

# Hiss, Oswald, the KGB, and Us

70

Michael Ledeen

ONE of the most durable and most damaging legacies of McCarthyism has been the besmirching of the good name of anti-Communism, and the attendant evisceration of American liberalism. From the McCarthy period on, anti-Communism has been labeled a reactionary ideology, and in its place there has come to be enshrined a crude anti-anti-Communism, according to which Communism does not now, and never did, pose any real threat to the United States. By the time of the Vietnam generation and Watergate, many had come to believe that Communist behavior, and in particular the behavior of the Soviet Union, could be explained primarily, if not entirely, in terms of the legitimate fears Communists had of the United States and its nefarious plans for world domination. In the field of strategic weapons, the fashionable position of the late 60's and 70's concluded that the entire arms race had been brought about by American initiatives, and that the Soviet Union, justifiably terrified by our nuclear arsenal, was merely struggling to keep pace. And even today, when the Russians have passed us in several vital areas, many liberal intellectuals still cannot bring themselves to face the possibility that the Soviet Union is determined to achieve strategic superiority and to use that superiority to increase its power over world affairs.

But myth-making over the arms race is only a side show; the real spectacle has been the discrediting of any concern over Communist espionage and subversion in the United States. Indeed, this concern has been turned inside out: the real threat—according to the fashionable mythology—was a conspiracy on the part of a vicious power structure using the myth of a Communist menace to justify its aggressive designs abroad and the squelching of opposition to those designs at home. Soviet espionage did not exist. Those convicted as KGB agents were usually (if not always) innocent victims of anti-Communist hysterics: in particular, the investigation and trials of Alger Hiss and Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were political dramas staged for the gullible. Finally, the real subver-

sives, both at home and abroad, were "loyal" Americans: FBI and CIA men who overthrew foreign governments, violated the constitutional rights of American citizens, and, hand in hand with other leaders of the military-industrial complex, inaugurated and perpetuated the cold war.

This entire mentality has been superbly encapsulated in a recent event. According to a story featured on the front page of the *New York Times*, the Soviet intelligence apparatus has been carrying out a massive campaign of telephone interceptions in this country. Yet when a Democratic Senator publicly asked his colleagues why nothing was being done about this, he was challenged the next day by a leading network-news correspondent, who called to ask whether the evidence of Soviet espionage had not itself been acquired illegally. Was it not true that the National Security Agency had acted without a warrant in uncovering the Soviet operation, and should the evidence not therefore be destroyed? The Senator, in turn, wondered out loud whether his interlocutor really meant to propose that proof of Soviet violations of Americans' constitutional rights be shredded. The correspondent insisted on his point. Thus, while the campaign in the press and elsewhere to restrict American intelligence and counterintelligence activities goes on apace, suggestions that something be done about Soviet espionage in the United States meet with silence or outright denial.

POLITICAL culture is highly resistant to reality. Nevertheless, some recent straws in the wind suggest that a long overdue reconsideration of Communist espionage is at last under way. Two excellent new books may be placed in evidence: *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case*, by Allen Weinstein,\* and *Legend: The Secret World of Lee Harvey Oswald*, by Edward Jay Epstein.† Indeed, Weinstein's personal experience in writing *Perjury* perhaps stands as a paradigm for the shift in perception which may now be taking place. When, under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, Weinstein filed a series of requests to obtain documents from the FBI, he was

MICHAEL LEDEEN is executive editor of the *Washington Review of Strategic and International Studies* and the author of *The First Duce: D'Annunzio at Fiume*.

\* Knopf, 704 pp., \$15.00.

† Reader's Digest Press/McGraw-Hill, 382 pp., \$12.95.

convinced that the information so gathered would permit him to trace the conspiracy that had framed Alger Hiss; but after several years of investigation, he reached the (to him) surprising conclusion that Hiss was guilty, and he was even able to identify many of the Soviet spy rings within which Hiss had worked.

In all its essentials, Whittaker Chambers's account of Soviet operations in this country, and of Alger Hiss's role in them, is confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt in Weinstein's book. Through the released documents, through scores of interviews with involved persons, including former Soviet agents still alive, and through a meticulous reconstruction of all the events in question, Weinstein shows how Hiss, and others like him, obtained classified information on a whole range of matters—from Japanese and German military plans to American industrial techniques and foreign policy—and passed them via well-organized channels back to Moscow.

As for Hiss's later activities, Chambers, who defected from the Communist apparatus in the spring of 1938, was unable to provide information on them, but Weinstein speculates that Hiss may have remained a Soviet agent long after that date. Hiss continued his close friendship with Henry Collins, who was a Russian spy throughout the mid-40's; he was the object of a striking verbal bouquet from Andrei Gromyko in the autumn of 1945, when Gromyko proposed to the American Secretary of State that Hiss be made acting Secretary General of the new United Nations Organization; and in the same year he requested confidential documents dealing with subjects—the internal security of France, China, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union—which at a minimum suggested that he held an exalted opinion of his responsibilities atop the State Department's Office of Special Political Affairs (OSPA). Moreover, in September 1946 Hiss met with Donald Maclean, who was later to defect from England to the Soviet Union just when he was about to be exposed as a Soviet agent, at a time when Hiss had, in Weinstein's words, "developed a keen interest in atomic-energy matters that went well beyond the responsibilities in the area of atomic diplomacy at the UN to which his duties at OSPA confined him."

The critical discussion of *Perjury* undoubtedly will center on the question of the guilt of its living protagonist, since no case, not even the irrefutable one made by Weinstein, will ever persuade the die-hard partisans of Alger Hiss.\* But the enduring value of the book does not lie so much in the proof it gives of Hiss's guilt as in its extensive documentation of Soviet espionage in this country and of American reactions to it. Reading through the seven hundred calmly and elegantly reasoned pages of *Perjury*, one finds oneself amazed at the ease and effectiveness with which Soviet agents have been able to penetrate the American

government and industrial operations. And on the other side one finds oneself in the company not of relentless anti-Communist conspirators of the kind who have emerged in the polemics which followed McCarthy's brief inquisition, but rather a group of insecure, timorous, and bumbling American government officials, highly reluctant to "go public" with the information they had, and totally opposed to the launching of a great anti-Communist crusade. As Nadya Ulanovskaya, the wife of one of the organizers of a Russian network in New York in the early 30's (and a woman who subsequently served a prison-camp sentence in the Soviet Union before emigrating to Israel), told Weinstein: "If you wore a sign saying 'I am a spy,' you might still not get arrested in America when we were there." This reluctance to act against Soviet espionage was characteristic even of the notoriously anti-Communist J. Edgar Hoover and Allen Dulles, and even in instances where the information was abundant. The best-known such instance was the Hiss case.

BY THE autumn of 1945, the FBI had received information from three independent sources about Hiss's links to the Soviet intelligence network. One source was Chambers, who had given considerable information to Adolph A. Berle in September 1939, naming Alger and Donald Hiss, Noel Field, Harry Dexter White, and others as Soviet agents. Berle apparently told President Roosevelt about Chambers's story, but the President did not believe it, and Berle kept his notes on the Chambers conversation to himself until 1943, when the FBI requested them. Chambers was also interrogated by the Bureau in 1942, when he again spoke of Hiss's Communist connections (this time downplaying the espionage component), again with no significant effect.

There were a number of reasons why Chambers was not taken seriously in those years. He was hardly a model informer—at best he was an ex-

\* One such partisan, Victor Navasky, writing in the *Nation* (April 8), attacks Weinstein for being in league with "cold-war intellectuals" and says that several of his sources now claim to have been misquoted. Yet Weinstein has tape recordings of his interviews with some of those cited by Navasky, independent testimony from witnesses present at other of the interviews, additional documentary evidence, and letters from several of the now-recanting sources—all confirming the accuracy of the quotations in *Perjury*. Interestingly, Herbert Mitgang of the *New York Times* did not see fit to mention this corroborating testimony in his April 5 story about Navasky's article, even though Weinstein had informed him of it in a telephone conversation.

But even being persuaded by Weinstein has failed to shake the belief of another partisan, Garry Wills, in "The Honor of Alger Hiss" (*New York Review of Books*, April 20, 1978). The very fact that Hiss was a Soviet agent, and that he remained a loyal enough Communist to lie about it, shows, in Wills's view, that he does indeed possess "the integrity people have always sensed in him."

Communist, a possible homosexual, and a certain neurotic; at worst he was a compulsive liar. Hiss, on the other hand was a model bureaucrat with excellent connections and a wide array of protectors (ranging from Dean Acheson and Felix Frankfurter to John Foster Dulles). But more important, there was the sure knowledge that confirmation of the presence of Soviet agents in the United States would provoke a political crisis. We were then allied with the Soviet Union in the war against fascism, and even if one were to have believed Chambers's claim that Hiss had been a Soviet agent until 1938, it was clearly desirable in the midst of a world war to regard Hiss as a good citizen. If it were thought that the Soviet Union was continuing its espionage operations against the United States in the very midst of a great joint effort to save the world from Hitler, Mussolini, and Tojo, the entire public rationale of the alliance with Stalin would be jeopardized.

What is rather more difficult to explain is the reluctance of the American national-security forces *after* the war to accept the evidence of Hiss's connections. For by the end of 1945, the FBI had received striking confirmation of Chambers's accusations. Elizabeth Bentley, a former courier for Communist agents, identified Hiss as the person who had recruited another agent, Harold Glasser, for a group in the Communist underground. The French Premier, Edouard Daladier, reportedly told American Ambassador William Bullitt that French intelligence had learned that "two brothers named Hiss," working in the State Department, were "Soviet agents." And then there was the "clue" which had provoked the initial FBI investigation into Hiss's Communist ties, and which ironically came to it as the result of erroneous information. In October 1941, the Dies Committee had gotten a list of 1,124 purported "Communists, fellow travelers, and Communist sympathizers," and sent the names on to Attorney General Francis Biddle. Alger and Donald Hiss were both included as members of a radical group called the Washington Committee for Democratic Action. This turned out to be false: their wives had been members for a short time, but neither of the brothers had.

Despite all these leads, the FBI did not actively pursue the Hiss question. As Weinstein writes of the war period, in a statement that is true of the entire FBI operation up to and including the two eventual trials: "The Bureau's casual and haphazard follow-up on its 1942 interview with Chambers reflected its general ineptitude in dealing with Soviet espionage. . . . It is extraordinary that the FBI deemed Chambers unworthy of a follow-up interview for the next three years, or that among those whom he had named, only J. Peters received even a cursory investigation by the New York field office."

The event which finally compelled J. Edgar

Hoover to move seriously against Hiss occurred in Canada. In September 1945, a cipher clerk at the Soviet embassy in Ottawa defected with over one hundred documents. As he told the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, a colleague of his claimed that "we've got the assistant of [Secretary of State] Stettinius working for us." Since the defector, Igor Gouzenko, proved to be extraordinarily reliable—not a single claim of his has yet turned out to be false—Hoover and the State Department took steps to increase surveillance over Hiss's activities and to limit his access to classified material. The FBI went so far as to monitor Hiss's desk calendar. Yet no convincing evidence of espionage activity was uncovered.

One of the problems in the FBI investigation was that the man who actually had concrete evidence—Whittaker Chambers—was withholding it from the Bureau. "Chambers continued to insist," Weinstein tells us, "that Hiss's underground unit 'was not a spy ring.'" This last charge would not be made until the HUAC investigation two years later and the episode of the "pumpkin papers." Berle, however, did send his memorandum (suggestively entitled "Underground Espionage Agent") to the Bureau in 1943, but nothing seems to have been made of it until the HUAC hearings in 1948. Hence, even though the FBI had the memorandum with Chambers's charge that Hiss was a spy, had the Bentley testimony, had the Gouzenko revelation, and had Daladier's remark, Hiss was left virtually untouched. To be sure, he was eased out of the State Department in 1946, but he was not put through the kind of rigorous interrogation which might have been expected from the types who normally run national-security operations.

**B**OTH Chambers and Gouzenko were struck by their inability to get action on the basis of their testimony. Chambers had concluded by 1942 that the FBI and the State Department were hopeless and that there was little or no interest in investigating Communist infiltration. As he put it in a letter to Herbert Solow in 1942:

There was a time when I was interested in cooperating with the Civil Service and the FBI in keeping CP's out of government. Then I began to suspect, from the type of Civil Service and FBI agents sent around, that those agencies were incapable of doing anything to keep CP's out. The CP's under investigation regularly turned up in strategic agencies. . . . So I have become increasingly reluctant to have anything to do with this filth.

It is tempting to dismiss as paranoia Chambers's thinly-veiled conviction that Communists had infiltrated high echelons of the American government. Defectors from the KGB and its precursors

hav  
thi  
tha  
J  
No  
usc  
mi  
fol  
say  
vo  
me  
gry  
ia  
er  
ev  
th  
wa  
th  
ci  
dc  
th  
Pe  
lo  
in  
la  
n  
ir  
ir  
ti  
ti  
ti  
li  
fe  
n  
a  
a  
V  
r  
C  
l  
C  
C  
s  
f  
l  
l  
l  
l  
c  
l  
i  
i  
t  
t  
c  
t

have inevitably feared the worst at all times. In this case, however, there is considerable evidence that the claim should be taken seriously.

Igor Gouzenko told an interviewer just this past November that his own information was never used properly, and he speculated about what this might mean: "From the criminal way in which follow-up investigations never took place, I would say agents are still in high places of influence involving the Canadian government and its departments." Gouzenko is convinced of this on two grounds: the repeated failure of the Canadian government to pursue eight of the nine spy rings he identified to Canadian authorities, and the discovery of Soviet agents in high positions in virtually every Western intelligence apparatus. Realizing that the most effective way to identify such agents was to get others to defect, Gouzenko had urged the Canadians to encourage the process by offering citizenship, money, and protection. But it was not done. "The trouble," according to Gouzenko, "was that the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] Security and Intelligence branch placed a lot of trust and took a lot of advice from British intelligence—and that meant Kim Philby [who later defected to the Soviet Union]. No wonder nothing was done."

In Gouzenko's view, the Soviet purpose in placing agents like Philby in high levels of the British intelligence community was twofold. First came the goal of obtaining classified information and of finding out how British intelligence intended to penetrate the Soviet Union and to foil Soviet activities in Great Britain. But an additional objective emerges from Gouzenko's discussion: agents like Philby were able to undermine Western efforts at counterintelligence by providing "disinformation," inaccurate or misleading reports on the activities of the other side. There is no lack of examples of known Soviet agents throughout the West in recent years who may have played such a role: Gunter Guillaume, personal aide to West German Chancellor Willy Brandt, arrested in 1974; Dagmar Kahlig-Scheffler, a secretary in West German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's office; General Jean-Louis Jeanmaire of Switzerland, considered a violent anti-Communist and a close friend of the United States, convicted last year for passing documents to the Russians; and of course Kim Philby, Guy Burgess, and Donald Maclean in England.

Thus far no known case has come to light of high-level infiltration of the American intelligence community. Speculation over such an alarming possibility has generally been confined to Washington gossip and an occasional work of fiction (as, for example, ex-CIA official Victor Marchetti's novel, *The Rope Dancer*). Yet it would be absurd to conclude from this that no infiltration has occurred. After all, the KGB has managed to penetrate virtually every other Western intelligence

agency, and carries out a studied program of disinformation all over the world.

THE possibility that the American intelligence operation has been turned inside out by Soviet agents is raised in Edward Jay Epstein's brilliant book about Lee Harvey Oswald and his links to the Soviet espionage apparatus. This book marks a new departure not only in works about the Kennedy assassination (which is actually peripheral to its main thrust) but also in the literature on intelligence activities in the Soviet Union and the United States. Epstein's discussion of the Oswald case, which rests upon an impressive collection of new evidence, is frighteningly reminiscent of the speculations of Gouzenko and Whittaker Chambers.

The historical paradigm for Epstein's reconstruction comes from the 20's when the Russians created a group known as the "Trust." This was an ostensibly anti-Soviet underground organization which operated within the Soviet Union and provided "information" on Russian activities to Western intelligence organizations. It was designed systematically to misinform the West about Soviet intentions and capabilities. In Epstein's words:

The Soviet idea of creating its own "enemy" is similar to that of creating biological analogues for insect control. The insects, unable to differentiate between the man-made simulacrum and the real larvae, attempt to breed with the artifice, which is of course sterile. In this case Soviet intelligence arranged a series of initial successes for the anti-Soviet underground to prove the efficacy of the "Trust" inside Russia. Once the "Trust" was established as the mainstay of the Soviet resistance movement, the Soviet agents operating it spoon-fed to Western intelligence agencies information supposedly obtained from defectors in place at the highest levels of the Soviet government. The fabricated reports from the "Trust" were then confirmed by other fake anti-Soviet groups set up by Soviet intelligence.

Other examples of Soviet disinformation activities include the case of Heinz Felfer, who, Epstein tells us, rose to the head of West German counterintelligence "through an intricate series of maneuvers in which [the Russians] sacrificed their own agents like pawns in a chess game." Once established, a network of such agents could both inform the Soviet Union about the Western activities and disinform the West about the Soviets. Ideally they would be placed in the highest positions in Western defense, intelligence, and executive agencies, and they would perform their most important tasks at critical historical moments. One such moment, according to Epstein, was the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

The central figure in *Legend* is one Yuri Ivanovich Nosenko, a Russian who defected to the CIA in Geneva in early February 1964, claiming to

have been in charge of the KGB file on Lee Harvey Oswald, and, what is more important, claiming to know that Oswald had *not* been a KGB agent. At the very moment Nosenko arrived, many Americans—including President Lyndon B. Johnson—believed that a third world war was imminent, and many of them thought so because of the abundant evidence already available that Oswald had been connected with the KGB. Nosenko's arrival was therefore viewed as highly providential. Perhaps the happiest person to hear about it was J. Edgar Hoover, whose Bureau had been highly negligent in permitting Oswald to go without effective surveillance after his return to the United States from the Soviet Union. If Oswald turned out to have been a Soviet agent, Hoover would be in very bad trouble; if Oswald were a "lone nut," Hoover could breathe more easily.

Unfortunately, Nosenko's arrival raised more questions than it answered. Nosenko did not possess the information a man of his purported rank and experience should have had. Although he said he had been a central figure in KGB efforts to bug the American embassy in Moscow, he did not know the building's floor plan. He was wrong on crucial details involving KGB and CIA agents in Moscow whom he should have known. He lied about his rank, and lied about receiving a recall telegram from Moscow while in Geneva. He did very badly on a polygraph test. Most curious of all, his account of the KGB's handling of Oswald—a former Marine who had served on a U-2 base in Japan before defecting to the Soviet Union—simply did not jibe with known KGB procedures. Under interrogation, Nosenko admitted his errors, and on one occasion appeared to be breaking down.

Yet in the course of the next ten years, Nosenko was rehabilitated by the CIA, over the violent protests of many who had worked on the case and who believed that he was a disinformation agent. Nosenko's version of the Oswald story was accredited, and Nosenko himself was awarded a healthy salary, provided with a house, and given work as a consultant to the CIA. Moreover, those who had disputed Nosenko's bona fides as a defector were abruptly purged from the CIA by means of a leak to the *New York Times* of the agency's illegal mail interceptions, and they were replaced by a pro-Nosenko group.

How could all this have happened? According to Epstein, one central fact and one theory lie at the heart of the Nosenko case. The fact is highly suggestive: several crucial bits of wrong information from Nosenko were confirmed by "Fedora," a member of the Soviet Union's delegation to the United Nations who was passing information to the FBI. Hoover was very proud of "Fedora," and in order to keep him in place in New York had provided him with much classified material. If Nosenko were a liar, and if "Fedora" supported his

lies, the most likely explanation was that "Fedora" was in cahoots with Nosenko to disinform the Americans, and this would place under threat of suspicion Hoover's own status and credibility and the status and credibility of a good deal of the American counterintelligence operation as well. Hence, Hoover had an additional reason for wanting to believe that Nosenko was telling the truth. Thus far the fact.

As to the theory, it goes back to the basic question about the penetration of United States intelligence agencies by the Soviet Union. It appeared to many CIA people, including both the head of the division on the Soviet Union and the chief of counterintelligence, James J. Angleton, that "Fedora" and Nosenko *were* working together on a campaign of disinformation. But for this theory to make sense there had to be an intermediary, because some of the elements of Nosenko's story that were confirmed by "Fedora" only emerged from Nosenko after months of elaborate questioning. How could "Fedora" have known about them if not by way of an informant of his own? That intermediary (or "mole"), moreover, had to be at the highest levels of the intelligence community. Thus, according to this theory, the entire Nosenko episode illustrates the presence of a systematic campaign of Soviet disinformation, made possible in turn by the successful penetration of the American intelligence community by agents of the KGB.

That very charge was made, and directly, by another Soviet defector in the early 60's, Major Anatoli M. Golitsin. Golitsin claimed that the KGB had planted an agent at the very top of the American intelligence community, and that this agent was helped from time to time by "other Soviet-controlled agents masking themselves as defectors or double agents—who would supply pieces of disinformation designed to bolster an 'inside' man's credibility. The 'inside' agent, in turn, would be in a position to help confirm the authenticity of the 'outside' agents." Clearly, Nosenko fits the description of the "outside" agent to perfection. If one accepts this theory, the only remaining question is, who is the "mole" high up in the American intelligence community?

EPSTEIN'S book is about much more than Nosenko. It should be read for its great wealth of information about Oswald's life, which turns out to be quite different from the life portrayed by the Warren Commission. Epstein believes, for instance, that Oswald may have played a crucial role in the Soviet interception and capture of Francis Gary Powers, by providing the Russians with information about radar jamming devices on board the U-2 surveillance aircraft. And Epstein details Oswald's ongoing connection with Soviet intelligence agents right up until the assassination of Kennedy. But he does not believe that the assassination was ordered by

the KGB, or that Oswald was acting on behalf of a foreign intelligence organization when he shot the President—even though Oswald had spoken with Valery Kostikov, a Soviet embassy officer in Mexico City known to be a KGB agent who handled other agents in the United States, and who was thought to be in the department of the KGB which carried out violent acts of sabotage.

The questions Epstein raises are crucial, his ground for raising them are sound, and the general implications of his book are immensely important. Nevertheless, one can differ with his interpretation of individual events. Thus his version of the connection between Oswald and the U-2 affair seems dubious. On the one hand, it does appear likely that Oswald was involved in *some* way, for it is difficult otherwise to explain his physical presence at Powers's trial in Moscow; he was living at the time in Minsk and travel within the Soviet Union is not so simple. On the other hand, the Russians already knew almost everything there was to know about the aircraft, as the plans for the U-2 had been in another American spy plane shot down over the Soviet Union a year earlier and recovered virtually intact. The CIA, which tracked the plane on its fateful flight, came to the conclusion that the U-2 was not at its peak altitude when it was hit by Soviet missiles, but that Powers, for reasons not fully clear (either through some error of his own or perhaps sabotage in the fuel system), had flown the craft at a lower altitude. At a hearing following Powers's repatriation, many experts remained convinced that the U-2 had been captured as a result of mistakes on the pilot's part. The issue was not pressed because to have done so would have involved considerable bureaucratic complications, and if the effort were successful, Powers would have ended up being deprived of some \$60,000 in back pay.

Nor is the theory that Nosenko was a disinformation agent entirely convincing. Nosenko's father had been an alternate member of the Central Committee, had served for a time as Minister of Shipping, and had had an important shipyard named after him. Nosenko's son, following the defection, was excluded from positions that would have been automatically available to a member of such a family, and Nosenko's entire family became the object of discrimination. Now, assuming that Nosenko was a disinformation agent, one would have expected the KGB to do all this as part of his "legend." But why choose such a distinguished person? Why bring dishonor on such a family? Again, following Nosenko's defection there was a purge among his KGB associates. Were so many people to be sacrificed merely to convince the Americans that Oswald had acted alone?

If one counters these questions by postulating Machiavellian cunning on the part of the KGB, then one has to explain the almost transparent amateurishness with which Nosenko's "legend"

was constructed. American intelligence officials had little difficulty poking holes in his story. Despite his later rehabilitation by the CIA—which may have been aimed at encouraging others to defect—Nosenko was not a convincing witness. If the KGB is to be credited with great cunning, should it not have been able to "program" an agent better than this?

But whether or not one accepts his own interpretation of the facts, the issue which Epstein raises remains. Whether Nosenko was genuine or a double agent, it was his view of Oswald—the "lone-nut" view—which prevailed, despite the wealth of evidence linking Oswald to the KGB. And despite the evidence pointing to the presence of Soviet agents in this country, there seems little inclination to take the problem seriously, let alone to deal with it effectively.

THESE two excellent books, based on considerable research into previously classified material, both demonstrate an appalling lack of American expertise in counterintelligence. It took the FBI years to accept the testimony on Hiss, and the crucial evidence finally arrived not through American counterintelligence (which, as Weinstein shows in painful detail, rarely if ever came up with such evidence during the hearings and the trials of Alger Hiss), but from the usual source: a Soviet defector. In the Oswald case, the record is even worse, for here the intelligence community not only ignored the presence of a likely Soviet agent, and failed to place him under surveillance, but actually suppressed documentation at several stages of the investigation in order to deflect attention from the Soviet (and, at a later date, the Cuban) connections of the President's assassination.

Despite the vaunted anti-Communism of the American intelligence community, then, in two of the most important cases of the century, national-security experts showed a marked unwillingness to accept evidence of Soviet espionage. One can well sympathize with them, for in each instance the implications of acceptance were enormous. In the Hiss case, it would have meant rethinking the logic of a wartime alliance and then coming to grips with an ominous postwar reality. In the Oswald case, it would have meant facing the possibility that the Soviet Union (or the Cubans) had ordered one of its agents to kill the President.

Straddling the cold war as they do, the two cases nicely sum up the legacy of that period. It now appears that the unwillingness of many to accept the evidence about Hiss (and about others like him) made McCarthyism possible. Had the FBI done its job in the 40's, and had the government been willing to admit that it had been infiltrated, demagogues like the late Senator from Wisconsin would have been undercut. As it was, McCarthy and his allies were able to paint a picture of Communist

subversion which was made credible by earlier attempts at coverup and wishful thinking. And after the country had cooled down, a new mythology gained the upper hand: everything McCarthy stood for was insane. People who still maintained a belief in the reality of Soviet espionage were branded as paranoids, and it once again became impossible to conduct the necessary business of counterintelligence in a rational manner.

The McCarthyism of the 50's has its mirror image today in the war against the CIA and the FBI. Any news story, no matter how tenuously documented, which suggests that our own intelligence apparatus might be treading on American rights, real or imagined, receives banner headlines. Thus—to cite one example of many—a recent front-page story in the *New York Times* announced with great fanfare that the CIA had infiltrated the Black Panthers in the late 60's, as though there were something self-evidently wrong with surveillance of a group preaching (and practicing) revolutionary violence, and one of whose leaders, Eldridge Cleaver, was living in Cuba and Algeria during the period in question. Such reporting is entirely symptomatic: if our political culture is paranoid about anything these days, it is about the actions of the CIA and the FBI, not about the actions of the KGB or any other Communist espionage agency.

Yet evidence abounds that Communist espionage continues on this continent. In recent months, thirteen Soviet agents have been expelled from Canada following one of the brashest attempts on record to recruit a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. A Vietnamese spying operation has been uncovered at the United Nations. A man about to be hired by the House International Relations Committee fled the country when his East German connection was discovered.

A Soviet diplomat was quietly expelled from Washington when he was found to be "working" Capitol Hill. None of this is "news" in the same way as CIA transgressions are news, and it arouses little public concern. As the Congress now drafts new legislation dealing with intelligence and counterintelligence, the emphasis is on controlling our own agencies, not on protecting us from those of our major adversaries.

IN THEIR new books, Allen Weinstein and Edward Jay Epstein have raised the question of Soviet espionage in a dispassionate and scholarly way. This is most encouraging, for it shows that the issue of Communism and the related question of Soviet espionage can be discussed rationally, apart from their legacy of emotional and ideological prejudice; and if they can be discussed rationally, then perhaps they will also be faced realistically. A few years ago, for example, a book like David Cauter's recently published *The Great Fear* (subtitled "The Anti-Communist Purge under Truman and Eisenhower") would have been received with uncritical acclaim for its lurid portrait of the American response to the threat of Communist subversion and espionage in the early years of the cold war. Today, however, it is reviewed critically on the front page of the *New York Times Book Review* by Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who while acknowledging the abuses and violations of that period, also insists that espionage was a problem and says that it remains "a very real question" whether or not "Burgess, Maclean, and Philby might have been a lesser price to pay than McCarthy, John Foster Dulles, the FBI, and the CIA." It is of course too soon to tell, but if all this suggests the glimmerings of a new attitude, then we may at long last be emerging from the shadow of Joseph McCarthy.