

ROBERT CUTLER

b. June 12, 1895

d. May 8, 1974

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR

“No man in the Government, with the possible exception of the President, knows so many of the nation’s strategic secrets.” - The New York Times (1957)

**A closeted gay man,
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States’ first national
security advisor.**

A distinguished closeted gay brigadier general, attorney and bank president, Robert Cutler was the United States’ first national security advisor. He served in the position twice under President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Born in Massachusetts, Cutler attended Harvard College. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa and class poet in 1916, intent on teaching English and becoming a writer. He taught at Harvard and Radclyffe and published two novels in his 20s: “Louisburg Square” (1917) and “The Speckled Bird” (1923).

After serving in World War I, Cutler attended Harvard Law School. He graduated first in his class in 1922 and practiced private and corporate law in his home state. In 1940 he was appointed corporation counsel for the mayor of Boston. He resigned in 1942 to join the U.S. Army in World War II.

Cutler served as a colonel and the head occupational analyst of the Army Specialist Corps. In 1944 he became the executive officer of the War Ballot Commission, managing the soldier vote during the presidential election. He received the Distinguished Service Medal and the Legion of Merit. In 1945 the military discharged him as a brigadier general.

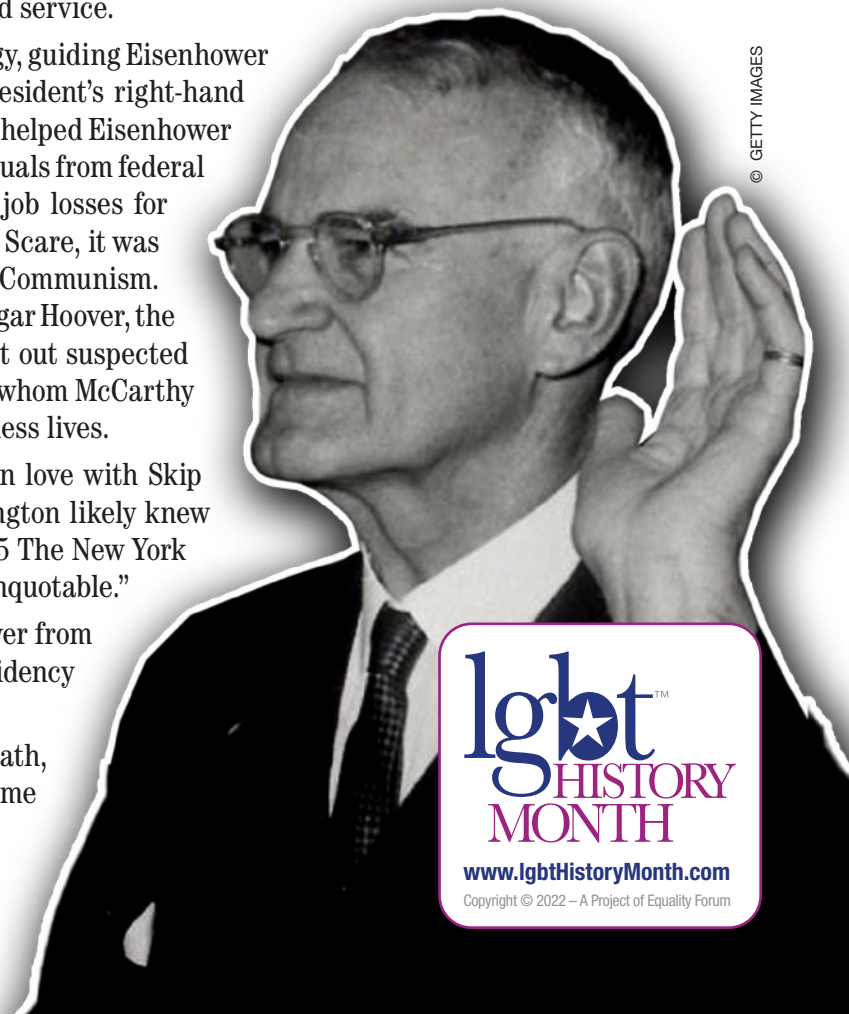
When Eisenhower ran for president in 1952, Cutler served as his campaign secretary. As president, Eisenhower named Cutler the country’s first national security advisor. Cutler held the position until 1955 and received the Medal of Freedom for his distinguished service.

As security advisor, Cutler helped shape Cold War strategy, guiding Eisenhower through nuclear arms escalation. Tragically, as the president’s right-hand man during a treacherously homophobic era, Cutler also helped Eisenhower draft Executive Order 10450. The order banned homosexuals from federal employment, triggering a witch hunt that resulted in job losses for thousands of gays and lesbians. Known as the Lavender Scare, it was fueled by the nation’s intense political paranoia about Communism. Joseph McCarthy, a Republican senator, assisted by J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI director (who was himself closeted), sought to root out suspected Communists and other “subversives,” i.e., homosexuals, whom McCarthy called “sexual perverts.” McCarthyism destroyed countless lives.

Based on his diaries and communication, Cutler was in love with Skip Koons, a gay naval intelligence officer. Some in Washington likely knew about Cutler’s sexuality, but never exposed him. In 1955 The New York Times called Cutler, “Untouchable, Unreachable, and Unquotable.”

Cutler served again as security advisor under Eisenhower from 1955 to 1957 and worked with him at the end of his presidency from 1959 to 1962.

Cutler never married. Eight years before his death, he published his third and final book, a memoir, “No Time for Rest.”



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