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Director of
Central
Intelligence

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A Study of Harassments and Provocations

Prepared for
The Director of
Central Intelligence
by the
Security Committee

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INTRODUCTION

This study describes harassments and provocations against Americans assigned to or traveling in the USSR, Eastern Europe, and China. The cases cited illustrate procedures used by Communist country intelligence and security services and are intended to support official defensive security briefings for persons with authorized access to classified information who are traveling to those areas. Material in this study was contributed by US Government departments and agencies and describes incidents occurring in the 1978-81 period.

For purposes this study:

HARASSMENT means any action taken against a person or group to prevent, inhibit, or delay the achievement of personal or group objectives (e.g., impeding collection of information by assigned diplomats).

PROVOCATION means any action taken against a person or group to induce self-damaging action (e.g., attempts to involve Americans in illegal activities).

Attempts by hostile services to recruit Americans to commit espionage are outside the purview of this study.

SOVIET UNION

1. Soviet authorities endeavor to keep fairly close tabs on foreign tourists visiting the USSR. This is largely done by keeping them in well defined tracks through organized tour itineraries and other administrative arrangements designed to discourage the tourist from deviating very far from the prescribed program. The ordinary tourist is rarely subjected to individual physical surveillance or other form of specific security attention unless he does something which the authorities regard as suspicious or offensive. It is important to realize, however, that the KGB evidently believes that foreign spies abound among tourist visitor groups and some acts, which would be regarded as of no consequence in Western countries, may be interpreted with suspicion by the authorities and result in the persons who perform them attracting the special attention of the KGB. Types of things which have caused problems for foreign visitors in the past include:

a. *Bringing in literature of a political nature which is anti-Soviet in tone or which is forbidden in the USSR.* Travelers should leave such material at home, but above all should not try to give it to Soviet citizens. In addition to political literature, the Soviets object to western pornography, in which they include such publications as *Playboy*, *Penthouse*, etc. There is a lively interest in both types of literature on the part of many Soviet citizens, but a tourist who carries such material in any quantity or seems interested in distributing it to Soviet citizens may find himself the object of unpleasant attention from the security authorities, as, most certainly, will the Soviet citizens to whom he gives it.

b. *Black market currency exchange and other illegal financial transactions.* Tourists are frequently approached by Soviets on the streets offering to exchange rubles for dollars at a very favorable rate and with offers to buy clothing and other western items. There is a flourishing black market in such items in the Soviet Union, particularly in those areas frequented by foreign tourists. Although approaches by Soviet citizens along those lines are not normally KGB provocations, the KGB does keep close watch on black marketeers; such transactions are illegal

both for the buyer and the seller. Travellers should reject overtures of this nature. Another popular type of illegal transaction is the sale of icons to foreigners in other than state stores. The purchase of icons from individuals is illegal—many are not genuine and all are subject to confiscation if found in the possession of a traveller on leaving the USSR.

c. *Photography.* The Soviets have rather strict ideas of what they consider to be military or security installations. Tourists will be advised in general terms of what they may photograph and what they may not, but it is always wise when in doubt to check with the "Inturist" guide before taking pictures. Although not mentioned in official instructions, Soviets are also very sensitive to people taking photographs of scenes which put the USSR in a bad light—run-down housing areas, lines at stores, drunks, or shabbily dressed people on the street, etc. Tourists taking such pictures have occasionally been the targets of harassment by "patriotic" citizens or auxiliary militia.

d. *Personal contacts with political dissidents, Jewish activists, and other elements considered undesirable by the authorities.* Such contacts should be avoided. Visitors who go out of their way to meet with such people have frequently been subjected to lengthy customs searches and other forms of harassment upon leaving the Soviet Union.

e. *Narcotics.* The Soviets are extremely hard on foreigners found with narcotics in their possession. Some have received lengthy prison terms. Under no circumstances should a foreign visitor bring any form of narcotic into the Soviet Union. Visitors who are using prescription drugs should carry them in containers bearing recognizable pharmacists' labels.

2. Foreign visitors should be aware that, although the KGB does not normally subject tourists to provocations or other forms of harassment, there are certain categories of individuals whom the KGB routinely singles out for special scrutiny:

a. Persons who speak Russian, have Russian-sounding names, have relatives in the USSR, or have travelled repeatedly to the USSR in the past;

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b. Persons who work or have worked for the US Government or its contractors, particularly in positions involving foreign affairs, national security, or military matters;

c. Persons who have had extensive contact with Soviet officials in the past;

d. Persons known publicly to have expressed strong views against the Soviet Government, or vigorous opposition to US policy on matters bearing on the USSR;

e. Persons who, during their visit to the Soviet Union, make special efforts to establish personal contact with Soviet citizens.

3. Individuals meeting any of the above criteria should be especially circumspect in their behavior. Although there is nothing for them to fear if they use good judgment, they may be the object of KGB approaches of one sort or another designed to test their reactions and/or determine their susceptibility to compromise or inducement to cooperate with the KGB.

4. The following are some general "do's and don'ts" for visitors in the Soviet Union which, in particular, should be observed by persons falling into the categories mentioned in paragraph 2:

a. "Don'ts":



(2) *Do not* respond to sexual overtures from anyone. There are prostitutes in virtually all tourist hotels in the USSR as well as males seeking out feminine companionship among foreign visitors. This activity is closely monitored by the KGB and virtually all of the individuals involved are subject to KGB pressure.

(3) *Do not* overindulge in alcohol.

(4) *Do not* engage in black market currency exchanges or other illegal transactions described earlier. The financial advantage of buying rubles on the black market might appear substantial, but it is definitely not worth the risk.

(5) *Do not* attempt to propagandize or engage in political arguments. Many Soviets are intensely curious about the US and are genuinely interested in talking with Americans. Their questions are best answered in an objective, forthright manner without drawing unfavorable comparisons with the USSR.

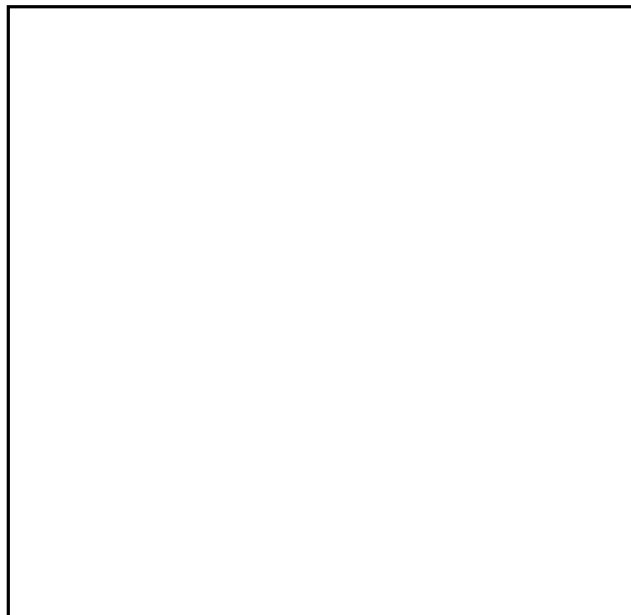
(6) *Do not* accept packages or letters from Soviet citizens for mailing or delivery outside the Soviet Union. Some such requests are genuine, but many are not and in many instances the contents can be compromising to the person carrying them, to the Soviet who gave them to him, or both.

b. "Do's":

(1) *Do* behave in a natural manner and enjoy your trip.

(2) *Do* stay with your group or, at least, with some members thereof.

(3) *Do* remember that Soviet citizens in general are discouraged from extensive contact with foreigners and that those who engage in such contacts without authorization of the authorities can expect to be questioned by the KGB. Maintain a healthy skepticism toward persons who seem to attach themselves to you. If invited to a Soviet home or to any other form of private get-together, try to ensure that at least one other member of your group is with you.



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Case 4

The Soviets sometimes use incapacitating drugs in harassment actions. In 1980 an American traveled from Moscow to Leningrad on official duty. Taking the overnight "Red Arrow Express" train, he accepted the normal offering of a glass of hot tea as they left Moscow. Returning to his private compartment to read, he soon became light-headed, disoriented and subsequently extremely tired. Sensing something wrong, he locked the compartment door and lay down. He later recalled being unable to stay awake. Upon awakening the next morning, he found his compartment door open and felt disoriented, dazed and unable to walk without using the wall for support. He also experienced a bad headache and severe mouth dryness. After being met in Leningrad, he continued to feel poorly throughout the morning and began to return to normal only later in the day. Examination of his belongings disclosed nothing missing, but clearly indicated rearrangement of his luggage contents. Later medical analysis of his displayed symptoms strongly suggested that he had been given a rapid acting barbituate or diazepam used in combination with scopolamine.

A similar experience on the same train was reported by the press in early 1982. This said four Japanese business representatives were robbed of their passports and wallets during the trip to Leningrad. Soviet police responding to the complaint reportedly said they had arrested two men who had admitted spraying a sleep-inducing gas under the train compartment door. The press accounts hinted that industrial espionage may have been involved, since the Japanese visitors—nuclear energy experts—may have been carrying technical papers. The accounts noted skepticism about the Soviet version, and cited an observation by an unnamed source that "extraordinary police work" must have been involved for the Soviets to locate and return, in less than 24 hours after the incident, passports said to have been thrown off a fast-moving train in the middle of the night.

Case 5

Making contact with dissidents in the USSR is likely to prompt harassment actions. In 1981 an American and his British wife—both Jewish—toured the Soviet

Union with an "Inturist" group. They experienced no difficulties in Moscow. In Kiev they left the tour group and visited a "refusenik" with whom they had corresponded for several years. While on the train the next day to repeat the visit, they were approached by a Soviet who asked for the time and then left. Immediately afterwards, they were seized by two burly men in uniform, forced off the train and taken into an unmarked office in a nearby apartment. There, an English speaking plainclothes man demanded to know what dealings they had had with the "criminal" who had asked them the time. He dismissed their protestations of innocence as lies and claimed that the "criminal" had written a lengthy deposition against them. He refused to permit them to call either the American or the British Embassy. After about three and a half hours of interrogation, and search and confiscation of their personal belongings, their interrogator demanded that they sign a "protocol" in Russian. He would neither translate the document nor explain the "charges" against them. The couple refused to sign. The plainclothes man then warned them to "stay as close as possible to your hotel; stick to the main streets; otherwise you will find yourself in trouble." They were then driven back to their hotel. They were unsuccessful then and the next day in attempting to call their respective embassies in Moscow—hotel personnel said the calls could not be made. When they told those personnel that they would not continue with the tour until their calls were put through, they were asked to meet with an "Inturist" representative. He told them they were interfering with "state affairs" and threatened to take them to court. Fearing imminent arrest, the couple rejoined the tour group and went to the next city. There they were able to contact the Canadian Embassy from a pay phone. Other than getting harassing phone calls late into the night, they experienced no further incidents until they went to the next city on the tour. There they were taken by hotel management before another "Inturist" representative who referred to their "misbehavior" in Kiev and warned them that if they continued in that course "Inturist" would not be responsible for their safety. The next day they went with the tour group to Leningrad, where they reported the incidents to the US Consulate, and, subsequently, left the USSR without further harassment.

Case 6

A staged provocation that went awry is illustrated by the experience of two US military officers touring the Soviet Union. They noted surveillance of them during local sightseeing trips, and frequent approaches by Soviets seeking—illegally—to purchase jeans or exchange rubles for dollars. Prior to their departure, one officer noted his luggage had been searched and a small packet of photographic slides of what appeared to be Soviet public buildings and tourist sites inserted in his bag. At the airport for the departing flight a very similar bag belonging to a third officer on the tour was thoroughly searched and its owner harassed at some length. It seemed likely that the slides had been planted to set the stage for official discovery and accusation of attempted smuggling of "classified" material out of the country.

Case 7

Tourists in the USSR can be the targets of harassments/provocations apparently resulting from their innocent interest in places considered sensitive by the Soviets. The wife of a US officer assigned in Europe took a Wives' Club tour to the Soviet Union. While in Moscow she asked about visiting Kaliningrad because of her interest in the philosopher Immanuel Kant. (Kant was born and lived there when it was Koenigsberg.) The tour guide told her there were some places which could not be visited. Later, while walking along a Moscow street with another wife on the tour, a man

stepped from a hotel doorway, focused his camera on them, took their picture at fairly close range, and then disappeared. The next day the woman involved in this incident went to a Moscow bank to exchange money. While waiting in line a "cleaning lady" appeared from behind potted plants and attempted to get the wife to make an unauthorized exchange of funds. The wife refused and encountered no other incidents.

Case 8

Personal documentation which differs from what Soviet officials expect can prompt unwelcome attention. The Thai wife of a US enlisted man in Europe traveled with her daughter to Thailand via Moscow, taking an Aeroflot flight because it offered a cheaper rate. Officials at the Moscow airport demanded an explanation of why she was traveling on a Thai passport while her daughter held an American one. She was questioned about her husband's identity and occupation. While she and her daughter were permitted to transit Moscow to Bangkok, their luggage was "lost" at the Moscow airport and didn't reach them in Thailand until 20 days later. On their return trip the flight to Moscow was late and they missed their connecting flight to Frankfurt. They were taken to a Moscow hotel for the night, but were unable to eat dinner because they were not permitted to exchange currency. The next day airport officials told them they'd have to spend another day in Moscow waiting for a flight out. But, after talking at length with airline officials, they were allowed to leave for Germany.

EASTERN EUROPE

In most East European countries, the components responsible for monitoring and working against foreigners inside their borders are patterned after the KGB. Similarly, the techniques, methods and approaches they use generally follow KGB practices. Such differences as there are tend to reflect circumstances which vary between Eastern Europe and the USSR. For example, immigration patterns have resulted in many US citizens having relatives still living in Eastern European countries. That offers opportunity to approach visiting Americans with offers to help relatives obtain exit visas or to threaten them with adverse action, depending on the Americans' responses to what is demanded of them.

Case 9

In mid-1980, a Hungarian-born, American sales manager for a large US company on a business trip to Budapest was called to the Ministry of Interior and interrogated about his background and frequent trips to Hungary. About a month later he returned to Budapest on business and was again called in for interrogation by the same security officers. They asked him to cooperate with them, and threatened to deny him further entry visas and threatened the safety of his relatives still in Hungary if he did not cooperate. The businessman refused and left Hungary immediately for his residence in Western Europe where he told the US Ambassador about his experience. Shortly

afterwards, his company transferred him to another Western European country, and he no longer makes business trips to Hungary.

Case 10

Five wives of high-ranking US military officers were on a tour in East Berlin when they were approached in a cafe by a German woman speaking excellent English who sought to get them to exchange East German marks for West German ones. The request was directed in a persistent manner toward the wife of a general officer. The ladies refused the request. This incident happened soon after the defection of an East German employee of the US Embassy in East Berlin.

Case 11

An American serviceman married to a German national traveled with his wife to East Germany for the wedding of one of her cousins. During their stay a person claiming to be a press reporter interviewed them for about 45 minutes on such matters as the American's vacation and sports interests and similar general interest matters. Toward the end of the interview the "reporter" asked the American if he wanted to exchange currency. The wife, becoming suspicious, interrupted to state that they were not interested. The subject was dropped in favor of a closing discourse by the "reporter" praising conditions in East Germany.

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