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In the shadowy world of spy versus counterspy, the West has a major advantage: corruption in the Soviet system. Here are the stories of four brave men who repudiated their communist masters to work for freedom

BY JOHN
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Double Agents in a Secret War

— Oleg Lyalin —

DURING THE PAST 14 YEARS, Western nations have been safer and world peace has been more secure because of a Russian named Oleg Lyalin. Until now, his story has never been made public.

As a youth in a Soviet sports club, Lyalin became expert in hand-to-hand combat, and later an excellent marksman and parachutist. Inducted into the KGB, the lean,

dark-eyed Lyalin underwent prolonged examination by specialists, who judged him capable of killing for a cause. In seeking staff assassins, the KGB places great value on stability and patriotic idealism. Given his Marxist values, Lyalin was a moral and honest man—too much so, as it turned out.

In the early 1960s, at an airfield near the Baltic coast, the KGB caught two Jewish dissidents trying to flee in a small plane. They were

dragged off and stuffed into the bomb bay of a military aircraft. Pretending to take off, the pilot taxied the plane down the field, then revved the engines to a high pitch. The two dissidents were told that the plane was losing altitude and they had to be jettisoned. The bomb-bay doors were opened and the men fell a few feet to the ground beneath the stationary bomber. The psychological shock killed them both. Lyalin saw them literally frightened to death, and he never forgot.

Assigned to London in 1967 as a "trade representative," Lyalin witnessed corruption everywhere in the KGB Residency. In quest of career advantage, some officers regularly gave or took bribes and falsified reports. Others embezzled from operational funds to buy Western goods to sell on the Moscow black market. At the same time, Lyalin concluded that a free British society had better fulfilled its promises than had Marxism.

Finally something snapped, and Lyalin called a British official. After talking for hours with British intelligence, he agreed to serve as a British agent within the KGB. Over the ensuing months, Lyalin detailed elaborate KGB preparations to terrorize London, Washington, Paris, Bonn, Rome and other Western capitals. He was not talking about some theoretical wartime-contingency plan, but rather of a plan to commit widespread murder and mayhem *in peacetime*.

Lyalin had been ordered to select British politicians, journalists, academicians and businessmen for assassination. His KGB counterparts in the United States and Western Europe had drafted similar death lists. Soviet agents had then recorded the daily movements of the marked men so they could be quickly liquidated whenever Moscow ordered.

Officers of Department V, the KGB's assassination and sabotage apparatus, had also developed agent networks. Posing as messengers, deliverymen or tourists, agents were to enter government buildings and litter the corridors with tiny, colorless capsules. Crushed underfoot, the capsules would emit vapors fatal to anyone breathing them. And the more rescuers, the greater the fatalities and the terror.

To create more chaos, the KGB intended to infiltrate, by plane and submarine, squads of Soviet saboteurs to blow up power stations, bridges and rail junctions and to poison municipal-water supplies.

When the incredulous British demanded proof, Lyalin supplied it—sometimes in the form of KGB documents, sometimes leading them to his own agents.

To defuse the threat, on September 24, 1971, the British suddenly wiped out the KGB Residency in London, expelling 105 Soviet "diplomats." Then they announced Lyalin's defection.

These actions produced pande-

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monium in the Politburo. Soviet rulers feared that Lyalin's disclosures might abort détente and cost them coveted Western capital, technology and foodstuffs. The Politburo abolished Department V, summoning home all its officers.

With Lyalin's help, British counterintelligence, MI-5, had cut the darkest core out of the KGB and eliminated the risk that the Soviet Union, by launching waves of terror, might provoke World War III.

— Vladimir Rezun —

AS A JUNIOR TANK COMMANDER in the Soviet army, Vladimir Rezun witnessed the same deceit, bribery and embezzlement Lyalin had seen in the KGB. He concluded that the

corruption was caused by the moral degeneracy of the Soviet system itself. The U.S.S.R.'s invasion of Czechoslovakia, in which Rezun participated, solidified his judgment that he must do all he could to remove the curse of the system from the Russian people.

Assigned to military intelligence and posted to Switzerland as a Soviet "diplomat" in 1974, Rezun awaited his opportunity. Boyish, smiling and polite, he and his attractive wife were welcome guests on the diplomatic circuit. At one reception, he took a chance and spoke to a visiting Englishman. About a week later, he met with British-intelligence officers.

Rezun had a warning for the West. It concerned *Spetsnaz*, a secret, elite element of Soviet military intelligence (GRU) consisting of about 27,000 men and women. Its mission: to destroy, as Rezun put it, the "brains and nerve centers" of Western nations by killing political, military and scientific leaders, and by sabotaging critical installations.

Assassination and sabotage teams of specially trained Red Army officers—often posing as Soviet athletes—would be slipped into the West just before an outbreak of war. This surprise attack would quickly be followed by parachute landings of *Spetsnaz* troops deep in hostile territory.

The West knew that *Spetsnaz* existed, but Rezun defined its strength, missions and methods as no one before ever had. More impor-

tant, he showed how to recognize the signs that *Spetsnaz* was about to be launched. Among the telling clues he cited: groups of Soviet "tourists" and "cultural delegations" with unusually fit young men and women; Soviet merchant ships with abnormally large crews in port; huge contingents of "workers" imported to repair or renovate a Soviet diplomatic installation abroad.

Because of Rezun's explicit warnings, the Soviets can no longer count upon *Spetsnaz* to surprise the West. Thus, a lone spy has greatly reduced the chances that the Soviets will dare employ that force.

Rezun intended to remain inside Soviet intelligence, ferreting out its secrets. But on a Friday in June 1978, Rezun and all other GRU

officers were called to an emergency meeting in the Geneva Residency, where a special Aeroflot flight to Moscow that weekend was announced.

Someone was obviously going to be forcibly returned to Moscow. Fearing he was the one, Rezun flashed a prearranged signal to British intelligence. Within hours, Rezun, his wife and child were safely hidden in England.

— Arkadi Shevchenko —

AS IT HAPPENED, the special flight was not for Rezun. Instead, it took away the rising young Soviet diplomat Gennadi Shevchenko, whose father, Arkadi, was Undersecretary General of the United Nations and at home in the highest Soviet councils. The KGB had just discovered that the elder Shevchenko was a spy working for American intelligence.

A member of the Communist Party oligarchy, Arkadi Shevchenko enjoyed power, privilege and luxury. Whatever he wanted—money, a country villa, Western goods—the party delivered. Arriving at the United Nations in 1973, he lived lavishly in New York. But Shevchenko had a sense of decency buried deep within him. Ultimately, it impelled him to recoil from the system, even though he was among its prime beneficiaries.

Shevchenko confided to an American acquaintance that he would like to defect. Furtive exchanges of secret messages led

Shevchenko to a Manhattan apartment and the CIA. Eventually, Shevchenko agreed to work in place, to ferret out whatever information he could that might be of use to the United States.

Shevchenko provided the CIA with volumes of Kremlin secrets. At the U.N., he performed his act so well that in 1978 the Soviets successfully induced the United Nations to extend his contract as Undersecretary General.

Not long afterward, the KGB realized that the Soviet Union was suffering a horrendous leak of secrets concerning its strategic-arms negotiations. Shevchenko became a prime suspect and was summoned to Moscow for "consultations." But just before he left, a friend signaled Shevchenko that he was in peril. Shevchenko then requested, and was granted, political asylum.

The full consequences of this Western penetration of the Soviet hierarchy may never be known. But one significant, continuing effect is discernible. From 1980 to 1983, the Soviet Union made a ferocious effort to intimidate the West into agreements precluding installation of new American missiles in Europe. Had the Soviets succeeded, a dangerous military imbalance surely would have resulted, and NATO might have unraveled. But partly because of Shevchenko's warnings, the West resolutely resisted the Soviet strategy. Convinced that a one-sided treaty is unobtainable, the Soviets may now be willing to sit down for serious talks.

— Col. Andrzej Sokolowski —

IN 1982, at the request of the Senate, the CIA submitted a remarkable document detailing advanced U.S. technology stolen by Soviet agents. The list was staggering: computers, lasers, ultra-secret "quiet" radar designed for the B-1 and Stealth bombers, and missile systems. How did the CIA know so precisely what the Soviets had acquired? Part of the answer was a source high in Polish intelligence: a colonel known by the alias of Andrzej Sokolowski.

Though in his youth Sokolowski had believed in communism, he repudiated it after witnessing the cor-

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ruption of Polish party leaders who were allowed to live like potentates in return for keeping their people vassals of the Soviets. He came to look upon individual liberty as the essential foundation of any political-economic system and, ultimately, on the United States as the greatest protector of liberty. Andrzej Sokolowski was in a position to do much for America.

Polish intelligence, known as the SB, functions primarily as an auxiliary of the KGB. Any secrets the Poles obtain go, literally overnight, to Moscow. At SB headquarters in Warsaw, Sokolowski worked intimately with KGB officers stationed there and often learned what the Soviets had succeeded in stealing from the United States.

He reported that a Polish agent inside the Hughes Aircraft Corp. was systematically looting secret U.S. military technology. In 1981 this information led to the conviction of Hughes engineer William Holden Bell.

Sokolowski also reported that, through a California businessman, the Soviets were obtaining masses of secret data on American missiles. In 1984, his information resulted in the conviction of James Durward Harper, Jr., of Mountain View, Calif.

By learning precisely which weapons systems had been compromised, the United States has been able to repair much of the damage. Because of one spy, great hemorrhages of technology have been

stanching. Andrzej Sokolowski and his family are now safe in the United States.

THE IMPACT on contemporary history of the secrets so bravely supplied by Lyalin, Rezun, Shevchenko and Sokolowski defies measurement. The four differed greatly

from one another in personality and background, yet each rebelled against the corruption he perceived in the Soviet system. So long as this degeneration continues—and it is accelerating—others are likely to join the rebellion.

In the secret war, time no longer is on the Soviets' side.