

When The Almost

EDITOR'S NOTE: For this article, the author extensively interviewed most of those counterintelligence officers in the secret services of the United States, Great Britain and France who had worked on the Anatoliy Golitsyn case from 1961 to 1974.

COULD THE WEST HAVE DEALT differently with one man's overwhelming supply of information? Was it duped by Soviet "disinformation"? Or was it a victim of its own paranoia—perhaps the most contagious and corrosive of human diseases?

Anatoliy Golitsyn defected from the KGB—the Soviet secret service—in exchange for asylum in the U.S. He told CIA officials he wanted to explain how the KGB really operates. He spoke of "moles"—Soviet double agents—in top positions of secret service organizations in the West. He predicted (accurately) moves the KGB would make. And he said the Soviets had a new strategy—to conquer the West without struggle.

Their reactions to Golitsyn's disclosures left the secret services of three Western nations in a shambles. Divided by distrust, they nearly fell. There were probes, resignations, firings, defections, imprisonment and even a death.

It all began when Golitsyn appeared at the American Embassy in Helsinki, Finland, in the midst of a snowstorm on Dec. 22, 1961. Short, powerfully built, in his mid-30s, speaking English with a heavy Russian accent, Golitsyn asked to see Frank Friberg, the CIA station chief.

He identified himself as a major in the KGB, assigned to the Soviet Embassy in Helsinki with the job of vice consul as his cover. While stationed at KGB headquarters in Moscow, he had learned all about the Soviet espionage apparatus in both the U.S. and Europe, he said, adding that he had documents from KGB archives. He offered all this to the CIA in return for safe passage to the United States for himself and his wife and daughter, who were spending Christmas with him in Finland.

In Washington, a search of the CIA's central records came up with only a single trace of Golitsyn. Seven years earlier, he had been listed by another KGB defector as potentially disloyal. For Richard M. Helms, then the CIA chief of operations, taking in Golitsyn

CIA Was Wrecked

By Edward Jay Epstein

was a calculated gamble, but finally Helms gave the "Go" signal.

After several weeks of around-the-clock interrogation at an Army base outside Frankfurt, during which he filled in biographical sketches on hundreds of KGB officers in Moscow and abroad,

Golitsyn was taken under cover to the United States. Counterintelligence experts from the CIA and military intelligence pieced together his story. They learned that he had been assigned to the central KGB apparatus in Moscow. For five years, he had prepared for his defection by ferreting out details about espionage networks around the world. Golitsyn reported that the KGB had established moles at the heart of French, British and American intelligence.

His first bombshell landed on the French. Golitsyn revealed that the KGB had such complete access to the French-kept secrets of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization that it used NATO's num-

bering system to request secret documents, which were shipped to Moscow within three days. He named KGB moles at the top echelon of French intelligence—and one at the core of President de Gaulle's inner circle—as suppliers of these secrets.

In March 1962, President John F. Kennedy dispatched to Paris a "for-your-eyes-only" letter for de Gaulle, informing him of the Soviet penetration allegation. Several weeks later, six handpicked French counterintelligence experts arrived in

Washington. For 14 days, they heard Golitsyn describe a ring of at least six top French intelligence officers, code-named Sapphire, operating under KGB instruction. He asserted that, aside from stealing NATO documents, Sapphire was

First, the stranger told the CIA he was a KGB agent.

Then he told secrets that left Western intelligence reeling.



about to use French intelligence officers to get data on American missile sites. The officers were unaware that it would be for the KGB, not France.

P.L. Thyraud de Vosjoli, the French intelligence liaison with the U.S., found this incredible. He suspected that Golitsyn was a "clever plant" who had feigned his defection to "disrupt relations" between the U.S. and France.

Then, to his amazement, he received

an order from Paris to organize a program using French agents in the U.S. to spy on missile bases—just as Golitsyn had predicted. Although de Vosjoli (the book and movie *Topaz* tell his story) strongly objected, he was overruled. Driven to conclude that Golitsyn was right—the KGB was controlling French intelligence—de Vosjoli abandoned France for the U.S. The scandal led to resignations by de Gaulle's intelligence adviser and two intelligence service chiefs. A senior officer committed suicide or was murdered, and a NATO official was sentenced to life imprisonment. The Franco-American intelligence/defense relationship was tenuous.

Golitsyn's revelations also were damaging to British intelligence. Ever since Kim Philby, the representative of British intelligence in Washington, retired under a cloud of suspicion in the early 1950s, the CIA had pressed unsuccessfully for a fuller inquiry. Golitsyn forced open the entire issue of Soviet penetration of the British secret service from the highest levels down. Soon, the number of suspects under investigation as KGB agents rose from 10 to 250. Philby defected to Moscow, and a former intelligence

executive, Anthony Blunt, secretly confessed to having been a Soviet spy.

Golitsyn disclosed in 1963 that the KGB knew British intelligence had photographed a secret Soviet code book, something known only by top executives of MI-5, the British equivalent of the FBI. The suspects here numbered only two: the director, Sir Roger Hollis, and his deputy, Graham Mitchell. A 10-year

search netted no definitive answer as to their guilt or innocence, but the resulting suspicion led to "severely limited cooperation" between U.S. and British intelligence, as one British investigation officer put it.

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CIA/continued

Golitsyn also focused suspicion in the CIA on its own Soviet Division—the unit responsible for recruiting Soviet citizens as spies and then aiding them. At least five division officers came under suspicion. No case was ever proved against any of them but all were transferred. In the mid-1960s, the division came to be cut out of the flow of sensitive information about new spies.

The Golitsyn debriefing even strained CIA-FBI relations. Golitsyn cast doubt on the legitimacy of a highly prized FBI informant at the UN—a Soviet diplomat code-named Fedora, established later as a KGB "plant." Golitsyn then dismayed J. Edgar Hoover by stating that an agent in the FBI's Washington office was a KGB source. Hoover cut off an internal investigation and suggested that Golitsyn himself was a "provocateur and penetration agent." In 1970, Hoover severed FBI relations with the CIA and other intelligence services, leaving the CIA with no agency for "watching" the KGB inside the United States.

Initially, Golitsyn had given leads on the Soviet infiltration of other intelligence services in NATO countries, notably Italy, Norway and Canada. And he had listed a number of KGB-controlled "agents of influence," including the president of Finland.

His debriefers wanted only to know names of KGB officers and sources. Golitsyn complained. He challenged: "What good does it do you to know who your enemy is if you don't know his strategy?" His requests to see higher officials, including the President, were ignored. Frustrated, in the spring of 1963, he demanded to go to England.

Returning from England three months later, he was reassigned to James Jesus Angleton, chief of the CIA's counterintelligence staff. Angleton arranged a meeting between Golitsyn and Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.

To Angleton, Golitsyn's thesis was simple. The Soviet leaders, deciding they had little chance of winning a nu-

clear war against the West, had adopted a new strategy in 1958: winning without fighting. The KGB, previously an instrument of terror and spying, had been reorganized. Its purpose: to penetrate Western intelligence—not, primarily, to steal military secrets but to alert the KGB on the effects of its disinformation.

Angleton became increasingly convinced by the Golitsyn thesis. By the late 1960s, his counterintelligence staff had invalidated many CIA and FBI sources as "disinformation" agents and antagonized many CIA and FBI officers. In 1974, Angleton was fired and all the top officers on his staff were forced to resign. Golitsyn was abandoned as a source. Now a U.S. citizen living in the Washington area, Golitsyn has written a book, *New Lies for Old*, which contains the analyses—expunged from U.S. files—that left Western intelligence in such disarray. 