

Operation Rollback: America's Secret War Behind the Iron Curtain

Peter Grose



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After the collapse of Nazi power in 1945, a sweeping change occurred in international relations that would transform the landscape of world politics for the next half-century. Uneasy allies in the war against Germany, the United States and the Soviet Union started secretly mobilizing forces against each other, building intricate networks of spies and digging in for the postwar era.

America's secret action plan was known as Rollback, an audacious strategy of espionage, subversion, and sabotage to foment insurrection in the Soviet satellite countries. The architect of the plan, an enigmatic American diplomat first known to the world under the pseudonym "X," publicly advocated an effort to "contain" communism. But following his legendary Long Telegram, Mr. X -- George Kennan -- devised a program of active confrontation with the Soviets through covert action. Within the secret councils of the Truman administration, hidden from the public as well as from most of the government, Kennan and his colleagues set in motion a series of daring and dramatic, though ultimately failed, secret missions behind the Iron Curtain.

Concealed by all sides for four decades, the dangerous episodes of the Rollback campaign have only now come to light. Peter Grose here untangles the extraordinary, little-known story for the first time, artfully reconstructing a hidden history of intrigue and tragic obsession, of secret plots and larger-than-life personalities. Operation Rollback reveals how and why suspicions and recriminations on both sides drove the world into the Cold War.



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