

**The KGB Documents and the Soviet Collapse:  
Part II**

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## The KGB in the 1980s:

The fullest set of files in our collection relates to the last decade of KGB existence, i.e. from 1980 to 1989. In addition to the top secret *Sobering KGB USSR*, discussed in the project's Brief Report No. 1, and the KGB publications, handbooks, and operative manuals, discussed in our proposals, we will include a unique collection of cross-reference materials in the public data base, including:

- 50 mass media interviews of chiefs of the KGB (Committee for State Security)-UKGB (Territorial Directorate of the Committee for State Security) functional and territorial directorates;
- memoirs of KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov; his deputies Filipp Bobkov and Viktor Grushko; KGB foreign intelligence chiefs Leonid Shebarshin, Vadim Kirpichenko, and Nikolay Leonov; Second Main Directorate deputy chiefs Vyacheslav Shironin and Vadim Udilov; and others, as noted in the attached list of sources.

As the output of our analysis and as a reference tool, we have incorporated into the public database:

- a functional flow-chart of the USSR KGB in the 1980s; and
- a structural flow-chart of the KGB Fifth Directorate for Ideology.

Public access to all of the collection's documents will be provided in two ways:

- the original documents will be publicly available through the National Security Archives collection (located in the Gelman Library of the George Washington University in Washington, DC), and
- in a catalog of the documents that will be translated into English and posted on the National Security

Archives web site (<http://www.seas.gwu.edu/nsarchive>).

During our research and analysis of the collection's documents we faced the following challenges:

- To select a methodological analog for the KGB phenomenon in order to facilitate scholarly understanding of its unique nature;
- To outline the concrete parameters of KGB power and its constraints in order to strip it of propaganda and mythology;
- To provide factual data on and a conceptual synthesis of the following questions set up in our proposals to the project:
  - ◆ Why did the KGB very actively take part in the effort to start perestroika early on and continue to play along with Gorbachev even after the reforms produced unforeseen

centrifugal forces that risked ruining the USSR and the KGB itself?

- ◆ What were the specific political/bureaucratic interests and aims of the KGB during the various phases of perestroika and what did the KGB do to implement them?
- ◆ Why did this omnipotent and all-pervasive organization fail to, if not prevent, then at least slow down and mitigate the demise of the external Soviet empire, the re-unification of Germany, the fall of communist regimes in Eastern Europe, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and its own dismantling?
- ◆ Was there a real possibility/potential inside the KGB for a reversal of the process of reforms and a coup against the Gorbachev leadership? Was the August 1991 coup a “KGB coup”?

### **Modelled on the Party:**

It was equally impossible to compare the KGB empire either to Western intelligence services or to any political structure in the present or historical past. Engineered as a supra-legal body and entrusted with protection of the Bolshevik Revolution, the VChK-OGPU-NKVD-MGB-KGB has, throughout the course of Soviet history, been able to retain its primary social function: the preservation of the political power of the ruling Communist Party. But, being at the same time not only a mechanism, but also a source of power in its own right, the state security organs became in time indistinguishable from the Party, and, in fact, went on to become its armed and covert extensions. That is why only the Party itself can be an appropriate model for a description of the KGB's functioning within the Soviet political system and society around it. Indeed, the KGB duplicated the structure of the CPSU, both functionally and territorially, and exercised control by “specifically Chekist methods<sup>1</sup>” over the same fields of sociopolitical life as did the “civil” appendages of the Party.

Like the Communist Party itself, the USSR KGB had a strictly centralized, imperial structure; it was represented in each of the 167 ethnic and administrative territories which made up the Soviet Union until its disintegration in December, 1991<sup>2</sup>. In every particular region (oblast), the chief of the territorial

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<sup>1</sup> See the statements to this regard by the USSR KGB Chairman, Victor Chebrikov in Pravda, September 9, 1988; the Ukrainian KGB Chairman, Nikolai Golushko, in Radian'ska Ukraina, September 9, 1988; the Chief of Sverdlovsk UKGB, Yury Kornilov, in Ural'skii rabochii, December 20, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> See “Ezhegodnik Bol'shoi Sovetskoi Entsiklopedii,” Sovetskaya Entsiklopedia, Moscow, 1989, p. 9; “Atlas SSSR”, GUGK, Moscow, 1986, p. 16.

KGB (known as “UKGB” – “Upravlenie komiteta gosudarstvennoi bezopasnoti”) was second in power to the secretary of the local Party organization. Every territorial UKGB was chaired by a general, usually of the rank of major general, with the exception of Ukraine, Belorussia, Primorskii krai, Moscow, and Leningrad, which, because of their size and importance, were usually staffed by lieutenant generals.

Just as the Communist Party, through its primary Party organization, was present in every Soviet enterprise and institution, so the KGB, too, had its open representatives and secret informers in every civil, military, state, and public body. This long-standing practice eventually came to the surface, when the KGB “legalized” and “civilized” its status by adoption of the Law on the State Security Organs in the USSR<sup>3</sup>. Article 11 of the Law stated: “In order to solve the questions of insuring state security in ministries, state committees, departments, state enterprises, institutions, organizations, and also in other foundations and bodies of public associations, servicemen of the state security organs may be posted in them with their agreement by a procedure determined by the USSR Cabinet Ministers, while the servicemen remain on active military service in order to fill posts on the staff of the bodies and organizations indicated.”<sup>4</sup>

The documents of the collection represent the activities of territorial and local KGB organs from practically all geographic regions of the former Soviet Union.

The central apparatus of the KGB functionally duplicated the activity of the principal departments of the Communist Party Central Committee (CC CPSU). Thus, at the beginning of the 1980s:

- **foreign policy** was the field of competence of three CC CPSU departments (International, Liaison with Communist and Workers’ Parties of Socialist Countries, and Work with Foreign Cadres and Travel Abroad) and KGB Foreign Intelligence (the First Main Directorate);
- **the military-industrial complex** was the area of responsibility of the CC CPSU Defense Department and the KGB Second and Third Main Directorates;
- **all branches of the Armed Forces and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD) – including its ordinary police and internal security troops and all other military and paramilitary organizations** were controlled by the Main Political Directorate of the Soviet Army, which had

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<sup>3</sup> See Victor Yasmann, “Law on the KGB Published,” RFE/RL Report on the USSR, No. 31, 1991, pp. 12-18. The Law was abolished after the “August coup” of 1991.

<sup>4</sup> Izvestiya, May 23, 1991. This provision contains a deceptive statement about the subordination of the KGB to the Council of Ministers’ regulations. According to the prime-minister of the USSR government and the head of the last Soviet-style cabinet, Nikolai Ryzhkov, he had neither control, nor impact on the activity of the KGB. Moreover, he got information from the KGB mainly as the member of the CPSU Politburo, but not as the chief of the country’s executive branch. See M. Nenashev “Poslednee Sovetskoe pravitel’stvo”, 1995 p. 24

the rank of a department in the CPSU CC, together with the KGB Third Main Directorate;

- **civil aviation, railroads, automobile, sea and river transport, and urban subways** were the responsibility of the CPSU CC Department of Transportation and Communications and the KGB Transportation Division (Fourth Directorate);
- **ideology, religion, culture, mass media, education, science, medicine and sport** were handled by the CPSU CC Departments of Propaganda, Culture and Science and Higher Education Institutions together with the Fifth Directorate for Ideological Counter-Intelligence (since 1989 known as the Directorate for the Protection of Constitutional Order);
- **industry, the civil sector of the economy, and the oil, fuel and nuclear power infrastructure** were the charge of the CPSU CC Departments of Economics, Heavy Industry and Energy and the Sixth Directorate for Economic Counter-Intelligence; and so on.

And just as the civil, visible part of the Party was interlocked with the state apparatus, so too, the secretive, invisible KGB mechanism was fused into the Soviet government system – controlling, checking, and correcting the functioning of the state machinery.

The arrangement of the KGB top leadership and the Office of the KGB Chairman had a striking similarity to that of the CC CPSU and the Office of the General Secretary. The top political administrative body of the KGB was the Collegium, made up of the KGB Chairman's deputies and the heads of the most important directorates. Collegiums existed in all of the 14 republic KGBs, in two of the oldest and most prominent territorial UKGBs (Moscow and Leningrad), and later in the other territorial UKGBs. Within the organization, the KGB Secretariat played almost the same role as the Secretariat of the CC did in the Party and its status was certainly higher than that of a chancellery of a government agency.

The KGB Chairman, like the General Secretary of the CPSU, had his own institution of aides – officially designated advisors – which was set up by Yury Andropov in late 1960s. The institution of aides was a privilege that did not exist in other governmental ministries, with the possible exception of the Council of Ministers and the Supreme Soviet. This lends the post of KGB head a prestige equal to that of the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet or the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (see Flow Chart No. 1).

### **The KGB's Place in the Soviet Political System:**

The last three KGB Chairmen – Yury Andropov, Viktor Chebrikov, and Vladimir Kryuchkov – were

senior members of the Politburo. Regardless of their personalities and only by virtue of their leadership of the state security organs, they were in the third most influential position after the General Secretary and the Council of Ministers' Chairman and, by volume of real power, the second. The Chairman of the KGB, indeed, had enormous resources of power.

Numerically, the KGB was one of the biggest employers in the Soviet Union. Although the project documents do not provide the number of KGB personnel, related sources do. According to the last Soviet Chairman of the KGB, Vladimir Kryuchkov, by August 1991, the total number of KGB servicemen amounted to 490,000, including 220,000 KGB Border Troops and 60,000 KGB Government Communication Troops.<sup>5</sup> About 90,000 KGB personnel worked in the territorial and republic organizations.<sup>6</sup>

The figure cited by Kryuchkov covers the KGB uniformed corps, albeit not completely. For example, Kryuchkov did not mention 3-4 divisions of Soviet Army Airborne Troops (VDV) which were transferred to the KGB functional command by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1988.<sup>7</sup> Notably, Kryuchkov failed to mention the non-uniformed part of the KGB's world, i.e. the enormous army of secret informers (agent-informants), "trustees," "helpers," and other non-staff KGB collaborators. According to KGB insiders this figure reached about 20 million.<sup>8</sup> Although this number can hardly be verified under present circumstances, even the most conservative evaluation can reach the same results. Roughly, over half of KGB personnel (about 220,000 as derived from the figures mentioned above) were involved in operative activities with secret informers, where every KGB "case officer" or "controller" had about 20 informants. Thus, the actual number of KGB secret informers could not be less than 4.5-5 million, which constituted 3-4% of the adult population of the Soviet Union.<sup>9</sup>

The nature of KGB power was different from that of the normal civilian part of the Party and the state *nomenklatura*, including the military bureaucracy. The real might of the state security organs was based not only on their representation in the Party or state power centers, but on their:

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<sup>5</sup> Vladimir Kryuchkov, "Lichnoe delo," "Olymp" AST, Moscow 1996, Volume II, p. 347; Vadim Bakatin, who presided over the dismantling of the KGB in 1991, had confirmed this figure. See Vadim Bakatin, "Izbavlenie ot KGB," *Novosti*, Moscow, 1992, p. 46. The White Book of the Russian Special Services provides another, reduced figure of the uniformed KGB personnel: 420,000. See *Belaya Kniga Rossiiskikh Spetssluzhzb, Informatsionno-Izdatelskoe Agenstvo "Obozrevatel,"* Moscow, 1996, p. 72.

<sup>6</sup> Vadim Bakatin, "Izbavlenie ot KGB, 'Novosti'," Moscow, 1992, p. 46.

<sup>7</sup> See Victor Yasmann "The internal security situation in the USSR and the Defense Council", RL 398/89, August 18, 1989

<sup>8</sup> Interview of the KGB Lieutenant Colonel Valentin Korolev on Russian television. July 30, 1991.

<sup>9</sup> This figure corresponding to the number of the secret informers of the GDR State Security Agency MfS (Stasi):

- functional access to every aspect of life in Soviet society;
- super-closed conspiratorial status;
- institutional autonomy;
- enormous human and financial resources; and
- lack of practical accountability to anyone outside of the most closely-drawn circle of Politburo members, the General Secretary of the CPSU, or, later, the USSR President.

The limitations of KGB power reflected, in fact, the limitations of the whole Soviet single-party system. Paradoxically, the basic constraint on KGB power was its status as an “armed detachment of the Communist Party,” which was codified in a top secret statute on the agency in 1959 by Nikita Khrushchev<sup>10</sup> and which was in force until 1991. Khrushchev, expressing the will of party’s apparatus, had adopted a set of regulations aimed at protecting the Party’s leadership and functionaries from a repetition of the merciless purges and terror of Josef Stalin, who made the predecessors of the KGB a pitiless weapon of his despotism.

These strict regulations are found in the collection’s documents. In particular, the KGB was categorically banned from recruiting agent-informers and other types of collaborators from among not only the Party apparatus, but also members of the *nomenklatura*, i.e. – political appointees who were cadres of the CC CPSU. The former included functionaries of the Communist party and Komsomol from the level of primary organization down to peoples’ deputies of all levels and political officers of the Soviet Army. Among the law-enforcement agencies, only the State Procuracy officials and judges were free from KGB surveillance. Remarkably, this regulation was not extended to the rank-and-file Party members, not to mention all other citizens of the Soviet Union.<sup>11</sup>

Consequently, the KGB was forbidden any overt or covert operative activities against these categories of functionaries. The KGB was strictly subordinated not only to its own military line of command, but also to the Party’s discipline and guidelines. Moreover, the fate of any Chekist depended on the Party organs (such as the Committee of Party Control and CC CPSU Department of Administrative Organs) no less than on his KGB superiors. Because Party membership was “a must” for 100 percent of the KGB officers, expulsion from the Party was a complete fiasco for their career.

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<sup>10</sup> See “Polozhenie o Komitete Gosudarstvennoi Besopasnosti pri Sovete Ministrov SSSR i ego organakh na mestakh” and the Directive No. 00225 of the Chairman of the KGB “O zadachakh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnoti v svyazi s resheniyami XXI s’ezda KPSS.”

<sup>11</sup> See “Polozhenie ob agenturnom apparate i doverennykh litsakh organov gosudarstvennoi besopasnosti SSSR”, KGB SSSR, 1983, p. 12.



In the same vein, all promotions within the KGB above the rank of colonel were subject to the authorization of the CC CPSU; appointments of KGB Department and Directorate chiefs were subject to approval by the Politburo and the General Secretary of the CPSU. Finally, the KGB basic policy documents and internal rules went into force only after authorization by the CC CPSU. All in all, KGB functioning was regulated by 5,000 top secret Party and KGB acts.<sup>12</sup>

Due to the KGB's unbreakable link to the Party, the CPSU's ideological policy formed the basis of the KGB's day-to-day procedures. In this sense, the KGB was a rigidly ideological organization that built its operational activity on the "solely truthful" Marxist-Leninist dogma. Using the "class struggle" as the approach to sociopolitical and economic life denied the presence of "antagonistic" conflicts in a socialist society. Therefore, it rejected the grounds and conditions for the development of nationalism, religious extremism, criminality, and another destructive processes under socialism. Hence, it viewed all manifestations of criticism of the existing regime or deviating behavior as "encroachments and plots" of external forces and Western intelligence services.

In retrospect, KGB Chairman Vladimir Kryuchkov and his top generals complained that these rigid statutory and ideological constraints tied their hands and did not allow them to "expose" Mikhail Gorbachev, Eduard Shevardnadze, and Aleksandr Yakovlev, whom they unanimously blamed for the disintegration of the USSR and considered "traitors" and "agents of Western influence."<sup>13</sup> However, in the KGB documents under review, we found neither a trace of KGB suspicion, nor criticism or "alarmism" about Gorbachev's policies, although the format of many publications allowed such criticism. Moreover, most of the documents dealing with Gorbachev's course until 1989 are rather conformist and certainly much more loyal to him than contemporary documents that originated in the Party's bodies. One reason for this phenomenon was the fact that the KGB considered Gorbachev, albeit mistakenly and for too long, as the successor of Yury Andropov's cause.

### **Andropov's Legacy:**

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<sup>12</sup> According to Vadim Bakatin, the first and last "democratic" Chairman of the KGB who presided over its dismantlement in 1991. See Vadim Bakatin, "Izbavlenie ot KGB," "Novosti," Moscow, 1992, p. 47.

<sup>13</sup> Vladimir Kryuchkov, "Lichnoe delo," "Olymp" AST, Moscow 1996, Volume I, pp. 258-269, 282-386; Felipp Bobkov, "KGB I vlast'," izdatelstvo "Veteran MP," Moscow, 1995, pp. 362-376; Nikolai Leonov, "Likholet'e," Moscow, "Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya," 1994, pp. 314-337; Vyacheslav Shironin, "Pod kolpakom kontrrazvedki. Tainaya podopleka perestroiki," "Paleya," Moscow, 1996, pp. 155-219.

The KGB had achieved the pinnacle of its power and influence abroad and at home in the period from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s. For the unprecedented growth of its authority, the KGB undoubtedly was obliged to Yury Andropov, who led the organization from 1967 to 1982. During his term in office, Andropov managed to step-by-step build up the KGB's clout within the Soviet power system, turning the KGB into an interbranch arbiter and expanding into the authoritative realms of the remaining government bureaucracy. The process became possible because of the KGB's quantum leap into three areas: ideology, state governance, and economics – the areas, which traditionally were the domain of the CC CPSU apparatus.

Just a month after Andropov's appointment as Chairman of the KGB in May 1967, the CC CPSU issued a directive, initiated by Andropov, on the creation of a new Fifth Directorate (FD), which was to be specially targeted to deal with "ideological subversion," i.e. – all the main forms of open dissidence in the USSR.<sup>14</sup>

Within the framework of this newly-created Directorate, there were departments responsible for:

- the Jewish emigration movement and other national-minded groups;
- religious groups and activists;
- the interrogation of "anti-Soviet" publications, i.e. "Samizdat;"
- creative intelligentsia, scientists and journalists;
- youth and sport international exchange; and
- "anti-Soviet" emigre centers and organizations.

Related departments were created within the territorial organs of the KGB (see Flow Chart No. 2).

Establishment of the Fifth Directorate as a kind of political-ideological police was the reaction of the Brezhnev leadership to the emergence of open dissidence and the inability of the Party's ideological apparatus to cope with it. The Soviet dissidence of the 1960s and 1970s was not, in reality, directed against the Soviet system. It was a product of the powerful impulse emanating from the revelations of Stalin's crimes at the 20th Party Congress. The subsequent emancipation of the society brought about the coalescing of large social and professional groups, which shared certain common outlooks inspired by Khrushchev's "Thaw" and a newly emerging social morality and subculture. This novel state of affairs in the society was known by the name *dvizhenie shestidesyatnikov* ("Movement of the 1960s generation").

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<sup>14</sup> History of Soviet State Security Organs, F. E. Dzerzhinskiy Red Banner Higher School of the Committee of State Security, under the auspices of the Council of Ministers of the USSR Special Faculty No. 9, Moscow, 1972, pp. 548-550, 552, 614; See, also, Philipp Bobkov, "KGB i vlast'," Izdatel'stvo "Veteran MP," Moscow, 1995, pp. 190-199.

However, the Party and the KGB saw the dissidence exclusively as a plot of outside forces and the “ideological diversion of the West.” In Andropov’s words:

At present, in our country there is no social base for the emergence of anti-Soviet and anti-societal manifestations (proyavlenii).<sup>15</sup> We have eliminated the economic conditions for the existence of such a base. As we are advancing to Communism, the social homogeneity of society is strengthening, the political-ideological unity of the workers is being reinforced . . . Running up against the monolithic nature [*monolitnost*] of Soviet society, the enemy is losing hope for success in a ‘frontal attack’ and, therefore, is using all the more sophisticated methods and forms of struggle designed to ‘soften socialism from within.’ This is one of the particular features of the present political and operative situation.<sup>16</sup>

The KGB’s invasion of the sphere of ideology, dealing with sophisticated social issues, and the “necessity” of controlling scientific and creative intelligentsia had prompted Andropov’s other step: “intellectualization” of the KGB. He raised educational standards for KGB officers and set up numerous scientific and research facilities within the organization.<sup>17</sup> Thus, in 1969, he issued directive No. 0395 on the creation of analytical-information departments in all elements of the KGB.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile, under the supervision of Andropov confederate and new Directorate chief Filipp Bobkov, the Ideological Counterintelligence Directorate began a merciless struggle against the dissidents. Bobkov, who later on deserved the reputation of “chief ideologue of the KGB” and the “best Soviet

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<sup>15</sup> “O zadachakh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v svete reshenii XXVI s’ezda KPSS,” The Address of the Member of the CC CPSU Politburo, the Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security. Yu. V. Andropov at the conference of the commanding personnel of the organs and troops of the USSR KGB, 25 May, 1981 in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, p. 46.

<sup>16</sup> “Zadachi operativnoi deyatelnosti organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v svete reshenii XXIV s’ezda KPSS,” The Address of the Candidate Member of the CC CPSU Politburo, the Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security. Yu. V. Andropov at the All-Union conference of the commanding personnel of the organs and troops of the USSR KGB, June 22, 1971 in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnosti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1980, p. 38.

<sup>17</sup> “On this topic, see, for example, “O dal’neishem sovershenstvovanii attestatsii nauchnykh i nauchno-pedagogicheskikh kadrov i usilennii roli diisertatsionnykh issledovaniy v reshenii zadach gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v svete trebovaniy XXVI s’ezda TsK KPSS i Maiskogo (1981) Vsesoyuznogo soveshchaniya rukovodyashchego sostava organov I voisk KGB SSSR,” Address of the Deputy Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security, N.P. Emokhonov at the All-Committee conference on the topics of the attestation of the scientific and scientific-pedagogic cadres of the USSR KGB, October 14, 1981 in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnosti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, pp. 204-218.

<sup>18</sup> History of Soviet State Security Organs, F. E. Dzerzhinskiy Red Banner Higher School of the Committee of State Security, under the auspices of the Council of Ministers of the USSR Special Faculty No. 9, Moscow, 1972, pp. 614.

counterintelligence man,” suppressed dissidence by a combination of direct coercion, intimidation, deception, and penetration. Bobkov’s 5th Directorate bears immediate accountability for the arrest, expulsion to exile, and persecution of such human rights figures as:

- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn,
- Andrei Sakharov,
- Aleksandr Esenin-Volpin,
- Andrei Amalrik,
- Petro Grigorenko,
- Anatoly Marchenko,
- Vladimir Bukovsky,
- Natan Shcharansky,
- Aleksandr Ginsburg, and
- activists of national self-determination movements in Ukraine (such as Levko Luk’yanenko, Vyacheslav Chernovil, Vasil Stus, Valentin Moroz, and Leonid Plyutshch), Georgia, Armenia, and the Baltic States.

Some of the collection’s files have information on these cases. By the end of the 1970s, practically all of the human rights groups in the USSR had terminated their active existence and all of the most prominent dissidents had been dispatched to camps, sent to internal exile, placed in psychiatric institutes, or been forced to leave the country.

The “success” of the Fifth Directorate in suppressing dissidence made the Brezhnev leadership feel safe and secure under the wing of the “Party police.” It had de-facto broadened both the influence and might of the whole KGB to the point that it was able to recapture the initiative in ideological areas from the CC CPSU.

Bobkov celebrated the newly-gained status by saying:

... the activity of the state security organs is directed at the defense not only of the political system and the state, like a tool of political power, but of the entire system named society and comprising all kinds of socialist societal relations, social institutions, classes, nationalities and other social entities and groups.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Nekotorye voprosy bor’by s ideologicheskoi diversiei protivnika v sovremennyi period,” Address of the Deputy Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security F. D. Bobkov to the chiefs of the KGB-UKGB at the faculty of advancing of the qualification of the USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, p. 291.

Andropov was quick enough to codify the new KGB status into legislation. The decree signed by Leonid Brezhnev on March 17, 1978 effectively freed the KGB from its symbolic subordination to the Council of Ministers. The organization was awarded a new designation and status – from then on to be known as “the KGB of the USSR,”<sup>20</sup> – distinct from its old, nominally curtailed status as “attached to (*pri*) the USSR Council of Ministers.”<sup>21</sup> In a country where the official language enjoyed such weighty significance, the new definition actually meant everything. In fact, “Kah-Geh-Beh SSSR” encompassed the security of the Party and her leaders, the country, the army, and society – in a word, any combination that came to mind.

Even earlier, the new Soviet Constitution that was adopted in 1977 incorporated a provision stipulating that not only defense (i.e. – compulsory military service) but also state security was a duty for Soviet citizens.<sup>22</sup> While little-noticed at the time, the provision gave the KGB truly unique opportunities in relation to their fellow-citizens. Now the question of “co-operating” with the KGB or refusing to do so became a matter of one’s loyalty to the Constitution. Thus, by the end of the 1970s, Andropov had erected a structure which finalized the transformation of the Soviet Union into what John Dziak called a “counter-intelligence state.”<sup>23</sup>

But the KGB’s main achievement in Andropov’s time was Andropov himself, who, after Brezhnev’s death in November 1982, occupied the position of General Secretary of the CPSU. For the first time in Soviet history, the head of the state security organs became the leader of the Party and the country. Ironically, by the time the KGB reached the peak of its power, the whole Soviet Communist system was unswervingly approaching its final collapse under the burden of internal contradictions and external confrontation.

A whole series of events in the late 1970s and early 1980s had radically changed the geopolitical situation in the world and radically worsened the position of the Soviet Union. These events included:

- the technological jump enjoyed by the West along with Japan, which was spurred by the scientific-

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<sup>20</sup>Vedomosti Verkhovnogo Soveta SSR, No. 28, 1978, p. 419.

<sup>21</sup> This affiliation was set up at the time of the creation of the KGB on March 13, 1954.

<sup>22</sup> The Constitution adopted on October 7, 1977, had a new Article 32, which stipulated: “...The duties of states bodies, public organizations, officials, and citizens in regard to safeguarding the country’s security and strengthening its defense capacity are defined by the legislation of the USSR.” (See S. E. Finer, ed., “Five Constitutions” Penguin Books, Harmondworth, 1979, p. 156). None of the previous Soviet constitutions, including the one adopted under Stalin in 1937, mentioned state security as a constitutional duty. One must add that the “legislation of the USSR” about which the references in the Constitution were made were strictly secret as far as the KGB was concerned.

<sup>23</sup> John Dziak, “Chekisty,” Lexington Books, 1988. Explaining his vision of the USSR as a “counterintelligence state,” Dziak wrote: “Police and counterintelligence operations (such as arrest, investigation, penetration, provocation, deception, entrapment, denunciation, informants, spy mania, censorship, dossiers and so on) soon characterized the behavior of the whole state structure, not just security organs”. pp. 2-3

technological revolution;

- the resurgence of neo-conservatism in the West and the ascent to power of conservative-minded political leaders in the US, England, Japan, West Germany and Israel;
- the successful beginnings of reforms in China;
- the Iranian Revolution;
- events in Afghanistan and the need to discern the inscrutable intentions of the “main enemy” – the United States; and
- political upheaval in Poland, possibly explosive for the “Socialist camp.”

Each of these demanded a response. Yet, the decrepit power of the Kremlin simply wasn't up to responding. Neither Andropov nor the KGB analysts understood the synergy of the developments. They saw the multifaceted process as a linear threat, originated and organized by the West. Worst of all, they continued to believe that the malfunctioning of the Soviet system was result of bad leadership and poor management but not the vices and defects of the system itself.

### **The Last Decade of the KGB:**

The principal thesis of many KGB documents can be expressed in one phrase: reliable rear at home, but increasing threat from abroad. In 1981, Andropov, for example, postulated in his address to the Chekists:

We have a good political situation within our country. This has made a decisive impact on the operative situation. The latter is, in general, favorable for us. . . . At the same time, an exacerbation of international tension accompanied by an expansion in the scale and intensity of the enemy's intelligence and subversive activities requires that the Chekist organs make maximum use of these favorable conditions.<sup>24</sup>

The KGB always considered the Helsinki Act (1975), which, in practice, divided Europe on Soviet terms, as its best accomplishment. Naturally, it put emphasis on the “first (political) basket” of the Agreement. The “third basket” (regarding human rights) was treated as less relevant. However, the realities of the early 1980s forced the KGB to change its position. Thus, in May 1981 Andropov said:

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<sup>24</sup> O zadachakh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v svete reshenii XXVI s'ezda KPSS”, The Address of the Member of the CC CPSU Politburo, the Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security. Yu. V. Andropov at the conference of the commanding personnel of the organs and troops of the USSR KGB, 25 May, 1981 in “Deyatel'nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape”, USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, pp. 35-36

In the first period after Helsinki, we experienced pressure from the West, which was trying to use the Agreement to accomplish its own specific objectives. While not yielding on principal issues, in some places we relaxed the regimen [allowed more free access] for diplomats, journalists, and tourists from Western countries. At that time it was justified and necessary because the West linked these issues with the general framework of the Helsinki Agreement.

Now the situation has changed. We can and must take certain corrective actions in our counterintelligence activities in this area.<sup>25</sup>

The analysis of the KGB documents shows that in 1980 there was a process of diffusing intelligence functions into domestic and regional Directorates. This process was very profitable for KGB institutional interests on the whole, as well as the interests of different KGB elements and individuals Chekists. It developed in three directions:

- through proliferation of foreign intelligence units (First Main Directorate or FMD) into regional directorates;
- through expansion of the foreign intelligence activity of the Fifth Directorate; and
- through broadening the intelligence functions of “economic counterintelligence” Directorates (the Fourth and Sixth Directorates).

The involvement of functional and territorial Directorates in foreign intelligence gained momentum in the first half of the 1980s, when the “first line” units had been created in the KGB-UKGB organs.<sup>26</sup> The local “first line” units had to coordinate their activity with the Directorate of Intelligence of the Territory of the USSR (RT), a key element of the FMD central apparatus. Created in 1980, the RT Directorate had at its disposal so-called officers of the Active Reserve. In contrast to a deceptive opinion, widespread among Western and Russian authors, the Active Reserve was composed not of retired KGB officers but of those who worked undercover in non-KGB Soviet organizations. The RT put Active Reserve undercover officers in all state and public organizations having contacts and/or representation in foreign countries.

The number of slots and positions in state and public organizations allotted to the KGB were regulated by top secret directives of the Central Committee and the USSR Council of Ministers. Many Soviet organizations have not only included individual KGB officers, but big groups or even entire units of undercover KGB officers among their personnel. This includes foreign representatives of:

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<sup>25</sup> “Ibid, p. 43.

<sup>26</sup> See “Political Intelligence from the Territory of the USSR,” Yu. V. Andropov Red Banner Institute, Moscow, 1989, p. 10.

- the Soviet “trade-unions” (VTsSPS);
- the Union of Soviet Societies of Friendship and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries;
- the USSR Committee of Youth Organizations;
- the Committee of Soviet Women;
- the Soviet Committee of Solidarity with the Countries of Asia and Africa; and
- the All-Union Agency for Protection of Copyright (VAAP).

Another target of RT activity was the contingent of foreign citizens in the territory of the USSR. In a typical year in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s, there were over 2,000 foreign diplomats and several hundred foreign journalists; and over 100,000 foreign students, including 60,000 from “capitalist” and developing countries and 10,000 foreign cadets in military academies.<sup>27</sup> In addition, up to 80,000 Soviet citizens annually made business trips to capitalist and developing countries and over 20,000 Soviet athletes took part in sporting events abroad.<sup>28</sup>

The opening of the closed Soviet society during Mikhail Gorbachev’s reforms dramatically increased the importance and significance of the foreign intelligence, “ideological,” and economic elements of the KGB. As our analysis shows, many of Gorbachev’s policies or even lack of a concrete policy coincided objectively with the KGB’s objectives and preferences at least until 1989. Gorbachev’s international actions and trips and his countless peace initiatives and charm offensives also lay in the sphere of traditional KGB activity. For example, from 1985 to 1990, Gorbachev made an unprecedented number of trips abroad, paying 40 state visits to twenty-six countries.<sup>29</sup> The KGB took part in preparations for these trips, seeing to it that its own actions and negative image did not harm Gorbachev:

...increasing our strikes on the enemy, [our] well-prepared strikes, one should measure them precisely from the point of view of the possibility of negative consequences for the successful realization of Party efforts for the extension of international cooperation, strengthening of trust, and advance of Soviet peace initiatives.<sup>30</sup>

Gorbachev, in turn, preferred not to touch the KGB, not to mention reduce its power. His tactics were

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<sup>27</sup> Political Intelligence from the Territory of the USSR,” Yu.V. Andropov Red Banner Institute, Moscow, 1989, p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 16.

<sup>29</sup> See the memoirs of KGB major general, and Gorbachev’s personal body guard, Vladimir Medvedev, “Chelovek za spinoi,” Russlit, Moscow, 1994, pp. 290-291.

<sup>30</sup> Ob itogakh Iyun’skogo (1987) Plenuma TsK KPSS i zadachakh organov I voisk Komiteta Gosugarstvennoi Bezopasnosti po uglublennyu operativno-sluzhebnoi deyatel’nosti,” Address of the CC CPSU Politburo member and the Chairman of the USSR Committee for State Security V. M. Chebrikov at the conference of the secretaries of the Party committees and bureaus of the divisions of the USSR KGB central apparatus on June 8, 1987, Sbornik No.



to keep the KGB “busy” by delegating it more and more assignments.<sup>31</sup> Appointed by Gorbachev, Vladimir Kryuchkov – the first chief of the KGB to come from the Foreign Intelligence Directorate – had seen the opportunities in Gorbachev’s charm offensive:

That is what happened in our country, the basically new direction of [our] foreign policy actions has created a new image of the Soviet state by its great attractiveness and influence...All this opens a broad area for our practical activity abroad and creates conditions for reinforcement of [our] political positions and acquisition of friends where our capacities were equal to zero just in the recent past. Of course, it will only bring positive results if we act skilfully and craftily by using appropriate patterns and techniques.<sup>32</sup>

At the same time Kryuchkov never forgot to stress the importance of the KGB for modernization: “We have no more profitable [organization] in our economy than the intelligence service.”<sup>33</sup>

### **The KGB and Ethnic Problems:**

The Soviet leadership never recognized the imperial nature and structure of its state. Instead, it propagated an ideological utopia about a “single Soviet people” and its legitimate child, the “New Soviet Man.” It is enough to say that until the mid-1980s, there were no institutions that studied the complex problems and conflicts of the hundreds of nationalities that populated the Soviet Union from the point of their ethnicity and multi-culturalism.

All of the negative aspects of national minorities’ problems were always interpreted as “nationalism” and “chauvinism.” The KGB, in fact, was the only organization which, by law, dealt with nationalities’ issues (from the position of “combat against bourgeois nationalism”). The KGB *Counterintelligence Dictionary* defined it thus:

Bourgeois nationalism – politics and ideology in the area of national [ethnic] relations which is contrary to socialist internationalism...In the Soviet Union, where full equality of all nations and nationalities has been provided, [and where] there are no socio-political and economic roots for B.N., it has presented itself as a malignant and dangerous

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118, p. 21.

<sup>31</sup> In Gorbachev’s time, two additional directorates were created: the Directorate of Special Forces (Sch) and the Directorate for Combat Against Organized Crime (OP). The number of KGB Chairman’s deputies reached a record of nine generals.

<sup>32</sup> “Vystuplenie chlene TsK KPSS, Predsedatelya Komiteta Gosugarstvennoi Besopasnosti SSSR, V.A. Kryuchkova na XXI partiinoi konferentsii KGB SSSR 17 dekabrya 1988, Sbornik No. 128, p. 4.

<sup>33</sup> Interview of Vladimir Kryuchkov in *Pravitel’svennyi vestnik* Nos. 14-15, 1989, p. 23; See also, Vladimir Kryuchkov, “Lichnoe delo,” “Olymp” AST, Moscow 1996, Volume I, p. 134.

[capitalist] remainder...<sup>34</sup>

Exactly in this spirit, the KGB evaluated national upheaval in the republics exclusively as the plotting and underhanded schemes of Western and Oriental secret services.<sup>35</sup> There was another motivation in the KGB's activity against nationalism. As an imperial super-organization the KGB combined the ossified ideology of "proletarian internationalism" with its own imperial substance. That is why it saw any nationalism, including Russian, as a challenge not only to the power of the Moscow Communist oligarchy over the Soviet Union's people and territories, but also as a threat to its own existence as a monopolistic imperial organization.

The explosion of ethnic conflicts and the growth of ethnic consciousness and self-identification in the Soviet empire's nations after the start of Gorbachev's reforms put the KGB in an insurmountable dilemma: how to cope with it without undermining the "democratic image of perestroika." In search of a solution, the KGB began to employ the tactic of active measures – operations of influence and disinformation which the KGB usually used abroad – against nationalist movements and NGOs. In 1987, KGB Chairman Viktor Chebrikov instructed Chekists:

With the help of our agent network, we must keep the enemy's groups, all of those using informal public entities for their purposes, in our vision permanently. In organizing our work against such groups at this concrete stage, we must put emphasis on practically-tested and approved methods for their breakdown [razhlozhenie] by means of: the insertion of ideological and organizational controversies into the top levels; the compromise of extreme-minded leaders; the creation of an atmosphere of mistrust, animosity, and mutual suspicion; the advancement into the group leadership of our experienced and qualified agent-informers able to apply real influence on the situation and to direct the activities of the groups into channels that would be beneficial for us...<sup>36</sup>

Consequently, the KGB materials about national movements are full of reports on "prevention" [profilaktika], "successful penetration," "recruiting," and "break down" of informal groups and public

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<sup>34</sup> *Kontrrazvedyvatel'nyi slovar'*, KGB Higher Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Scientific-publishing Department, Moscow, 1972, pp. 172-173.

<sup>35</sup> One of the most interesting illustrations of this approach is the address of Philipp Bobkov to the officers of 5th Directorate, broadly quoted in this report. See "Nekotorye voprosy bor'by s ideologicheskoi diversiei protivnika v sovremennyi period," in "Deyatel'nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape," USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, pp. 269-297.

<sup>36</sup> "Ob itogakh Iyun'skogo (1987) Plenuma TsK KPSS i zadachakh organov I voisk Komiteta Gosugarstvennoi bezopasnosti po uglublennyu operativno-sluzhebnoi deyatelnosti," Address of the Member of the Politburo CC CPSU and the Chairman of the KGB, V.M. Chebrikov to the conference of the commanding personnel, the secretaries of the party committees and bureaus of the central apparatus of the USSR KGB on June 8, 1987, *Sbornik* No. 118, pp. 22-23.

movements and organizations in the Baltics,<sup>37</sup> Ukraine,<sup>38</sup> Armenia,<sup>39</sup> Tajikistan,<sup>40</sup> Kazakhstan,<sup>41</sup> and Moldova.<sup>42</sup> All of these publications have one thing in common: they give the impression that the KGB was in control of the situation, while, in reality, it could not even evaluate it realistically.

In the KGB's combat against national movements, a special charter belongs to its fight against "Zionism," which was a speciality of the Fifth Directorate. The Jewish movement for repatriation to Israel and freedom of emigration was considered the most important because of its "international significance." The furious campaign against Zionism lasted more than two decades until the march of liberalization in the Soviet Union and establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel in 1989 made this "struggle" senseless. The data on the KGB persecution of Jewish activists shows that the KGB concentrated enormous resources and its best cadres on it. Still, the KGB failed to reach their goals and looked for excuses to explain it:

. . . it must be said frankly that under the existing situation, when extremism has emerged in its resistant form, many officers of the Fifth line and their agents are fighting at the front line not in full [strength]. This is due to a shortage of valuable assets in the leading levels of Jewish nationalists. . .<sup>43</sup>

The last operations on the "Jewish" line related to 1987-1988.<sup>44</sup> The official Soviet propaganda always tried to disguise its anti-Semitism under the mask of "combat against Zionism," but the KGB documents named the thing by its real name and exposed the genuine attitude of the KGB to the Jews. The most

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<sup>37</sup> Lieutenant General Yu. Petkyavichyus: "Bor'ba s klerikalnym ekstremizmom - nasha vazhneishaya zadacha," Sbornik No. 109, pp. 22-36; Colonels V. Karinauskas, E. Baltinas, "V bor'be s ideologicheskoi diversiei protivnika nado deistvovat nastupatel'no," Sbornik No. 115, pp. 19-23; Lieutenant Colonel, A. Red'kin, Major A. Rummyantsev, "Antisovetskie aktsii reaktivnoi pribaltiiskoi emigratsii obrechneny na proval," Sbornik No. 119, 22; Colonels V. Karinauskas, E. Baltinas, "Nash opyt ideinogo razoruzheniya natsionalistov s posleduyushchim ispol'zovaniem ikh v kontrrazvedyvatel'nykh meropriyatiakh," Sbornik No. 125, pp. 50-55.

<sup>38</sup> Lieutenant Colonel A. Koval', Major V. Shitov, "Emissar razoblachen," Sbornik No. 134, pp. 22-25; Colonel I. Samolenko, Lieutenant Colonel V. Litvin "Ukrainskie natsionalisty menyayut svoyu taktiku'," Sbornik No. 134, pp. 31-33; Colonel P. Pidgainyi, the chief of "Z" Directorate of Ukrainian SSR KGB, Colonel V. Zolototrubov, candidate of historical science, docent, "Priobretayem opyt," Sbornik No. 139, pp. 16-23.

<sup>39</sup> Major General V. Badayantz, "Vremya postupkov," Sbornik No. 130, pp. 17-27.

<sup>40</sup> Captain V. Bul'din, Colonel A. Zalesskii, "Poslanetz Jikhada," Sbornik No. 140-141, pp. 22-28.

<sup>41</sup> Colonel of Justice A. Gurskii, "V khvoste sobytii," Sbornik No. 137, pp. 12-16.

<sup>42</sup> Major General D. Muntyan, "Iz opyta profilaktiki natsionalisticheskii proyavlenii," Sbornik No. 104, pp. 27-35; Major General D. Muntyan, "Preduprezhdai deistviya anti-obshchestvennykh elementov v srede 'neformalov'," Sbornik No. 128, pp. 56-60.

<sup>43</sup> Lieutenant General N. Chelnokov, "Traditsiyam verny'," Sbornik No. 121, p. 11

<sup>44</sup> : Major General K. Kononovich (Mogilev UKGB), "Chat v osnove perestroiki raboty gorotela?," Sbornik No. 118, p. 44; Major General A. Strekalov, Lieutenant Colonel P. Pleshakov, "Aktivnyi sionist predstal pered sudom," Sbornik No. 104, p. 51; Lieutenant Colonel V. Vasil'ev, Captain A. Bochkov (Pensa UKGB) "Kak bylo razlozhenno natsionalisticheskoe grupirovanie," Sbornik No. 109, p. 44; Lieutenant General N. Chelnokov (Moscow UKGB,

interesting document on this topic is: “Specifics of Recruitment Work With Foreign Jews Ethnically Linked to the USSR,”<sup>45</sup> published in 1986. Many passages from the document look like reprints from Nazi Germany’s publications. Here are some samples:

- “As Jews believed for a long time in [their], in effect, illusory ‘special capacities,’ this gave rise to such features in the Jewish national character as vanity, arrogance, self-glorification, and excessive self-esteem.”<sup>46</sup>
- “Jews contact easily with strangers if they smell money. No exception is made for contacts with Soviet representatives, which they, as a rule, assess from the angle of making a profit – not only material, but also moral.”<sup>47</sup>
- “The longing for material profit, passion for money, prevailing egotistical and individualist interests in the hierarchy of moral values are the factors that as a whole can play a positive role in bringing Jews into cooperation with the external intelligence of the KGB”<sup>48</sup>

### **Church:**

The materials dealing with religious affairs and various churches emphasize the broadly accepted notion that the KGB strictly controlled the main religions represented in the Soviet Union. Remarkably, if in the other spheres of spiritual and informal life the KGB had a “division of labour” with the Party ideological apparatus, within the church’s affairs, the KGB enjoyed almost a full controlling monopoly.

In 1983, Philipp Bobkov reminded the Chekists of the Fifth Directorate, immediately “responsible” for religious faiths:

The KGB organs have historical experience in using [covert] agent’s methods to influence members of the clergy and in breaking-down [razlozhenii] religious congregations hostile to the Soviet state. In this regards, the remark made by F. E. Dzerzhinsky concerning A. V. Lunacharsky’s proposal, which had been submitted to the [Soviet] government, is typical. In his proposal Lunacharsky suggested that the Ministry of Education would deal more actively with the church and, in particular, it would reinforce its dialogue with the ideologue of the Russian Renewal [obnovlenneskoii] Church, Metropolitan Vvedensky. The Dzerzhinsky response was such: “ Leave the Church to the VChK. Because only the

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Traditsiyam Verny,” Sbornik No. 121, pp. 3-11.

<sup>45</sup> Methodological Study, File No. 391, Secret Copy No. 26, Attachment to 1/4578 of 1812 of 1986.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 30.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 33.

ChK with its means can break down the priests.”<sup>49</sup>

Bobkov himself had seen the KGB’s “work” with churches as a kind of totalitarian paternalism: “In this connection, it is necessary to note that the Chekist work among the clerics is one of the examples of the KGB’s participation in the realization of the educational role of the socialist state.”<sup>50</sup>

Although all religious groups were under scrutiny, the lion’s share of Chekist attention in the 1980s was paid to “reactionary” Protestant confessions in Russia<sup>51</sup> and the “trouble-making” Catholic Church in Ukraine and Lithuania. It was done by extensive “active measures,” “disinformation,” and “active use of experienced agents from the church and sect authorities.”<sup>52</sup>

### **Economics:**

The KGB monopoly on counterintelligence provided the agency with controlling functions in such key or “sensitive” sectors of the national economy as:

- foreign trade, freight, and shipping;
- hard currency operations;
- international construction projects abroad and at home;
- the oil, fuel, and nuclear power infrastructure;
- vital scientific and research centers; and

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<sup>49</sup>“Nekotorye voprosy bor’by s ideologicheskoi diversiei protivnika v sovremennyi period,” Address of the Deputy Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security F. D. Bobkov to the chiefs of the KGB-UKGB at the faculty of advancing of the qualification of the USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, p. 285 (Footnote).

<sup>50</sup>“Nekotorye voprosy bor’by s ideologicheskoi diversiei protivnika v sovremennyi period,” Address of the Deputy Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security F. D. Bobkov to the Chiefs of the KGB-UKGB at the faculty of advancing of the qualification of the USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi besopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, p. 285.

<sup>51</sup> Lieutenant General Yu. Petkyavichyus: “Bor’ba s klerikalnym ekstremizmom - nasha vazhneishaya zadacha,” Sbornik No. 109, pp. 22-36; Colonel G. Mamedov, Lieutenant Colonel G. Abuev (Dagestan): “Nelegal’nye pechatnye tochki likvidirovanny,” Sbornik No. 109, pp. 53-56; Lieutenant Colonel A. Sharafanov, Major A. Grinko, “Tsel dostignuta,” Sbornik No. 119, pp. 27-28; Colonel N. Vasilenko, Major V. Yashchenko, “Aktivnaya kontrpropaganda sygrala svoyu rol,” Sbornik No. 131, pp. 15-20.

<sup>52</sup> Colonel N. Vasilenko, Major V. Yashchenko, “Aktivnaya kontrpropaganda sygrala svoyu rol,” Sbornik No. 131, p. 16.

- export and import of cultural artifacts.

This is not to mention the KGB “protection” of the military-industrial complex and the fact that the boundaries of the Soviet Union were sealed by KGB Border Guard Troops, which gave them practical control over the Customs Service.

In addition, the KGB was responsible for investigating such economic crimes as:

- as the stealing of state and social property on an exceptionally large scale or committed by abuse of an official position;”
- smuggling;
- the violation of rules for currency transactions; and
- the transmission of information containing commercial and job-related secrets to a foreign organization.

Finally, the KGB was responsible for maintaining the system of “blanket secrecy” in science and industry and persecution of “acts of corruption and sabotage,” a responsibility dating from Stalin’s time. Many of the collection’s documents cover these aspects of KGB “economic” activity.<sup>53</sup>

The KGB expansion into the Soviet economy was in inverse proportion to the economy’s performance. The worse the Soviet economy did, the more “economic tasks” the Politburo entrusted to the KGB. This was clearly visible, for example, in the early 1980s when the political and economic situation in the USSR began to rapidly deteriorate. This deterioration manifested itself in:

- the flourishing of a shadow economy;
- the spread of corruption;
- the formation of semi-feudal clans with entire regions of the country under their power;
- the emergence of organized crime; and
- the rise of a youth subculture, indifferent or aggressively hostile to the official regime and

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<sup>53</sup> Major General G. Vasilenko, Captain V. Zlobin, “Vypolnyaya reshenie kolegii KGB,” Sbornik No. 104, pp. 36-38; Major General N. Gruden, “Iz opyta kontrrazvedyvatelnoi raboty sredi inostrannykh spetsialistov,” Sbornik No. 108, pp. 35-43; Colonel A. Abdullaev, Captain N. Davydov, Senior Lieutenant L. Babkov (Baku), “K rabote na mezhdunarodnykh vystavkakh gotovimsya zaranee,” Sbornik No. 108, pp. 44-47; Lieutenant Colonels N. Gibadulov and A. Barkov, Major S. Likashenko, “Kontrrazvedyvatelnoe obespechenie stroitstva magistralnogo truboprovoda Urengoi-Uzhgorod,” Sbornik No. 109, pp. 17-22; Lieutenant Colonel, A. Sibirov “Chekistskoe sodeistvie programe ‘intensifikatsiya-90’,” Sbornik No. 119, pp. 10-14; Colonel A. Suntsov, Lieutenant Colonel I. Gladkikh, “Mikhinatsii rasoblacheny I presecheny,” Sbornik No. 122, pp. 54-58; Major General G. Kuznetsov, Colonel V. Sobolev, “Novye podkhody v usloviyakh reformy vneshneekonomicheskoi deyatelnosti,” Sbornik No. 128, pp. 42-48; Lieutenant Colonel V. Chogovadze “Aktivno ispolzuya agenturu poluchaem razvedyvatenuyu informatsiyu,” Sbornik No. 130, pp. 35-39.

ideology.

Societal alienation contributed even more to the accelerating collapse of existing state institutions and structures, the paralysis of entire branches of the civil economic sector, a rapidly widening technological gap with the West, and the increasing political isolation of the Soviet Union. This isolation reached its peak with the imposition of martial law in Poland (1978) and the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979), when, in practice, there was not a single large state in the world whose relations with the USSR were not marked by suspicion and wariness.

The sharp fall in oil prices at the end of the 1970s and the restrictions on high technology transfer overseen by COCOM made the Soviet situation even more acute. Looking through Chekist eyes, however, all these developments were solely the result of Western hostile actions. As Andropov put it in 1983:

I would like to say about one of the specifics of the operative situation. I am talking about the subversive actions of the enemy in the sphere of the economy. They are evident in the efforts to create difficulties in the national economy, to slow the rate of industrial growth, and **to conceal the most important achievements of the scientific-technical revolution from us** (emphasis added -VY).<sup>54</sup>

Georgy Tsinev, the First Deputy of the KGB Chairman at that time, added:

It would not be a mistake to say that the Reagan Administration practically began an economic war against us. By driving the Soviet Union into “enforceable participation” in a new round of the arms race, its goal is to hamper us in the solution of problems linked with the development of Soviet society, to constrain the USSR’s ability to make an economic impact on the development of international relations and has in mind [seeing] a growth of difficulties in our national economy and the emergence of pockets of tension.<sup>55</sup>

This was the background for Andropov’s decision to re-create the Fourth Transportation Directorate (September 1981) and the Sixth Economic Directorate (October 1982),<sup>56</sup> which, in his view, “... being a combat detachment and truthful helper of the Party, are called upon to take a most active part in the

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<sup>54</sup> O zadachakh organov gosudarstvennoi bezopasnosti v svete reshenii XXVI s’ezda KPSS,” The Address of the Member of the CC CPSU Politburo, the Chairman of the USSR Committee for the State Security. Yu. V. Andropov at the conference of the commanding personnel of the organs and troops of the USSR KGB, 25 May, 1981 in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi bezopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, p. 28.

<sup>55</sup> O zadachakh 6-go Upravleniya,” pp. 235-236.

<sup>56</sup> Ob itogakh noyabr’skogo(1982) Plenuma TsK KPSS I zadachakh partiinoi organizatsii KGB vytekayushchikh iz reshenii Plenuma i rechi na nem General’nogo Sekretarya TsK KPSS, tovarishcha Yu. V. Andropova. Address of the USSR KGB Chairman, comrade V.M. Chebrikov at the conference of the KGB’s Party Active, in “Deyatel’nost gosudarstvennoi bezopasnoti SSSR na sovremennom etape,” January 12, 1983, USSR KGB Higher Order October Revolution Dzerzhinsky Red Banner School, Moscow, 1983, pp. 128-129. See also, Vadim Udilov, “Zapiski

realization of the economic development plans by applying its specific means...<sup>57</sup> The essence of these means was formulated by the KGB leadership:

Taking into account foreign and domestic political conditions and the requirements of the Communist Party's economic strategy, we have grounds to evaluate the defense of the economy as an array of interconnected agent-operative, criminal-procedural, preemptive-preventive, administrative-classified and information measures executed by the Committee for State Security organs for exposure, interruption, and prevention of hostile activity by the enemy's agents in the national economy; and for early detection and prompt elimination of the causes and trends that can damage the Soviet economy...<sup>58</sup>

By 1983, the Sixth Departments had been activated within all local KGB organs, whereby 45 bodies had been organized anew and 200 had been reinforced.<sup>59</sup> At the same time, the KGB also extended the list of economic enterprises and individuals subject to its "counterintelligence service [kontrrazvedyvatelnoe obsluzhivanie]." This later included "practically all economic ministries and bodies involved in international economic and technical-scientific cooperation, about 6,000 enterprises and scientific centers, and tens of thousands of Soviet scientists and specialists"<sup>60</sup>

The idea of solving economic problems with the help of the political secret police found its manifestation in the new task set up for the KGB by Andropov:

to combat against the enemy's ideological diversion aimed at the scientific-technical intelligentsia and the working class; exposure and disruption of activity by anti-Soviet elements at economic enterprises; detection and prevention of negative processes in working collectives.<sup>61</sup>

In the same way, another KGB "economic" department, the Fourth (Transportation) Directorate was responsible not only for the security of transportation lines, but for surveillance and recruiting of Soviet and foreign citizens through the channels of Soviet international transport organizations such as the Ministry of the Merchant Marine (Morflot), Aeroflot (the only aviation company in the Soviet Union), and Sovavtotrans (the only national auto cargo company).<sup>62</sup> In this capacity, the hand of the Fourth Directorate

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kontrrazvedchika," Yaguar, Moscow, 1994, pp. 195-196.

<sup>57</sup>"O zadachakh 6-go Upravleniya...", p. 237.

<sup>58</sup>"O zadachakh 6-go Upravleniya...", p. 236-237.

<sup>59</sup>"O zadachakh 6-go Upravleniya...", p. 256.

<sup>60</sup> "O zadachakh 6-go Upravleniya...", p. 239.

<sup>61</sup>Lieutenant General F. Scherbak, "Aktual'nye voprosy perestroiki kontrrazvedyvatelnoi raboty v oblasti ekonomiki," Sbornik No. 118, p. 32.

<sup>62</sup> (unsigned), "Korobeiniki," Sbornik No. 82, pp. 66-74; Major General A. Archipov, Colonel Yu. Grozdov, "O praktike razoblacheniya v otkrytoi pechati razvedyvatel'no-podryvnykh aktsii protivnika na morskome kanale'," Sbornik No. 109, pp. 36-40; Major O. Vinogradov, "Vremya udezhdat' i perevospityvat,'" Sbornik No. 130, pp. 25-32; Lieutenant Colonel V. Grechikhin, "Prestupleniye predotvrashcheno," Sbornik No. 138, pp. 23-27.



reached to points as remote from the USSR as Valparaiso-de-Chili, Capetown, Rotterdam, Vancouver, and Hamburg.

A new period of KGB activity in the economy began with Gorbachev's liberalization and abolition of the centralized state monopoly on foreign trade in 1987-1989. The increasing number of direct export-import operators provided the KGB with new kinds of activities and new concerns: exactly which KGB element must "oversee" the Soviet-Western joint ventures that mushroomed in the first romantic years of perestroika. Eventually, in 1988, the KGB Chairman issued Directive No. 0066, which defined that "supervision" of a Soviet-foreign joint ventures belonged to that Directorate whose functional responsibility covered the type of economic activity of the Soviet partner. Thus, the Fifth Directorate was empowered to deal with businesses in publishing, printing, or, for example, commercial sports events; the Fourth Directorate was responsible for cooperative enterprises in transportation and ocean fishery; the Second Main Directorate was in charge of commercial services for foreign visitors and tourists; while the Sixth reserved for itself science and industry and the main coordination of the entire economy.<sup>63</sup>

A spirit of total confrontation with the West, maniacal secrecy, and xenophobia of all foreigners in many instances prevailed over the KGB's own "economic interests." As late as 1987, the KGB's economic divisions were concerned with such problems as the alleged "preparation by the enemy. . . to use seasonal migration of birds and other fauna species to transfer pathogenic micro-organisms to the territory of the Soviet Union."<sup>64</sup>

Closer to the final curtain of the USSR, the march of events forced the KGB to spend more of its time on its customary secret service functions. The "economic" files of the period from 1988 to 1990 are full of reports on the KGB efforts to prevent, albeit unsuccessfully, strikes and mass disorders in the economy<sup>65</sup>.

### **Knockout from History:**

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<sup>63</sup>Major General G. Kuznetsov, Colonel V. Sobolev, "Novye podkhody v usloviyakh reformy vneshneekonomicheskoi deyatel'nosti," Sbornik No. 128, p. 47.

<sup>64</sup>Lieutenant General F. Scherbak, "Aktual'nye voprosy perestroiki kontryzvedyvatel'noi raboty v oblasti ekonomiki," Sbornik No. 118, p. 31.

<sup>65</sup>(unsigned), "Strikhi operativnoi obstanovki," Sbornik No. 130; O.S. Shenin, First Secretary of Krasnoyarsk kraikom KPSS, "ChP za Polyarnym krygom," Sbornik No. 134, pp. 6-11; Colonel N. Shama, "Chto pokasala zabostovka shakhterov," Sbornik No. 137, pp. 25-30; Major A. Sorokin, "Konflikt lokalizovan sovместnymi usiliyami," Sbornik No. 139, p. 32.

In the 1980s, the KGB experienced several devastating blows, which eventually prepared the turf for its defeat and dismantling, but not complete exit from the historical arena. The first blow was the disgraceful discovery of deep penetration by the CIA, MI6, and the other Western services into the KGB's most sensitive elements, as well as into the GRU (military intelligence), and leading Soviet political, military and scientific institutions. When the KGB found out about this, thanks to the treason of high-ranking CIA mole Aldrich Ames, it experienced a state of mind close to shock. In the words of Philipp Bobkov:

Being busy with the penetration of foreign special services, we did not allow even the slightest suggestion that a Western agent might be inserted into us...The exposure of several KGB staffers, such as Politschuk, Motorin, Varennik, Yuzhin had been perceived by us as an unbelievable catastrophe...Yes, it was our defeats that meant the loss of the Cold War. We were reluctant to tell the people about these failures and, therefore, lost the right to speak about the mistakes of others.<sup>66</sup>

The second blow was the information revolution and liberalization of society, which made many functions of the KGB superfluous and counterproductive. As one Chekist author complained:

...while our society is becoming more democratic, the number of the agents' apparatus continues to grow every given year. In the process, a part of this apparatus ceases to be necessary (and the agents-informers feel this more than others) because much of the information reported to the KGB in the past can now be discussed broadly and [problems] solved openly.<sup>67</sup>

The third blow to the KGB was the loss of the Soviet external empire and the East European satellite services, especially the most loyal ally, the East German MfS, known as the "Stasi." These events undoubtedly were tremendously demoralizing.

Finally, the political struggle within the Soviet leadership, first between Gorbachev's group and the hard-liners, and second, between Gorbachev and Yeltsin's confederates, aggravated the demoralization and loss of purpose within the KGB ranks.

It is our hypothesis that all of the above-mentioned factors put Kryuchkov and the other KGB chiefs in a dilemma: to fight violently for the Soviet Union and, with all probability, face a Yugoslav variant of civil war and the prospect of sharing the fate of the Stasi, or to preserve the main cadres and resources, find a safe exit from the historical scene, and leave room for revanche in the future. The way that Kryuchkov staged the coup of August 1991 shows that he and his confidants preferred the second option. Had the August coup not looked so laughable and eccentric, a much more severe punishment than one

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<sup>66</sup> F.D.Bobkov, "KGB I vlast'," Izdatelstvo "Veteran MP," Moscow, 1995, pp. 245-246 and 248.

<sup>67</sup> Colonel V. Tretyakov, "Nashi mneniya," "Sbornik No. 131, p. 33.

year in prison and the status of heroes in the Communist-nationalist opposition might have awaited Kryuchkov and his comrades.

### **Some Conclusions and Prospects:**

The Cold War, undoubtedly, contributed to the KGB's strength and efficiency. In contrast to the lukewarm and inert Communist political bureaucracy, the KGB was one of only two Soviet entities which functioned under conditions of aggressive competitiveness and outright challenge. If the Soviet military-industrial complex developed its might in struggles with Martin Marietta, McDonnell Douglas or General Dynamics, the KGB accomplished its skill in a global rivalry with the CIA, MI6, Mossad and other Western services.

Still, by the middle of the 1980s, the KGB looked like a very sophisticated and ramiform electric power network. It had its circuitry and outlets in the most remote and barely accessible places, great output capacity and double protection blocks. One thing was bad: there was no current in the network. The reason was also trivial. The KGB was a structure from another historical epoch. Created in the extraordinary conditions of Bolshevik dictatorship and Civil War, the VChK-KGB perfected its deadly efficiency under Stalin's tyranny and further consolidated its positions in the Brezhnev-Andropov administrative economy.

But what was good for a single party political system and a mobilization economy was inadequate for an emerging society with private incentives, a pluralistic political life, and a post-modernist cultural environment. The strength of the KGB was in its state of total secrecy and conspiracy. The information revolution quickly stripped the KGB of its untouchable status, impermeable armour of secrecy, romanticized image, and myth of infallibility.

The KGB was an elitist organization. But just like the entire Soviet ruling elite, it lost its feeling of historical perspective, political initiative, and strategic vision. The KGB was less corrupt than other Soviet organizations, but with all its weight and might it had protected the venal and corrupt Communist oligarchy and by so doing preserved and reproduced the corruption of the regime.

When Gorbachev unleashed his reforms, the KGB accepted this as a chance to save the Soviet system. It put all of its resources into trying, as much as possible, to control human factors, events, and the far-flung geographic regions of the USSR, but the speed of historical changes made this control senseless. In the final judgment one can say that the KGB lost to historical time.