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'Undercover War': The Book Battle

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THE BATTLE of the books is part of an undercover war that has foreign ministries around the world waiting with dread for the next revelation to find its way into print. Book publishers have rarely, if ever before, made such a shattering impact on the news.

The first and foremost instance is that of Svetlana Alliluyeva, Stalin's daughter, whose memoirs to appear in October have already brought a price of up to \$3 million for world rights. She has said that she does not intend the book as a salvo in the cold war but rather as a personal narrative of her alienation from Soviet society and Communist dogma and her discovery of religion and another way of life.

This is not, however, the way the Kremlin will read it. The unofficial Soviet line is that the memoirs can in any event be of little interest since Svetlana was only a young girl when she was her father's favorite and, therefore, what she writes can have only minor political significance.

One of the very few persons to see the manuscript puts a different interpretation on it. It is the intimate, detailed life of the secluded elite at the top of the Soviet hierarchy. In dress, manners, privilege, luxury, their lives were completely set apart from the mass of the Russian people.

One who has seen the manuscript put it this way. Imagine that all property in the United States has been nationalized under a Communist regime. The top officials running the country from New York are assigned to small apartments in public housing. But they take advantage of their power to go out to Long Island and appropriate the estates of the former wealthy capitalists.

THESE are the equivalent of the dachas in the wooded area near Moscow where members of the Supreme Presidium and others in the power structure spend their weekends. As Svetlana paints the picture, they saw only each other, enjoying luxuries in their style of living reminiscent of the czarist period.

For a Communist nation that presumes on the 50th anniversary of the Russian revolution to have achieved an egalitarian society this is a devastating picture. It is reminiscent of Milovan Djilas' book, "The New Class," which

portrayed the privileges and perquisites of the Communist rulers. For this and other books, notably "Conversations with Stalin," a realistic portrayal of a wartime session in the Kremlin when Djilas was high in the Yugoslav hierarchy, he was twice sent to jail.

In the West the concern is not over books by defectors but by those once in high office who tell all in first-person accounts. Secretary of State Dean Rusk is reported indignant at some recent disclosures and concern over others still to come. He has raised a question as to whether these tell-all books may not violate the security oath taken by top officials and presumably still binding even though the individual no longer holds office.

The forthcoming account raising the most uneasiness is "To Move a Nation" by Roger Hilsman, who was director of the Bureau of Research and Intelligence in the State Department from 1961 to '63 and then, in the year following, Assistant Secretary for Far Eastern Affairs. Hilsman, now professor of government at Columbia University, has several times blasted Administration policy in Vietnam. He was commanding officer of an OSS guerrilla group in Asia in World War II.

SOME GRUMBLING has been heard in the State Department over William Attwood's "The Reds and the Blacks," a first-person account of his ambassadorship to Guinea and Kenya. Foreign service officers, particularly those now serving in Kenya, say his revelations have made the American position more difficult in Africa. Attwood left *Look* magazine to become an Ambassador and returned to *Look* as editor.

While it was not a book but a *Saturday Evening Post* article, the revelations of Thomas W. Braden about his role in the Central Intelligence Agency in handing out CIA subsidies caused a small earthquake in Washington. His former colleagues in the agency do not try to conceal their rage at Braden's confession, titled "I'm Glad the CIA Is Immoral." They say Soviet propaganda is playing this up around the world as proof from authority that the agency was using every possible front for its subversion.

It is a bull market in the tell-all field, with publishers on the prowl for more of the same. The battle of the books promises to get hotter and hotter.