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A program for identifying and attacking the adversary's psychologically vulnerable fringe.

MORE ON THE RECRUITMENT OF SOVIETS

Martin L. Brabourne

Andrew J. Twiddy's "Recruitment of Soviet Officials"¹ came as an invigorating breath of fresh air to at least one much interested reader, combining a realistic appraisal of one of our key intelligence tasks and an unenchanted review of past efforts with an original and optimistic approach to the future. Its community-wide dissemination in the *Studies* was also a forward move in striking the keynote, so to speak, for a renewed and broader examination of Soviet recruitments which would lift the subject out of its status as the arcane, esoteric specialty of a selected few. It is not out of disagreement with Mr. Twiddy but stimulated by his refreshing treatment that this reader has tried to organize and pull together his own parallel thoughts and experiences in the hope of continuing the conversation, the "thinking out loud" that Twiddy began. He believes he has something to say, and perhaps this may in turn stimulate others to join the discussion.

The Vulnerable Target

We have for years studied so-called "vulnerabilities," the "basis for recruitment," the "motivation of defection," and so on, and there is no question that we have learned something from these studies. That our efforts have somehow been wide of the mark, however, is indicated by the consistent failure of operational approaches based on the studies. It may be that we have lost sight of the forest, or perhaps more appropriately have failed, in our wandering among the trees, to perceive that we are in a forest at all. What we are looking for is so evident, so perfectly obvious, that in a sense it has escaped our notice.

This single, simple, self-evident observation is that the enormous act of defection, of betrayal, treason, is almost invariably the act of a warped, emotionally maladjusted personality. It is compelled by a fear, hatred, deep sense of grievance, or obsession with revenge far

¹ *Studies* VIII 1, p. 1 ff.

exceeding in intensity these emotions as experienced by normal, reasonably well-integrated and well-adjusted persons. Defection is atypical, and continued betrayal even more so: of the thousands, even tens of thousands of Soviets who have served abroad since say 1950, only a few dozen have defected, and of these only a few have worked in place for us as agents. Such acts in peacetime are clearly a manifestation of abnormal psychology; a normal, mature, emotionally healthy person, deeply embedded in his own ethnic, national, cultural, social, and family matrix, just doesn't do such things.³

This general principle is illustrated in our experience with Soviet defectors. All of them have been lonely people. All of those in the writer's experience have manifested some serious behavior problem—such as alcoholism, satyriasis, morbid depression, a psychopathic pattern of one type or another, an evasion of adult responsibility—which was adequate evidence for an underlying personality defect decisive in their defection.³ It is only a mild hyperbole to say that no one can consider himself a Soviet operations officer until he has gone through the sordid experience of holding his Soviet "friend's" head while he vomits five days of drinking into the sink.⁴

What is the evident corollary of this proposition? Simply stated, it is that our operational efforts should be focussed against the emotionally weak, immature, and disturbed fringe elements of a Soviet colony. Systematic fishing in these troubled waters should have a much higher probability of yield, over a period of time, than unfocussed, indiscriminate efforts such as have been made in the past. This is the principle that has been so obvious as to escape notice.

³ The truth of this generalization is today adequately recognized in overt academic, journalistic, and literary works. Of the many references that could be given, Rebecca West's *Meaning of Treason* comes to mind, and William L. Shirer's *The Traitor*. From a psychoanalytical standpoint there is Robert Lindner's *Prescription for Rebellion*. A sociological treatment, and the best one for our own systematic study and understanding, is Morton Grozdin's *The Loyal and the Disloyal* (University of Chicago, 1956).

⁴ Our classified literature has finally recognized this fact, and articles in this journal have reflected the hard-earned lesson. See, for example, "What to Do with Defectors" by John Ankerbrand, *Studies* V 4, p. 33 ff.

⁵ We shall not attempt an analysis of the degree to which this post-defection behavior may reflect guilt and remorse for the act of defection. Suffice it here to observe that psychiatric study of several of these defectors identified the alcoholic manifestations as merely one symptom of long-standing personality difficulties of which the defection itself was another.

Given the principle, a number of conditions must be satisfied before it can be translated into an operational program. First is the question whether it is possible to recognize and identify these fringe elements by means of traditional and existing sources of information. Do sources normally available to us produce the kind of clues which would at least tentatively identify such potential targets? If so, the next step is to isolate and catalog these clues, criteria, and indicators of our targets. That done, case officers and analysts have to be sensitized to recognize the indicators, have to develop the outlook and sophistication to seize on them in their observations and report them. Finally, access must be gained to the targets so identified, and officers must learn how to talk to them.

Target Characteristics

An intelligence officer once observed that the only reliable motivation for treasonable espionage is hatred and thirst for revenge. Elsewhere it has been said that most traitors have been impelled to their treason by dreams of power and glory. Who are the people that hate and seek revenge with such passion they commit treason? Who are the people that dream of power and glory and, not only frustrated in these dreams but perhaps even ridiculed in their daily lives, become so bitter as to turn their backs on family, friends, and nation?

It is necessary at this point to go into a little amateur (and vastly oversimplified) psychology. In this writer's opinion, the persons we are seeking are those with a markedly deficient or defective conscience—the psychopaths, also called sociopaths—and at the other end of the spectrum those who may have an adequate (or perhaps overdeveloped) conscience but are hampered in their life and work by intense internal conflicts—neurotic and prepsychotic personalities.

The psychopath is a person basically without scruples or one whose weak or defective conscience is eroded by the problems and frustrations of living and finally collapses under their intolerable accumulation. Sometimes a deceptively charming and seemingly well-adjusted person, he can also be an easily recognizable misfit, an intrigant, a con man, a chiseler. He is highly self-centered, even if he hides it with some degree of success. He is impulsive, with a low frustration tolerance, hypersensitive, easily angered. He has an enormous need for prestige, status, recognition. He is often highly arrogant. He characteristically seeks revenge for real or imagined slights. The revenge may be taken in coolly calculated actions to wreak the maxi-

mum damage or in indiscriminate destructive retaliation, a blind lashing out. Sgt. Dunlap, Col. Penkovskiy, Joe Valachi, Aaron Burr, Rastvorov, George Blake, and Lee Oswald almost certainly belong to this type. Eleazar Lipsky has written a highly perceptive fictional account of such a person in his story *The Scientist*, which is well worth reading. Another by the same author is *Kiss of Death*, presenting a fictional precursor of Joe Valachi.

The neurotic and prepsychotic are different from the psychopath, but equally interesting from an operations standpoint. Here we have emotional constellations characterized by inner conflicts, anxieties, and severe repressions or distortions of particular facets of the personality. It is to this category that Morton Grozdin's "alienated" personality belongs. The neurotic or prepsychotic has difficulty getting along in life; in severe cases he is immobilized in his job or perhaps in his family relations. He may be severely repressed, or over-organized and rigid (the Puritan, for example). His ability to understand and get along with other people is characteristically poor. He is pre-occupied with his own problems. He loses contact with other people to varying degrees, and he acutely feels need for such contact, for communication and affection. He will be over-dependent or over-aggressive. His personality distortions cause his unsatisfied needs to be experienced with much greater intensity than in "normal" people, and it is these overwhelmingly intense feelings which can provide the driving power for defection and espionage.*

Whether the neurotic/prepsychotic is overly dependent (often shy, withdrawn, even isolated), or overly aggressive, obnoxious, and up-staging, he retains the opposite tendency repressed, driven out of sight, so to speak, with greater or less success. A highly dependent person thus has strongly repressed hostility and unsatisfied aggressive needs, while the highly aggressive ones have rigidly suppressed dependency needs and are often most lonely persons. The suppressed tendency, whether to dependency or aggression, often splashes over into overt behavior, giving the outside observer an impression of inconsistency, "spottiness," or instability of character.

*The force of these drives was well illustrated by an incident in the writer's handling of a defector. The defector was being "dried out" from one of his periodic alcoholic bouts and had been placed under sedation. The doctor administered about ten times the dosage normally sufficient to knock a person cold. This massive dosage failed to put him to sleep, however; it merely "slowed him down."

Neurotic and prepsychotic persons are characteristically unable to evaluate friend and foe objectively. They systematically misread the motives and intentions of others, projecting their own problems onto people in the outer world. In aggregate all these attributes, while making their possessors difficult to work with, render many of them peculiarly susceptible to approach and development.

Finally, even in more normal people, we should look especially at the unique vulnerabilities of middle age. The incidence of various types of emotional and mental breakdown is highest in the middle-age category. The period of life from say age 37 on shows the highest incidences of divorce, disappearance, alcoholism, infidelity, suicide, embezzlement—and probably defection, overt or in place.

The reasons for this phenomenon are not hard to find. There is the onset of decline from physiological peak; one's children suddenly are no longer children but young adults, bringing a sharp realization of the passage of one's life; youthful ambitions and ideals suffer disillusion and then sudden, brutal collapse; career turning-points occur at this time. The prospect of an insignificant old age looms large and immediate. Most men, according to numerous qualified sources, go through a complete reevaluation of personal philosophy, religious and moral beliefs, and so on in this period.⁶ It is the time when a man takes stock of his life, and the result is frequently traumatic in the extreme. This so-called "middle-age revolt" is of exceptional importance from an intelligence operations standpoint, since men of 37 or older are usually well advanced in their professional careers and highly enough placed to make them extremely interesting targets.

Symptoms and Sources

What precisely, then, should we look for in our scrutiny of source materials during the initial search for targets? The following sketches the outline of an indicator list; it is not, of course, complete or comprehensive:

Alienation in interpersonal relationships. Lack of close friends in the Soviet colony. Evidence of coldness in personal relationships. Isolation, aloneness. Personality difficult to get along with. Arrogant, offensive, sullen, hostile. Feels discriminated against. Resentful. Hypersensitive. Enemies in the Soviet colony. Ob-

⁶ See Edmund Bergler, *The Revolt of the Middle-Aged Man* (Grosset and Dunlap, 1957).

ject of either ridicule or contempt. Difficulties with co-workers or psychological isolation from them.

Career Situation. Evidence or reasonable inference of difficulties in job situation. Resentment of supervision, direction, interference. Evasion of job responsibilities. Lack of appropriate career progression. Resentment of others' progression.

Family Situation. Difficulties in family. Lack of warm relationship with wife, children. Resentment of wife, children. Infidelity. Avoidance or disregard of family (e.g., in off-duty diversions).

Non-Duty Outlets. Avoidance of family or other Soviets. Excessive drinking. Infidelity. Wasting away time in trivial diversions. Having no physical sports or diversions. Predominance of diversions over responsibilities and obligations.

Personality. Aggressive vs. submissive evaluation. Rigid and compulsive behavior patterns. Anxiety and self-protective maneuvers. Unusual shyness and over-dependency. Or anxious efforts to please, over-submissiveness. Preoccupied with self ("McLandress dimension"), selfish, overestimating own problems, ideas, outlook. Excessively impulsive, chronically impatient, easily angered. Hypersensitive, feelings easily hurt, unable to accept criticism. Tending to blame others, evade own responsibility. Arrogant, excessively prestige- and status-conscious, anxious to impress everyone with own brilliance and importance. Great mood swings, depressions, evidence of low self-esteem or self-estimate. Constant criticism of others, fault-finding, sarcastic manner, sarcastic or anti-social type of humor. Rigid, highly organized, inflexible personality, or its opposite.

All of the above are relative questions; they call for qualitative evaluation of the ways a given Soviet relates to other Soviets. To make valid evaluations of this type requires persons, analysts and case officers, who know and understand the Soviets as participants in their own culture and society. It requires mature, sophisticated, socially sensitive, and observant persons who mingle and converse with a broad range of Soviets reasonably frequently and over a period of time.

Telephone taps and audio sources which provide coverage of internal conversations in a Soviet colony, properly read, are an exceedingly valuable source of clues and leads bearing on the questions of interest. Wives' personal chatter and complaints, the planning of social events (picnics, hunting and fishing trips, receptions), what is

said when the children become ill, when the boss insists a man leave his lunch to come to the office, when people are planning home leave—all of these situations are among the kind that provide occasion for personal commentary, for flashes of irritation, frustration, and anger, for identifying persons who are disliked or isolated, and so on.

People who have business relations with the Soviets visit their offices frequently and also attend parties and receptions. As recruited agents, they can report on pecking order, on arrogance/submissiveness, on the personal manner and personality of individual Soviets, and on warmth or coldness in interpersonal relationships, as well as more concrete observations such as disparaging remarks made by one Soviet about another, jokes and ridicule, flashes of irritation and anger, impatience in dealing with people, and so on. As a given Soviet becomes acquainted with such a contact and gains confidence in him, he may over time decide that the man is no risk, regardless of what the security officer might say, and may increasingly confide in him. All of these observations and confidences provide insight into the Soviet colony and produce the hints and leads we are seeking.

Double agent operations can also, in certain circumstances, produce similar information.

Finally, there is direct diplomatic or social contact. Numerous advantages accrue from a broad and continuing contact of this kind. Foremost is the short-circuiting of all the indirect assessment problems, problems occasioned by working through one or several intermediaries; face-to-face meetings by trained intelligence professionals should produce far more comprehensive and reliable impressions. Second, the direct American-Soviet confrontation permits individuals on each side to become acquainted with individuals on the other and so dispels the numerous halo effects and stereotype conceptions that arise when the two are isolated from each other. Third, if there is information already on hand leading to a given target or if it is obtained from another source such as a telephone tap, it is far easier, faster, and more productive to undertake direct probing and development of him and observe and evaluate at first hand his reactions. Fourth, it is extremely useful, if not indeed essential, to expose a given target to a range of diverse personality types, for purposes of both assessment and development. Finally, an intelligence officer (and to a lesser degree any U.S. government officer) can be much more fully briefed and guided than say a third-national agent.

Program Training

A third prerequisite for making an operational program of our principle, we said, was to provide an enabling point of view for case officers and analysts and sensitize them to the indicators. One aspect of the problem is that most case officers regard Soviet recruitments as a will-of-the-wisp and simply refuse, in practice if not in words, to give the required effort to the task. The other is that they do not recognize the necessity for sensitive observation, through fairly subtle indicators, of personality relationships and adjustments. If a case officer cannot himself do these things, it is of course unrealistic to expect him to give adequate guidance to his agents. The net result is that a supervisor trying to run such a program must spend an inordinate amount of time in personal debriefings and guidance of these people. Some examples follow.

Three different officers in a field station were successively charged with responsibility for screening telephone tap production. They were given the criteria for selection, and examples taken from live material were repeatedly drawn to their attention. Yet time after time they all failed to notice interesting and possibly important leads in the material. *One item missed:* a series of telephone calls indicating that a given Soviet was having serious marital problems, was drinking heavily (on one occasion throwing the embassy into a flap at 2 a.m.), and was having difficulty in his work as a result. (A year later new evidence showed the marital problems to be deep and durable ones. He was of minority ethnic origin, and his wife, a Great Russian, ridiculed him as representative of this minority nationality.) *Second item missed:* A senior officer newly assigned to the Soviet embassy conducted himself with great arrogance, constantly using offensive and abusive language over the telephone and creating numerous enemies. (It has more recently been found that this same officer may be having not one but several affairs simultaneously within the Soviet colony.) *Third item missed:* Two Soviet officers were reflected in telephone conversation as absolutely despising each other, to such an extent that they could not even be seated next to each other at an official function. *Fourth item missed:* In an operational development that was heading toward a defection approach, a key unknown was the relationship of the target with his wife. Overt observation had suggested that it was the hoped-for cold and perfunctory one; a warm feeling between them would probably vitiate the whole approach. The missed conversation, on a newly acquired tap, established beyond a shadow of doubt that husband and wife were warm and intimate.

Reports on social contacts can be equally frustrating from a supervisory standpoint. In reporting physical characteristics, intelligence officers trained in anti-Soviet operations generally produce good descriptions of Soviets they meet. But when it goes beyond the physical to observations on interpersonal relationships and psychological nuances, they rarely produce acceptable reports in the sense of what is needed for a program of this kind. One officer who had flirted with a Soviet's wife recalled gleefully some weeks after the event how the husband had bristled with antagonism from across the room, obviously watching every move she made. This incident had not been noted either in the written report of contact or in the oral debriefing after the party.

Another intelligence officer, speaking fluent Russian, gained acceptance from the Soviets and frequently attended their get-togethers and embassy receptions. But this officer treats social/diplomatic contact as just that: his eyes are blind to behavioral nuances and his ears are closed to anything except art, books, theatre, and so on. Nothing can be elicited from him concerning which Soviet talks to which and in what manner, or which habitually wanders around alone and unengaged with others. Superior in many aspects of his job performance, he seems to have a blind spot when it comes to functioning as a spotter or developer. He will note that a Soviet has a seventeen-year-old boy; but that this same Soviet is very upset because the boy's education is about to be broken off by conscription escapes him.

Another officer, reporting that a Soviet had been in London, failed to report that the London visit was a six-month familiarization assignment in the embassy, which usually means a KGB probationary tour. Met later by another officer, this Soviet turned out to be a quiet, thoughtful, and seemingly impressionable young man; there was no such description in the original contact reports. With glowing sincerity he now characterized his experience in London as "the most wonderful six months" in his life. The original case officer, apprised of this remark, said "Oh I know that, he told me that a long time ago!"

These sad stories could go on, but the point is made: officers must be trained and sensitized, and first of all they must be convinced that Soviets can be recruited and it is worth the effort. This is a long-term process, easier with young officers than with older ones.

Access and Development

If we can overcome this obstacle, the final requirement for making the program operational is gaining access to the Soviets in question and knowing what to do when it is gained—things easier said than done. Access is in a sense the key question of Soviet operations. If normal social, business, and diplomatic intercourse with the Soviets were possible, most of the problems to which this paper is addressed would not exist. Many of the operational approaches and gimmicks which have been devised over the years have been efforts to evade or surmount restrictions on getting next to the target.

Some of these restrictions are created by Soviet security practices and controls of one type or another. In addition to specific control procedures, the intense security indoctrination the Soviets get implants in them suspicion and anxiety about any foreign contact. So even when you succeed in establishing an outside relationship with one or two Soviets, you usually find that it is leading nowhere unless you get invited to their home ground, where, paradoxically, you have a chance to break out of the controlled channel by assessing individual Soviets in their own environment and observing their relationships with each other. Outside the Bloc practically the only place where this is possible is at Satellite or Soviet receptions, or to a lesser degree at some third-national receptions. Invitations to these are therefore the first objective, regardless of whether you are seeking an opportunity in person or trying to maneuver embassy officers, indigenous businessmen or other contacts, or recruited agents of any nationality into promising situations.

Of equal importance with the Soviet restrictions are our own self-limitations. These result from general American attitudes towards the cold-war enemy, the reflection of this in the official climate established by an embassy, a reluctance on the part of American diplomatic and even intelligence officers to consort with Soviets and East Europeans, and a general diplomatic ineptitude in dealing with them, often marked by the apparently irresistible urge to be one up on them, embarrass them, and score at their expense in order to look good as a loyal and clever American diplomat when the Political Counsellor reads the Memorandum of Conversation. More on this subject a little later.

Third-National and Indigenous Agents

In the face of this reluctance of the official American community abroad to indulge in social contact with Soviets, a natural course is to emphasize the alternative and complementary program of running agents into the Soviet-Satellite community. These may be American (including staff agents under deep cover), indigenous, or third-nationals. They may be persons already in business or other contact with the Soviets whom we can coopt, or they may be carefully selected "pigeons" whom we recruit, train, and then set up in positions where we hope the Soviets may be interested enough to cultivate them.

The agent approach is indeed an essential part of any comprehensive program. Third-national agents, in particular, provide a broader base for assessments and development, offer windows that may have a truer view of certain targets than an American can get, and frequently give access to Soviet groups that, like trade missions, are beyond reach through normal diplomatic channels. It does suffer, however, from certain inherent difficulties. One is that the unilateral cooption of people with established Soviet contacts is replete with security hazards, including a high probability of their being doubled by the local security service as well as by the Soviets, and the consequent limitations on the extent to which they can be safely briefed and guided. Finding them in the first place may require an extensive investigative effort, and then come operational maneuvers to screen, contact, and develop them. A year or more may thus be required to procure only a handful of such agents. And as noted, if we are doing this unilaterally we are operating in the same area and against the same targets as the local services.

The planting of agents especially recruited and trained for this purpose is an important program that takes even more time. Finding suitable persons, recruiting and training them, creating situations leading to contacts, and developing plausible relationships are a matter of long-term effort that should be undertaken in sufficient mass to make up for the likelihood of failures. After the laborious preparation the plant may fail to evoke any interest whatever from the targets. Or he may develop a relationship which the local security service then calls him in to explain. If he escapes these hazards, the time will still come in most agent-mediated operations, though not in all, that an intelligence staff officer under viable cover

must be introduced to make a face-to-face assessment and possibly take over the development.⁷

The citation of these difficulties in trying to maneuver agents against Soviet targets, along with a conclusion that the percentage over time of yield from such operations will be low, is not intended to convey a pessimistic or defeatist attitude regarding this use of agents. It is intended as grounds for insisting that such operations must be part of a comprehensive, long-term, focussed program; and this is not a program that can be run with the left hand, so to speak, part-time, by officers assigned also to other duties whose product may be more immediately tangible and gratifying to a chief of station.

Diplomatic Contact

Broad and regular diplomatic contact with the Soviet colony is the other main approach to the access problem. Against its undeniable limitations and dangers, it offers the advantages of direct assessment, personal acquaintance and familiarity, gradual development through conversations, rapid contact in any sudden opportunity for more direct approach, and a high degree of control over what is said to the target and how it is said.

The opportunity for this kind of contact is probably much greater than the accepted mythology allows. The Soviets are said to shy away from such contacts, to be prohibited from accepting invitations, to mouth nothing but the Party line, to walk away if an American approaches, and so on. Undoubtedly this is a true picture in many places. In this writer's experience in one country, however, such beliefs, buttressed by a few casual experiences, had effectively inhibited efforts to cultivate Soviet bloc representatives for a considerable period of time, but when a determined and prolonged effort was finally made it paid off handsomely, to everyone's surprise. The principal obstacles, it transpired, had been skepticism, indifference, and hostility within the American establishment.

A truer picture would show that Soviet intelligence officers and coopted workers are under instructions to cultivate Americans—for

⁷ This statement is based in part upon the proposition, not here to be developed, that no Soviet is going to consider seriously defection to nationals or intelligence services of small powers. When a Soviet begins to think about treason, he is going to think of either Britain (along with some Commonwealth countries) or the United States. Third-national agent assessments are in any case, in this writer's opinion, not to be considered reliable; that is why a first-hand professional assessment must be obtained.

identification, assessment, and transmission of "disinformation"—and moreover that, as human beings in a dull and restrictive environment, they welcome such contacts, whatever their official aims may be. This truer picture would distinguish between intelligence officers and other Soviets; the latter are truly wary of friendly contacts with Westerners while under the eyes of their security shepherds and tend to avoid Westerners at receptions. Finally, willingness to engage in broad diplomatic contact, in all probability, varies considerably from one Soviet embassy to another, depending on the local situation, the personalities of the ambassador and the intelligence residents and so on. But we don't find out what we can do in any particular place until we really try.

There are a variety of reasons why Foreign Service, USIS, and military attaché personnel and even intelligence officers under official cover are so often reluctant to involve themselves with Soviet bloc representatives. Some don't want it on their records that they have had Eastern associations; some imagine that the Soviets are ten feet tall; many feel that it's too much work with too little to show for it; some have a visceral distaste for intelligence and just don't want to get involved in it. Many officers are therefore also indifferent to standing instructions that contacts and relationships be reported, dilatory in writing reports, and reluctant to be debriefed. And there is a certain category of persons whose chief delight is to bait, embarrass, and insult their Eastern counterparts.

For this latter there is no excuse. Yet time after time one can see officers—military, diplomatic, and intelligence—ruining contacts: "All that guy could do was talk about himself, I just walked away." "This jerk fastened himself to me like a leech, so I told him off." "He was so stupid I couldn't make any money with him." "When he got gushy about friendship I asked him why they didn't take the same approach to disarmament negotiation." "That fat slob is too incompetent as an Army officer for me to waste my time talking to him."

It must be recognized that some of the American inhibitions are not wholly without justification. The KGB is known to put at the top of its priorities the cultivation of American officials in order to assess them, determine who does what in their installations, attempt compromises, and hopefully recruit. But this fact merely calls for discrimination on our part in selecting those—intelligence officers or others—whom we encourage to cultivate and be cultivated by the Soviets, and for care and realism in defensive briefings.

Many of the difficulties are often traceable to a single underlying cause, an indifference pervading the individual establishment. The tone or attitude of an official representation is determined by the ambassador and his deputy. If the ambassador is indifferent, skeptical, or hostile toward this intelligence objective, then it is an uphill struggle all the time. On a personal basis one can secure the full cooperation of Foreign Service, USIS, and attaché officers, but usually only at the cost of time and developmental efforts which should be invested rather in operations against targets. The only solution visible to this writer is a continuing flow of requirements and guidances not only from intelligence headquarters but also from the State Department emphasizing the Soviet operations problem. Until the U.S. Government addresses itself integrally to this problem, the intelligence effort will tend to peter out in paper exercises.

Tactical Devices

The Soviets are a highly disciplined group, intensively indoctrinated, provocation-minded, keenly suspicious, insulated, and operating within security controls and secret observation several orders of magnitude greater than anything to which we are accustomed. They are prideful and highly sensitive to slight. At the same time, as individuals, many of them are extremely anxious for adventure and exposure beyond these narrow confines, and many are eager for acceptance and approval by Westerners and by Americans. This mixture of conflicting tendencies can produce interesting results and points to operationally useful tactics.

While Soviet relationships with the British and Americans (and some others) are under tight official control, those with other nationalities may be, for diplomatic or other reasons, much more relaxed. Thus it may be unusual (as well as operationally undesirable) for a Soviet to accept a singleton invitation from an American but not at all unusual to see singleton Soviets at parties given, for example, by the Indians, the Iraqis, or the French. And at such a third-national party the singleton Soviet can be approached, conversation can flow easily, and after a number of such meetings over a period of time a real relationship and bond may develop. The Soviet is in a position—limited, of course, by the possible presence of Soviet agents at the party—to report the contact or not, or to slant the report, as he sees fit. But the minute an attempt is made to convert this relationship to an overt Soviet-American one, it comes into the purview of

the resident and the security officer, and it will be either abruptly terminated or run as a controlled intelligence contact.

In twos or more, on the other hand, the Soviets will often accept invitations from Britishers and Americans, even during periods of international tension, especially to reasonably large parties or receptions which have a diplomatic or official rather than personal and pointed tone. It is perfectly possible, over a period of time and in a succession of large cocktail party meetings, to conduct highly useful conversations with a chosen target, even though other Soviets are charging around and perhaps watching closely from across the room. This is a device that can be used at posts where there is no mechanism to assist elements of the diplomatic community, especially newcomers, to meet their counterparts from other countries. Where there are organs like International Clubs or Diplomats' Associations they enormously simplify the problem of meeting Soviets and spotting links.

Most officers in a Soviet establishment speak the local language, usually quite well, and very few Americans speak Russian. It is often argued, therefore, that the Soviets will immediately suspect a Russian-speaking American of being an intelligence officer and shy away from him, so that in order to allay suspicion it is better for American officers to speak the local language. This argument is fallacious on three counts.

First, in order not to start out from a position of inferiority, the American should be able to speak the indigenous language as well as the Soviets do. In many places he usually is not. A man with a six-month or one-year quickie course in one of the less common languages usually cannot compare with the product of the Soviet institutes, who may, moreover, be serving his second or third tour in the area. Second, the argument presumes that the Soviets will have nothing to do with a suspected intelligence officer. This is simply not true, any more than that we will have nothing to do with a suspected Soviet intelligence officer. Finally, there is the fact that many Russians are genuinely pleased to have a foreigner speak to them in their own tongue. At a recent Soviet reception this writer had the pleasant experience of finding himself "receiving" his Soviet hosts: at one time there were seven Russians lined up to introduce themselves to their Russian-speaking guest, one third secretary, even elbowing his way past the GRU deputy chief.

What to Say

Here are some observations, which apply both to direct contact and to the guidance of agents, on how to talk to Russians. The first and overriding rule: Warmth, openness, sincerity, interest. A cold, suspicious, cautious, unresponsive person is greeted with coldness, suspicion, caution, and indifference. Second rule: Avoid polemics, political evangelism, criticism, one-upmanship. Third rule: Don't probe. Fourth rule: Show respect where respect is due.⁸

Remember that the object of the exercise is not to pass the afternoon, conduct political arguments, or cement international relations; it is to recruit Soviets. The immediate purposes of the social contact are to build rapport, to elicit responses useful for assessment, to assist chosen targets in articulating grievances, to awaken resentments and anxieties, to plant ideas, to make oneself a sympathetic friend, a channel, a "connection." These objectives should be best served by questioning and conversation on topics which we know from our many studies to be likely to stimulate anti-regime responses, tailored to the extent possible to the individual Soviet in question so as to strike a responsive note without giving cause for alarm.

Example No. 1. A Soviet Army officer in assistant attaché assignment, rank commensurate with age but passed over a number of times for assignment as attaché. Hero of the Soviet Union. Difficult personality, has chronically had difficulties with his chiefs and expresses contempt for them. Blunt, outspoken. Very high self-estimate. Highly variable moods.

After rapport was solidly established, we would question him about and discuss the Soviet Army promotion system, what he would do after retirement, when he would make General, how it could be that those clowns, his several chiefs, could be put in charge of anything, what kind of pull and connections they must have, what the future is for an officer who has wasted seven career years in attaché assignments under chiefs who have given him bad fitness reports, and so on. We would make frequent allusions in various contexts to corresponding aspects of U.S. practice. These conversations were of

⁸ See *A Guide for Interviewing Soviet Escapees*, Air Research and Development Command, HRRRI, Research Study No. 3, August 1953. This is the best single handling guide or training manual for contacts with Soviets that the writer has run across. See also *How the Soviet System Works*, by Bauer, Inkeles, and Kluckhohn, available in both hard cover and paperback.

course progressive so that the target was never offended, and we elicited a surprisingly positive response. Then after a six-month build-up we hit him with a disguised but definite approach. He backed away, but not without absorbing our point. The rapport was not broken, and we have a reasonable belief that the conversations were never reported. No defection, no recruitment; but who knows, in the future, if perhaps the system should kick him hard in the teeth.

Example No. 2. GRU colonel, civilian journalist cover. Spotted and developed by third-national agents. Difficult personality, disliked by a number of other Soviets. Cultural pretensions. Pompous and conceited, high self-estimate, but work actually marginal. Self-indulgent. Strongly dependent personality, would refuse to rebut political arguments. Drinking progressively more during his tour, toward the end approaching near-alcoholism. Under pressure would block up and become unable to express himself. Marital situation unknown, although ample evidence of frequent friction with his wife. Constantly chafing against the "bureaucracy." Frequently in trouble with the embassy.

After development by agents, warmly accepted direct American contact, which confirmed almost all aspects of previous indirect assessment. He was crude, arrogant, condescending, constantly talking (about himself), highly insecure, seeming greatly in need of a sympathetic listener (other Soviets apparently wouldn't give him the time of day). Unfortunately, just when the relationship was getting warm he and the Soviet ambassador discovered a common passion for chess, which transported him from a condition of chronic discontent, isolation, and unhappiness to a seventh heaven where all immediate opportunity for manipulation was dissolved.*

Our conversations with this Soviet were directed towards conveying a sense of the cultural ferment, freedom, experimentation, and opportunity to be found in the West and particularly in the United States. We especially dwelt on the immense prestige, power, and influence exercised by Western journalists and commentators. We also fed back to him his own complaints about the cultural and intellectual

* Our belief in the value of using the Russian language was strengthened by this case. Both this man and his wife spoke good English, and he also spoke the local language. As he drank, however, he would revert more and more to Russian. His wife also, on one occasion at a party, after several hours of effort at being pleasant, sought us out with the plea, "Come sit and talk with me in Russian, I'm tired of speaking English."

sterility of "bureaucracy," with a progressive effort to tie the terms of reference for this into his headquarters in Moscow and the local Soviet embassy.

Example No. 3. A young Soviet officer was noted in the telephone taps, soon after arriving, to be having serious difficulties with his wife and to be drinking very heavily. After raising Cain on the town one night he was apparently severely reprimanded and assigned (as he still is) to minor embassy drudgery. His parents were divorced, we learned, and as a child he lived with his stepmother and mother alternately, a pointer to one possible source of his problems. A third-national agent with a logical business cover established contact with him, and a warm though unproductive relationship has resulted. (It is unproductive because the intermediary agent is an unimaginative plod, unresponsive to requirements and guidance by virtue of inability to grasp any subtleties whatever. But we keep trying.)

The Soviet did make one interesting point in a conversation with the agent, to wit: "Please don't invite me out. We are not like the Germans or British or Americans and cannot accept an invitation just like that. If I accept your invitation, I must obtain approval, and for this I must offer explanation, provide justifications, and so on. You like me and I like you, but it just isn't worth it."

Our efforts to get additional means of regular access to this man have so far been fruitless. Recently, however, upon being introduced to this writer, he was talking within minutes about the sterility and boredom of existence in the confines of the Soviet colony. He is outgoing, bored, curious, anxious to see and learn, chafing under embassy restrictions, and at least partially perceptive of the negative aspects of the Soviet system. He deserves further exploration, to assist him in the articulation of his discontents and to discover whether his personality, political, and career problems are deep and strong enough to provide fuel for a channeled explosion.

These examples illuminate to some extent the generalization that the safest, most innocuous way to surface and cultivate anti-social tendencies and personal grievances, as well as plant ideas and communicate sympathy, is by *questions* on certain crucial topics: "What is your promotion system?" "You look very tired tonight, have you been working too hard?" "You say you are bored and hate this place, but there is this and this and this to do, you have a very pleasant and beautiful Club, how can you feel that way?" "Why do you call diplomats worthless careerists?" "How can the Soviet Foreign Office

assign a man like B [whom we know the respondent hates] to such a responsible post?"

Digression: Virtues of the Interrogative

The utility of questions in stimulating conversation, in focussing thought, in causing inner turmoil (if that is what you want to do), and in communicating a sympathetic awareness is of more than mere tactical value. The mind functions four to five times as fast as oral communication, so that even under the best circumstances, when a respondent is interested in what you are saying, his attention and thoughts are continually straying, elaborating. Under less than the best circumstances, where there is a language problem and the respondent is only mildly or even negatively interested, his attention is constantly wandering and the effectiveness of your communication can go well below 10 percent. Addressing him a question, however, serves to engage almost his whole consciousness, prevents his thoughts from wandering, appeals to his ego, and communicates an interest in him and his opinions.

In addition, the responses to certain types of questions can be useful in assessment; the so-called *projective* questions, requiring expressions of preference, interest, and the like, are an essential part of assessment. For example: "Who is your favorite author [or fictional hero]?" "What do you hope to do when you retire?" "What is it you like best [or least] about living in such and such a country?" "What do you want your children to do in life?" "Why did you choose the foreign service?" "Your work involves talking to people a lot, do you like that?" "Why did you [a Satellite representative] like the movie 'Chance Meeting'?"

Suitable questions are the most effective way to probe personally and politically sensitive topics and implant ideas without running a risk of alienating the respondent or exposing your own prior knowledge. A sure way to alienate Soviets is to criticize the system, its methods and policies, etc., even if you know what you are talking about and even though the Soviet may agree with you. The better way to get him to think such thoughts is to trigger them by seemingly innocuous questions. "What do you do with your evenings?" "Have you been dancing at A?" "Have you visited B?" "Do you prefer to spend your time at your own Club here?" These questions (and many more like them), directed at a person already chafing at the restricted and highly organized Soviet embassy existence (a fact

known to you from other sources), will certainly provoke inner reactions, no matter what the overt response is.¹⁰

The Last Step

After all these many words we are still faced with the crucial problem of how this whole process is to be carried to the point of defection or recruitment, as the case may be. In a sense, to be sure, we can consider all we have done—identifying targets, establishing relationships with them, working on their frustrations, pressures, prides, and ambitions—as worth-while programmed work to increase the probability of walk-ins. And that it will often be. Only in a most unusual and favorable case will an outright approach be made, and then only after every aspect has been studied and restudied at headquarters and in the field and the plan specifically tailored to its opportunities, peculiarities, and risks.

But to complete a hypothetical case let us assume that we have arrived at the stage of considering an outright approach. We are working with a Soviet who is definitely "different"—an odd-ball of some type, neurotic, "alienated," possibly quite disturbed. We know a great deal about him from a number of different sources as well as through direct contact. He has shown a tendency to relax and talk about his personal problems with his American or other friend. He has shown he has the nerve to side-step Soviet security controls, and we have strong grounds for believing that he is not reporting his conversations with us. We believe that we have detected an important change in his relationship with other Soviets (which may not have passed unnoticed by them either).

¹⁰ This digression on the interrogative was derived from the theory of sales work, a fact which provokes a further digression: It is strange that a profession so highly dependent on personal contact, personal rapport, and personal influence as clandestine operations is has paid practically no attention to such allied lines of endeavor as social case work and selling. The sales profession has intensively applied both pragmatic insight and psychological research to problems of personal effectiveness, rapport, interpersonal influence, the hard sell, and the soft, insidious sell. It has no qualms whatever about telling a salesman both how he is to talk to people and what he is to say, with highly effective results. A manual entitled *Cold Call Selling*, published by the National Sales Development Institute, is the finest piece this writer has seen on the "cold approach." (It cost him \$17.00, which couldn't be written off operationally but was at least income tax deductible.) Elmer Leterman's *Creative Selling* is a fine manual on personal contact, especially on the soft sell.

What do we do now? Here we should keep in mind the very basic proposition that a man who defects is *running away* from something too big for him to cope with, and a man who changes sides in place is *fighting back* against something. Neither is being pulled to us by personal magnetism or ideological attraction, even though these motives may appear as rationalizations. Our role then is to continue to build up, in our contacts with him and perhaps by clandestine irritant actions on the side, these inner pressures that are driving him. At this stage we try to contribute to building in him the conviction that there is no hope for him within the Soviet system. Now we can do what we could not earlier, try to channel and focus his resentment onto the top Soviet leaders, the apparatchiki who surround them, or the system itself. The process is one of pinning the blame for his intense personal dissatisfactions on the regime, of directing his anti-social tendencies, if you will, against it.

This is a stage of utmost interest and delicacy. We are not trying to tell a Soviet things which he himself knows better and feels more deeply than we. But we can build on, feed back to him, and focus feelings which he has already expressed. We all know how to calm a friend down when he is upset; we also know, with a close friend, subjects to avoid talking about, not because he would get angry at us but because they would hit sensitive nerves and plunge him into depression or trigger anxieties. It is the reverse of this latter course, in moderate and appropriate doses, that we deliberately pursue with our Soviet "friend."

Once a Soviet is so far along as to question his own system and his relationship to it, we are not far from our ultimate goal. Once he begins to think of his rulers as bad or irresponsible or dangerous or corrupt, or as surrounded, misinformed, and manipulated by others who are like that, he is very close to the crossing.

In Sum

It has been our thesis here that we do have a sufficient basis of understanding to bring about recruitments and defections of Soviets. Our information sources, if they are properly used, are adequate to permit us at least an initial target selection; and if we deliberately seek out "alienated" Soviets, the neurotic or sociopathic fringe, the chronically unhappy, the misfits, we can significantly increase our probability of yield. We must, however, seek some means of solving

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the overriding problem of our own attitudes, of overcoming our skepticism and indifference. If we do not, the future will be like the past, and such successes as we achieve will be simply from luck or circumstance, or perhaps from our mistakes cancelling each other out.