, even inspiring. Being an admirable public figure, or private person, is not inconsistent with being willing to work secretly for another nation, whether “friend” or “enemy” of the United States. That fact should be recognized when evidence about the careers of Soviet agents in America surfaces in sources such as Vassiliev’s notebooks and *Spies*.

**W**e have only a few brief comments on issues raised in several of the reviews but a significant disagreement with Bruce Craig's remarks.

Greg Herken's article and our book, *Spies*, both mention that Alexander Vassiliev's notebooks show that from 1942 to early 1944, the KGB's chief sources on the Anglo-American atomic bomb project were in Britain, not in the United States, and that a hitherto obscure exiled Austrian physicist, Engelbert Broda, working at the Cavendish Laboratories at Cambridge, was the most significant. In a remarkable coincidence, in April of this year an article appeared in *Intelligence and National Security*, by Andrew Brown, "The Viennese Connection: Engelbert Broda, Alan Nunn May and Atomic Espionage." Largely based on a thorough review of newly opened British Security Service (MI5) files, it constructed a circumstantial but nonetheless weighty argument that Broda likely was engaged in atomic espionage. Vassiliev's notebooks supply the direct evidence that MI5 did not have in the 1940s.

Katherine Sibley makes a vigorous case for FBI counter-intelligence in the early 1940s. While FBI counter-intelligence was not our major focus, we agree it was not a "failure." And against its chief priorities in during WWII, German and Japanese intelligence, FBI efforts were, so far as we understand them, a success. But while we did not call the FBI's efforts against Soviet espionage a failure, neither would we call it a success or even a stalemate; inadequate is a reasonable judgment. The period from 1942 to 1945 was the golden era of Soviet espionage in America, with its penetration of U.S. government institutions and key technical and scientific targets unsurpassed before or since. The FBI certainly undertook a variety of investigations that turned up promising leads and frustrated some KGB operations during this period, but it was unable to prevent a massive transfer of diplomatic, military, and technological information to the USSR. When the FBI focus turned principally to the Soviet target in late 1945, and with the assistance provided by Venona, key defections, and, belatedly, adequate support from executive and congressional branch policy makers, the golden era came to an end. As John Fox's essay underlines, FBI counter-intelligence went through a sustained period of learning and evolution. The same point is made in Raymond Batvinis' *The Origins of FBI Counterintelligence* (2007).

We agree with Ted White that the suggestion by Bruce Craig that historians put aside their usual standards and adopt those of the contemporary American criminal justice system when dealing with the history of espionage is a non-starter. Few historians have any desire to get a law degree so they can decide what evidence they are allowed to use and are unlikely to submit their evidence to some non-existent historical judicial court that will rule on what they can and cannot use. Deciding historical truth according to the special and technical rules of the criminal justice system will produce a distorted and misleading history where blatant lies are called truth because relevant evidence has been ruled inadmissible on one or another legal technicality. Let us give a clear example. Judith

Copland was tried twice on espionage related charges. She was convicted twice. The evidence was and is overwhelming that she was a spy, a KGB agent working inside the U.S. Justice Department providing the KGB with information on FBI counter-espionage investigation. But after both convictions, appellate courts ruled that key evidence was inadmissible and overturned the verdicts. The decision in one case, written by Learned Hand, a senior federal judge and highly regarded legal scholar, held that Coplon's "guilt was plain" but the evidence was inadmissible under the legal rules of the day, and the guilty verdict was set aside. So, using criminal justice standards, Coplon was not guilty of espionage. In fact, she was a spy, and a history that says otherwise is a lie. As Ted White suggests, using the arcane rules of the criminal justice system would vitiate broad fields of history.

In regard to the two most high-profile espionage cases of the early Cold War, Alger Hiss and Julius Rosenberg, the articles by Eduard Mark and Steven Usdin are the culmination of years of years of meticulous and intense archival attention with both judging that Vassiliev's notebooks allow them to fill in what gaps remained in the complex narratives of these two cases. Usdin's essay on the Rosenberg apparatus not only provides the most up to date comprehensive assessment of the Rosenberg network's espionage available, but his documented timeline, <http://www.wilsoncenter.org/cwihp/rosenberg/>, provides both researchers and teachers convenient access to key documentary material.

Mark definitively disposes of the Kai Bird-Svetlana Chervonnaya thesis that the Soviet spy "Ales" was Wilder Foote rather than Hiss and documents Hiss's relationship to Soviet military intelligence in the 1930s. Craig, without explicitly saying so, appears to quietly abandon the Foote thesis so recently and loudly proclaimed by Hiss defenders. But he maintains that the evidence only indicates that "the KGB *was under the impression* that Hiss was connected to 'the neighbors,'—the KGB's fraternal military intelligence organization, the GRU." We encourage H-Diplo readers to consult the numerous entries in Vassiliev's notebooks regarding Hiss to see if they agree that they only indicates that the KGB had an *impression* that Hiss was a GRU agent. To cite but a few, note the December 1948 document by Anatoly Gorsky, former KGB Washington station chief and then a senior officer of the Committee of Information (the "KI," a short lived merger of KGB and GRU) that listed among the Soviet intelligence sources compromised by the defection of Whittaker Chambers (cover name "Karl") "Alger Hiss, former employee of the State Dept." giving his cover name at that time as "Leonard" (Black notebooks p. 77), another Committee of Information document from 1948, written by two senior officers in a report to the chairman of the KI about "our former agents who were betrayed by Chambers (A. Hiss, D. Hiss, Wadleigh, Pigman, Reno)" (Black notebook p. 73), followed by a 1950 document regarding the difficult status of Soviet espionage in the U.S., noting the "trial of the GRU GSh VS agent 'Leonard,' the chief of one of the main divisions of the State Department and a member of 'Karl's' group, ended in his conviction at the beginning of 1950" (Black notebook p. 82). These and other documents in the notebooks, detailed by Mark's article, are not reflections of an "impression" but of certain knowledge by KGB and KI officers of Hiss's work as a GRU agent.

We gave the matter of I.F. Stone's cooperation with the KGB in the 1930s six pages out of 548 pages of text in *Spies*. He was a minor player in the overall story of KGB operations in the United States. But Max Holland in his lengthy and detailed essay inserts the documentation of Stone's covert relationship with the KGB in the late-1930s in the context of Stone's total career and his trajectory from a radical writer and fellow-traveler to an icon of journalistic independence. We continue to view with perplexity those who read the evidence in Vassiliev's notebooks about Stone and find it ambiguous. For example, in the Black notebook, Stone is identified as having the cover name "Pancake" (p. 23) and that by May 1936 "Relations with 'Pancake' have entered 'the channel of normal operational work,'" with the latter phrase an exact quote from the original KGB document. Along with several subsequent documents noting Stone's work in assisting recruiting the adult son of the American ambassador in Berlin as a KGB agent and his work as a courier, a document on the status of the New York KGB station in late 1938 listed, to use the Russian, the "agentura" of the station in the third quarter of 1938 to include I.F. Stone. "Agentura," which we translated in this context as "agents," is defined in Vasily Mitrokhin's *The KGB Lexicon* (p. 8) as "a collective term for 'agents.'" And the *Lexicon* (p. 3) defines an "agent" as "an individual who consciously, systematically and clandestinely carries out intelligence assignments in pursuance of an understanding to cooperate secretly with an official intelligence representative or the representative of some organization (sometimes legendary) in which an intelligence officer or agent plays a secret part." There is nothing ambiguous about Stone being listed as part of the "agentura." And, we should note, these meetings in the 1930s with Soviet officers were not with Vladimir Pravdin, a KGB officer operating under TASS cover. Pravdin was not even in the U.S. at that time. Pravdin's contacts with Stone, documented by the KGB cables deciphered by the Venona project, came in 1944 when the KGB attempted to renew its 1936-1938 relationship with Stone. Although Stone defenders insist that the contact with Pravdin was simply a chat between journalists, in the deciphered 1944 cable Pravdin made it clear Stone understood he was speaking with an intelligence officer who was attempting a renewal of contact. (The evidence is unclear on whether Stone did renew an agent relationship.)

Professor Craig asserts that we have exaggerated the successes of the KGB and, in addition to Stone, labeling such people as Bernard Redmont, Michael Straight, and Ernest Hemingway of being spies on the basis of flimsy evidence. But, in *Spies*, we quote numerous documents in which Soviet intelligence officers candidly discuss both successes and failures. Hemingway met several times with covert KGB officers, agreed to cooperate, but never provided any information. Straight was recruited, provided some low-level information, but was prized for his high-level contacts with New Deal officials, including President Roosevelt, and the KGB was anxious not to press him too hard lest it spoil his future usefulness. But over time, his growing reluctance and doubts led to a changed evaluation of his usefulness and contact ended. Craig sees only "flimsy evidence" for our account. But, Straight, in his 1983 memoir *After Long Silence*, admitted he was recruited in the U.K., returned to the U.S. to take a State Department post, covertly met with and delivered material to a Soviet agent, but finally grew disillusioned and cut off contact in 1941. Although Straight minimized the extent and importance of his relationship, his memoir corroborates the more detailed account in the notebooks. The notebooks also demonstrate that Redmont was a minor source—just as Elizabeth Bentley had testified.

We were surprised that in his review Professor Craig raised the issue of Harry Dexter White and the statement that in going through the documents about White in Vassiliev's notebooks that he "got a very different read" on what is indicated about White. We didn't spend much time on White because we regarded the question of his role as a Soviet intelligence asset as settled by the deciphered KGB cables of the Venona project as well as earlier evidence and testimony from Whittaker Chambers and Elizabeth Bentley. We saw no point in belaboring a well-established matter. In any event, there is a great deal more in the notebooks about Harry White's participation in Soviet espionage.

We suggest that those who wish to themselves review the evidence about White do so. Vassiliev's original notebooks are available at the Library of Congress with no restrictions on access. In addition we have placed scans of the original handwritten notebooks, transcriptions into word-processed Russian, and translations into English of the notebooks have all been posted on the web at [www.cwihp.org](http://www.cwihp.org). The transcripts and the translations are paginated and formatted to match the original, so researchers can move easily between all three versions to check on a translation or study them as intensely as they wish. As scholars consult and use the notebooks, we are entirely confident they will judge them authentic and reliable. There is much material in the notebooks that we did not use in *Spies*, and other researchers may spot matters we overlooked or will use the material to address questions we did not ask.

To facilitate locating relevant documents, below are summaries and quotations from the documents in the notebooks and Venona relating to Harry Dexter White. We are confident that reasonable scholars reviewing all of these documents will conclude, as we have, that White knowingly, consciously, deliberately, and covertly cooperated with, facilitated, and assisted Soviet espionage operations. The citations provided should allow any scholar to review the original on-line. (The cited KGB cables of the Venona project are available on the web at <http://www.nsa.gov/publicinfo/declass/venona/dated.shtml>.)

1941

Black notebook pp. 174-76. White is discussed in an early 1942 KGB Moscow Center summary memo on the status of the American stations (then in a period of rebuilding after the damage done by the Stalin purges in the period 1938-1941). Harry White, noted as currently having the cover name "Richard" but previously that of "Cashier," had been recruited by the illegal station in 1941: "In 1941, "Dir" ("Kid"), "Pal," "Jurist" ("Cashier") and "Sachs" ("Hello") were also recruited to work for us as agents." The report identified him as: "'Cashier" ("Jurist") – Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. Secret member of the CP USA." [White assumed the post of 'assistant to the Secretary of the Treasury' in December 1941 but did not become an "Assistant Secretary" until 1944.] The same 1942 report noted various "highly valuable materials" that a variety of agents had provided, specifying that among those White was the source of an "excerpt from a letter from Winston Churchill to Roosevelt."

White notebook #1 p. 26. A November 1941 report stated: ““Pal” passed along a report titled, “The Food Situation in Continental Europe.” “This is a report written on 30 August 1941 by H.D. White, chief of the division of monetary research at the Department of the Treasury, for Morgenthau and pertaining mostly to Germany and the countries it has occupied. The report cites data that point to the inevitability of starvation by the peoples of Europe even if the Germans capture all of the Soviet Ukraine, since the harvest there would be gathered more quickly than the Germans would capture the territory. The paper presents a great deal of data on the food situation in the countries of Europe.”

White notebook #1 p. 30. A November 1941 Moscow Center memo to Vasily Zarubin, then in route to New York, about the situation he would find there and his tasks, identified White as a member of the Silvermaster network and states, ““Jurist” [White] represents the most valuable source from this group. His capabilities, thanks to his proximity to Morgenthau, are very substantial. We should focus our work with him on obtaining important documented and verbal information. In this regard it is essential to train the source to transmit exactly what he has heard and to extract from his interaction from Morgenthau’s inner circle information that is of most interest to us”

1942

White notebook #1 p. 34. A January 1942 Moscow Center cable to Zarubin, newly arrived in New York, repeats the importance Moscow attached to White, calling him “one of the most valuable probationers [agents]” and tasking the American station to get Silvermaster to “work with “Jurist” [White] on his further development in order to prepare the “Jurist’s” transfer to direct communications with our operative.” [In other words, Moscow wanted White to be prepared for removal from the CPUSA-linked Silvermaster network and placed in direct contact with a KGB officer.]

Black notebook p. 43. An April 1942 KGB Moscow Center outline of plans for the American stations noted that the American stations had several sources working at the Treasury department through a network run by Gregory Silvermaster. The memo noted that these agents, of which White was listed as one, were “used without their knowledge.” [The latter phrase means the agents were not in direct contact with the KGB but delivered their information via a CPUSA-based network, in this case the information went from Silvermaster to Jacob Golos, a senior CPUSA official and its liaison with the KGB, who then turned the information over to the KGB. Likely those involved, all sophisticated men, understood that their information went to Moscow via the CPUSA (the party had little use for the international economic and diplomatic information White and his fellow sources at

Treasury provided) but they did not know the precise route or the agencies involved.]

White notebook #1 p. 44. A report from the New York station in August 1944 stated that its links with the Silvermaster network and White were not as close as Moscow believed, "A total misunderstanding has occurred with "Jurist" [White]: you consider him a "valuable probationer" (obviously based on what was reported to you or, rather, was not reported) and here "Leonid" informed us along the same lines. However, when we too had the idea of separating "Jurist" from "Pal's" [Silvermaster's] group and taking him over for direct communications, it turned out that he is not only not our probationer, but we hardly know anything about him at all, and "Sound" [Jacob Golos] also knows very little about him and has a very fuzzy concept of the nature of his contact with "Pal's" group. ["Leonid" was Aleksey N. Prokhorov, a junior KGB officer of the American station prior to Zarubin's takeover in January 1942. Prokhorov had a high opinion of Golos's work for the KGB whereas Zarubin thought it amateurish and did not want to takeover his sources until thorough reviews had been done. When Prokhorov returned to Moscow he complained of Zarubin's downgrading of Golos's status.]

White notebook #1 p. 48. Zarubin in an October 1942 report states, "According to "Sound," [Golos] "Pal" [Silvermaster] continues to draw information from "Jurist" [White] while engaging in a friendly relationship with him. "Jurist" is a very nervous and cowardly person and is not getting very close to "Pal" politically. He is more interested in matters of domestic policy and his job. [In this period Moscow Center temporarily rejected Zarubin's suggestion that a KGB officer should immediately replace Golos as the KGB's liaison with Silvermaster, but Zarubin renewed his suggestion, arguing that Golos from overwork and lack of training is unable to properly exploit the agents of the Silvermaster network.]

White notebook #1 p. 38. A November 1942 Moscow Center report tells the American KGB station: "According to information we have received, "Jurist" [White] at one time was a probationer [agent] for the neighbors [GRU, Soviet Military Intelligence]. We will communicate detailed information about him separately. He should, at last, be properly recruited for work and taken on for direct communications. In view of "Jurist's" value and the necessity of adhering to the rules of covert work, we consider it advisable to assign a special illegal to work with him. You should have a better notion of how best to approach the implementation of this task. Wire us your suggestions." [This corroborates Whittaker Chambers's statements that White had been part of Chambers's GRU-linked apparatus in 1937-1938.]

1943



White notebook #1 p. 48. In a February 1943 report Zarubin says, “Re “Jurist” [White] — “Sound” [Golos] reports that in recent months he has begun to visit “Pal” [Silvermaster] less often, obviously out of fear for his career, and has almost completely forgotten about his leftist attitudes in the past. According to “Sound,” “Pal” says that there are no opportunities to approach “Jurist.”

White notebook #3 p. 49. Harold Glasser, a KGB agent in the Treasury Department reported that in 1943 Assistant Secretary of State Adolph Berle tried to stop issuance of a diplomatic passport to Glasser [Whittaker Chambers had identified Glasser as a secret Communist in a meeting with Berle in September 1939], but that White intervened to get Glasser the passport.

1944

White notebook #3 p. 14. In March 1944 KGB officer Iskhak Akhmerov (chief of the KGB’s “illegal” American station) meets directly with Silvermaster (previously liaison was only through Golos and Elizabeth Bentley). The report on Akhmerov meeting states that Silvermaster “knows full well that he is working for us. Besides giving us info., ‘Pal’ [Silvermaster] has tried to help us through ‘Jurist’ [White], ‘Peak’ [Coe], and oth. people. For instance, they recently discussed with ‘Jurist’ how to expedite the issuing of credit to the Sov. Union. At first, they thought they could persuade Morgenthau to present Roosevelt with a plan for issuing credit to the USSR in the amount of \$10 billion. When they found out about Harriman’s telegram, they decided to push for a plan involving five billion dollars of credit. Through probationers [agents] in the Treasury Department and the Foreign Economic Administration, ‘Pal’ tried to create a friendly climate for the USSR. He asked ‘Mer’ [Akhmerov] to have us advise him about which causes he should advance: for example, ‘Jurist’ had asked him whether to advance the loan to the USSR under the Lend-Lease law or as independent credit. After discussing this question with each other, they decided that it should be advanced as credit.”

White notebook #3 p. 16. A follow-up cable about the March meeting between Akhmerov and Silvermaster states: “When asked what ‘Jurist’ [White] knew about ‘Pal’s’ [Silvermaster’s] work, the latter replied that ‘J’ knows where his info. goes, which is precisely why he transmits it in the first place. Besides ‘J’ and ‘Pal’s’ wife, only ‘Polo’ knows that ‘Pal’ works for us. The other members of the group think that he works for the CP.”

Venona 590 KGB New York to Moscow, April 1944. White reported that Cordell Hull and Vice President Wallace discussed a \$5 billion loan to the USSR and Wallace supported the idea

White notebook #2 p. 36. In May 1944 Moscow Center instructed the KGB officer with liaison with Earl Browder, chief of the CPUSA, to get his assessment of White. It also told the American stations, "'Jurist' [White] was a probationer [agent] for the mil. competitors [GRU] from 1935 until 1940, and was in direct contact with their operative. In 1940 'Jurist' was turned over to our contacts through 'H' [Browder].

White notebook #2 p. 37. In response to above, a June memo from Zarubin to Moscow reports: "'According to information that So. [Golos] once passed along, Jurist [White] was not an agent for the neighbors. The situation was different: J. has a relative—a doctor by the name of either Volman or Volper, who used to be in contact with the neighbors. This doctor would supposedly receive information from J. and turn it over to the neighbors. J. knew that the doctor was a fellowcountryman and believed that the information received from him was going specifically to the fellowcountrymen. The doctor once mentioned in passing that he was working for us and would like to get J.'s help. After that incident J. kicked out the doctor and barred him from coming to his house. Later the doctor supposedly had his cover blown, in which someone named Paul Sheffer was involved. This gave J. a big scare. According to So., we have all this information. Since all this came from Pal [Silvermaster], we will carefully double-check this story and let you know the results before having a substantive discussion. In any event, prior to a substantive discussion with Pal of J.'s contact with our man, Helmsman [Browder] must be informed about this. This must be done because otherwise Pal himself will tell Helmsman about this and we may ruin our relationship with the latter. I'm confident that if we speak candidly with H., he will agree and will personally direct Pal to act as we want it and he will thereby strengthen 'Mer's' [Iskhak Akhmerov's] authority, since H. will tell 'Pal' that Clever Girl [Bentley] must not know about this.'" [At this point the KGB was moving to break up the Silvermaster network, and one of its chief priorities was direct liaison with White. But Silvermaster was resisting the effort because he would lose his importance as head of a large espionage apparatus. He offered a series of excuses why none of his agents should be removed from his supervision. Silvermaster also, obviously, knew nothing about White involvement with Chambers GRU apparatus of the mid-1930s. Given White's importance, the KGB moved carefully so as not to provoke Silvermaster into disrupting the change over and panicking White.]

White notebook #3 p. 15. A report on a June 1944 meeting between Iskhak Akhmerov and Silvermaster discusses problems that Silvermaster is having with American security agencies suspicious of his hidden Communist ties but that White was willing to intervene: "'Jurist' [White] told 'Pal' [Silvermaster] long ago that he could hire him (at the Treasury Department) and, if it proved necessary, to defend him. 'Jurist' was convinced that if there was a confrontation, he could win the case. 'Pal' says that he would under no circumstances agree to expose 'Jurist' to danger or take any chances. 'Pal'

and “Jurist” agreed that J. would mention “Pal” to “Nabob” (our note: Morgenthau), saying that “Pal” could be of use to their department. In so doing, they will try to manipulate things in a way that would make “Nabob” take an interest in “Pal” of his own initiative and offer him a job. Pal” thinks that this would not lead to any complications and that if “Nabob” hires him himself, “Jurist” would not get mixed up in it.”

White notebook #3 p. 17. A July 1944 report notes the need, if poor health forces Silvermaster to leave government service, for the KGB to assist in setting him up in a position that will justify continued contact with peoples such as White but also notes that Silvermaster has a inflated view of his own abilities and importance and believes that White regards him as an equal.

Venona 1119-1121 KGB New York to Moscow, 4-5 August 1944, reports on a meeting between a KGB officer and White. Sections of this message were only partially deciphered. White answered a series of questions put to him on U.S. credits to the USSR, the occupation of Germany, lend-lease arrangements with Britain, U.S. trade and raw materials policies, the Polish government-in-exile, annexation of the Baltic states, Finland’s borders, and Secretary of State Hull. On one item White told the KGB officer that “obtaining the document extremely risky.” The message concludes “As regards the technique of further work with us Jurist [White] said that his wife was ready for any self-sacrifice; he himself did not think about his personal security, but a compromise would lead to a political scandal and the discredit of all supporters of the new course, therefore he would have to be very cautious. He asked whether he should [unrecovered code groups] his work with us. I replied that he should refrain. Jurist has no suitable apartment for a permanent meeting place; all his friends are family people. Meetings could be held at their houses in such a way that one meeting devolved on each every 4-5 months. He proposes infrequent conversations lasting up to half an hour while driving in his automobile.”

White notebook #1 p. 55. In an August 1944 cable KGB Moscow Center, concerned about evidence of increased FBI wiretapping and bugging, ordered changes in the cover names of leading American agents, White among them. White’s cover name was changed from “Jurist” to “Lawyer.”

Black notebook p. 5. From a September 1944 report to the chief of the KGB by Vasily Zarubin, recently returned to Moscow, summarizing his work as chief of the New York KGB station, January 1942--August 1944. Zarubin in reviewing the KGB’s American agents states of White: “one of the leading officials at the Treasury Dept., member of no party, a man of leftist views, close friend of ‘Pal,’ [Silvermaster] ‘Polo’ [Ludwig Ullmann] and ‘Aileron’ [George Silverman]. The friendship dates back to 1937-1938 — the ‘Jurist’ [White] shares information with them, knowing that they have an interest in it, but he doesn’t provide documents. The ‘Jurist’ is rough around the edges

and a lot of work has to be done on him before he will make a valuable informant. To date he has reported only what he deemed necessary himself. If 'Pal' receives proper and sufficient guidance from us, he will be able to put the 'Jurist' to much more specific and broader uses." Later in the report (Black notebook p. 14) Zarubin stated that one of the tasks facing Iskhak Akhmerov, chief of the KGB's illegal station, was to "Make 'Jurist' [White] more active through 'Pal' [Silvermaster]."

White notebook #3 p. 17. In a September 1944 meeting with Iskhak Akhmerov, Silvermaster warns that if the Republicans win the fall elections, KGB sources White and Currie will likely lose their government posts.

Venona 1388 1389 KGB New York to Moscow, 1 October 1944, reports that Silvermaster was angry about the July meeting between a KGB officer and White and fears it diminishes his position.

Venona 1634 KGB New York to Moscow, 20 November 1944. Iskhak Akhmerov urges Moscow Center to approve providing funds for the college expenses of White's daughter in order to reduce the temptation that he leave government service for more financially rewarding private work.

White notebook #3 p. 46. In December 1944 Washington KGB station chief Anatoly Gorsky reports that he had been told that White had been involved with Harold Glasser and the GRU prior to 1940.

White notebook #3 p. 51. In December 1944 Gorsky in another report on Harold Glasser notes Glasser's connection to White through the CPUSA: "'R.'" [Glasser] was admitted to "Nabob's" [Morgenthau's] department owing to the influence of "Richard" [White], who knew at the time that "R." was a fellowcountryman [Communist]. "Richard," apparently, thinks that "R." remains one to this day. On several occasions, he let "R." familiarize himself with certain documents that had no direct bearing on "R's" work and told him certain things."

1945

White notebook #3 p. 53. A January 1945 report notes that John Glasser [an error for Harold Glasser] had been a secret Communist and linked to the GRU in the late 1930s in association with White and Josef Peters.

White notebook #3 p. 53. Another January 1945 report states that Silvermaster is willing to try to influence White to get KGB agent Harold Glasser a job in the Treasury Department but wants Glasser transferred from the espionage apparatus run by Victor Perlo to his own network.

Venona 79 KGB New York to Moscow, 18 January 1945, reports that Silvermaster is willing to try to influence White to get KGB agent Harold Glasser a job in the Treasury Department but wants Glasser transferred to his espionage apparatus.

Venona 83 KGB New York to Moscow, 18 January 1945. Via Silvermaster, White discusses prospects and terms of a U.S. loan to the USSR.

White notebook #3 p. 54. A February 1945 memo that White reported that despite his efforts, Morgenthau had decided to give the position of chief of the Division of Monetary Research to Frank Coe rather than Harold Glasser.

White notebook #3 p. 56. A March 1945 Iskhak Akhmerov report discusses whether KGB should encourage Silvermaster to have White place Harold Glasser on the Treasury delegation going to Moscow for economic negotiations.

White notebook #3 p. 77. A March 1945 report on the lack of security among the CPUSA-linked networks then coming under direct KGB supervision noted that members of Victor Perlo's network were well aware of White cooperation with the KGB via Silvermaster's network.

Venona 248 KGB Moscow to New York, 19 March 1945, reports on continued concern by Silvermaster with the July 1944 meeting of White with a KGB officer.

Venona 328 KGB Moscow to New York, 6 April 1945, instructs Akhmerov to make arrangements via Silvermaster for White to be contacted during the San Francisco UN conference.

White notebook #3 p. 21. In April 1945 Silvermaster reports that Treasury Secretary Morgenthau has offered him a government post that he will discuss with White, then away from Washington.

White notebook #3 p. 22. In June 1945 Iskhak Akhmerov reports on feuding inside the Silvermaster apparatus, including Silvermaster's threat to send White back to a purely political party unit unless he gets his way.

White notebook #1 p. 69. There are reports from the American station in July and August of 1945 of several meetings between KGB officer Vladimir Pravdin, then chief of the New York KGB station who worked under TASS cover and White. White told Pravdin, that Ludwig Ullmann, another member of the Silvermaster apparatus, was leaving his staff position at the Pentagon and returning to the Treasury Department because he "wasn't receiving interesting materials for us and that because Zhenya [Sonia Gold, another Silvermaster agent working at Treasury] went on maternity leave he had to get a job in that institution in order to replace her in our work." White also

reported that the new Secretary of the Treasury, Frederick Vinson, unlike his predecessor, Henry Morgenthau, “wasn’t sharing important information so far” with White. Pravdin went on to report, “Following your instructions, Reed [White] was told that we have an interest in his keeping his current position, in which he can work most fruitfully in the interests of our cause. When he asked whether this instruction was in line with the wishes of the Home’s [the USSR’s] leadership, he was answered in the affirmative, and Reed was evidently flattered by the clarification that on such important matters as his work we always consult the center and ask for special instructions.”

White notebook #3 p. 95. A report of a meeting in June 1945 of a KGB officer with Charles Kramer, a KGB agent in Washington, Kramer noted that in the 1930s he had been the link between the head of the CPUSA underground, Josef Peters, and White’s wife.

White notebook #3 p. 98. June 1945, Washington KGB station to Moscow cable on Charles Kramer noting his having worked with Joseph Peters and White’s wife in the 1930s CPUSA underground.

White notebook #3 p. 26. A circa July 1945 summary report on Silvermaster says that in 1940 or 1941 Earl Browder gave permission for Golos to put Silvermaster’s underground Communist political network in Washington, including White, to the service of the KGB.

Yellow notebook #4 p. 123. July 1945 KGB intelligence report sent to Stalin, Molotov, and Beria based on information from White and another KGB source, Johannes Steel. ““The USSR NKGB reports the following agent information, obtained by the NKGB station chief in NY from a source close to U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau. M. stated in a conversation with the source that Truman is pinning very high hopes on the forthcoming meeting with St., wishing to establish good relations between the U.S. and the USSR and also to secure Stalin’s personal friendship. M. made clear that T. doesn’t particularly like Ch. and noted that this fact will apparently help T. and St. to find a common language. According to M., it is unlikely that Ch. will be able to act in a “united front” with T. if the USSR manages to utilize T.’s polit. ambitions—to be re-elected president of the U.S. in 1948. T. wants to show, after he returns to the U.S. from the conference in Berlin, that he has succeeded in creating an atmosphere of trust between the U.S. and the USSR and to achieve an agreement with the USSR on all major issues. The source points out that these polit. ambitions are highly characteristic of T. Bearing this in mind, the source expresses the view that “it would be advisable to give special attention to Tr., in the form of one or two meetings between St. and T.” The foregoing information is corroborated by other agent data, also obtained by the NKGB station chief in NY.”

White notebook #3 p. 25. In a August 1945 meeting with Iskhak Akhmerov, Helen Silvermaster complains that White did not cooperate as well as she thought he should.

White notebook #3 pp. 26-27. A KGB report of August 1945 notes that Ludwig Ullmann in a meeting with a Iskhak Akhmerov complained that White was reluctant to deliver on his promise to give Ullmann as Treasury department job. At the same meeting, Silvermaster “implied several times that as a result of our contact with Richard [White], the latter had started treating him very badly, that he neither listens to him nor obeys him. Some time ago, I wrote to you about how Robert [Silvermaster] had threatened to send Richard back to the Communist group to which ‘Richard’ had previously belonged, and whose members included several scoundrels. Naturally, how can one expect to be sincerely respected after such a threat, but Robert is definitely inclined to attribute Richard’s behavior to our influence. Dora [Helen Silvermaster] and Robert have told me on several occasions that after our person met with him at the last conference, he had started putting on airs and acting independently of them. The most likely explanation is that it only seems this way to them. Having damaged their relationship with Richard through their tactless behavior, they are inclined to blame us.” The report also refers to White meeting with a KGB officer at the UN founding conference at San Francisco (April-June 1945), “maybe our worker, who had met Richard [White] at the conference, had told him we were interested in these problems.”

White notebook #1 p. 71. An August 1945 report from the American station reported that White had been displeased by the “ménage à trois” sexual arrangement between Gregory Silvermaster, his wife Helen, and Ludwig Ullmann, who shared a residence with the Silvermasters.

White notebook #3 p. 126. A passing reference to White in August 1945.

Yellow notebook #4 p. 128. An August 1945 KGB intelligence report sent to Stalin, Molotov and Beria based on “data from “Richard” [White]” “In the view of one responsible official at the U.S. Dept. of the Treasury, the USSR shouldn’t count on receiving a lump-sum loan of 6 billion dollars. At best the USSR will be able to get a loan of 1 billion dollars from the Export-Import Bank. The U.S. govt. would like the USSR to agree to the offer formulated at the press conf. on 21.8.45 by Crowley, the head of the Foreign Economic Administration, to grant the S.U. a loan to buy the supplies it has already ordered under Lend Lease, which will not be delivered to the USSR as a result of the latest decision by the Amer. govt. A substantial portion of these orders consist of food. The Amer. govt., of course, will attempt to make the USSR buy this food if the S.U. agrees to Crowley’s offer. If the USSR refuses the food and demands capital equipment instead, the Amer. govt. apparently will give in. After the International Bank is established, the USSR may get another 1 billion-dollar

loan in roughly a year or two. The dominant opinion in the U.S. govt. at present is Harriman's view that the USSR should not be given a large lump-sum loan, but shipments of goods to the USSR should be stretched out over many years and loans used as a means of pressure in order to obtain polit. concessions from the USSR. Even if the USSR managed to obtain a large lump-sum loan, there is no possibility of using it in the U.S. in a short time because it doesn't have the amount of goods that the USSR needs."

Yellow notebook #4 p. 131. A September KGB intelligence report sent to Stalin, Molotov and Beria based on information from White and Glasser: "on 18.09 there was a meeting regarding the q. of the loan to the USSR—Secy. of the Treasury Vinson et al. {It is unlikely that the USSR will be able to get a loan of 6 bil. dollars.} Even if the U.S. govt. agrees to grant the USSR such a loan, it will grant it over time in installments, with the idea that the U.S. govt. would be able to get some polit. concessions in exchange for granting each individual installment. At the same time no guarantees will be given that, after receiving one part of the loan, the USSR will be able to get the remaining parts. The granting of such periodic installments each time will be the subject of complex negotiations. There are currently two groups in U.S. govt. circles with regard to the q. of granting a loan to the USSR. One group, which consists of representatives of the State Dept., Secretary of the Treasury Vinson and many other influential polit. figures, believes that, while counting on good business conditions in the U.S. and the ability of private industry to prevent a deep econom. crisis, it is essential to delay the granting of a large loan to the USSR for as long as possible and to use it as a tool of polit. pressure. Another, less influential group, consisting of a number of specialists on econom. and financial issues, believes that there will be 8 million unemployed in the U.S. in the very near future, and the granting of a large loan to the USSR will afford an opportunity to increase production and expand U.S. exports. At the aforementioned conference on 18 September, the q. of obtaining from the USSR, as a guarantee, information on its financial position was discussed. The U.S. govt. intends to request information from the USSR regarding the following questions: 1. The USSR's gold reserves. 2. Data on gold production in the USSR. 3. The USSR's financial position. 4. The USSR's plans with regard to obtaining loans from other countries. 5. The USSR's plans with regard to exports and imports. 6. What resources the USSR plans to use to amortize foreign loans." It is claimed that the govt. of Great Britain has supposedly already provided such information to the U.S., but in doing so inquired twice whether the U.S. govt. intends to obtain the same information from the USSR."

White notebook #1 p. 71. In September 1945 Pravdin meets with Gregory Silvermaster, to discuss the ongoing breakup of the Silvermaster network and parceling out of its agents to direct KGB liaison. Silvermaster complains of the difficulties he had had with some of his agents, saying of White "the situation with Reed [White], according to Robert [Silvermaster], is different.



The reason that Reed doesn't pass along information or documents is not that he doesn't want to help us, but partly because he is extremely absent-minded and forgets his promises, but mainly because he considers such work secondary. According to Robert, Reed feels that his main calling is to provide advice on fundamental political and econom. issues."

White notebook #3 pp. 29-32. A September 1945 KGB report by Iskhak Akhmerov states that when he and Vladimir Pravdin "met with him [Silvermaster] several weeks ago, he had tried, in telling us about his group's work, to stress that his work was divided into several phases; that is, before our worker had contacted Richard [White] at Bretton Woods (monetary conference July 1944) and again in San Francisco [UN conference April-June 1945]. Robert [Silvermaster] did not tell me outright, but he definitely implied that Richard's [White's] bad treatment of him had been elicited by our contact with Richard. He thinks that Richard has really been ignoring him ever since the conference in San Francisco, because the latter feels that he is independent of him. He is terribly irritated by the fact that he no longer enjoys the same prestige, respect, and authority of a Communist leader, which he had enjoyed before our worker established a connection with Richard. He is absolutely convinced that we are interfering too much in his organizational system and putting him in an embarrassing position. Moreover, he is inclined to think that we really are creating difficulties in order to conduct our own work. He comes to these imagined conclusions of his on the basis of a few rather insignificant facts. You remember that after our worker contacted Richard at Bretton Woods and asked him to explain a bunch of different issues for us, Robert become so enraged that he even said he might order Richard to break off his connection with our worker. At the time, he had said the following: what had he been doing for you all these years, hadn't he been trying to keep you informed about all the issues that were assigned to Richard; how could your person think that Richard would explain these issues when he himself (Robert) was incapable of forcing Richard to work in the sense of furnishing us with essential materials. Robert proceeded to criticize our worker's every action. He said that we were not satisfied enough with his work for us, that we were trying to make it so that Richard would be working independently on the same issues he was working on; that we were showing that we didn't trust him, etc, etc. At the time, Robert believed that our worker would maintain contact with Richard and ask the latter to give us information on questions directly pertaining to the financial conference, on questions regarding the granting of a loan to us, relations between our countries, and oth. problems of high politics. According to him, our worker was not interested in these questions and instead tried to make Richard work on solving our specific problems that Robert was constantly working on." The report went on to describe other grievances Silvermaster had about the KGB's establishment of direct contact with White.

White notebook #1 p. 73. At an October 1945 meeting with Pravdin, White reported that due to Vinson's lack of confidence in him he intended to resign rather than wait to be fired and would open a private economic consulting firm in Washington. Pravdin stated, "It was pointed out to Reed [White] how important it was to us for him to keep his post and so forth. Reed replied, however, that we wouldn't lose anything from his departure, since Peak [Frank Coe, another Silvermaster agent in Treasury] would replace him perfectly well. Besides, according to Reed, if he succeeded in establishing the planned office in Carthage [Washington], he would not only retain his capabilities for informing us, but would even be able to expand his connections."

White notebook #3 p. 34-36. An October 1945 KGB report that Silverman stated that due to increasing personal friction, White and others limited their cooperation with Silvermaster in mid-1945, cited Silvermaster's increasing tendency to bully members of his network. Silverman also reported that White had told him that he had achieved direct contact with the KGB through Pravdin.

White notebook #1 p. 72 In October 1945 Pravdin met with George Silverman, a leading agent of the Silvermaster network and a close friend of White's. Pravdin reported, "A factor that definitely played a role in Robert's [Silvermaster's] poor relationships with Aileron [Silverman], Peak [Coe] and Reed [White], was that, although they had worked for us for a much longer time, Robert was appointed their handler as soon as he was recruited for our work. Aileron repeated several times that neither he nor his comrades understood the choice of Robert as handler, since they had far more experience in our work."

White notebook #3 p. 37. A November 1945 report from Iskhak Akhmerov notes that he had given \$2,000 to Silvermaster to deliver to White, "I gave 'Robert' [Silvermaster] these 2,000 dollars as well and told him to give them over to 'Richard' [White] - \$500 as an anniversary gift (in view of the anniversary of the Oct. Revolution) and 1.5 thousand to pay expenses associated with his daughter's education."

White notebook #2 p. 41. In November 1945 Moscow Center informed the American stations that it had learned that Elizabeth Bentley had defected to the FBI and order that contact be cut with their sources, stating "Break off contact with agents: 'Art' [Helen Koral] Richard [White] 'Echo' [Bernard Schuster] and 'Berg' [Alexander Koral]" and to tell Silvermaster to reduce contact with his former network, specifically he and his partner Ullmann should "reduce meetings in public with their contacts: 'Aileron [Silverman], Richard [White], Zhenya [Sonia Gold], Acorn [Bela Gold], Sachs [Solomon Adler], Peak [Coe] and others"

White notebook #2 p. 33. In December 1945 Kim Philby, the KGB agent inside the British Secret Intelligence Service, informed the KGB that Elizabeth Bentley had identified forty-one KGB agents, including White.

1947

White notebook #3 p. 41 A July 1947 KGB report notes that White had visited Silvermaster.

1948

Black notebook p. 77. White is listed in 1948 KGB memo by Anatoly Gorsky (then a senior official at Moscow Center but Washington KGB station chief in 1944-1945) as a Soviet agent compromised by the defection of Whittaker Chambers.

It should be noted that different sources provide overlapping evidence that clearly implicates White as a long-standing Soviet source. That he was fearful and hesitant, reluctant at times to give the Soviets everything they wanted or had prickly relations with his main American connection to the KGB is all true. That he was not a spy is not borne out by the documentary record.

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