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FABLES FROM THE KGB. The Man who Cracked the Trianon Case

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When intelligence officers retire, many are drawn to fiction. But memoirs are not the best of the "espionage" genres. The most fruitful and beloved is the fable, which is not surprising. After all, it is one thing to say: "In 1972, Lieutenant Colonel Petrov in Sweden ...", and quite another: "Once one of my colleagues in Scandinavia ...". Colonel Igor PERETRUKHIN, who worked in the KGB, also pays tribute to the folklore of the intelligence services. What can you do: people of his profession never retire.

- "Heinrich Böll believed that the salt of the waiter's profession is in tips. The journalist has a bombshell. And you?"

- "Perhaps the salt of our profession is recruitment. It is an art built on a scientific, psychological foundation. Before recruiting a person, you need to find a common base. It is better if these are some type of ideological motives, but both money and fear will do.

"When the base is found, you can start work, but here it is important not to frighten the recruit. Once, one of our military colleagues, a native of Azerbaijan, while in the GDR went after an East German. All fair and square - with the knowledge of the brotherly Stasi. It seemed that they had agreed on everything, but it ended with the fact that the German went to the party committee of his enterprise and said that a man with a clearly Arab appearance posing as a Russian intelligence officer had tried to recruit him.

"Naturally, even the most flawless groundwork must be properly followed up. And here is a 'joke For Official Use Only': in the Vitebsk Oblast a group of Japanese specialists, who at that time were presumably subjects of interest, were working under a contract. Once the Japanese went out on a picnic in the woods, poured drinks, and started drinking. And then 'like a grand piano from the bushes' our man appears by their fire, who in good Japanese asks: "Excuse me, please, how do I get to the nearest bus stop?"

"NEVER TRUST DUBIOUS PEOPLE"

- "Career intelligence officers get that way as a calling. And what about agents?"

- "I'll tell you one story that is known to many from the novel by Yulian Semenov *TASS is Authorized to Announce*. Alexander Dmitrievich Ogorodnik's covername was actually

'Trianon,' and at the beginning of this story he worked at the Soviet embassy in Colombia. Once Ogorodnik pocketed \$800 while selling the ambassador's car. This surfaced, and Ogorodnik was allowed to pay back what was missing. The money, of course, by that time had vanished into thin air, and therefore he had to do some fancy footwork. And he got sneaky: he began to buy whiskey and cigarettes at the embassy store and sell them to the owner of a nearby gas station. The same one, as luck would have it, turned out to be an agent of Colombian military intelligence. But that's just half the trouble - his brother worked for the CIA. For the Americans, Trianon was all the more valuable because upon his return he became an officer in the Foreign Policy Planning Office, the *think tank* of the Foreign Ministry.

"When working with a suspect, it is very important to feel who he is as a person. Lifestyle, habits, relationships with others can tell a lot about psychology. It was necessary to assess whether Ogorodnik was capable of betrayal. He turned out to be an extremely vain man, greedy for money and women. But everything became finally clear only after films with instructions from American intelligence were found at his place. As it was written, justifiably, in the instructions for British counterintelligence officers during the First World War, 'never trust women and dubious people, since both will sooner or later show weakness.'

"The finale is known to everyone from the film: during the arrest: Ogorodnik-'Trianon' poisoned himself."

PEOPLE ARE RESTRICTED IN THEIR FREEDOM

- "Is there a certain professional 'spy' code of ethics?"

- "It exists, but, as a rule, you remember about it when the professional comes into conflict with the universal. Once, in the 60s, in one of our port cities, I had to play the role of a German sailor who had to get in touch with his compatriot. There were suspicions that she, while working for the West German intelligence service BND, had lost contact with the West. I had to sell myself to her as the would-be contact.

"I knew the language, but it was important to enter the role and become a "real" German - to reproduce everything, down to habits, gestures, smell. The idea of the operation was that she had to buy into me as a 'compatriot.' And she bought it, moreover, she was clearly interested in me and made it clear that she would not mind continuing her acquaintance in a more intimate setting. What would a German sailor do in my place if he was not "gay" and not impotent? Of course, I would gladly have given in, especially since she was all woman. But I needed permission to continue the contact ..."

- "Did you actually refuse her?"

- "What else could I do? She, naturally, was mortally offended, and this is not at all a 'spy' thing, but purely human psychology."

- "Is it true that intelligence officers most often 'slip up on the little things'?"

- "There was this case: our illegal worked in the West, posing as a citizen of some Latin American country. Once he celebrated his fortieth birthday. He invited friends to a restaurant and everyone was drinking and eating tapas. Suddenly some music blares out and everyone gets up. And he sits. Friends push him: 'Amigo, are you drunk? This is the anthem of your country, we found it and made a recording especially for you.'"

"CODE-BOUND SPY"

- "How can you live with the constant fear of failure?"

- "This is an inevitable condition of the job - no one is immune from failure. Jokingly speaking, there is only one way that is one hundred percent guaranteed to stay out of trouble: don't stick your nose outside the embassy. But once you have ventured out, be prepared for the fact that you will be 'grazed' by surveillance. Actually, they are interested not so much in the "Russian diplomat" as in his contacts. At the same time, it is not recommended that you to get into conflict with surveillance: counterintelligence officers in any country are touchy people. But sometimes it's so hard to resist..."

"Once I was sent on TDY to Dusseldorf for an international exhibition. One of our cosmonauts was present there. I was responsible for his safety, and therefore I was in constant contact with our German colleagues, but nevertheless..."

"Once I forgot my exhibition pass at the hotel and came back after walking halfway. I get out of the elevator and hear the door slam on the floor. I guessed it was mine. I would, of course, pretend that I didn't notice anything, but I decided to play along: they had nowhere to go - the corridor ends in a dead end. At the dead end is the laundry room. I open the door, and I see - on the bottom shelf of the shelves between the piles of linen - two asses and four soles of commercial size 48 shoes. [US size 14]

"I stood there, then carefully closed the door and left. That evening in my room I said: they worked, as they say, sloppily. The next morning I arrive at the fair, and Herr Müller from the security service looks right past me - he was offended."

- "Many were offended by our special services ..."

- "Every intelligence and counterintelligence organization serves the state that supports it. And its special services reflect the state. And it is absolutely not necessary that citizens be en masse in love with the special services of their country. It's just that everyone should do their job professionally."

This interview was conducted by Sergey OSIPOV.

