

HOW SPIES OPERATE

Third Article in a Vital Series

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ESPIONAGE is a fine art. Like all the professions, it has its leaders, those who rise above all others in importance to the forces they serve. These men or women are selected and trained because of their intelligence, personality and education. They must be impeccable in diction and accent of the language of the country in which they are to operate. And, of course, they must have their "blinds," behind which they can operate, presumably on a legitimate basis.

Their training is not complete until they know the history and geography of the country in which they are to be assigned. They must be acquainted with its folklore and the culture or lack of culture of its people. They must be emotionally able to simulate sectional prejudices and share in the nationalistic fancies of the lands of their assignment.

A spy's value is directly in proportion to his contacts, or those of the organization he directs. In times of peace, his chief assignment is making friends whose innocence he can play upon when necessary.

As an illustration, suppose, for instance, a charming lady comes to America. She is welcomed in some of the best homes in the land. She is well-versed in certain industries and discusses them with rare knowledge with their leaders. A brilliant conversationalist, she is always a welcome dinner guest. Her knowledge and interest in certain industrial developments bring her many invitations to visit scenes of operation. Some day these contacts might be valuable to a hostile nation. She will know just where to go for information of the type that will reveal the supply of defense materials. She will be able to state with authority vulnerable points in great industrial centers. She will become an observation post for saboteurs — that is, unless she is removed from circulation. She represents the type of spy that specializes in industrial and commercial secrets.

Then there is another type. She can be illustrated from an actual case. Plans for her scheme were made on the roof garden of a fashionable hotel in a foreign country. She and a successful professional man were being feted by two officers of a foreign intelligence service. In addressing the young lady, one of the officers asked, "Would it not be possible for you to make contacts in Washington for our government?" The young lady did admit knowing that many of the younger Army and Navy officers and government officials were underpaid. The foreign officers painted a picture of how they could advance her money

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to entertain her guests lavishly. Then, when she was well established, it would be easy to introduce the two intelligence officers around, should they visit America. In return she would have a large house and an adequate income in her homeland.

Promised a Captaincy

LATER, the couple were the dinner guests of the chief of the military intelligence service of this foreign country, who was responsible for the development of intelligence in North America, France, the Netherlands and Canada. He reiterated the proposition of his subordinates and even promised the professional man a captain's commission in his country's air force and a home if he would make the right contacts.

Fortunately this plot was nipped in the bud. Had the plans developed which I have just outlined, agents would have been placed in the homes of certain high government officials, posing, for instance, as housemaids or waiters.

One convicted spy boasted that he had contacts in loan offices who would be in a position to know of the financial obligations of government officials. Others in turn could make contacts and benevolently offer assistance to the proper officials in times of financial embarrassment. Fortunately, I might add, the consummation of such plans is very unlikely in view of the precautionary steps that have been taken.

Adaptability and versatility are the first traits sought in the recruiting of spies. In this, we can profit from the last World War in tightening up on our national defense. We recall the case of Captain Franz von Rintelen.



In 1905, he visited the United States to study banking. His father at one time was Imperial Minister of Finance and one of Germany's most prominent financiers. While here, he made many important social and business contacts. Upon his return to Berlin, he was always on the alert to entertain visiting Americans.

Then came the World War. Von Rintelen was given an assignment as an espionage agent in the United States. He arrived in New York in 1915 on a Swiss passport under the name of Gasche, with \$500,000. Eagerly, he

contacted the Americans he had entertained in Berlin and whom he had previously met in America. He assisted in the organization of the Laborers' National Peace Council, which held meetings in Chicago and Washington. The expenses of the delegates to these conventions were paid by von Rintelen. The avowed purpose of the meetings was to build sentiment among the working men for peace. In reality, von Rintelen was seeking to foment labor disturbances, thus preventing the shipping of materials and munitions to the Allies.

Von Rintelen became more ambitious and formed a two-million-dollar pool to purchase munitions in competition with the Allies. His activities came to the attention of Special Agents of the FBI when he sought to purchase 300,000 rifles from our government for the Imperial German Government. Our investigation revealed the identities of several agents working under von Rintelen. There was, for instance, the chemist who made bombs according to his specifications. No longer than a cigar, they were capable of igniting a ship's cargo a few days after it had sailed. It was von Rintelen who formed the American Truth Society, which was to be used to disseminate propaganda on behalf of Germany.

In times of peace, as I have already pointed out, a spy's task is to make contacts. Then, in times of transition, his interest shifts to propaganda to build up favor for his principal. And when armed conflict comes, no holds are barred in his methods of operation.

Salich-Gorin Case

A CASE handled by Naval Intelligence and the FBI about a year ago throws further light on the manner in which spies operate. Hafis Salich was born in Moscow, Russia, in 1905. In 1920, he emigrated to the United States. He had attended St. Joseph's College in Yokohama, Japan, and spoke Japanese fluently. After he arrived here, he completed a course at a business college in Seattle, Washington. He worked for steamship companies off and on until 1926, when he became a member of the Berkeley, California, Police Department. He worked there until 1936, when he was given a leave of absence to

work on a special assignment for the Navy Department. In the meantime, he became acquainted with Mikhail Nicholas Gorin, who arrived in the United States on January 10, 1936, to take over the management of the Pacific Coast Division of Intourist, Incorporated, a travel bureau designed to promote travel in Soviet Russia.

It is alleged that Gorin absent-mindedly left a document in a coat pocket that was sent to the cleaner's. A patriotic citizen found it. It immediately reached the hands of our efficient Naval Intelligence. An alert officer recognized the document as having come from Navy files. The FBI was notified. A joint investigation disclosed that Salich apparently had received \$1,700 from Gorin for reports that Salich was accused of having secured from Navy Department files. Salich and Gorin were sentenced to serve prison terms for violation of the Espionage Statute. As this is being written the case is pending appeal in the United States Supreme Court.

Espionage agents have but one code: "The end justifies the means." The means can be murder, robbery, burglary, barter of loyalty or blackmail.

Identifying spies is one thing — proving their mission is much more difficult. Of even greater importance to the protection of our internal defense is keeping a check upon their plans. These plans, as a rule, are carried out by the underlings of spydom. The directors of espionage invariably remain behind the scene, well protected by many imposing "fronts."

In some respects the organization of widespread espionage activities is little different from the imposing organizations of predatory crime and racket empires. The smashing of an organized gang of kidnapers, bank robbers or confidence men is not a particularly easy task, yet the past few years have demonstrated that it can be done. The same holds true in espionage. The only difference lies in the final method of vanquishing the foe.

Kidnapers, bank robbers and confidence men can be apprehended and prosecuted to the limit of the law. The effectiveness of law enforcement in dealing with predatory crime is gauged by the number of criminals brought to justice.

In the case of spies, the measure of success is different. The effectiveness of the FBI in co-ordinating espionage and counterespionage work cannot be gauged by arrests made and prosecutions secured. The American citizen should bear this in mind when un-American forces lay down a smoke screen of vituperation.

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UNCLE OSCAR SAYS . . .



SHUCKS! . . . if ever'body who got out on a limb turned out to be *bear meat* — why, this old world would be full of nothin' but *ancestors*.

It's only when some guy figgers out how to get himself *out* of trouble that human-ity hitches up its pants an' says, *Gangway!*

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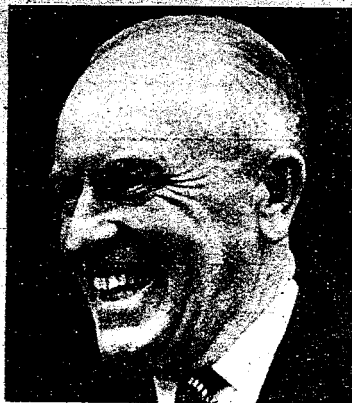
tion, seeking to shackle not only the FBI but all law enforcement by raising the cry that if there are spies in America, they should be arrested and prosecuted. Nothing would please the powers that be in foreign espionage more than to have the FBI announce arrests and make public the identity of espionage agents and saboteurs operating in the land today. If this were done, then they would know where and how spies and saboteurs should be assigned to take the places of the old ones whose effectiveness had been ruined through detection.

The real test of effectiveness lies in the number of enemies of American democracy who are located, their contacts established, methods of communication ascertained and sources of information uncovered.

This is one of the first considerations to bear in mind in tracking down spies. It is better to let a hundred disloyal Americans go their way if the investigation leads to the higher-ups and the real "powers that be." The underlings and tools of both espionage and sabotage, like the hangers-on of crime, are usually the most pitiful specimens of humanity. Dupes and double-crossers, they become harmless once the internal setup of the

organization they serve is known, and their sources of information are learned and controlled.

The location and identification of espionage agents is the easiest step in the procedure of protecting our internal security. Denying them free circulation is entirely different. The Constitution of the United States requires the presentation of legal evidence in court to sustain charges of espionage. In most instances, this



Wide World

For ten years von Rintelen set the stage for his spy work

would mean the revelation of complete details of their operations and the publicizing of data that should be kept undisclosed in the public interest. Hence, it is necessary to control sources of information. This is truly no simple task, particularly with so small a force of Special Agents as has been available to handle national-defense work; a total of 150 Special Agents were provided in the fall of 1939. Fortunately the President and Congress have taken steps to augment this force with several hundred additional agents.

The FBI Agent, in every case involving espionage, proceeds upon the assumption that the spy, like the criminal, always leaves a trail.

In picking up this trail, the Special Agent has back of him every possible aid that science can offer. No clue is too insignificant. Every possible investigative "lead" must be pursued to its logical conclusion, however inconsequential it may appear. It is the little things that count, and spies and criminals trip themselves in the mass of small details that go into the planning and execution of their deeds.

Tracking down the spy requires trained intelligence and every available scientific aid. An apparently innocent message may contain orders of destruction written between the lines, which become readily apparent under ultraviolet rays in a scientific laboratory. A bomb fragment may lead the authorities to the very doorstep of the foreign foe. Certainly, no detail can be overlooked. And, above all else, every citizen must remember that when the evil forces of foreign foes break loose, we are not dealing with amateurs. Here is a job for trained investigators and constituted authorities.

I have already stated that spies are comparatively easy to identify. This is so because they must work through others. In our nation of 130,000,000 people, the great majority are patriotic and loyal. Of necessity, spies do come in contact with them and suspicions are bound to arise. Closer observation follows, and facts are learned. Then it is high time to make a report to the nearest FBI Field Office, or directly to the Washington Headquarters of the Bureau. If the suspicions are well-founded, the facts should be in the hands of trained investigators. It must be remembered that the acts of each underling of spydom may fit into a national picture. His deeds might be the connecting link to a widespread plot.

Daily, complaints are being made to the fifty FBI Field Offices. Many are without foundation. These are soon eliminated, with no embarrassment to the persons involved. The others receive serious consideration.

Spies are often identified because some loyal, patriotic American senses that something is wrong and reports the facts to the proper authorities. Once there is an aroused public opinion and vigilance on a national scale for the protection of America, the battle will be more than half won.

Next Week: Spies and the Underworld