

DEPUTY DIRECTOR

JPS

31 Jan 61

Please prepare suitable
brief note to SUSLO (L)
acknowledging & thanking
him for these documents.
Attn F's signature





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Serial: 18
29 January 1961

Vice Admiral L. H. Frost
Director
National Security Agency
Fort George G. Meade, Maryland

Dear Admiral Frost:

The incident of the two planted documents (subject of my LN 0085) has inspired some interesting press commentary which you might care to read.

I'm inclosing an article from the Manchester Guardian of 18 January about the case, written by Victor Zerza who is one of the more thoughtful and reliable British columnists. In the same issue he has another article, also inclosed, which goes into the whole Soviet planting system.

Incidentally, with respect to the two documents in this latest case, it hasn't been published but identical photographs, with a similar cover letter, were mailed to a reporter in the Paris office of the New York Times.

Best regards,

Frank

FRANK G. AUSTIN
Senior U.S. Liaison Officer, London

2 Incls
a/s

"TOP SECRET" FORGERIES BY RUSSIA

Attempts to create bad blood between Governments

By VICTOR ZORZA

A Secret Service headquarters in Moscow, with a main branch in East Germany, and sub-branches in places as far apart as Tokio, New Delhi, Accra, and Havana, has planted in the newspapers of these and other cities over the past few years some fifty "confidential," "secret," and "top secret" documents which were presented as revealing some of the most embarrassing, and potentially explosive, Western Government secrets.

In almost all cases the first publication of these documents outside the Soviet bloc was followed by concerted campaigns designed to secure, through Moscow radio and other Communist news distributing agencies, the widest publicity for these documents in the countries or areas for which they were "angled."

Some of the forgeries were so blatant and so clearly designed for political effect that, the best place for them,

The first article
in a series on Soviet
diplomatic forgeries

when their reproductions were flaunted in some of the newspapers in which they had been planted, appeared to be a subsection in my filing system marked "Falsies." But now that the operation, which had been largely confined to countries with a gullible public, appears to have gained more sophisticated Western outlets, the time has clearly come to examine the file for the light it can shed on this fascinating subject.

Not the first

The "secret" documents bearing the signatures of Mr Herter, the Secretary of State, and Mr Brucker, the Secretary of the Army, which the "Daily Express" says have been sent "through the ordinary post to an unauthorised person in London," are not the first of their kind to have been aimed at this country. In February, 1958, copies of a letter attributed to Mr David Bruce, then United States Ambassador in West Germany, designed to show that American policies were being deliberately conducted in a way detrimental to Britain, were mailed from France to journalists and politicians in London. After creating something of a diplomatic flurry, the letter was exposed as a forgery and failed to make the headlines for which it had been intended.

In fact, however, the forgeries which do not finally appear in the press can, in a way, be more dangerous potentially than those which receive publicity and are exposed for what they are. Only one prong of operation "Falsies" is designed for the penetration of the press. Another prong consists of the feeding of deliberate misinformation by the Soviet Intelligence Service to its Western counterparts—an operation which sometimes assumes such vast proportions that the Western services find it more than usually difficult to separate the grain from the chaff.

But the third and sharpest prong is the delivery to high Western Government officials of alleged letters from the secret archives of their allied opposite numbers. These are usually more skilfully framed than the forgeries designed for an impressionable public opinion, and on several occasions they have succeeded in producing bad blood between Western Governments before they were finally nulled down.

Consultation

There now exists a system of consultation whereby the emergence of any such document is brought by the recipient Government to the attention of the Government supposed to have originated it, and the kind of

trouble these forgeries are designed to start is usually nipped in the bud.

But the documents are usually so framed that, if for instance an American "document" reaches the French Foreign Office, and if the latter believes that it could conceivably be genuine, then it might not be too eager to disclose to the State Department its knowledge of the contents, and the Americans might then not be in a position to prove to the French that the document is a forgery. This was one of the difficulties in the first stages of the Soviet operation, but it has now been overcome.

A notable example of this kind of document which was not intended for the press and never reached it, was the photographic copy of an alleged letter sent to the State Department under the signature of Mr Eilm O'Shaughnessy, chief of the political division of the American Embassy in Bonn. The copy of the letter was mailed through the ordinary post in Munich on July 5 to a high French official, in the full knowledge that he would not himself try to check with the Americans whether it was genuine, but would pass it on for information to the appropriate French Government agency.

The expectation was that it would take some time before the French Foreign Office and Intelligence Service got to grips with the document and in the meantime its "relations" would begin to travel, uncontradicted, through the French official grapevine, causing resentment against the Americans.

Phantom

The "letter" called the attention of the State Department to the activities of reactionary ultranationalist organisations in West Germany—which were largely a matter of public record—and recommended, with what appeared to be the full authority of the Bonn Embassy, that the United States Government should support these groups and use them for its own ends.

This was at a time when French public opinion, and even official quarters, had been much disturbed by a whole series of letters, mailed from the same Paris post office on behalf of an alleged German neo-Fascist group, demanding the return of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany. This group, which went under the name of Kampverband für ein unabhängiges Deutschland, has since been shown to be a "phantom" organisation existing only in the files of the East German Intelligence Service, whose agents in West Germany and in France distributed neo-Fascist and irredentist material with a view to sowing distrust between the French and the Germans.

The service concerned in this operation is the Foreign Intelligence branch of the East German Ministry of State Security, known by the initials HVA, which stand for Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung, and it works with a Soviet "adviser" who co-ordinates its activities with the wider operations directed from the Moscow headquarters. An HVA agent who has defected to the West has identified the Alsace-Lorraine leaflets as the product of this organisation.

By comparing typewritten forgeries known to have originated from the HVA with the O'Shaughnessy letter, it is possible to establish that a whole series of these "documents" was produced on the same typewriter. Another HVA operation was designed to exploit by means of forged letters some of the suspicions and ill feeling that occasionally flare up between this country and West Germany.

Atomic weapons

This took the form of letters produced on the forged letterheads of the BBC office in Berlin. The photo-copies of the BBC "letters" were so drawn up as to indicate to the recipients—who included the West German Foreign Secretary—that the British Foreign Office had directed the BBC to support the "Göttingen declaration," in which 18 leading West German nuclear physicists stated their opposition to the possible arming of the Bundeswehr with atomic weapons. Since it was well

enough known in West Germany that this prospect was not viewed enthusiastically in Britain, some recipients of the letter may have concluded that perfidious Albion was up to its tricks again.

While all these "letters" were carefully prepared to mislead Western officials, the "secret" documents planted in the press show evidence of more hasty preparation, for they were often timed for publication in order to produce the greatest impact on public opinion in the wake of some major political event.

A study of the fifty or so documents, of the way in which they were "surfaced" and "replayed"—to use the terms coined by the intelligence experts for this new branch of their activity—reveals a fascinating background of human gullibility and low cunning, of complex and highly efficient organisation on a world scale that is nevertheless subject to the crudest kind of human error, of cleverness and sheer stupidity that form the ingredients of any good and true story that deals with espionage or its fringes.

US SECRETS "FORGED"

Story rejected by embassy

By VICTOR ZORZA

The American Embassy in London yesterday described as "fabrication from start to finish" an alleged "secret" State Department document which was the subject of the main news story in a London newspaper yesterday.

Two documents which figured in the story were supposed to have been signed by Mr Herter, the Secretary of State, and by Mr Brucker, the Army Secretary. They refer to alleged American efforts to induce Soviet citizens to take refuge in the West by various underhand methods, and to recruit spies.

The American Embassy said that its investigations had failed to reveal the existence of either document. The alleged Herter document examined by it bears a serial number and a date which shows it, to the satisfaction of American officials, to be a forgery. "It calls to mind," the Embassy said, "numerous other forgeries of official documents circulated during the last few years."

Intelligence activity

The planting of such documents is in fact a well-established activity of Communist intelligence services, designed to discredit Western Governments or even to sow dissension between them. The documents in question were accompanied by an anonymous letter.

In this case it appears that the planting of the documents is primarily intended to enable the Soviet press and radio to reproduce them and thus to show to the Soviet public—and to such sections of Western opinion as will be impressed by them—that the Americans will stop at nothing to undermine the Soviet system.

The alleged letter from Mr Herter to American Embassies abroad, which purports to show the concern of the State Department at the failure to obtain suitable "defectors," is so drawn up as to suggest that the Americans are anxious to increase the flow in order to use the defectors' revelations for anti-Soviet propaganda.

While the Americans are naturally concerned at the use of official stationery for the forgeries and would like to know how it got into the forgers' hands, they are not investigating any "leakage" of the documents now published, because no such documents have ever existed. They are, however, concerned at the continued publication of the alleged details, because this would give them the appearance of verisimilitude, and could be exploited by the Russians in exactly the way they had intended.

Investigating

While the American Embassy denied the authenticity of the documents outright, the State Department spokesman in Washington, pending the receipt of fuller details from London, said that the Department was "looking into" the report and thus provided some fuel for those who may wish to argue that there is no smoke without a fire.

The published "secret" State Department document bears the serial number CA-974 and is dated June 10. There had indeed been a document of that number, the Embassy said, but it was issued on July 29, 1959, to request the Embassy to extend the usual courtesies and assistance to an American clergyman travelling abroad.

["Top secret" forgeries, page 11]