

Sleepers of influence

The FBI has just sprung a trap with ten post-Soviet spies.¹ More precisely, they are active deep cover agents. Because these lack diplomatic immunity, they are also known as illegals. Some media accounts have referred to them as “sleepers,” however. A sleeper is a secret agent who, after his or her insertion into a foreign nation, blends in perfectly but ceases any and all operations, so as to avoid detection, until she or he is “woken up” by his supervisors, sometimes many years later, to execute a special assignment. That can be assassination, sabotage, aiding an invasion force, or helping a fugitive spy. Meanwhile, the center either cuts off all contact or limits it to a bare minimum. Sometimes the center even ceases to support a sleeper financially so as to erase any and all traces. He stands completely on his own. A sleeper’s success is thus predicated on perfect camouflage and complete passivity so as to preserve his cover. Technically then, sleepers can be classified as passive deep cover agents. However, not all deep cover agents are sleepers. If a deep cover agent commences to carry out his tasks immediately following his insertion, he is an active spy, not a sleeper. And any spy’s success is predicated on deception, on the ability to harmonize himself with the population of the targeted nation. Therefore, even an active deep cover agent must acquire, develop, and exploit many of the skills of a sleeper.

This is the case with the recently intercepted ten post-Soviets. They too needed to allow themselves to be absorbed by the unwitting host society. They patiently constructed their image to reflect the norms of the infiltrated nation. They further had to deceive their neighbors, friends, co-workers, and fellow students about their true identities to be able to legitimize themselves in their midst to carry out their long-range assignments. And that was, chiefly, to influence the targeted nation. Thus, with certain leeway, the term “sleepers of influence” can be applied to the spy ring.

At any rate, what we know about the culprits is rather sketchy. It comes from the indictment by the Justice Department and the press reports. They are necessarily incomplete for reasons of national security and journalistic bias. The picture is also inadequate because we must assume that anything the sleepers of influence have volunteered about themselves very well may be a lie. They are deceivers by definition. Therefore the following can prove inaccurate in places, and even flawed, and should be treated as a preliminary analysis based upon currently available information, extrapolation, and intuition.

The case against the sleepers of influence seems solid. The FBI had collected an impressive amount of incriminating material about their activities. The group was subordinated to the Foreign Intelligence Service (*Sluzhba Vneshnei Razvedki* -- SVR), the external arm of the post-KGB. The deep cover agents were spotters rather than recruiters. They identified individuals who could potentially become SVR collaborators. The spy net had operated at least for 10 years, and it has been under FBI counterintelligence surveillance for a minimum of 7 years. It is unclear whether America’s counterintelligence penetrated the net or turned one or more of its members. It is unknown how the FBI picked up the scent. Perhaps the CIA received a tip from its overseas sources. One possibility is the former Russian Federation intelligence officer and post-Soviet defector Sergei Tretyakov, who has been very loudly advertising his expertise on the case. That, however, suggests disinformation on the

¹ For the court filings see <http://www.scribd.com/doc/33676529/Criminal-Complaint-2>; <http://web.stratfor.com/images/northamerica/062810complaint1.pdf?fn=8916631445>; <http://web.stratfor.com/images/northamerica/062810complaint2.pdf?fn=2216631471>.

part of the American secret services.² Thus, thankfully, the evidence is too scarce to extrapolate anything about the origin of this particular FBI counterintelligence operation.

What we know is that the FBI officers eavesdropped, followed, photographed, and filmed the suspects. They also surreptitiously intercepted packages, secretly searched their homes, and broke the codes of the post-Soviet *agentura*. This concerned not only high tech communications but also the old-fashioned messages written in invisible ink. During one of the secret searches, the FBI discovered a serpentine password, carelessly dumped on a pile of papers on a desk, consisting of twenty-seven characters. This discovery allowed the US counterintelligence officers to access hundreds of secret computer files. They were further able to learn about a system of digitally hiding information by embedding them in images and pictures on web sites, a technique known as steganography, or “hidden writing.”³ The FBI also filmed so-called brush passes of money bags between agents and center liaisons at public places, like a train station in Brooklyn. The officers were able to intercept communications between post-Soviet spies on a secure short-distance wireless network designed for portable computer to computer contact. They even located a buried money cache on a field in Wurtzboro in upstate New York. American secret operators filmed meetings between the sleepers of influence and their handlers in Latin America. The US counterintelligence officers established that the Moscow center supported its agents financially, including tuition and mortgage payments.⁴ Moreover, the FBI uncovered and studied the post-Soviet methods of tradecraft. It identified couriers, collaborators, and targets, including the individuals slated to be deceived, exploited, and recruited. In other words, this was a counterintelligence operation *par excellence*, and a very valuable one at that.⁵

The operation revealed also that the spies were tasked primarily to act as agents of influence. They were instructed in a short run to acquire contacts in scientific and financial milieux, which would presumably translate into access to “policymaking circles” in a long haul. One objective was to build a net of influence among present and future American decision makers. Another intention was to gain access to the brilliant creators of new technologies and to prominent individuals in the realm of economics. It was correctly assumed that they would have influence over culture, politics, and philanthropy in the United

² J.J. Green, “Russian spies interested in Pres. Obama's desk,” and “Former spy warns U.S. about 'friends',” no date [30 June and 2 July 2010] <http://www.wtop.com/?nid=778&sid=1989344>.

³ Noah Shachtman, “FBI: Spies Hid Secret Messages on Public Websites,” 29 June 2010, <http://www.wired.com/dangerroom/2010/06/alleged-spies-hid-secret-messages-on-public-websites/>; Trudy Walsh, „Alleged agents hid messages in plain sight in digital photos,” Government Computer News, 1 July 2010, http://gcn.com/Articles/2010/07/01/Russian-spies-used-steganography-to-transmit-messages.aspx?s=gcndaily_020710&p=1; Michael Hardy, “Were alleged Russian spies undone by technology problems? Password security needed improvement, too,” Government Computer News, 1 July 2010, <http://gcn.com/articles/2010/07/01/russian-spies-undone-by-technology-problems.aspx>.

⁴ Scott Shane and Charlie Savage, “In Ordinary Lives, U.S. Sees the Work of Russian Agents,” *The New York Times*, 28 June 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/29/world/europe/29spy.html?hp=&adxnml=1&adxnmlx=1277809534-j68u6bamHdCORXdpJrKVjg&pagewanted=print>; Tom Hays and Pete Yost, “NY case alleges Russian snooping by 10 agents,” 30 June 2010, Associated Press, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/us_doj_russia_arrests.

⁵ Fred Burton and Ben West, “The Dismantling of a Suspected Russian Intelligence Operation,” Stratfor.com, 1 July 2010, <http://app.response.stratfor.com/e/es.aspx?s=1483&e=58194&elq=1783093f97634c158e1a5f30b4f22acb>; Walter Pincus, “FBI spent nearly decade pursuing spy suspects in bid to gain counterintelligence,” *The Washington Post*, 3 July 2010. And more broadly see Raymond J. Batvinis, *The Origins of FBI Counterintelligence* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2007).

States. Still another task was to infiltrate and manipulate student organizations in places like Washington, DC. Long-range objectives were at stake.⁶

Most spies were arrested in several localities in the geographic corridor between Massachusetts and Virginia, on Sunday, 27 June. Eleven persons were seized: ten in the US and one in Cyprus.⁷ The latter had served as the money man: “Christopher Robert Metsos” bore a Canadian passport. But in 1994 he studied at Norwich University in Northfield, Vermont, as a Columbian citizen. The Cypriot Greek authorities freed him on bail, and he promptly disappeared. The Cypriots have explained that their police did not shadow Metsos because it would infringe upon his human rights. Earlier, they allowed his girlfriend to leave the island without interrogating her. The authorities have claim that the Americans were to blame because the US failed to supply appropriate information about Metsos underscoring the gravity of this case. However, the explanation is rather disingenuous. Cyprus is a well-known post-Soviet Mecca. The post-Soviets dominate its finances, tourism, entertainment, and media. Tens of thousands of them dwell their in colonies of holiday homes. They are prominent in the economy of the island. Further, the President of Cyprus, Dimitris Christofias, is a life-long Communist with a Soviet doctorate in history from the Institute of Social Sciences and the Academy of Social Sciences in Moscow. Little wonder that Metsos was able to vanish with impunity.⁸ But his comrades are safely behind bars in the US.

Most of the prisoners are American citizens or legal residents in this country. However, aside from Metsos, three other spies claimed to be Canadians: “Patricia Mills,” “Tracey Lee Ann Foley,” and “Donald Howard Heathfiled.”⁹ Upon her arrest, the Canadian Patricia Mills confessed that she was Russian and her real name was “Natalia Pereverzeva.” Perhaps. Her “husband” Michael Zotolli, who co-habitated with her in Alexandria, Virginia, and pretended to be an American, also revealed himself as Mikhail Kutzik, a Russian citizen. Maybe so. At any rate, the couple has two little children, which may have influenced their confession. Before moving to Alexandria, they lived in Seattle, where they attended at least

⁶ This is nothing new. For example, the Soviet spy outfit run by Columbia University’s anthropology professor Mark Zborowski concentrated on infiltrating Trotskyite groups in the United States. The aim was to disintegrate and neutralize Communist competition. See John Earl Haynes, Harvey Klehr, and Alexander Vassiliev, *Spies: The Rise and Fall of the KGB in America* (New Haven, CT, and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 479-481.

⁷ Tom Hays and Pete Yost, “NY case alleges Russian snooping by 10 agents,” 30 June 2010, Associated Press, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/us_doj_russia_arrests; Jane Rosenberg, “The Spy Next Door: Tri-Staters Charged as Russian Agents,” 28 June 2010, NBC News New York, <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local-beat/The-Spy-Next-Door-Tri-Staters-Charged-wiith-Espionage-for-Russia-97334329.html>; Jason Ryan and Megan Chuchmach, “Russian Spy Ring Suspects Busted! 10 Alleged Secret Agents Arrested in U.S.,” ABC News, 28 June 2010, <http://abcnews.go.com/print?id=11037360>; Charlie Savage, “U.S. Arrests 10 on Charges of Being Agents for Russia,” *The New York Times*, 28 June 2010.

⁸ Menelaos Hadjicostis And Christopher Torchia, “Cyprus hunts for alleged Russian spy paymaster,” Associated Press, 1 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100701/ap_on_re_eu/eu_cyprus_russia_spy_arrests; Tom Hays and Menelaos Hadjicostis, “Suspect in Russian spy ring vanishes in Cyprus,” Associated Press, 1 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100701/ap_on_re_us/us_russia_spy_arrests;_ylt=Ar2.evSNA4wV0_vpm5tEuJVnhVID;_ylu=X3oDMTNhNGg2N3ZmBGFzc2V0A2FwLzlwMTAwNzAxL3VzX3J1c3NpYV9zcHlfYXJyZXN0cwRjY29kZQNtb3N0cG9wdWxhcGRjcG9zAzMEcG9zAzMEc2VjA3luX3RvcF9zdG9yaWVzBHNsawNzdXNwZWNoaW5ydXM-; Menelaos Hadjicostis, “Cyprus official: Russian spy has fled island,” Associated Press, 2 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100702/ap_on_re_eu/eu_cyprus_russia_spy_arrests; http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100704/ap_on_re_eu/eu_cyprus_the_paymaster.

⁹ “U.S. says alleged Russian spies posed as Canadians in bid to penetrate Washington,” *The Canadian Press*, 28 June 2010.

one class in finances at the University of Washington and showed themselves to be doting parents.¹⁰

Alumnus of the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, Andrey Bezrukov aka Donald Heathfield stole the identity of a Montreal Canadian who died as an infant in 1963.¹¹ Elena Vavilova aka Tracey Foley claimed she was a naturalized American citizen born in Canada. But she also used a fake British passport at least once for a trip to Moscow.¹² Foley worked as a real estate agent. This both solidified her cover and afforded her access to chi-chi clientele in the Boston area. She posed with Heathfield as a married couple with two teenage sons. They lived in Cambridge, Massachusetts, strategically located near Harvard and MIT to facilitate their task to acquire information about new technologies. In fact, their focus was futurology. Heathfield was a partner in a think tank devoted to such problems: TechCast. He also ran his own consulting company: Future Map. The Foley-Heathfield team was interested primarily in individuals germinating bold technological ideas in the private sector. However, Heathfield also milked a US government employee for information on nuclear weapons systems. Self-advertising and networking were the most important key for the duo.¹³

Meanwhile, another “American,” Lydia Guryev aka “Cynthia Murphy,” lived in Montclair, New Jersey. Together with her husband Vladimir Guryev aka “Richard Murphy,” they projected a suburban dream existence of a professional couple. In 2000, Cynthia Murphy graduated with a BA in finances from New York University, and in 2010 she earned an MBA at Columbia University. While at the Business School, the spy attempted to befriend fellow students who considered making the CIA their career choice. She also probed her professors as potential recruitment targets. Using her Columbia affiliation, Murphy endeavored to ensnare a prominent financier, Alan Patricof, who is a good friend of Bill and Hillary

¹⁰ Liz Robbins, “Like Father, Like Daughter: The Spy Saga Continues,” *The New York Times*, 2 July 2010; Kathleen Miller, “Prosecutors: 2 Spy Suspects Admit Using Fake Names,” AOL News, 2 July 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/prosecutors-say-2-spy-suspects-admit-they-are-russians-using-fake-names/19540747>; Mary Gay, “Alleged Russian Spies Ensnared by Facebook Too,” AOL News, 30 June 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nc/article/more-details-of-alleged-russian-spies-double-lives-emerge/19537373>.

¹¹ Tom Hays and Menelaos Hadjicostis, “Suspect in Russian spy ring vanishes in Cyprus,” Associated Press, 1 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100701/ap_on_re_us/us_russia_spy_arrests;_ylt=Ar2.evSNA4wV0_vpm5tEuJVnhVID;_ylu=X3oDMTNhNGg2N3ZmBGFzc2V0A2FwLzIwMTAwNzAxL3VzX3J1c3NpYV9zcHlfYXJyZXN0cwRjY29kZQNtb3N0cG9wdWxhcGRjcG9zAzMEcG9zAzMEc2VjA3luX3RvcF9zdG9yaWVzBHNsawNzdXNwZWNoaW5ydXM-

¹² Matthew Weaver and Luke Harding, “Anna Chapman's cover story unravels: British firms deny knowledge of alleged Russian spy working for them, apart from one employer, which challenges CV details,” *The Guardian*, 30 June 2010; Jenny Percival, “MI5 investigates activities of Russian 'spies' in Britain,” *The Guardian*, 2 July 2010.

¹³ Scott Shane and Charlie Savage, “In Ordinary Lives, U.S. Sees the Work of Russian Agents,” *The New York Times*, 28 June 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/29/world/europe/29spy.html?hp=&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1277809534-j68u6bamHdCQRXdpJrKVjg&pagewanted=print>; Paul Sonne, Cassell Bryan-Low and Aparajita Saha-Bubna, “Spying as Networking,” *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 June 2010, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703426004575338841496481902.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLETopStories.

Clinton.¹⁴ Cynthia and Richard Murphy understood America very well. They managed to talk the Moscow center into buying them a house to strengthen their cover “in a society that values home ownership.” The Murphy couple emulated their neighbors. They showered their children with love. They barbecued, and gardened avidly. They even participated in neighborhood cook-outs, including for the 4th of July. Cynthia lied to her neighbors that her accent was Belgian, so as to appear more acceptable, more Western, and to deflect suspicion. In other words, the Murphys played regular Americans very well. Yet, their secret activities were most closely related to regular spying. The center expected them to supply information on such topics as the war in Afghanistan or nuclear disarmament negotiations with Russia. The dearth of information about Richard Murphy suggests that his activities may have impacted America’s national security seriously (or, alternatively, that he was turned by the FBI). However, it was the carelessness of the Murphys that allowed the FBI to acquire the password and computer files during secret searches. One would expect them to be more professional than other of their comrades in the spy ring.¹⁵

“Mikhail Semenko” was even more careless. Active in the environs of the Pereverzeva-Kutsik duo in northern Virginia, the spy apparently operated under his own name. He pretended however to be an aspiring Russian emigrant on a work visa. Semenko was employed with a travel agency, whose boss was Slava Shirokov, his old friend from the Amur State University. Both graduated in Sinology. Semenko subsequently spent a few years in China and then moved to study in the US. He earned a double MA, in international relations and Asian studies at Seton Hall University (2005-2008). Meanwhile, he also completed a course in Chinese language and culture at the Harbin Technical University. However, Semenko failed to conduct himself like an average travel agent. Instead, he carried on like a boisterous youth. The spy showed off with his black Mercedes. He showed off his command of five languages. Semenko frequented society functions, fashionable parties, and diplomatic receptions. He blatantly advertised himself on Facebook¹⁶ and LinkedIn¹⁷; he

¹⁴ Dan Mangan, “Accused Russian spy Cynthia Murphy tried to recruit Columbia profs, students,” *The New York Post*, 1 July 2010, http://www.nypost.com/p/news/local/kremlin_ring_MATedSSV1hGx1xr7UfvqpM; Michael Roston, “Grad School a Novel Way for Spies to Enter US,” AOL News, 2 July 2010,” <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/grad-school-gave-russian-spy-suspect-mikhail-semenko-legal-entry-to-us/19540035>.

¹⁵ Scott Shane and Charlie Savage, “In Ordinary Lives, U.S. Sees the Work of Russian Agents,” *The New York Times*, 28 June 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/06/29/world/europe/29spy.html?hp=&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1277809534-j68u6bamHdCQRXdpJrKVjg&pagewanted=print>; Samantha Henry, Pete Yost, and David B. Caruso, “Spy suspects had interests in science, finance,” Associated Press, 30 June 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100630/ap_on_re_us/us_doj_russia_arrests; Mara Gay, “Life Interrupted for Children of Accused Spies,” AOL News, 2 July 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/life-interrupted-for-children-of-accused-russian-spies/19540398>; Mary Gay, “Alleged Russian Spies Ensnared by Facebook Too,” AOL News, 30 June 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nc/article/more-details-of-alleged-russian-spies-double-lives-emerge/19537373>.

¹⁶ Michael Roston, “Grad School a Novel Way for Spies to Enter US,” AOL News, 2 July 2010,” <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/grad-school-gave-russian-spy-suspect-mikhail-semenko-legal-entry-to-us/19540035>; “The Facebook Adventures of Accused Russian Spy Mikhail Semenko,” <http://gawker.com/5575882/the-facebook-adventures-of-accused-russian-spy-mikhail-semenko>; Mary Gay, “Alleged Russian Spies Ensnared by Facebook Too,” AOL News, 30 June 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nc/article/more-details-of-alleged-russian-spies-double-lives-emerge/19537373>.

¹⁷ <http://www.linkedin.com/in/mikhailsemenko>.

blogged avidly about China's economy.¹⁸ In other words, the spy behaved brazenly as any other American twenty-something. This was a great way to camouflage one's activities. Yet, he fell for an FBI provocation which directed him to pass on falsified documents to an accomplice.

Anna Kushchenko aka "Anna Chapman" aka "Irine Kutsov" has a similar profile to Semenko, including her immigration status. She triggered the final destruction of the spy ring by the FBI. Chapman was caught in a sting. An American counterintelligence officer posing as a post-Soviet diplomat from the consulate in New York dispatched her with a fake passport to another member of the spy net. Chapman initially had agreed to deliver the item but then balked and contacted her father, Vasilii Kushchenko, most likely an SVR operative, who told her to turn the passport over to the police.¹⁹ She followed the instructions to deceive the American authorities which shadowed her to prevent her from catching a plane to Moscow. Anna even discarded a compromised cell phone in a public place to lose their tail, all to no avail.²⁰ She was arrested within a day. As for Vasilii Kushchenko, he most likely operates under diplomatic cover, a few years ago in Zimbabwe, for example. Anna's ex-husband the Brit Alex Chapman claims that his former father-in-law used to serve in the KGB.²¹

We know relatively much about Anna Chapman. First, she was perhaps the most brazen of the spies; second, the least careful; and third, the most attractive. Last but not least, fourth, she had an English husband, who is talking. Let's focus on her, because, through her example, we can appreciate the art of training and covering an agent. Let's remember that, at the moment, it is impossible to ascertain the truth about some elements of her biography. It seems that her real name is Anna Kushchenko. She is twenty-eight. A daughter of a Communist secret policeman, she attended the Russian University of the Friendship of the Peoples. She claims to have studied economics there between 1999 and 2005. However, elsewhere she confirms that she was married at the time and living in England. She got married at nineteen, became a British subject, and divorced at twenty-four in 2006. Afterwards she returned briefly to Russia. There is no proof that she spied in Great Britain, but this possibility cannot be excluded. Naturally, it is difficult to expect clean intentions from anyone related to the KGB. In this context, one should keep in mind the allegations that

¹⁸ <http://chinaeconomytoday.wordpress.com/>.

¹⁹ Larry Neumeister, "Lawyer: NY spy suspect's dad told her to see cops," Associated Press, 3 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100703/ap_on_re_us/us_russia_spy_arrests_chapman;_ylt=Aj3pUOjuRaSVPJo9ry7G9QIV6w8F;_ylu=X3oDMTNpYWM5dWJvBGFzc2V0A2FwLzIwMTAwNzAzL3VzX3Jlc3NpYV9zcHlfYXJyZXN0c19jaGFwbWFuBGNjb2RIA21vc3Rwb3B1bGFyBGNwb3MDMQRwb3MDMQRzZWMDDeW5fdG9wX3N0b3JpZXMEc2xrA2xhd3llcm55c3B5cw--.

²⁰ "FBI Busts Russian Spies: Feds: Covert agents caught using old school, high-tech spycraft," 28 June 2010, <http://www.thesmokinggun.com/archive/years/2010/0628101spy1.html>.

²¹ Andy Bloxham and Gordon Rayner, "MI5 investigates KGB father of Russian 'spy'," The Daily Telegraph, 1 July 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/7866823/MI5-investigates-KGB-father-of-Russian-spy.html>.

Kushchenko frequented a posh London night club to introduce herself to princes William and Harry. Fantasy or orders?²²

Having moved to New York in 2007, Anna Chapman quite unabashedly maintained a high profile. She infiltrated the White Russian milieu, attending charitable balls thrown cyclically by Count Andrei Tolstoy Moloslavski.²³ She maintained a profile both on Facebook²⁴ and LinkedIn.²⁵ The spy boasted of her contacts in the world of finances. She painted herself as an expert at investing in the US and Russia. Chapman ran her own company specializing in real estate listings.²⁶ The firm seriously underperformed until last year's infusion of cash from a mysterious source, most likely the Moscow center. Chapman's projected sense of impunity was shocking. She either falsified or padded her resume. The spy spuriously bragged about her affiliation with a variety of companies in Great Britain. They either deny any knowledge of her or clarify her exaggerations. For example, she worked for NetJets Europe as an executive assistant for a little longer than a month. But Chapman listed her employment there as having lasted over a year, selling jet planes to Russia. Barclays either never heard of her, or had her tend to small business accounts for a short time. Other businesses would not comment. It is still too early to tell fact from fiction.

Anna Chapman made a perfect honey pot, or an agent of seduction, who could milk her prey for information in exchange for sex or its prospect. Was she trained as a honey pot? We do not know. Intercepted emails indicate, however, that at the end of her ride as an agent, Chapman became vulnerable. She confided to her ex-husband that she regretted not only her abortion, which destroyed their marriage, but also other choices she made in her life. Now she sits in solitary confinement.²⁷

Arguably, "Juan Jose Lazaro" and his "wife" "Vicky Peleaz" are the most prominent among the captured agents. She was born in Peru, he in Uruguay, even though he carries a Peruvian passport in addition to an American one. As a child, he lived in the Soviet Union,

²² "Russia spy suspect's ex-husband says 'she changed'," Agence France Presse, 2 July 2010, [http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100702/wl_uk_afp/ussrussiabritainspyarrestechapman;_ylt=An6tbeJnjo4B44QM_pom_99vaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTM1MnRhM204BGFzc2V0A2FmcC8yMDEwMDcwMi91c3J1c3NpYWJyaXRhaW5zcHlhcjRjaGFwWFuBHBvewM4BHNiYwN5bl9hcnRpY2xlX3N1bW1hcnlfbGlzdARzbGsDcnVzc2lhc3B5c3Vz](http://news.yahoo.com/s/afp/20100702/wl_uk_afp/ussrussiabritainspyarrestechapman;_ylt=An6tbeJnjo4B44QM_pom_99vaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTM1MnRhM204BGFzc2V0A2FmcC8yMDEwMDcwMi91c3J1c3NpYWJyaXRhaW5zcHlhcjRjaGFwWFuBHBvewM4BHNiYwN5bl9hcnRpY2xlX3N1bW1hcnlfbGlzdARzbGsDcnVzc2lhc3B5c3Vz;); "Russian spy suspect Anna Chapman 'tried to meet princes in London'," Metro.co.uk, 4 July 2010, <http://www.metro.co.uk/news/833932-russian-spy-suspect-anna-chapman-tried-to-meet-princes-in-london>.

²³ Paul Sonne, Cassell Bryan-Low and Aparajita Saha-Bubna, „Spying as Networking," *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 June 2010, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703426004575338841496481902.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLETopStories.

²⁴ Mary Gay, "Alleged Russian Spies Ensnared by Facebook Too," AOL News, 30 June 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nc/article/more-details-of-alleged-russian-spies-double-lives-emerge/19537373>.

²⁵ <http://www.linkedin.com/in/chapmananna>

²⁶ <http://www.domdot.ru/>

²⁷ Matthew Weaver and Luke Harding, "Anna Chapman's cover story unravels: British firms deny knowledge of alleged Russian spy working for them, apart from one employer, which challenges CV details," *The Guardian*, 30 June 2010; Gordon Rayner and Andy Bloxham, "Russian spy suspect Anna Chapman: I regret life I've chosen," *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/7868978/Russian-spy-suspect-Anna-Chapman-I-regret-life-Ive-chosen.html>; Paul Sonne, Cassell Bryan-Low and Aparajita Saha-Bubna, „Spying as Networking," *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 June 2010, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703426004575338841496481902.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLETopStories.

reportedly in Siberia. It seems that his parents were Communists who fled their native land in the wake of a failed revolution or a spy affair. Both Lazaro and Peleaz are Russian citizens, even though they denied it.²⁸ Both traveled to Latin America to meet their Moscow handlers and bring the funds for the spy ring. Lazaro is a radical scholar. He studied at the New School of Social Studies in New York. He briefly taught Latin American and Caribbean politics at Baruch College. The agent of influence spewed anti-American propaganda to the rejoicing of his leftist students. Hugo Chavez was his shining hero, and the architects of American foreign policy were his whipping boys. That would make him a mainstream academic if it were not for the poor quality of his scholarship. According to Dean Thomas Halper of the Political Science Department of Baruch College, Lazaro flunked his assessment and was fired after a single semester. One of the very few scholarly publications to his name reveals him as a Marxist feminist, a fierce ideologue of the revolution, perfectly at home with “gender studies.”²⁹ Nonetheless, leftist radicalism in American academia was an excellent cover for a spy, and Lazaro did not even have to pretend to be someone else. It served him very well until his capture. Nota bene, upon his arrest, the spy was the first one to admit that he was an operative of the post-Soviet intelligence and that Lazaro is just a pseudonym.³⁰

The Peruvian Peleaz was editor of *El Diario-La Prensa*, New York’s largest Spanish language newspaper. Its slant is liberal. It purports to speak on behalf of the illegal and legal immigrant community. It usually supports Democratic politicians; it endorsed Barack Obama for President. In her punditry, Peleaz fashionably skewered the United States and the free market. For example, she liked to compare the American penitentiary system to that of apartheid South Africa and, of course, Nazi Germany. Somehow she was not bothered by Cuba’s jails, nor the Soviet Gulag or the Chinese *laogai*. Arizona became the latest target of Peleaz’s vituperations on the account of its alleged “racism” for having passed legislation which made the state less friendly to illegal aliens. A suspicious thought has crossed one’s mind that Peleaz perhaps combined her day job with her primary mission to influence the American public. Thus, it has been suggested that it is possible that her latest journalistic assault may have been inspired by the Cuban secret police, which is seriously concerned about the integrity and durability of its channel to smuggle drugs and illegal aliens into the US via Arizona. It is an interesting extrapolation, but one without any proof. Be it as it may, the

²⁸ Carl Schreck, “Spy Ring: Why Moscow Admit the Suspects Were Russian?” *Time*, 2 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/time/20100702/wl_time/08599200084200;_ylt=AiMzWwDcb5Dzt8y7MvJhtt9vaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTJtaDFyOXViBGFzc2V0A3RpbWUvMjAxMDA3MDIvMDg1OTkyMDAwODQyMDAECG9zAzMzBHNIYwN5b19hcnRyY2xIX3N1bW1hcnlfGldARzbGsDc3B5cmluZ3doeW1v.

²⁹ Juan Lazaro, „Women and Political Violence in Contemporary Peru,” in *Women and Revolution: Global Expressions*, ed. by M.J. Diamond (Norwell, MA., and Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kulwert Academic Publishers, 1998), 291-314.

³⁰ Gordon Rayner and Andy Bloxham, “Russian spy suspect Anna Chapman: I regret life I’ve chosen,” *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 July 2010, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/7868978/Russian-spy-suspect-Anna-Chapman-I-regret-life-Ive-chosen.html>; Jerry Markon, “Spy suspect is released on bail, two are detained,” *The Washington Post*, 2 July 2010, http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/07/01/AR2010070100504.html?wpisrc=nl_politics.

judge failed to be convinced by the evidence mustered by the FBI that Peleaz was dangerous, and freed her on bail.³¹

What will happen to the apprehended spies? None were charged with spying. They face 5 years in jail as unregistered agents of a foreign power. The charge of money laundering is much more serious, and carries a sentence of up to 20 years. If the accused had registered as lobbyists, they would face no charges. For what they did was truly lobbying and, alas, that is a run of the mill phenomenon in the United States.

America's public perception of this imbroglio is that the Russian sleepers of influence caused no serious harm. Further, the Obama administration aims at good relations with Russia. That suggests that Washington and Moscow will endeavor to find a political solution to the problem. There has already been at least one high-level meeting to address this issue. Both sides appear ready to tackle it amicably.

Initially, following their apprehension, some post-Soviet media and commentators, of course, denied any spy activities and any Russian government involvement.³² The Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin accused the US of reverting to Cold War ways, and rejected the American charges of spying. Thus, we were treated to a standard (post-) Soviet denial and deception dance. But in a departure from the past practice, Moscow admitted that the persons seized by the FBI were citizens of the Russian Federation. The Kremlin tacitly acknowledged the validity of the charges against its spies, but sought to trivialize the gravity and the extent of the damage wrought by them on America (which, incidentally, is in tune with some of the commentary in the US media).³³

What will happen next? Generally, the illegals operate without diplomatic immunity. When they are caught, they have to rely on themselves, unless their superiors have something to offer to the other side. For example, in 1962, the Soviets swapped Francis Gary Powers, who piloted the U2 spy plane downed by the Soviets, for Colonel Vilyam Fischer aka Rudolf Abel, who served as an illegal, deep cover agent against the US until caught by the FBI.

It was not immediately clear whether there were any American assets imprisoned in Russia and available for trade for the Russian spies held in the US. One wondered whether perhaps one could swap the latter for the kleptocratic oligarch Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the West's unexpected human rights' cause célèbre imprisoned in the Gulag. Then rumors surfaced that Moscow would like to exchange its spies for Igor Sutyagin, an academic

³¹ Humberto Fontova, "Why We Should Care About the Arrests Of the Russian 'Illegals'," 29 June 2010, <http://bigjournalism.com/hfontova/2010/06/29/why-we-should-care-about-the-arrests-of-the-russian-illegals/>; "SVR Illegals Vicky Peleaz and Juan Lazaro," CI & CT News, 29 June 2010, <http://cicentre.net/wordpress/index.php/2010/06/29/2009-article-written-by-svr-spy-vicky-pelaez-re-illegal-immigrants-must-organize/>; Jonathan Bandler and Jorge Fitz-Gibbon, "Yonkers couple in spy case face bail hearing today," 1 July 2010, <http://www.lohud.com/article/20100701/NEWS02/7010365/Yonkers-couple-in-spy-case-face-bail-hearing-today>.

³² "Russia media slams 'unconvincing' spy scandal," Agence France Presse, 30 June 2010, http://www.breitbart.com/article.php?id=CNG.6e39b4356db3f9767b7dd94f29693e41.2f1&show_article=1; Carl Schreck, "Spy Ring: Why Moscow Admit the Suspects Were Russian?" *Time*, 2 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/time/20100702/wl_time/08599200084200;_ylt=AiMzWwDcb5Dzt8y7MvJhtt9vaA8F;_ylu=X3oDMTJtaDFyOXViBGFzc2V0A3RpbWUvMjAxMDA3MDIvMDg1OTkyMDAwODQyMDAECG9zAzMzBHNiYwN5b19hcnRyY2xlX3N1bW1hcnlfbGlzdARzbGsDc3B5cmluZ3doeW1v.

³³ Vladimir Isachenkov, "Russia FM: US arrest of spies a Cold War Throwback," 29 June 2010, Associated Press, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100629/ap_on_re_eu/eu_russia_us_arrests; Evan Perez and Richard Boudreaux, "Putin Rips Russian Spy Bust," *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 June 2010, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704103904575337041000860662.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_MIDDLETopStories.

researcher who, in 2004, was sentenced to 14 years for working as an open source free lance consultant on Russia's nuclear weapons system for a British company alleged to have been a CIA front. Sutyagin's family claimed that there were other candidates for exchange.³⁴ There were indeed.

On July 8, 2010, after less than two weeks in US custody, all participants in the SVR sleeper of influence spy ring pleaded guilty and were immediately deported to Russia via Austria.³⁵ The Kremlin, in turn, pardoned and released to the West the following Russians: Igor Sutyagin, Gennady Vasilenko, Alexander Zaporozhsky, and Sergei Skripal. In 1997, Zaporozhsky, a former colonel in the SVR, retired in the US and was suspected of consulting for America's secret services. He foolishly visited Russia, where he was put on trial and, in 2003, sentenced to 18 years for spying for the CIA. Skripal served as a colonel in the military intelligence (GRU) but was turned by the British MI6, exposed in 2006, and sentenced to 13 years. Vasilenko was a major in the KGB operating undercover as a journalist in Latin America. Suspected of having been turned by the CIA, he was arrested in Cuba and brought back home in 1988. In fact, Vasilenko was a "developmental" agent, a candidate who had not fully committed himself yet. He regained his freedom after the implosion of the USSR in 1991, worked in corporate security for foreign companies with his former CIA contact, but, in 2005, he was rearrested, tried, and found guilty on weapons charges and for resisting authorities. This most likely indicates that the Kremlin's internal security arm, the FSB, was unable to tie him to any spy activities.³⁶ Ultimately, then, in exchange for ten Russians spying for Moscow, we received four Russians who are alleged to have worked for Washington.

Spying against the United States will persist until the end of days. Russia will continue on no matter what. The lessons from this affair are straightforward and simple. The Cold War is over. However, this alters the proactive attitude neither toward the opportunity to capture the secrets of a foreign state nor toward the possibility to influence its policies, society, economy, and culture. Further, the post-Soviet secret police remains as a largely unreconstructed relic of totalitarianism, including its anti-American venom. As Professor Paul Goble has quipped, there is no ex-KGB any more than there exists an ex-German shepherd.

³⁴ Khristina Narizhnaya and Vladimir Isachenkov, "Russia, United States Working Out a Spy Swap?" Associated Press, 7 July 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/world/article/russian-spy-case-spy-swap-between-united-states-and-russia/19544928?icid=main/htmlws-main-w/dl1/link3/http%3A%2F%2Fwww.aolnews.com%2Fworld%2Farticle%2Frussian-spy-case-spy-swap-between-united-states-and-russia%2F19544928>; "Moscow 'offers former Russian colonel and nuclear expert to U.S. in Cold War-style spy swap to bring Anna Chapman home'," *The Daily Mail*, 8 July 2010, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/worldnews/article-1292745/Russia-offers-spy-swap-U-S--deal-place-Britain.html#ixzz0t4NBVqNR>; "Factbox: Candidates for possible U.S.-Russia spy swap," Reuters, 8 July 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE66726720100708>.

³⁵ Larry Neumeister and Tom Hays, "10 Russian Spies Deported After NY Guilty Pleas," Associated Press, 8 July 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/russian-spy-suspects-in-court-ahead-of-expected-swap/19547042>; Peter Baker and Benjamin Weiser, "Spy Suspects Leave U.S. in Swap With Russia," *The New York Times*, 9 July 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/10/world/europe/10russia.html?_r=1&src=un&feedurl=http%3A%2F%2Fjson8.nytimes.com%2Farchive%2F.

³⁶ Larry Neumeister and Tom Hays, "10 Russian Spies Deported After NY Guilty Pleas," Associated Press, 8 July 2010, <http://www.aolnews.com/nation/article/russian-spy-suspects-in-court-ahead-of-expected-swap/19547042>; James Risen, "F.B.I. Spy Case May Explain Arrest of a K.G.B. Agent," *The New York Times*, 7 March 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/03/07/national/07SPY.html?pagewanted=1?pagewanted=1>; Peter Baker and Benjamin Weiser, "Spy Suspects Leave U.S. in Swap With Russia," *The New York Times*, 9 July 2010, http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/10/world/europe/10russia.html?_r=1&src=un&feedurl=http%3A%2F%2Fjson8.nytimes.com%2Farchive%2F; "Russian president pardons 4 spies for swap with US," Associated Press, 8 July 2010, http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap/20100709/ap_on_re_eu/eu_russia_spy_arrests_kremlin.

Because the Russians in their spy games employ the Soviet modus operandi, we must continue to study the history of the Soviet Union and Russia, with a particular emphasis on its police practices. And let's keep in mind that the current rulers of the Kremlin like to refer to themselves with pride as "We, the Chekists." They just can't help themselves but spy.

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