



Medusa's Head: The Rise and Survival of Joseph Fouché, Inventor of the Modern Police State

By Rand Mirante

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Minister of Police Joseph Fouché was universally distrusted, feared, and hated in his time, but was nevertheless considered indispensable. In Medusa's Head, Rand Mirante recounts the chameleonic and astonishing career of Napoleon's security chief, who created the modern police state and wielded immense power that threatened the other main organs of government. Fouché was one of the most important, fascinating, and controversial figures of the French Revolution, the First Empire, and the Bourbon Restoration, and this biography captures and unravels the highlights of Fouché's life, including his infamous roles as: A priest-in-training who became a radical Jacobin and de-Christianizer A regicide who cast a dramatic swing vote for Louis XVI's immediate execution The grim and remorseless "Butcher of Lyon" Mastermind of the conspiracy that sent Robespierre to the guillotine The head of Napoleon's police - privy to everyone's secrets, shaping the media, deploying 10,000 informants in Paris alone, and securing funding from the Empire's casinos and brothels Cunning enabler of Napoleon's 1799 coup, and subsequent repeated betrayer of the Emperor Acting president after Waterloo and traitor to France Louis XVIII's Minister of Police, in spite of his responsibility for the death of the King's brother A wealthy but disgraced exile who met an unusual end in Trieste on the Adriatic Medusa's Head provides fresh insights and perspectives on this enormously influential and fearsome individual.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Rand Mirante is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Law School; after spending most of his legal career with McGraw-Hill, he has worked in Princeton's development office. For a number of years he taught a course titled Treason: from Henry V to John Walker Lindh in the University's Writing Program, which helped spark his interest in the antihero Fouché. He also has been a featured speaker on military history and diplomacy on alumni trips abroad.

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