

*Operating in Moscow in the 1960s*

# Reflections on Handling Penkovsky (U)

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*Editor's Note: As part of the CIA's Fiftieth Anniversary celebration in 1992, (b)(3)(c) organized a presentation on the Penkovsky espionage operation for the Directorate of Operations' European Division. He brought together two of the participants—(b)(6) who had headed the MI-6 half of the Anglo-American team that ran the case, (b)(3)(c) who had been assigned to Moscow to handle the CIA's share of the operational meetings with Penkovsky, (b)(3)(c) who himself served in Moscow in the 1980s, had a unique opportunity to talk at length with (b)(6) and (b)(3)(c) at the time, and later met again with (b)(3)(c) to document for the historical record some of his personal recollections of one of the most important espionage cases of the Cold War era. His reflections are recorded here in interview format. (U)*

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and deliver it to the US Embassy. The envelope contained his offer to work for the US government and provided a communications plan by which to contact him. In response, the CIA assigned a case officer to Moscow to establish contact. Unable to make the connection after several months of trying, the CIA turned to Britain's MI-6 for help. In the meantime, not knowing of CIA's efforts, Penkovsky tried to enlist other Westerners to convey his offer, finally persuading British businessman Greville Wynne to help him. Shortly thereafter, Penkovsky led a Soviet trade delegation to London, during which time MI-6 and the CIA, which had formed a joint team to run the case, held several lengthy meetings with him. The team conducted further debriefing and planning sessions with him during his subsequent trips to London and Paris later that year.<sup>2</sup> (U)



The operation that produced some 10,000 pages of intelligence on Soviet military capabilities and doctrine and allowed President Kennedy to call Khrushchev's bluff over Berlin and Cuba began in August 1960 in Moscow. Oleg Penkovsky, a colonel in the Soviet military intelligence apparatus (GRU), persuaded a reluctant American tourist to accept an envelope

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In the summer of 1961, the wife of the MI-6 head of station in the Soviet Union began meeting with Penkovsky in Moscow. Greville Wynne also traveled on occasion to Russia and continued to see Penkovsky. The CIA recalled its first officer that summer and began to process another to take over the case. This individual had to cancel out of the assignment at the last minute, and it was not until June

<sup>2</sup> The basic facts of the Penkovsky case are set forth in Jerrold L. Schecter and Peter S. Deriabin's *The Spy Who Saved the World* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992). The authors were given access to the CIA files on the case and conducted interviews with many of the people involved. (U)

1962 that his replacement, [redacted] (b)(3)(c) [redacted] was assigned to Moscow and began working the case. His work was short lived. Penkovsky was last seen in early September. His arrest was publicized in early December, and he and Wynne, who had been detained in Hungary and brought to Moscow, were tried and convicted of espionage in May 1963. Wynne was imprisoned and Penkovsky, reportedly, was executed (b)(3)(c) [redacted] was pulled out of Moscow. (C)

*How did it happen that, as a first tour officer, you were assigned to be Penkovsky's contact in Moscow, given the agent's seniority and value? (U)*

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The main criterion for assignment to Penkovsky, however, was not operational experience but fitting into the right cover slot. When the case began, US Ambassador Lewelyn Thompson was adamantly opposed to the assignment of CIA operational personnel to the Embassy and to any espionage activity involving embassy facilities. Within the DO's Soviet Division, it was said that he

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believed discovery of such a connection would seriously damage his and the Embassy's relations with the host government, and that this risk far outweighed any possible benefits. He was also said to be concerned that Penkovsky might be a provocateur. Very likely, too, the publicity surrounding the recent arrest of Soviet spy Pyotr Popov and his CIA case officer, Russ Langelles, was still fresh in his mind. How absolute his prohibition was I do not know; however, [redacted]

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Whatever the Ambassador's reasons, the Agency viewed his stance as a crippling constraint. We had an increasingly desperate and very valuable agent out there and no one in a position to contact him. Initially, the CIA's approach—evidently the best that the Agency could negotiate—had been to

assign an officer to a low-level slot with no diplomatic duties or contacts and hope for the best. This first officer had been sent to Moscow as a junior administrative employee, a job that had turned out to be more like that of a maintenance man. His intelligence mission, however, was to come up with an operational plan for handling an agent who socialized with some of the mightiest in the land. Since this officer had no access to Penkovsky, either officially or socially, his contacts would have to be completely covert. The officer failed to develop a plan, not even making initial telephone contact according to the instructions Penkovsky himself had provided. He was eventually recalled and released from the Agency. Interestingly, when the British were brought into the case they evidently had no one in Moscow who could meet officially with Penkovsky either. The system they set up relied exclusively on clandestine street meetings. (C)

Penkovsky worked a cover job at the State Committee for Coordination of Scientific Research Work (GKKNIR), which oversaw scientific and technical exchanges with the United States, Great Britain, Canada, and perhaps other countries. As a consequence, GKKNIR officials dealt with the offices in those countries' embassies that handled such matters. These offices tended to be on the fringes of the embassies' staffs, not in the core political or economic sections. Penkovsky knew the scientific attaché at the British Embassy, for example. He also had gotten to know the Canadian commercial attaché,

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William Van Vliet, and had tried, at one point, to get him to accept a package for delivery to US intelligence.<sup>3</sup> (U)

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Because of Penkovsky's GKKNIR position, the most desirable cover slots to facilitate official interaction with US personnel were not the State Department FSO political and economic positions, which the Ambassador had put off limits anyway, but those dealing with more technical matters. There were not many of these as Moscow was not a mega-embassy in those days. One office in regular contact with GKKNIR was that of the agricultural attaché. In the early 1960s, quite a few agricultural delegations and specialists of one sort or another traveled back and forth between the United States and the USSR. As a result, agricultural attachés had routine, although not necessarily frequent, official and social contact with the GKKNIR staff, including Penkovsky. (U)

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<sup>3</sup> This occurred early in Penkovsky's efforts to get in touch with us. Van Vliet kept the package for a couple of days and then returned it, a crushing blow to Penkovsky. (U)

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operations skills, in case she had to help with the case. For me, the whole emphasis was on cover preparation. I had been through the CT course, which at that time included six months of operational training at the farm.

[Redacted]

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*The British had been meeting with Penkovsky in Moscow on a more or less regular basis for months before you arrived. What was the background to that? (U)*

After it had become clear that the first CIA officer was not able to make contact with Penkovsky, and with no other suitable candidate immediately available, the Agency had asked MI-6 for help. They already knew about Penkovsky through his contact with Wynne, and perhaps from other sources. After all, Penkovsky, in his desperate search for someone to listen to him, had contacted a number of people, including Americans, Britons, and Canadians. When this became a joint operation, a small task force was organized

from the CIA and [Redacted]

[Redacted] from MI-6 became co-

chiefs of the [Redacted] decided that Janet Chisholm, wife of Roderick Chisholm, the MI-6 station chief, was the best person he had in Moscow to use on this case. He had known her as an MI-6 secretary and held her in high regard. During meetings in London, the British showed Penkovsky photos of Chisholm and her children (who

As far as I could tell, my cover held up perfectly until the case was eventually publicized in the Soviet press. (S)

I did not receive any special training for this assignment, although my wife was taught some basic

would be props for some of their encounters) and gave him a contact plan for meetings with her. (C)

This must have been a tremendous relief for Penkovsky. At last he was actually going to be in touch with someone from Western intelligence in Moscow. It had been a long wait. Chisholm proved to be a very professional case officer. During the ensuing several months, she met a dozen or so times with Penkovsky in a park and in apartment house lobbies, often under difficult conditions—with her three children in tow on some occasions. (U)

All was not sweetness and light, however. CIA officers on the team were less than thrilled when they learned (b)(6) choice for Penkovsky's case officer was the wife of the MI-6 head of station. They viewed this as a serious security problem because of her husband's position and the fact that Soviet spy George Blake had certainly known that Roderick Chisholm was an MI-6 officer.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, they had no one in place to substitute, so there was nothing to be done about it. The CIA also thought, as this phase of the operation progressed, that Chisholm was meeting Penkovsky much too frequently, putting his long-term viability at risk for short-term gain. (U)

The frequency of the meetings, however, seems to have been largely at Penkovsky's instigation. A driven man, he apparently wanted

<sup>4</sup> George Blake was an MI-6 officer who had been convicted in 1961 of spying for the Soviet Union. Subsequently, he escaped from a British prison and fled to Moscow. (U)

to produce as much as possible as fast as possible. Their meeting schedule called for many alternate arrangements to give him maximum flexibility. He seemed to try to make as many of these as he could. In any event, he eventually noticed surveillance on Chisholm, and the street meetings were discontinued forthwith. Chisholm and Penkovsky met a couple more times at diplomatic receptions before she and her husband left for another assignment, and each time he passed her a package. (U)

The British were not deterred by their lack of official access to Penkovsky. The bulk of Chisholm's meetings with him were completely clandestine. MI-6 was able to do what we could not—devise and carry out a covert operational plan for the case. The British, as far as I know, made no attempt to get an officer in direct contact with Penkovsky via GKKNIR, which we were trying so hard to do. Perhaps they had no one available for this role. When Chisholm left PCS, her replacement was slated to be another former MI-6 secretary, Pamela Cowell, the wife of the incoming head of station in Moscow. The British were evidently planning to carry on very much as before. (U)

Our approach was to try to develop the kind of relationship with Penkovsky that Greville Wynne had with him. Wynne traveled to the Soviet Union and other countries in Eastern Europe in his capacity as a businessman and promoter. Penkovsky, in his GKKNIR *persona*, was his contact in Moscow, and had seized on this relationship to

persuade Wynne to be his channel to Anglo-American intelligence, after failing to connect through others. (b)(6) has since emphasized, it was Penkovsky, not MI-6, who recruited Wynne, although MI-6 quickly got involved. The main point, though, is that Penkovsky and Wynne usually met alone, and could pass materials back and forth with relative impunity. They did so, many times. With luck, an embassy official might be able to develop the same kind of overt relationship, justifying meetings and providing cover for exchanges with Penkovsky. (U)

Wynne may not always have been the most enthusiastic agent but he was an effective and valuable one. In my view, he was much under appreciated. He contributed enormously to this operation, at great risk and eventually great cost to himself. (U)

Thus, for the "inside handling" part of the operation, the British played the dominant role. The Americans did not get anybody, that is to say me, in place until the end of June 1962, which was barely two months before contact with Penkovsky was lost and probably after he was compromised. (U)

For the "outside handling" part of the operation—that is, the meetings during Penkovsky's trips abroad—the American side was preeminent. The CIA provided the principal case officer, at first George Kisevalter, who had also been Popov's case officer. Another experienced SR officer, who has never been publicly identified, later replaced him. The Agency also sent

Leonard McCoy, a senior reports and requirements officer, to be the Anglo-American team's resident expert on the Soviet Union. Penkovsky's trips abroad ended in fall 1961, however, and for the next several months his only contact was with his two British contacts in Moscow. (U)

*You arrived in Moscow in late June 1962. Chisholm had left several weeks earlier, and Wynne was in Moscow for only a few days in late June and early July. Thus, you were the only one left on whom Penkovsky had been briefed. What happened at this stage of the operation? (U)*

The American side finally got into the act in Moscow on 4 July 1962. As is customary, the American Ambassador hosted a huge Independence Day reception, and anybody who was anybody in Moscow had been invited. This of course included Penkovsky and other officials in his office. Earlier, while on one of his foreign trips, the team had shown him a tie clasp, and told him that someone was being assigned to Moscow to work with him and that he would be wearing an identical pin. A few days before the reception, Wynne had returned to Moscow, met with Penkovsky, shown him my photo, and given him my name. There was to be no confusion in Penkovsky's mind about the identity of his new contact. Wynne also had passed on instructions from the team that Penkovsky was not to bring any material for passage. It was to be an introductory meeting only, to establish an overt relationship. What Wynne did not tell Pen-

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kovsky, but which I speculate was very much on the team's mind, was that, in addition to all the other good reasons for no operational activity in the fishbowl atmosphere of this occasion, the Ambassador could hardly have been expected to agree to espionage activity at this huge national day party in his official residence. (U)

Things went exactly as planned. I met Penkovsky and the other members present from his office and chatted a bit with all of them, including one Vitaliy Petrochenko, who seemed to stick very close to him, both then and at later social events. Penkovsky and I managed a brief conversation alone. He confirmed that he would have something for us “next time.” (U)

This turned out to be seven weeks later. Although Penkovsky and I had seen each other a few times at GKKNIR, it was always in a conference setting, during discussions about delegation visits and the like. During this period, Penkovsky had been invited to one or two receptions at embassy officers' apartments but had not appeared. The first real chance we had came on 27 August. I had spent the previous week traveling with a delegation of American tobacco specialists to Georgia and other

tobacco-growing areas. Upon our return to Moscow, the US agricultural attaché, William Horbaly, hosted a reception for them and their Russian hosts, including Penkovsky, his boss Yevgeniy Levin, the administrator/interpreter for the delegation Zhana Danilova (who looked and acted like the KGB officer she very likely was), and some others from the GKKNIR office. (U)

I did not want to try a brush pass in this crowded apartment, a technique Penkovsky and Chisholm had used a couple of times, and which she had advised against. I had been experimenting in my own flat with a dead drop, taping a packet to the underside of a toilet tank lid. The idea was to load the drop after Penkovsky arrived; have him remove it and attach his own package in the same manner with extra tape that we supplied; then I would retrieve it as soon as feasible. This was hardly an ideal system, but nobody had any better ideas. Why the bathroom? It was the only place in an apartment where a guest could go during a party, be by himself, and have any confidence of not being observed. There were obvious drawbacks to this system. What if somebody dropped the lid and broke it? What if the tape came loose? And sequential visits to the bathroom could look suspicious. The main problem, though, was that we had never had a chance to tell Penkovsky about this idea. (U)

Some time after Penkovsky arrived at the apartment, I loaded the drop. When we had a chance to talk briefly, I tried to tell him what to

do, but in the crowded, noisy reception room, with his colleagues ever nearby, I could not be sure that I had gotten more across than that whatever was to happen would be in the main bathroom. A few minutes later, Penkovsky asked to see the apartment, a ploy he had used with Chisholm on at least one occasion. Several others joined in the tour, including myself. As this was my supervisor's place and I knew the layout, I pointed out to the members of the tour some of the features of the apartment, including the main bathroom. As the tour was returning to the reception area, Penkovsky and I moved to the rear of the group. I again pointed out the bathroom, and Penkovsky asked if he could use it. I stepped into the room with him, ostensibly to show him how this "American bathroom" worked, had anybody asked. Penkovsky, pulling a package out of his pocket, immediately asked if I had anything for him. I pointed to the tank top, but he did not react, instead asking again if I had anything for him. I removed the lid, put it on the floor, tore off the package, and gave it to him. He then handed his to me and left immediately. There was no one in the hallway outside. I put everything back in place, waited a few moments, then rejoined the group. This was the one and only time that the American side succeeded in exchanging materials with Penkovsky inside the USSR. (U)

Penkovsky's package to us on that occasion contained his usual trove of exposed Minox film, as well as other items. Included in our package to him was an alias internal

Soviet passport, to be used in the event he had to flee Moscow and go into hiding or try to get to the West. Exactly how that was to be done had not, as far as I know, been worked out in any detail. (U)

A week later, the Ambassador hosted a reception for another American delegation, and Penkovsky showed up for this event as well. There was a lavatory off the reception room, and before he arrived I had tried taping the package I had brought to the toilet tank lid. It would not stick. (Sensitivities about operational activity in the Ambassador's residence must have abated, or I would not have been trying this.) I put the package back in my pocket and went back to the reception. I was actually relieved, however, because the circumstances did not look at all good for any kind of action that night. There were not many people in the large reception room, the Soviets seemed to stick together more tightly than usual, and nobody seemed particularly happy to be there. (U)

The possibility of an exchange quickly became moot, however. Penkovsky told me he was going to a movie called "A Taste of Honey," which the British were showing the following evening, and insistently urged me to attend. Translation: "No exchange tonight; we will try tomorrow night." Alas, the film show was for Soviets only, with no third-country guests invited, despite efforts by the Station to wangle me an invitation. Penkovsky showed up as planned. This turned out to be his last public appearance, as far as we know, before his arrest. (U)

Just when the arrest occurred is unclear. The Soviets claimed it was in late September. It was probably before 2 November 1962. On that date, somebody triggered the emergency signal agreed upon with Penkovsky to warn us in the event he learned of Soviet plans to attack the West. This procedure consisted of three parts: a voiceless phone call by Penkovsky (he was to blow into the receiver but not speak); a "have loaded" mark on a utility pole; then a dead drop. Early in the case, the team had given Penkovsky the phone numbers of two embassy apartments for this purpose. One was occupied in succession by the Embassy's administrative officer, William Jones, and DCOS Montgomery; the other belonged to the Embassy's doctor, Alexis Davison. The KGB apparently found these phone numbers after Penkovsky's arrest. When the call came, Davison checked the signal site and found the mark. (U)

Since Penkovsky had not been seen or heard from for two months, the Station strongly suspected that the KGB had triggered the signal, not Penkovsky; however, nobody could be sure of this. Since the case was so important, it was decided that the dead drop would have to be cleared. The newly minted CT, (b)(3)(c) [redacted] who knew about the case but had not previously been involved, was sent to unload it. (b)(3)(c) [redacted] an unwitting FSO who was the Embassy's publications procurement officer, was asked (b)(3)(c) [redacted] on an ostensible book-buying foray to the vicinity of the site and drop him off there. After finding and unloading th(b)(3)(c) [redacted] was immediately

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arrested, although he managed to jettison the package in the process. He was detained for several hours while the KGB tried without success to get him to respond to questioning, and then released to the Embassy. I knew nothing about all this while it was going on, but late in the afternoon someone in the Station told me what had occurred. (U)

Talki (b)(3)(c) [redacted] about it later, I got the impression he thought his captors were confused about something during their attempt to interrogate him. They kept asking him his name, which he had given them when the questioning began. (That was all he would tell them.) Perhaps they were expecting someone else to show up. (b)(6) [redacted] has said he is convinced they were expecting the British to unload the drop, apparently because they had been Penkovsky's principal contacts in Moscow. I tend to the view they were expecting me, since I was the last person to meet with him, which the KGB surely found out during their interrogation. Mc (b)(3)(c) [redacted] and I were about the same height and build, we were both relatively young, and both wore dark-rimmed glasses. His captors may not have been able to tell the difference. (U)

Why (b)(3)(c) [redacted] who was not otherwise involved in the case, sent to unload the drop? If, as was suspected, the KGB had triggered the emergency system, (b)(3)(c) [redacted] instead of me (the only two CIA (b)(3)(c) [redacted] choices available), would unnecessarily compromise a “clean” officer with a bright future. Nobody ever

told me why, but it may have been out of concern that the KGB would react more zealously if I serviced the drop (b)(3)(c) [redacted] did. (U)

At the end of that day (b)(3)(c) [redacted] came to my office and asked me to ride home with him—we lived in the same complex. He claimed he had forgotten his diplomatic ID card and did not want to drive alone. I suspect he asked me because he thought, given my job as agricultural attaché, I would be the least likely person in the Embassy to have any connection with whatever it was that had happened that day. I felt uneasy about it because he had no way of knowing what he was letting himself in for, but I could hardly say no, so off we went. When we drove away from the Embassy, three carloads of goons pulled out behind us. They followed us the several miles to our apartments, weaving in and out in front of and behind us, flashing their headlights, yelling, and waving their fists. I was convinced that they were going to stop us and drag one of us, probably me, from the car; but they did not, and we made it home. (U)

(b)(3)(c) [redacted] was arrested on 2 November and PNG'ed, but you stayed on until early December. What was going on during this interval? (U)

Nothing happened officially until early December, when the Soviet press publicized my involvement in the case. I was not expelled by the Soviets at that time, but I was ordered by our own people to move with my family from our outlying apartment into the embassy compound and leave the country as soon as possible thereafter. I was never told who made this decision, but I imagine the Embassy weighed in on it. The Embassy issued a statement to the effect that I was leaving because my effectiveness had been impaired by the publicity. Our departure was complicated by the fact that we had had a baby in Moscow just a few weeks earlier and, at the time the story broke, my wife was in Paris on a brief holiday. I was taking care of the kids. So, leaving virtually everything behind in our old apartment, I flew with the children to Copenhagen, where my wife met us. I was not officially PNG'ed until the following May. (U)

*How do you think Penkovsky was compromised? Any special insights?* (U)

None. That question must have been studied and restudied many times over the years. Speculation has included compromised communications, wide dissemination of Penkovsky's intelligence reports, case officer error, the agent's own recklessness, and a mole. Obviously, with two services involved, the risk of compromise by whatever means was greatly increased. It is worth noting that there was a lot going on in the world of espionage at that time. Although 1985



has been called the Year of the Spy, the same could be said of 1961.<sup>5</sup> Anatoliy Golitsyn defected, with ultimately disastrous consequences for the Agency.<sup>6</sup> MI-6 officer George Blake was arrested and confessed (b)(6) incidentally. There were a number of other spies, both British and American, who were discovered to have been working for the Soviets at that time. Any one of these, or others still unknown, could and maybe did have access to information critically damaging to Penkovsky. (U)

Jerrold Schecter's account of his conversations in 1990 in Moscow with KGB officers about Penkovsky's compromise is intriguing. Although these officials mainly stressed that Penkovsky came under suspicion as a result of surveillance on Janet Chisholm in January 1962, one of them told Schecter that the way Penkovsky was caught could not be revealed even at that late date (nearly three decades later).<sup>7</sup> That suggests that there was more to Penkovsky's compromise, probably a lot more, than a suspicious sighting during routine surveillance. (U)

<sup>5</sup> The American news media coined the term "Year of the Spy" to refer to such 1985 espionage cases as the defection of KGB officer Vitaly Yurchenko, Moscow's detention of valuable CIA agent Adolf Tolkachev, security lapses by Marine guards at the American Embassy in Moscow, and Washington's arrest of NSA mole Ronald Pelton and members of the Walker family. (U)

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<sup>7</sup> Schecter and Deriabin, p. 413. (U)

*Aside from the great value of the information that Penkovsky passed to Western intelligence, what are some of the features of this case that strike you? What was unique about it that might be instructive? (U)*

It seems to me that Penkovsky was calling the shots to an unusual degree in the part of the operation that took place inside the USSR—being his own case officer, as it were. Of course he was a man with a big ego and he liked to be in control. Moreover, this was his turf and he had demonstrated convincingly that he was an effective and astonishingly productive operator. His difficulties in making contact with Western intelligence in the first place and getting the operation going may also have encouraged him to take a hands-on approach. He seems to have been the one who came up with a lot of the operational ideas that were used in Moscow. He was the one who picked out the apartment buildings to which he led Chisholm for their meetings. He devised the ploy of asking his hosts at receptions in embassy flats to show him around, thus setting up chances for brush passes with his case officers. During the time when he was working with Chisholm, he was the one who determined the frequency of the meetings. It was he who decided that he and I should try to meet at the British film show. And, of course, it was Penkovsky who recruited Wynne to be his courier to British intelligence, a key event in the operation. Whatever the reasons, letting an agent call the shots increases the danger of compromise. Input from an agent is necessary to build a good commu-

nications plan, but the Agency should always have the final word on the details. (U)

On another matter, to correct the record, Penkovsky always passed his material to us hand-to-hand, at personal meetings, never by dead drop. The planning for this case included several proposals for dead drops, but none was ever used, except the one loaded by the KGB after his arrest. The contact plan Penkovsky provided in his initial message to us included a dead drop, as did his early warning communication plan, which incorporated the same site. As mentioned above, I tried to use a dead drop at a reception but had to revert to a hand-to-hand pass. The British came up with the clever idea of a concealment device in a dispenser of some kind that was to be installed in the bathrooms of British embassy apartments, thus providing a dead drop mechanism for use during diplomatic receptions. The case ended before this device could be used, however. Such a system would have been good for us, too, as a backup, but it is doubtful we could have gotten embassy approval for anything permanently installed, because of the danger of discovery by Soviet maids or maintenance personnel. Moscow was a dangerous environment for espionage; almost certainly Penkovsky preferred to keep incriminating material in his possession until it was turned over personally. (U)

A really remarkable thing about Penkovsky as an agent was that, in addition to the incredible access he had due to his GRU position and

his friendships within the military elite—not to mention his diligence and creativity in exploiting this access—his cover job, too, was ideal for a spy. It allowed, even required, direct contact with officials from Western embassies, as well as Western businessmen, scientists, and academics. He was in remarkably favorable circumstances for a foreign intelligence service to handle him. The only downside to his cover position was that it was challenging to exploit it, because his job was so high profile that it automatically attracted the attention of those whose duty it was to monitor contacts between Soviet officials and foreigners. (U)

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The great tragedy of the case, other than the loss of Penkovsky himself and his fabulous production, was that the CIA was unable to take advantage of this golden opportunity early on, to get somebody in place right from the start who could meet openly and legitimately with him. By the time we did, it was almost certainly too late. (U)

Penkovsky of course was an enormously productive agent and a figure of real historic importance. I cannot help but think, however, that to later generations of case officers who were stationed in the Soviet Union and handled operations there, the way we ran the Penkovsky case must have seemed rather crude. From what I have heard in subsequent years, the technical capabilities and operational ingenuity and techniques employed in the decades after Penkovsky were far superior to what we had in the early 1960s. (U)