

# Spies: Foot Soldiers in an Endless War

OUTSIDE London's Marlborough Street magistrates' court one morning last week, a throng of newsmen waited impatiently. The object of their interest, an ostensibly minor Soviet trade official named Oleg Lyalin, 34, failed to show up to answer the charges against him—"driving while unfit through drink." He was resting instead in a comfortable country house near London where, for the past several weeks, he had been giving British intelligence a complete rundown on local Soviet espionage operations. His revelations prompted the British government two weeks ago to carry out the most drastic action ever undertaken in the West against Soviet spies: the expulsion of 105 diplomats and other officials—nearly 20% of the 550 Russian officials based in Britain.

The case generated waves from Moscow to Manhattan. As soon as Soviet Party Leader Leonid Brezhnev returned to the Soviet capital from his three-day visit to Yugoslavia, he took the extraordinary step of convening an emergency meeting of the 15-man Politburo right on the premises of Vnukovo Airport. The high-level conference, which forced a 24-hour delay of a state dinner in honor of India's visiting Premier Indira Gandhi, might have dealt with the still-mysterious goings-on in China. But it might also have dealt with the difficult problem of how the Kremlin should react to the unprecedented British expulsions—a problem that Moscow, by week's end, had not yet solved.

## Potato-Faced Fellows

In Manhattan, British Foreign Secretary Sir Alec Douglas-Home spent 80 minutes with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. "We have taken our action," said Sir Alec, "and that's all there is to it." Nonetheless, he emphasized that the British step was "designed to remove an obstacle to good relations." Harrumphed Gromyko: "That's a fine way to improve relations." He added that Moscow would be forced to retaliate. But the British apparently knew of some spies among the remaining 445 Russians in Britain. "Yes," said a Foreign Office man, "we have retained second-strike capability."

The British case dramatized the expanse and expense of espionage activity round the world. It was also a reminder that the old spy business, which has received little attention in the past three or four years, is as intense—and dirty—as ever, despite the rise of a new type of operative. Since World War II, espionage has undergone a metamorphosis. For a time, its stars were the famed "illegal" or "deep cover" agents—the Colonel Abels, the Gorden Lonsdales, the Kim Philbys. Says British Sovietologist Robert Conquest: "These men compare with the massive

embassy operations rather as a skilled armored thrust compares with human-wave tactics in war." Moreover, the growing phalanxes of routine operatives are supported by spy-in-the-sky satellites that can send back photographs showing the precise diameter of a newly dug missile silo. But even as the modern army still needs the foot soldier, so does espionage still need the agent on the ground. "A photograph may show you what a new plane looks like," says a key intelligence expert, "but it won't tell you what's inside those engines and how they operate. For that you still need someone to tell you."

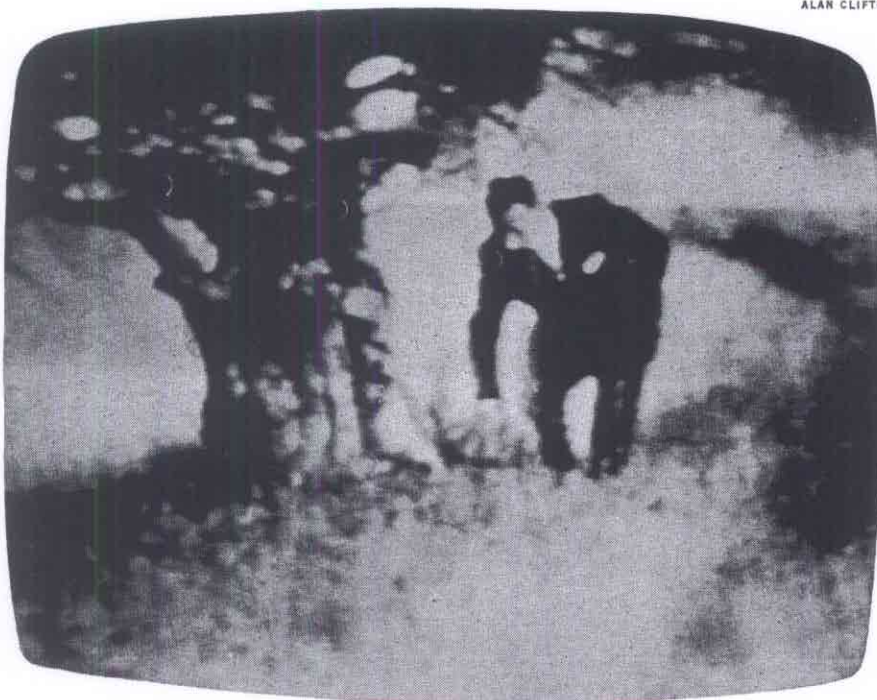
Eric Ambler, author of spy mysteries, has little use for the new species of

007s have largely given way to the undramatic, plodding and featureless agents who count it a job well done if they wheedle a photostat of a set of circuits out of a computer repairman for \$80.

## Wide-Open Country

The heroes, if there are any at all, sit behind gray desks in Moscow; Langley, Va.; and London. There they must sift through tons of material provided by hundreds of different sources before they can, with luck, piece together a picture of, say, the locking mechanism on a swing-wing fighter. Many of the reports are useless, some are contradictory and others are de-

ALAN CLIFTON



BBC FILM SHOWING SOVIET "DIPLOMAT" AT SECRET PICKUP POINT  
There was still a roar in the old lion.

spy, particularly the representatives of the *Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti* (KGB), the Soviet Committee for State Security, and the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. "KGB men?" he sneers. "They're the potato-faced fellows you see on trains in Eastern Europe wearing suits that aren't quite right and smelling too much of eau de cologne. The CIA people all smell like after-shave lotion. They always look as if they are on their way to some boring sales conference for an unexciting product—and in a way, they are."

In one respect, Ambler is unfair and behind the times. The contemporary KGB man is generally far more polished, more sophisticated, more accomplished in foreign languages and manners than his counterpart of a few years ago. But Ambler is right in saying that the Mata Haris and the

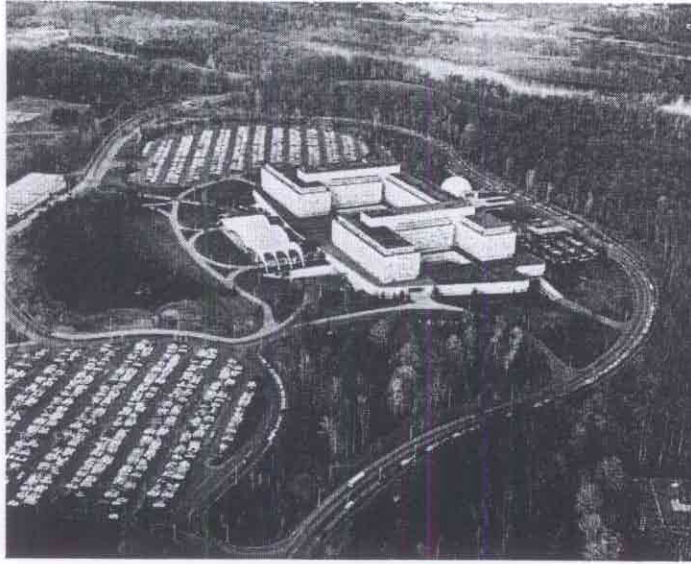
liberately misleading, planted by departments of "disinformation."

It is work that occupies tens of thousands of mathematicians and cryptographers, clerks and military analysts, often with the most trivial-seeming tasks. Yet it is work that no major nation feels it can afford to halt. Says a former British ambassador: "We all spy, of course, more or less. But the Russians are rather busier at it than most. They're more basic too: not so subtle as our chaps. I like to think that we have a certain finesse in our methods—that we don't go at the thing bull-headed. But maybe our tasks are different from theirs, just because this country is so wide open."

Wide open or not, there remains the question, in Eric Ambler's words: "What on earth has the KGB got to spy on in Britain? You would think 105 spies

of it stands the giant statue of the first Soviet secret policeman, Feliks E. Dzerzhinsky, who ran the police until his death in 1926. In the same building is dank Lubyanka prison, where political prisoners undergo their initial conditioning; in his novel *The First Circle*, Alexander Solzhenitsyn wrote how its warders clicked their tongues to warn each other whenever they were escorting a prisoner: "One prisoner must never be allowed to encounter another, never be allowed to draw comfort or support from the look in his eyes."

The Soviet secret police, of course, have a dual function. At home they were never busier than during the Stalin era, when they organized and executed the purges and ran the labor camps. Today the KGB is headed by Yuri Andropov, 57, a Brezhnev protégé who is clearly subordinate to the political arm of the party. A powerfully built man over 6 ft. tall, Andropov proved his ruthlessness in Hungary as ambassador at the time of the 1956 uprising. It was he who encouraged a delegation of Hungarians to meet with top Soviet officers in Budapest to



CIA HEADQUARTERS IN LANGLEY, VA.

One out of nine.

talk about a withdrawal of Russian troops; two days later, when a settlement seemed near, General Ivan Serov, then head of the KGB, burst in on the parley with a platoon of agents and arrested the rebel leaders, many of whom were later executed. In 1967, Andropov became head of the KGB, and thereby master of the most formidable power complex in the Soviet Union outside the armed forces.

Even though the days of wholesale exile and mass murder are past, the

dreds of foreigners in Moscow under surveillance; and on occasion it has even bugged the seal of the U.S. Embassy in Moscow—an act that the U.S. publicized during the U-2 affair of 1960.

All this internal security is in the hands of the KGB's second chief directorate. The heart of the organization's foreign-intelligence operation is the first chief directorate, whose functions are roughly equivalent to the CIA's. Its boss was last known to be—and may still be—Alexander Sakharovsky. He

## Picnics and Wet Stuff

**T**HOUGH operatives of the CIA are cautioned not to use professional slang lest they be identified as spies, the argot of espionage has become part of the language around the world. Herewith a glossary of current spy terms, most of them used in the West but some international:

**BAG JOB:** In the U.S., an illegal search of a suspected spy's residence to obtain incriminating information. Also, sending secret data back home through the diplomatic pouch.

**BLACK BAGGING:** Delivery of funds to an undercover agent or network by a courier.

**BLOWN:** When an agent's identity has been discovered.

**COME HOME:** "Coming in from the cold," as in John le Carré's novel, is the old-fashioned equivalent of "come home," which describes an agent's withdrawal from active espionage in the field.

**THE COMPANY:** The CIA.

**CONDITIONING:** Political agitation caused by the effective use of *disinformation* (see below).

**CONTROLLER:** An agent's direct supervisor or case officer.

**DEAD DROP or DEAD-LETTER BOX:** A hiding place where an agent can deposit or collect messages and material.

**DIRTY GAMES:** Insidious work, such as blackmailing a foreign official or businessman to force him into espionage against his own country.

**DISINFORMATION:** Spreading of false propaganda and forged documents to confuse counter-intelligence or create political unrest or scandals.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION:** Any violent action including assassination or sabotage or, in Britain, arrest. The Soviets call it *mokrye dela* (wet stuff).

**FLAPS WELL DOWN:** An old phrase still used in Britain, describing an agent who is worried about his future and lying low. Applicable to KGB agents in Britain today.

**ILLEGAL:** An illegal is an agent with "deep cover," infiltrated into another country posing as a citizen.

**LEGAL:** An intelligence officer who holds a "legal" embassy post or is assigned to another legitimate organization.

**MINUS ADVANTAGE:** An unsuccessful project that left those who planned it worse off than before.

**N.T.:** No trace, as when an agent is asked for information on someone and can find nothing.

**PICNIC:** A place or country in which operations are easy. West Germany is considered to be a picnic for the Soviets.

**REGROOMING:** Training in the culture and language of the country an agent will be assigned to.

**REZIDENT:** Soviet term for a chief KGB officer, the equivalent of a CIA station chief, in a Soviet embassy abroad. His headquarters is the *rezidentura*.

**SAFE HOUSE:** A secure, unbugged meeting place.

**SIS:** The British DI-6 (equivalent to the CIA); the letters stand for Secret Intelligence Services. Also known as "The Old Firm," as referred to by British Ambassador Sir Geoffrey Jackson, when he said he had been relying on it to secure his release from the Tupamaros in Uruguay.\*

**SPOOK:** Vernacular for a spy.

**SURVEILLANCE, HOT AND COLD:** Cold surveillance is secretive and meant to go unnoticed by the target. Hot surveillance is open tailing or bugging of a person for harassment or intimidation purposes.

**SWALLOWS:** Girls used for entrapment through sexual blackmail for espionage purposes.

**TERMINATED WITH EXTREME PREJUDICE:** Killed.

**TO TIP:** A term for recruitment of an operative.

**TURN AROUND:** Recruiting a defector to spy on his own agency before his defection has been noticed.

**WALK-IN:** A defecting agent.

**WET STUFF:** An executive action where blood is meant to flow.

\* Highly placed members of the intelligence community in Paris believe that SIS did help to arrange the escape of 106 Tupamaros from the Uruguayan prison that led to Jackson's release last month.

is now about 70, and Washington experts speculate that he may have been retired, but they are not certain and do not know who his replacement might be.

Of his 9,000 officers, about 3,500 are stationed abroad. They may be assigned to an embassy or to newsgathering outfits such as Tass or *Pravda*, or to any of a host of other organizations—Soviet Export Films, the Moscow Narodny Bank, the Russian Lumber Import Co., Intourist, Aeroflot, Black Sea Baltic Insurance, Morflot Shipping. The Soviet government is totally integrated, without neat divisions between diplomats, intelligence officers and journalists. That helps explain why the Soviets and East Europeans almost automatically regard Western journalists as agents of the CIA or Britain's DI-6 (for Defense Intelligence, 6th Section, formerly MI-6).

Young Russians are recruited with promises of an exciting career, travel abroad, such perquisites as autos and expense accounts, and early retirement at 55. As for foreign talent, the Soviets after World War II relied on a succession of ideologically convinced Communists in the West as their principal undercover agents. Today the Russians are usually forced to recruit foreigners through blackmail or money.

#### Jumbled Numbers

As many as 50% to 75% of all Soviet officials stationed abroad are estimated by U.S. sources to be KGB agents. The percentage is lower in big industrial countries, where Moscow has many legitimate interests to oversee and services to perform, and much higher in underdeveloped lands. These estimates do not include the far smaller but vital contingents of KGB officers who function as undercover "illegals" under assumed names and do not operate through their embassies but report to "controllers" or directly to Moscow.

Their activities cover a wide range. They collect military and political information. They engage in industrial espionage, which has become an important part of their work. They keep rival spy networks under surveillance and strive to infiltrate them. They also engage in "wet stuff," the Soviet euphemism for violence (see glossary, page 44), although less frequently than in earlier times. Most wet-stuff activity in West Germany has been conducted against Russians living in exile and working for the overthrow of the Moscow regime. The last known case was the 1959 murder, with a special cyanide pellet fired from a pistol, of Ukrainian Exile Leader Stefan Bandera in Munich.

A considerable number of KGB agents abroad are primarily concerned with the Soviet Union's "main enemies," the U.S. and China. There are more than 200 staff members at the Soviet embassy in Washington, whose mansard roof bristles with more antennas than any other place in the area except the

Pentagon. There are 82 diplomats in the Soviet mission to the U.N., plus 227 Russians on the staff of the U.N. Secretariat. At least 20% of all these are believed to be KGB agents. The Soviets also maintain large KGB forces in the countries of the U.S.'s principal allies—notably Britain, Canada and West Germany. In 1970, West German counter-intelligence seized no fewer than 768 Communist spies. Even so, West German sources estimate that there are as many as 16,000 spies still at work, and Communists are acquiring recruits at the rate of two a day.

There are several reasons for West Germany's status as the spy center of Europe: it is part of a divided country on the edge of the East-West chasm, it is the base for 210,000 U.S. troops and a sizable nuclear arsenal, and it can be easily serviced from espionage centers in East Germany. On certain nights, a voice broadcast over a short-wave band from the closely guarded Karlshorst

WRIGHT—MIAMI NEWS



"Achoo!"



BONNER RUNDSCHAU

Compound in a suburb of East Berlin will rattle off a burst of jumbled numbers aimed at a KGB undercover agent somewhere in Western Europe. The agent will respond by using the "dead-letter box" system or a powerful two-way radio no larger than three packs of king-size cigarettes.

#### Individuals as Ammunition

The Russians, of course, are far from the only players in the game. Moscow's agents may be especially aggressive, but Russian espionage has a strong defensive streak, linked to a conviction that half the world is against the Soviet Union—a conviction that began with the never-forgotten Western attempts to crush the Revolution. The West is usually more squeamish about espionage than Russia or other Communist countries. David Cornwell, the Briton who writes realistic spy fiction under the pen name John le Carré (*The Spy Who Came In From the Cold*), once observed that the West does not believe in "eating people" and yet is forced to defend this very principle by using individuals as "ammunition." In the U.S., espionage was grossly neglected until the advent of the cold war. In 1928, Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson was shocked to learn that the State Department had a cryptographic bureau. He fired the founder of the code-breaking agency, observing: "Gentlemen do not read other people's mail." But since then, the U.S. has overcome these and other scruples; it has learned a great many lessons from its opponents.

The trauma of Pearl Harbor led directly to the establishment of the wartime Office of Strategic Services and, in 1947, the powerful Central Intelligence Agency. Today the CIA, with a budget believed to be over \$500 million, has 15,000 employees in Washington and several thousand agents abroad. Moreover, the CIA is but one of nine major U.S. intelligence-gath-

Party Congress well in advance of U.S. intelligence; and knowing the location of every plane in the Egyptian air force and where nearly every pilot would be (at breakfast) when the Six-Day War was launched in 1967.

### Stolen Sidewinder

Both the CIA and the KGB have had their share of successes and disasters. The CIA prides itself on the Penkovsky case, which exposed the operation—and many of the personnel—of the Soviet military intelligence network. In 1967, the CIA managed the skillful extrication from Moscow of KGB Colonel Evgeny Runge, who had led a spy network in West Germany. Until the Francis Gary Powers case, the U-2 operation was a major intelligence success. The CIA is also credited with obtaining superior information about Soviet military devel-

North America. In Bonn, Freelance Photographer Heinz Sütterlin wooed and won the plump secretary of a high Foreign Ministry official and sent nearly 1,000 secret papers to Moscow before a defector blew his cover and prompted the ill-used Mrs. Sütterlin to commit suicide. Heinz Felfe, who held a key position in the BND, the West German equivalent of the CIA, for ten years was a double agent who supplied the Soviets with the names of West German agents in the East, codes, dead-letter drops and courier routes. He all but wiped out BND operations in the Soviet orbit. To keep him above suspicion, Moscow regularly gave him important secrets concerning East Germany to feed to his unsuspecting West German employers; he was so valuable that the KGB even allowed him to betray a lesser Soviet spy to Bonn.

BEN MARTIN

Perhaps the weirdest case in the KGB's history—and one of its dizziest triumphs—occurred in 1967, when three men stole a Sidewinder missile from a supposedly well-guarded NATO base at Zell and drove 300 miles along the autobahn to Krefeld with the 9½-ft. rocket sticking out a window. When their leader, Manfred Ramminger, inquired at the Düsseldorf airport about the best way to get a shipment to Moscow, KLM suggested air freight and Lufthansa assured him that nobody at the German customs office would bother about the contents. Ramminger followed the advice, then boarded a jet for Moscow, with the missile's ignition switch in his hand luggage.

On arrival, he was dismayed to learn that something had gone wrong; the box containing the missile had been off-loaded in Copenhagen by mistake and sent back to Düsseldorf.

When the box finally arrived in Moscow after a ten-day delay, the Soviets could hardly believe their eyes. "Brüderchen [Little Brother]," roared Ramminger's contact in the KGB, shaking with laughter, "You're a superman!"

Not all KGB exploits are so successful. There was, for example, the case last March involving Mexican students sent through Moscow to North Korea for guerrilla training. But the war goes on in every part of the globe. Items:

► In September 1969, KGB agents in Beirut tried to steal a French-built Mirage 111-E fighter from the Lebanese air force to test against Soviet MIGs. They offered a young Lebanese fighter pilot \$2,000,000 to fly his plane to Baku in the Soviet Union. The officer reported the offer to his superiors, and the two Russians, caught red-handed with a \$200,000 down-payment check, were wounded in a shootout with Leb-

anese police and were quickly deported.

► Even though they suspected Communist agents of stirring up university students to oppose the regime, Congolese officials agreed early this year to permit a 15-man Soviet football team to visit the country. A few days after the team ended its tour, however, the Kinshasa government discovered that only eleven players had departed; the remaining four, quietly at work in the Soviet embassy, were subsequently expelled.

► In Japan, the Soviets' chief interest is the U.S. military hardware. A month ago, police arrested Kazuo Kobayashi, 41, after catching him trying to buy the plans for a Phantom-fighter missile and radar systems from an American G.I. for \$555. Then, with Kobayashi's help, they confronted his contact, who had identified himself only as "Ed" but proved to be Lieut. Colonel Lev Konokov, assistant military and air attaché at the Soviet embassy in Tokyo.

### How to Save Money

Most of the world's governments are becoming increasingly bureaucratic and secretive. A case in point is the Pentagon's passion for classifying every document in sight. If those SECRET stamps were used less frequently, spies would be a lot less busy trying to grab often totally unimportant material.

The Soviets, moreover, are inclined to accord greater respect to information that has been acquired deviously—even if it is as accessible as a Sears, Roebuck catalogue. In *The First Circle*, Novelist Solzhenitsyn scathingly described a prison research institute run by Soviet intelligence where American magazines that were sold to anyone in the U.S. "were here numbered, bound with string, classified and sealed up in fire-proof safes, out of reach of American spies." The result, for the CIA as well as the KGB, is an astonishing amount of make-work and the accumulation of vast amounts of material that simply cannot be digested—even with computers reminiscent of Len Deighton's *The Billion Dollar Brain* constantly whirring.

Is it all necessary? During his 1959 visit to the U.S. Khrushchev told Allen Dulles, then director of the CIA: "We should buy our intelligence data together and save money. We'd have to pay the same people only once." There is undeniable appeal in that proposal, but the world simply does not run that way. For the foreseeable future and probably forever, there will be unremarkable-looking men poking around English factories or East-bloc offices, busily ferreting out farm reports, industrial blueprints and highway maps, while British or Hungarian agents keep an eye on them. From the tons of material they gather, occasionally—but only very occasionally—something will emerge that will make the head man in Langley, Va., or Dzerzhinsky Square in Moscow reach for his direct line to the White House or the Kremlin.



KIM PHILBY



RUDOLF ABEL

No more stars.

opments and Chinese nuclear-weapons progress, and with sound assessments of the situation in Viet Nam (which were frequently ignored by policymakers). Among its setbacks: the Bay of Pigs, although this was a failure of decision making as well as intelligence, and the failure to warn of the Berlin Wall's construction in 1961 or Khrushchev's fall from power in 1964. In some cases, the agency was plagued by the ever-present problem of drawing the line between operations and intelligence; the line became unrecognizably blurred in places like Laos and Guatemala.

One of the KGB's most notable successes was the Burgess-MacLean-Philby case, a classic example of successful infiltration aided by the refusal of the British Foreign Office's "old boys" to admit that one of their class could betray the country. Colonel Rudolf Abel spent nine years in the U.S. running a spy network that may have covered all of