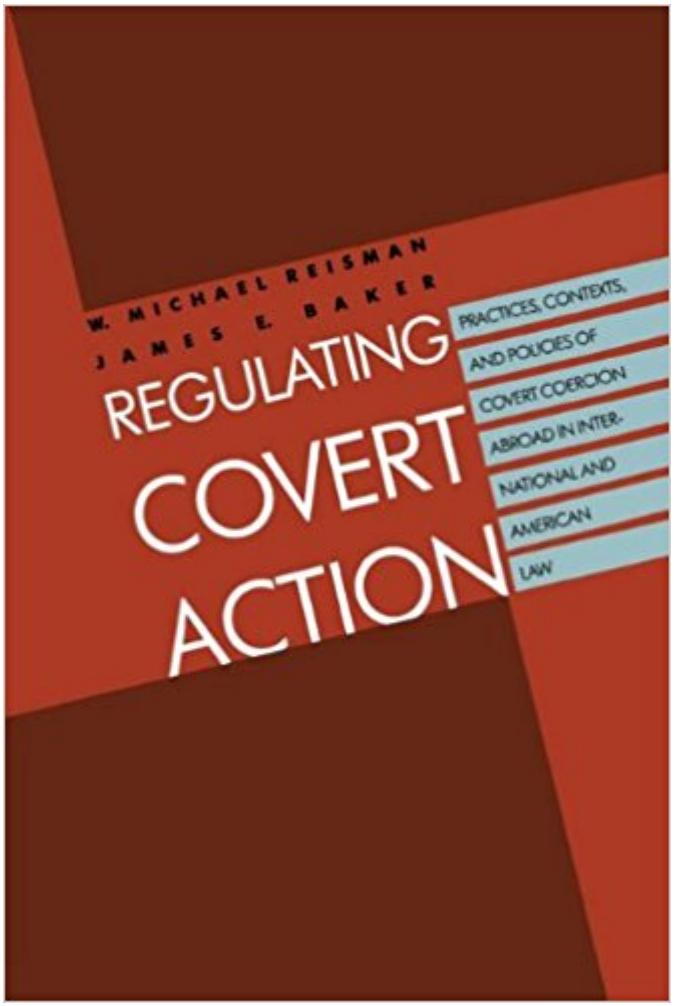
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Regulating Covert Action



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Synopsis

Covert activity has always been a significant element of international politics. When it has served their interests, governments have secretly disseminated propaganda in other countries, manipulated foreign economies, and abetted coups against their adversaries. What are the circumstances, if any, in which it is lawful, under international law or United States law, to resort to covert action either directly or through local proxies? When is it right to do so? Ã Â This book is the first to assess the lawfulness of covert action under United States and international law and to face candidly the implications for democratic states that covert operations pose. Michael Reisman and James E. Baker identify different types of covert actions, discussing a variety of cases that include the Trujillo assassination in 1961, the Rainbow Warrior in 1985, and the raid on Libya in 1986. After explaining the complex operations of the international legal system, they explore trends in decision making and the conditions that accounted for themÃ¢â ¬â •whether the covert operations were proactive, defensive, or reactive. They examine in detail the procedures followed in the United States to authorize and oversee covert activity and propose guidelines for political leaders who may contemplate using covert techniques. An appendix reviews twenty years of allegations of covert aggression brought to the attention of the United Nations Security Council.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Great read. Even though written as a post Cold War book, much of the analysis and principles remain relevant today.

This book is the best analysis of covert action policy-making I have read. Surprisingly, it is written by two legal scholars, and not by political scientists. It’s primary purpose is to analyze the international legal status of covert actions. However, it contains a detailed and thoughtful analysis of the goals and objectives of covert action. In addition, it has a good list of covert actions carried out by a number of countries.

The item was excellant

Reisman and Baker bring much needed clarity to an legal area which is controversial and a moving target. Superb exposition. Useful "take aways" for a national security practitioner. Have always enjoyed Reisman’s clarity of thought particularly in his analysis of Law of the Sea issues - - he does it again in the area of covert operations.I hope a second edition is written which analyzes the law of covert operations as it applies to current U.S. Government policies and practices. An analysis of how information operations fits into this overall scheme would also be interesting.Well done!

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