

THE CONSPIRACY TO TOPPLE PRESIDENT TRUMP

Spygate Exposed

Svetlana
Lokhova

SPY GATE

EXPOSED

The Failed Conspiracy Against President Trump

Svetlana Lokhova

DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the loyal men and women of the security services who work tirelessly to protect us from terrorism and other threats. Your constant vigilance allows us, your fellow citizens to live our lives in safety.

And to every American citizen who, whether they know it or not, almost lost their birthright government of the people, by the people, for the people—at the hands of a small group of men who sought to see such freedom perish from the earth.

God Bless Us All.

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Svetlana Lokhova

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What happened to the President of the United States was one of the greatest travesties in American history. Without any basis they started this investigation of his campaign. Even more concerning is what happened after the campaign in a whole pattern of events...to sabotage the presidency.

Attorney General William Barr
April 8, 2020

Introduction

I've got a story to tell you. It's all about spies. And if it's true—which I think it is—you boys are gonna need a whole new organization.

—John le Carré, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*

Svetlana Lokhova, supposedly this is Flynn's girlfriend. This is the reason that they open up an investigation on General Flynn.

—Rep. Devin Nunes July 28, 2019.

To me belongeth vengeance and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.

—Deuteronomy 32:35¹

Truth is stranger than fiction, but it is because fiction is obliged to stick to possibilities. Truth isn't.

—Mark Twain, *Following the Equator*

Spygate is “the greatest scandal in U.S. political history.”² After the 2016 Presidential election political opponents attempted to unseat the elected US President Donald J. Trump. The plotters, among them some of the former leadership of Obama’s intelligence community used information they knew was false and supplied to them by a man with links to an “obviously unethical if not criminal spying operation during the 1980 presidential campaign.”³

In John le Carré’s masterpiece *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, the greatest spy novel ever written, the source codenamed “Merlin” almost destroyed the security services by providing false

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture is taken from the King James Version in the public domain.

² President Donald J. Trump May 23, 2018.

³ Glenn Greenwald, *The Intercept* (May 19, 2018), <https://theintercept.com/2018/05/19/the-fbi-informant-who-monitored-the-trump-campaign-stefan-halper-oversaw-a-cia-spying-operation-in-the-1980-presidential-election/>

intelligence. Spygate's "Merlin" was perhaps the long-term CIA and FBI asset Stefan Halper.⁴ As with the fictional intelligence organization in the novel, the real intelligence organizations before and especially after President Donald Trump's election were seemingly so desperate for "gold dust" intelligence on campaign figures, they gobbled up the false information on offer, however preposterous. Here is the question; did the spy chiefs either know at the time or should they have known that the "intelligence" they received was concocted by a single unreliable source and unverified? Both the fictional and real intelligence organizations paid a fortune for fake information and the more they rewarded the source the more they relied on the fables.⁵ Both the fictional "Source Merlin" and the real life Halper have been described as collectors of intelligence no-one else could get, with "contacts" at the highest level of the Moscow Kremlin.

The novel, *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy* has a good ending: George Smiley, a veteran British intelligence officer, painstakingly investigates and dramatically exposes the entire plot. He proceeds to clean out the stables. Spygate is real-life. Will Attorney General William Barr, who is investigating the origins of Spygate, emerge as the hero?

Myths born in the Cold War espionage battles between the great powers are the origin of the Spygate scandal. For the operation to come so close to toppling President Donald Trump, the Deep State sought to influence American public opinion against him, relying on inherited memories planted deep in the U.S. psyche. "The press is part of the operation, the indispensable part. None of it would have been possible...had the media not linked arms with spies, cops, and lawyers to relay a story first spun by Clinton operatives."⁶ The press scam unlocked latent suspicion of Russia. A remarkable and intense media campaign poisoned the minds of the American public to the point many believe their own president, Donald J. Trump, was a

⁴ Halper has been named by numerous media outlets including the *Washington Post* and *New York Times* as both a CIA and FBI asset. David Ignatius described him as FBI "trusted source." Tom Hamburger also of the Post described Halper as "*a peripheral figure in intelligence circles — someone who is unofficially "part of the family" and is trusted to take on low-risk tasks at the government's behest.*" Halper or someone close to him, I believe is the likely source of this information. Family is a reference to his ex-father in law Ray Cline a legend in the CIA. I call him the Spider, referencing a line from a poem by Sir Walter Scott.

⁵ Halper's exact FBI payments are redacted in the Inspector General Horowitz report. It would appear to be a sum in excess of \$1million from 2008.

⁶ Lee Smith. *The Plot Against the President: The True Story of How Congressman Devin Nunes Uncovered the Biggest Political Scandal in U. S. History.* (New York, Center Street 2019)

“Manchurian Candidate”, a Kremlin puppet under the control of a hostile foreign power. The disinformation campaign ran 24/7 for years and was unlike anything seen before.

The Spycgate scandal progressed through a series of inquiries. Special Counsel Robert Mueller found no collusion between the Trump presidential campaign and Russia. Inspector General Michael Horowitz uncovered a swathe of FISA⁷ abuse, and now Attorney General Bill Barr and U.S. Attorney John Durham from Connecticut are looking at the very origins of the operation. The sordid events of 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018 live on, still spinning around us and inevitably feeding into the politics of re-election in 2020.

I am uniquely qualified to explain this horror of government abuse. I am an intelligence scholar, an eye witness and a critical one to the operation against Donald Trump. I know those who are now named and routinely reported on as players in the origins of this story. In this book I provide my own eyewitness evidence of hard facts together with deduction and analysis. Of course, I may be wrong in some of my assumptions as is inevitable in unravelling so much disinformation. I bring my skills as a scholar and my memory to this task. The arduous mission for Attorney General William Barr and U.S. Attorney John Durham is determining the start, the genesis of the whole operation.

My story starts in 2014. I am a scholar, an academic, a mother and certainly not a spy. Long before the Deep State ensnared me in its web, I was innocuously researching espionage history. Following along in the footsteps of the great novelist John le Carré, I made *“the world of spying ... my genre. My struggle is to demystify, to de-romanticize the spook world, but at the same time harness it as a good story.”*

Later, my life was taken over by false allegations fabricated in the plot against Donald Trump, that has become the greatest political scandal of U.S. political history. According to the lies, I am General Flynn’s “Russian girlfriend” and that lie is the reason that the FBI opened up a counter-intelligence investigation on General Flynn. I have used my research skills honed as a historian to uncover the lies, the leaks, and the fake investigations. I have an advantage over other writer: I

⁷ Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act

am an eyewitness. My story is important to understand the history of the United States of America and to correct those who maintain the narrative of deceit. It does not fit, in fact my story destroys, the established Deep State's narrative and chronology; it is most inconvenient.

In 2014, I was teaching history to undergraduate students at the UK's top-ranked university, Cambridge. It was a tranquil life and a world away from the dark games of Washington power politics. The University of Cambridge is an elite academic institution founded in the Middle Ages in a quiet, sleepy market town in the crushingly flat east of England. I am a leading expert and possibly the only specialist on early Soviet espionage in the United States which began at the start of the 1930s.⁸ My area of expertise is not the modern day but an investigation, an expedition back in time into the secret world of spying in the last century.

By 2014, when this story starts, I had long been a British citizen. I spent sixteen years associated with England's most famous university since emigrating from the chaos of Moscow, Russia, to the calm ivory towers and spires of Cambridge—the educator of choice for the British establishment. It is also home to a small, highly prestigious but dying intelligence history group. My Russian language skills and my youth set me apart from the club which is an otherwise stale, male, and pale world of Cambridge-based espionage historians.

Unlike the others in the small, fractious group, I was not a crusty Cold War warrior clinging to the ideas of the Great Game.⁹ I am a product of the modern capitalist Russia that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union and a Western education. Unlike the others in the Cambridge club I was not a participant in the shadowy, murky operations of the Cold War. I approached the subject of espionage history with the clear eyes of the intellectually curious and not the preconceived notions of a participant.

In the brief hiatus between the end of the first Cold War in 1991 and its sudden resumption in mid 2014, Russia's new capitalist government released files stored from the Soviet era for public view. Most of my research relied on the declassified records of the long disbanded Soviet

⁸ Svetlana Lokhova *"The Spy Who Changed History"* (London, Harper Collins 2018)

⁹ The Great Game was a political and diplomatic confrontation that existed for most of the 19th century between the British Empire and the Russian Empire over Afghanistan and neighboring territories in Central and South Asia.

Communist Party. The documents are open to the public and archived in Moscow. I have no exclusive access. But unlike almost all Western historians, I read Russian and understand Russians. The no-doubt fascinating official Soviet-era spy records remain highly classified, inaccessible, and likely to remain so forever. However, the Soviet state was a bureaucratic monolith, a machine that generated mountains of files and paperwork. I discovered in the now-declassified Communist Party records a treasure trove of clues for my work in the personal papers of Soviet leaders. A diligent researcher will find revelatory information in these dusty files. It is a Herculean task, so I am the only Western-trained historian with native Russian language skills who has analyzed this unique historical source.

Espionage history can be magical. There are undiscovered stories, thrilling and often tragic in equal measure. Using almost a century old documents, I was making fresh, groundbreaking finds in my field, rewriting our understanding of a bygone era. I was uncovering long-secret spy operations. It was my success as a scholar and not a sordid plot that brought me into the inner circles of Cambridge University. Everyone trusted me, and why not? After so many years, I was very much part of the furniture.

My work extended beyond the ivory towers. I helped the British government declassify its spy records—the British National Archive at Kew in London stores the declassified MI5 files for public view. The most significant stash of KGB records is the archive of the Soviet era defector, Mitrokhin, located in the Churchill Archive Centre in Cambridge. Naturally, in the course of my everyday work, I was introduced to many distinguished senior servants of intelligence services.

Over its long, mostly glorious history, the University of Cambridge has produced Nobel prize-winning scientists, world leaders, comedians, and more than its fair share of world-class spies and traitors. “Spies are a Cambridge tradition. We’ve produced more of them than any other British university,” says Professor Christopher Andrew, the world’s leading expert.¹⁰

Cambridge’s reputation as a center of espionage is now a national joke. Stephen Fry, one of the best comedians the university produced, quipped, “When I was at Cambridge it was, naturally

¹⁰ <https://www.corpus.cam.ac.uk/news/500-years-of-cambridge-spies>

enough I felt, my ambition to be approached in some way by an elderly . . . don [professor] and asked to spy for or against my country.”¹¹

None of the traitors is more famous than the so-called Cambridge Five. In the early 1930s, at least five British undergraduates studying at the University converted to the Communist cause and later became committed Soviet spies. On graduation, the traitors took their places as moles at the heart of the British establishment and betrayed secrets to the Soviets. These spies were not Russian infiltrators but home-grown British converts to the Communist cause.

The most infamous was Kim Philby. He is the only British traitor to be publicly and prematurely cleared in a speech in the House of Commons by the then foreign secretary, and later prime minister, Harold Macmillan. On November 7, 1955, Macmillan told the House of Commons, “I have no reason to conclude that Mr. Philby has at any time betrayed the interests of his country.¹²” Ah, a different age when Russia’s spies were buried deep in our government system, and no one believed it! Today the reverse is the case; there were no Russian spies at the heart of the newly elected US government but half the population was fooled into believing there was!

During his long career with the British Secret Intelligence Service, Philby came within touching distance of being appointed the head. No one suspected his treachery especially given his privileged social background and Cambridge credentials. The presence of the long-dead Magnificent Five (interchangeable with Cambridge Five) still lingers in memories around the University. A lively cottage industry still pumps out best-selling books each year, each trying to find a fresh angle on the old scandal.

But the University of Cambridge, as a center of espionage, should have remained as a historical anomaly. The Five were members of the upper-class British elite, not infiltrated Russian-trained sleeper agents. After the political turmoil of the 1930s, Cambridge retreated to its traditional role as a quiet backwater dedicated to studying. In my academic career, the only nugget I uncovered

¹¹ Ted Goodman (ed.), *Forbes Book of Quotations: 10,000 Thoughts on the Business of Life* (New York: Hachette Books, 2016), 219.

¹² Hansard (1955 Parliament meeting), at <https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1955/nov/07/former-foreign-office-officials-1>

on the Cambridge Five was hidden deep within the Mitrokhin Archive¹³. According to Mitrokhin's account, the KGB regarded their recruits' occasional state of drunkenness and amateur tradecraft antics with grave concern.¹⁴ Russians are still bemused today by the British obsession with their long-dead spies. A trail of authors heads to Moscow each year in the vain hope of finding something new. The Russians rate Kim Philby, Anthony Burgess, Donald McClean, Anthony Blunt, and John Cairncross much more for their propaganda value as an embarrassment to British intelligence than their covert work. In turn, the British pump out their propaganda; the myth that the Five all died miserably repenting their treachery in their cups.

The sleepy medieval city of Cambridge is a beautiful setting for a fictional spy story because of its historical associations. There is always some whiff of intrigue in the air. But these days it has been reduced to the petty plotting of fierce academic spats fought out at High Table. In academia, where the stakes are very low, and everyone has time on their hands to plot, I have witnessed many long-held grudges and bitter arguments being played out. So when the *Financial Times* reported the fake story in December 2016 of an alleged spy ring operating on Russian president Vladimir Putin's orders at the University, my reaction was "how absurd." No one could even summon the energy to stir themselves to alert the university authorities let alone the security services about the concocted spy ring.¹⁵

Spies have studied at the University from the Elizabethan days of the playwright Christopher Marlowe. Even the fictional James Bond obtained a First Class degree in Oriental Languages from the University. But it is the unjustifiable spying of the real life American interloper Stefan Halper, which has brought the most shame on the venerable institution. He is the only known foreign spy to penetrate and operate at the University.¹⁶ Cambridge University and bogus professors are forever synonymous with cover for an espionage asset. After recent revelations,

¹³ The papers of the defector and former KGB archivist Vasily Mitrokhin.

¹⁴ From material translated by the author contained in the Mitrokhin Archive.

¹⁵ Sam Jones. "Intelligence experts accuse Cambridge forum of Kremlin links" (The *Financial Times* December 16, 2016.)

¹⁶ Halper has been named as a spy by numerous media outlets since being exposed in May 2018. See, Tom Hamburger "Cambridge University perch gave FBI source access to top intelligence figures — and a cover as he reached out to Trump associates." (The *Washington Post*, June 5, 2018).

anyone introducing themselves as “The name is Bond, Professor Bond” is more dangerous than plain “Bond, James Bond.”

John le Carré’s spy books sell so well because their plots draw heavily on historical events. The merit of his first dark work, *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*, was not just that it was authentic, but that it was credible. Le Carré’s most famous work, *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* is a masterful reworked version of the Kim Philby story. The gritty and squalid tone of the novelist’s plots is a credit to the author. Le Carré was an MI6¹⁷, spy whose career was cut short by Kim Philby’s betrayal of him. There are many similarities in the fictional plots about George Smiley, Gerald the Mole, the dissolute spy Alec Leamas, and the real Spycgate scandal. The black arts and dirty methods spies employ never change. Le Carré’s work based as it is on his real-life espionage experience exposes many of them.

A spy is by all accounts the world’s second oldest profession. The Old Testament describes the mission of the Twelve Spies (Hebrew: עֲשָׂרִים וְשְׁנַיִם הַמְרַגְלִים) in the Book of Numbers 13:1–33. A group of Israelite chieftains, one from each of the Twelve Tribes, were dispatched by Moses to scout out the land of Canaan for forty days. They were looking for a future home for the Israelites, wandering in the wilderness following their Exodus from ancient Egypt. It was much later in the twentieth century when what we see today as professional intelligence and counterintelligence services were established. The British invented modern spying just before the start of WWI founding the famous MI6 (or SIS, Secret Intelligence Service), and MI5 (domestic intelligence service). An article in the British tabloid the *Daily Mail’s* began a hoax German spy scare, and the government responded by creating a Secret Service. Before the Great War, gentlemen would simply not spy on each other.

It was the czarist-era Russian spy service known as the Okhranka which first perfected the dark arts of spying on political opponents that we see revealed so starkly today. The czar’s government deployed “agent provocateurs” to launch disinformation campaigns at home and abroad against his opponents; much of the *Okhranka’s* techniques are those used by the CIA in this story. The United States acquired the records of the Paris bureau of the disbanded czarist

¹⁷ The British secret service.

spies in 1924 and made an exhaustive study of their methods. Helpfully, they later declassified their studies and posted the analysis online.¹⁸

The mysteries of the Russian intelligence agencies still grip popular imagination. The Communist Revolution was supposed to tear down the structures of the oppressive czarist state but ironically created the most successful intelligence services the world has ever known. The originally planned “temporary commission” or Cheka formed in 1918 evolved into Stalin’s feared NKVD¹⁹ and then later the famous KGB. The Soviet achievement of stealing the secrets of the atomic bomb in WWII remains unsurpassed as the greatest espionage feat in history. Although much smaller in size and impact, the Soviet Military Intelligence, known as the GRU, had its fair share of success. The GRU officer Richard Sorge who operated undercover in China and Japan during WWII is Ian Fleming’s pick as the world’s greatest spy. Ian Fleming, who like le Carré worked in espionage, was the creator of James Bond.

The Americans were very slow to the party. The fledgling American colonies and occupying British had deployed spies during the Revolutionary War. The unfortunate young Nathan Hale was one, hanged by the British in New York for spying on behalf of General George Washington. Of course, Washington’s spy ring was not a formal organization. But when the United States belatedly embraced intelligence, they soon became the world’s biggest and eventually the best. However, the Americans still remain deferential to British intelligence which taught them a crash course in espionage during wartime. America’s WWII Office of Strategic Services (OSS) established by “Wild Bill” Donovan became the CIA in 1947. In terms of its history, US spying might be short, but in scale, no other country compares both in success and now scandal.

Despite the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and hence its *raison d'être*, the U.S. intelligence community continued to expand unchecked in size and cost. One critic, General Mike Flynn said, “There is an inherent bias in the intel community because they want to get money, they want to exist, and they want to grow.”²⁰ It is known around the spook trade as

¹⁸ www.cia.com

¹⁹ The Soviet secret police agency (People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs)

²⁰ Lt. General Mike T. Flynn, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/12/10/why-the-afghanistan-papers-matter/>

“kingdom building”. Today, the U.S. spends more on espionage and counter-espionage than the rest of the world combined. In early 2015, retired General Mike Flynn emerged as a potentially credible threat to the continued existence of the CIA.

Gen. Flynn, a former head of the United States military intelligence organization, the DIA²¹, gave a series of explosive media interviews delivering a devastating critique of the Agency’s many failures in Afghanistan and Iraq. It was not just what General Flynn had said that caused his target, the CIA concern but to whom he was talking. By the summer of 2015, Gen. Flynn began meeting with leading Republican politicians, in particular, the maverick presidential candidate Donald Trump. This was perhaps a meeting “too far” for the CIA leadership; their mission apparently became an effort to stop Gen. Flynn and Donald Trump. Could the response of the CIA’s former leadership to their emerging challenge be to launch a covert operation? Did they see the task was not to protect U.S. national security but to preserve the Deep State?

²¹ Defense Intelligence Agency