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By Geoffrey Elliott, Harold Shukman

FABER FABER, United Kingdom, 2011. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Main. 198 x 126 mm.

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how in the 1950s, under Eden and Lloyd at the Foreign Office, some 5,000 young men doing national service were quietly siphoned off from their units, secluded in Cornwall and Fifeshire, or, more boldly, next door to the Guards depot at Coulsdon in Surrey, and put through crash courses in Russian till they could speak it fluently. . (M.R.D. Foot, Spectator ). Lambasted by the Soviets as a spy school , the Joint Services School for Linguists (JSSL) was a major Cold War initiative, which pushed 5000 young National Servicemen through intensive training as Russian translators and interpreters, primarily to meet the needs of Britain s signals intelligence operations. Its pupils included a remarkable cross-section of talented young men who went on to a diversity of glittering careers: professors of Russian, Chinese, ancient philosophy, economics; the historian Sir Martin Gilbert; authors such as Alan Bennett, Dennis Potter and Michael Frayn; screenwriter Jack Rosenthal; stage director Sir Peter Hall; and, churchmen ranging from a bishop to a displaced Carmelite friar....

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