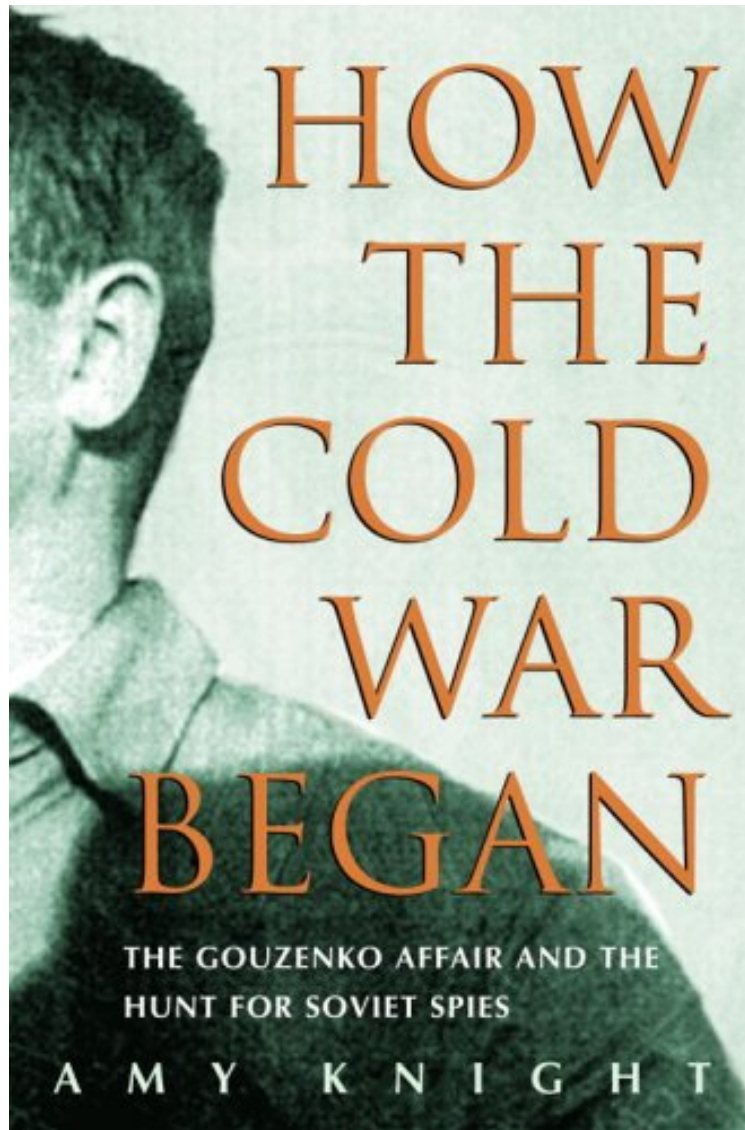


(Mobile ebook) How the Cold War Began: The Gouzenko Affair and the Hunt for Soviet Spies

## How the Cold War Began: The Gouzenko Affair and the Hunt for Soviet Spies

*Amy Knight*

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**Amy Knight : How the Cold War Began: The Gouzenko Affair and the Hunt for Soviet Spies** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised How the Cold War Began: The Gouzenko Affair and the Hunt for Soviet Spies:

10 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Half the story, but a well-written halfBy Sergey RadchenkoThe book is a gripping account of espionage investigation and the political fallout from Igor Gouzenko's defection to

Canada in September 1945. Knight argues that the Gouzenko case triggered a change of public perception of the Soviet Union, from that of a wartime ally to that of a deceitful enemy. This change of perception, and the political outrage in the West over Soviet espionage, precipitated anti-communist hysteria in the US and became the opening act of the drama of the Cold War. Knight's analysis is certainly interesting, placing her clearly in the ranks of revisionist historians (those inclined to blame the US for the Cold War). Her research is very impressive; recently declassified Canadian materials are consulted at great length. On the other hand, the Russian side of the story is inadequately covered. Knight resorts here to a few articles or interviews by former Soviet intelligence officers, omitting archival evidence altogether. Granted, as she quickly points out in the beginning, archival access in Russia remains problematic, and Gouzenko files at the GRU archive are certainly out of reach. But other archives (e.g. the Foreign Ministry, RGASPI) are more or less open to researchers, and Knight's omissions are regrettable. As matters stand, only half Gouzenko's story is told in the book; the other - the Russian half - still remains to be written. Still, Gouzenko's life and times are examined in great detail. Knight shows something of an ambivalent feeling towards Gouzenko's personality, admiring him for courage but censuring him for egoism and arrogance. The one important problem that is barely mentioned in the book is Stalin's policy in the early years of the Cold War. Only once does Knight offer her opinion about the underlying motivations of Soviet foreign policy - i.e. that Stalin wanted to cooperate with the West \*before\* Hiroshima - but this important observation is not buttressed by any evidence, except for a reference to the Zubok/Pleshakov book (*Inside the Kremlin's Cold War*). And yet, Stalin's side of the story is exceptionally important, for if he ruled out cooperation with the West in the aftermath of Hiroshima, then did it really matter what Gouzenko did, or what Washington witch-hunters thought - the Cold War had already begun! The book's title is "How the Cold War began", but certainly without a greater examination of the Soviet side of the Cold War, we can never really tell how it all began. Nevertheless, it is an interesting book, well worth reading, well-written, full of insights and pertinent information. Also, towards the end the author defends Alger Hiss (arguing that he was not a Soviet spy), though she does not really offer much evidence to undermine the well-known public prejudice to the contrary. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Eye-opening! By Daniel Sokolov A fascinating account of politics, political crimes, ineptitude, infighting, haplessness, confusion, and, yes, espionage and counterespionage. Before I forget: A couple Soviets are mentioned as well. :-)

29 of 34 people found the following review helpful. Revisionism By maskirovka I looked this book over at Borders and decided not to buy it when I saw that the author claims that the jury is still out on whether Alger Hiss was a Soviet spy. Frankly, it's my opinion that the Venona decrypts of KGB messages during the World War II era have pretty much settled this issue. Hiss was a spy and so were a number of other people that Ms. Knight seems to assert "reasonable doubt on." Also, the assertion by her that the Gouzenko case marred amicable relations with the Soviet Union after World War II is ludicrous. To use Marxist terminology, that alliance collapsed of its own contradictions (democracies allied with expansionist totalitarian regime). Also, setting aside the Hiss and Harry Dexter White Cases, Venona indisputably proves that the Soviets were running an extremely aggressive intelligence collection program in the West of a scope and nature that is not normally associated with friendly intent. So I would give this a pass, but if you have to read it, you should also check out a book called "the FBI-KGB War" by Robert Lamphere. Lamphere was an FBI agent deeply involved in many of the cases that this book discusses and in my opinion, he has a lot clearer view of reality than Ms. Knight.

Just weeks after World War II had ended, a young cipher clerk named Igor Gouzenko walked out of the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa with secret papers stuffed under his shirt and headed straight for the offices of a city newspaper. His action would change the course of the twentieth century. Gouzenko's defection sent shockwaves through Washington, London, Moscow, and Ottawa. It was the first from a Soviet Embassy, and the smuggled documents, which suggested that agents in North America were feeding atomic secrets to Moscow, sparked a witch-hunt for spies, including not only Americans and Canadians, but a leading British nuclear scientist, Allan Nunn May. FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover used Gouzenko's defection to demonize the Soviets and discredit the leftists in President Harry Truman's White House. All he had needed to push his agenda was evidence of spying, and Gouzenko delivered the goods. The FBI and the House Un-American Activities Committee used Gouzenko's revelations to go after Alger Hiss, Harry Dexter White, and many others. And all the while, infamous MI-5 double-agent Kim Philby kept his Soviet masters apprised. The Cold War had truly begun. In this first book to tell the Gouzenko story, Amy Knight uses newly declassified files as well as interviews with several of the key players to examine the substance of Gouzenko's revelations and delve into his hidden motives for defecting. She explains how Gouzenko was really a pawn in a much larger game. And she brilliantly connects these events to the hardening of relations between Moscow and the West, the practice of guilt by association, and the end of the movement for international control of the atomic bomb.

"This is the best book yet on the Gouzenko case and its international ramifications. That it is also a cautionary tale on the way the state's legitimate need for security can spin out of control makes it very relevant in today's world." -The Globe and Mail

"It took an American scholar to unearth the Gouzenko story....Amy Knight has done a beautiful job of rescuing the Gouzenko story from layers of dust and forgetfulness." -Literary of Canada

"This work is a major

achievement in terms of its contribution to our understanding of the early Cold War and the spy hunt in North America.”-Canadian Journal of History“This is a seminal work on a subject that has mystified and divided Canadians for generations:the Gouzenko Affair....Knight may be at her best as she unravels the American reaction to and the role in perpetuating Gouzenko’s revelations....All told, this is a balanced and penetrating analysis of a sensational and divisive period in Canadian history.”-Winnipeg Free Press“Meticulously researched...How the Cold War Began chronicles a fascinating but ultimately dark chapter in Canadian history....This timely retelling of a real-life thriller will hopefully intensify the debate on where national security concerns end and the rights of the individual begin.”-Quill Quire“Reading like a spy thriller, yet intricately woven and authoritative, this book fills in the troublesome blanks and omissions found in the work of many other researchers....Knight breaks new ground with her portrayal of the real life of Igor Gouzenko.... By illustrating how ‘labelling is easier than proving guilt when innocent people are accused of spying,’ she brings us right up to date with the war on terrorism.”-The Beaver“Amy Knight brings her extensive knowledge of Soviet history to bear on one of the key episodes at the start of the Cold War and on Igor Gouzenko, the man at the heart of it. She has a wonderful cast of characters, from the difficult and mysterious Gouzenko himself to the eclectic array of Soviet spies and sympathizers whom his revelations uncovered. Her book reads like a good thriller but, at the same time, raises issues that matter to us today. How do democracies deal with those who want to use their very openness to destroy them? How much must we give up of our own liberty in the name of security? A book that entertains and stimulates: What could be better?” —Margaret MacMillan, author of Paris 1919“Amy Knight is one of the most meticulous and groundbreaking scholars of Soviet history, and this latest work is her best yet. How the Cold War Began, based on new archival sources, is a gripping spy thriller, a fascinating human story, and a magisterial history of how the victors of WWII moved from four years of Grand Alliance to forty years of Cold War.”— Simon Sebag Montefiore, author of Stalin: Court of the Red Tsar and Potemkin: Catherine the Great’s Imperial Partner

About the AuthorAmy Knight has a Ph.D. in Russian politics from the London School of Economics. She has been a Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars in Washington, and is a world expert in Soviet and Russian security services. She has written for The New York Times, The Times Literary Supplement, The Washington Post, and The New York of Books. Her four previous books, The KGB: Police and Politics in the Soviet Union (1988), Beria: Stalin’s First Lieutenant (1993), Spies Without Cloaks: The KGB Successors (1996), and Who Killed Kirov? The Kremlin’s Greatest Mystery (1999), have all received prominent international attention.

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Igor Gouzenko was presented to the West as a man of courage who did a great service in opening up the eyes of the world to Soviet treachery. But like most defectors, Gouzenko is more complicated than that. The popularly accepted account of his defection and the subsequent investigation leaves many unanswered questions. Was Gouzenko really a hero? Those who were accused unjustly of spying, and who had their names and reputations tarnished for life as a result, viewed Gouzenko as an opportunist whose word should never have been trusted. But was it really his fault that his allegations were used for the purposes of realpolitik? Once he made his pact with Western intelligence services, much of what Gouzenko did or said was out of his control.

To understand Gouzenko’s historical legacy, we must go back to the beginning, to that fateful day in September 1945 when he walked out of the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa with a sheaf of secret documents. What motivated this obscure young cipher clerk to betray his country and embark on what would become a life of fear, acclaim, and, eventually, frustration and poverty? What evidence did he actually produce to show that there was such a massive Soviet spy ring in North America? And what were the driving forces that led Western government officials and politicians to seize on Gouzenko’s allegations and engage in an unprecedented struggle against the communist menace?

For decades, much of the official documentation on the Gouzenko affair in Canada, Britain, and the United States was kept under wraps as part of long--standing secrecy regulations. But government files in all three countries have opened up, and recently the intelligence services of Canada and Britain have released an impressive amount of exciting new evidence. In 2003, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (csis), at this author’s request, declassified hundreds of RCMP Gouzenko documents, and at the end of that year the British made a large portion of their MI5 Gouzenko file publicly available. It is now possible to document, for the first time, the details of the defection and the response of the allied governments, and to examine the impact of the case in the years that followed. And thanks to “glasnost,” we now can learn about the impact of the Gouzenko affair in the Soviet Union, the turmoil it created in the Kremlin, and the repercussions it had for the Soviet intelligence apparatus.

In chronicling Gouzenko’s story, this book renews a debate that began in the McCarthy era and divides historians to this day. To what extent were the people accused of passing secrets to the Soviets during the 1940s really spies, and to what extent were they merely individuals sympathetic to the communist cause and unwittingly drawn into the Soviet espionage network? Another important question, one that resonates particularly strongly in today’s post--September 11 world, is whether the harm that was done to Western interests by those who did spy justified the widespread abuse of individual rights, the vast expenditures of public resources, and the shattering of so many innocent lives. Was the Gouzenko affair necessary to open up our eyes to the evils of the Soviet empire, or did the defection produce an overreaction that polarized Western society and diverted Western governments from a more reasoned and productive response to Soviet espionage as we gradually came to understand its capabilities and aims? Can we say today, with over fifty years of hindsight and a vast

amount of new archival documentation, that the Cold War, as fought by the West against Soviet espionage in the early post-war years, was worth fighting? This book aims to answer these questions.