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Objectives and techniques of acquiring assets in East European official missions around the world.

INSTALLATION PENETRATION

Walter Steinmeyer

The increasingly active participation of the USSR's Eastern European Satellites during the mid-1950's in Soviet diplomatic and economic offensives against the West and in particular the increasing challenge which the Soviet Bloc was posing to U.S. interests in underdeveloped and uncommitted nations occasioned in 1957 a review of our efforts to obtain intelligence concerning the intentions, strengths, and weaknesses of the Satellite countries, efforts which also now had to contend with a more rigorous operational climate than before. A combination of research, analysis, and experienced operational judgment brought the conclusion that one approach upon which increased emphasis should be placed was that of penetrating these countries' installations abroad.

This conclusion was based on a number of varied and inter-related factors. Prominent among these was the fact that the Satellite embassies, legations, consulates, trade missions, and news bureaus constituted the instrumentalities for that economic penetration, political subversion, and espionage that threatened U.S. interests. Another consideration was that the personnel assigned to these installations were outside their iron curtains for extended periods of time, two to five years, during which the full weight of the intelligence apparatus could be brought to bear against them.

In formulating an operational doctrine for the penetration of such installations, it was profitable to draw on the experience of professional West European internal security services that had traditionally mounted this kind of operation and in fact regard the penetration of foreign installations in their countries as the classical approach to the problem of procuring current intelligence. From time immemorial the installations of foreign governments in any European

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country have been the object of sustained interest on the part of that country's internal security service, and a body of proven operational concepts and techniques for penetrating them had consequently been established.

These European concepts and techniques offered a useful frame of reference against which to examine collection theories responsive to U.S. collection priorities. At the same time, they were subject to modification to meet the operating conditions to be encountered in third countries around the world where operations might be mounted against Satellite missions. The resulting doctrine for installation penetration operations has been tempered by experience in the school of hard knocks during the period 1957-1962, and it can now be said that principles governing the objectives and techniques of such operations have been crystallized.

Objectives

The first objective of a mission penetration program is *regular collection of current political and economic intelligence* from the installation in question. The best source for such intelligence would of course be an in-country agent who had access to the minutes of Politburo meetings. But given the difficult realities of operation in denied areas, a Politburo penetration is all but impossible, and political and economic intelligence obtained from a Satellite installation abroad is a welcome substitute for the visionary optimum. Most Satellite missions abroad are headed by a senior officer with status both in a ministry and in the Party. His personal rank and the policy functions of his installation require that it receive a large number of directives from the Party and from ministries (Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade) of the government. The quality of the intelligence available through access to these documents is high.

A second objective is *the recruitment of Satellite officials* not only as sources for the period of their duty abroad but *as continuing agents after they return home*. Installation penetration thus becomes a means of establishing long-range assets in the Satellites by recruiting, testing, and training them while they are abroad. The Satellite diplomat, foreign trade official, journalist, or intelligence officer who has been useful to us abroad will be even more valuable when he goes

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back home at the end of his tour, not just because he is then inside the target country, but because the intelligence to which he has access in a ministry headquarters has greater scope and depth.

The third is a counterintelligence objective, *the identification and neutralization of members of hostile intelligence services*. Since diplomatic and trade missions abroad are used extensively by all the Satellites to furnish cover for their intelligence personnel, the penetration of these installations can and does lead to the identification of opposition intelligence officers and sometimes of their local agents, modus operandi, communications systems, and operational targets. Once this identification is achieved, their neutralization can be accomplished in a variety of ways—sometimes by police action, sometimes by doubling agents back, ideally by recruiting the hostile intelligence officer in place.

Fourth is an objective to be sought only when all possibilities for recruitment in place have been exhausted—*the defection of senior diplomatic, trade, or intelligence personnel*. Defection can obviously yield only those golden eggs already in the nest; it cuts off the continuing intelligence that could be communicated by an in-place asset. It may be worth while, however, simply to deny a target country the services of an able and experienced officer, and it may produce, in addition to his store of positive intelligence, leads to his former colleagues who are still in place.

The fifth and final objective in the penetration is *to build up indexes of Satellite officials abroad who are likely in the future to have other tours of foreign duty somewhere in the world*. An official may not be developable for recruitment during his current tour, but six months from now it might be a different story. Political turmoil being what it is within the Satellites, the "ins" can rapidly become the "outs." If we can identify a man as a former "in" who is now "out" we may be able to recruit him. But this kind of identification requires orderly and current biographic indexes of Satellite personnel who travel abroad.

The Probe

The achievement of a penetration in pursuit of these objectives rests upon a search for weaknesses through the syste-

matic collection of operational intelligence, the exploitation of these weaknesses, and an ingredient of luck. In the probing for exploitable weaknesses the following sources of operational intelligence have proved useful to penetration operations. This list is not exhaustive nor in any order of priority.

American diplomats or business representatives in the host country. In countries where Americans have social, business, or diplomatic contacts with Satellite representatives they are a prime source of personality and assessment data on them.

The foreign diplomatic community in the host country. The protocol lists of the host country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs identify the Satellite representatives in the country by name and rank. Diplomats of the host country and of third countries have professional and social contacts with these Satellite representatives and are excellent sources of personality and assessment data on them. On occasion a foreign diplomat can also be used as a catalyst to bring the U.S. recruiter and his target together under appropriate and secure circumstances. Whether the target can then be developed to the point of recruitment depends on the recruiter's skill and the validity of our cumulative assessment of the target's personality and predisposition to cooperate.

Liaison with local intelligence and security services. At the minimum these services are usually a source of visa, passport, personality, and photographic data on Satellite representatives. At maximum they contribute to joint operations against the Satellite installations in the country.

Washington name trace. This furnishes the field operations officer all data on a person accumulated in the files of U.S. government agencies.

Analysis of the local press. This can identify people who attend the social functions at Satellite installations, deal with them commercially, etc.

Debriefing established agents with access to Satellite representatives. Of particular value here are journalists, politicians, or leaders in the cultural field who cooperate with us.

Telephone taps. A tap, unilateral or joint, of this primary means of local communication on social, cultural, political, and economic matters is a virtual gold mine of operational intelligence. Systematic and timely processing of telephone tap

data can and does yield complete rosters of the members of a mission and their positions. Even more important, it can furnish penetrating insight into the relationships among the members: if a third secretary fails to display over the telephone a habitual due respect for a first secretary, this is reason enough to start suspecting that he exercises intelligence or Party security functions.

The aggressive exploitation of the tap's revelations about who in an installation deals with whom, when, and on what subject matter can develop operational leads to local residents who, screened and recruited, might ultimately become avenues of approach to the Satellite representatives. Telephone taps have identified hostile agents and their methods of contact with the intelligence residentura in an installation. They have also provided personality data and detailed information on the contacts of a Satellite official in his homeland. Such information has facilitated not only the recruitment of target officials but also the quick appraisal of their eventual access to useful intelligence.

The key to success in the use of telephone taps is the timely field processing of the perishable information they offer. And the key in deciding whether to mount one is the need for operational intelligence; they rarely, if ever, are consistent producers of significant positive intelligence. The need can be determined only by estimating the potential of this source against other available sources of operational intelligence.

Physical surveillance. The routine gumshoe technique, if applied judiciously and in conjunction with a telephone tap, can yield important data on the activities and contacts of an installation's personnel. These not only provide leads to persons who may eventually help in approaching Satellite officials for purposes of recruitment but also identify counter-intelligence suspects. Physical surveillance also serves to establish a regular pattern of activity or norms of behavior for a given Satellite official as the basis for selecting a secure time and way to approach him in developing his recruitment. A discreet and thorough surveillance for this purpose requires both foot and vehicular capabilities. The intentional obtrusion of these capabilities, on the other hand, can be used selectively as a deterrent to reduce the aggressive intelligence

activities of a given Satellite installation. Thus physical surveillance becomes both a defensive technique and an offensive instrument for installation penetration.

Photographic surveillance. Clandestine photography of people entering and leaving a Satellite installation is a useful practice, primarily in support of counterintelligence objectives, especially when the subjects include members of the mission as well as local residents. Experience has been that passport and visa photographs of most Satellite personalities are five to ten years old, and current clandestine photographs are therefore a valuable supplement for any locally maintained rogues' gallery used to help double agents identify their handlers, as well as for Washington rogues' galleries which can be viewed by defectors. But photographic surveillance has also in the past identified numerous operational leads, particularly to hostile intelligence officers.

Floor plans. The floor plan of an installation is a useful tool in planning audio and surreptitious entry operations. It is also useful as a basis for plotting who sits where in an installation. A simple analysis of physical arrangements can sometimes reveal people's real functions—cipher clerk, Party secretary, intelligence officer, etc.

Service personnel. These people, usually local residents, can if properly harnessed be valuable stepping stones to full-scale penetrations of a mission. Of particular importance are the telephone operators, secretaries, janitors, fuel deliverers, mailmen, trash collectors, police guards, public utility meter readers, and the mechanics who service the automobile fleet. The aggregate knowledge of an installation that can be gained from their access to it is remarkable.

Defectors. The defector from a target installation should be debriefed not only with respect to positive intelligence and operational leads, but for any operational intelligence which can facilitate the penetration program.

If any considerable number of these sources is harnessed effectively, the data they produce will be voluminous enough to require systematic processing. The raw information must be synthesized and put into a form readily usable for identifying operationally exploitable weaknesses. It is best to organize it into two sets of files, one concerning the installation

itself, recording by category all its important physical details, and one a series of dossiers on the individuals in the installation. Each individual should have a separate file, established when he first applied for a visa to enter the host country and not to be closed until he leaves it. Even this closure is only a holding action; the file is consolidated and retired to headquarters for future use when its subject reappears in the West.

Types of Penetration

There are essentially only four types of penetration operation, as follows.

Planned recruitment of an in-place agent. This type of operation is the one we have had chiefly in mind above—targetting an individual, collecting operational intelligence, finding his weakness, developing secure access and a cooperative relationship, and then making a successful recruitment pitch. It can be carried out unilaterally or done jointly with a local liaison service. The objective is to acquire an important asset in a Satellite official with continuing access to useful intelligence.

Recruitment and return of a walk-in. This second category differs from the first chiefly in the manner of initial contact, but the difference is important: the man has usually taken the initiative and come to us because he is in trouble. We can make the most of the opportunity if we are ready to act when he comes. If a sound installation penetration program is mounted against any target for a sustained period, when breaks occur and walk-ins develop, as they will, we can take advantage of them by having done our homework in advance. The walk-in's bona fides can be resolved quickly, and if he can be persuaded to go back in place we are prepared to exploit him as a source immediately and in full.

Audio penetration. Here microphones or transmitters are placed in key and sensitive spots of a hostile installation and the audio pick-up monitored. Microphones can be inserted as probes in a common wall or floor with areas of interest in a hostile installation. Or audio surveillance equipment can be planted in a building into which a Satellite installation is about to move. Short-term audio operations can be mounted

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with battery transmitters concealed in furniture, etc., by agents recruited for instance from the service personnel.

Not every installation, however, is worth penetrating by audio surveillance. Some of the factors to be considered are the importance of the particular installation to the Satellite in question, the stature of its senior officer, the number of visitors it has from home, and the counter-audio capability of the target country.

Surreptitious Entry. This is the most complex of the penetration operations and one high in flap potential. It is a type of thing for which Americans generally do not have a flair. In its ultimate implementation, however, it is productive, providing access to the opposition's most sensitive safes and files. If it can be done without detection we not only obtain photographic copies of current documents but retain the capability to renew them at some future time. This capability would be particularly important in the matter of cipher pads and cryptographic procedures.

A mission penetration program is not of course a panacea for collection problems. But if the objectives of the program are held firm and the techniques outlined above pursued with diligence, penetrations of Satellite installations can be achieved, and they will produce intelligence responsive to collection requirements. This intelligence, in the final analysis, is our reason for being in business; our success is measured not by the quantity of our operations but by the quality of our end product.

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