

Vigilance is not enough

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Résumé ou extrait : A broad and deep survey of American intelligence from before the Revolution to the present Every nation has an intelligence apparatus--some means by which its top officials acquire needed information on sensitive issues. But each nation does it differently, influenced by its history, its geographical conditions, and its political traditions. In this book, Mark M. Lowenthal examines the development of U.S. intelligence to explain how and why the United States went from having no intelligence service to speak of to being the world's predominant intelligence power almost overnight, and he discusses the difficult choices involved in maintaining that dominance in a liberal democracy. Lowenthal describes how the lack of a tradition of spycraft both hindered and helped American efforts to develop intelligence services during and after the Second World War. He points to the political pragmatism--leading to difficult choices--with which most intelligence directors operated; the constant tension between security and civil liberties in a constitutional democracy; the tension between the need for secrecy and the accountability required for democratic governance; and the way the growing importance of technology changed both the methods and the objectives of intelligence gathering. Far more than simply an episodic history, this book offers an analysis of why American intelligence developed as it did--and what it has meant for the nation's and the world's politics.

Sujet - Nom commun : Services de renseignements militaires -- États-Unis -- Histoire

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