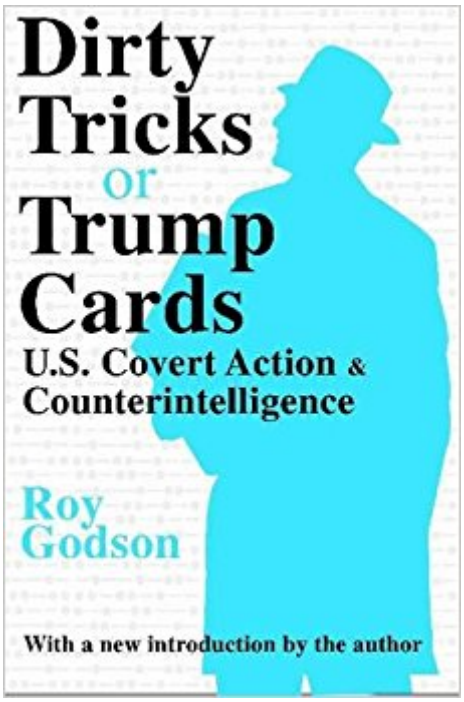
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Dirty Tricks Or Trump Cards: U.S. Covert Action And Counterintelligence



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Synopsis

Contrary to popular misconceptions and public branding as "dirty tricks," covert action and counterintelligence can have considerable value. Democracies, while wary of these instruments, have benefited significantly from their use, saving lives, treasure, and gaining strategic advantage. As liberal democracies confront the post-Cold War mix of rogue states and non-state actors, such as criminals and terrorists, and weapons of mass destruction and mass disruption, these clandestine arts may prove to be important tools of statecraft, and perhaps trump cards in the twenty-first century.Godson defines covert action as influencing events in other parts of the world without attribution, and counterintelligence as identifying, neutralizing, and exploiting the secret activities of others. Together they provide the capability to resist manipulation and control others to advantage. Counterintelligence protects U.S. military, technological, and diplomatic secrets and turns adversary intelligence to U.S. advantage. Covert action enables the United States to weaken adversaries and to assist allies who may be hampered by open acknowledgment of foreign support.Drawing on contemporary and historical literature, broad-ranging contacts with senior intelligence officials in many countries, as well as his own research and experience as a longtime consultant to the U.S. government, Godson traces the history of U.S. covert action and counterintelligence since 1945, showing that covert action works well when it is part of a well-coordinated policy and when policy makers are committed to succeeding in the long-term. Godson argues that the best counterintelligence is an offensive defense. His exposition of the essential theoretical foundations of both covert action and counterintelligence, supported by historical examples, lays out the ideal conditions for their use, as well as demonstrating why they are so difficult to attain.This book will be of interest to students and general readers interested in political science, national security, foreign policy, and military policy.

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Customer Reviews

Godson’s impressive study, notable for its clarity, defines both counterintelligence and covert action, arguing that both are necessary. Counterintelligence, he writes, includes the identification, neutralization and exploitation of the intelligence activities of others (thus protecting state secrets from adversaries); covert action encompasses efforts to influence events in other parts of the world without revealing or acknowledging involvement. Godson outlines ``ideal'' counterintelligence and covert action, describes how both have been practiced by the U.S. and suggests possible ways to employ each more effectively in the national interest. Godson, a professor of government at Georgetown University and consultant to the National Security Council, has written a textbook accessible to the general reader. Copyright 1995 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"...if you want to understand how the whole thing works at Washington level, and to have an idea of what George W. Bush is hearing from his adviser, then reading this will prove quicker and cheaper than setting up your spy network." Ã¢â ¬â •Daily Telegram "Roy Godson provides much-needed balance, context, and insights for understanding the clandestine arts. As the United States debates the future of its intelligence capability, this provocative, interesting, and well-written book, which explains the signifigance of covert operations and what it takes to do them well, should be permitted to have a significant impact on the debate." Ã¢â ¬â •Richard Helms, Former Director of Central Intelligence "An independent analysis of key elements of intelligence, unbiased and unprejudicedÃ¢â ¬â •in contrast to the books of many 'insiders.' Godson illuminates the interdependence of the different but potent threats we will face in the 21st century: symbiotic relationships among transnational organized crime, security services, politicians, and terrorists, and the potential use of weapons of mass destruction and mass disruption. He demonstrates how the effective use of the clandestine artsÃ¢â ¬â •covert action and counterintelligenceÃ¢â ¬â •can provide a winning edge. A wake-up call for everyone involved in global security." Ã¢â ¬â •Volker Foertsch, Former Director, Germany's Clandestine Intelligence Service "As a pioneer in intelligence studies and one of today's most influential scholars, Roy Godson has produced an outstanding analysis. Drawing on his extensive knowledge of history and contemporary intelligence

practices in the United States and abroad, he sets forth principles to guide effective post-Cold War policy." Ã¢â ¬â •Robert L. Pfaltzgraff, Jr, Shelby Cullom Davis Professor of International Security, Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy

This was definitely an interesting and one of my books from college that I actually read all the way through. It included lots of examples that kept the reading entertaining and kept me wanting to read more.

If you are interested in politcs and the intelligence agencies of the United States, this is an amazing book.

Godson,Another great job, book was interesting and thorough. Enjoyed reading the material and your thoughts.

A quick, cheap alternative to setting up your own spy network.SPY BOOKS have evolved. Early in the 20th century we had thrillers and fantasies, shamelessly implausible but racy and fun, culminating in Bond. Thoughtful spy novels began with Somerset Maugham’s Ashenden (1928), featuring a detached hero on a journey to disillusion, a process brought to its apotheosis by le Carre via Greene. In parallel with this were volumes of reminiscence prompted by espionage of two world wars and the Cold War. But in recent decades, another strain has emerged: the academic study of intelligence, of which this book is a good example. Roy Godson is a Professor of Government at Georgetown University and heads the American-based Consortium for the Study of Intelligence. He rightly asserts the importance of intelligence studies to any understanding of 20th-century international relations. Given the number of Cold War political decisions to which intelligence was a contributor - sometimes a determinant - any history of the period which leaves it out is, at best, one-eyed. Counterintelligence (CI) and covert action, the subjects of his book, are significant sub-divisions of intelligence activity, although syping can happen without them. In Godson’s definition, the primary mission of CI is to "identify, neutralize and exploit the intelligence or secret infrastructures of others". In other words, CI is spying on spies, studying, distrupting and, if possible, turning against themselves the activities of hostile organizations who are trying to spy on you. Most examples given are American, but one familiar to British readers is Oleg Gordievsky, the British agent who ended up charge of the KGB’s London operations and who, according to Godson, was thus able to prevent the M15 officer Michael Bettaney from spying for the Russians. (In fact,

Gordievsky was more than an outstanding CI agent: he was also a producer of very high-grade political intelligence.) Godson defines covert action as "influencing conditions and behaviour in ways that cannot be attributed to the sponsor". It ranges from getting articles into the press to sponsoring guerilla warfare. Although governments without an intelligence service can mount effective covert action - the American 1902 acquisition of rights over the Panama Canal is an example quoted - it usually demands resources that only an intelligence service could maintain. Thus, when the British and American governments sought the overthrow of the Mussadegh government in Persia in 1953, they mounted a joint covert action using the existing British intelligence network. This is not a collection of shock-horror spy revelations or stories of derring-do but an academic study of the bureaucracy of the cloak and the politics of the dagger. The ending of the Cold War, Godson rightly says, does not mean an end to conflict - "World politics continues as it has for much of mankind's existence" - and the present "low levels" of government in parts of the world does not mean the end of the nation state. There are, he estimates, more than 100 intelligence organizations targeting American interests. American attitudes towards CI and covert action have traditionally suffered from "fits-and-starts" - as often too much as too little - and what are now needed are consistent, well-thought-out foreign policies to which these activities contribute systematically. They should neither dictate policy nor be tactics of last resort. If you want spy thrills, this is not your book; but if you want to understand how the whole thing works at Washington level, and to have an idea of what George W Bush is hearing from his advisers, then reading this will prove quicker and cheapter than setting up your own spy network.

Roy Godson is the only person to have systematically studied intelligence requirements in a holistic manner, consistently distinguishing among collection, analysis, counterintelligence, and covert action. His series in the 1980's, and then again in the 1990's, on intelligence requirements, stand alone as efforts to define and measure key elements.With this book, written and published prior to 9-11,Godson provides both a historical and a prescriptive treatment of the two most neglected and mis-managed elements of U.S. national intelligence: covert action (concealed influence) and counterintelligence (protecting our secrets by catching their spies and agents of influence).While 9-11 demonstrated our incapacity in both these vital areas that comprise the black art side of national power, there is no other book and no other expert that has done more to itemize the details that must be contemplated (and are not now being contemplated) by those responsible for devising homeland security defenses. The author's appreciation for pre-emptive "offensive" counterintelligence and covert action, and his understanding of terrorist and criminal and other

nonstate actors (one should include rogue corporations, of which there are many), make him particularly well-qualified to advise the Administration and Congress as we move toward what must be a draconian reconstitution and revitalization of national intelligence.

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