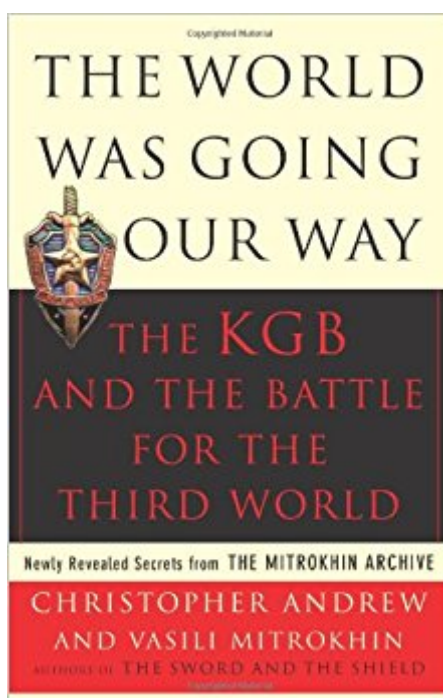


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The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB And The Battle For The Third World, Vol. 2



Synopsis

In 1992 the British Secret Intelligence Service exfiltrated from Russia a defector whose presence in the West remained a secret until the publication of *The Sword and the Shield* in 1999. That man was Vasili Mitrokhin, the KGB's most senior archivist. Unknown to his superiors, Mitrokhin had spent over a decade making notes and transcripts of highly classified files which, at enormous personal risk, he smuggled out of the KGB archives. The FBI described the archive as "the greatest single cache of intelligence ever received by the West." In *The Sword and the Shield*, Christopher Andrew revealed the secrets of the KGB's operations in the United States and Europe; now in *The World Was Going Our Way*, he has written the first comprehensive account of the KGB and its operations throughout the Third World. Our understanding of the contemporary world remains incomplete without taking into account the vast impact of the KGB in developing nations: Andrew reveals the names of political leaders on the KGB payroll as well as the KGB's successful penetration of numerous foreign governments. He also points to the many absurdities of KGB operations—such as agents attempting to assess the spread of influence of rival Chinese communism by visiting African capitals and counting the number of posters of Mao Tse Tung. For decades the KGB believed that the world was going their way—and Americans at the highest reaches of government lived in fear that they were losing the Cold War in the Third World. This extraordinary book will transform our understanding of the history of the twentieth century.

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Customer Reviews

This second volume of the post-war history of the KGB—based on the "Mitrokhin Archive" of secret

documents purloined by the late co-author, a KGB dissident-surveys the Soviet spy agency's skullduggery in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Historian Andrew portrays Russian policy toward the Third World as largely the creation of the KGB, which hoped that the spread of Soviet influence and revolutionary upheavals would make these regions the decisive Cold War battleground. The Cuban Revolution inspired these ambitions, and by 1980, after the American defeat in Vietnam and with leftist regimes installed in Nicaragua and Grenada, Cuban troops fighting in Africa and Russian forces occupying Afghanistan, both American and Soviet officials saw communism on the march. Still, in Andrew's account, Soviet initiatives-with a few exceptions, like the Afghanistan intervention-seem cautious, reactive and uncomfortably dependent on fickle client regimes; wary of confronting the United States, Russia often exerted a restraining influence on local allies. Andrew's engaging, occasionally gossipy narrative provides new evidence of Soviet sponsorship of Latin American insurgencies and Palestinian terrorists, along with details of KGB spycraft and dirty tricks. The world-wide communist conspiracy he depicts was far from a juggernaut, but he sheds new light on the hidden history of the Cold War. Photos.Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Christopher Andrew is Professor of Modern and Contemporary History at Cambridge University. In addition to *The Sword and the Shield*, his previous books include *Her Majesty's Secret Service*, *KGB*, and *For the President's Eyes Only*. He lives in Cambridge, England.

My first recommendation to readers is to watch the superb Youtube video presentation at the International Spy Museum by Christopher Andrew in 2005 when this book was published. This is the best introduction. This is part of the Mitrokhin series and Vasili Mitrokhin should be credited as a co-author as is done on the title page. The book is dedicated to the late Mitrokhin and his late wife. Mitrokhin was the archivist of the KGB secret files and risked his life and probably that of his wife in smuggling his extensive notes out of Moscow to the newly free Baltic states. The first book in the series "The Sword and the Shield" published in 1999 should be read first and covers the entire history of Soviet intelligence. This book focuses on Soviet activities in the third world and will be of special interest to present and former residents of third world countries and scholars of modern third world history. I am passing this book on to a colleague born in Pakistan who will have a hard time putting down the parts describing KGB activities in Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. In this series, Cambridge historian Christopher Andrew points out that many previous works that claim to be based upon the release of previously secret KGB were actually accounts that were hand fed to

authors by the current Russian Intelligence Service and are sanitized versions of KGB history. This is the real unsanitized history and is probably the most complete picture of any intelligence agency the world will ever see. It is must reading for anyone wanting to understand the cold war, the era of decolonization and the failure of the Soviet Union. Ronald Reagan had it exactly right--this was indeed the "Evil Empire."

This book is even better than the first one (in my own opinion). For years, we were told that the front lines of the cold war were in Europe with the third world serving as a battlefield where the superpowers can fight proxy wars. Before this book came out we were very familiar with the CIA's role in Iran, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Chile and other places using dirty tricks and covert operations to promote American interests. This book details the KGB's equivalent operations. We learn that the KGB sponsored a "Hostile takeover" of India; that it was in close contact with Salvador Allende and Fidel Castro and that it was the main support for the ANC during the apartheid struggle. The book shows that although the KGB had numerous tactical successes, in the long run this could not help the Soviet system as communism was a flawed ideology and doomed anyway.

It is a well written study of how the KGB tried to manipulate and fight the cold war in the third world. I was a bit disappointed though after reading at the start how this new and great archive was now available. Yet little of it is presented here. Overall there seemed little radically new in the book although there are some new and interesting points. For example in South Africa, I never realized how much the USSR and South Africa must have traded during the apartheid era in diamonds. The writer's argument which I think is correct is that the KGB was one of the major means used by the Soviets to spread communism throughout the world. Often they were more inventive and clever than their enemies. Unfortunately for the USSR, either the form of communism that took shape in these third world countries produced a rival for example China or they became a major drain on the Soviet economy. Often they were played by the locals just like the US. At the end of the Cold War, in the third world as in many other fields the Soviet's economy could not afford the price.

I agree with Robert Kaiser's take on this work in the introductory review, that much of the assembled facts here were already known or surmised at the time of its publication. The rubric of "newly revealed secrets from Soviet archives" was one of the biggest cons of the American publishing industry in the 1990s. This book underscores another Western shortfall as well - that the success of Communism in the world from 1917 on was directly related to the "Democracies'" unwillingness to

put its rhetoric into practice. This extended with a vengeance into the Third World in this book's timeframe. In Cuba, as a prime example, the US refused to intervene against Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista's misanthropic reign - with which the US possessed leverage - and instead vainly attempted to thwart the Castro regime, with which it possessed none. This blinkered US policy, based only on the short term interests of American investors in Cuba, laid the groundwork for Castro's defection and the KGB's penetration into the Western Hemisphere. Similarly, the unquestioning US subsidy of Israel's Mideast grand strategy likewise gave the KGB entry into the Middle East. American unwillingness to come to grips with its own racial problems in the 50s and 60s, and similar ambivalence regarding anti-colonialism in Africa, ensured that black Africa would seek constructive engagement with the Kremlin while Washington pursued it with Pretoria. The KGB's successes here were all in proportion to Western - specifically American - failure of vision. These successes would have been far greater than even Mitrokhin suggests, were it not for the KGB's own hamstrung bureaucratic mentality.

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