



Secret Empire: Eisenhower, the CIA, and the Hidden Story of America's Space Espionage

Philip Taubman

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In a brief period of explosive, top-secret innovation during the 1950s, a small group of scientists, engineers, businessmen, and government officials rewrote the book on airplane design and led the nation into outer space. Led by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, they invented the U-2 and SR-71 spy planes and the first reconnaissance satellites that revolutionized spying, proved that the missile gap was a myth, and protected the United States from Soviet surprise nuclear attack. They also made possible the space-based mapping, communications, and targeting systems used in the Gulf War, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Veteran *New York Times* reporter and editor Philip Taubman interviewed dozens of participants and mined thousands of previously classified documents to tell this hidden, far-reaching story. He reconstructs the crucial meetings, conversations, and decisions that inspired and guided the development of the spy plane and satellite projects during one of the most perilous periods in our history, a time when, as President Eisenhower said, the world seemed to be "racing toward catastrophe."

This is the story of these secret heroes, told in full for the first time.

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