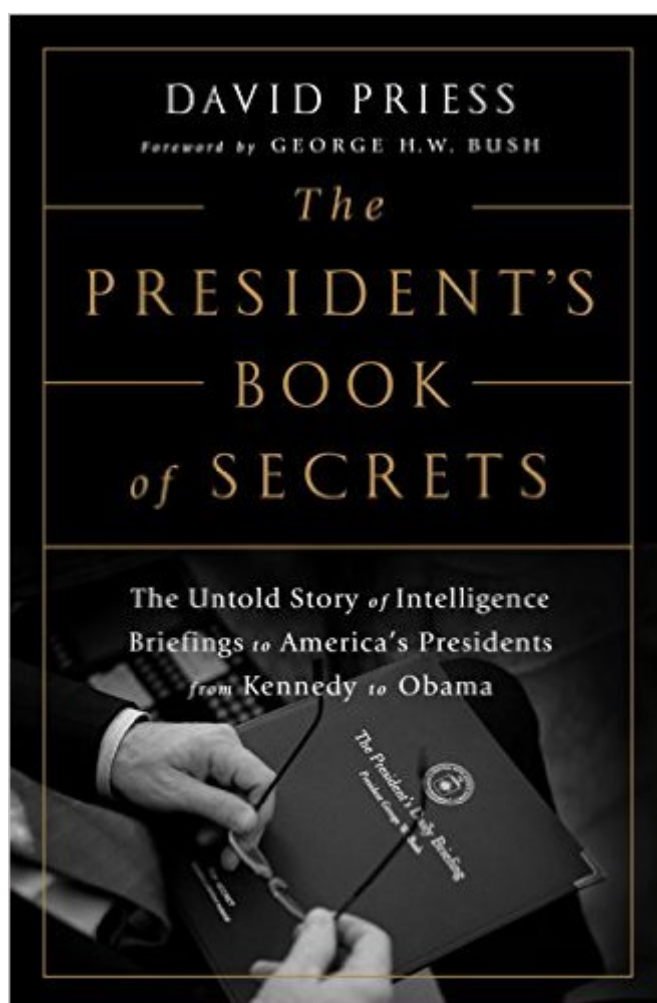


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The President's Book Of Secrets: The Untold Story Of Intelligence Briefings To America's Presidents From Kennedy To Obama



Synopsis

Every president has had a unique and complicated relationship with the intelligence community. While some have been coolly distant, even adversarial, others have found their intelligence agencies to be among the most valuable instruments of policy and power. Since John F. Kennedy's presidency, this relationship has been distilled into a personalized daily report: a short summary of what the intelligence apparatus considers the most crucial information for the president to know that day about global threats and opportunities. This top-secret document is known as the President's Daily Brief, or, within national security circles, simply 'the Book'. Presidents have spent anywhere from a few moments (Richard Nixon) to a healthy part of their day (George W. Bush) consumed by its contents; some (Bill Clinton and George H. W. Bush) consider it far and away the most important document they saw on a regular basis while commander in chief. The details of most PDBs are highly classified, and will remain so for many years. But the process by which the intelligence community develops and presents the Book is a fascinating look into the operation of power at the highest levels. David Priess, a former intelligence officer and daily briefer, has interviewed every living president and vice president as well as more than one hundred others intimately involved with the production and delivery of the president's book of secrets. He offers an unprecedented window into the decision making of every president from Kennedy to Obama, with many character-rich stories revealed here for the first time.

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Customer Reviews

Dr. David Priess served as a former State Department intelligence officer during both the Clinton and George W. Bush administrations. In his book, he tries to let us peer into a history of the president's daily intelligence briefing. The book starts off with a Foreword by President George H. W. Bush, stating that his love of the position as Director of the CIA, was "All about the remarkable men and women who make up our intelligence community. Their dedication, their courage, and their determination match that of no others and inspired me every single day." President Bush further details "That their names are seldom known and their accomplishments are rarely celebrated." Every single day, a CIA officer starts their day around 2 a.m. at CIA headquarters speaking with various analysts from the seventeen organizations that make up the "Intelligence Community." They study the late breaking raw assessments and even classified stories that did not make it past their editors and tucks it away in a locked briefcase and then travel to the White House to deliver a summary of international events. This is called the Presidential Daily Brief and it contains the very latest and most sensitive reporting of the intelligence community. This can vary from what is transpiring within the Central Intelligence Agency to the National Security Agency, our satellites and anything in between. For the past fifty years, starting with President Truman and traveling throughout generations of previous presidents up to today. Some presidents chose not to use it, such as Kennedy and some rely heavily on it, but it has evolved into what it is today, an absolute necessity.

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