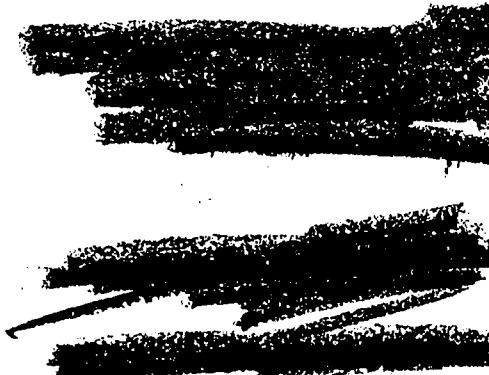


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MiG PILOT: Lt. Viktor Belenko's Final Escape
John Barron. Reader's Digest Press/McGraw-Hill, \$10.95 ISBN 0-07-003850-3
 Barron, an editor at *Reader's Digest*, recounts the story of Viktor Belenko, a Soviet pilot who defected by flying his secret MiG-25 to Japan in 1976 and later came to the U.S. Readers who have no particular curiosity about the technical aspects of aircraft will nevertheless find the book interesting for its picture of life in the Soviet Union. Through Belenko's eyes we see a poor country where everyday existence is difficult for the average Russian due to food shortages, shoddy goods and mistaken priorities by planners. Barron's primary emphasis, however, is on what he considers Belenko's contribution to our national defense, information about Soviet pilot training, equipment and the like Belenko passed on to the CIA during months of interrogation. But the psychology of the defector, Belenko's severe culture shock in adjusting to American life (even with a sizable trust fund from our government to ease his financial problems), the transfer of allegiance from one system to another by this "quintessence of the New Communist Man" are subjects that little concern the author, who deals with such matters only briefly in a concluding chapter. [February]



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