



## By Any Means Necessary: America's Secret Air War in the Cold War

By William E. Burrows

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**By Any Means Necessary: America's Secret Air War in the Cold War** By William E. Burrows

### The "Blind Man's Bluff" of aerial espionage.

Unknown to the public and cloaked in the utmost secrecy, the United States flew missions against the Communist bloc almost continuously during the Cold War in a desperate effort to collect intelligence and find targets for all-out nuclear war. The only hint of the relentless, clandestine operations came when one of the planes was shot down. Many of the air force and navy flyers were killed on the top secret missions. But now, for the first time, award-winning historian William E. Burrows shows that others were captured by the Russians, Chinese, and North Koreans, and were tortured, imprisoned, and killed, while their loved ones grieved and their government looked the other way. In an effort to improve relations with Russia, Washington is still looking the other way, though it pretends otherwise.

Burrows has interviewed scores of men who flew these "black" missions, as well as the widows and children of those who never returned, all of whom want the full story finally told. He has done so with an eye to this story's immensely human dimension. *By Any Means Necessary* is not about airplanes, but about the people who've sacrificed their lives in the interests of national security.

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### **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

When a Chinese fighter collided with an American EP-3E Aries II reconnaissance plane on April 1, 2001, it was merely the most recent incident in a long string dating back to the end of WWII. Burrows (Deep Black), a professor of journalism at New York University and founder and director of its Science and Environmental Reporting Program, uses a host of personal interviews among his many sources, and details for the first time the secret American reconnaissance missions against the Soviet Union, China, North Korea and North Vietnam. The specter of Communist aggression coupled with the threat of nuclear war meant that America had to have accurate knowledge of enemies and their military capabilities. But Burrows also examines the issue of intelligence gathering from the Soviet viewpoint. Having been attacked by erstwhile ally Germany without provocation and having seen the atomic bombs dropped on Japan, the Soviets were understandably edgy when American planes began buzzing their borders and occasionally flying directly over their airspace. Frustrated, the Soviets struck back. From 1950 to 1969, Soviet fighters shot down 16 American planes in situations that resulted in loss of life. An appendix provides a chronological listing of these planes and the names of the crew members who perished. Most planes were converted bombers or tankers, crammed with all sorts of electronic eavesdropping devices. The whole game was generally called "ferreting." Nikita Khrushchev's joy when U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers was captured after his plane was downed on May 1, 1960, is understandable. The Soviets announced the capture, but the Americans never apologized directly and still haven't. The ultimate tragedy in this cat and mouse game befell the families of the missing airmen who were often executed if captured alive. Burrows is to be congratulated for superb research and stellar writing in this first look behind the secret curtain of intelligence gathering. 16 pages of photos not seen by PW. (Oct.)Forecast: This book, driven by interest in the still-fresh Chinese incident and by its own merits, should be a breakaway bestseller. Look for Burrows all over the media and for massive review coverage.

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From Library Journal

When World War II ended, the Cold War began. Its frontline warriors were the pilots and crews who flew air reconnaissance missions against Communist-bloc countries. For this purpose, bombers were converted to aerial spy work, often with disastrous results for the crews. As crews were lost or shot down, an effort was finally made to improve the planes and organize air reconnaissance into one unit the Strategic Air Command (SAC). Formed under Curtis LeMay, it provided not only air reconnaissance but immediate military response to any country that might attack the United States. Higher-flying aircraft, like the U-2, made air reconnaissance safer for crews, but surveillance with total safety wasn't achieved until satellites were launched. Burrows (journalism, New York Univ.; Deep Black: Space Espionage and National Security) tells the story of Cold War air reconnaissance with emphasis on the individuals involved, the sacrifices they made, and the way the U.S. government turned a blind eye to those who served. A fascinating book that public and academic libraries will want to purchase, especially in view of the recent spy plane episode with China. Grant A. Fredericksen, Illinois Prairie Dist. P.L., Metamora  
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Review

"Burrows is to be congratulated for superb research and stellar writing." -- *Starred Publishers Weekly*, August 13, 2001

"Burrows puts the history of America's secret air war during the Cold War into a clear perspective." --  
*Francis Gary Powers, Jr., Founder, The Cold War Museum*

"Burrows tells the story of Cold War Air reconnaissance with emphasis on the individuals involved...Fascinating." -- *Library Journal, August 2001*

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