



Stalin's Agent: The Life and Death of Alexander Orlov

Boris Volodarsky

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This is the history of an unprecedented deception operation - the biggest KGB deception of all time. It has never been told in full until now. There are almost certainly people who would like it never to be told.

It is the story of General Alexander Orlov. Stalin's most loyal and trusted henchman during the Spanish Civil War, Orlov was also the Soviet handler controlling Kim Philby, the British spy, defector, and member of the notorious 'Cambridge Five'. Escaping Stalin's purges, Orlov fled to America in the late 1930s and lived underground. He only dared reveal his identity to the world after Stalin's death, in his 1953 best-seller *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes*, after which he became perhaps the best known of all Soviet defectors, much written about, highly praised, and commemorated by the US Congress on his death in 1973.

But there is a twist in the Orlov story beyond the dreams of even the most ingenious spy novelist: 'General Alexander Orlov' never actually existed. The man known as 'Orlov' was in fact born Leiba Feldbin. And while he was a loyal servant of Stalin and the controller of Philby, he was never a General in the KGB, never truly defected to the West after his 'flight' from the USSR, and remained a loyal Soviet agent until his death. The 'Orlov' story as it has been accepted until now was largely the invention of the KGB - and one perpetuated long after the end of the Cold War.

In this meticulous new biography, Boris Volodarsky, himself a former Soviet intelligence officer, now tells the true story behind 'Orlov' for the first time. An intriguing tale of Russian espionage and deception, stretching from the time of Lenin to the Putin era, it is a story that many people in the world's intelligence agencies would almost definitely prefer you not to know about.

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