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NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW
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In Short

NONFICTION

THE NEW KGB: Engine of Soviet Power. By William R. Corson and Robert T. Crowley. (Morrow, \$19.95.) Despite its title, this book is mainly a history of the Soviet security and intelligence apparatus, rounded out by a retelling of some of the organization's more notorious exploits in Britain and the United States. The chapters on the methods employed by Soviet agents in ferreting out the West's industrial and military secrets are particularly timely, what with recent arrests of a number of Americans accused of spying for Moscow. But the book's message lies elsewhere. The authors, who claim a combined 70 years' experience in military intelligence, contend that the K.G.B. has taken over control of the Soviet Communist Party and "now operates the U.S.S.R." They concede that this view puts them at odds with many "traditional" American scholars who see the party as still firmly in charge, and they provide little real evidence in support of their own opinion. Their conclusions are more a matter of interpreting Soviet political dynamics as holding out little hope for any improvement in East-West relations. American ventures in détente, trade and scientific exchange are dismissed as delusions that have made it that much easier for the K.G.B., beefed up before his death last year by the Soviet leader Yuri Andropov, to carry out his ukase — massive filching of Western high technology to modernize and expand the Soviet armed forces. Soviet professions of reasonableness are pretense, a smokescreen behind which Russia under its new K.G.B. masters reverts to harshest Stalinism. There is little left to do, as the authors would have it, but hold the Russians at arm's length and proceed with President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars" program. It is unfortunate, in a book laying claim to special expertise, that the footnotes and bibliography should contain so many errors in transliterations of Russian names and words.

— Anthony Austin