



Spies in the Vatican: The Soviet Union's Cold War Against the Catholic Church

John Koehler

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The shocking history of the Soviet Union's espionage campaign against the Catholic Church.

Already infamous for the arbitrary, paranoid persecution of its own citizens throughout much of the twentieth century, the Soviet Union—as is revealed in John Koehler's revelatory, eye-opening exposé—also waged a vicious espionage campaign against the Catholic Church and its followers. From the persecution of local priests to an assassination order against Pope John Paul II, the KGB viewed Catholicism as a threat to stability in Eastern Europe and treated the church as an enemy of the State.

Lifetime journalist and former U.S. Army Intelligence Officer John Koehler has written the definitive book on this startling history. Using never before seen documents and transcripts, including an order against the Pope that was signed by Gorbachev and nine other Politburo members, Koehler paints a vivid picture of the network of spies and double agents who were working to infiltrate the Church's infrastructure, from the Vatican down to local parishes. But what is most impressive is the overwhelming evidence of the extreme courage of everyday believers who offered shelter and protection to the persecuted, despite the danger of their own arrest or execution.

The KGB's efforts to purge the Soviet Union of the church's "conspiratorial influence" would eventually backfire. The shared sense of unity that developed as a result of these attacks, compounded with the myriad of grievances brought on by decades of brutal Soviet rule, would culminate in the birth of the Solidarity movement after a visit by the Pope in the late 1980s.

This unprecedented chronicle of the Soviet Union's cold war against the Catholic Church is a vital and important contribution to the works of twentieth century history. 16 black-and-white illustrations

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