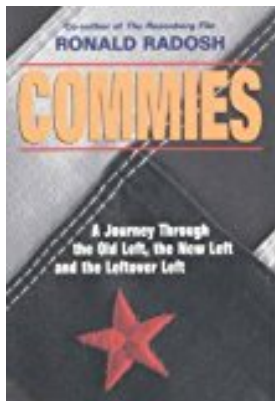


[PDF] Commies: A Journey Through The Old Left, The New Left And The Leftover Left

Ronald Radosh - pdf download free book



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Description:

Ronald Radosh, the scholar who is probably most responsible for showing that Julius Rosenberg was indeed a spy for the Soviet Union, offers this honest memoir of growing up a red-diaper baby in New York and, many years later, falling out of favor with his fellow travelers. Born into a family that was both Jewish and Communist, Radosh spent much of his life orbiting these worlds (especially the latter) as an activist for all sorts of left-wing causes. The FBI even began keeping a file on him.

There's a certain amount of score settling on these pages, much of it amusing. What makes *Commies* fascinating, however, is Radosh's virtual banishment from left-wing politics for publishing *The Rosenberg File*, a book that definitively showed Julius Rosenberg was not the innocent martyr of liberal mythology but a traitor to his country. Radosh actually started the book believing he could vindicate Rosenberg; through the course of his research, however, he concluded the man was guilty, and set about saying so. This was too much for many of his friends, who soon refused to be seen with him in public. Here is a man who viewed the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 as very possibly a portent of "extreme reaction, if not fascism," suddenly blacklisted by the Left. He became disenchanted with how he had spent his life and "started to question the whole project of the Left." He even suffered professionally: in 1993, Radosh was denied a job in George Washington University's history department. "If I had still been a Communist writing left-wing history, I probably would have breezed in. But faculty members practicing a politically correct version of McCarthyism blackballed me."

Radosh is not a left-winger who has become a right-winger, like David Horowitz, but he is clearly a person who has had second thoughts about what he once believed. America, he writes, is "a country where I was born but didn't fully discover until middle age." *Commies* is a valuable document describing radicalism in the 1950s and 1960s from the inside. --*John J. Miller* --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Radosh was once a communist and is now a conservative; this is his engrossing story of that transformation. Born into the insular world of New York Jewish radicalism, with its own high schools, summer camps and plenty of odd and romantic characters, Radosh took being left-wing for granted. Moving on to Madison, Wis., and college in the 1950s and then back to New York and teaching in the 1960s, Radosh fit easily into and became a leading spokesman for the burgeoning New Left. But doubts were forming about what he later came to view as the left's "reflexive hatred of the American system." These doubts were hardened by the attacks and rebukes he faced by former friends and colleagues upon publication of his book *The Rosenberg File* (written with Joyce Milton), which concluded that the couple were indeed guilty of espionage. Finally, as the left his left refused to see the dark side of the Cuban revolution and later the totalitarian tendencies of the Sandinista revolution in Nicaragua, Radosh made a clean break with his past. He had, he writes, "ended my long exile from America," and finds the left today to be no more than a "collection of postures and grievances" and as arrogant and thoughtless as ever. It's quite a story, and Radosh captures well the times and personalities of his journey. Some may find his brush too broad. Others will admire the courage of his journey. All will acknowledge that he both entertains and engages in this unusual, heartfelt memoir. (June 1)Forecast: Readers who enjoyed David Horowitz's similar trajectory in *Radical Son* will appreciate Radosh's volume. The author will be signing books on June 1 and 2 at BEA, after which he will make stops in Washington, D.C.; Madison, Wis.; New York City and San Francisco. Supported by a \$40,000 marketing budget, this book will draw media attention and should sell well.

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