

Enemies: A History of the FBI

By Tim Weiner

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“Fast-paced, fair-minded, and fascinating, Tim Weiner’s *Enemies* turns the long history of the FBI into a story that is as compelling, and important, as today’s headlines.”—Jeffrey Toobin, author of *The Oath*

NATIONAL BESTSELLER

Enemies is the first definitive history of the FBI’s secret intelligence operations, from an author whose work on the Pentagon and the CIA won him the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award.

We think of the FBI as America’s police force. But secret intelligence is the Bureau’s first and foremost mission. *Enemies* is the story of how presidents have used the FBI to conduct political warfare, and how the Bureau became the most powerful intelligence service the United States possesses.

Here is the hidden history of America’s hundred-year war on terror. The FBI has fought against terrorists, spies, anyone it deemed subversive—and sometimes American presidents. The FBI’s secret intelligence and surveillance techniques have created a tug-of-war between national security and civil liberties. It is a tension that strains the very fabric of a free republic.

Praise for *Enemies*

“Outstanding.”—*The New York Times*

“Absorbing . . . a sweeping narrative that is all the more entertaining because it is so redolent with screw-ups and scandals.”—*Los Angeles Times*

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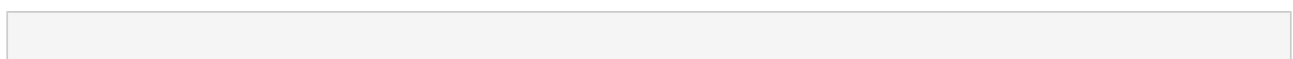
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Editorial Review

Review

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“Fascinating.”—*The Wall Street Journal*

“Pulitzer Prize–winning author Tim Weiner has written a riveting inside account of the FBI’s secret machinations that goes so deep into the Bureau’s skulduggery, readers will feel they are tapping the phones along with J. Edgar Hoover. This is a book that every American who cares about civil liberties should read.”—Jane Mayer, author of *The Dark Side*

“Important and disturbing . . . with all the verve and coherence of a good spy thriller.”—*The New York Times Book Review*

“Exciting and fast-paced.”—*The Daily Beast*

About the Author

Tim Weiner has won the Pulitzer Prize for his reporting and writing on secret intelligence and national security. As a correspondent for *The New York Times*, he covered the Central Intelligence Agency in Washington and terrorism in Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Sudan, and other nations. *Enemies* is his fourth book. His *Legacy of Ashes: The History of the CIA* won the National Book Award and was acclaimed as one of the year’s best books by *The New York Times*, *The Economist*, *The Washington Post*, *Time*, and many other publications. *The Wall Street Journal* called *Betrayal* “the best book ever written on a case of espionage.” He is now working on a history of the American military.

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Chapter 1

Anarchy

J?. Edgar Hoover went to war at the age of -twenty--two, on Thursday morning, July 26, 1917. He walked out of his boyhood home in Washington, D.C., and set off for his new life at the Justice Department, to serve as a foot soldier in the army of lawmen fighting spies, saboteurs, Communists, and anarchists in the United States.

America had entered World War I in April. The first waves of her troops were landing in France, unprepared for the horrors that faced them. On the home front, Americans were gripped by the fear of sabotage by German secret agents. The country had been on high alert for a year, ever since an enemy attack on a huge warehouse of American munitions bound for the battlefield. The blast at Black Tom Island, on the western edge of New York Harbor, had set off two thousand tons of explosives in the dark of a midsummer night. Seven people died at the site. In Manhattan, thousands of windows were shattered by the shock waves. The Statue of Liberty was scarred by shrapnel.

Hoover worked for the War Emergency Division at the Justice Department, charged with preventing the next surprise attack. He displayed a martial spirit and a knack for shaping the thinking of his superiors. He won praise from the division's chief, John Lord O'Brian. "He worked Sundays and nights, as I did," O'Brian recounted. "I promoted him several times, simply on merits."

Hoover rose quickly to the top of the division's Alien Enemy Bureau, which was responsible for identifying and imprisoning politically suspect foreigners living in the United States. At the age of -twenty--three, Hoover oversaw 6,200 Germans who were interned in camps and 450,000 more who were under government surveillance. At -twenty--four, he was placed in charge of the newly created Radical Division of the Justice Department, and he ran the biggest counterterrorism operations in the history of the United States, rounding up thousands of radical suspects across the country. He had no guns or ammunition. Secret intelligence was his weapon.

Hoover lived all his life in Washington, D.C., where he was born on New Year's Day 1895, the youngest of four children. He was the son and the grandson of government servants. His father, Dickerson, was afflicted with depression; deep melancholy cost him his job as a government cartographer and likely hastened his death. His mother, Annie, was doting but dour. Hoover lived at home with her for the first -forty--three years of his life, until the day she died. He told several of his closest aides that he remained a single man because he feared the wrong woman would be his downfall; a bad marriage would destroy him. Hoover's niece, Margaret Fennell, grew up alongside him; she stayed in touch with him for six decades. She knew him as well as anyone could. "I sometimes have thought that he -really—I don't know how to put -it—had a fear of becoming too personally involved with people," she reflected. If he ever expressed love beyond his devotion to God and country, there were no witnesses. He was sentimental about dogs, but unemotional about people. His inner life was a mystery, even to his immediate family and his few close friends.

Hoover learned how to march in military formation and how to make a formal argument. The drill team and the debate team at Central High School were the highlights of his youth. Central High's debate squad was the best in the city, and Hoover became one of its stars; his school newspaper praised his competitive spirit and his "cool relentless logic." He told the paper, after a stirring victory over a college team, that debating had given him "a practical and beneficial example of life, which is nothing more or less than the matching of one man's wit against another."

Hoover went to work for the government of the United States as soon as he had his high school diploma. Its monuments were all around him. His -two--story home sat six blocks southeast of Capitol Hill. At the crest of the hill stood the chandeliered chambers of the Senate and the House, the colossal temple of the Supreme Court, and the Library of Congress, with its vaulted ceilings and stained glass. Hoover dutifully recited the devotions of the Presbyterian Church on Sundays, but the Library of Congress was the secular cathedral of his youth. The library possessed every book published in the United States. The reverent hush of its central reading room imparted a sense that all knowledge was at hand, if you knew where to look. The library had its own system of classification, and Hoover learned its complexities as a cataloguer, earning money for school by filing and retrieving information. He worked days at the library while he studied in the early evenings and on summer mornings at George Washington University, where he earned his master's degree in law in June 1917. He registered for military service but joined the Justice Department to fight the war at home. "The gravest threats"

On April 6, 1917, the day America entered World War I, President Woodrow W. Wilson signed executive orders giving the Justice Department the power to command the arrest and imprisonment, without trial, of any foreigner deemed disloyal. He told the American people that Germany had "filled our unsuspecting communities and even our offices of government with spies, and set criminal intrigues everywhere afoot."

The president's words stoked fear across the country, and the fear placed a great weight on the Justice Department. "When we declared war," O'Brian said, "there were persons who expected to see a veritable reign of terror in America."

O'Brian watched over Hoover and his colleagues as they labored day and night in cramped and smoky rooms at the War Emergency Division and the Alien Enemy Bureau, poring over fragmentary reports of plots against America. They were like firemen hearing the ceaseless ringing of false alarms. "Immense pressure" fell upon them, O'Brian recalled; they faced demands from politicians and the public for the "indiscriminate prosecution" and "wholesale repression" of suspect Americans and aliens alike, often "based on nothing more than irresponsible rumor." Before Black Tom, "the people of this nation had no experience with subversive activities," he said. "The government was likewise unprepared." After Black Tom, thousands of potential threats were reported to the government. American leaders feared the enemy could strike anywhere, at any time.

The German masterminds of Black Tom had been at work from the moment World War I began in Europe, in the summer of 1914. They had planned to infiltrate Washington and undermine Wall Street; they had enlisted Irish and Hindu nationalists to strike American targets; they had used Mexico and Canada as safe havens for covert operations against the United States. While Hoover was still studying law at night school, at the start of 1915, Germany's military attaché in the United States, Captain Franz von Papen, had received secret orders from Berlin: undermine America's will to fight. Von Papen began to build a propaganda machine in the United States; the Germans secretly gained control of a major New York newspaper, the Evening Mail; their front men negotiated to buy The Washington Post and the New York Sun. Political fixers, corrupt journalists, and crooked detectives served the German cause.

But after a German -U--boat torpedoed the British passenger ship Lusitania on May 7, 1915, killing 1,119 people, including 274 Americans, the German ambassador glumly cabled Berlin: "We might as well admit openly that our propaganda here has collapsed completely." Americans were enraged at the attack on civilians; Germany's political and diplomatic status in the United States was grievously damaged. President Wilson ordered that all German embassy personnel in the United States be placed under surveillance. Secretary of State Robert Lansing sent secret agents to wiretap German diplomats. By year's end, von Papen and his fellow attachés were expelled from the United States.

When Hoover arrived at the Justice Department, O'Brian had just tried and convicted a German spy, Captain Franz von Rintelen. The case was -front--page news. Von Rintelen had arrived in New York a few weeks before the sinking of the Lusitania, carrying a forged Swiss passport. On orders from the German high command, he had recruited idle sailors on New York's docks, radical Irish nationalists, a Wall Street con artist, and a drunken Chicago congressman in plans to sabotage American war industries with a combination of business frauds and firebombs. But Captain von Rintelen had fled the United States, rightly fearing the exposure of his secret plans. British intelligence officers, who had been reading German cables, arrested him as he landed in -En-gland, roughly interrogated him in the Tower of London, and handed him over to the Justice Department for indictment and trial.

"America never witnessed anything like this before," President Wilson told Congress after the captain's arrest. "A little while ago, such a thing would have seemed incredible. Because it was incredible we made no preparation for it."

Terrorists and anarchists represented "the gravest threats against our national peace and safety," the president said. "Such creatures of passion, disloyalty, and anarchy must be crushed out.???The hand of our power should close over them at once."

J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI would become the instruments of that power.

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