



The Rape of Serbia: The British Role in Tito's Grab for Power 1943-1944

By Michael Lees

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Recounts how the British were tricked into supporting Tito.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

There were two major resistance movements in Yugoslavia during the war: Tito's Communist Partisans and Draza Mihailovic's Loyalist Chetniks. The author served as British liaison officer with the latter in 1943 and 1944. His memoir describes how Tito deceived Winston Churchill into believing Mihailovic was collaborating with the Germans, which resulted in the abrupt transfer of Allied aid from the Chetniks to the Partisans. The tragic upshot was that Tito then used Allied munitions against the Chetniks after the German retreat, launching an extermination campaign against thousands of rivals and potential enemies. The British prime minister, realizing too late his error in embracing Tito at the expense of Mihailovic, tried to intervene on the latter's behalf but was unable to prevent a Titoist court from convicting him of treason. Mihailovic was executed in 1946. Lees relates this grim story with unrestrained bitterness. His book is a powerful indictment of British wartime policy in the Balkans and an elegy for Yugoslav victims of Tito.

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From Library Journal

Lees combines his personal experience as British liaison officer with research in official declassified records to provide a revisionist account of the civil war in Yugoslavia at the end of World War II. The result is a fascinating investigation that effectively demolishes the reputation of Marshal Tito and blames his rise to power on the overt support of the Western allies. Lees indicts the British Secret Service for turning the tide toward Tito and against the non-Communist resistance leader General Draza Mihailovic, who was executed by Tito in 1946. Lees's involvement in some of these events adds an element of high drama to this study, and this unsettling work will cast serious doubt on all previous histories of this period, such as Walter Roberts's *Tito, Mihailovic, and the Allies* (LJ 2/1/73). Recommended for most academic and larger public libraries.

- *Thomas A. Karel, Franklin & Marshall Coll. Lib., Lancaster, Pa.*

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