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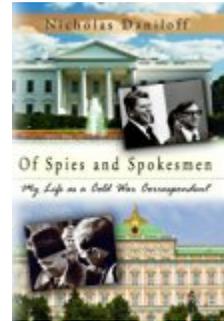
in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Nicholas Daniloff. *Of Spies and Spokesmen: My Life As a Cold War Correspondent*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2008. xiii + 436 pp. \$44.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8262-1793-6; \$24.95 (paper), ISBN 978-0-8262-1804-9.

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Manipulating the Press on Both Sides of the Iron Curtain

Nicholas Daniloff, professor of journalism at Northeastern University, spent much of his professional life working as a correspondent covering the relations between the Soviet Union and the United States. He reviews his career in *Of Spies and Spokesmen*, concluding that “to get information during the Cold War, you often had to dance with spooks” (p. xii).

Daniloff starts his memoir with a look at his childhood. The son of a Russian immigrant father and an American mother, his childhood was far from typical; the Daniloffs spent much of their time traveling between the United States, Europe, and South America. This experience, along with his Russian grandmother’s memories of Czarist Russia, played a vital role in fueling Daniloff’s desire to explore his own Russian roots, a desire that was dampened by his father’s bitterness towards the Soviets. How these conflicting views of his family’s Russian heritage filtered Daniloff’s view of the Soviet system is a recurring theme throughout his life.

Following in his father’s footsteps, Daniloff went to Harvard for his undergraduate education. It was during this time that Daniloff found himself starting to think about a career in journalism and upon his graduation in 1956, he took a job working for the *Washington Post* and *Times Herald*. Nevertheless, Daniloff shortly left the *Washington Post* to study at Oxford, where he took a part-time job working at the London offices of the United Press.

Readers curious about the history of the newswire services during the Cold War will find the middle chapters of *Of Spies and Spokesmen* a valuable source. Daniloff offers a wealth of insight on the working of UP (eventually to become UPI in 1958 when it merged with INS—International News Service) as he covers his early years working the desks in London, Paris, and Geneva. It was during his time in Geneva that Daniloff ran into one of the perils of Cold War journalism when a former Harvard classmate visited his office. It was only after this visit was over that Daniloff would learn that his friend was a member of U.S. Army Intelligence and that he was using Daniloff’s office as a cover for his mission, potentially putting Daniloff’s journalism credentials at risk.

The working relationship between journalists and spies became more apparent to Daniloff in 1961 when he was posted to the UPI office in Moscow. Upon his arrival there, Daniloff was briefed on the difficulties of reporting from the Soviet Union by veteran reporter Henry Shapiro. Often referred to as the dean of Moscow reporters, Shapiro introduced Daniloff to the alliance system of reporting that was set up between the Western press agencies that were working in Moscow. The system divided the press into two camps, each one working against the other. UPI, Agence France Presse (AFP), and smaller newspapers “specials” worked within one group while the other was comprised of the Associated Press, Reuters, and satellite “specials.” This system was designed to allow each side to pool resources within while

maintaining a competitive edge between the agencies. The alliance system also helped to thwart the various levels of control that the Soviets had in place for controlling the press.

Daniloff is careful to remind his readers about how controlled the Soviet system was during the 1960s. Western reporters would often be assigned a “nanny” who was controlled by the Soviet government; it was the job of the nanny to provide reporters with information about stories while also warning the reporters when they were displeasing the authorities. As a reporter, Daniloff worked without the diplomatic immunities which were given to Western diplomats. Reporters were often put into situations where they could be arrested for breaking one of the many censorship laws governing reporting—laws which Western reporters knew existed but were never allowed to read.

Besides providing a wonderful account of life as a Westerner in the Soviet Union, Daniloff’s account of his first posting as a correspondent in Moscow is of note for the insight that he provides of the Soviet perspective of several major Cold War events, including the Cuban missile crisis, the space race, and the death of President John F. Kennedy. Scholars of the Cold War will find Daniloff’s account of the Cuban missile crisis of interest; from his account of the problems that the Westerners had in translating the Russian text of Soviet media to the role that UPI played in helping to test a Washington-Kremlin hotline in the aftermath, Daniloff’s explanation of how a Western reporter viewed the Soviet actions during the crisis goes beyond the typical accounts of the crisis.

Daniloff returned from his Moscow posting in 1965. After a brief stay in London, he and his family moved to the United States where he soon began covering the Washington beat for UPI. His account of this time is filled with several remarkable recollections of his interviews with various Washington figures. Daniloff’s accounts of senators Frank Church and William Fulbright, along with his tales of covering President Nixon’s national security advisor Henry Kissinger, are full of insight which only a reporter of Daniloff’s experience could provide. It should be noted that Daniloff uses these accounts to caution the reader about the perils that reporters faced while working in Washington. He takes issue with the Lindley Rule system of using both background and deep background. Arguing that it allowed for the use of journalists for political purposes, Daniloff explains how he and other Washington-based reporters were occasion-

ally used by Capitol Hill staffers, who would give them misleading information on the condition of “the rules” of Washington reporting, which stated that the source of the information would not be revealed. It is often Daniloff’s view that while the system was more open in the United States, reporting from both the Soviet Union and the United States was very much similar in that a reporter could never be too sure of the motivations of his sources.

Daniloff took the job of Soviet reporter for *U.S. News and World Report* in 1980, becoming the weekly’s Moscow bureau chief in 1981. Daniloff’s account of his reactions to the changes that took place in the fifteen years he was away is one of the few let-downs in *Of Spies and Spokesmen*. Instead of providing a complete narrative of how he felt upon his return to Moscow, Daniloff reprints several pages of text from an article he wrote for *U.S. News*. While this does a fine job of giving the reader some perspective on some of the views that Daniloff held at the time of his return, readers looking for a comprehensive account of the changes that Daniloff experienced may feel shortchanged.

Daniloff was witness to many notable events during his second posting in Moscow, including both Chernobyl and the Soviet offensive in Afghanistan; however, *Of Spies and Spokesmen* focuses on Daniloff’s arrest in 1986. Known as the Daniloff affair, the KGB arrested Daniloff on false charges of spying in retaliation for the arrest by the FBI of Gennadii Zakharov, a Soviet national who was working in the United States as an academic while also recruiting agents for the KGB. Daniloff’s account of his arrest provides a noteworthy account of what it was like for a Westerner to face detention by the Soviets, focusing on his interrogations by his captors. He also gives more credit than most histories have so far provided to the role that both his wife, Ruth, and the Western press played in helping to pressure the Reagan administration into negotiating his release.

Daniloff’s *Of Spies and Spokesmen* does a good job of covering one reporter’s role in covering the Cold War. It reminds the reader that both sides had reasons for manipulating the press to reach their goals. The Soviets often did this through state institutions while in the United States it was often the political parties that sought to use the press against each other. In both cases Daniloff is correct in his assessment that correspondents often have to “dance with spooks” to get the information they seek.

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