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Chap # 14  
EN 30, 33, 36

14/30

SENDER WILL CHECK CLASSIFICATION TOP AND BOTTOM			
<input type="checkbox"/> UNCLASSIFIED	<input type="checkbox"/> CONFIDENTIAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SECRET	
<b>OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP</b>			
TO	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS
1	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>ACTION</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DIRECT REPLY</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>APPROVAL</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>PREPARE REPLY</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>DISPATCH</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>CONCURRENCE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>RETURN</b>
		<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>SIGNATURE</b>
<b>Remarks:</b>			
Popov -- short form, de-sensitized			
<b>FOLD HERE TO RETURN TO SENDER</b>			
<b>FROM: NAME, ADDRESS AND PHONE NO.</b>			<b>DATE</b>
[REDACTED]			22/9/80
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>UNCLASSIFIED</b>	<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	<b>SECRET</b>	

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Moscow

At GRU Headquarters in Moscow Popov was questioned about several matters, required to write a report on the Mili affair, and dismissed from GRU for misconduct. His wife left Berlin on 17 December. Developments in his student case, which was taken over by another GRU officer, do not make it clear whether it was a factor in his dismissal or not, but they show that later the Soviets kept the case going to screen the fate of Popov and to obtain a reading on CIA awareness of his fate.

In accordance with the communications plan, Popov signaled by a "wrong

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-9-

~~SECRET~~

number" phone call on 25 December for a meeting [REDACTED] in Moscow at a children's theater on 28 December. His failure to appear, possibly because he could not obtain a ticket to the theater, automatically triggered an alternate meeting at the Aragvi Restaurant on 4 January 1959. The meeting was successful and in the men's room he passed an S/W message written in a pocket notebook, containing information of good quality. The message also advised that he had been dismissed from GRU for <sup>what he thought was</sup> a combination of reasons-- the Milil affair, the Illegal in New York, and some distrust of his student case. He was in the Reserves and awaiting reassignment, and he wished to talk [REDACTED]. A brief note passed to Popov instructed him to write to his accommodation address in Berlin and explain what had happened.

Popov signaled for a second brush meeting at a bus stop on 21 January. It was successful but Popov passed no message. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Popov said that he had mailed or would mail a letter, but no letter was received at the accommodation address in Berlin. The message given to Popov contain<sup>ed</sup> descriptions of new meeting sites and instructed Popov to use only the S/W carbon which he had received in the last meeting in Berlin and to destroy his old carbons. It also asked what was meant by distrust of his student case. A copy of this message was prepared as an S/W letter, which was to be mailed that night to Popov's home in Kalinin by another CIA officer if the meeting did not take place, so that Popov would receive it before he was posted away from Moscow. The signal from [REDACTED] Popov was misunderstood [REDACTED] and the letter was mailed by mistake. Nosenko described the KGB's observation of the mailing and the recovery of the letter from the mailbox.

The Cylinder Letter

[REDACTED]

Along with the KGB-dictated S/W notebook which Popov passed in the Aragvi Restaurant on 18 September, he passed a secret message printed by pencil on eight small pieces of paper, which were rolled into a cylinder about the size of a cigarette. (To distinguish the secret-writing message from the secret message, the latter is called the "cylinder letter".) It was wrapped in a bit of cloth, tied with a string, and smelled of perfume.

In the cylinder letter, Popov reported that he had been arrested in February 1959 and that in the meetings thereafter he had been under KGB control and wearing a microphone.

The idea that Popov could write a message and smuggle it out of Lubyanka Prison was considered preposterous. The message therefore was thought to be a hoax and the content was treated with suspicion. One thing which strengthened the suspicion was that Popov claimed to have gotten away with an incorrect and incomplete confession.

Technical analysis determined that the cylinder letter was written on more than one piece of paper of the kind used in the Soviet Union at that time for magazine wrappers, that the writer had access to either more than one pencil or a means of sharpening a pencil, and that the hand-printing was probably done by Popov. Analysis of the case with the possibility that this was genuinely a secret message opened a window through which the following could be seen:

In order to gain his cooperation, the KGB probably did not subject Popov to hostile interrogation at first but obtained what it needed to know to run a playback. Popov agreed to participate in the playback, hoping to earn a light sentence and probably hoping to use his cunning against the KGB. After

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he had correctly carried out the first two controlled meetings, he was given better prison conditions, possibly was held somewhere in KGB Headquarters rather than in Lubyanka Prison, may have been allowed a visit from his wife, and had access to newly received magazines and writing supplies. He participated as a consultant in some but not all of the planning sessions for the September and October meetings. As he demonstrated his cooperativeness, the guard on him was relaxed somewhat and he had some degree of privacy. By 18 September, probably his uniform was tossed to him; he was told to bathe, shave, dress, and be ready by a given time; and no one watched him dress. The scent on the message was probably from his shaving lotion. [REDACTED]

There is evidence in the content that the cylinder letter was genuine and that the KGB did not know about it at the time. One item after another was contrary to the KGB's interest. Among other things, the letter revealed the extent of KGB knowledge of the Popov case, or lack thereof, including what it knew from sources other than Popov's confession. It showed where the KGB had made some analytical errors. It outlined the KGB's plans for future meetings in the playback. Most significantly, it mentioned that there was high interest during Popov's interrogation in something to do with Marshal Zhukov. This can be understood as the KGB's effort to determine that it had caught and stopped the right person, the source of the Zhukov speech report fed back by Blake.

Finally, the letter was totally "Popov". Even his wild idea of appealing to the American President to save him was understandable. It came from the "gallows psychology" of a man who had changed his allegiance and was trying to stand up against the Soviet regime, as his brother had stood up and written to President Kalinin. The KGB could not have thought this way or understood Popov's need to walk in Aleksandr's footsteps.