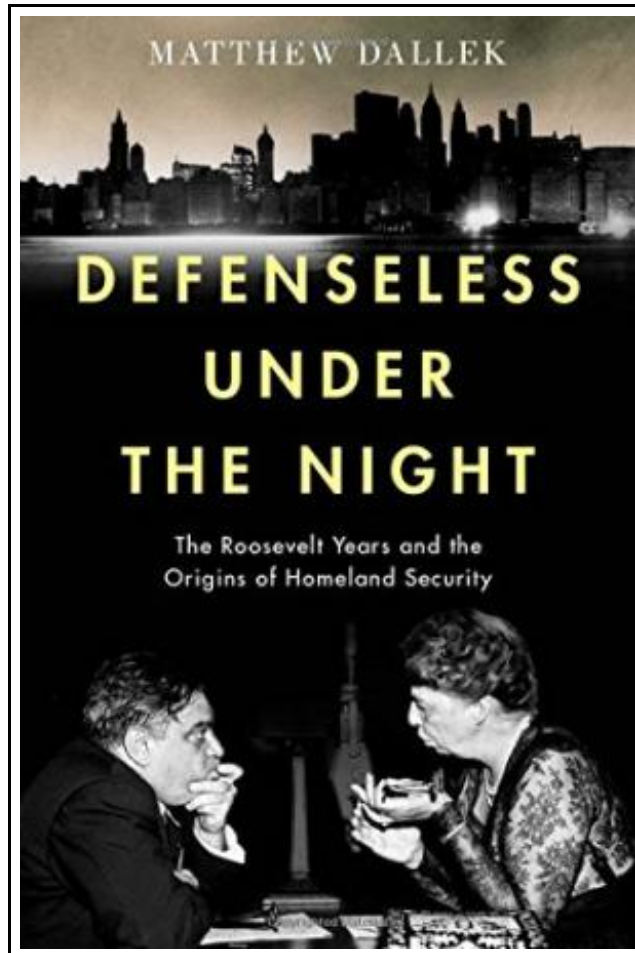


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Reviews




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DEFENSELESS UNDER THE NIGHT: THE ROOSEVELT YEARS, CIVIL DEFENSE, AND THE ORIGINS OF HOMELAND SECURITY (HARDBACK)

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Oxford University Press, United Kingdom, 2016. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 235 x 156 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. As the bombs fell on Guernica, the Blitz terrorized Britons, and atrocities were reported from Nanking-even before Pearl Harbor-Americans watched and worried about attacks on their homeland. In 1941, US mayors urged President Franklin D. Roosevelt to form a federal agency to focus on mobilization and citizen protection. In May of that year, FDR established an Office of Civilian Defense to protect Americans from foreign and domestic threats. As its head, he appointed New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia, elected leader of America s most vulnerable city. As the assistant director, he appointed First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt In this book, Matthew Dallek, historian, journalist, and speechwriter, narrates the history of the Office of Civilian Defense. He uses the development of the precursor of homeland security as a way of examining constitutional questions about civil liberties; the role of government in propogandizing to its own citizens; competing visions among liberals and conservatives for establishing a plan to defend America; and federal, state, and local responsibilities for citizen protection. Much of the dramatic tension lies in the preparation of communities against attack and their fears of Japanese invasion along the Pacific Coast and Nazi invasion. So too there was a clash of visions between LaGuardia and Eleanor Roosevelt. The mayor argued that the OCD s focus had to be on preparing the country against German and Japanese attack, including conducting blackout drills, preparing evacuation plans, coordinating emergency medical teams, and protecting industrial plants and transportation centers. The First Lady believed the OCD should also promote social justice for African Americans and women and raise civilian morale through the building of nursery schools, old-age homes, housing projects, and physical fitness centers. Their clashes frustrated...

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