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CONTENTS

In which it appears things aren't getting any better

ELEGANT WRITING IN THE CLANDESTINE SERVICES

Richard T. Puderbaugh

How I came to be designated CWH/WW (Chief Word Watcher, Western Hemisphere) was that a certain Senior Officer called me into his office the other day and showed me a paper from one of the stations, which spoke of giving an operation "short shift."* My God, he said, who ever heard of a short shift? I knew what he meant, so I didn't make the mistake of mentioning Volkswagens, 1970 petticoats or the Redskins. The Senior Officer went on with his denunciation, and ended up by asking me "Don't they know what 'shrift' means?"

It is a good question. How many people do know? It is one of those terms everybody knows about and thinks he can define, and one which should really lead people inexorably to the dictionary. But it doesn't, not even those people who know how to spell it. I didn't say these things to the Senior Officer, because he is more senior than I am, and has a quick temper.

Anyway, in that conversation, the Senior Officer appointed me Official Word Watcher for the Division, by I don't know what authority, and charged me with the following duties:

> To collect from all CS communications outstanding examples of elegant writing, and to report upon my research at opportune times so that our writers may be edified and instructed thereby.

As soon as my appointment became known, I had a great deal of help from other headquarters personnel, but I will acknowledge that help specifically only if the danger of lynching becomes clear, and I need help (or company).

Here, then, is my first report. I should like to begin it by listing some of the most elegant words we have in our correspondence, words which I urge one and all to use at every opportunity. I should like to see the day when not a single page of our prose escapes the use of at least one of these words. I especially urge our writers to try new uses for all these words, and not be bound by such things as tense, gender, number or

*Author's Note: In this essay, examples of elegant writing have been taken from official CS communications. The names of originating stations and officers, as well as cryptonyms and other indicators, have been changed to protect the guilty.

mode. *Caveat*, for example, is in the Latin imperative mode, but that is much too restrictive, and we have quite properly used this word as a noun for some time now. Imagine my delight when I observed recently the first attempt that I know of to use it, as is, in the present indicative. When you consider that we have long since expanded its original sense of "warning" to include the sense of "conditions" or "provisos," you can understand why the word is so important to us. I can right here remark that I should caveat some of the remarks I am about to make in this essay, and you will not have the slightest idea what I mean, but it sounds distinguished and important, and that is what matters.

Here is the list:

caveat
rationale
thrust
interface (used as a noun and a verb)
dichotomy
lacuna*
forthcoming (in the sense of "candid")
profile (can be either high or low)
silhouette (can be either high or low)
options
life-style
posture
rapport

Rapport is an especially fine word, but so far we have used it only as a noun. Perhaps we should offer a prize to the officer who first devises a successful sentence using rapport as a verb, although we may have been beaten to the punch on this one by the folk-rock expression "to rap." Even employing "rapport" as a noun, nevertheless, we can do great things. Note the following excerpt from a field report:

> "We hope it does not reach the extreme where the agent fails to establish a working rapport, or worse, and thus destroys . . ."

The mind boggles at the thought of anything being worse than a working rapport, and yet here is an officer who does *not* want the agent to *fail* to establish exactly that. Like the character in the play who suddenly discovered that he had been speaking prose all his life, this writer is probably unaware that he has constructed a litotes there. A

*Plural is *lacunae*. This is really a keen word, which has only recently appeared. Used judiciously, it should be OK at least through 1973.

litotes affirms something by denying the contrary, as in "he is not without charm." The device can also be stretched to refute something by negating the denial of the contrary, as in "he denied that he was not unwilling to go," . . . and so on, into total opacity. It is one way to make a reader really study your prose. Still with me?

Try this one:

"Subject: Refutal of rumors regarding a coup."

To take words from other languages or disciplines, and use them in new and clever ways to confound the pedestrian mind, is a noble thing, but how much more magnificent it is to take a legitimate word from our own language and by the change of one phoneme devise a new word, which nobody ever heard of before, but whose meaning everybody will immediately perceive! The roots of this particular treasure seem to be in the words *refuse* and *refute*, but I noted that the inventor did not arrange a reciprocal loan of suffixes and speak of such things as "Hanoi's *refusation* to make peace." There is something not quite right about that one. Sort of low class, perhaps. It is possible, of course, that the word *rebut* was bobbing around in the crucible which produced *refutal*, but in that direction lies paranoia, and we will venture no farther.

It seems to me that *refutal* deserves at least as high a place in our lexicon as *normalcy*, which, as you may know, was invented by Warren G. Harding, who didn't realize he was inventing anything. He would have made a good operations officer. Indeed, I think that the authenticity of these inventions has to be based to a great extent upon the fact that when they are first uttered their inventors are unconscious of bringing something new into the world.

I don't know whether the innocence of the inventors has any bearing on the acceptability of words to modern dictionaries. I doubt it. Modern dictionaries will accept anything anybody says, because if somebody says something it becomes usage, and usage is *king*! There is one grumpy headquarters officer who dislikes this modern trend, and says that the Oxford of 1912 is the only authoritative dictionary of the English language. He is a troublemaker, who will one day be dealt with by Division Authorities. He is the one who brought to me the following:

"Subject: Easement of the Threat of a Coup."

I had to point out to him that Webster's New World Dictionary says there *is* such a meaning to easement, in addition to the legal use pertaining to land titles, so that settles that. He also has to accept

the fact, for instance, that *chaise longue* has now become *chaise lounge* in this country, by authority of Sears, Roebuck and Company, and that *lingerie* means ladies' drawers and shifts and things of that nature, and if he and the French don't like it then they can damn well lump it.

What should we do about the shall/will problem? My own inclination is to let it lie, because the shall/will rule was an artificial thing, anyway, set up in a very elegant epoch of the English language, to tone up the speech of His Majesty's subjects. It is a difficult thing to master, and I think we are doing well enough without it, although you have to admit that nothing dresses up a sentence quite so much as an unexpected "shall" where a "will" really belongs. That is to say that we should pay no attention to the rule, but should just put in a shall at any time a sentence needs to be toned up a bit.

Another problem which I'm inclined to de-emphasize is the one which the *New Yorker* calls "The Omnipotent Whom." There is no doubt about it, *whom* sounds much more literate and polished than plain old everyday *who*, but I think we have this factor under good control. In fact, I have ceased collecting samples, after nearly filling a notebook, because everyone is doing so well. I shall cite just two fairly typical examples:

> "ZPDRUM, whom we note is currently in Paris . . ."
> "Forward the document to whomever may have an interest in the matter."

If there is anything that dresses up our prose even more than the shall/will or who/whom pilasters, it is the mixed metaphor. If your metaphor gives a clear picture, you should be ashamed of yourself. We don't do as well as we should on metaphors, in fact, and we must work on them a bit harder. We have much to learn from the State Department in this respect, as witness the following sample from State traffic:

> "If the government of Graustark does not box itself in by wrapping the national flag around the training area . . ."

Try to construct a mental picture from the Ozymandian blueprint, and despair! The same State Department expert also spoke of "a certain rustling of sabers," which shows that he is made of championship material. I would quarrel mildly in one sense, however. If the sabers are, in truth, made of something that rustles, he should correct and extend his borrowing from Poe, and make the rustling *un*certain, as well as sad, and perhaps silken. Unless, of course, the writer meant to imply that there was a kind of military Bad Bart who was going

around stealing great numbers of sabers from the corrals of nice folks in white hats.

But a fig for the State Department! We have our own experts, and I defy any other agency to produce anything to equal the following:

> "The result of the medical checkup was that the agent has diabetes."
> "His bank allotee is forwarded under separate cover."
> "The negative reaction to this device was its (attaboy!) lack of sufficient range. It was tested singularly and in pairs."
> "He is not temperamentally geared to write in subtilities, but does produce good hardhitting yellow journalism in the style of a poor man's Westbrook Pegler."

The last sentence may be one of the best of the decade. I don't say that because of his reference to "hardhitting" journalism, either, even though that term does limn a picture of an energetic, up-and-at-'em CIA officer playing Wagnerian themes on the mighty Wurlitzer he has constructed from his local (sob) *stable of assets*. It's good, but you can't give very high marks for it, because when you come right down to it, our operations have never to my knowledge produced a single paragraph that *wasn't* hardhitting. Where that sentence achieves greatness is in calling attention to one of the characteristics of the late columnist which has been too long overlooked—that is, the fact that only the rich could afford the real Westbrook Pegler.

But there is more. If one lifts the phrase "temperamentally geared" out of the stream and contemplates it carefully, one cannot help but be impressed with the subtility of the thing. I know a number of people in this agency who I think are temperamentally geared. I steer clear of them. They can't do you any good.

> "In view of the serious flap potential, which, if discovered by the host government, could have lead to a worsening of relations . . ."

We need not dwell upon the construction which hypothesizes the damage that might be done if the government discovers the flap potential of an operation. We all know that, surely. Who among us would ever want a host government to find out how risky an operation he was mounting? We must always keep our host government reassured that our clandestine operations in their countries have also no flap potential at all. But let us press on to the rest of that sentence, whose enigmatic wording led my mind into an almost psychedelic whirl, with images of "some lead is red, and some reds are led," and

when the machinery finally clanked to a halt, here is what came out of the printer:

> Wherever your writing may lead, Sir,
> You may rest assured I shall read, Sir;
> But if, when I've read,
> You insist I've been lead,
> Then I surely shall sea read, indeed, Sir.

You can have that, if you want it.

Perhaps there is something about lead that attracts the man—Freudian associations with bullets or poison or pollution. It would not be the first time our prose implied more than it said. Notice the gothic scene evoked by the following:

> ". . . we will continue to keep this asset tabled, and will call on him for spot reporting when necessary."

If all our Operations Officers were as skilled at writing as this man, the Green Beret case would never have hit the headlines. There is no "terminated with extreme prejudice" blooper here to provoke the news media into soaring flights of fancy. No, the untutored mind would receive that sentence as meaning that the matter was being held in abeyance, as in the parliamentary term "to table a motion," whereas those of us in the know immediately perceive that this officer is describing a bit of standard tradecraft, whereby we strap a man to a deal table and belabor him with interfaces and rapports and dichotomies until he by god comes up with a spot report.

> "So successful was Fulano's re-immergence as a crusading journalist that . . ."

A number of our stations have in the past produced or supported underground newspapers, but this must be the first one of record whose clandestine journalism was done under water. Eat your heart out, MI–6!

> "Fulano appears to be in excellent financial straits."
> "Subject and his wife, Josephine, nee unknown . . ."
> "He did it in a fit of peak."*
> "He easily looses his head."
> "He attempted to illicit the information."
> "The rightist candidate, who won a pleurality of votes . . ."

**Fit of peak* is known to the medical profession as "Pike's Syndrome." In Asia, it is called "Norky's Complaint."

"The agent demonstrated an excellent operational posture."*
". . . like operating in a vacuum tube."
"The national liveration movement . . ."
"Incendiary fires will be set."
"Several methods of modus operandi are being contemplated."

The author of that last sentence could have added immeasurably to its charm by pointing out that incendiary fires can be put out with wet water; but he did at least clarify things a bit the following week by explaining "By large incendiary fires, the agent may be referring to one of the petroleum storage areas . . ."

One of the prize words in my collection is the invention of a State Department officer, whom we really ought to try to identify and recruit. The word is fragile and beautiful, and it is with some hesitation that I offer it up on our rather brutal altar, for I fear that we will over-use it and cause it to wilt and fade before its time. I have no right to keep it, however, and present it herewith with a fervent exhortation to one and all to use it tenderly so that it will last for at least six months to a year. Here it is:

dichotomization

If that doesn't bring a lump to your throat, nothing will. There is more, but I cannot go on. I trust you will all keep your passive voice active. It must never be allowed to be wondered why our communications are not being written with more thrust and rationale. Go forth and write, and may the Lord have rapport upon you.

*The OK operational posture for 1970–72, in case you didn't know, is *forward-leaning*. We have in the past been through postures of defense, agonizing re-appraisal, benevolent neutrality and the like, but then came that luminous moment when an unknown genius suggested that we should all be forward-leaning. Thousands of our patriotic, conscientious headquarters staff members were thereupon transformed into human gnomons, who can be observed every morning shortly before 8:30, inclined dutifully in the direction of Langley, and at about 5:00 p.m. pointed just as dutifully toward home.

More from the legal annals

THE JOHN RICHARD HAWKE CASE

Lawrence R. Houston

In the late spring of 1965, a pilot named John Richard Hawke, an English ex-RAF ace, was flying a B 26 on his way from Arizona through Canada to Portugal. How much he knew about the legalities of his flight we will probably never know, but as a pilot he certainly knew that a B–26 properly configured is an excellent ground support military aircraft and particularly valuable in an insurgency situation. It was also hard to believe that he was not aware of Portugal's troubles with insurgency in its African colonies, and that these were particularly touchy problems for the United States. At the very least, therefore, he must have known he was not in a routine situation. He later admitted he had no export license for the plane.

Coming near the Washington area, his instruments indicated a sudden loss of oil pressure. Accordingly, he made for National Airport by the most direct line, which took him through the restricted area around The White House. When he landed, therefore, he was immediately ordered to report for questioning by Government agents. He explained the emergency, and when the technicians had checked and corroborated the oil leak, he was released with an oral warning. It seemed to him that he got off extremely easy, and it appeared as if someone was protecting his mission.

All of this became important later in the trial in the Federal Court in Buffalo, New York. As the Government developed the case, it appeared that in November 1964 Lucien Bernard, President of Luber Inc., S.A., Geneva, Switzerland, got in touch with Henri de Marin de Montmarin, a French aircraft broker who had handled many large transactions in various parts of the world. Bernard asked Montmarin if he could find B–26 aircraft. One of Montmarin's many acquaintances in the business was Gregory R. Board, President of Aero Associates, Tucson, Arizona, who had access to a large number of surplus B–26s. Montmarin, Luber Inc., and Aero Associates entered into a series of agreements to overhaul and modify the B–26s so they could obtain Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) air worthiness certificates and be capable of transatlantic passage. They arranged with one

MORI/HRP
from pg.
09-13

W. W. Roderick of Winnipeg, Canada, to represent Aero Associates in Canada as purchaser of the B–26s and then to arrange for the transit of 20 aircraft and spare parts to Portugal without Canada's customs' attention. The Canadian intermediary was essential as Canada was the only country for which an export license from the Department of State was not required whereas for Portugal one most certainly was.

John Hawke was a friend of Board's and agreed to ferry the aircraft. Beginning on May 29, 1965 and continuing to August 18, 1965, Hawke ferried seven of the B–26s through various U.S. ports of exit to St. John's, Newfoundland, and then to Portugal. During this time, CIA received four intelligence reports from a variety of intelligence sources. On 9 June 1965 a report came from [redacted] 25X1

25X1 [redacted] stating that the Portuguese government had purchased 20 B–26 aircraft in the United States and that the planes were then to be flown from Texas via Canada and Switzerland to Portugal. The second report on 7 July 1965 from the same source stated that four or five B–26 aircraft had been delivered to Tancos Air Base by 1 July. These two reports were disseminated on a priority basis to the normal intelligence community members on 8 July. Concurrently, a sensitive domestic source familiar with Board's Aero Associates outfit provided information on the same transaction. It so happened that this report was disseminated internally to the Office of General Counsel, which recognized the legal as apart from the political implications, and requested additional distribution to the Bureau of Customs, FAA, Department of the Treasury, and the FBI. We also assured that the Bureau of Munitions Control, Department of State, had access to the reports. Finally, another domestic source informed CIA that a pilot, John Hawke, and a mechanic, Keat Griggers, were installing long-range gasoline tanks in B–26 aircraft at Rochester, New York. This information was relayed to the FBI on 23 June 1965.

The Bureau of Customs subsequently conducted an investigation. On September 16, 1965, Hawke and Montmarin were arrested in Miami, Florida, on charges of conspiracy to violate Federal laws on exportation of arms, ammunition, and implements of war. Gregory Board, a naturalized U.S. citizen of Australian origin, fled the country to avoid prosecution and returned to his native land where he renounced his U.S. citizenship.

On October 8, 1965, the Grand Jury in Buffalo, New York, returned a true bill against Hawke, Montmarin, Roderick, Board, Griggers, and Aero Associates. Subsequently, the charges against all but Hawke, Montmarin, and Board were dropped, and as Board was

outside the jurisdiction only Hawke and Montmarin ultimately stood trail on the charges.

Hawke retained a Florida lawyer named Edwin Marger, who, at a meeting with the Department of State in September, said he had proof that Hawke was working for the Central Intelligence Agency while flying the aircraft to Portugal and, therefore, did not require or seek any export licenses. A most careful investigation was made to assure that no component or person purporting to speak for the Agency had ever given any reason for Marger and Hawke to make these allegations, and no possible basis for such a claim could be found. This was reported to the Department of State and the Internal Security Division, Department of Justice.

The trial began on September 20, 1966, with a second lawyer, Edward Brodsky, representing Montmarin. Mr. Marger's first move was to request the court to issue a number of subpoenas, particularly one for Mr. Helms as Director of Central Intelligence and Richard Bissell, formerly Deputy Director for Plans. It had been anticipated by us that Marger would probably try to bring in the Director and CIA files, and we had worked it out with the U.S. Attorney that he would argue the question on the grounds of public denials of CIA involvement which had been made in the Senate and the United Nations.

The court heard the arguments of counsel, and over the U.S. Attorney's motion to quash ordered the subpoena for Mr. Helms and the pertinent Agency files to issue. Defense counsel agreed, however, to permit me as General Counsel to appear in Mr. Helms' stead. The court declined the subpoena for Mr. Bissell on the grounds that he had left the Agency long before the questioned flights.

We had considerable discussion as to how to respond to the subpoena, as it was possible that we could enter a claim of executive privilege based on security, but this might result in the dismissal of the criminal charges and might also be taken as an admission that we were involved. Moreover, the documents in question were the four reports described above, which would obviously be counter to the interest of the defendants, and, if we could protect the sensitive sources involved, would, if anything, help the Government's case. We decided, therefore, to respond to the subpoena.

The case by this time had attracted considerable public attention and had become a matter of charges and countercharges and denials in the United Nations. Accordingly, the Department of State requested that I explain the situation in detail to Ambassador Goldberg, who was then representing the United States in the United Nations. He went

into the matter with me very carefully and at the end expressed his satisfaction with the basis for his denials in the United Nations and encouraged us to pursue the matter in court.

On October 7, 1966, I appeared as a witness for the defense. Mr. Marger asked me if I had brought the CIA files on Hawke. I replied that I had Agency documents having to do with the flying of B–26s to Portugal. Marger then asked if I had the documents in the courtroom, and I said I had. At that time, as we had previously arranged, Mr. John T. Curtin, the U.S. Attorney handling the prosecution, requested an inspection of the documents in camera, that is, in the judge's chambers. He explained to the court that, while the body of the documents could be revealed, indications on the documents as to their sources as well as other sensitive CIA markings should not be disclosed. He further said that excision of the sensitive information would not impair the text of the documents in any way. He argued that the in camera inspection would demonstrate this to the judge. The judge agreed, and brought Mr. Curtin and me into his chambers. The judge concluded that the excision requested for security reasons would not alter the substance of the documents and ruled that they could be admitted in sterilized form. He then called in Marger and Brodsky and with a stenographer making a verbatim record explained that he had reviewed the documents brought by Mr. Houston and was ruling in favor of their admissibility, but that he would permit only photostatic copies of the originals, with certain sensitive markings removed, to be put in evidence. He repeated to defense counsel that all factual matters contained in the originals would be present in the copies. He then sealed the originals and the stenographic transcript and said they would be kept in his safe against a possible need for them in case of appeal.

Court proceedings were reopened before the jury, and Marger began pursuing the line that the Agency had had knowledge of the planned flights as early as May 23, 1965. I explained how the reports had come in as unevaluated raw information and we had seen to it that the proper dissemination was made to Government agencies with jurisdiction to take action. Despite this explanation of the reports, Marger introduced one into the record, apparently thinking he could somehow establish CIA's sponsorship. It is interesting that Brodsky, counsel for Montmarin, who was not pursuing the theory of Agency involvement, objected strongly and repeatedly to Marger's attempts to introduce the CIA documents. Shortly after this exchange, the court was adjourned for the weekend.

As an interesting sideline, Hawke then asked the court's permission to leave the country for the weekend as he had a contract to ferry an airplane to England. The court granted such permission, and as a matter of fact when I flew up from Washington to Buffalo on Monday morning, I met Hawke in the airport waiting for his luggage. Since he looked somewhat forlorn I gave him a ride to the courthouse in my taxi. He turned out to be a pleasant and interesting young man.

On October 11, 1966, Marger continued to examine me. He repeatedly attempted to impeach my testimony, but since I was his witness this only drew down on him the anger of the judge. He then tried unsuccessfully to secure a ruling that I was a hostile witness. On cross-examination, Curtin questioned me and for the first time gave an opportunity for a specific direct denial of any Agency involvement in the entire affair. This completed my appearance, and the defense rested its case.

The jury acquitted both Hawke and Montmarin, but according to one of the jurors, they did not believe there was any Agency involvement. They based their acquittal on the fact that the major culprit, Board, had duped these two defendants and was not before them on trial and they saw no reason, therefore, to hold Hawke and Montmarin criminally guilty. The local papers and wire services by and large also accepted my denial of involvement. So to this extent we came out fairly well from the trial. However, without being able to prove it, I am convinced that Board told Hawke a detailed story of what he claimed were his relations with the Agency and its support, probably so Hawke would take a lower salary as there would be less hazard in the operation. This is one reason why Hawke really believed that CIA had intervened to keep him from serious trouble when he violated The White House air space on his approach to National Airport, and this in turn gave credence to Board's claims.

How the Soviets destroyed the Fourth International

LEON TROTSKY, DUPE OF THE NKVD

Rita T. Kronenbitter

"All they know about my movements is what they learn from the newspapers." —Trotsky, 1932

It is generally agreed among students of the Soviet secret services that the principal aim of the OGPU and its sequel, the NKVD, through most of the 1930's was the destruction of Leon Trotsky, his family, his aides, and other promoters of the Fourth International. Within Russia, where Trotskyism never had a chance to evolve into a broad underground political organization, the movement was essentially imaginary, a provocation designed to serve the regime as a cardinal pretext for purges of real or potential opponents. The secret services were under orders to prove that the individuals and groups singled out for extinction were guilty of Trotskyism so that they could be accused as wreckers, saboteurs, spies, and assassins. Abroad, where Trotsky's theories of opposition to Stalinism attracted enough of a following to develop his Fourth International, with factions of adherents in many Western countries, the purpose of Soviet teams and agents was to neutralize or discredit the movement and, above all, to kill the leader and his important assistants. The campaign against Trotsky and his movement began with the OGPU and was successfully concluded, at home and abroad, by the NKVD. For operations abroad Stalin's services resorted at first to the use of penetration and provocation agents, spotters or fingermen, then to mobile teams for abductions and assassinations.

The early 1930's were favorable years for the growth of Trotskyism, the movement which eventually formulated the platform of the Fourth International. Leftist oppositionists adhering to it condemned Stalin's doctrine of "socialism in one country" as a betrayal of the ideal of world revolution as expounded by Trotsky. Disaffected communists everywhere formed new parties to follow Trotsky's theory and propaganda. By 1936, when he moved to Mexico, the movement in Europe was at its peak. From his exile Trotsky channelled his ideas and instructions to the office of his son, Leon Sedov, in Paris. The latter's *Bulletin of Opposition*, which published the writings, conveyed

MORI/HRP
from pg.
15-61

his ideological guidance to their followers everywhere. Public and underground party organs in France, Germany, England, the Low Countries, and elsewhere reproduced what Trotsky wrote in the *Bulletin*. The Secretariat of the Fourth International, located in Paris, also received Trotsky's guidance through Sedov's office. It was patterned upon the organization of Lenin's party before the October Revolution. It had its conferences and congresses, and it maintained *ad hoc* control committees to deal with organizational disputes and accusations of disloyalty. Unlike all other major Russian conspiratorial organizations, however, it never created a counterintelligence department to watch over the security of the movement and to prevent hostile penetrations. The members of the International Secretariat were Western Europeans, convinced Marxist-Leninists, theoreticians rather than aggressive conspirators, hardly more than dilettantes in leftist politics. Because they were perennially engaged in polemics with the pro-Stalinist communist press, the NKVD had no need to pay serious attention to them. The agents of the NKVD did of course manipulate individual leaders to promote internal friction and the splintering of the party, but the Soviet services concentrated on attacks upon Trotsky himself, his son, and the important aides who served as the channel of communication between the leader and the movement.

The wide array of international assets of the Soviet secret services were under one central control and direction. Perhaps its "order of battle" will never be fully revealed. Trotsky himself, however, adds indirectly to the understanding of how the NKVD agents operated in his and his assistants' headquarters. He failed to realize the dangers until the latter years of his exile, when it was too late. His grotesque naïveté made it possible for spies to insinuate themselves permanently and profusely into his full confidence and friendship, and eventually into his home.

Trotsky, his son Leon Sedov, and other leading comrades abroad were frequently warned about NKVD agents in their midst. His gullibility in dealing with people around him and the failure of the Fourth International to act by setting up some office to counter hostile espionage stand out as an enigma in Trotsky's life and work. One of the principal characters in staging the October Revolution, he organized the Red Army and its military and counterintelligence components. In the period of civil war he worked in unison with Dzerzhinski's secret service at the capital, while the armed forces under his command cooperated closely with the provincial Chekas. His entire adult life in the conspiratorial underground had been a rehearsal for revolu-

tionary counterintelligence. The bulky folders of his correspondence of 1917 to 1921 include many messages which reveal his dominant position in starting the Soviet secret services. He recruited and placed in the Red Army political commissars as adjuncts or staffers of the military intelligence units. In addition, he commandeered Cheka representatives for joint operations with the political commissars and the Red Army intelligence staffs. His messages to Lenin, Dzerzhinski, and others are replete with instructions and requests relating to intelligence against counterrevolutionaries. His wires show that he used effectively his military intelligence, the commissars, and the Cheka agents "on loan" to him from Dzerzhinski. Lenin and Dzerzhinski likewise consulted him on intelligence matters, both foreign and domestic. In many ways Trotsky set the pattern for the early practices of the Soviet secret services. He prescribed the role of the Cheka area leaders attached to the Revolutionary War Councils at the front and gave and carried out recommendations on purges and summary courts. He stipulated the requirements in recruiting Cheka leaders and teams for intelligence assignments against counterrevolutionaries and for Bolshevik propaganda. His field messages to the Politburo dealt with the uses of codes, security of communications, methods of suppressing hostile rumors, and the role of the press in misleading foreign governments and organizations.

Throughout the civil war Trotsky was in close contact with Dzerzhinski, for whose organization and leadership of the Cheka he continued to express profuse admiration, even in his writings in exile. He never expressed antagonism to the Cheka's successor services. In fact, when an allegedly disenchanted agent, Yacov Blumkin, visited him in Turkey, Trotsky urged him to remain in his OGPU service for the good of the "workers' state." His references to the Soviet secret services and the security of revolutionary movements proved that Trotsky strongly believed in and supported the Cheka's successor services (although not the extent to which they were under Stalin's personal control).

In contrast to his past conspiratorial and intelligence activities, Trotsky in exile, although abundantly warned about NKVD penetrations of his offices and the Fourth International, failed to organize any form of offensive or defensive intelligence service. He insisted on the use of code names in communications and repeatedly admonished the Secretariat in Paris that the secrecy of his correspondence was imperative. Further, he was concerned about his own safety. He traveled incognito during his exile; and wherever he stayed for any length of time, he sought and obtained secure quarters, with guards.

But for the security of his revolutionary movement, which, he fully realized, was the paramount target of Stalin's services, he was incapable of organizing even a rudimentary form of counterintelligence.

Various writers have expressed surprise over Trotsky's failure to devote serious effort to counterintelligence as a matter of personal and organizational security. Important French and German followers had urged him to do so. He was engrossed in his doctrine of world revolution and the attacks on Stalin's personal regime; but like so many other revolutionary leaders before him, he had no interest in collecting information on the plans and operations of hostile agents. With the exception of news items from the press recording the GPU-NKVD assassinations of his aides, we have no evidence that he received reports on the Soviet services that were working against him and his movement.

The utter disregard of counterintelligence techniques, in which Trotsky was proficient in the pre-revolutionary and civil war years, may be interpreted in several ways. Milovan Djilas wrote about Trotsky as "an excellent speaker and skilled polemicist, a man of exceptional intelligence, deficient in only one quality; a sense of reality." [1] Many others described him as conceited and arrogant, refusing to comply with well-wishing followers who were concerned about security. Summing up Trotsky's striving "to rally the underworld of Europe to the overthrow of Stalin," Winston Churchill described Trotsky's conspiratorial audacity and demoniac energy.[2] The same characterization was drawn by John Gunther, who interviewed Trotsky at Prinkipo in Turkey. His description gave the essence of the movement's structure in 1932, which remained about the same until Trotsky's death:

> A Trotsky movement has grown up throughout most of Europe. In each country there is a nucleus of Trotskyist agitators. They take orders from Prinkipo direct. There is a sort of communication between the various groups, through their publications and manifestos but mostly through private letters. The various central committees are linked to an international headquarters in Berlin (in Paris, after Hitler's take-over).[3]

Its confidential communications with occasional uses of couriers, safe accommodation addresses, and code names for correspondents gave Trotsky's movement the semblance of an intelligence service.

[1] *The New Class*, London, 1957, p. 50.

[2] *Great Contemporaries*. Chapter on Leon Trotsky, Putnam, New York, 1937.

[3] "Trotsky at Elba" in *Harpers Magazine*, April 1932.

But contrary to the voluminous pro-Stalinist writings which depicted the movement as a vast international espionage system aiming at the destruction of the Soviet Union,[4] neither Trotsky nor any of his leading followers maintained any intelligence establishment.

Moreover, Trotsky was an easy prey for the Soviet services on other scores. Although he gradually realized that the GPU was under the absolute control of Stalin, he trusted its known agents in the Siberian exile of 1928, and in Turkey in 1929, when he feared his life was endangered only by the exiled Czarist officers. Depending on the GPU in the consular offices at Istanbul, he used them and their diplomatic pouch for correspondence with comrades in Russia, informing them about the oppositionist growth abroad. Thus, his first years of exile in Turkey were as fully covered by the GPU as his year in Siberian exile at Alma Ata. Although he realized that his mail was being tampered with and that important letters to comrades in Russia were being stolen, he took no precautions in Turkey or later in Norway. Naively assuming that his son's name would not be known to the GPU, he signed much of his correspondence with "Leon Sedov." He curiously underestimated the Soviet secret services. In 1932 he wrote that the GPU knew of his movements only what they learned from the newspapers.[5]

Another vulnerability of Trotsky was inherent in the composition of his political movement. The Trotskyites of the 1930's were predominantly former CP members, Social Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, leftist laborites, Spartacus Youth groups, and similar extreme radicals. Their unifying slogans focused on the negation of Stalinism, while with regard to their positive ideal, world revolution, their varied ideological background divided them in all efforts. Such differences and personal aspirations and jealousies of national Trotskyite leaders opened for the GPU many doors into the movement.[6] Even in the early 1930's Trotsky discovered that his devout correspondents, com-

[4] Example: Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, *The Great Conspiracy*. Little, Brown and Co., Boston, 1946. Whole chapters of this volume of grotesque falsehoods deal with Trotsky's "espionage" aimed at the destruction of the Soviet Union. The book contains an extensive bibliography in support of the allegations about Trotsky's spy system, which has now been exploded by the Soviet leadership itself in the XXth and XXIIth Party Congresses.

[5] See John Dewey, *The Case of Leon Trotsky*, Secker and Warburg, London, 1937, p. 551.

[6] Examples: In Austria, with a sizeable membership, the Trotskyites split into three factions as a result of GPU manipulations. The same thing happened in Germany and Czechoslovakia.

rades Melev and Senin,[7] were responsible for the movement's disruption in Germany; but according to his own statements he refused to believe that the two were GPU spies.

The fact that the movement attracted mostly defectors from the CP's was a boon for GPU penetration agents. Especially when entire groups rebelled against Stalin's regime and the Comintern, as happened in several instances of bickering among German communist factions, GPU agents were invariably among them.[8]

Trotsky's vulnerability is obvious in much of his personal correspondence. In contrast with his internationalist appeal, he appears to have been partial to Jews, especially the leftist Zionists from Russia. His letters to the Palestinian comrades confirm this impression. He paid no heed to the warnings from non-Jewish comrades in Berlin and Paris; yet all his aides who were subsequently discovered as GPU-NKVD penetration agents were of that category. There is no record in his or Sedov's files indicating that Jewish or Zionist comrades were investigated when joining the movement, whereas applicants of other racial stock were subject to suspicion as possible provocateurs.

Individual defections from his ranks back to Stalinism and assassinations of his aides made Trotsky realize, belatedly, the throughness of NKVD penetrations. The writings of his last two years show that he sensed how the enemy was closing in on him. To every report on the liquidation of his followers he would add some marginal note to the effect that he himself would be the next victim. Warnings from loyal comrades and others also increased; but the GPU methods of planned confusion, promoted by agents in his own entourage, made it impossible for Trotsky to tell which threats were genuine and which were hoaxes.

The GPU-NKVD resorted to a great variety of schemes for the penetration and destruction of the adversary. The methods employed can be traced with some clarity by examining individual agent and team operations, as deduced from Trotsky's own files and some *ex post facto* data from other sources.

Stroilov's Provocation: The Downfall of Trotsky

The incident which served as overt justification for depriving Trotsky of all offices, including his Party membership, and for his

[7] "Senin" was the pseudonym used in correspondence for Jack Soble. "Melev" has not been identified, but may have been the name used for Soble's brother, Robert Soblen, although the latter was usually known as "Well". Their roles are amplified below.

[8] E. G., the Soble (Sobolevicius) brothers, Melev, and Olberg, discussed later.

arrest and exile to Siberia in 1928, was an act of GPU provocation. There is no record to show the date when the secret service was first ordered to keep Trotsky under surveillance. One can gather from his own writings that the campaign against him began in early October 1923 when a scapegoat was needed for the fiasco of the communist uprising in Germany. That abortive attempt was attributed to the rightists in the Party, and Trotsky was at the time being denounced as the author of rightist deviation. Recriminations began in the Politburo while rumors were circulated among the public that Trotsky was not a true Bolshevik. Comintern representatives to the Fifth Congress in July 1924 came as his admirers but were speedily aligned against him by a slogan about bolshevizing all communist parties abroad. Foreign Comintern delegates who persisted as Trotsky's friends were expelled from the Party.[9] This period marked the beginning of Trotsky's downgrading. When Lenin died, Trotsky was taking a rest cure in the Caucasus. Stalin, not wanting him at the funeral, telephoned that he would arrive too late, although in fact the funeral was delayed for several days.

By May 1925 Trotsky was out as the War Commissar. He became deputy to Dzerzhinski, an inferior post in the Council for State Economy. The decisive contest with Stalin began in the summer of 1926 when a Joint Opposition was formed and started sending emissaries to the provinces. These steps were taken *sub rosa*, but Stalin knew every move ahead of time, and GPU ruffians were dispatched promptly to disrupt all oppositionist gatherings.[10]

By this time the GPU had initiated constant surveillance over Trotsky and his leading followers. The Joint Opposition was forced underground, with meetings in workers' homes, suburban tenements, cemeteries, and forests. Its tenets called for a return to Lenin's doctrine of revolution not in one country but throughout the world. In the Politburo the opposition constituted a regular faction. Efforts were made to compromise, but Stalin attacked when Max Eastman published Lenin's "last will" in the *New York Times*. Trotsky was blamed for giving the document to his capitalist friend, Eastman. He counterattacked by calling Stalin the "gravedigger of the revolution." The net result was Trotsky's expulsion from the Politburo.

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[9] Alfred Rosmer, V. Delagarde and P. Monatte of France and A. Bordiga of Italy. Bordiga formed the first oppositionist group abroad, the "Comitato d'Intesa" of Naples.

[10] Extensive accounts are given in Edward Hallett Carr, *Socialism in One Country*. Macmillan Co., New York, 1964, Vol. III, Part I, p. 273 ff.

The Joint Opposition responded with more virulent underground activity. It prepared a political platform for publication. Stalin of course knew all about it. Stroilov, a GPU agent posing as an oppositionist and working as an underground organizer of young anti-Stalinists, reported daily about the preparation of the platform to his chief, Yagoda. Stroilov had been a secret agent since the Cheka period and was assigned as a penetration of Trotsky's group. The opportunity now presented itself for a classic provocation, such as had been practiced by the Okhrana when agents set up printshops and provided paper and ink for revolutionary leaflets as a method of incriminating and apprehending subversive groups. Because the oppositionists could no longer have anything printed openly, Stroilov now supplied a mimeograph, paper, and ink. When the platform was printed and ready for distribution, the GPU arrested the whole group of participating oppositionists.

In this operation Stalin went a step beyond the usual Okhrana practice in setting up printshops for revolutionaries. When Yagoda reported to him the history of his agent, Stroilov, among the Trotskyists, Stalin ordered, according to Alexander Orlov,[11] "Now make Stroilov into a Wrangel officer." Stroilov, the Cheka's agent in the civil war, could not have been an officer of Wrangel, but that was immaterial. The GPU produced documentary evidence that the "former White Guard officer" was collaborating with Trotsky's conspirators to destroy the "workers' state".

Trotsky was absent from Moscow when his underground "printshop" was liquidated, but all the blame for the offense was on him and other leaders of the Joint Opposition. His papers and his testimony before the Dewey Commission allege that he knew nothing about who did the printing of the platform. He obviously accepted the GPU version that a former officer of General Wrangel worked among his young followers responsible for the publication.[12] He did not know that the GPU itself documented the agent as a former White Guardist. Such a status for the "oppositionist" Stroilov made the incrimination more serious and despicable in the eyes of the public. It marked Trotsky as working with the White Guards to overthrow the Soviet government. Such evidence was enough for *Pravda* to refuse to publish his explanations or any other articles. Expulsion and exile to Siberia followed within months.

[11] *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes*. Random House, New York, 1953, pp. 311-312.
[12] Dewey, *op. cit.*, pp. 26, 325, 333.

Yacov Blumkin

As already stated, the GPU was in full control of Trotsky's correspondence with oppositionist comrades in Russia. That control began with his exile to Alma Ata. The physical conditions of this exile were pleasant. He and his family were not even under house arrest. They were accorded full freedom of movement within Alma Ata and an unrestricted supply of Party and other literature. There was no ban on correspondence by mail or wire. The GPU agents attached to the household were ostensibly concerned only with his safety and comfort. Trotsky himself duly informed the leading comrades among the oppositionists about his status, so that they felt free and safe in expressing their political views and ambitions in the exchange of correspondence. The fatal consequences of this fallacy became obvious years later in the great purge trials, executions, and suicides of 1936–1937.

For the same ostensible purpose of protection, GPU agents accompanied Trotsky to his exile in Turkey. He insisted on having as his personal bodyguards two persons of his own choice. In communications with GPU chief Fokin in Istanbul he named two of his loyal friends, former secretaries who had been with him at Alma Ata. The two were promised, but they never came. According to Trotsky they disappeared without a trace.[13] Those assigned to Trotsky's household were subsequently dismissed by him after he signed a receipt for $2,000 allowed as subsistence money from the Soviet government.[14]

The overt GPU agents dismissed from Trotsky's household were promptly replaced by two different types of informants: teams from the Soviet consulate to keep the residence villa on Prinkipo Island under covert surveillance, and individual penetration agents engaged by the GPU from among the Left Opposition in Germany. The former, in addition to watching the coming and going of visitors, made occasional forays to steal Trotsky's documents and, on one occasion, to set the place on fire. The individual GPU agents, always under cover as loyal followers, took turns as residents in the household. One of these, Sobolevicius, because of his more complex activities in the GPU program to destroy the movement, will be discussed subse-

[13] The two were Poznansky and Sermuk, both of whom were shot, according to Natalia Sedova's account.

[14] The sum given Trotsky by the GPU in Istanbul was disputed by Mrs. Trotsky (Natalia Sedova) in her accounts to Victor Serge (*Vie et Mort de Trotsky*. Amiot-Dumont, Paris, 1951, p. 201). She wrote that the amount was $5,000. On the other hand, Stalin's propaganda machine claimed that Trotsky got away with millions of dollars of Soviet money.

quently. Another one was Jacob Frank, the initial organizer of the Left Opposition in Germany, who was probably converted back to Stalinism by the time Trotsky arrived in Turkey. He was the first GPU agent to stay at Prinkipo Island for five months as a fully trusted friend and enthusiastic comrade. It can be assumed that the GPU knew everything about the exile's messages and secret projects, especially his anxious efforts to obtain visas for moving to Germany and, when that failed, to England. Sure that his correspondence with several influential friends who would help him obtain that permission would not be known, he was surprised when the GPU itself informed him that all his efforts would be in vain. He could not understand how the GPU could know about his confidential requests. Mrs. Trotsky described how Trotsky learned that Frank was a GPU informer only after the latter returned to Berlin to take part in the campaign of splintering the groups of German and Jewish oppositionists.[15]

Frank was in Trotsky's home at the time of Yacov Blumkin's visits, in 1929, so that the GPU had a double source on the exile's activities and the performance of its own agent. Trotsky's writings and statements regarding Blumkin are contradictory on several points. For instance, he stated before the Dewey Commission that Blumkin was a member of the Left Opposition, whereas in his letters to followers in Paris he insisted Blumkin was never a member. (The true allegiance of this important GPU agent could hardly be deduced from the Soviet statements giving the reasons for his execution without trial.) Equally unconvincing are Trotsky's writings about his meetings with Blumkin, whom he used as courier to Moscow. Trotsky's liberal propaganda exploitation of the execution of Blumkin also offers no clue about who controlled the agent.

One not too irrational deduction would be that Blumkin came to Trotsky upon GPU instructions. The Soviet story, proven completely false, called Blumkin the head of Trotsky's bodyguard at Prinkipo.[16] As confirmed by Trotsky's followers visiting at the time in Turkey, and also by Mrs. Trotsky, there were only two visits of Blumkin to Trotsky's villa, after he met Trotsky's son, Sedov, "by chance" on a street in Istanbul. Trotsky, apprehensive at first, was persuaded by

[15] See Deutscher's *Prophet Outcast*. Oxford, London, 1963, p. 25.

[16] This story was repeated in Sayers and Kahn, *op. cit.*, p. 212. The two authors quote out of context a string of biographic data on Blumkin, truths and half-truths to fit into their package of disinformation on the case.

his son and consented to see his old protégé,[17] although he knew that Yacov was currently the chief counterespionage agent for the GPU in the Orient. Without explaining the reason for the roundabout route, Blumkin told Trotsky that he was on his way from Persia back to Moscow. According to Trotsky, he expressed disaffection with Stalin's regime and spoke of the dangers to Trotsky, insisting that he should be protected by at least twenty bodyguards in and around the villa. Then Blumkin volunteered to serve as Trotsky's courier for deliveries of communications to Moscow. Trotsky was eager to use this opportunity. He gave Blumkin the names and addresses of leading followers and a letter containing plans of the Left Opposition in the fight against Stalin.[18] Trotsky may also have given Blumkin oral instructions of a conspiratorial nature. Whatever the messages about secret projects may have been, the GPU knew it all anyway from its agent, Frank, who was staying in the Prinkipo villa.

There are differing versions of Blumkin's doom upon his return to Moscow. Some maintain that he delivered the letter to Karl Radek, who had by then recanted, who had deserted the oppositionists, and who took the letter to Stalin. Blumkin was arrested. He confessed and was executed forthwith. Another Soviet story was that after seeing Radek, he realized that he was betrayed and therefore gave himself up as a traitor, asking to be shot without delay. Stalin, according to this legend, complied by telling Menzhinskiy to carry out Blumkin's request. According to still other stories, Blumkin did not confess, so a mistress was engaged to learn from him about the oppositionists whom he was still required to meet on behalf of Trotsky. The woman failed, but within a month he was arrested and executed anyway.[19] In view of the fact that all details about Blumkin must have been already known to the GPU from agent Frank's reports, such efforts to trap the man would appear superfluous.

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[17] Blumkin, as a young Social Revolutionary terrorist in 1918, participated in the murder of the German Ambassador Count Mirbach and engaged in other assassination attempts in Kiev. When caught, Trotsky protected him and saved him from imprisonment and possible execution. Thereafter, Blumkin served as a Cheka agent with Trotsky's Red Army units and finally the GPU. According to Trotsky's and his wife's description, this Jewish "activist" was adventurous, intelligent, poetical, and a writer on French military strategy. Mrs. Trotsky's version in Serge, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

[18] Deutscher, *op. cit.*, p. 87, states that in addition Trotsky arranged with Blumkin for shipping anti-Stalin literature to Russia with the help of Turkish smugglers. While Trotsky habitually made and saved a copy of every letter he wrote, his files contain no carbon of the letter he entrusted to Blumkin.

[19] Orlov's account, *op. cit.*, pp. 192–193.

What probably happened was that the GPU had Blumkin under arrest as soon as he arrived in Moscow, whether his visit to Trotsky had been a GPU assignment or not. His execution marked the beginning of the liquidation of active or potential Trotskyists, and killing a GPU agent was consistent with the policy of subsequent Stalinist purges. By 1929 all Trotsky's friends and associates were under suspicion; many of them were in prison and exile. Blumkin owed his life and his outstanding career in the Cheka and the GPU to his protector Trotsky. If he was disgruntled with the regime and had actually expressed himself to that effect to both Menzhinskiy, chief of the GPU, and Trilisser, chief of the GPU Foreign Section, as Trotsky stated in his letter, he was slated for elimination in the first place. Thus, if the GPU purposely sent him to Trotsky with offers to be his courier, it was an act of provocation against the exile and in the meantime a way of incriminating one of the key counterespionage agents scheduled for extinction. This GPU-NKVD technique of getting rid of secret agents no longer useful because of dubious allegiance or because continued service entailed possible exposures was particularly obvious in some other cases, such as that of Valentine Olberg, discussed below.

The Brothers Sobolevicius: Jack Soble and Dr. Robert Soblen [20]

Immediately upon his arrival in Turkey, Trotsky made it known that he wanted to leave because there were no Marxists or oppositionist sympathizers. Claiming that he needed medical treatment, he made strenuous efforts to obtain a German visa. In reality, he wanted Germany as a base for political propaganda. The Left Opposition there, more numerous than anywhere else, constituted the most promising beginnings for a Fourth International. Among the followers in Berlin and Leipzig were leading communists who refused to comply with Stalinist policy. As repeated requests for a visa proved fruitless, Trotsky blamed the misfortune on a pact agreed upon by Stalin and Mueller with regard to the Left Opposition.

As a summary of the reams of correspondence with the comrades in Germany would indicate, Trotsky placed too much confidence in those who were of Russian Jewish origin. The leaders of his movement in

[20] The two Jewish brothers from Lithuania were also known under the Russified surnames Sobolevich, Sobolev, Sobol, and Soble. As GPU penetration agents in the Trotskyist movement, the older one was known as Roman Well (at times signing his letters to Trotsky as R. Schmidt); the younger as A. Senin. In the United States, continuing as Soviet agents, they went under the names Dr. Robert Soblen and Jack Soble, respectively. We shall use the latter names, which are more familiar in the United States.

Germany were predominantly Jewish anyway, but many of them had Austrian and German backgrounds. None of these were uncovered as GPU agents, whereas the Russian Jews in whom Trotsky had an apparently unqualified confidence betrayed him almost invariably. The GPU obviously knew and took advantage of his weakness in this respect. It recruited penetration agents before they joined the Left Opposition or after they had been active in it and inserted them into Trotsky's home and his movement. The Sobolevicius brothers, whose operational names among the Trotskyists were Roman Well, and A. Senin, were Trotsky's most constant correspondents. They were also occasional visitors in Turkey from 1929 to 1932. He probably never realized that they were brothers and remained ignorant of their teamwork for the GPU. Praising each other as devoted comrades and confirming each other's false information, in order to confuse Trotsky and make him disown loyal supporters, they wrecked all efforts toward a unified Left Opposition.[21]

As a first step to ingratiate himself with Trotsky and join the movement, Jack Soble wrote a brief biography of himself. He began with a short account of the Jewish Left Opposition, its strength and loyalty. Regardless of some appearances to the contrary, he wrote, their devotion was given to Trotsky only. For instance, Soble's own wife Myra, a Soviet citizen employed with the Soviet Trade Mission in Berlin, was in reality an ardent oppositionist, her whole heart with Trotsky. Equally devoted were many other Russian Jewish comrades living in Germany. Therefore, Soble reasoned, Trotsky should rely upon this group of Jewish comrades in the promotion of the international Left Opposition. Prompted by this letter, Trotsky wrote an article for the *Clarte*, a Jewish leftist organ. Soble replied with profuse thanks and said that the readers were "all joining Trotsky's movement."

Soble's persistent efforts to ingratiate himself with Trotsky continued throughout 1930. Among the hundreds of letters Trotsky wrote to dozens of leading followers in Berlin there is no indication of inquiries about the man's true loyalty, his income or political activities, just as there was no inquiry about Robert Soblen (Roman Well). No one was disturbed that Soble's wife Myra continued in Soviet employ, especially after Soble intimated that such employment was good cover for secret participation in the Trotskyite group. And no one ever

[21] The elder brother, Robert Soblen (Roman Well), was editor of *Arbeiter Zeitung* in 1927, then *Bolschevistische Einheit*, extreme leftist organs in Leipzig. "A. Senin" returned from Russia to Germany in 1929 to resume his job as correspondent for the *Zeitung*, which he had held previously.

inquired about the purposes of the travels of the Soble couple to Riga and Russia.

The GPU was obviously responsible for Soble's campaign through 1930 to become Trotsky's most trusted representative in Germany. The Soviet service handled him either directly or through his wife. He himself claims that the GPU did not recruit him until 1931, allegedly through blackmail; his wife was kept hostage in Russia. His testimony to that effect [22] was a self-serving exculpation, for there is no indication in Soble's correspondence of the period to show that his wife ever went to Russia alone. From his letters one can deduce that Soble began his work as a penetration agent among the Trotskyists in late 1929. His wife served as the GPU case officer or go-between and possibly also coordinator of Robert Soblen's correspondence with Trotsky. In 1931 Soble's assignment was markedly changed or intensified, and his letters to Trotsky became more lengthy and more frequent. They took on the form of intelligence reports about the movement: its rapid growth, its prospects, and assessments of the reliability of its leaders.

Early in 1931 the GPU assignment for Soble and his brother Soblen, as is evident from their letters, concentrated on the disruption of the unified Trotskyist movement in Germany.[23] Soble's letters first started with accusations against such individual leaders as *Landtag* deputies Landau and Urbahns, both actually Trotsky's loyal supporters. In a confidential manner they were now depicted as saboteurs. Robert Soblen's letters in roundabout fashion confirmed everything Jack Soble had written about the bad faith and treachery of Landau and Urbahns. Trotsky was convinced, and in the end he was obliged to recommend the expulsion of Landau and Urbahns from the movement.[24] A similar game was repeated with regard to other German leaders. The result was disunity, the breaking up of groups, and the expulsion of one opposition leader after another.

To split Landau's group from the movement the brothers not only wrote accusations to Trotsky and Sedov, they incited Landau

[22] Soble's and Jack Lotto's *New York Journal-American* article of 10–20 November 1957, as published by the U.S. Senate Internal Security Committee, Part 87, November 21, 1957, pp. 4875–4889.

[23] In 1930 there were some twenty Trotskyist factions in Germany. These German and Jewish groups began to unify through joint conferences of leaders, such as the Prussian Landtag deputies Kurt Landau, Otto Seipold, Urbahns, and others. It appeared by the end of 1930 that unity, in a single political party, was finally in sight.

[24] An earlier expulsion of Landau's group from the movement was effected in December 1929 as a result of calumnies from another GPU agent, Jacob Frank.

against Trotsky as well. False reports and hostile notes began flowing into Landau's office. A set of documents "from Trotsky's personal file" revealed that the latter was "a vicious schemer who was resorting to dirty GPU methods." For this bit of disinformation Soble engaged a certain Melev, also a GPU man, to visit Landau's office with him. The pair defended Trotsky in such a way as to incense the parliamentarian still further. Landau and his influential group broke with Trotsky forever. To deepen the cleavage, Soble wrote to the International Secretariat in Paris about his and Melev's visit with Landau, who threatened to expose "Trotsky's dirty game." This letter was filled with pious expressions "for solidarity and against fractionalization so prevalent in the German Left Opposition." [25]

The game continued after the expulsion of Landau's group. Calumnies against other leading followers were so planted as to incite one side against the other, at first only in Germany, then in Paris. A group of *Landtag* deputies including Otto Seipold deserted en masse, as did Pierre Naville, when Soble and Soblen initiated rumors through the party press that they were traitors who had turned back to Stalinism. The comrades did not realize until 1933 that Soble, Soblen and a few others were the troublemakers, but even then none suspected them as GPU agents.

Most of Soble's letters in 1931–1932 are obvious copies of what he was submitting to the GPU.[26] His exaggeration in describing the oppositionist growth in glowing terms served his purpose with regard to either recipient. In one report he wrote that in Berlin alone Trotsky's party had 50,000 members. Giving such a high figure to the GPU, he impressed his bosses about his own importance in pursuing the target, while at the other end Trotsky was deluded into false optimism.

Why did Trotsky fail to detect Soble's and Soblen's treachery? When at the end of 1932 the two broke all contact with the Left Opposition, he was convinced that they had only reverted to Stalinism.[27] He could have detected Soble's falsehoods merely by scrutinizing the volumes of correspondence exaggerating the strength of the German movement, but he trusted him more than scores of other activists reporting truthfully on the same groups. The contra-

[25] Dated 1 June 1931 and signed by "Senin" and Melev. See also Note 7 above.

[26] Some of the letters show his inadvertence in copying, such as copying some line or passage twice or apparently missing a line when rewriting from the original.

[27] Trotsky was on a lecture tour in Copenhagen in December 1932, where he accused Senin of capitulating to the enemy, with these words: "You will one day regret what you are doing. I never want to see you again." U.S. Senate, *op. cit.*, p. 4876.

dictions in Soble's financial status, alleged extreme privation and sudden affluence at about the same time, were ignored. His trips to Lithuania and his wife's continued employment with the Soviets should all have caused suspicion. While "in Lithuania," Soble gave the address of Leopold Prasch in Berlin for forwarding mail; no one ever inquired about the identity of Prasch. Upon returning "from Lithuania," Soble was suddenly well-off. Without asking for consent, he wrote from Berlin that he was coming to Turkey for a visit with Trotsky. His sojourn lasted nearly three months. The Agent's channel of reporting from Trotsky's household or during the journeys is not known, but by his own word his communications were regular and direct to Moscow.[28] Trotsky should have been alerted by the questionnaires about his activities in expanding the movement abroad. These comprised a good portion of Soble's reports. But trust and confidence were boundless.

Soble's teamwork with his brother Robert Soblen explains at least in part the success of the game. Soblen wrote even more often than Soble, for he had more inquiries about the movement and its leaders and about Trotsky's channels into Russia. All these questions were ostensibly intended to find ways to ship oppositionist literature.

As editor of the leftist newspapers, Soblen was also the top leader of the Trotskyist groups in Saxony and thus well qualified to produce "proof" in support of Soble's allegations about traitors. While the brothers coordinated the stories, Soblen seldom and Soble never mentioned the other's name, and there was never a suggestion of their blood relationship. The triangular correspondence that developed in 1931 meant that Soble's reports to Trotsky were duly but indirectly confirmed by Soblen, while Trotsky's replies and instructions to Soblen were passed on to Soble as well. Soblen often added postscripts about his unbounded loyalty to Trotsky, asserting, "I cannot play a double game."

Trotsky's son Sedov, in Paris during 1932, began to suspect Soble and Soblen as the comrades responsible for the campaigns against individual oppositionist leaders. He reasoned that Landau and other top comrades were excluded because they were Austrian and German rather than Russian Jews. For this reason Sedov prevented Soblen's selection as delegate to a conference in Paris. Expressing his hurt to Trotsky, Soblen stated that he wanted to resign but decided instead to stay and transfer all future reporting on the German Socialist Party to Comrade Soble. Later Trotsky wrote that the

[28] U.S. Senate, *op. cit.*, p. 4876.

internecine strife among his German followers was caused not by Austrian or German but by Russian Jewish comrades.

Trotsky never inquired about the finances of Soble or Soblen. When Trotsky's house burnt down in Turkey, Soblen immediately offered help, although he himself and his paper were supposedly very hard up. He wrote of an offer of assistance from a comrade in Saxony, a strong workingman who could go to Turkey at once to help guard the household. Trotsky should not worry about expenses; Soblen and Soble could pay for the comrade's trip and maintenance. Soblen repeated the offer several times, but Trotsky failed to reply, perhaps because Soble wrote about the same time that he had no money for postage.

Soble left the Trotskyist movement in December 1932, Soblen the following month. Trotsky's total ignorance about their teamwork could be seen in his letter to Soblen after the break with Soble. He pleaded for Soblen's continued solidarity and a renewal of steady correspondence. Yet both brothers publicly proclaimed themselves as Stalinists and disappeared from the scene, apparently upon GPU orders.

In a letter to Raymond Molinier and the International Secretariat Trotsky demanded Robert Soblen's immediate expulsion from the movement on the grounds that "he had been caught *flagrante delicto* placing obstacles to the progress of the German Left Opposition."

Why the brothers were instructed to reveal themselves as Stalinists and thus terminate their extremely successful work in the Trotskyist movement remained unknown even after they were exposed as GPU-NKVD agents. As "Senin"-Soble wrote in the American press in November 1957, the Kremlin considered his penetration job well done. Even then Soble made no mention of the work of his brother "Well"-Dr. Soblen. They both returned to Russia to prepare for more important espionage tasks in the United States.[29]

Valentin Olberg

Valentin Olberg received more publicity in the Soviet press than any other GPU-NKVD agent engaged in operations at home and abroad. The publicity was of course accorded only when he faced the tribunal posing as a remorseful terrorist and as state witness

[29] See reproduction of the article "How I Spied on U.S. for the Reds," U.S. Senate, *op. cit.*, pp. 4875 to 4889. Dr. Soblen was condemned in the U.S. but fled to Israel in 1962, where he was denied refuge. During a return trip to America, via England, he made two attempts on his own life, the second one successful, in London. See Deutscher, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

against the Trotskyists. His success as a penetration agent was not as great as that of the Sobolevicius brothers. Yet Trotsky and Sedov, ignoring urgent warnings that Olberg was obviously a GPU man, granted him access to facts that fitted into the web of disinformation required for the prosecution in the first purge trial, in 1936. As his project to become Trotsky's secretary failed, his assignment became more varied. Operating as a journalist, he excelled in provocation. Placed by the NKVD as a college history professor (without academic qualifications), he fingered for trial and execution suspected Trotskyites among the staff and student body. Finally, to render the NKVD his fullest measure of service, he posed before the tribunal as a self-confessed conspirator sent by Trotsky and Sedov to kill Stalin. This perjury enhanced the prosecution, and Olberg went free after the trial, as did several other agents with the same task. Assurance of freedom had been given them before they testified, but after the death sentences were pronounced, the NKVD had no further use for Olberg; he and the other agents were executed with the rest of the victims.

Olberg's GPU assignment in Germany began not later than 1927, when he came to Berlin to serve with the Inprekor (a Comintern publication front: *International Press Correspondence*). As his first letters to Trotsky in Turkey indicated, he had left that agency in December 1929, ostensibly because he opposed Stalinism. On the other hand, he insisted that he had been an oppositionist for the previous five years and that he had joined Trotsky's movement in Berlin at the time of his arrival, in 1927. His very first letter to Trotsky, containing such inconsistencies, was an offer or request for a position as his secretary. He listed his professional, linguistical, and ideological qualifications. A few paragraphs described his background: a Latvian Jew by birth; a five years' record in the oppositionist movement, beginning in Latvia; associations with Anton Grylewicz, a leading Trotskyist in Germany; and an experienced writer with the INPREKOR. Describing himself humbly in subsequent letters, Olberg expressed great pride in being able as a young man to participate in the Left Opposition. Each letter noted his achievements and eagerness to learn more, so that he could be of greater use to Trotsky.

Impressed by the obviously very promising young comrade and in urgent need of a qualified secretary, Trotsky wrote to his friend and publisher Franz Pfemfert in Berlin to interview Olberg and render his opinion. The latter's prompt reply was completely negative and replete with observations that Olberg was probably a GPU agent.

Instead of a formal interview, the young man was invited to the home of the Pfemfert couple to meet three other leading Trotskyists: Max Shachtman from America, Pierre Naville from France, and *Landtag* deputy Kurt Landau. While the leaders were in conference, Pfemfert's wife, Anna Ramm, herself a Russian or Latvian, casually questioned Olberg. She found him evasive and false about his origin and occupation. She recognized in him the young man who in the past used to frequent the publishing offices to purchase large quantities of oppositionist literature, for delivery to Inprekor. Pfemfert and the other leaders were alarmed by Olberg's indiscreet questions regarding confidential matters of the opposition's leadership, organization and strength by countries, methods of communication, and the like. Their consensus was that he could not possibly be anything but a GPU agent. The Pfemferts, Shachtman, and Landau wrote to Trotsky separately, all in that vein, warning him to have nothing further to do with Olberg. Pfemfert's letter added:

> . . . The cuckoo knows that the comrades are childishly naive and trustful. We must not underestimate Stalin's horde which would stop at nothing in order to place a spy among our ranks, even if it is for nothing more than having our addresses and information about our work.
>
> . . . Olberg has not been proven in any way, and he is a hysterical, overbearing, and tactless type. Thus, Comrade L. T., I am sorry to tear up your possible hope of getting a Latvian comrade, but I consider it my duty as a comrade and revolutionary to state what I see.
>
> Do not take this lightly: Have nothing to do with Olberg. In 24 hours he would become an unbearable burden and, more probably, he would try to insinuate himself into activities so as to gather reports useful to the GPU.

The urgent warnings from the oppositionist leaders in Germany, France, and the United States impressed Trotsky enough to prevent his accepting Olberg as secretary but not enough to end the correspondence with him. The contents of his letters to the "young comrade" became to a large extent operational, telling Olberg everything he asked for. Both Trotsky and his son Sedov, after May 1930, were supplying the Latvian with names and addresses of leading followers in Russia, the Baltic countries, and elsewhere. Trotsky's letters in no instance indicated doubts in the loyalty of the man or his wife, who also joined the movement. When the letters got "lost," as Olberg alleged, or when other incidents occurred that would have

alerted almost anyone else, Trotsky wrote about his concern but kept up the same trustful communication, for somehow Olberg was always able to explain things promptly and convincingly. The mail, he wrote, was received and delivered to such and such a comrade. As a result, the comrade in question became suspect, just as Olberg intended. Or the discrepancies were caused by the miserable financial circumstances among the followers. Trotsky was apparently satisfied with the explanations. He sent him 98 pieces of correspondence in 1931, a volume equal to that addressed to Soble.

Olberg's role in the latter months of his association with Trotsky resembled that of Soble in other ways as well. He became an intelligence reporter on the movement, but his elaborate reports look like doctored copies of what he was submitting to the GPU boss. Into his longhand copying crept omissions and repetitions of lines and passages, similar to the oddities in Soble's papers for Trotsky.

Olberg never failed to weave lengthy questionnaires into the reports. He asked hundreds of questions about the movement, the couriers, the methods of shipping Trotsky's tracts to Russia, the addresses of confidants by countries, the mails expedited. Above all, he had made constant requests for new instructions. In a letter stating that he had no address for communicating with Arkhangelsk, Olberg confirmed the receipt of eight names and addresses of comrades in Russia. For reasons not known, he repeated this confirmation in an identical letter. Perhaps the copy had been intended for the GPU.

Olberg's correspondence and all record of him ended in March 1931. Trotsky apparently made no note about this termination. He did not mention, as he did in the case of the Sobolevicius brothers, that Olberg capitulated to Stalinism. In Trotsky's statements to the Dewey commission, however, it is noted that Olberg returned to Russia and soon thereafter went to Czechoslovakia, where the GPU launched a campaign to expel Trotskyist emigres, especially their German leader Anton Grylewicz, as agents of the Gestapo.

In 1935 Olberg was again recalled to the Soviet Union to serve as a provocateur against the Trotskyists at the Gorky Pedagogical Institute. He was supplied with Honduran citizenship.[30] The Consul

[30] Honduran citizenship was arranged by the Soviets for other emigres to the United States. See the case of Richard H. Abrey (Ryszard Henryk Abramovicz) before the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, *Hearings*, Part 50, 1957, p. 3047 ff. David Yulievich Dallin, author of *Soviet Espionage* (who in 1941 married Lilia Estrinanie Ginsberg, discussed below), also came to the United States with a Honduran passport, issued in Berlin on 1 July 1933. Dallin at the time was a Soviet citizen and as late as 1939 he contributed writings to *Het Volk* which were favorable to Stalin. None of the holders of Honduran passports ever saw that country.

General of that country, Lucas Parades, stationed in Berlin, made the arrangements when visiting Prague, where an intermediary named Benda delivered the documents. Before the purge tribunal Olberg testified in 1936 that Sedov supplied him with the Honduran passport and 13,000 Czech crowns for the purchase of citizenship, so that he could go to Russia to kill Stalin.[31]

In Moscow Olberg was first assigned to the GPU political department, which was then under the direction of Molchanov.[32] In the drive to suppress Trotskyist tendencies in Soviet universities the latter assigned him, as an expert, to act under cover as a history professor at the Gorky Institute. However, both the academic staff and the local CP secretary, Yelin, who controlled it, found Olberg unqualified to teach history or anything else. In the interview he gave contradictory responses; he was not a Party member, as required of all the staff; he had no record of Party education, or of any previous employment. He was not even a Soviet citizen but a Latvian who had entered the USSR with a Honduran passport. The Institute's rejection was immediately overruled, however, by Molchanov and his boss, Yezhov. Olberg became a historian overnight, while all those who objected, and an even larger number of "Trotskyists" whom he reported, were executed.[33]

In addition to Olberg, the NKVD provided the prosecution with two other agents, Fritz David and Berman Yurin. All were shot within 24 hours of the verdict. Because he was the only one whose proof of personal contact with Trotsky, Sedov, and the movement abroad was well documented, Olberg served as the most important witness for prosecutor Vishinsky. The Honduran passport and the money, which he claimed to have obtained from Sedov, with instructions to go to Moscow to kill Stalin, were most direct proofs of his complicity which he fully admitted and elaborated upon in conformity with NKVD instructions. For this reason Olberg, the "would-be assassin hired by Trotsky to kill Stalin," received the greatest publicity in the Soviet press.[34] The proceedings of the Dewey commission in Mexico exposed

[31] Trotsky-Sedov files belie such allegations by claiming that the Honduran citizenship and funds were obviously supplied by the GPU.

[32] Probably Georgiy Aleksandrovich, appointed in November 1935, and reportedly shot in the third Moscow trial.

[33] With the exception of comments on the spurious Honduran citizenship and passport, Trotsky's records contain no information on the above incidents. The story on Olberg's placement and role at the Gorky Institute is given in detail by Orlov, *op. cit.*, Chapter IV.

[34] Sayers and Kahn, *op. cit.*, p. 284 ff., give the Soviet version of Olberg as Trotsky's terrorist.

the complex fabrication of the agent's testimony,[35] but Trotsky's depositions about him again attested to an irrational lack of security.

Etienne [36] *and Lilia:* [37] *Mark Zborovsky and Lilia Dallin*

Much is known about the involvement of this pair of alleged Trotskyists in the NKVD's maze of operations in France, but many facts best known to the Soviets have yet to be revealed. The papers of Trotsky and Sedov, who were ignorant of their true allegiance, contain dozens of folders about them. Among these are documents accusing the two as Stalin's spies and warnings from European comrades against them, though these contained more suspicion than concrete proof. Trotsky preferred not to believe them and, instead of investigating, drew Etienne and Lilia ever closer into his confidence. After Sedov's death the two co-workers replaced him for several years in publishing the *Bulletin of Opposition*, the organ for disseminating ideological guidance to the groups of followers around the world. Trotsky urgently needed researchers for his endless tracts and polemics. Above all, he could hardly communicate with the Paris Secretariat of the International without trusted go-betweens and the accommodation addresses they provided. He knew that Etienne and Lilia were well qualified to assume such assorted responsibilities and, as expressed in many of his notes, he was sure of their unfailing loyalty.

Although he told only a small part of his story, Etienne himself eventually confessed that he was the principal Soviet penetration

[35] John Dewey, *Not Guilty*. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1938. Chapter XIII.

[36] Etienne's original name was Mordka Zborowski (Sborowski, Zborofski and Zborwsky); his GPU-NKVD code name was Mark. Born in Uman, Russia, in 1908, he lived in Poland after he was 11 years old and had been a member of Socialist Zionist groups and the CP since boyhood. From 1928 to 1937 he attended the Universities of Rouen and Paris, majoring in sociology and anthropology. For immigration to the United States he obtained an affidavit from Harry Liverman, allegedly a native of Uman, who claimed to have known the Zborowski family. It was discovered, however, that Liverman's affidavit contained falsehoods similar to those he made in affidavits for others, including (see below) Lilia Ginsberg's brother Raphael and her subsequent husband David J. Dallin. When these affidavits were submitted to the immigration authorities, it was found that Liverman was in correspondence with a Maurice Stern, a suspect Soviet agent. Another 1941 affidavit for Zborowski stated that he had a brother and sister in Moscow, while on other occasions he asserted he had no relatives in Russia.

[37] Lilia's original name was Lola Ginsberg. She was born in Liepaja, Latvia, in 1898, and lived there until 1914, then studied law in Moscow. In 1923, she emigrated to Berlin where she married Comrade Estrin. The couple professed to be Mensheviks, then Leninists and Left Oppositionists. In 1933 they moved to Paris. In 1939 she still claimed Soviet citizenship and had apparently encountered no difficulty in extending her Soviet passport annually.

agent in the Trotskyite movement.[38] Lilia never confessed anything of the sort and was never effectively challenged about it. Trotsky's files, on the other hand, threw much light on the role of the two. The "Siamese twins," as Lilia referred to herself and Etienne, were "inseparable, neither undertaking anything without doing it together." In their weekly letter to Mexico, between Sedov's death in February 1938 and Trotsky's death, they were forever whitewashing each other. Shrewd and inventive, conspiratorial, and hard working, they never defended themselves directly by denying charges with arguments and alibis. Instead they casually put in a good word for each other, thus producing indirect and convincing evidence of loyalty and diverting suspicion toward the accusers themselves.

The services of Etienne and Lilia at the center of Trotskyite activities stretched across a period of six years, 1934 to 1940. During this time the GPU-NKVD teams abroad killed several of Trotsky's organization aides, while these two, the most important to Trotsky and Sedov, remained unharmed. The archive contains no indication that Soviet agents ever kept them under surveillance or threatened them; yet the pair invariably mentioned the dangers to themselves when other prominent comrades were reported abducted or murdered.

The records on Etienne show that his university studies in France extended over ten years but give no indication of adequate employment or other income for himself and family. It is possible therefore that the Soviet services kept him on the payroll throughout the period. In 1930 he became secretary of the Russian emigré Union of Returnees[39] in which he had served as a spotter and recruiter of emigrés to repatriate. First he associated with the French oppositionists; then he concentrated on the small Russian Section of the Fourth International, headed by Leon Sedov, whom he met in 1934. He promptly professed ardent anti-Stalinism and assiduously cultivated the new friendship. Sedov introduced him to Lilia Estrin, secretary to Boris Nikolaevsky at the International Institute of Social History. Continuing as secretary for the Union of Returnees even after that office was exposed as Soviet-subsidized, Etienne did odd jobs for Lilia and made himself indispensable to Sedov by helping in the shop where the *Bulletin* was published. After 1935 he was available to Sedov at all times but was never paid for his work. His friendship, loyalty to the cause, and

[38] U.S. Senate Committee of the Judiciary, *Hearings*, March 2, 1956.

[39] The Union of Returnees was established in its French name as the *Bureau de l'Union de Repatriement des Russes*, at 12 rue de Buci in Paris. It was known among the Russian emigres simply as the *Vozvrashchentsi*, a welfare-type organization designed to help unfortunate emigres to return to the USSR. It was an NKVD cover.

exceptional ability gained him the absolute confidence first of Sedov, and then of Trotsky. His NKVD case officer, to whom he said he reported daily, was in the Soviet mission in the rue de Grenelle.[40]

Etienne's true allegiance was plainly suspect because of his continued affiliation with the Soviet-controlled Union and the vague sources of his income.[41] As for Lilia, her political past and other circumstances could similarly have provided ample grounds for suspicion. Admitting that she had been a Menshevik revolutionary, then a Leninist, she professed Trotskyism while she lived with her husband in Berlin; yet neither name appears anywhere on the rosters of Trotsky followers. The annual extension of her Soviet passport and her unexplained trips to Russia, although she was publicly known as a prominent aide of Sedov and Trotsky, was the most obvious cause for doubt.[42]

Lilia's name first appeared among Trotsky's records in a letter from Sedov to his father, who was then in Honefoss, Norway, and asking for a Russian secretary. Sedov wrote that the "Menshevik typist" was willing to come for a month or six weeks, providing she could stay in Trotsky's household and was paid 1200 to 1500 francs plus room and board. Assuring his father of her skill, he mentioned a string of security problems in hiring Lilia. Her joining the household would alert the Deuxieme Bureau and she would probably talk, thus creating the risk of blowing the entire Trotsky system. If hired, she should have no access to the archive and political matters. Lilia was not hired for the temporary job, but this episode marked the beginning of her permanent affiliation with Sedov. She obtained a full-time job with Boris Nikolaevsky's Institute. She and her husband lived in an apartment full of unemployed relatives, including her brother, Dr.

[40] According to his admission before the U.S. Senate, Etienne reported to the Soviets daily. As secretary he was daily in the office of the Union of Returnees, but there is no record of the frequency of his contacts with the Soviets, except that Orlov wrote that Etienne constantly visited the Soviet mission. If Etienne did not exaggerate in his story to the Senate (which is also possible, for his testimony reads as if he were proud of his job), his transmission of *daily* reports could have been in part through some go-between among the *Vozvrashchentsi* officials.

[41] He married Rivka (Regina) Levi in 1938. She came to Paris with her parents, from Lodz, but they moved on to Palestine. As a Stalinist herself she knew of her husband's services for the NKVD. Their only child, George, was born in Paris.

[42] In 1939, when stopping in New York on her way to visit Trotsky, she still claimed Soviet citizenship. Victor Serge, one of her accusers, said she had made mysterious trips to Russia. In her letters to Trotsky she stated that her absences from Paris were only for vacations, but her dossier shows that she came to Paris in 1933 directly from Moscow, not from Berlin as she claimed in response to the accusations in Paris.

Ralph Ginsberg, and his wife, who used the name of Dr. Fanny Trachtenberg (or Tranchenka, as she was known to the Russian emigres). The two doctors had no license to practice in France, and Lilia's wages of 1500 francs a month was for years the only overt income in the household.

Once established in Sedov's home office, Lilia wrote an average of two or three letters a week to Trotsky and his secretary, Sara Weber. She described herself as a human dynamo, capable of working on two full-time jobs, seven days a week, without respite or vacation. This self-praise, not unwarranted, served the purpose of making herself indispensable from the Trotsky-Sedov standpoint. "I work like an ox," she wrote to Mrs. Trotsky, "from early morning to late into the night, and I am content. My job (with the Institute) is interesting. After it, I work for the *Bulletin* and other (Trotskyite) matters which keep me up until one o'clock at night. At seven in the morning I am up again . . . I need no Sundays, no respite. I am a dynamic person, I need action."

Lilia's voluntary and unpaid work in Sedov's establishment began in 1935, gradually, first as proofreader for the Russian *Bulletin*, then as research worker for Trotsky's writings and also Sedov's secretary handling correspondence with Trotsky and the leaders of various groups of followers in Europe and America. Her particular interest was in Russian Jewish groups in Paris. She "knew everybody," including such NKVD agents as Jack Soble and Robert Soblen (the brothers Sobolevicius).

When he introduced Lilia to Etienne in his *Bulletin's* printshop, Sedov did not know that they knew each other, for Etienne had already done some odd jobs for the Institute. The two developed a close friendship when Etienne began contributing articles for the *Bulletin*.[43] They became a team which met regularly to manage the Russian Section of the Fourth International. Sedov issued directives as instructed by his father; Lilia attended to secretarial work, research and communications; and Etienne was the go-between in organizing groups of followers. Lilia and Etienne worked with great zeal in collecting testimonies of various Trotskyist leaders needed for the presentation to the Dewey Commission in Mexico.

Etienne and Lilia perfected their teamwork for the NKVD, especially when, as this cooperation developed, rumors started circulating about their disloyalty. Several European leaders in the movement accused them as Soviet spies, but the fingers pointed to

[43] Under the pen name "E. Tienov" or mere "T".

one at a time, and they "cleared" each other. Etienne was instructed to investigate the gossip against Lilia; he proved her innocent. Lilia in turn exonerated Etienne so convincingly that Sedov thereafter confided in him more than in anyone else in his circle of comrades. He let Etienne keep the key to his mailbox. Letters got lost and addresses had to be changed—but Etienne kept the key.

In November, 1936, Sedov made an agreement with Boris Nikolaevsky for the transfer of a portion of Trotsky's files to the Institute for safekeeping. Fifteen cases were delivered in secrecy, with only Lilia and Etienne knowing about the transaction. The following night burglars used a blowtorch to break into the cellar. They took no valuables, only Trotsky's files. The investigating police concluded that it was obviously a GPU job. But who could have informed them about the delivery to the Institute? The police wanted to question Etienne and Lilia, but Sedov vouched for them as being absolutely above all suspicion. Rumors circulated among the comrades that Lilia was involved. In defense against one of the accusers, Victor Serge, she wrote to Trotsky that she feared she was being accused because she had separated the more important documents from the boxes to take them to her home for sorting. On the other hand, Sedov stated that the more important documents were taken by *Etienne* to *his* home, for safekeeping. Etienne was obviously apprehensive that the police might uncover him as the culprit; Jeanne Martin, Sedov's mistress, pleading with Etienne to appear in court, felt it necessary to assure him that no question about the burglary would be raised. In 1956 he admitted that he took part in the burglary.[44]

After Sedov's death Etienne and Lilia handled most of Trotky's correspondence for Europe. They were a transmission belt for communications with the Fourth International in Paris, the leaders of oppositionist groups in various countries, Soviet defectors, and other figures of importance to the movement, as well as the Paris courts. They knew who suspected them of disloyalty and when and how to counteract. They wrote many skillful letters to Trotsky and his wife. Etienne's mail was businesslike; they showed him as a dependable successor to Sedov in managing the affairs of the movement, and they complimented Lilia unstintingly for her sacrifices. The letters of Lilia, many addressed to Mrs. Trotsky, were replete with sympathy, adulation for the family, and unlimited devotion to the cause. Between the lines, she seldom failed to insert piously worded barbs against

[44] U.S. Senate, Judiciary Committee *Hearings*, March 2, 1956. Exhibit No. 14, p. 131 ff.

Jeanne Martin, the late Sedov's mistress, who openly talked about Lilia and Etienne as traitors. The reports against other accusers were filled with countercharges aimed at several genuine followers. Their letters, based on ostensible investigations of who the NKVD agents might be, were usually signed jointly: E. or Et. for Etienne; Lola, L., Lil., Paulsen, or P. for Lilia.

For some months, March to June of 1938, Trotsky seemed somewhat sceptical about the pair's sincerity. It was not only the shock of his son's sudden death that made him stop corresponding with them. Jeanne Martin wrote numerous letters about her conviction that Sedov did not die from natural causes. The distressed widow voiced anger against Lilia and Etienne for refusing to make statements for the court then conducting the inquest into Sedov's death. Trotsky, after a period of silence, demanded an explanation. Lilia responded with a flood of letters containing endless condolences and chatter about Sedov's goodness, but always in such a way as to portray her own fine character and devotion. In response to Jeanne's accusations, Lilia and Etienne engaged a number of other comrades to write that Jeanne was a nervous wreck, irresponsible and full of hate without cause. Thus they succeeded in convincing Trotsky that they had been unjustly maligned and that the accusations against them had been inspired by one source only, the NKVD. Their efficient editing of the *Bulletin* prompted him to write a rare letter of praise.

Trotsky's affirmation of absolute confidence in Etienne and Lilia came at a time when rumors about the two being Soviet agents were most persistent. Talk circulated that Henk Sneevliet (Maring), the Dutch oppositionist leader, referred to Etienne as that "filthy Polish Jew spying for the GPU." Victor Serge told several comrades of his suspicion of both Etienne and Lilia. The pair informed Trotsky about the gossip before anyone else could. The reply was that comrade Etienne must take the initiative in setting up a commission, in concurrence with the International Secretariat, to put a stop to such calumnies. Trotsky wrote to Etienne: "Take most energetic initiative to push the accusers to the wall as soon as possible."

The rumor that the pair were Soviet spies helped them finally in gaining greater prestige and the absolute confidence of Trotsky. Replacing a commission, Etienne himself undertook the investigation to prove that he was no spy and that Lilia was innocent.

In this fantastic paradox the two interviewed a number of comrades and prepared a lengthy statement of the results. The reports of the "investigation" satisfied Trotsky as conclusive evidence that Etienne and Lilia were innocent victims of the troublemakers spreading false

rumors on behalf of the NKVD. His subsequent letters contained frequent praise for the pair. He instructed them that his future mail would be intended for both, regardless of the name in the address. Even if he was not in charge of correspondence, Etienne was performing the important tasks. The "investigation" moved Trotsky to take still other measures. He broke relations with Jeanne Martin, the most persistent accuser of the pair. From the NKVD standpoint this break was a major victory, for it meant a split between the Secretariat and the French Section of the Fourth International. Jeanne's first husband, Raymond Molinier, and his brother Henri happened to be the key figures in the Secretariat and the French Section. Trotsky's break with Jeanne estranged the Moliniers and the majority of other French followers, but his decision was irrevocable.[45] Lilia and Etienne had convinced him, after a long campaign, that Jeanne and the "French clique" were working with the enemies.

From then on Trotsky wrote more letters of commendation for Etienne. In response to Lilia's offers, he invited her to visit him in Mexico in May 1939.

NKVD Surveillance and Ambush—Death of the Son

After the first great purge trial in Moscow Trotsky's son Leon Sedov was under constant surveillance in France. It was not enough for the NKVD to have Etienne in the young comrade's entourage; the separate surveillance team it set up was to follow the quarry and his associates in all their movements.

Considerable information on the organization of this surveillance came to light indirectly, from the interrogation of suspects in the Reiss murder case by the Examining Tribunal in Paris during January 1938.[46] Sergei Efron, posing as a political refugee in the Soviet-subsidized Union of Returnees, where Etienne served as secretary, organized the surveillance team and designated Dmitry Smirensky[47] as its leader. The latter was recruiting agents as early as 1935, ostensibly for innocuous jobs but obviously as a matter of testing. All

[45] Note, however, that according to Deutscher, Trotsky's break with Molinier and their subsequent feud dated from Molinier's establishment of his dissident newspaper, *La Commune*, in 1935, *op. cit.*, p. 295–7. At that time, Trotsky, was in Norway.

[46] Ignace Reiss, an important NKVD defector who tried to affiliate himself with the Left Opposition and Sedov, was murdered by an NKVD assassination team at Chablandes near Lausanne. The Paris court acted upon a request from the Swiss Government for the extradition of Lydia Grozovskaya, her husband at the Soviet mission in Paris, and a number of other suspect accomplices.

[47] Smirensky also used the names of Frenchman Maurice Rollin and Czech Vaclav Chadek.

agents, however, had to be approved by Efron, who met the prospects in the home of another Soviet contact named Pozniakov. Pierre Ducomet, a photographer and detective, and Renate Steiner were hired in that way in 1935. In 1936 the surveillance team settled in a Paris apartment at 28 rue Lacretelle, opposite the building in which Sedov lived. The team of three—Smirensky, Ducomet, and Steiner—was joined by two officers from the Union of Returnees, Pierre Schwarzenberg and Vadim Kondratiev. There were still others whose true names the testimonies failed to produce.

The surveillance agents, as it turned out, formed a support group for the NKVD mobile team and in fact several among them "graduated" to become operatives in the team. Thus, for instance, Renate Steiner was sent on an urgent assignment in 1936 to go with Efron and Smirensky to Antibes in southern France. She had no knowledge of what the hurried mission might be but was told upon arrival to obtain room and board in Villa Marie Pension near Juan les Pins. After registering she was given a full description of a couple at the pension whom she was to keep under constant surveillance. She reported to Smirensky daily. Renate struck up a personal acquaintance with the couple and learned from them that they were Leon Sedov and his mistress Jeanne Martin. Being of Russian Jewish descent herself, she developed a close friendship and spent most of the time with the vacationing couple. Sedov's letters, never expressing any suspicion, described the new friend as a "pleasant, young, timid and insignificant female."

The intense surveillance by Renate may have been intended as a preliminary to an attempt on Sedov's life,[48] but more likely the girl substituted for Etienne and other watchers in Paris who could not join the couple while vacationing.

Steiner was detailed to another team dispatched from rue Lacretelle to Mulhouse in January 1937. This time the purpose was not merely surveillance. It appears that the girl was intended as a decoy: a friend who happened to be in town, and who would again find a chance for a friendly meeting, and who would finally lure the quarry to the mobile team. Efron was preparing for Sedov's assassination. The number of agents in this gang has not been recorded, but Renate's testimony in court showed that Efron was in charge and that she was in Smirensky's team with another agent called "Bob." The three had lodgings in different hotels and received instructions on shifts for covering railway station arrivals. She was then told that Sedov was

[48] According to Isaac Deutscher, Sedov stated that Steiner had urged him with strange persistence to go with her on sailing trips. *Op. cit.*, pp. 389–390.

expected in Mulhouse. Her first job was to observe his company, the lodging taken, and other particulars. Smirensky would tell her what to do next.

Sedov handled the preparations for the Mulhouse trip with considerable secrecy; [49] yet the NKVD could have learned about it from several sources, not only from Etienne but also from a number of "lost" letters containing that information. Efron's group, therefore, was ready well in advance. It had waited in Mulhouse for four days when the leader suddenly left, then called everyone back to Paris. Sedov must have learned something about the danger in Mulhouse and decided not to go. After his death both Lilia and Etienne wrote to Trotsky that he cancelled the trip on account of illness, but other records show that he was in good health then.

It was at this time that Sedov finally realized he was under constant surveillance. He knew that the occupant of the building across the street was Smirensky with his crowd of "White Guards," but he learned this fact only after they murdered Reiss. Even then, as the records show, he took no precautions. He observed in his notes of mid-1937 that he was no longer followed. As was learned later, the NKVD had diverted all its assets in France to the hunt for Reiss.

Leon Sedov's health through the year prior to his death was described in two diametrically different versions. According to Lilia and Etienne, who wrote after his death, he was constantly ill. Etienne explained that Sedov could not travel to Mulhouse and then to Reims [50] because of illness, and meetings with the Dutch Trotskyist leader Henk Sneevliet and Reiss had to be postponed for the same reason. Lilia confirmed all that (but only after Sedov could no longer dispute her) by writing repeatedly that Sedov was sick all the time in 1937. On the other hand, Sedov never complained about his health but wrote that he was vacationing—at the time of his malady, according to Etienne. Others wrote about Sedov's sturdy nature in carrying

[49] The trip was for the purpose of seeing a Swiss lawyer in a suit which Trotsky was instituting against several pro-Stalinist newspapers for calumny and public defamation.

[50] Sedov intended to go to Reims to meet Ignace Reiss and Henk Sneevliet. Etienne handled the correspondence between Sneevliet and Sedov; by delaying the mail or purposely misinterpreting Sneevliet's requests he succeeded in wrecking several plans for a rendezvous. Tired of waiting, Sedov decided to do a little vacationing with his mistress, Jeanne Martin. Sneevliet, not knowing that Etienne had kept his cable instead of delivering it to Sedov, went to Reims, together with Victor Serge. The mobile NKVD team killed Reiss at Chablandes before his scheduled departure for Reims. The fact that Sneevliet took Serge with him to Reims was used by Etienne and Lilia as a major argument in convincing Trotsky that the two were in collusion with the NKVD.

on under immense strain and in privation. Only Klement once mentioned that Sedov had headaches from overwork and the realization of the danger to his life. That note, however, was intended to impress Trotsky with the need to remove his son to Mexico and safety; it did not imply that Sedov was sick. Sedov's mistress, Jeanne Martin, who lived and vacationed with him, never mentioned any illness of Sedov in her letters. Sedov himself wrote that he was enjoying excellent health and was not inclined toward despair, despite the persecution. If death should come suddenly, as he put it, responsibility for it would be lodged in Stalin's camp.

As stated in Jeanne Martin's testimony at the inquests, Sedov fell ill on 15 January of what the doctors diagnosed as appendicitis but was well again by 20 January. Abdominal pains recurred on 8 February; by noon of the following day Jeanne, Lilia, and her sister-in-law, Dr. Trachtenberg (Tranchenka) decided to take him to the Mirabeau Clinic, a small Russian hospital owned and directed by Boris Zhirmunsky.[51] As he was taken by the ambulance, arranged for by Etienne, Lilia allegedly went for the money needed for hospitalization.[52] She returned to meet Etienne in front of the building in rue Lacretelle—where the NKVD surveillance team was watching. Etienne's version in the notes for Trotsky differed in some details. He wrote that Dr. Trachtenberg arranged for the Mirabeau Clinic with Dr. Adolf Simkov because "there were no Russians in that hospital and Sedov was registered there under the name of Monsieur Martin in order to hide his identity."

Etienne and Lilia would have been contradicted in their explanations that the clinic was chosen because it had no Russian personnel, or in their defense of individuals suspected of implication in what happened, if other comrades in Paris had known what they were writing to Trotsky. Zhirmunsky came from Russia in 1928 with ample funds to open a hospital in Paris and live in luxurious apartments, maintained separately for himself, his wife, and his daughter. He was considered a Bolshevik sympathizer, but Lilia protested against such assertions from the police, assuring Trotsky that the doctor was apolitical. Dr. Simkov, who held a medical degree from Geneva, became medical director of the clinic in 1931. He was originally from Kiev. Lilia maintained at length that Simkov too was apolitical, despite the fact

[51] Described in *Battalla* of 26 January 1937 as a Socialist with Stalinist learnings.

[52] In her accounts to Trotsky, Lilia did not mention where she got the money. Sedov knew Lilia and her large unemployed family had no money, but she assured him not to worry about it. As on other occasions, Lilia was able to produce cash in emergencies.

that he kept active membership in the Mechnikov Medical Society, a group deserted by all Russian doctors of non-Jewish origin because of its pro-Soviet orientation. Dr. Faum Trachtenberg (Fanny Tranchenka), without a license to practice, still maintained working relations with the clinic and initially took care of Sedov as a friend of Lilia's. Among the nurses there was only one Russian, Helena Eismond, née Rogina, of Leningrad. She took care of the patient more often than any other nurse. The surgeon who operated on Sedov twice was Dr. Marcel Thalheimer, the only one of the medics at the clinic not listed as of Russian origin.

Keeping Sedov in the hospital as Monsieur Martin was Etienne's and Lilia's idea. They wrote to Trotsky that not even the doctors, except Faum Trachtenberg, knew the true identity at first. She did tell Dr. Simkov, but even he allegedly did not know that the patient was registered as M. Martin. Etienne and Lilia wrote that the surgeon, Dr. Marcel Thalheimer, was told in order to impress him when the second operation was decided upon as a desperate chance to save the patient. The key followers in the International, among them close friends of Trotsky and Sedov, were to be told nothing except that Sedov was temporarily away from home. The incognito and the selection of the "non-Russian" clinic, Lilia and Etienne wrote Trotsky, were measures to protect Sedov from the NKVD. In reality, of course, it would have been much safer if the hospital had been French, and the doctors, and for that matter the public, had been told the patient's identity.

Etienne's and Lilia's presentations to Trotsky insisted that death came of natural causes as a result of post-operational complications. They received full support in this version from medical and autopsy statements. Only Jeanne Martin persisted in her accusations of foul play. On the basis of her appeals, seconded by French comrades, especially lawyers Jean Rous and Gerard Rosenthal, Trotsky demanded and obtained a grant for two inquests after the original post-mortem investigation and statements.

The first operation on Sedov was performed successfully on 9 February. It was described as "removal of an intestinal occlusion." For four days the patient felt well, and recovery was normal according to all statements of doctors and visitors, Jeanne, Lilia, and Etienne. He joked and engaged in discussions of political matters. The abrupt change, which the doctors could not explain, occurred during the night of 13–14 February. No one was with the patient to know what happened. Of the visitors, Jeanne had spent more time with the patient than anyone else; she said that Sedov felt well in the evening before

the relapse. Lilia, too, saw the patient daily, while Etienne made frequent trips to the clinic for talks with him and Lilia together.

Upon seeing the patient in the morning after the relapse, Dr. Thalheimer was unable to explain the abrupt crisis. He was of the opinion that there could be a case of "auto intoxication," but did not rule out other possibilities.[53] A second operation was decided upon as offering a slim chance of survival, but the patient died the following day.

The medical doctors, in unison but by individual depositions, corroborated the theme that death came from natural causes. The court accepted the staff's statements, which were unanimous on the following points:

> Sedov's identity became known to the personnel only after his death.
>
> No person other than those introduced by Mme. Martin, who was known as the patient's wife, contacted Sedov in the hospital. (*This was obviously false, but Lilia and Etienne refused to testify or reveal to the court that they had visited the patient daily.*)
>
> No incident, visit, or event supported the supposition that death could have come from causes other than those resulting from illness and the two surgical operations.
>
> Finally, none of the persons assigned to keep watch over Mr. Sedov could be considered from a political viewpoint, because none of them indicated any political interest or activity.

In their letters to Trotsky, Lilia and Etienne assured him of the staff's veracity, stating repeatedly that there could have been no agent who harmed the patient. It was at this stage that Lilia wrote of Sedov's constant illness through 1937, implying thereby that he was too debilitated to convalesce, particularly after the second operation. In the same reassuring letters Lilia invariably included hostile remarks against Jeanne Martin, the "neurasthenic with her lunatic imagination about foul play . . . who sees the GPU everywhere."

Despite the court's acceptance of the medical and laboratory depositions, the widowed mistress remained convinced that Sedov was murdered by the NKVD. Demanding additional inquests, she begged in vain both Etienne and Lilia to appear before the examining judge

[53] Jeanne Martin insisted at the inquest that Dr. Thalheimer stated such an opinion to her immediately after seeing the patient. Thalheimer, however, denied at the inquest that he ever mentioned the possibility of poisoning. His and all other doctors' replies to the investigators were unaminous in that the death came as a consequence of post-operational complications.

to make statements and to answer questions. At Jeanne's prodding, Trotsky submitted appeals for additional inquests. These were granted, but all further investigation turned out to be a recapitulation of the first one, which ruled out all other possibilities except death from natural causes.

Jeanne undertook considerable investigation on her own. Before the fatal relapse she had insisted upon the removal of the Russian nurse, Helena Eismond, because in his delirious state after the first operation the patient spoke Russian and the nurse induced him to keep on talking in that language. The clinic refused to remove the woman from attendance.

In general, the establishment was hostile to Jeanne's probing. She challenged the clinic's version of what had happened during the fatal night. A story was formulated that in the middle of the night, unattended, Sedov jumped out of bed, ran to the adjoining room, picked up an orange, peeled and ate it, then fell on a bed in that room, where he was picked up and carried back to his room. Questioning the nurses and inspecting the adjoining rooms where Sedov had allegedly roamed, Jeanne spoke to the patient in the room where Sedov had supposedly stopped for the orange, had eaten it, and had thrown the peels on the floor. The patient said that he had seen nothing of the kind but had rung for the nurse when he saw the door left ajar. She was told further that Sedov must have gone through several rooms before he collapsed. She was particularly interested in questioning the man in the adjoining room, and another young man occupying a second bed in that same room whom she had noticed in passing during Sedov's stay. But the two had left, and the clinic would not reveal their identities or why or when they were admitted to occupy the three-bed room next to Sedov's. She was therefore suspicious not only of poisoning but of manhandling which might have caused the death. In her statements she recalled that on 14 February, when she visited Sedov, he uttered certain words that she dismissed at the time, for he was too weak to be allowed to talk. He said: "You know what they did to me last night." Jeanne began to think later about what Sedov wanted to tell her. She would have asked him but never had a chance to do so.

In her statements asking for a third inquest, Jeanne posed many questions for determining whether criminal action was the cause of death. In her first three statements, for the second inquest, she gave reasons explaining who should be questioned and along what lines with regard to possible poisoning. Her set of thirteen questions concerned the two autopsies. Did these include examination of the nervous

system and a search for possible lesions caused by chemical substances introduced by mouth or injection? What were the causes of a purple patch that she had observed on the abdomen of the patient before he died? Were searches made of the spots on the body where injections had been administered, and were those marks of injections at the spots usually used for medical injections? Were there traces of any mass of microbes injected? In this set of queries, Jeanne repeated that Sedov had always been of sound health. None of her professionally worded questions was answered specifically but rather in a summary manner which took into account the medical depositions and laboratory reports denying all traces of poisoning.

Trotsky protested the report of this inquest to Judge Pagenel by stating that the examiners had followed the "line of least resistance" in attributing death to natural causes. He explained to the judge the NKVD methods of poisoning and summed up his long request for still further investigation by writing that Sedov's illness and surgery offered the NKVD extremely favorable chances for intervention.

Trotsky's letters for the examining judge insisted that the assumption of natural death must be dropped, for "the organizers of the crime were GPU agents, pseudo-officials of the Soviet mission in Paris. The executioners were agents engaged from among White Russian emigres. . . . The GPU could not fail in placing its agents in a Russian clinic or in the immediate vicinity of that clinic." The court did not respond to Trotsky's appeal but reopened the case in answer to Jeanne Martin's pleading, which contained contentions more specific than Trotsky's general accusations. She claimed that former investigations had been inadequate and that the clinic's stories about what happened that night were contradictory and at best only guess work about what the patient did before he was found by the nurses on duty. She asked why the two patients in the next room were never questioned, and why the director of the clinic, Dr. Zhirmunsky, refused to reveal their names, so that they too could be questioned. Jeanne insisted that the two young patients next to Sedov's room be identified and the clinic's records examined as to the nature of their illness, when they registered, and when they left the institution. She stated in the appeal that she had seen the clinic's register for all persons coming and going, and now she wanted that book examined as well. Moreover, she again demanded an inquiry about the drugs administered to Sedov, as recorded by the nurses. Since she knew that Sedov the night before his relapse was still too weak to walk, she suggested that he could not have left the bed without someone's support or without some administered stimulant.

The last inquest took place in November, but it turned out to be a mere formality. Only Drs. Simkov and Thalheimer were called upon for their comments. Neither Dr. Trachtenberg nor Zhirmunsky was questioned this time. The two doctors denied all of Jeanne Martin's assertions and refused to reply to her numerous allegations. Some of the questions they evaded on the grounds of customary professional privilege. As for the repeated requests that the names of the patients in the room adjoining Sedov's be revealed, Zhirmunsky took the same position for everything about the registrations in the clinic was supposedly confidential. The judge did not grant the request.

After the failure of the inquest in November, Jeanne started a campaign to round up witnesses whose testimonials would make it necessary to open the case again. She engaged for the purpose her former husband Raymond Molinier, his brother Henri, and several other comrades. Etienne and Lilia, who could have served as key witnesses, refused to cooperate to bring about another investigation even when Trotsky, in response to Jeanne's appeals, urged them to prepare statements. All that Jeanne asked them to do was to write down for the judge whatever they knew in connection with the hospitalization. The pair told Trotsky why they refused to cooperate. Lilia's letter explained their reasons: It would be foolhardy for them to go before any police examiners, for their mixing into the case would lead to their expulsion from France. After all, their association with Sedov had been clandestine. She repeated her previous assertions that she could contribute nothing to clear up the case, and "Etienne had nothing to tell the judge, not a word!"

Thus no further investigation took place, although Judge Pagenel was willing to comply with Jeanne's and Trotsky's requests. At this time dissension among the Trotskyists in Paris was at its peak because of rumors of betrayal. Among those whom Lilia and Etienne named in letters to Trotsky as the troublemakers on behalf of the NKVD, Jeanne and the Molinier brothers were now included with Henk Sneevliet and Victor Serge. Lilia's portrayal of Jeanne in her efforts to reopen the inquest became vicious but contradictory: Jeanne was insane but intelligent and shrewd, lying and selfish, confused yet scheming, so that only the NKVD could profit from her meddling.

Although Trotsky was a bit skeptical about Etienne and Lilia in early 1938, by the end of that year the pair had fully convinced him of their unflinching loyalty. He instructed them to break all contact with Jeanne, for he himself wanted no more to do with the Moliniers. This decision also meant that he accepted the verdict of the inquest

about the natural causes of his son's death, as interpreted for him by Lilia and Etienne. He wrote to them:

> Dear Comrades:
>
> I completely agree with your decision not to respond to the invitation of Mme. Jeanne Molinier (Martin) concerning your depositions before the investigating judge.
>
> At one time we proposed to Mme. Molinier that she act jointly with our commission.[54] She refused and formed her own commission composed of Leon's enemies. That commission naturally did nothing. It was nothing but an empty demonstration against the organization and memory of Leon.[55]
>
> Mme. Jeanne Molinier attempted to transmit my documents to one of Leon's slanderers, all because of political interests on behalf of Raymond Molinier's clique . . .

Trotsky accepted the version that his son died of natural causes as a result of post-operational complications because NKVD agent Etienne and his assistant Lilia were more convincing than his son's widow and the loyal French comrades around her. Working full-time as a team, they were able to cater to Trotsky's arrogant belief that he controlled the French followers. His term "the Molinier clique" and his disavowal stemmed entirely from the impressions he got from the pair's communications. Thus, he accepted the path of least resistance himself, not because he perhaps believed in his son's natural death but because the "French clique" insisted on the opposite line.

Lilia's Trip to Mexico

Lilia Estrin may have had nothing to do with the NKVD preparations for the culminating event in the anti-Trotsky operations, the murder in Mexico City. Yet wittingly or unwittingly she played a role that was useful in directing action teams or individuals. Because of strict compartmentation, her close partner and NKVD agent, Etienne, was probably as ignorant as she was of the intricacies of the

[54] This was the commission for taking custody of Leon Sedov's files. Jeanne objected to the inclusion of Etienne and Lilia as members of that commission because she never trusted the two.

[55] Described as such by Etienne's and Lilia's letters to Trotsky, who by now (February, 1939) accepted the pair's version of everything concerning the Secretariat.

long range plans. As a replacement for Rudolf Klement,[56] he was responsible for the physical requirements of the Fourth International, which was assembled for a world conference in Paris. He arranged for the lodgings of delegates and observers, among them Sylvia Agelof, interpreter from the United States, and her fiancé, "Jacques Mornard" (Jacson, Ramon Mercader). At the time Lilia acted in unison with Etienne concerning everything in the International, so that she too met the delegates, including "Mornard" and Sylvia.

Lilia first proposed going to Mexico in May 1938, to take dictation for Trotsky's book on Stalin. She would use the vacation due her from the Institute of Social History. Stopping in New York for a week, she would speed to Mexico to have some six or seven weeks for intensive work. She did not explain where she was getting money for the trip and she asked for no remuneration.

Trotsky apparently did not accept Lilia's first offer, for there was no further correspondence about it. But Lilia kept on writing to Mrs. Trotsky and the secretary, Sara Weber. The letters were ingratiating, reminiscing about the goodness of the late Sedov and about her own and Etienne's amicable relations with him. They always contained "clever but poisonous remarks" about Jeanne Martin and others who accused her and Etienne of treason. The transparent purpose of several letters was to get an invitation from Trotsky for a visit to Mexico. In a letter of October 1938 she indicated her plan to visit New York. At that time she still carried a Soviet passport but was trying to secure a different one. The following February she was in possession of a "usable" passport. She wrote Mrs. Trotsky an optimistic note that Paulsen (her code name) would begin the trip on 20 April and would stay in New York for four or five weeks before visiting Mexico for some urgent talks. The Mexican visa, she stated, should be easier to obtain in New York than in Paris.

Trotsky's invitation in reply to Lilia's many proposals for a visit came only in March 1939. By then, as a series of his commending letters indicates, he was sure of Etienne's and Lilia's unbounded loyalty. As for the secretarial work for him, he had already acquired a Fanny Yanovich. Both Lilia and Etienne made persistent inquiries

[56] Rudolf Klement, a young German comrade, was Trotsky's secretary in Turkey during 1930 to 1932. He then organized the German Trotskyists, and in 1938 he was scheduled for election as Secretary General of the Fouth International, the post Etienne allegedly sought to attain. On 20 July 1938 Klement was kidnapped. A headless body fished out of the River Seine some three weeks later was believed to be his. His code names in the movement were Frederick, Adolf, and Camille. For data attributing his death to the NKVD see Deutscher, *op. cit.*, p. 407.

about her identity, but Trotsky never explained to them who "Fanny" was, nor does the archive reveal her identity.

Lilia left Paris on 19 April, and Etienne corresponded with her in New York. Both wrote to Trotsky requesting assistance in providing her with a Mexican visa. The mediator in the case was Jean Van Heijenoort, Trotsky's Dutch secretary. In answer to his cable Etienne wired from Paris that Lilia was "of Russian origin, no other nationality acquired." A visa of two months' validity was obtained, and Lilia took the bus from New York to Monterey on 24 May, for arrival in Mexico City on 29 May.

Trotsky apparently had no urgent discussions with Lilia. The two talked about the transfer of Trotsky's grandson Seva (Vsevolod Volkov) from Paris to Mexico. Lilia took notes regarding Trotsky's book on Stalin: its revision, editing, and translation into French. There were also talks about the organization of an inner secret circle of Russian Trotskyists in Paris as proposed by Etienne a year earlier.

In conference with Lilia, Trotsky brought up a letter he received in January 1939. It was an earnest warning against an NKVD agent among Trotsky's top aides, the most urgent and meaningful of all such notices. The letter clearly pointed to Etienne as a spy and traitor. It was not signed. It had come in duplicate, one copy in an envelope for Mrs. Trotsky, as insurance against NKVD intercepts. The writer introduced himself as a Russian Jew in New York and relative of General Henry Samoilovich Lushkov, NKVD chief for the Far East, who had defected to Japan.[57] He wrote that he had been visiting Japan, where Lushkov had told him that Trotsky had in the center of his organization a dangerous provocateur. The accurate and verifiable information about the top NKVD leadership and other data in the letter must have impressed Trotsky with the validity of the source and his information. It described Etienne's association with Trotsky's son and his reporting from Paris, reporting which earned decorations for several NKVD officials. It solved the riddle of Trotsky's stolen documents by stating that "Mark" did the job for delivery to Moscow. The writer's version was so thorough and definite that it allowed no doubt that Etienne was "Mark." It expressed Lushkov's amazement on noting that Trotsky's loyal comrades in Paris had failed to observe "Mark's" constant contact with the Soviet Embassy.

[57] General Alexander Orlov, another defector in 1938, admitted the authorship of this letter before the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary. See Hearings, February 14 and 15, 1957, Part 51. The letter was dated 27 December 1938.

Orlov's warning letter was actually an urgent appeal that Trotsky take heed for his safety. It read: "Believe no one, male or female, coming to you from that provocateur." The letter asked Trotsky to acknowledge its receipt by inserting a notice in the *Socialist Appeal*, with the wording that "Stein's letter was received by the editor." [58] Trotsky responded with the advertisement: "Mr. Stein, I insist that you immediately go to the *Socialist Appeal* for a talk with Comrade Martin," but no one came.[59] Orlov testified in 1957 that he went to that office; but when he took a side glance at Comrade Martin, he lost confidence and left. He tried instead to reach Trotsky by telephone but got only the secretary; wary that the caller might be just another persistent newspaperman, Trotsky would not come to the telephone.

Trotsky's presentation of the letter to Lilia in order to question her or to discuss it appears irrational, the negation of elementary security precaution. For almost a year prior to their meeting he had been receiving accusations of treason committed by both Lilia and Etienne. Whether he wanted to use the letter as a test to find how she would respond to the contents or whether he wanted, in his proud and arrogant way, to show that he was flooded with such warning notes, we do not know, since he made none of his usual records about this confrontation. He obviously disregarded the writer's specific request that he trust no one, male or female, coming from Etienne. (Questioned as Mrs. Dallin in 1956, Lilia testified that she felt uncomfortable when Trotsky showed her the letter because "the details were very unpleasant." She told him that the letter could be nothing else but "a dirty job of the NKVD who wanted to deprive Trotsky of his few dependable collaborators in France.") [60]

It was logical for Lilia to argue that the warning letter was an NKVD hoax. Another such ridiculous note, also unsigned, stated at the same time that a woman (meaning Lilia) was coming for a visit to poison him. There were many previous warnings of the same type, some genuine though general, others more specific but obviously spurious. Arguing that the false warnings resulted from a common NKVD practice designed to confuse the opponent, and pointing to the preposterous accusation that she had any evil intention, she satisfied Trotsky about the loyalty of both Etienne and herself.

[58] *Ibid.*

[59] *Hearings, op. cit.*

[60] See *Hearings, op. cit.*, 2 March 1956. Also Deutscher, *op. cit.*, p. 410. Note, however, that in his book on *Soviet Espionage* David J. Dallin, Lilia's second husband, made no reference to this incident or, for that matter, to any NKVD operations in Trotsky's movement.

It is obvious from Trotsky's correspondence that Lilia's visit strengthened the pair's position. He no longer had any doubts about their genuine loyalty and paid no heed when Lilia reported how certain European comrades had renewed allegations about her treachery. After June Lilia actually assumed a role secondary to that of Etienne, but remained the principal correspondent for matters relating to the Russian Section of the Fourth International, and was responsible for the *Bulletin's* publication. She informed Trotsky that she had become the assistant of her friend Etienne; and Trotsky, pleased with the arrangement, again congratulated the pair for their wonderful work. In one instance Trotsky was obviously elated with Etienne's performance. He sent him an autographed picture of himself, and Etienne dutifully thanked him:

> Dear Lev Davidovich:
>
> I am very grateful for the photograph sent to me. Your attention moves me deeply. If fate throws me to the country neighboring to yours, I shall do what I can to express to you personally my sincere devotion.
>
> Hearty greetings to you and Natalia Ivanovna.
>
> Etienne

Assault and Assassination—The Death of the Father

In one of his last written accounts describing the assault that the NKVD staged upon his villa at Coyoacan, Mexico City, Trotsky said: "I know that Stalin often admitted that my deportation abroad was his great error. Only a terroristic act could correct that mistake." Despite the international assets and capabilities of the execution teams, the plans for the final assault materialized slowly. Many operatives had priority jobs in Europe. For a year they concentrated on the leftist oppositionists in Spain, where "the bestial GPU," according to Trotsky, staged a purge en masse as a sequel to the purge trials in Moscow. From Spain individual agents started moving to Mexico, and this exodus was the beginning of the flow of warnings from loyal Trotskyists.

In January 1938 a man posing as a left oppositionist comrade came to Trotsky's house with a message from a political follower. It was evidently a rather amateurish effort, but the comrade came prepared to kill. The message was discovered to be spurious, a device to gain entry. The stranger was searched and disarmed. As a result of this first scare American and Mexican friends and President Cardenas in

particular, arranged for the safety of the exile by placing day and night guards. The walls around the residence were fortified, and an alarm system was installed. The refuge became a virtual fortress under the protection of the Mexican state and President Cardenas personally.

Trotsky's records of more than two years after January 1938 mentioned no physical threat to his life but noted the mounting propaganda against him. Stalinist-oriented newspapers persisted with editorials and articles by leading communists who demanded that the Cardenas government expel the exile, the traitor to the proletariat. As if conditioning the public for the event, Stalinist newspapers intensified the agitation during the weeks before the commando attack took place. The Mexican comrades, led by NKVD agents, had to be given "moral justification" for Trotsky's liquidation. This intensified campaign was conducted by the "overt friends of the NKVD agents" whose sudden concentration in Mexico City came to the attention of the non-Communist press.

As described by Trotsky himself, the armed attack on his villa started at four a.m. on 24 May 1940. It was a thoroughly professional operation. Having worked intensively and late the evening before, Trotsky had taken pills and was fast asleep when the firing woke him. He thought at first that the natives were celebrating some holiday, but then noticed that bullets were spraying into the bedroom. His wife pulled him off the bed, and both crawled close to the wall. Crossfire was cutting through the windows and doors. Altogether some 200 shots poured into their bedroom alone. Their grandson Seva in the adjoining bedroom was screaming for Grandpa. The attackers had deposited two incendiary bombs there, but the boy escaped in the darkness. Mrs. Trotsky ran into his room, put out the fire, saw the empty bed riddled with bullets and thought that the boy had been kidnapped. Actually he had found safety in the guard's quarters. Before the attackers left, one of them rushed into Trotsky's room to spray more bullets into the rumpled bedding.

The attack was over in twenty minutes. All the assailants then rushed from the compound. The only casualty appeared to be Seva, with a bullet wound in his toe. The inside guards joining the household in the patio were dazed, not knowing what had happened to the guards outside the walls. These were discovered, disarmed, and tied up. They said that minutes before four o'clock twenty men in police and army uniforms surprised and overpowered them without firing a shot. One of the attackers, a "major," went to the gate. Another spoke to Robert Sheldon Harte, a young American, who was on night duty. Harte opened the gate, and the attackers rushed in. They surprised

and disarmed the inside guards. They placed machine guns at various points facing Trotsky's bedroom.

It was not immediately realized that Robert Sheldon Harte was missing. Trotsky was convinced that the young comrade had been abducted; but Colonel Salazar, the chief of the secret police who was at the compound within half an hour of the assault, had a strong suspicion that Harte too was an NKVD agent.[61]

The disappearance of Harte, whose body was exhumed about a month after the assault, lent temporary support to the Stalinists, who suddenly developed a propaganda story to the effect that the Trotskyists themselves had staged the attack, in which no one was hurt. The Central Committee of the Mexican Communist Party issued two announcements about Harte's participation in the assault, implying thereby that the whole affair was executed on behalf of Trotskyist propaganda to smear the Communist Party. Even before the corpse was found, Trotsky wrote protests to President Cardenas requesting the release of several of his domestic servants whom the police suspected of complicity. In a letter of protest he wrote that the GPU used David Alfaro Siqueiros and Vincente Lombardo Toledano, and he urged that both of them be questioned about their complicity. The police followed Trotsky's lead by arresting several participants in the assault. As soon as Siqueiros' name was mentioned in the press, however, he disappeared; and the Mexican CP disowned him overnight as well as some other CP leaders. Their names were suddenly included among those published as Trotskyists and traitors.

Trotsky wrote in considerable detail about how the GPU manipulated the Mexican CP in order to cover the organizers of the assault. Several top leaders whose names had long been deleted from the Party records suddenly had to be proclaimed traitors in the Stalinist press. The purpose of the campaign (developed by the NKVD, according to Trotsky) was to divert all blame from the CP and to provide a basis for the rumors that Trotskyists themselves had staged the assault.

David Siqueiros was arrested in a hideout on 4 October 1940. He did not deny participation in the assault, but he insisted that the Mexican CP had nothing to do with it. He defended himself with a story that he wanted to produce a "psychological shock" in protest

[61] Although the Mexican police refused to abandon the notion of Harte's complicity with the GPU, Trotsky was probably right in his conviction of man's innocence. Two days after his abduction, Harte was murdered and secretly buried. The body was found lying on a bed which, as the police found, had been purchased by the wife of the Mexican artist David Siqueiros, who was eventually tried for leading the assault.

against Trotsky's presence in Mexico but that he had not wanted to kill him. He was released on bail and disappeared from Mexico for several years.[62]

Trotsky was assassinated on 20 August 1940. His widow's reminiscences of the event became part of Victor Serge's book, *Vie et Mort de Trotsky*.[63] She also prepared an account for the Trotskyists' *Bulletin*. Trotsky's English secretary, Joseph Hansen, issued a statement to the press on the morning after the fatal attack by "Frank Jacson." He said that Trotsky, at the moment in the hospital with only a slim chance to live, had predicted this blow from Stalin since the assault of 24 May, but no one could know the planned manner or timing of the assassination. Hansen stated that Trotsky had known Jacson for some six months. The young man, who had been a member of the Trotskyist movement in France[64] and the United States, was reputedly a financially generous sympathizer. Visiting as the fiancé of comrade Sylvia Agelof, he gained Trotsky's confidence. No one ever questioned his loyalty, so that there never was the slightest suspicion that he could be an NKVD agent. On the other hand, describing the character and behavior of the man, Hansen wrote:

> The record of Jacson is sinister. He was in Paris when Trotsky's former secretary, Rudolf Klement, disappeared and was murdered by the GPU . . . Jacson's entry to the house in Coyoacan was, without a doubt, engineered a long time ago. It is possible that he was the leader in the assault of 24 May. Maybe it was he who

[62] According to L.A.S. Salazar, *Murder in Mexico*, London, 1950, pp. 76-77, Siqueiros led the assaulting gang, but under the orders of the "French Jew" (allegedly Jacques Mornard-Jacson-Mercader), who was friendly with Sheldon Harte and talked him into opening the gate to the compound. While Trotsky and the household defended Harte as innocent, Salazar upheld the possibility that the NKVD placed him in Trotsky's household as a spotter who was subsequently converted to Trotsky's ideals. Thus, Salazar continued, it is possible that the attack lay so heavily on Harte's conscience that the gang considered it safest to finish him. As for the famous painter Siquerios, Salazar quoted him from an interview of 23 April 1947 as saying: "I must state that I consider my participation in the armed attack at Coyoacan as one of the most honorable acts of my life."

[63] Amiot-Dumont, Paris, 1951.

[64] Jacson, as Mornard, was constantly with Sylvia Agelof, who attended as an American observer and interpreter the Fourth International's congress in Paris during September 1938. However, Lilia and Etienne, reporting to Trotsky about that congress and the participants, failed to mention Sylvia or Mornard. Etienne, as previously mentioned, played an important administrative role at the congress; he arranged for the housing of delegates and other essentials.

> talked Robert Sheldon Harte into opening the gate to the killers that night. To keep Jacson's identity secret, Harte had to die. This explains why Jacson had to leave for the United States immediately after the May assault. He needed protection in case his name should be mentioned in the investigation. During the last weeks, when things quieted down, he returned to Mexico as ordered by the GPU to finish the job.
>
> There is no doubt that the GPU had a firm hold on Jacson. It is possible that they would denounce him in France for the murder of Klement or the murder of Harte. It is possible they would have killed him after he failed as leader of the assault in May. While he was struggling with the guards (after he killed Trotsky) he cried out several times: "They are keeping my mother in prison!" . . .

The crime of Mornard-Jacson-Mercader, described by many authors in detail, does not differ in the essentials from Hansen's narrative. Jacson came to Trotsky's home at 5:30 p.m. The two met on the patio. Jacson had written an article and asked Trotsky to read it and give him his opinion about it. Without saying anything to his secretaries, Trotsky took Jacson to his study. The details of how the blow with the mountaineering pick was struck and of the short struggle that followed, as described by various writers, are mostly conjectures, although probably correct. No one else was in the study. Hansen wrote: "The first sign that something happened were the terrible screams and noise of struggle." Two of the nearest guards left their posts and ran to the dining room next to the study. They saw Trotsky leaving his office with blood streaming down his face. One of the guards jumped at the assassin, who held a pistol in his hand. The other attended to Trotsky on the floor.

Hansen's statement to the press appeared incomprehensible on certain points. How could he have suddenly realized, along with others in Trotsky's household, that Jacson, under no suspicion before, was implicated in Klement's abduction and murder? And how could it have occurred to Hansen that Jacson's past record was sinister if there had been no reports to that effect? If there had been grounds for suspicion, why were Trotsky and his aides so credulous as not to check up on the new follower? Trotsky's papers contain no record of a refusal to associate with Jacson, as they did in many other cases where such a refusal was based on ideological differences. As was true throughout the long series of atrocities committed by the GPU on the Trotskyists, the realization had come too late.

Mrs. Trotsky's story in Victor Serge's book[65] tells of times when she and her husband were disturbed by suspicion about Jacson. They did not trust him, but they failed to act. They were puzzled about his financial resources and strangely vague accounts of his big business deals. They were mystified by his sudden departure to New York after the assault in May. Upon his return they observed a strange change in his conduct; he was sullen, restless, excitable, absent-minded, and inconsistent. A former "vulgar *bon vivant*," he was now unable to conceal his obvious anxiety. His behavior toward his mistress Sylvia, of whose loyalty the Trotskys had no doubt, worried them; and they were confounded by his actions and remarks. Jacson once said to Hansen, who was supervising the fortification of the wall around the compound: "Why all this construction? You know that you can do nothing against the GPU!" On an outing with two of Trotsky's aides he once swerved his Buick toward a precipice, exclaiming: "This way and everything would be over!" Mrs. Trotsky was worried to see Jacson alone with her husband, who once shouted: "Who is this wealthy patron, anyway? We must investigate!" Trotsky realized that Jacson had no ideological acumen or capability as a writer. After one session with him in the study, which turned out to be a rehearsal for the slaying, Trotsky spoke to his wife: "Jacson showed me his paper. It is worthless, confused and trite. . . . I don't like it. Who is this youth? We must investigate!"[66]

They never did investigate, however. They continued to accept Jacson as the "husband" of Sylvia. When an American aide recommended that Jacson be investigated, Trotsky actually protested against it.[67] It was Trotsky's nature not to do what others recommended; so it may have been the American's recommendation to investigate that deterred him from doing what he wanted to do himself. His conceit, expressed in the past in not following the advice of proven supporters to take security measures by breaking with such NKVD spies as the Sobolevicius brothers, Olberg and Etienne, all but ruined his political movement. His obstinate refusal to investigate Jacson, as prompted by others and obviously by his own premonition, destroyed him. The Mexican Government, as other host governments had done before, provided him with elaborate safety precautions. His life might well have been spared, despite the malevolent NKVD designs, if he had been endowed with a sense of humility and understanding, if he had listened to friendly and tested comrades.

[65] *Op. cit.*, Chapter V: "The Assassins," p. 317 ff.
[66] *Ibid.*
[67] *Ibid.*

Jacson's story about his motive for murder, as given to the Mexican police, exhibited the traditional NKVD trademark. Even in its wording, his rationale was identical with the text of what "Frederick" (Klement) allegedly wrote to Trotsky. He was another "disillusioned follower" who found in Trotsky nothing but a lackey of capitalism, an ally of Hitler and the Gestapo, a fiendish enemy of the proletariat. Victor Serge, analyzing the content and form of the killer's statement, traced its origins to the Soviet secret service. Apart from being a killer's justification, the statement was to serve as another propaganda blow against Trotskyism, now dead and never again to be a serious danger to the Soviet state.

This account of how the NKVD killed Trotsky reveals both the ruthless tenacity and skill of the Soviet service and Trotsky's own gullibility, arrogance, and waywardness. It is clear that the men in Moscow who drew up the blueprint for his murder understood his weaknesses and used them. If we compare Trotsky's death with Stalin's, we are immediately struck by the contrast between the two men. Trotsky trusted naively; Stalin, not at all. Trotsky was caught up in his cause and forgot himself. Stalin subordinated his cause to himself. Trotsky wanted to understand and persuade his enemies. Stalin killed his, or those his paranoia told him were his foes. The tactician defeated the theoretician—the pick killed the dream.

In the last analysis, then, it was not only Trotsky's defects of character that destroyed him but also his strength. His heedlessness was not scatterbrained; it was a single-minded devotion to his goal, an intensity of purpose that made him impatient with clutters of facts, like rocks in his path. Both Stalin and Trotsky were the enemies of freedom, but it is nonetheless true that the better man lost.

Assignment: Paris

THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE OF 1960: AN INTELLIGENCE OFFICER'S VIEW

Sherman Kent

There was to be a gathering "at the Summit"—so the world learned late in 1959.[1] The Four, President Eisenhower, Prime Minister Macmillan, President de Gaulle, and Chairman Khrushchev were to come face to face and take up the major problems which troubled the relations between their states. General de Gaulle would be the host; the Elysée palace in Paris would be the place; and Monday, 16 May, would be the day when the principals would meet for their first discussion.

In the past, the Directors of Central Intelligence had offered as a matter of course the Agency's support to US delegations participating in high-level international conferences. On this occasion, Mr. Allen Dulles came forward again, and the President accepted. I received the honor of heading the Agency's liaison on the spot.

For the benefit of the few uninitiated, the words "intelligence support" meant that the Agency would gather itself to keep the President and his principal lieutenants up to the minute on significant world developments. It also meant that the Agency with the cooperation of the community would stand ready to service special requirements.

In actual practice this sort of enterprise involved a few simple administrative decisions such as the designation of an officer at Headquarters to round up all-source intelligence that was relevant and worthy of transmittal and to put it on the wire. He was to be Huntington Sheldon (the Director of OCI), with Thomas Patton assisting. In the larger sense it involved everyone in the Agency who was in a position to contribute anything to the success of the delegation. And finally in the narrower sense again, it involved the little group in Paris—in this case, three professionals and two

[1] *New York Times*, 31 December 1959.

secretaries.[2] One of them was to call at 7:30 a.m. at the President's place of business, meet with a presidential aide, deliver the material, comment on it orally if such seemed appropriate, and then ask if the Agency could help with any specific intelligence problems that he had in mind.

The "material" of the last sentence consisted in large part of what Mr. Sheldon and Mr. Patton sent from Headquarters. It was dispatched so as to start coming into the Paris commo shack early in the morning. In addition, there might be special messages from overseas stations which were alert to serve directly should need arise. There was also the highly important material from the FBIS, which its London office forwarded. This consisted of relevant worldwide coverage, including the texts of broadcasts from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe which the BBC had monitored, plus the FBIS's expert quantitative analysis of Moscow's foreign and domestic newscasts. Lastly, there was that morning's Paris press and radio news.

Some of this material needed no editing at all, some of it a good deal. But none of it could be relayed to the President and his advisers in the exact form in which we received it. Hence at a minimum it had to be retyped. Before we gave a copy to the ladies, however, we did the obvious rearranging, striving for what we felt to be a rational order. Thus for example, if an FBIS item further illuminated something from more sensitive material, we would put the two together; we would put up front items which we knew would be of highest local interest; we would add captions and take other small editorial liberties.

The performance of exactly these duties in a foreign capital was new to all five of us. So as to learn the trade in advance of the President's arrival, we met in Paris on Thursday, 12 May. Next morning we undertook our first dress rehearsal. And a good thing, too, for had it been for keeps it would have been a disaster. We arrived at the Chancery at about 5:30 a.m.; the full decrypted text was not available for another thirty minutes. Moreover, it had arrived in

[2] This was a larger force than normal, probably because four of the five were already in Europe. Robert Matteson, a member of the Board of National Estimates was on TDY to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Since that Conference suspended operations for the duration of the Summit, Matteson and the two ladies, Mrs. Ann Mann and Miss Susan Rowe, who were also on duty in Geneva, could be spared. The second professional, John Whitman of the ONE Staff, was on an overseas assignment with the analysts in [redacted] 25X1

(In case anyone refers to this article for planning intelligence support for another conference, let him realize that there was no fat on this T/O. We all worked long hours and could indeed have kept still another sister fully occupied.)

a sequence which forbade the final typing of any part until we had it all. Ours was a firsthand and woeful realization of what I had heard from predecessors in this sort of mission (notably from Osborn Webb in London, whom I'd seen on my way through and who was even then in mild shock from a recent experience in the role). What was clear was that Mr. Sheldon's people would have to start sending earlier, that they would have to alter the ordering of items within the message, and most importantly for us, at least, that we would have to be at the office by 3:30 a.m. if we were to make our 7:30 a.m. delivery time.

Next morning there we were. Everything worked, including a simulated delivery from the Chancery down in the Place de la Concorde to the Residence on the Avenue d' Iena not far from the old Trocadero, which would be Mr. Eisenhower's White House abroad. We were in business.

I should explain to the reader who does not know Paris that there is no good way to get from the Chancery to the Residence. All practicable ways are likely to necessitate the transit of the ten acres of traffic bedlam which staggeringly belie the name Concorde. Once a driver had navigated it, he still had before him the fiercely competitive array of speedsters and trucks down the Quai of the Seine's right bank until he could fight free up the hill to his destination. One should allow twenty to thirty minutes for the trip taken in relatively peaceful hours and almost any amount of time during what the French call the "hours of affluence."

As to the delegation which President Eisenhower led, it was formidable. Counted as official members thereof were: Mr. Herter, the Secretary of State; Mr. Merchant, the Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs; Mr. Kohler, the Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs, and Brigadier General Goodpaster, the Staff Secretary to the President. Senior advisers were: Mr. Gates, the Secretary of Defense, Mr. Bohlen, the Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, Mr. Achilles, the Counsellor of the State Department, and Ambassadors Houghton (France), Thompson (USSR), and Whitney (UK). There was also Mr. Haggerty, the press secretary to the President. Parenthetically, Mr. Gates had not been among those of the first list, but was added when one heard that Khrushchev was fetching along his own Minister of Defense, Marshal Malinovski.[3] Back in Washing-

[3] I mention the "why" of Mr. Gates' attendance because an important observer in Paris picked up from a French source who had gotten it from a Soviet source that Malinovski went to Paris when the Russians heard that Mr. Gates would be there. The report of the observer is a matter of official record. The evidence of its incorrectness is, however, impeccable.

ton the principal officers of the executive branch were Vice President Nixon, acting Secretary of State Douglas Dillon, and acting Secretary of Defense James Douglas; with all due respect—the second team.

Mr. Eisenhower arrived at Orly at 9:30 Sunday morning on 15 May and went straight to Ambassador Houghton's residence. From that moment until well into Monday, that was where the principal business of the US delegation focused. To be sure, Mr. Herter had received rights to Ambassador Houghton's own office in the Chancery and other visitors got office or desk space there while the regular embassy staff doubled up. I mention this to make clear that the delegation which used the Chancery but seldom was not absent because of any inhospitality. Its members had to be close to the chief and no one in his right mind would have taken up his station in the Chancery unless he had a personal helicopter at standby.

Needless to say, Mr. Dulles's little group was not in the Residence. We had ample office space [redacted] access to an auto and driver, and supposedly, I, at least, had been identified with the Secret Service men who controlled the entrance to the Residence. My first delivery of the mail had been set for 11:30 Sunday morning. I arrived in good time, made it through the security barriers, met General Goodpaster, and delivered the package with some oral comments. Although he could scarcely have had time to be aware of the international pulse as it throbbed in Paris, I nevertheless inquired if he had any special problems which we of the Agency could help him with. Of course he had one; so had the President and every other knowledgeable and sensible human except Nikita Sergeivitch and a handful of his Russian colleagues. They did not have it for they alone had the answer. The question in essence was the central one about the probable Soviet stance at the morrow's meeting. More explicitly, General Goodpaster asked for our thoughts regarding Soviet objectives in their recent exploitation of the U 2 incident and what we thought Khrushchev thought he could likely get from the Summit conference.

25X1

Just in case the answers to these questions seem, in hindsight, to have been obvious, they were not. Surely no student of international affairs would have put the chances of Khrushchev's permitting the conference to be a productive exercise as better than say 10 to 20 percent, but by the same token no such student would have put the chances at zero. If Khrushchev was not going to play at all, why had he talked the way he did between his announcement of the shoot-

down of the U–2 and 15 May, a matter of a week and a half?[4] Why was he in Paris at all? In fact, why had he got there two days early, on Saturday, 14 May? There were plenty of things in Khrushchev's plans, and one could and did estimate that a precipitate breakup of the conference would by no means further them all. For example, such a course would not necessarily assure further friction among the western allies—in fact there were significant odds that it would have a unifying effect—nor could it be counted upon to further Soviet aims related to Berlin, the GDR, and the wide area of disarmament. These and other considerations had occupied the US intelligence

[4] On 5 May Khrushchev opened the first session of a meeting of the Supreme Soviet. In his remarks he let go at the U–2 intrusion, calling it a direct provocation, and threatening retaliation. However, at the end of his speech he tempered the blast referring to his commitment to the Leninist principle of peaceful coexistence and to his intention to spare no effort at the Paris meeting to reach agreement.

Again, on 7 May on two occasions, one in his remarks to the adjourning Supreme Soviet and the other at an impromptu press conference, he came down hard on the "espionage" aspects of the flight and the Soviet government's sense of outrage, but said nothing to indicate that the USSR was not going through with the meeting in Paris.

A few days later, 10 May, our government received the Soviet official protest which was couched without reference to the Summit. On 11 May at an exhibit of the wreckage of the U–2 aircraft in Moscow, Khrushchev again spoke with some violence, but noted only his government's intention to take the issue before the U.N. Security Council and, in the event of U.S. obstruction, to the General Assembly. Nothing was said of Paris. The next day Tass glossed these remarks in such a way as to assure that the Soviet government felt that the Summit conference should take place as planned.

In retrospect it may be that Khrushchev himself had chosen to play the incident in relatively low key. Not so his more militant colleagues, among whom would have been the Soviet military led by the Defense Minister, Marshal Malinovski. The overflight—especially its predecessor flights, which the US government in its statement of 7 May said had been going on for four years—were a profound professional affront to them in the way they reflected the shortcomings of Soviet Air Defense. To this historian it seems probable that sometime in the week following 5 May, the hard liners triumphed over Khrushchev's personal preference. Witness to their victory (if such was really the case) may have been the decision to put Marshal Malinovski on the Paris-bound delegation and the drafting of the harsh statement which Khrushchev carried with him to use in Paris. More about this statement later on.

Some added substance is given to the above hypothesis in the memorandum of conversation (which took place in 1969) between Khrushchev and A. McGehee Harvey (*Life*, 18 Dec. 1970, p. 48B). According to Dr. Harvey, Khrushchev in speaking of the U–2 incident said, "Things (i.e., his ideas about having 'our two countries live together peacefully and compete economically not militarily'), were going well until one event happened. From the time Gary Powers was shot down in a U–2 over the Soviet Union, I was no longer in full control." Maybe I am reading too much into this, but one cannot escape the striking difference between Khrushchev's posture of, say, 5 May and that of 14 May when he arrived in Paris with the famous document in his pocket. This much of a change of mind usually occurs with a deal of outside help.

community for days, and General Goodpaster, if not Mr. Eisenhower himself, had read two memos prepared by the Board of National Estimates which our Director had sent to the White House. What General Goodpaster meant that morning was a desire for any further lucubration on the matter.

We arranged that I would call again at 5:30 p.m. Sunday and in his absence leave the day's news with his colleague, Major John Eisenhower or with their secretary Miss Alice Boyce. The delivery after that one would be Monday morning at 7:30.

I returned to the Chancery with the requirement, which Whitman took in hand. Matteson and I, with Whitman, went over it amending it here and there ("picking at it" would be the author's phrase). Then rather than pass it on our own cognizance, I cabled it to Headquarters, telling of its point of origin and soliciting speedy comment.

By that hour and largely unanticipated by the President and his close advisers—not to mention their CIA liaison man—Khrushchev had made something of a surprise move, which as it turned out, cast the Summit into oblivion. He had initiated a meeting with de Gaulle (the fact of the meeting was no secret) for 11:00 a.m. that very Sunday, and at just about the moment I was taking note of General Goodpaster's intelligence requirement, Khrushchev was formally apprising de Gaulle of the Soviet government's attitude towards the U–2 incident and the next day's meeting of the Four. He did more than this, he left with de Gaulle an *aide mémoire* in French[5] which ran to upwards of a dozen pages.

With this piece of business done, he went on later in the day (4:30 p.m.) to a meeting which he had arranged with Prime Minister Macmillan, whom he favored with a reading of the same text. He left no *aide mémoire* behind this time.

When later queried as to why he had omitted the President on this round of visits, he replied that the President had not indicated a desire to see him. This was, of course, a piece of diplomatic evasiveness, for the French and British official record will show that neither de Gaulle nor Macmillan had "indicated an interest" and that Khrushchev had himself initiated both visits. In short, the omission of Mr. Eisenhower from his calling list was a part of the Soviet Summit strategy.

There are probably some unimportant details about these meetings as yet undivulged by the French and British governments; there is nothing secret about Khrushchev's message. He delivered it for the

[5] U.S. Senate, Report of the Committee on Foreign Relations, *Events Relating to the Summit Conference*, 28 June 1960 (Report No. 1761, p. 14).

third time at Monday's meeting of the Four at the Elysée [6] and gave it to the press.

You can read all of it on page 15 of the *New York Times* for 17 May 1960. What de Gaulle had seen and what Macmillan had heard on Sunday is one of those pieces of classical communist prose which leaves us children of the western tradition not only uncomprehending of the art form but unaware of any group in the world other than dutiful members of the CPSU to whom it would communicate clearly and forcefully. In its web of lusterless invective and tedious repetition the more important of its two central points is pretty well obscured. The first point comes through all right; it was that the Soviet government was outraged at the U–2 intrusion. The second and more notable matter lumbered into view in mid-course and was to the effect that Khrushchev would not discuss the substantive issues of the Summit's agenda until the President of the United States undertook three actions; condemn the provocative act which Khrushchev's *aide mémoire* ascribed to the US Air Force; guarantee that the US would refrain from such acts in the future; and punish the individuals responsible for the U–2 operation.

Sometime between 1:00 and 2:00 p.m. that Sunday the French foreign secretary reached a ranking member of the US delegation by phone, informing him that the French government had in hand a highly important document which it wished to pass to the President. One of our bilingual senior career officers hastened to the Quai D'orsay and received the document—which was, of course, the *aide mémoire* which Khrushchev had just left with the President of the French Republic. There was a delay while the Quai sought out a xerox machine that would work and it was 2:00 p.m. before the officer reached Mr. Eisenhower in the Residence. What he had was a dozen or so pages of French which he speedily read aloud in English. In such a fashion did the President learn what the Soviet position was and that it was unlikely to change before the Monday meeting.

While these momentous events were going on, Mr. Dulles' liaison with the delegation, wholly unwitting, fell to preparing the intelligence

[6] What he read on Monday was the 2600 or so words which he had communicated to the French and British plus a last 400 words which he had husbanded as a sort of dessert. This is the passage in which he canceled his invitation to Mr. Eisenhower to visit the Soviet Union. One may be fairly certain that it was prepared as an integral part of the long blast but withheld from de Gaulle and Macmillan, lest Mr. Eisenhower, learning of it from them would choose to stay away from the Monday meeting. If this had happened, then Khrushchev would have denied himself a forum which he eagerly sought. As it was, Mr. Macmillan, on Monday, made a determined but fruitless effort to get Khrushchev to delete it from his hand-out to the press.

materials which were to be delivered to General Goodpaster at 5:30 that afternoon. At the Residence a great busyness engulfed the delegation. The President had a meeting at 2:30 p.m. with de Gaulle, Macmillan, and Chancellor Adenauer (who was there as a highly concerned chief of government, but of course not a formal participant) and then another at 6:00 p.m. at the Elysée with de Gaulle and Macmillan alone. Those of the President's advisers not attending the meetings were discussing the situation, what courses they would recommend to the President, and the text of the statement he should be prepared to make at the next day's meeting.

The fundamental question was exactly what Khrushchev intended and what he would settle for. Did he really intend to break up the meeting unless he got satisfaction on all three of his points or would he accept something less? Of one thing everyone was certain and that was that if Khrushchev himself were to call in the press or leak to it, or if any of those witting of the content of his statement let it leak, then any glimmer of hope of salvaging anything would instantly disappear. The publication of the detail of the ultimatum would almost certainly make a Khrushchevian retreat from the letter of it impossible. Just as certain was Mr. Eisenhower's unwillingness to yield anything on Khrushchev's first and third points (the repudiation and punishment points) and his willingness merely to restate the US position with respect to the second: namely, that the U–2 flights had been suspended and would not be resumed.

In these circumstances all those privy to the matters at hand dropped into a deep and impenetrable silence. Within a few hours of Khrushchev's visit to de Gaulle that Sunday morning, small groups of confidential advisers to the French, British, and American chiefs had seen the document or knew its content; a bit later Chancellor Adenauer and his intimates learned about it. This would make at least twenty—maybe as many as fifty—non-Soviet men and women, and if you count the Russians in Paris and back in Moscow, the figure would be much higher. For almost twenty-four hours not so much as a syllable nor a hint of a syllable seems to have leaked from this inner group. The how and why of this remarkable achievement of security is worth a moment's consideration.

Look first at the Russians. It is highly likely that in their calculations they had pretty-well counted on the President's refusal to accept the three points of their ultimatum. In short, they were prepared for a breakup of the Summit but wanted it to take place in a way which, *inter alia*, would maximize the global impact of the position that they were taking. This was that of a peace-loving people

outraged by the American provocative violation of their national sovereignty. Khrushchev's long statement, which *in its full text* ended with the personal affront to Mr. Eisenhower (the abrupt and public withdrawal of the invitation to visit the Soviet Union), would clearly have its maximum impact throughout the world if launched from the august forum of the Four. It would also permit Khrushchev to show his fellow countrymen how he personally was settling his private score with the President. (Khrushchev's important enemies at home, thoroughly upset by the meeting at Camp David, had been pointing to the U–2 incident as characteristic of the true attitude of President Eisenhower and cutting away at Khrushchev for having been the dupe of American perfidy.) Thus, having decided to come to Paris at all, the Soviets had compelling reasons to guard the statement themselves and hope that those to whom they communicated it would do the same.

Within the American delegation there was a full awareness that although the odds favoring any kind of substantive discussion at the Summit were short indeed, they would drop to zero with a premature revelation of the Soviet position. If the Khrushchev statement should hit the Monday morning press, the President would find it impossible to come to the meeting scheduled for 11:00 a.m. But so long as there was hope to salvage something, the Americans chose to cling to it. They were a very close-lipped group. Without intending to derogate their abilities to keep a secret, let me observe that they had going for them the fact that the day was Sunday and that, for the most part, they were closely secluded within the security of the Residence. Any need that one of them might have felt to enlarge the circle of the witting could not have been done casually. It would have taken some quite purposeful doing.

One cannot escape the suspicion that within the American delegation there was operative still another factor which made the secret the easier to keep. This was that the delegation could have subconsciously come to consider itself the self-contained exemplar of the executive branch, if not a representative slice of the US Government. There is at least one slug on an outgoing cable from Paris that tends to bear out the hypothesis: the original text was addressed to the "Under Secretary [of State]," the "Under" is crossed out and supplanted by the word "Acting." In these circumstances who was there back in Washington who had a compelling need to know?

I suspect, obviously without knowing, that some, at least, of these same forces were operable upon the French and British officials privy to the inside story. Mr. Macmillan's passionate concern to have the

meeting and his faith in it as a touchstone to peace would surely have dampened any British urge to talk out of school. Chancellor Adenauer and his associates were as silent as those more intimately concerned.[7] And so a graveyard secrecy enveloped all these doings of great importance and enveloped them totally well into Monday.

At least one member of the American delegation worried over the decision to confine the news to the little circle in Paris. Mr. Gates began to be concerned about the possible military implications of a breakup of the Summit in the atmosphere of Khrushchev's belligerency. Some time later, he owned that the thought of the Pearl Harbor attack, coming as it had in the middle of negotiations, had crossed his mind.[8] Early in the evening, after hearing Mr. Macmillan brief the President on his session with Khrushchev and getting Mr. Macmillan's gloomy forecast for the morrow, he went back to his hotel, picked up his White House phone and talked directly to the Acting Secretary of Defense, James Douglas. He told Mr. Douglas that he felt that the prudent thing to do was to have the Armed Forces assume some alert basis which, in his judgment, would include notifying the Headquarters of the principal commands and communications and intelligence facilities. How much of the substantive background of his concern he communicated is not known, but, at a guess, it was probably *de minimis*. From other sources it is clear that he spoke in deepest confidence and urged that his message be rigorously held within the need-to-know category.

Having made the call, he returned to the Residence and immediately reported his action to the President who approved it. He also informed Mr. Herter. In Washington, meanwhile, Mr. Douglas conferred with General Twining, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and together they decided the technical meaning which they would apply to Mr. Gates's oral instruction. They checked out the techni-

[7] Shortly after the breakup of the Conference there was a rumor that someone in the German delegation had talked to the German press. If he did, there is no trace in the major German newspapers for Monday, 16 May. I am inclined to doubt the rumor, although I was enough concerned at the time to ask for (and get) a full canvas of press utterances for the critical day. Adenauer himself is reported to have said to someone "Khrushchev seems to be in a bad mood" and this piece of very mild news reached the press. See *The Washington Post*, 16 May 1960, p. 1.

[8] See Report of the [Senate] Committee on Foreign Relations, already cited, p. 132. "Senator Wiley. 'When it was decided to have the alert—[you] had in mind, did you not know what the condition of this country was at the time of Pearl Harbor . . . ?'
Secretary Gates. 'I certainly did.'
Senator Wiley. 'During negotiations?'
Secretary Gates. 'I did, indeed!' "

calities of their decision with Mr. Gates[9] and at about nine p.m. local time sent forth the word.

Mr. Gates's request for a passing of the message on a strict need-to-know basis may have been observed to the letter. But a good many people had to be involved willy nilly, and the need-to-know injunction got several interpretations.

On the one hand, within the Pentagon itself, it was so well observed that no formal notice was passed to the Watch Committee and its National Indications Center. This sort of omission is something to which we in intelligence are highly sensitive, and with justification. We know that an operational order of this sort when carried out, is bound to light up lights in, say, the Soviet watch mechanism and consequently find its resonances in the change of posture of Soviet strike and defense forces. Once this change in their posture begins to take place, our own Watch mechanism picks up the indicators, and not knowing the first cause, innocently passes the warning word to our own operations people. What happens from there on can be serious; usually it is not, but as far as our calling is concerned, the thing which had already taken place was a small nightmare of unprofessionalism.

In the case at issue, our own Watch did not have long to wait to get the news in unclassified form. For the exemplary security within the Pentagon did not hold throughout the land. The alert caused ripples at SAC and ADC bases which could not be concealed, if indeed the commanders tried. The base commander at Lowry AFB, for example, in his search for two missing pilots got in touch with the local police who in turn went to a Denver TV station asking that the following be put on the air as a "military order": "All fighter pilots F–101 and fighter pilots F–102—attention Captain Singleton and Lieutenant Griffin. Code 3 alert. Hotcake one and Hotcake six scramble at Lowry immediately."[10] The TV station obliged and, if you can believe it, in these very words. The Captain and the Lieutenant were not alone in getting the message, nor for that matter were they lonesome in the scramble. A vast number of nervous fellow citizens got it that night on the radio and TV and scrambled, and next morning even more got it in the press.[11] It was still front page news for the morning papers of Tuesday, 17 May. The Watch Committee had been well served—if a bit late.

[9] There is some confusion as to the chronology of Mr. Gates's activities and the written record will do little to abate it. What I have written above is based upon the testimony of Mr. Gates himself.

[10] *The Washington Post*, 17 May 1960, p. 1.

[11] See inter alia, *The Washington Post*, 16 May 1960, p. 1.

Some twelve hours after Mr. Gates's message and almost coincidental with the gathering of the Four at the Elysée, Mr. Herter requested that a short and pessimistic prognosis be sent to the Acting Secretary, Mr. Dillon. This message was destined to a wider, but still closely circumscribed, audience.

Such were the guarded snippets of news communicated to Washington of possible thunder on the left. Perhaps I flatter myself, but who should be in a much better position to feel the effect of the miraculously tight security than Mr. Dulles's man in Paris? There he was well within a mile of the action and part of a group continuously tapped into the multiform resources of the world's best intelligence service, and he might just as well have been eyeless in Gaza.

For the balance of the day, while the American delegation went about its pressing business, while the President and Secretary Herter had meetings with the other western heads, Matteson, Whitman, the ladies, and I were back in the all but tenantless Chancery putting together the late Sunday afternoon package. We had not yet had Washington's comment on our memo of the morning, nor had we any other information which dealt with the heart of the President's problem. When I arrived at the Residence at 5:30 p.m., neither General Goodpaster nor Major Eisenhower was present. I left the material with Miss Boyce, who, if she knew what was going on, confined herself to an amiable "thank you." And so back to the Chancery to lock up and have a last confab with the stalwarts of commo.

Monday, 16 May—Summit Day—began as we had planned it, well before 4:00 a.m. There was the cable of general news from Mr. Sheldon and a few other items in the special category, a few cables from stations in Europe, the FBIS material, and a full set of the morning's Parisian newspapers. There was also the answer to General Goodpaster's request. The Office of National Estimates with the aid of knowledgeable analysts from other Agency components had gone over our draft, and Mr. Dulles had come to the office to study, discuss, and amend it before dispatch. It added little to the substance of previous estimates, but its last paragraph, particularly its last sentence for which Mr. Dulles was personally responsible, saved a bit at least of intelligence's bacon. The paragraph was of the "much-will depend" breed. In this case much would depend upon what Khrushchev learned from his preliminary soundings in Paris. The last sentence noted that those on the spot would be in a better position to draw conclusions than those afar. As you have seen, indeed they were and indeed they had drawn some pretty sound conclusions.

With all the materials in hand I made for my 7:30 appointment, and once again found General Goodpaster and Major Eisenhower away from their office. Miss Boyce, of course, remained the soul of discretion and I left the premises as innocent as at the moment of arrival, When time permitted, General Goodpaster went through the package, and I am grateful that in our subsequent meetings he politely refrained from teasing about the scuttle of dubious coals I had delivered to Newcastle.

Thirty minutes later—I learned the big news—then some twenty hours old—in the Chancery's front yard from a foreign service officer who had spent most of Sunday with his chief and others of the delegation. Then inside the building, I received a much fuller account from a friend who had been even closer to the center of things. I hurried to our office, almost as embarrassed at the realization of my failure as I was unhinged by the news and sent off an "Op-Im, Eyes Only" to Mr. Dulles. Long after, I discovered that even so the Director of Central Intelligence was probably the first official in Washington to receive word on the events of Sunday and how the prospects for Monday's meeting were very decidedly on the glum side.

Our luck improved that Monday, as I had chance encounters which Sunday's manning pattern of the Chancery and the role of the Residence had denied me.

According to a prior agreement of the principals, the first meeting of the Four was to take place at the Elysée at 11:00 a.m. Monday. It was to be a session devoted to procedural matters. As is all too well known, this is as far as the conference got. Khrushchev took the floor and read his statement with its three conditions, he concluded with the final uncivil paragraphs in which he withdrew the invitation to Mr. Eisenhower to visit the USSR. The President followed with a much shorter statement in which he reiterated an American position which both he and Secretary Herter had already made with respect to U–2 flights: "In point of fact these flights were suspended after the recent incident and are not to be resumed . . ." he said. On Khrushchev's other two points he had no words. These two statements opened a free discussion (three languages were used which required double translations) which finally ended with Khrushchev reminding all that the meeting just about to conclude was not the beginning of the Summit, but merely a preliminary on procedural matters. The adjournment was officially clocked at ten minutes before 2:00 p.m.

Shortly thereafter I had the good fortune to meet an officer who had been present at the debriefing of the President and a bit later Matteson and I encountered someone who had been at the Elysée.

Our message to Mr. Dulles was short to be sure, but it hit almost all of the main points and I trust beat the press. (The Soviets released the full Khrushchev statement soon after the meeting.) Such were the minor grandeurs of Monday after the miseries of the Sabbath.

As I have gone along, I have tried to imply a lesson or two for intelligence in the experiences of this intelligence officer. There is left the matter of grasping the most important one firmly and giving it a bit of gratuitous pointing-up.

Here it is. Any international conference where our President heads the US delegation is highly likely to include all his top echelon experts and advisers in the relevant area of foreign affairs. In such circumstances there will probably develop the subconscious feeling which I have ascribed to the Summit that the requirement to keep Washington informed is not all that urgent. After all, the normal information cables written from the site of lower level conferences are written in the hope that they will be read by the Secretary in Foggy Bottom or the President in the White House. When these two are in the next room, a lot of the motivation to inform home base will have evaporated. To follow on: if, as in the case in Paris, the price of a leak was the sure and sudden foundering of the whole enterprise, those on the inside would be scrupulous in their observance of the need-to-know principle. It is my confident estimate that if General Goodpaster had perceived a problem whose solution could be forwarded by an appeal to intelligence, he would have summoned his liaison and told all that was necessary to service the requirement. In this particular case the problem was one in which intelligence was far less well informed than the policy officers on the spot. Before intelligence could be expected to produce any useful wisdom on the matter, it would first have to be filled in by the very people it was supposed to enlighten. The built-in deterrent to such a procedure should be obvious to even the most incorrigible intelligence devotee, *a fortiori* when you pause to think that the President had right there in the Residence two of our country's reigning sovietologists (Bohlen and Thompson), and another half dozen wise and experienced general-purpose advisers. Why would he go beyond them for an estimate of Khrushchev's real rock bottom position?

No matter the delegation's esteem for intelligence; when it came to making this sort of intelligence estimate, its members were quite naturally their own intelligence officers. Furthermore, they knew full well that if perchance intelligence through some arcane source had achieved a full and confirmed view of Khrushchev's intentions, they could count on intelligence to give without prompting.

Some future intelligence officer at another Summit may not have the misfortune to have the big events played out on a Sunday, when his opportunities for informal talk are materially reduced. But suppose this future event is scheduled for the middle of the week and the intelligence officer does become privy to the inner secret. It may be that his informant in telling him will at the same time bind him not to communicate a word of it beyond the premises. I can only say that I am happy that I was spared this situation.

Epilog:

Among the lessons of the Paris meeting was one which at first glance seems of a lesser order. In fact, however, it bears on a prickly—and ever-present—intelligence problem: the care and handling of raw intelligence.

Among the many security men of four nations deployed to guard the persons of the Four, was a small group inside the Elysée palace itself. These men waited in an antechamber outside the conference room. Their duties involved the security of the room and, as well, escort service to the principals as the latter walked (still within the building) to their cars. When the meeting broke up, the Russian delegation, escorted by General de Gaulle and the Russian security men, left first. Soon after their departure, Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Macmillan came out of the conference room into the antechamber to await General de Gaulle's return. It was at this moment that one of the security men clearly heard Mr. Eisenhower make a remark not easily forgotten. It was "I don't care, my hands are clean, my soul is pure." General de Gaulle had returned from escorting the Russians to the door just in time to overhear it. It was speedily put into French and the General "nodded full agreement."

Our witness was a well-trained officer, and when his immediate duties were done he reported them in a memo to his superior and gave appropriate emphasis to the President's utterance.

The document not only does credit to the accuracy of his ear, but also to that of the President. For what the latter said was not something of his own composition nor was it remotely related to the status of his own hands and soul. Rather was it a direct quote from none other than Khrushchev himself who had proclaimed it a few minutes back to the other three in an emotional passage. He was in the process of resisting de Gaulle's and Macmillan's effort to salvage the Conference and driving on to reexpress his and his government's sense of outrage at the U 2 reconnaissance. Part of the passage went: "If there had been no incident we would have come here in friendship and in the best possible atmosphere . . . Our rocket shot the thing

down. Is this good friendship? God is my witness that I come with clean hands and a pure soul."

What is the lesson? Clearly the witness was not at fault; he did his assigned job (the security detail) flawlessly: nothing ill befell Mr. Eisenhower, and furthermore he volunteered a very interesting and informative report about what he saw and heard in these few moments in the presence. There was no way that he could possibly have known that Mr. Eisenhower was quoting Khrushchev unless he had also heard what one fancies must have been Mr. Eisenhower's introductory words. These—if uttered—had been said before our witness had tuned in. The witness did no speculating about what such remarks might have been, and a good thing too, for there was only the slightest chance that he would have been on the right track. Anything of this sort that he might have added on his own cognizance would have deepened the fog. So one important lesson that our witness had already learned and one that needs no special mention here is the rule that says when you are reporting, report your observations as exactly as you can, and if you feel compelled to interpolate your own speculations, be sure to label them as such.

The larger lesson is of course the very familiar one about "raw intelligence" and its dissemination to the wrong people. Generally speaking the wrong people are consumers, and the more highly placed, the wronger. The right people, those dark figures who enjoy the *jus primae noctis* over intelligence reporting, are in the first instance the "reports officers." It is probably because one of them held this memo up or confined its distribution to narrow limits that its colorful, quotable, and grossly erroneous message did not go forward and on into the fan. Not that we do not know the rules about raw intelligence, but it is good for all of us to have their rationale spelled out in a case such as this.

Play "suppose" for a minute. Suppose that Khrushchev had used a paraphrase of one of his intemperate remarks like "we will bury you." Suppose our witness had caught this one as he had caught the original—out of context—and reported it as if Mr. Eisenhower were addressing it to his British colleague. Then suppose there were a leak to an irresponsible newsman who worked for an irresponsible daily. Can you not see the headline: "Eisenhower swats British"? The lead sentence would have struck forth: "Today President Eisenhower told Prime Minister Macmillan 'we will bury you.' The two were emerging from the Summit's conference room when Mr. Eisenhower, flushed and clearly in a somewhat emotional state, was heard to remark to his British opposite number . . ."

A new legend would have been born—and a mighty disconcerting one for us and our cousins. No matter what the denials and explanations, the story would lurk on at the friction points of our special relationship, where it would do no good whatever.

Far out? Really not too far. Let us remember that dissemination of raw intelligence done in good faith has upon occasion brought us to grief. Our consumers who continuously ask for raw intelligence ought to understand that our reluctance is principally in everyone's interest—their's included.

Letter to the Editor

A Comment on "A Note on KGB Style"*

The central thesis of this essay is intriguing. It is true that major intelligence services, and especially those engaged in collecting foreign intelligence abroad, develop distinctive styles and that the style of each has a deep influence upon its personnel and its capabilities.

The writer's assessment of the style of the Soviet State Security Service, the KGB, gains clarity, however, at the expense of omitting certain complicating but essential facts. The essay has a monodimensional quality because the Second Chief Directorate (SCD), the KGB's domestic security and counterintelligence component, has been ignored. The style of the Second Chief Directorate is important, of course, because it is actually the primordial element of the service. Furthermore, the style of the SCD is more ruthless and cynical than are any of the qualities that this article attributes to the service as a whole. This fact results largely from the coercive, underhanded, and repugnant methods that the SCD has used in the past and that it keeps on using. Despite a strong effort in recent years to polish the image of the KGB at home, so that Soviet citizens will see its officers as their stalwart defenders, the continuing persecution of intellectuals and dissidents, the persistent use of sexual entrapment against foreigners, and the arbitrary use of duress have not been wholly concealed. Many Soviet citizens continue to hate and fear the KGB. The CPUSSR and the KGB can argue until they are blue in the face that there is no morality but Communist morality, but the reaction of Russians approached by the KGB often ranges from evasiveness to revulsion. Even the Soviet man has a non-Marxian conscience. KGB officers know how they are seen; and though the cynical may take pleasure in their power over others, the less corrupted are disturbed. Most defectors from KGB ranks have expressed distaste if not disgust.

The author of "A Note on KGB Style" considers that although that style ". . . is in many ways admirably suited to running operations, it appears to have limitations in the way it makes use of the product of its operations and in evaluating whether the operations are really worthwhile." He considers the younger officers ". . . less dedicated to fulfilling the obligations of the Party and the State." The record, however, suggests that KGB officers are loyal and dedicated, that they show genuine analytic skill in evaluating their operations, that they have scored major successes, that they use both agents of influence and disinformation (to cite only two strata) with subtlety that the present

Studies, Vol. 15, no. 1, Winter 1971, p. 115.

MORI/HRP
from pg.
81-82

generation of Sovietologists, diplomats and political leaders just refuse to face up to. The simple word "Kombinazia," for example, has no real analogue in the English "Combination." Our appreciation of its significance to understanding large-scale Soviet and Bloc deception is primative and inadequate. It goes without saying that we need more information about the KGB. Presumably we always shall. But it is dangerous to suggest, on the basis of our inadequate and superficial information, that the service is anything less than hard-driving and by its own standards, successful.

Both the communications and filing systems are described as somewhat primitive. Whether or not volume of traffic is a good indicator for the effectiveness of the commo system used by the KGB, which makes widespread use of TDY trips and oral messages, their methods of storing and retrieving information have been much affected by modern equipment. Like other Bloc services, the KGB has reportedly invested heavily in computers.

In his discussion of KGB training the author says, "In the course of their education the students learn two or three foreign languages well. . . ." The *well* is relative, of course. Even so, it is unusual for anyone past childhood to learn another language well, especially one written in a different alphabet. When Soviet intelligence defectors are debriefed about the skills of former colleagues, they usually describe them as knowing no foreign language well or knowing one. The officer who knows two or three well seems to be an exception.

The strength of the KGB and its special character or style result from several characteristics, but one of these is more important than the rest. It is the fact, which the author of this essay has noted at its conclusion, that this service is part of Soviet society as a whole and shares the quality of that society. Its compartmentation and vertical structure are characteristic of the government that it serves. Its subtlety and ruthlessness, its contempt for the rights of individuals, are among the sources of its effectiveness. No counterintelligence service in a non-communist country can match the advantages which the KGB exploits as the henchman of a dictatorial state. In no other service, therefore, are the employees at all levels subjected to the same corruption of the human spirit. It is basically this fact which has created and maintains the style of the KGB.

John W. Monkiewicz