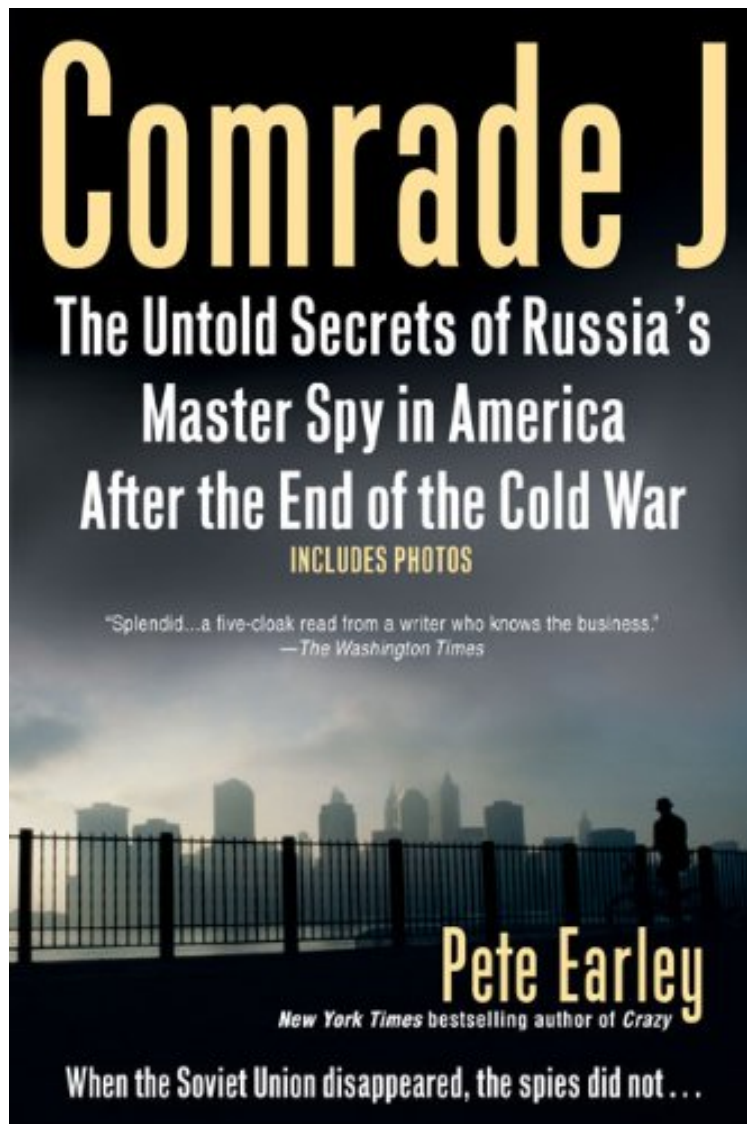


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## Comrade J: The Untold Secrets of Russia's Master Spy in America After the End of the Cold War

*Pete Earley*

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**Pete Earley : Comrade J: The Untold Secrets of Russia's Master Spy in America After the End of the Cold War** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Comrade J: The Untold Secrets of Russia's Master Spy in America After the End of the Cold War:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Provides a compelling insight into post Cold War Russian

intelligence operations in the U. S. By Kindle Customer Pete Early is one of the most informed and respected authors on Soviet/Russian intelligence and American spies. In this book he had unprecedented access to possibly the most important Russian defector in decades who gives candid insight into the inner workings of the KGB/SVR. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great read! By Scott A. Wimmer I am only about 1/3 into it, but it has been fascinating. Highly recommended! Then again, I "spent some time" in the Soviet Union (as a tourist, of course), so I have special interest in this subject. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Spy or history book? By Aris I would have given a better rating if it wasn't the too many chapters on the political history of the USSR and the KGB. Those belong more on a dedicated history, than a true spy book. Nevertheless, it is well written and Sergei Tretyakov's own story is very interesting

When the Cold War ended, the spying that marked the era did not. An incredible true story from the Pulitzer Prize-nominated New York Times bestselling author of *Crazy*. Between 1995 and 2000, "Comrade J" was the go-to man for SVR (the successor to the KGB) intelligence in New York City, overseeing all covert operations against the U.S. and its allies in the United Nations. He personally handled every intelligence officer in New York. He knew the names of foreign diplomats spying for Russia. He was the man who kept the secrets. But there was one more secret he was keeping. For three years, "Comrade J" was working for U.S. intelligence, stealing secrets from the Russian Mission he was supposed to be serving. Since he defected, his role as a spy for the U.S. was kept under wraps-until now. This is the gripping, untold story of Sergei Tretyakov, more commonly known as "Comrade J."

"Delivers the spy-versus-spy frisson that espionage readers expect." -Booklist "Splendid...a five-cloak read." - Washington Times "A fascinating account of Tretyakov's activities." -Library Journal About the Author Pete Earley, a former reporter for The Washington Post, is the author of seven works of nonfiction, including the bestsellers *The Hot House* and *Family of Spies*, and the multi-award-winning *Circumstantial Evidence*. According to the *Washingtonian* magazine, he is one of ten journalist/authors in America "who have the power to introduce new ideas and give them currency." Earley is also the author of two novels. From The Washington Post ed by David Wise The CIA and the FBI were hugely damaged by the supermoles Aldrich Ames and Robert Hanssen, who ran their own private spy bazaars and peddled vast amounts of U.S. secrets to the Russians for years. No one seemed to notice when Ames drove a red Jaguar XJ6 to CIA headquarters or when the FBI's Hanssen escorted a stripper to Hong Kong. So it is understandable that the two agencies might want the public to know that for at least a few years in the late 1990s, they had a mole sending secrets the other way. Enter Col. Sergei Tretyakov, a Russian spy who defected in New York in 2000 as the deputy rezident (station chief) there of the SVR, the successor to the KGB's foreign intelligence directorate. Some four years later, author Pete Earley found himself in a suite at the Ritz-Carlton in Tysons Corner with two FBI agents, two CIA officers, soft drinks, snacks and the defector. The meeting had been set up by an FBI agent who contacted Earley and encouraged him to write a book about the Russian. Earley, a former reporter for The Washington Post, is the author of *Family of Spies*, a well-received account of the John Walker naval spy ring, and *Confessions of a Spy*, a perceptive book about Ames that did not receive the attention it deserved, perhaps because it came out after four other books about the case, including (full disclosure) one by this reviewer. Tretyakov, who had been assigned to the Russian mission at the United Nations since 1995 and to Ottawa before that, gave the FBI 5,000 secret SVR cables and more than 100 Russian intelligence reports, according to one U.S. intelligence official cited by Earley. Tretyakov apparently first tried to defect around 1997 but agreed to remain as an "agent in place," passing secrets to the FBI until October 2000, when he vanished from a Russian residential compound in the Bronx with his wife, daughter and cat. Four months later, the United States acknowledged his defection, but *Comrade J* (the title is drawn from the KGB's code name for Tretyakov, *Comrade Jean*) is the first account of his espionage career. "It is one of our biggest success stories," puffed the unnamed U.S. intelligence official. Perhaps so. But to put the case in perspective, Tretyakov spied for the United States for about three years, while Ames sold secrets to Moscow for nine years (and caused the death of 10 Soviets working for the CIA), Walker spied for 18 years, and Hanssen betrayed America on and off for 22 years. Yet, if Tretyakov was not a world-class mole, he was definitely a world-class name-dropper. And that is the difficulty with his story. All defectors tend to exaggerate their own importance, or at least the importance of their information, especially if they worry that when they run out of secrets to reveal they may be cast aside. Tretyakov's claims about Strobe Talbott, the deputy secretary of state under President Clinton, are a case in point. "Russian intelligence had tricked and manipulated him," Tretyakov said. "He became an extremely valuable intelligence source." Georgi Mamedov, the Russian deputy minister of foreign affairs, was "a longtime co-optee" of the SVR, who met often with Talbott and who "was reporting everything that was said or done by Mr. Talbott directly to us at the Center." Employing a familiar Nixonian technique -- ironic for a KGB man -- Tretyakov is careful to add that Talbott "was not a Russian spy." Talbott, contacted by Earley, called the defector's charges "erroneous and/or misleading." When he spoke with Mamedov, Talbott said, both officials presumed they would each report everything back to their own governments. Similarly, Tretyakov says a friend who was the KGB man in Israel had Prime Minister Golda Meir as his "main target." But Tretyakov, Earley writes, said his friend "was elusive whenever he was asked whether or not Meir

had been a KGB source." And, if one is to believe Tretyakov, the KGB "created the myth of nuclear winter" in the 1980s by hornswagging Carl Sagan and other American and foreign scientists -- although, Earley points out, whether that is true "is impossible to discern." Tretyakov also accuses Eldar Kouliev, Azerbaijan's representative to the United Nations in the 1990s, of being "a deep-cover SVR intelligence officer." And former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, Earley notes, "frequently met with Kouliev." And no doubt with Strobe Talbott. The defector describes five Canadians he says he recruited while stationed in Ottawa and gives their code designations but not their real names. He says he also recruited Alex Kindy, a former member of the Canadian parliament. He claims that Alexander Kramar was the SVR's man inside the much-criticized U.N. Oil-for-Food program -- part of the sanctions on Saddam Hussein's Iraqi regime -- and helped the Russians steal half-a-billion dollars "to line the pockets of top Russian government leaders in both the Yeltsin and Putin presidencies." Also, according to Tretyakov, before the Soviet Union collapsed, KGB chief Vladimir Kryuchkov sent up to \$50 billion in Communist Party funds out of the country, although where the money went, nobody knows. That's an oft-told tale in Russia; Tretyakov provides no details to substantiate the story of the party gold. The real value of Sergei Tretyakov's saga lies less in his scattershot claims and innuendoes than in his sharp eye and gossipy insider's view of the KGB/SVR's training, methods, foibles and tricks. The CIA resettles defectors and pays well the ones it likes. It certainly must like Tretyakov because, Earley reports, his pay package topped a record \$2 million. He lives now in a secret location under a new name. His wife, Helen, drives a Porsche, and Sergei has a Lexus SUV. Copyright 2008, The Washington Post. All Rights Reserved.