



# **Fool's Mate: A True Story of Espionage at the National Security Agency**

*John W Whiteside III*

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## **Fool's Mate: A True Story of Espionage at the National Security Agency** John W Whiteside III

"Fool's Mate" tells the true stories of two traitors working different sides of the Cold War. One is an arrogant, lonely U.S. Army soldier serving in the highly secretive National Security Agency. The other is an ambitious KGB officer with access to the U.S.S.R.'s most sensitive documents. Both betray their countries, but their fates and motivations are very different. At the height of the Cold War in September 1965, disgruntled U.S. soldier Robert Stephan Lipka walked boldly into the U.S.S.R. embassy in Washington, DC. Inside, he negotiated the sale of highly sensitive National Security Agency documents. The price he demanded for his treason? A mere four hundred dollars. The Soviets could not believe their luck. For the next two years, Lipka delivered a steady stream of important information on U.S. security, before attempting to get out of the spy game as his military enlistment period expired. The KGB, however, continued their interest in Lipka for several years, eventually dispatching deep-cover Soviet illegals to make re-contact. As Lipka exited the scene, KGB officer Vasili Mitrokhin planted the seeds of his own treason, which bore unexpected fruit decades later. With the fall of the Berlin Wall and the imminent collapse of the Soviet Union, Mitrokhin fled to the West, offering a treasure trove of archived KGB files in return for protection. Hidden within those documents was incriminating evidence against Lipka, who was then living a quiet life in the Amish suburbs of Lancaster, Pennsylvania. After a lengthy surveillance and sting operation, Lipka was convicted in 1997. Thirty-two years after first committing treason, he was finally brought to justice—his conviction ending the longest-running open espionage case in U.S. history. With Lipka's adamant refusal to cooperate with authorities, it remains unclear just how much American blood he traded for small sums of cash. "Fool's Mate" reconstructs the Lipka investigation through the eyes of author John Whiteside, the FBI Special Agent who led the case from start to finish, telling a story as relevant today as it was in 1965. With the arrest of ten Russian illegals in 2010 and the 2013 release of classified National Security Agency documents by Edward Snowden, "Fool's Mate" reminds us just how vulnerable national security is to both foreign intelligence services and men like Lipka, willing to sell out their country from within.

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