

Weinstein's use of his material is impeccably fair. He does not accept things just because they are favorable to his conclusion (see, for instance, his measured treatment of Nathaniel Weyl's and Louis Budenz's testimony). He is tentative about any charges other than those brought and proved in court. He refrains from psychological theorizing, treats Hiss defenders fairly, and shows no personal or ideological animus of any sort. The narrative of the story is cleanly told despite the mass of details he must organize. So far as any one book can dispel a large historical mystery, this book does it, magnificently.

But its virtues of restraint and hard-headedness will leave certain people unsatisfied. He does not try to explain Alger Hiss, just to deal with the evidence for certain acts having occurred. He rightly sticks to that as his first priority, and does not try to tell us *why* the acts occurred. So, the dogged and infectious air of innocence around Hiss will continue to give people pause. The problem is not simply how he could have spied for a certain period, but (even more) how he could have lied to his friends in the first place and maintained the lies with assurance—even with serenity—for over a quarter of a century.

Most of those who conclude, reluctantly, that Hiss lied cannot believe that he kept a foreign allegiance after America went to war, or—even more unthinkable—after America's break with Russia. But neither could they think that of Kim Philby, another impeccable civil servant with a disreputable friend. Philby was about to be knighted, and was being groomed to head the British secret service, when the first doubts about him forced him from the service. Hugh Trevor-Roper notes that Philby had a vague reputation as an intellectual though he showed no real interest in ideas. The same is true of Hiss, whose intellectual reputation rests almost entirely on a book Justice Holmes inscribed for him.