

A Spy For All Seasons: My Life in the CIA

By Duane R. Clarridge

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This memoir of former CIA Deputy Director Duane R. "Dewey" Clarridge offers revelations about clandestine activities he supervised in the world's hot spots. He offers us an account of Iran-Contra, and why the CIA was so shaken by the Walsh investigation. He offers a behind-the-scenes look at the Reagan administration's secret war against Sandinistas - a campaign Clarridge conceived and ran. Clarridge, who founded and headed the CIA's counter-terrorist centre, also reveals how the agency retaliated for the terrorist murders on the cruise ship "Achille Lauro" and in the Vienna and Rome airports. Whether he is speaking about William Casey or William Webster, this intelligence veteran provides insider perspectives on key security issues and political events of our time.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Clarridge, a New Hampshire-born dentist's son, joined the CIA in 1955 to fight Soviet and Chinese communism. His 33-year career-including stints as chief of the Latin American and European divisions, and head of the CIA's Counterterrorist Center, which he set up in 1986-ended with his forced retirement after the FBI and congressional committees investigated his role in what he dismissively calls "the Iran-contra nonsense." Indicted in 1991 on federal charges of lying to Congress and the Tower Commission, Clarridge received a presidential pardon from Bush a year later. In a brisk, businesslike memoir studded with disclosures about CIA covert actions and espionage around the world, Clarridge denies charges that he secretly anointed Oliver North as U.S. coordinator for contra funding and weapons supply. He also denies that he knew in advance a shipment of missiles to Iran was, in fact, weaponry rather than oil-drilling equipment, as North allegedly tricked him into believing. Clarridge reveals details of an almost-successful agency attempt to nab Palestinian terrorist Abul Abbas, who hijacked the cruise ship Achille Lauro in 1985, killing a wheelchair-bound Jewish passenger. The CIA veteran staunchly defends Reagan's contra war against Nicaragua's "totalitarian" Sandinistas, an operation he created and supervised. And he reports that, after Abu Nidal terrorists killed 19 people in the Rome and Vienna airports in 1985, CIA operatives penetrated the Libya- and Lebanon-based group, sowing paranoid distrust that led Nidal to murder 330 of his own hard-core disciples. Coauthor Diehl is a frequent contributor to Playboy and has collaborated on six book.
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From Booklist
When Clarridge retired under the shadow of the Iran-Contra affair, he was one of the most senior clandestine operations people in the CIA. Behind him lay the career this book recounts. Beginning in the 1950s, when the CIA had just completed its transition from being the OSS, it continued through the height of the cold war to finally witness the collapse of Communism. Frank about his own limitations and failings and equally proud of his achievements, Clarridge, with writer Diehl's able help, generally offers a commendably unglamorous insider account of the spy's life. It is, of course, hard to judge whether he is totally truthful about his role in supporting the contras, but he is definitely persuasive in arguing against creating a situation in which clandestine operations are impossible, as he believes is now the case. Good reading for students of espionage, both serious and casual. *Roland Green*

From Kirkus Reviews
The engrossing, matter-of-fact memoir of a career CIA officer whose involvement with Nicaragua's Contras brought him to grief at the hands of a special prosecutor. A well-connected New Englander, Clarridge joined the CIA in 1955. Dispatched to Nepal, the author (then 27) was obliged to learn his offbeat trade on the job, while running a one-man listening post in Katmandu. Subsequently assigned to less remote but still exotic venues like Istanbul, New Delhi, and Rome (where he served as chief of station), Clarridge became a cold warrior par excellence. Adept at cultivating and recruiting sources of useful information, he achieved enough to be recalled to Washington in 1981 as head of the agency's Latin American Division. Inter alia, the author recounts what the CIA did and did not do in arming Nicaragua's Contras. In his straightforward narrative (officially vetted by erstwhile colleagues still at the CIA), Clarridge also details what he knew of the role played by Oliver North in the Contra campaign and the CIA's running battles with a Congress dominated by Democrats who, he says, had an eye for the main political chance. Moving on to the European Division during the mid-1980s, the author was later tapped to create a Counterterrorism Center. Eased out of the agency in 1988 in the wake of the Iran- Contra investigations, he was indicted by Lawrence Walsh. While

prepared to fight these charges (essentially, of deceiving the Senate), the author accepted a pretrial pardon in 1992. In reviewing the factors that ended his life as a player in the great game, Clarridge makes a persuasive case for a strong US intelligence capability in an increasingly dangerous world and settles a host of old scores (e.g., with Jacques Chirac, the DEA, and the Tower Commission). A professional operative's apologia pro vita CIA. -- *Copyright ©1996, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

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