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FROM : Information Control, OSO.
COUNTRY : Germany (Russian Zone).
SUBJECT : Reorganization of the RIS in Germany.
DATE OF INFORMATION: Current.
EVALUATION : F-2.

The following information, based on the interrogation of a defected interpreter from an MGB Operational Sector Headquarters in Germany, is believed to be correct and has been partially substantiated. Previous information on the suspected reorganization of the Russian intelligence service in Germany had been fragmentarily reported by a number of sources. A lucid and consecutive compilation, however, was not possible without the additional and strategic information of this source. A series of reports on the structure and key personnel of the Russian intelligence service in the Russian Zone of Germany, and specifically in the Province of Brandenburg, will be disseminated, of which this is the first:

1. The reorganization of the Russian intelligence service in Germany, which began in September 1946, was completed in November of that year. A uniform system of intelligence echelons, under the exclusive jurisdiction of the MGB (Ministry of State Security), entailing the liquidation of the old MVD (Ministry for Internal Affairs) system, was accomplished. The reorganization was coincidental with the departure from Germany of Colonel General SEROV and the appointment of his successor, Lieutenant General KOVALCHUK.

NOTE: Whether the Russian intelligence service in its pre-October 1946 form was essentially an NKVD organization, is still a contentious question. Source states that in preparation for the Potsdam Conference in September 1945, approximately two thousand NKVD operatives were brought from Soviet Russia to Germany. They were addressed by Colonel General SEROV in Babelsberg, who was accompanied by a number of ranking NKVD officers slated to become heads of the newly established Operational Sectors. SEROV told the group that they were responsible for all necessary security precautions for the Conference and that their task did not end with the Conference, but that most of them would be retained in Germany.

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2. The basic structure of the old Russian intelligence service remained, with the Operativni Sektor at the top level (provincial), the Operativni Okrug at the district level, and the Oper Grupa at the Kreis level, as the lowest echelon. Source states that this organizational set-up, as well as the functional sections of the Operational Sektor as given in paragraph 3, is the same for the other five Operational Sektors in the Russian Zone: Berlin, Land Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and Mecklenburg/Vorpommern.

NOTE: It can be assumed, however, that regional variations are in effect. The organizational and functional plan of MGB Operational Sektor BRANDENBURG, for example, would not necessarily apply to MGB Operational Sektor BERLIN, which is the only city in the Russian Zone set up in itself as an Operational Sektor.

3. The MGB Operational Sektor is divided into the following functional offices. Source is not able to explain the difference between the two named categories, section and sub-section, nor the obvious inconsistency of an alphabetical denotation for one sub-section while using numbers for the rest:

Sub-Section A: An independent sub-section maintaining all operational files of the Sektor, except informant files. All case files, as well as informant card indices, are kept by this office. The latter contain the agent's personal description, code-name, and assigned field of activity. No files can be removed and special permission is required to gain access to the card indices.

Sub-Section I: An independent sub-section for the collection of positive intelligence. This is accomplished by maintaining a net of informants in the American, British, and French Zones and sectors and by sending agents on missions into those Zones and sectors. The following information is gathered: OB of American, British, and French troops in Germany; political, economic and technical intelligence; public opinion; situation in DP Camps; activities of foreign intelligence services.

NOTE: This section evolved, according to source, from MVD Section IV, sub-section I, which was formerly charged with positive intelligence.

Section II: This section conducts counter-intelligence operations. At least in the Operational Sektor BRANDENBURG, this Section has two branches, one dealing with U. S. espionage, the other, with British and French espionage. It also engages in offensive operations, sending agents into the American, French, and British Zones on counter-intelligence missions.

NOTE: This section evolved, according to source, from

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MVD Section IV, sub-section II, which was formerly charged with counter-intelligence. Agents of MVD Section IV could be sent on both positive and counter-intelligence missions. Under the MGB system, the chiefs of Sub-Section I and Section II are authorized to send agents only on missions germane to the basic functions of their respective sections.

Section III: This section covers, through informant nets, administrative agencies in the Soviet Zone of Germany. Informants are planted in every branch of the German Administration, in political parties, churches, schools, and cultural organizations.

NOTE: Under the MVD system, according to source, MVD sections I, II, and III represented functional divisions of the Operational Sector, each of which dealt with a specific phase of German public life: denazification, political parties, churches, etc. Under the MGB system, these sections were consolidated into Section III, which has been known to dispatch agents into the western zones, to corroborate facts brought to light in the course of investigations.

Sub-Section IV: An independent office for locating persons wanted by the Russian intelligence service. It maintains a number of German leg-men and makes extensive use of German police facilities.

Section V: This section maintains a net of informants within the Soviet Military Administration of Germany. Informants are placed in every Kommandatura, and in other administrative offices. Source considers it possible that this section also has its informants in military units.

Section VI: This is the investigative and interrogation section. Source was employed in such a section from November 1946 to June 1947. The section is charged with the investigation of all arrests and performs interrogations on the basis of briefs submitted by other sections, particularly Sub-Section I and Section II. It is not authorized to engage in agent operations, but can brief and debrief agents of either Sub-Section I or Section II, with proper authorization, on the elements of information in which Section VI is interested.

Finance Section: This section maintains the payrolls of officers, enlisted men and civilian interpreters. It also distributes confidential funds at the request of section chiefs.

Kader Section: The personnel section of the Operational Sector, maintaining all personnel files of officers, enlisted men, and civilians.

4. Overall command is under the direction of Lt. General KOVALCHUK, whom source identifies as chief of the MGB in Germany. KOVALCHUK has a complete staff with functional staff-sections corresponding to those of the MGB Operational Sectors. Source

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is uncertain whether such a staff existed under Colonel General SEROV.

a. A central investigative group, similar to Section VI of the Operational Sector, entrusted with investigative activity covering the whole of Soviet-occupied Germany. Its offices are located in POTSDAM, under Colonel CHIZENKOV.

b. A section, similar to Section III of the Operative Sector, entrusted with surveillance of German public life in all its aspects. This section is under the command of Colonel CHESTAKOVICH.

c. A central disbursing agency, similar to the Finance Section of the Operational Sector, which manages finances of all MGB installations in Germany. Its offices are presumably located in BERLIN.

d. Source is unable to identify staff-sections corresponding to Sections and Sub-Sections I, II, IV, and V of an MGB Operational Sector; he is, however, convinced that such exist.

Source is not informed about command channels between Lt. General KOVALCHUK's staff and the MGB Operational Sectors. He considers it likely that the same system applies which is known to exist between MGB Operational Sectors and MGB Operational Districts under their command. Command channels of the Operational Sectors reveal that the Sector has jurisdiction over its Operational District (Okrug) offices, which correspond roughly to Regierungsbezirke. The CO of a sector can give orders directly to the CO of an Okrug, as well as to the section chiefs within that Okrug. Staff officers and section-chiefs on the provincial level of the Sector can also give direct orders to their corresponding section-chiefs on the district level. Similarly, the CO and section-chiefs of the District office level have authority to issue direct orders to the Oper Grupi, which are under the District's jurisdiction. The close integration existing between the functional sections of an MGB Operational Sector and parallel functional sections in its Okrug offices, source illustrates by the fact that Okrug section-chiefs report once a month directly to their counterpart section-chief on the provincial level. Only after this has been done, do they submit a report to their own Okrug commanding officer. Thus a double chain of command is stressed with two parallel lines of authority, one through the commanding officers on each level, and the other through the functional section offices and section-chiefs on each level. The second can evidently override the authority of the CO's of the various level installations.

JFB:eda
11 September 1947.
Source: BRG-782, 792, 794.
FO: State, War, Navy.

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