

Alexander Rado

The head of a famous Soviet wartime spy net now collects geographic intelligence in Budapest.

Louis Thomas¹

Part I

Highlights of a Remarkable Career

Alexander (Sandor) Rado, Alexander Foote's chief in the Swiss-based "Rote Drei" net that in 1941-43 supplied Moscow with detailed information on German order of battle, now plays a leading role in Soviet Bloc mapping programs and has shown exceptional zeal in collecting geographic intelligence on the West. His activity in intelligence, mapping, and related fields has lasted nearly 50 years and may earn him a place in the pantheon of major intelligence figures of the times.²

Rado was born in Ujpest, Hungary, in 1899 of wealthy Jewish parents. While a student, reportedly a brilliant one, at the Budapest gymnasium he joined a socialist group whose members included Matyas Rakosi and Erno Gero. He became one of the first members of the Hungarian Communist Party when it was formed in November 1918. He took an active part in the Bela Kun uprising, 1918-1919, serving as political commissar in Ferenc Munnich's division. Forced to leave Hungary when the short-lived Communist government was ousted in 1919, he went to Austria and later to Germany.

Geographer in Germany



Alexander Rado at age 60.

In the fall of 1919 Rado started academic work at the University of Jena, changing his field of study from law to geography and cartography. Continuing his Communist activities, he was in touch with Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, founders of the German Communist movement. Through the influence of German and Hungarian friends he was brought to Moscow at the end of 1919 to work in the Secretariat of the Comintern. He performed well and enjoyed the sponsorship of several leaders, among them Comintern president Zinoviev. At age 20 or 21 he was made director of a Soviet intelligence and propaganda office located at Haparanda, Sweden, on the Finnish frontier, and subsequently held a similar position in Vienna. In late 1922 or in 1923 he resumed his studies at the University of Jena, where he continued until 1925.

While in Moscow in 1919 Rado had met Helene Jansen, an avid German Communist then working as second or third secretary to Lenin. (He himself had at least one talk with Lenin.) In 1923 or 1924 he married her in Moscow and she joined him in Germany while he completed his studies. Thereafter she participated extensively in his intelligence activities. The Soviets regarded them as Soviet citizens, although Rado, holding a valid Hungarian passport, could also claim Hungarian citizenship. He seems to have received financial support from the USSR continuously from 1919 on.

In 1925, upon completing his studies at Jena, Rado was trained in the

USSR for service with Soviet military intelligence and then settled in Berlin. He was assigned to a Soviet intelligence network concerned mainly with German politics and industrial development. To establish his cover he worked for the German publishing firm Meyer's Lexicon, and later he was employed as a cartographer preparing air charts for Lufthansa. While with Lufthansa he reportedly studied photogrammetry and traveled several hundred thousand miles throughout the world.

Rado prepared and published in Berlin in 1928 a German-language guide to the USSR and in 1929 an *Arbeiteratlas des Imperialismus*, the Communist slant of which did not seem to affect his standing with Lufthansa. In the early 1930's he did air chart work in Stockholm for Aerotransport, a Scandinavian Airlines predecessor then affiliated with Lufthansa. This work gave him some access to defense secrets of Sweden and possibly other countries—secrets which, it may be assumed, soon found their way to Moscow.

The Rados made a trip to Moscow in 1931, presumably for briefing and orientation. Upon returning to Germany in 1932, he accepted employment as a geographer for *Almanac de Gotha* in Berlin, a position he held until 1933. During this period he wrote geographic articles for a number of journals and became a fellow of several geographical societies, including the Royal Geographical Society of Great Britain.

Paris Enterprise

In 1933 Rado moved with his family (sons were born in 1925 and 1930) to Paris, where he founded, with Soviet financial backing, a press agency known as Inpress, specializing in maps and geographic data related to current events. Soviet operations against Germany would be more secure if the directing center were outside the target country. Inpress employed some 16 people, including four or five agents using the firm as cover. Communications for the network were handled through couriers whom Rado would meet in France and Spain or later, after the start of the Spanish Civil War, in the Scandinavian countries, especially Finland. Particularly sensitive information was sometimes transmitted through the Soviet embassy in Paris. High-level Soviet officials such as Litvinov and Molotov are reported to have conferred clandestinely with Rado

when passing through Paris.

In early 1936 Rado was called to the USSR for consultation. Since Inpress had not become self-sustaining financially, it was decided that the firm should be closed down and Rado moved to another assignment. Rado, however, asked to be released from intelligence work. and the Soviets agreed, on condition that he and his family resettle in the USSR. He returned to Paris to close down Inpress and to discuss the Soviet proposal with his wife.

But before they had decided what to do, Rado is said to have been approached by German officials and asked to undertake a special assignment for them. Mussolini had requested the Germans to recommend an expert to assist Italy in the solution of some geographic and cartographic problems; Rado was to pose as a German officer and take the job. He did so, spending some 8 months on it while his family remained in Paris. His findings were sent to Mussolini, to the Germans, and gratuitously to the Russians. Why German officials of Nazi persuasion should have sought out Rado for the Italian assignment remains a mystery.

Change of Station

Rado's personal contact with the Fascists in Italy, the rise of Nazism in Germany, and the trend of the Spanish Civil War convinced him, it is reported, that he should continue his work for Soviet military intelligence. He was assigned to direct and expand a small Red Army intelligence network operating in Switzerland against Germany. He proceeded to Geneva with his family, including Helene's mother, in late 1936, ostensibly to take a position with the League of Nations International Labor Office, in which there were at that time many Communist sympathizers. After several months of working full time for ILO, he became its part-time consultant and devoted his main energies to his intelligence work and the development of cover for it.

In 1936 or 1937, with Soviet funds and having a Swiss citizen as silent partner, Rado organized Geopress, a news agency specializing as Inpress had in maps and geographic background data. Geopress was more successful than Inpress because of better organization and the

increased demand for news maps in the advancing shadows of World War II. As cover for an intelligence operation it proved ideal. Its normal activity—news collection and dissemination—provided justification for contacts with businessmen, officials, diplomats, journalists, and military leaders, some of whom became intelligence sources. It also justified a large volume of telephone and telegraph traffic, extensive postal business, and the maintenance of a courier system.

While building up his Geopress cover Rado also developed his sources, organized communications, and summarized for transmission the reports collected by his growing network. And he even found time to maintain through publications his image as an internationally known geographer. A left-slanted *Atlas of Today and Tomorrow*, prepared jointly by Rado and Marthe Rajchman, was published in London (1937) by Victor Gollancz Ltd.

War Service

As resident director of the Switzerland network, Rado held the secret Red Army rank of Major General; he was awarded the Order of Lenin in 1943. A description of the apparatus he administered was first made public in 1949 in Alexander Foote's *Handbook for Spies*, and interest in it has recently been revived by a flurry of speculation and controversy, chiefly among French and German researchers, about how its prime source "Lucy" (Rudolph Rössler) got such prompt access to the secrets of the German high command. Moscow, Foote declares, largely fought the war on Rössler's messages. But in 1941, when Rössler first made contact with Rado, Moscow was extremely suspicious and advised Rado to have nothing to do with him. Rado, in what must surely rank as the most important decision of his life, nevertheless went ahead and paid Rössler, insisting that his information was authentic and vital, an evaluation later accepted by Moscow. Foote, de facto number two man in the network and no Rado admirer, calls this one of Rado's few independent acts during the war.

The network had many troubles. Prominent among them were the difficulty of getting funds from Moscow to Switzerland, Moscow's pathological suspicion of the British, rivalry between Red Army

intelligence and other Soviet services, the security of personnel inherited from other networks, and a serious personality clash between Rado and Foote. Rado thought Foote misused network funds, was overly cautious and "hard to work with." Foote thought the same of Rado. Nevertheless, they accomplished much with the knowledge and tacit approval of officially neutral Switzerland. German pressure on the Swiss rather than independent Swiss initiative brought about the breakup of the net.

Rado's main participation in the work of his apparatus ended in 1943. Compromised and forced to hide out, he and his wife spent several months at a safe house, while their sons remained with their grandmother in Geneva. Their exit to France was finally arranged by the Nicole organization of Swiss Communists.

Foote believed that Rados did nothing but hide out until their exit. Another version holds that during this period Rado tried to reestablish contact with Moscow through the British embassy, there being no Soviet-Swiss diplomatic contact at the time, and then through the Chinese embassy. Finally, communication via Chungking proving too slow and unreliable, he attempted to get a new transmitter built in Liechtenstein with funds from Swiss businessmen who were to be repaid and rewarded with large orders from the USSR after the war. Although the Liechtenstein transmitter never got into operation, the Swiss financial backers presented their claims when diplomatic relations between Switzerland and the USSR were established in 1946. Soviet diplomats, however, disclaimed any knowledge of Rado and his wartime activities, and the claims were not paid.

In 1944 the Rados contacted friends in the French Resistance and spent five or six months working with the Maquis in southern France, for which they were later awarded the Legion of Honor by the French Government. They did not attempt to report to the Soviets until Paris was liberated in 1944, when they made contact with the Soviet military attaché there. The Nicole organization brought their boys to Paris to rejoin them. Helene's mother remained in Geneva to liquidate the household.

Disgrace

Alexander Foote, only recently freed from a Swiss jail, reached Paris

about the same time as the Rados. The two men were interrogated individually by the Soviets regarding the last days of the network. With a more complete and current picture of the situation in Switzerland, Foote's antagonistic opinions evidently prevailed when his account was weighed against Rado's. Both were ordered to report to Moscow for consultation.

Apprehensive about the fate that might await him in the USSR, Rado considered declining Moscow's invitation. It is reported that Helene finally persuaded him to go, arguing that he had done his best with the Switzerland network under difficult conditions and so had nothing to fear from the Soviets. In January 1945, still somewhat dubious, he and Foote left Paris on a Soviet aircraft bound for Moscow via Cairo. After talking at length with Foote, Rado's doubts again got the upper hand and he left the flight in Cairo.

He was soon picked up by the British-directed Egyptian police, who were puzzled and uncertain as to how he should be handled. A censor's information card, passed at the time to OSS representatives in Cairo, sums up what seems to be the story he first told his captors:

24 Feb. 1945

RADO, SANDOR

During the German occupation of Hungary, lived in Geneva where published geographical maps for the Allied Governments until 1943; discovered by the GESTAPO and consequently his relatives in Hungary were murdered/ went with family to Paris in September 1944 and continued his work/summoned to Russia to report on his activities with the Free French Organization and left on 8 Jan. 1945 by special plane for Moscow/suspecting a trap, he got off the plane in Cairo where he remained/received no news from his wife in Paris and suspects that she might have been deported/he was formerly a Fellow of the Geographical Society in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Rome and Washington, D.C.

OFFICE OF CENSORSHIP, Egypt, 11 April 1945

He had apparently decided that his interests would be best served by painting himself as a victim of persecution and devoted to the Allied cause while holding to a minimum revelations that might increase the ire

of Moscow. The result was a mixture of truths, halftruths, lies, and distortions.

After some local maneuvering Rado made a direct effort to defect to the British but was turned down. Also to no avail was his legal resistance to Soviet extradition. He was handed over to the Soviets and flown to Moscow in the summer of 1945. Confined to Lubyanka prison for a year and a half, he was eventually charged with espionage in favor of the West, letting code keys fall into enemy hands, misuse of network funds, and failure to keep his network functioning. He was sentenced without trial to 15 years' imprisonment and stripped of rank and honors.

A hostile attitude on the part of Beria may have figured importantly in the disposition of Rado's case. During the war Beria reportedly sent his son to Switzerland to work in Rado's net in order to keep him out of front-line.- army duty. The son, a playboy type, wasted network funds, jeopardized security, and did no useful work. Rado had him recalled to the USSR, where he was eventually killed serving with the Red Army; and for this his father blamed Rado.

Reports on Rado's period of forced labor in the USSR are few and somewhat contradictory. In early 1947 he was apparently moved from Lubyanka to a coal mine in Siberia. In a short time he became labor manager of the mine and thus was not subjected to hard physical work. He was soon shifted to Kuchino, near Moscow, the site of a geophysical observatory. According to one interpretation, the move to Kuchino was the result of an error; officials reviewing his papers saw that he had transmitted intelligence by radio and so thought him a radio technician. At Kuchino he was put to work on map and chart problems connected with the development of a navigation system and possibly missile guidance. He made noteworthy contributions, apparently, for he soon became a "prisoner with privileges," entitled to a private apartment and access to Western publications. It is conceivable that the "error" which brought him to Kuchino was the result of string-pulling by friends.

In 1946, while still in Lubyanka prison, Rado had been pressured into writing his wife in Paris and suggesting that she and their sons follow him to the USSR. Helene, suspecting that the letter had been written under duress, declined; the Soviets then directly urged her to come. Other letters of Rado's to members of his family were not forwarded to them, and their letters were not delivered to him in the Soviet Union. In 1948 or 1949, Helene, still in Paris, obtained a divorce of convenience in

the hope that it would discourage further Soviet attempts to make her return to the USSR.

Rehabilitation and Return

Rado was released from prison in 1954, his sentence being reduced by work credits. The amnesty that followed Stalin's death, along with the intervention of friends and the fall of Beria, may have expedited the release. For perhaps a year he remained in the USSR working, ironing out his citizenship status (the Soviets now consider him a dual citizen), obtaining documentation, and weighing alternative plans for his future. There are a number of contradictions in reports on him during this period. One account says he worked as a geographic expert for the KGB. Another report states that he was a translator and cartographer for the Soviet Academy of Sciences, a position he obtained through Professor N. N. Baranskiy, whom he had met while a prisoner.

His negotiations with the Soviets, at any rate, were not smooth. At one point he was offered his choice of professorships in the USSR; at another Soviet officials wanted to send him to Siberia. It was reportedly only through the intercession of Hungarian Ambassador Ferenc Munnich, an old friend from the Bela Kun period, that the way was finally cleared for Rado to return to Hungary. Khrushchev is said to have sent a telegram to the Hungarian Communist Party vouching for him on the eve of his return.

According to one report, Rado reentered his native land in July 1955; yet his name is listed as a member of the editorial board of the Hungarian journal *Geodézia és Kartográfia* in its first issue for 1955. Either the reported date is incorrect or he began participating in Hungarian mapping affairs before leaving the USSR. In either case, his appointment to membership on the journal's editorial board was remarkably fast for one who had not spent a day in Hungary since 1919.

A considerable number of Hungarians who had been prisoners in the USSR returned at about the same time as Rado, so that his arrival in Budapest attracted little attention. He found to his surprise that his sister, Elizabeth Klein, was living in Budapest with her son; the Soviets had told him that none of his relatives in Hungary survived the war. At

first he worked as cartographic editor of an encyclopedia but soon discovered many old friends in high places who wanted to use his talents and experience. Rakosi and his deputy Gero, whom he had known since 1916, reportedly offered him the position of chief of intelligence and he refused, claiming he did not want to get mixed up in "dirty work."

He worked briefly for the Ministry of Foreign Trade, then returned to his encyclopedia job, and finally, still in 1955, accepted a position as deputy chief of the Allami Földmérési és Térképészeti Hivatal (State Survey and Cartographic Office) with specific duties as head of the Cartographic Department. This continues to be his main official position, except that in the spring of 1967 the previously autonomous AFTH was put under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and its name changed to the Országos Földügyi és Térképészeti Hivatal (National Land and Cartographic Office). Other posts Rado holds or has held include a professorship at the Karl Marx University of Economic Science, numerous editorships, and the chairmanship of many committees and commissions.

Shortly after his return to Hungary and unaware of Helene's divorce, he wrote her in Paris suggesting that she join him but that their sons, French citizens, remain in France; if they entered Hungary they might be treated as Hungarian citizens and denied egress. Helene, ill with cancer, was thus reunited with Rado in 1956. She died in Budapest in 1958.

Rado reportedly took no part in the Hungarian revolt of 1956, but it seems more by luck than by design. At one point in the power struggle the principal figures on both sides, Imre Nagy on the one and two Soviet generals on the other, were old friends of his. He thought he might be able to bring them together to work out a modus vivendi. To this end he attempted to see Nagy but was unable to reach him, and there the matter ended.

After the revolt the Soviets showed a new and favorable interest in Rado. To their appreciation of his mapping and intelligence knowhow had been added the important fact that he did not take part in the uprising or attempt to leave Hungary while it was in progress. It is reported that he was appointed Chairman of the Warsaw Pact Committee on Mapping and Geodesy in 1957. While this specific has not been confirmed, there is much evidence that at about this time his power and prestige increased greatly, that he was accepted by the Soviets as he had not

been before, and that he began making short trips to the USSR at approximately six-month intervals.

A U.S. official in touch with Rado and other Hungarian geographers and cartographers in 1959 noted that the younger men coming up in the mapping organizations were being drawn from the Karl Marx University of Economic Science, where Rado taught Communist theory, the geography of the Soviet Union, and economic geography and presumably exercised some screening authority. In 1959 he married a librarian at the University, Erzebet Bokor. Fortyish and the holder of a doctorate, she shares many of his professional interests and has accompanied him on trips to the West.

A source who worked with Rado in the 1950's noted in 1963 that he seemed very well satisfied with his situation. He was better dressed than in the past and had a chauffeur-driven limousine at his disposal.

Rado has written or edited many articles, books, and maps and has received honorary degrees and prizes. Noteworthy among the latter is a 1963 Kossuth Prize, Class III, for "achievements in organizing and raising the scientific standards of civilian cartography in Hungary." A deliberate effort has been made to establish him as an internationally recognized geographer. He has represented Hungary at several international meetings and has made numerous trips to the West, a sign that he enjoys Soviet confidence. It is noteworthy that he has been willing to interpret the Bloc line on such sticky matters as the role of Albania in the Socialist camp, the China-India boundary, and the Oder-Neisse question both at international meetings and in unclassified publications. On several occasions he has been observed in extended conversation with K. A. Salishchev, a key figure in Soviet mapping.

Since 1956 Rado's influence has been projected into an ever-widening circle of activities. He is an administrator and coordinator of mapping programs, a cartographer, a teacher, a scholar, an editor, a propagandist, a diplomat, an intelligence collector, a security officer, and a still-alert old man who derives much enjoyment from his present position of power and the opportunities he now has to carry out his ideas and programs.

Part II

Contemporary Intelligence Collector

Although the record of his early years is far from complete, there seem to have been few times from the early 1920's through World War II when Alexander Rado was not engaged in some phase of intelligence collection. Whether his work upon returning to Hungary in 1955 was intended from the beginning to include such collection is moot. The fact remains that an emphasis on procurement became noticeable in the Hungarian mapping milieu shortly after he appeared on the scene and has increased steadily to the present. At some stage Moscow seems to have given him a green light to make Hungary a special instrument for the collection of geographic intelligence on the West.

Main Collection Schemes: Cartactual

The emphasis Rado places on the collection of geographic intelligence is illustrated in several of the Hungarian publications under his influence. The journal *Földméréstani Kozlemények* (Periodical of Geodesy), which appeared from 1949 to 1954, came out under a new name, *Geodézia és Kartográfia*, in 1955, simultaneously with Rado's first being listed on the cover as a member of the editorial board. Its second issue for 1956 incorporated format adjustments and several new sections, among them *Változások a Térképen* (Map Changes), comprising some three pages of current data for both Communist and Western countries on civil divisions, place names, hydrography, transportation, and other changes of particular interest to cartographers. Rado's name appeared at the end of the section as "coordinating editor." This section, carried regularly since 1956, has increased in size to five or six pages. The credit to Rado was elaborated in the final 1959 issue to read, at the head of the section, "Coordinating Editor-Sandor Rado, Doctor of Geographic Science," a form used consistently in all issues thereafter.

In 1962 the publication schedule of *Geodézia és Kartográfia* was stepped up from four to six issues per year. This made the section on changes

more valuable in getting word to cartographers sooner, and it permitted an increase in the volume of data handled. As an intelligence window to the West, however, the section still had a great disadvantage—publication in the Hungarian language. This was remedied in September 1965 with the first issue of a new quarterly, *Cartactual*, having text in English, French, and German. *Cartactual* broke the language barrier and gave Rado an instrument apparently designed specifically to establish and maintain contacts between his office and map makers and publishers throughout the world.

Each issue of *Cartactual* is essentially a collection of easy-to-reproduce maps illustrating the more noteworthy map changes cited in *Geodézia és Kartográfia*. On the whole, it is a cleverly conceived instrument that reflects a well-honed appreciation of:

expanding Bloc needs for geographic information on foreign areas,
the thirst of the West for hard data on the Communist world,
news values and the role of maps in statecraft,
the problem of keeping maps current in a technological climate
wherein man can change the landscape significantly at an
everincreasing pace,
the needs and interests of cartographers and publishers,
especially those working with limited resources and facilities,
and the peculiar mechanics of "data trade" around the world.

The content of *Cartactual* seems to be gleaned entirely from open sources and reflects a careful reading of many newspapers and technical journals. Much of the research, as well as the selection of items, is believed to be handled personally by Rado, who is fluent in at least six languages. A typical recent issue included 22 pages of maps on non-Communist countries but only two on Communist countries. Some of the Western items are old hat by the time they appear in *Cartactual*, but many working cartographers find it helpful and convenient to have the data organized, indexed, and illustrated with clear maps.

Although some information on Communist countries is provided, essentially Rado and his coworkers contribute service—search, selective collection, organization, illustration, and publication of known data. In return he gets the subscription price (\$10 per year), an extensive systematic file of Western data needed to keep Bloc maps current, a

plausible basis for maintaining close contact with Western sources (some of which may be susceptible to development as clandestine agents), and finally, prestige for his office as a "world clearinghouse" for geographic intelligence. He is trying to encourage mapping agencies throughout the world to contribute more large-scale maps and detailed data for his use.

Now in two colors, *Cartactual* has been generally well received in the West by private cartographers and publishers. A review in the *British Cartographic Journal* for December 1966 gave it unreserved and naive praise:

. . . In preparing *Cartactual*, Professor Rado and his colleagues have placed all map makers in their debt. . . . A very high standard of cartographic line drawing was achieved from the outset and it should not be thought that the maps are sketchy or diagrammatic in form. Each is carefully drawn in a simple style based almost entirely on line work and with little reliance on areal shading or hatching. A variety of neatly applied lettering styles is used to make the appropriate emphasis in different parts of each map. A scale of miles and kilometres is included in each map and all relevant locational information is clearly provided. A particularly noteworthy feature is the inclusion of the source and date of the information used in the preparation of each map. . . .

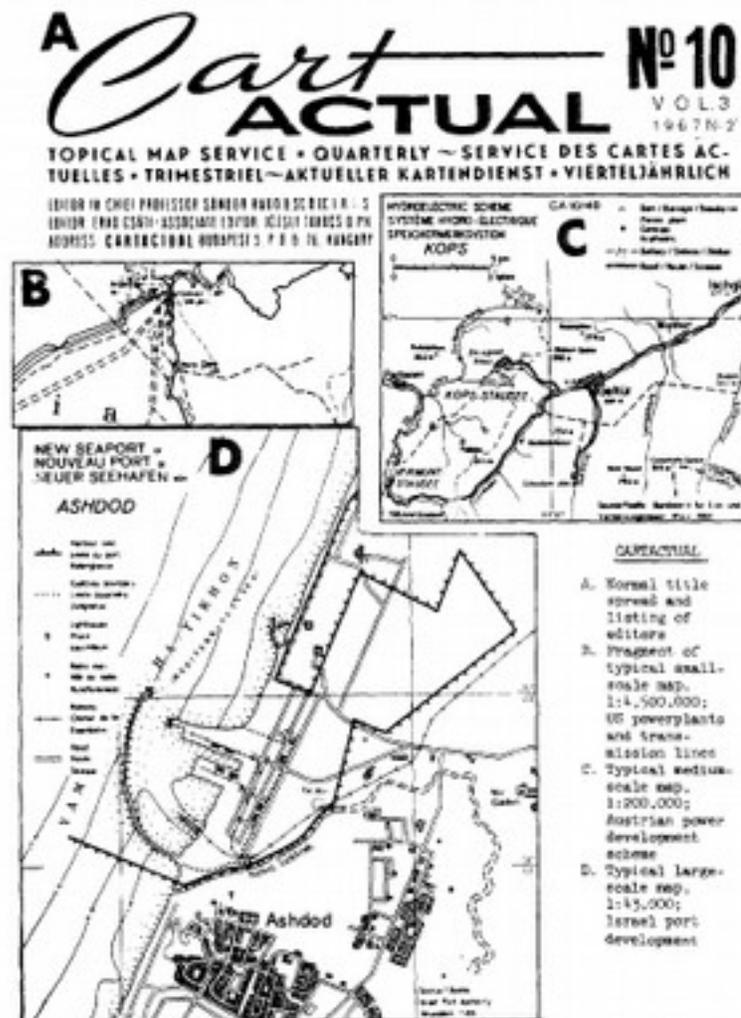
When one discovers among these maps details of ferry services in Scandinavia or the alignment of a new road through the holiday towns of the Adriatic coast, one realizes the value of this publication to a wide range of users, other than cartographers and geographers. In clear, uncomplicated maps such as these the school teacher, and the layman, can find at a glance information of considerable importance to him which would seldom be quickly retrieved if given in textual form in technical journals or the press. .

. .

In 1967 *Cartactual* began to carry lists of "correspondents" on the back cover. It is likely that some of these have agreed to supply data from their home countries, but no details on the working arrangements are now available. It is noteworthy that the correspondents for three important map-producing countries (Rand McNally for the United States, Du Jonchay for France, and Esselte for Sweden) are individuals or organizations that have collaborated with Rado on joint projects, as

discussed below. The lists suggest that Rado has been zealous in seeking correspondents and is having some success in his attempt to become a world clearinghouse for geographic intelligence.

The *Cartactual* collection scheme is believed to bring the Bloc substantial intelligence gains at modest cost. It is similar in many ways, in its neat completeness, to the Geopress cover scheme Rado operated in Switzerland from about 1937 to 1943. In developing the current operation Rado must have been influenced by his Swiss experience and have been trying, if only subconsciously, to get back on his old track, with appropriate adjustments and allowances for a changed world situation.



Bloc 1:2,500,000 World Map

The scale of 1:2,500,000 has been much used in the USSR since the 1930's. In 1956 the Soviets proposed, within the framework of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, that a world map with uniform sheets at 1:2,500,000 be endorsed as an international mapping project in place of the International Map of the World at 1:1,000,000, to which they object for security reasons. They would like to have the advantages of participating in international mapping programs but do not want to reveal the detail on the USSR that would be shown by one-to-a-million sheets covering Soviet territory. After their proposal was rejected, they decided to go ahead anyway with a 1:2,500,000 world map, with most Bloc countries participating in the work.³ Rado had much to do with this decision and may have been the prime mover behind it. He claims that all 244 sheets of the series will be published "within a few years time" and then kept current by a revision program.

Although it may thus not have been conceived as a procurement gambit, the Bloc 1:2,500,000 program, with Rado as the leading spokesman, offers many procurement advantages. It may be possible to get some Western mapping agencies to participate directly in the compilation of sheets covering their own or adjacent territory, but regardless of what is or is not accomplished along this line, production of the series and later maintenance will provide a logical pretext for seeking geographic data from all parts of the non-Communist world for years to come. The project can be represented to potential data suppliers as an "international" program, and to innocents in some of the underdeveloped countries it may not be apparent that ultimate control rests solely with the USSR.

Rado has used and no doubt intends to make further use of the 1:2,500,000 map as justification for seeking geographic intelligence from the West. In a 1967 request he noted that his office is "discharging the functions of Information Centre of the World Map programme." At the Latin American Regional Conference of the International Geographical Union held at Mexico City in 1966, Rado delivered a long paper on the World Map and displayed available sheets covering the Americas. He also brought with him preliminary proofs of some 28 not-then-published

sheets covering Latin America. There is reason to believe that he sought and perhaps obtained Latin American assistance in checking and reviewing the proofs.

He wrote in 1965 to the U.S. Navy Oceanographic Office seeking a large quantity of bathymetric data for use in the compilation of *World Map* sheets. He received an answer giving an approximate cost figure which was probably higher than he expected. He then asked a U.S. geographic attaché in Europe about the possibility of obtaining the desired data at a lower figure but was given no encouragement. In October 1967 he wrote to the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey reiterating his need for bathymetric data "as detailed as possible" for use in compiling the world 1:2,500,000 map. He asked specifically for copies of Coast Survey charts of the coast of the United States and offered to "return your courtesy in any form, among others to send you in exchange all the sheets of the *World Map*."

The *World Map* and *Cartactual* tie in especially with the procurement of geographic intelligence needed to keep maps current. They now seem to be Rado's favored schemes and to be receiving most of his time and attention. He has not abandoned other collection schemes, however.

Other Collection Devices

Rado and his colleagues have been zealous in seeking exchange agreements with both official and private agencies in non-Communist countries. Proposed agreements have covered maps of all kinds and a not very specifically defined range of miscellaneous publications. These efforts have been clearly identified in the United States, Latin America, Europe, and Asia, and they are believed to be world-wide in scope. In general, the exchange agreements have been a good thing for the Hungarians and a poor bargain for their partners. Hungary has persistently demanded the best topographic maps, engineering studies, technical publications, and specific data needed for map compilation in exchange for school maps, tourist maps, picture books, and items of little intelligence value. An official U.S.-Hungarian exchange was cancelled by the United States in 1961 because Rado was unwilling to maintain approximate parity in the quality of items exchanged.

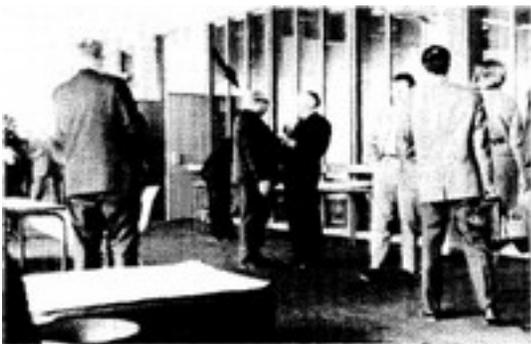
The Hungarians procure by purchase some of the most desired maps and studies, as for example topographic maps of the United States at 1:24,000. Orders are sent to U.S. Geological Survey field offices and to book and map dealers throughout the United States. Orders are also directed to book and map dealers in foreign countries who handle U.S. publications, as for example dealers in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan. Hungarian military attachés have placed some orders personally; others have been handled by correspondence. For some orders a Hungarian origin has been suspected but could not be proved. Rado and his colleagues use the purchase approach sparingly, even though it should be the most expeditious way of obtaining some desired materials. The reasons are not clear; a shortage of hard currency may figure in it.⁴

Hungarian solicitations come by letter to a wide range of national and local government offices, transportation authorities, chambers of commerce, educational and research institutions, and business firms throughout the non-Communist world. Usually the requests are for specific publications or data and are justified in various ways: We are compiling a scientific map, preparing a news map,⁵ writing a textbook, preparing a statistical compendium, correcting an encyclopedia, compiling an atlas, assembling material for a university course, and so forth. It is noteworthy that Rado finds time to serve nominally as co-editor of the Hungarian International Almanac; in that capacity he signs letters requesting statistical data and other information on subjects beyond the realm of cartography or geography.

Budapest map exhibitions, an ingenious collection scheme, were started in 1962. Exhibitions are held yearly, usually in October, with the theme changing from year to year. The 1962 exhibition focused on national atlases. Themes for other years were as follows: 1963, road maps; 1964, tourist maps; 1965, city plans; and 1966, school atlases and globes. Requests for maps for the 1964 exhibit went to many private organizations in the United States, including Rand McNally Company, Cousha Company, and the American Automobile Association; 1,419 maps of the United States or parts thereof were contributed without charge: for exhibition and retention. The contributions of other countries were probably more modest, but the take from the world as a whole was considerable. Rado, who knows a good thing when he sees it, refers in a recently published *International Geographic Union Newsletter* to the "now traditional Budapest map exhibitions."

Rado or Hungarian agencies arrange joint projects with publishers in the West to produce specific maps or atlases. Three arrangements of this type have come to attention to date: a 1966-67 map of China published jointly by Esselte (Sweden) and "Cartographia" ⁶ (Hungary), based mainly on data supplied by Rado; a French atlas published in 1966, *Atlas International Larousse, Politique et Aconomique*, prepared under the direction of Rado and a French geographer, Ivan du Jonchay; and an arrangement with the Rand McNally Company of the United States under which "Cartographia" will prepare (along with companies in England, Sweden, Hungary, Japan, and West Germany) parts of an international atlas to be published in 1968 by Rand McNally and the Encyclopedia Britannica.

Such joint projects develop contacts for Rado in Western countries, open data-collecting doors, and earn hard currency. He is known to have proposed to an Italian organization that it economize by having its cartographic work done on a contract basis by Hungarian agencies, a suggestion that was rejected. No other rejected proposals for joint work have been reliably reported, but it is likely that there have been some. The collaboration with Du Jonchay may be partly rooted in wartime camaraderie. Du Jonchay is a retired French naval officer with an odd World War II record, an Africa expert, and a member of the Comité Français de Géodésie et de Géophysique. He reportedly collaborated—or pretended to collaborate—with the Germans in North Africa during the early phase of the war but later became active in the French Resistance in southeastern France, as Rado was in 1944.



Alexander Rado (arrow) at Third International Conference on Cartography, 17-21 April 1967, Amsterdam.

Another aid to collection is participation in international conferences. Rado has been very active in the work of the IGU and the ICA and seems to be the chairman of most Hungarian national committees

tributary to these organizations. He has also found time to attend other meetings such as the general assemblies of geographical societies in Bloc countries, an exhibition in Finland, an international conference on economic regions convened in Poland, and a reception held by the Cuban Academy of Sciences. His last two forays into the West were to the Regional Latin America Conference of the IGU in Mexico City in 1966 and the conference of the ICA held at Amsterdam in April 1967. Some of his activities and objectives at such conferences are essentially the same as those of Western participants—to obtain the latest word on new developments, make useful contacts, inspect exhibits, obtain literature, and negotiate publication exchanges. In addition, he propagandizes the achievements of Bloc cartographic science and technology, looks for penetrative opportunities such as a chance to send Bloc experts to an underdeveloped country, and polices contacts between Bloc representatives and Western delegates.

In general, Rado carries to international meetings the same get-everything-give-nothing tactics that have characterized his handling of routine map and publication exchanges. Although he still enjoys a measure of success, his background is apparently becoming known and some of his overtures are now brushed off or are received warily.

Trends and Prospects

Firm quantitative estimates of Rado's take are unavailable, and its value to the Bloc can only be guessed at. There are, however, some indications that the volume is considerable and the low cost of obtaining it makes the collection program a bargain. The procurement push began with Rado's reappearance in Hungary in 1955, and the schemes and gambits have grown steadily in number and complexity since that date. There has been no trailing off. The awards and honors Rado has received suggest that his efforts have been officially evaluated as successful and that in the Communist hierarchy there is considerable appreciation of what he has accomplished.

A few foreign agencies, as well as U.S. business firms and municipalities, have sought advice from U.S. officials on how they should respond to Rado requests. In reply they have been told something of his collection

activities and encouraged to refuse. When it became evident that Rado had written to officials of virtually all sizable U.S. cities seeking city plans for a map exhibition, the Department of State wrote letters to U.S. municipal authorities calling attention to his one-sided exchange policies and suggesting that they refrain from filling his requests. The most effective action has probably been the informal passing of the word at international geographic and cartographic meetings that exchanges with him are one-way streets that benefit the Bloc considerably while bringing nothing of value to the West. His poor reputation in this respect was a factor in his rejection, at least temporarily, as a candidate for vice president of the ICA at its 1967 meeting in Amsterdam. Given the expectation that the person elected would become president in three to four years, Rado's Bloc-endorsed candidacy met resistance, and after some backstage argument the final settlement of the matter was postponed until the 1968 meeting in New Delhi.

Recent word to the effect that Rado will soon publish his memoirs, making public "all he deems it possible to say about his political, revolutionary, and intelligence activity before and during World War II" seems to mean, *inter alia*, that in the near future he will give less time to mapping and geographic intelligence collection (possibly abandoning the ICA presidency as an objective) for the sake of producing propagandistic history. The Soviets were stung by recent European press interpretations of their espionage in Switzerland during the war and have evidently decided to tell some of their side of the story through Rado, even at the expense of his current activities.

If relatively detailed and candid, Rado's account may throw new light on the history of the war and his own remarkable career. In a May 1968 press interview he declared that he wanted in his memoirs to "crack the myth" that Germany lost the war because of traitors in the Wehrmacht's General Staff. It is virtually certain that his recollections, whatever their merits or deficiencies, will touch off a new round of discussion and controversy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1 Adapted from CIA/BGI PN 63.2300, a 39-page study of the same title.

2 The Soviets' long silence about their wartime operation in Switzerland was broken on 20 February 1968 by a Komsornolskaya Pravda story that told a little about the Switzerland network and praised Rado. Since then other stories about him have appeared in Bloc media. The latest items claim that he will soon publish his memoirs.

3 When the project was in the early planning stage, Communist China agreed to prepare sheets covering Chinese territory, but later backed out. It is reported that Czechoslovakia will now prepare the China coverage.

4 In their contacts with the West, Rado and his aids consistently complain about their organization's budgetary woes and shortage of hard currency, a posture that may reflect the truth. On the other hand, it is possible that they sound the we-are-poor note as a matter of policy in the belief that it will open free procurement doors, invite contract work, and give their activities an aura of innocence that a well-funded operation would not have.

5 For Terra, a Budapest-based news service that issues geographic background summaries on areas in the news. Releases are accompanied by outline maps designed especially for newspaper reproduction. The service is subscribed to by many Hungarian newspapers and perhaps also by papers in other countries. In function, Terra has much in common with the Geopress service that Rado operated in Switzerland.

6 The commercial front for Rado's official civil mapping agency, Orszagos F61dugyi es Terkepeszeti Hivatal . . . (National Land and Cartographic Office ...).

Posted: May 08, 2007 08:17 AM