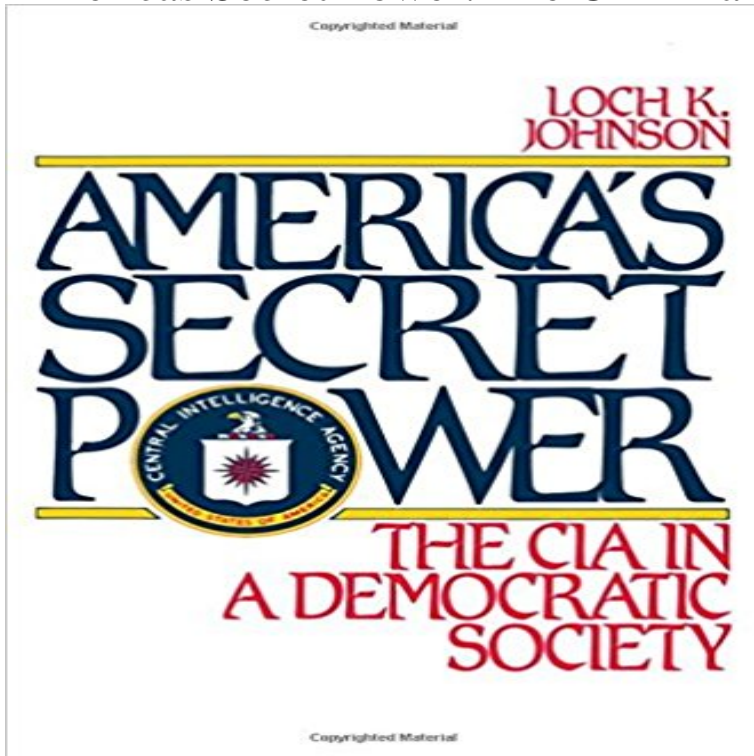


Americas Secret Power: The CIA in a Democratic Society



Based on hundreds of interviews with CIA officials, national security experts, and legislators, as well as a thorough culling of the archival record, *Americas Secret Power* offers an illuminating and up-to-date picture of the CIA, stressing the difficult balance between the genuine needs of national security and the protection of individual liberties. Loch Johnson, who has studied the workings of the CIA at first hand as a legislative overseer, presents a comprehensive examination of the Agency and its relations with other American institutions, including Congress and the White House, and looks closely at how it pursues its three major missions--intelligence analysis, counterintelligence, and covert action. At once fascinating and sobering, Johnson's book reveals how the best intelligence reports can be distorted or ignored; how covert actions can spin out of control despite extensive safeguards, as in the Iran-Contra scandal; and how the CIA has spied on American citizens in clear violation of its charter. Further, he provides a thorough review of legislative efforts to curb these abuses, and suggests several important ways to achieve the delicate balance between national security and democratic ideals.

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