

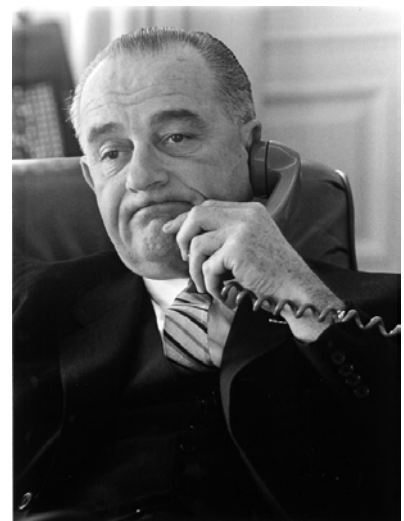


Cold War Times

The Internet Newsletter for the Cold War Museum
And Cold War Veterans Association

January / February 2003

The Tumultuous Year 1968



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On the Cover: Official U.S. Navy photo of USS Pueblo, seized by North Korea in Jan. 1968 and U.S. President Lyndon Johnson (photo from LBJ Presidential Library).

About the Cold War Museum

Founded in 1996 by Francis Gary Powers, Jr. and John C. Welch, the Cold War Museum is dedicated to preserving Cold War history and honoring Cold War Veterans.

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Cold War Museum Update

Bill Craig, Contributing Editor

EIGHT NATIONS SALUTE COLD WAR MUSEUM

Eight Eastern European nations saluted the Cold War Museum December 17 at a reception in the Romanian embassy in Washington, where Ambassador Sorin Ducaru presented a piece of the ruined Communist headquarters in Bucharest and archival material to Gary Powers, Jr., Museum founder.

The event was sponsored by the Embassies of Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia. A large crowd from the diplomatic community in Washington also witnessed Power's presentation to the ambassador of a medallion bearing the design of a statue dedicated to disarmament standing outside of the United Nations in New York.

Ambassador Ducaru saluted Gary Powers for his idea of establishing a Cold War Museum and paid tribute to the people of Eastern Europe whose deep-rooted belief in liberty, free enterprise and freedom of expression survived totalitarian Communism and made possible the events of 1989 that ended the Cold War. He said a generation in that part of the world believed that at one time there had been a "different, nobler time" in their countries. He said the idea of a geopolitical clash between East and West never took root among ordinary people, despite the efforts of Communist governments.

"History has proven that such an artificial utopian construction cannot go against the normal evolution of history," he said. Striving for liberty, for prosperity through free enterprise, for truth, and for freedom of expressing the truth is what made possible the changes in 1989 in their part of the world and in part of the Soviet Union.

The ambassador noted that President Bush in his recent trip to Bucharest stood at the site of the former Communist party headquarters where in December 1989 the square was filled with people confronting the Romanian dictatorship. He said that in the long term freedom and truth always prevail against dictatorship and suppression.

“This is what the Cold War Museum should symbolize,” he said, adding that the museum should be a place where future generations should come to learn about the Cold War years and make sure that such events are never repeated.

Dr. Eberhard Koelsch, Deputy Chief of Mission at the German embassy, recalled the dramatic events of 1989 that he witnessed first-hand, as thousands of East Germans abandoned their homes and sought refuge in the West after the border between Hungary and Austria was opened.

“Tonight is about the Cold War in general,” he said, “a period in history we should not forget so that we can better appreciate the freedom and absence of fear that we enjoy today...”

Dr. Koelsch said the most moving experience he had had in more than 30 years as a diplomat came in May 1989 when Hungarian soldiers started taking down the barbed wire between Hungary and Austria. East Germans could travel to Hungary and started fleeing. In September 1989 there was a new flood into West German missions. As the world watched on television, people crowded into the embassy in Prague. He said he witnessed unforgettable sights: the center of the city was clogged with 1,500 Trabant automobiles that had been abandoned; furniture was removed from the German mission and it was turned into temporary housing with bunks five layers high for the crowd of refugees that overflowed into the garden. He accompanied trainloads of refugees to the West. He said no one at that time would have believed that Germany would be unified just one year later.

Dr. Vladimir Tismaneanu, Professor of Government and Politics at the University of Maryland, painted a broad historical picture of the Cold War, its basis, and the factors that brought about its end. He quoted his wife’s comment that young people they are teaching today have no memory of what the Cold War was.

“The revolutions of 1989 put an end not only to Leninism and Stalinism,” he said, “but also to the division of the world into antagonistic, ideologically-based military and political blocs. They were revolutions against Yalta...” He rebuffed the argument by some revisionist historians that the West was equally responsible for starting the Cold War. “It is the Soviet

Union that started the Cold War,” he emphasized. “It is not the response of the United States and the West that started [it].”

He said the main goal of the Communist regimes was the stifling of civil society for what they called the new man, that the regimes were rooted in duplicity and engaged in destructive warfare against their own populations in the name of building up a perfect, so-called classless society. He said Leninism was nothing but ideological justification for Soviet imperial expansion.

The year 1989 was a remarkable one, he noted, when regimes that seemed immutable and destined to last for years came tumbling down. He said it did not happen as the result of some lucky arrangements of events, but was a grand failure of Communism that had nothing further to offer. He praised Western support from human rights groups and the AFL-CIO labor union, and Western leaders who kept pressure on the Soviets to abandon militaristic adventures in the Third World. He said the Gorbachev doctrine was also a factor that permitted the playing out of the historical drama—the demise of “the Old Order based on the fanatical attempt to alter human nature in the name of mythological fantasies.”

Dr. Tismaneanu said he hoped that the Museum would remember the dead who gave their lives over the years for causes such as the popular uprisings in Berlin and Budapest. He said Cold War history is not just a chamber of horrors, but is about heroes, about resistance, about many other things; that the museum should not be just about the atrocities of Communism.

Other gifts presented to Powers by Ambassador Ducaru included 11,000 pages of microfilmed archives from the Communist era in Romania detailing the “trial” of leaders involved in the Hungarian uprising of 1956, and the first issues of the newspaper *Truth* issued in 1989 and 1990.

In his closing remarks, Powers described the progress of the Museum and made a request for continued donations of memorabilia from the Cold War years, noting that donations are tax free.

A Few Words from the Editor...

The year 1968 was a very difficult year for the United States, to say the least: the seizure of *USS Pueblo*, the Tet Offensive, and assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, just to name a few events. The short article “1968 – A Tumultuous Year” provides an overview of these and other events that occurred in 1968. In a re-print from an earlier CWT issue, Contributing Editor Bill Craig examines *USS Pueblo*’s capture by the North Koreans in January 1968 and the imprisonment of her crew.

In the first of our two feature articles, Terje Olav Almenning of Norway examines the KAL 007 shutdown and propaganda associated with it. While I personally do not agree with much of Terje’s interpretation, as a historian one must consider all perspectives when viewing the past. Our second feature article is actually a multi-part installment of an outstanding article written by intelligence officer James Hansen on deception used in the Cuban Missile Crisis. The article will appear in three parts over the next three issues.

Once again, the current issue of CWT is quite large. We are working on slimming down CWT and hope to have it down to a more manageable size by the summer.

Have a safe and joyous New Year!

Bryan J. Dickerson,
Editor, CWT

Ode to a Cold Warrior
Lt. Col. Tim Trusk, USAF (Ret.)

When I came home after years of service,
I heard you snicker and sneer.
Gee, friend did I offend
Or does my presence make you nervous?

You said I was no war hero
(a title I never did claim).
But don't you dare belittle my status
Or what it was that I became.

Perhaps I should have got a job
In endeavors of less noblesse
Putting profit above honor
In someone's place of business.

But when I was young the world was different.
It was East against the West.
Tyranny versus Freedom
To see which one was best.

The East was ruled by communists
Who don't believe in God or Life at all.
They just took everything from their people
And enslaved them behind a wall.

The West believed in democracy
Of Constitutions and the rule of law
That God created us equal
The Reds just thought this bourgeois.

And so it was when I grew up
I chose to make a pact
To defend this country and the West
In an outfit known as "SAC" .

It was a life of hardship
Low pay, long hours on SAC ALERT
Standing vigilant against a foe
Who would try to do us hurt.

Where were you "citizen" when duty called?
I did not see you there
When others stood watch at some Arctic post,
Underground or in the Air?

So while you sit there smug and warm
Enjoying your portfolio and your cash
Just tell all the children that you see
While you were getting wealthy
We prevented World War III!

USS Pueblo Incident

By Bill Craig, Contributing Editor

One of the most dangerous confrontations of the Cold War took place on January 23, 1968, when a U.S. Navy intelligence-gathering ship, the *Pueblo*, was fired upon and seized by North Korean naval vessels in the Sea of Japan off the Korean coast. American statements that the vessel was in international waters were disputed by the North Koreans who claimed that the ship was conducting espionage in their territory.

The ship was confiscated by the North Koreans, but the 82 surviving crew members and its captain, Commander Lloyd M. Bucher, were finally released on Dec. 22, 1968, after U.S. officials signed a document apologizing for the alleged spying and promising not to do it again. In an unprecedented action, the United States declared the document false before signing it. Secretary of State Dean Rusk said the North Koreans apparently believed they were reaping some propaganda value nonetheless. The U.S. disclaimer reiterated the American view that the ship was not engaged in illegal activity and that it had not at any

time intruded into the territorial waters claimed by North Korea. President Lyndon Johnson said the crew's detention was totally unjustified.

After their return, an Army physician who examined the crewmen said they showed signs of recent maltreatment. Commander Bucher said he and other crew members had been beaten by their captors with fists, boards and clubs, and that he had been held in solitary confinement for the entire 11 months of captivity. He said North Korea was country "completely devoid of humanity, completely devoted to enslavement of men's minds." He later described in detail the physical and psychological ordeals he and his crew had suffered. He said at one point a North Korean officer had taken him to see a horribly tortured man who was near death.

A Navy court of inquiry on the ship's seizure later heard testimony from 104 witnesses. Commander Bucher told the court that the *Pueblo* had been "seized" and had not surrendered, and that he had been ordered not to uncover the ship's guns and start a war. He said he had been informed prior to his mission that support would not be available in case his ship was attacked. He said he considered the crew to have represented their nation in an outstanding manner. Crew members related how they had signed "confessions" under duress and the fear that they might be compelled to reveal vital intelligence if they resisted. One crew member was killed as the North Koreans attacked the boat, and his body was returned when the crew was released.

The USIA – Advocacy of Cultural Diplomacy or Political Propaganda? The Case of Flight KAL 007

By Terje Olav Almenning
Ullensaker, Norway

Introduction

This article addresses the agenda that the United States Information Agency (USIA) carried out during the latter part of the Cold War.¹ This will be shown through the case of the Korean airliner (KAL 007) incident from 1983. On the night of September 1, 1983, Korean Airlines Flight 007 was destroyed by a Soviet SU-15 fighter plane. The Boeing 747 was a scheduled commercial airliner with 269 passengers and crew and was on the second leg of a journey from John F. Kennedy Airport in New York to Seoul's Kimpo Airport.

In his address to the National Association of Evangelicals in March 1983, President Reagan called the Soviet Union "the Evil Empire".² By using this hostile term, "the Great Communicator" managed to increase the level of tension between the two superpowers. Reagan set the stage for the harsh rhetoric that would bring on the war scare worldwide during the autumn of 1983 due to the destruction of Flight KAL 007. Of all the incidents between East and West since World War II, the downing of KAL 007 was the disaster most costly in human lives.³

A working assumption for this article is that the political aftermath of the destruction of KAL Flight 007 was an exercise in the "creation of truth".⁴ The governments of both the

¹ The various agencies of foreign policy were reorganized as a result of the Foreign Affairs Reform and Restructuring Act of 1998. The USIA was abolished and its functions were transferred to the Department of State. Supporters of the reorganization argued that the act would lead to a more coherent foreign policy decision-making.

² Frances Fitzgerald, *Way Out There In the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the Cold War* (New York: Touchstone, 2000), 22-26.

³ Alexander Dallin, *Black Box: KAL 007 and the Superpowers* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 100.

⁴ I will discuss how this incident was used in the Cold War of rhetoric. My article is based on in-depth personal interviews, telephone interviews and e-mail interviews with former USIA employees and KAL 007 investigators.

United States and the U.S.S.R. were not always honest, subordinating accuracy to the ends of foreign and domestic policy and allowing ideology to cloud judgment.⁵

Another underlying assumption for this article is that the USIA was instrumental in carrying out U.S. Cold War objectives ever since President Eisenhower established the agency on August 1, 1953. This article focuses on the rhetoric used by the USIA in the aftermath of the KAL 007 incident. Did the USIA advocate cultural diplomacy and/or political propaganda during the latter part of the Cold War? I will address this question by analyzing contrastively the operations of the USIA during the Carter and Reagan Administrations. Both Administrations attributed importance to advocacy of public diplomacy, although from different points of departure. Moreover, are we to believe in “innocent lost” theories that claim that KAL 007 strayed off course unwittingly, or are we to believe in “conspiracy” theories that claim that KAL 007 was on a spy mission? I will present and discuss the findings of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the authoritative voice of aviation, as well as the main differences between the “innocent lost” and the “conspiracy” advocates.

It is a question of great interest whether the USIA pursued a double agenda during the Cold War, i.e. advocacy of cultural diplomacy as well as political propaganda. Was there inherent tension between propaganda-oriented and information-oriented advocacy in the bureaucratic structure of the USIA? Public diplomacy activities are either intended for purposes of political advocacy or for cultural communication. It is important to recognize that the concept of public diplomacy is often understood to embrace both political and cultural diplomacy.⁶ The purpose of political advocacy is to encourage support for

⁵ Marilyn J. Young and Michael K. Launer, *Flights of Fancy, Flight of Doom: KAL 007 and Soviet-American Rhetoric* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1988), 267.

⁶ Gifford D. Malone, *Political Advocacy and Cultural Communication: Organizing the Nation's Public Diplomacy* (Lanham, MD: The University Press of America, Inc., 1988), 4. Malone argues that policy advocacy ought to be handled by the Department of State while cultural communication ought to be handled by an agency exclusively concerned with cultural diplomacy and separated from the advocacy function.

particular U.S. policies while the purpose of cultural diplomacy is to help foster a climate of mutual understanding between Americans and people from other countries.

Creating the USIA

The need for a public diplomacy in the U.S.A. arose from the wartime experience. World War II made it necessary for the U.S. Government to enter the field of cultural diplomacy as a means of supporting American foreign policy objectives. "Winning the war" became the mantra that enabled the warring countries to ignore the finer distinctions between cultural diplomacy and political advocacy. The pattern repeated itself throughout the Cold War: propaganda and culture became integrated in a coordinated effort "to win the minds of men". In 1942, the Roosevelt Administration created the Voice of America (VOA) and the Office of War Information (OWI) in order to combat Axis propaganda and to coordinate America's efforts to explain for audiences at home and abroad the nation's wartime policies.

Shortly after World War II, two pieces of legislation were enacted to provide the legislative foundation for U.S. public diplomacy. Educational exchanges with foreign countries were established through the Surplus Property Act of 1946. The Smith-Mundt Act of 1948 and the Fulbright-Hays Act of 1961 provided the U.S. Government with goals for the conduct of its public diplomacy. The United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948, known as the Smith-Mundt Act, states in part:

The Director [of USIA] is authorized ... to provide for the preparation ... and dissemination abroad, of information about the United States, its people, and its policies, through press, publication, radio, motion pictures, and other information media.... Any such information ... shall not be disseminated within the United States.⁷

A major objective of the Smith-Mundt Act was to promote a better understanding of the United States and its foreign policy abroad. Furthermore, the act enabled the government for

⁷ Alvin Snyder, *Warriors of Disinformation: American Propaganda, Soviet Lies, and the Winning of the Cold War* (New York: Arcade Publishing, 1995), 301. USIA director Charles Wick employed Snyder's services in order to give the new TV-service, Worldnet, a sense of direction. I interviewed him in Washington, D.C., in July 2000.

the first time in the post-war era to use all its educational and propaganda resources in the ideological confrontation with the Soviet Union. The main objective of the Fulbright-Hays Act was to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries.

President Eisenhower took office in 1953 with a strong conviction that international information efforts were important to national security. He decided that a new and separate organization was needed to manage U.S. public diplomacy. The educational programs were initially left in the State Department since they were foreign policy-related. From the outset there was an institutional separation between policy programs, on the one hand, and educational exchange programs on the other.⁸ This meant that the management of educational programs was supposed to be insulated from that of policy-oriented information. President Eisenhower provided the USIA with its first mission:

to submit evidence to peoples of other nations by means of communication techniques that the objectives and policies of the United States are in harmony with and will advance their legitimate aspirations for freedom, progress and peace. (Malone, 20)

Under its mandate from Eisenhower, the USIA was supposed to strike a moderate tone in its public diplomacy. This meant that the USIA was supposed to be factual and objective in its description of the American society.

The need to clarify the agency's mission was strongly felt many years after the creation of the USIA. In contrast, President Kennedy's 1963 memorandum to the director signaled a more policy-oriented view of the USIA's mission:

The mission of the U.S. Information Agency is to help achieve U.S. foreign policy objectives by a) influencing public attitudes in other nations and b) advising the president, his representatives abroad, and the various departments and agencies on the implications of foreign opinion for present and contemplated U.S. policies, programs and official statements. (Ibid.)

Kennedy's mission statement reflected his interest in using the USIA instrumentally as a foreign policy tool. At a time when the stakes were high, the Kennedy Administration

endorsed the advocacy function of the USIA so completely that it is only the Reagan Administration's embrace of the advocacy function during the 1980's that is comparable.

From the outset the objective of the Smith-Mundt Act was to promote U.S. foreign policy abroad while the objective of the Fulbright-Hays Act was to create academic exchange programs that were not tainted by political considerations. According to Richard T. Arndt, the foundations of cultural diplomacy as promulgated through the Smith-Mundt and Fulbright Acts ought to have been enough to insulate cultural diplomacy from the propaganda imperatives of foreign policy.⁹ The fact that the USIA was established in order to project America's image abroad in the context of the Cold War implied that the USIA tended to change hats for its different missions, at times being a cultural mediator and at other times being an advocate of foreign policy.

One might make use of the metaphors of Doves and Hawks when contrasting the Carter and the Reagan Administrations' outlook on public diplomacy. The question is whether it is feasible to argue that American cultural diplomacy during the Cold War was a struggle between "the Doves", who saw public diplomacy programs as a contribution to peace and mutual understanding, and "the Hawks", who regarded the programs as foreign policy instruments.

A Contrastive View at the USIA - Carter vs. Reagan

President Carter was aware of the fears expressed in academic circles about placing the Fulbright Program in the USIA, an agency with a propaganda agenda for U.S. foreign policy positions. Carter decided to issue a new mandate that would define the new organization's mission in such a manner that assurances would be provided for the integrity of the educational and cultural components. Carter also decided to rename the agency the

⁸ In 1978, president Carter decided to rationalise by housing the educational programmes under the USIA umbrella.

⁹ Richard T. Arndt, "American Cultural Diplomacy: The U.S. Government Role," in Richard Horwitz, ed., *Exporting America: Essays on American Studies Abroad* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993), 18.

United States International Communication Agency (USICA) to give the agency a new image. Following the recommendations of the House International Relations Committee, the Carter administration found it pointless to detach the policy advocacy function from the USIA and place it in the State Department. The USICA's mission was to be different from that of the USIA: "The aim of this reorganization ... is a more effective dialogue among the peoples of the earth" (Malone, 51).

The USICA was supposed to continue the USIA's efforts in telling the world about American society and its policies. However, the USICA's Second Mandate would increase the importance of listening to people from other nations. The new goal was "to assist individual Americans and institutions in learning about other nations and their cultures".¹⁰ Carter desired a change of direction for the USICA because he believed that it was necessary to have a vision for the future of changing relationships between the U.S.A. and other nations. Aggressive promotion of U.S. policies overseas and anti-Communism would no longer be on top of the USICA agenda. The Second Mandate placed the emphasis on "talking with" foreigners instead of "talking to" them. Thus, Carter envisioned an agency that would be devoted to the creation of dialogue and mutual understanding more so than advocacy of policy.

The Carter reorganization completed the separation of the State Department from the field of public diplomacy. The institutional separation between the State Department and the USIA meant that that the State Department devoted itself fully to the conduct of day-to-day political diplomacy. The removal of public diplomacy functions from the State Department also meant that the State Department was in a position to treat the USICA's "advisory function" regarding the implications of foreign opinion for U.S. policies with benign neglect. The USICA toned down the mandate that had brought the USIA to life: building public support abroad for particular U.S. policies. In the spirit of détente, the Carter Administration

¹⁰ Allen C. Hansen, *USIA, Public Diplomacy in the Computer Age* (New York: Prager Publishers, 1984), 22.

did not want the USICA to engage in propaganda with the objective of “selling” the United States and its policies abroad.

Carter proposed a new educational mission for the USICA that would replace one-way ideology and add a second dimension to public diplomacy:

To reduce the degree to which misperceptions and misunderstandings complicate relations between the United States and other nations. It is also in our interest - and in the interest of other nations - that Americans have the opportunity to understand the histories, cultures, and problems of others, so that we can come to understand their hopes, perceptions, and aspirations.¹¹

Was the USICA able to implement the ideals put forward in Carter’s Second Mandate? To a great extent, the Second Mandate illustrates the difference between ideals and reality. The Second Mandate was difficult to implement because of the prohibition of the outmoded Smith-Mundt Act that prevented the USICA from disseminating propaganda domestically. Because of the prohibition inherent in the Smith-Mundt Act, most Americans were unaware of the existence of the USICA/USIA as well as its programs. Lack of funding and personnel made it difficult for the new agency to perform effectively and to implement the Second Mandate. The USICA was created as a new institution off to a fresh start, but in the end the USICA became a minor player that was never offered a seat at the table where policy was made.

With the coming of the Reagan Administration and the new USICA director, Charles Wick, the agency experienced a dramatic change in direction. Under the leadership of Wick, the USIA became part of the foreign policy establishment.¹² Wick immediately reclaimed the one-sided propaganda orientation of the USIA. In short, the USIA was formally offered a position in foreign diplomacy that it never enjoyed before or afterwards. Wick managed to put the USIA into the forefront of U.S. foreign policy efforts by the force of his personality and his close personal friendship with President Reagan. He became part of an

¹¹ Nancy Snow, *Propaganda, Inc.: Selling America’s Culture to the World* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 1998), 41.

¹² The name of the agency was changed back to the USIA in 1982.

Administration that focused on the ideological conflict between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. in a way that the Carter administration had not.

There was a strong sense of consensus in the Wick Administration that the agency needed clearer direction on the grounds that it had drifted astray under Carter in trying to fulfill its two-way dialogue mandate. The Reagan Administration took office convinced that U.S. overseas information efforts had to be used in the service of foreign policy. The Administration was inclined to embrace public diplomacy as a foreign policy instrument. Hence, the Reagan Administration's interest in public diplomacy was fuelled by the possibilities of using the technological innovations in the field of communication to advocate its foreign policy objectives. Although Reagan offered no statement of mission as Carter had done in organizing the USICA, it was clear that the USIA's old motto, "Telling America's Story to the World", had been revived so that the USIA's programs could promote U.S. policies more aggressively. To a greater extent than its predecessor, the Reagan Administration understood the importance of communicating its policy and the significant role of the media in this process. Satellites could reach beyond the Iron Curtain and offer new opportunities to make broadcasting a critical part of international diplomacy. Hence, under the directorship of Wick, "the USIA used improved technology for radio and television to work public opinion abroad to swing it around to the U.S. way of thinking" (Snyder, interview 2000).

According to Robert Bemis, the USIA's increased role during the Reagan Administration was not only a consequence of the friendship between Wick and Reagan, but it was also based on the fact that the Reagan Administration saw things in ideological terms, and that the USIA was seen as the agency that dealt with this ideological battle.¹³ However, Bemis argues that the Public Diplomacy Officers in the field enjoyed a considerable degree of

¹³ Robert Bemis has been a Public Affairs Officer in Italy, Egypt and Iran. He has also worked for the National Security Council before he became the Director of the Office of Policy at the USIA in Washington, D.C. My interviews with him took place in Oslo and in Washington, D.C.

autonomy in their conduct of public diplomacy efforts. He maintains that the USIA prided itself on being a field driven agency with understanding for local concerns. He claims that the Public Affairs Officers in the field were not tied up with fixed ideology and guidelines in the same manner as the bureaucrats in Washington, D.C. (Bemis, interview 1999).

By comparison with its successor, the Carter Administration did not embrace information in order for it to be a short-term policy tool. The mission statement that Carter provided for the USICA signaled a change in direction for the agency since it was no longer supposed to engage in aggressive advocacy of U.S. policies overseas or criticism of potential adversaries. The Carter Administration saw the USIA as part of a two-way dialogue. The philosophical underpinning behind this was that it was arrogant to believe that the U.S.A. had more to teach the world than it could learn from it. According to Robert Bemis, "Carter wanted multi-layered dialogue between people whereas Reagan wanted to project American power, and saw dialogue between nations as a wishy-washy activity" (Ibid.).

The USIA became instrumental in the Reagan Administration's willingness to do ideological battle with America's adversaries. The shift of administrations meant that the USIA was put back in its old role as a missionary for the foreign policies of the incumbent administration. The USICA's Second Mandate was ignored because of the Reagan Administration's political agenda. Technological improvements, such as Worldnet, and increased budgets for the agency enabled the USIA to become a player in the foreign policy community. Hence, USIA officers were allowed to work with and on the White House staff in planning and coordinating U.S. foreign policy. However, the Reagan Administration's strong interest in employing the USIA in order to pursue its foreign policy objectives brought to the surface a problem that the agency was unable to solve: the issue of compatibility between programs intended for policy advocacy and other long-term non-political programs, such as Fulbright.

The KAL 007 Incident and U.S. Cold War Rhetoric

Flight 007's course resulted in its penetration of sovereign U.S.S.R. airspace overlying the Kamchatka Peninsula as well as the Sakhalin Island.¹⁴ Soviet military aircraft were sent aloft to intercept the ill-fated airliner as it was approaching the Sakhalin Island. According to the ICAO report, the aircraft was hit at 18:26 (GMT) by two air-to-air missiles fired by Lt. Col. Genadi Osipovich. Only a few minutes from the Sea of Japan, Osipovich was ordered by his ground controller to destroy KAL 007. He confirmed the downing by responding "the target is destroyed" (ICAO, 72; Snyder, 62).

Air-to-ground communications were intercepted by U.S. as well as Japanese communications intelligence in the Western Pacific. At the USIA, it became Alvin Snyder's job to package the intercepted air-to-ground transmissions from the Soviet pilots to their controllers in a video production aimed at scoring propaganda points at a time when Soviet-American relations were at a freezing point. The videotape, focusing on the phrase "the target is destroyed", was to be presented at the United Nations by U.N. Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. The phrase "the target is destroyed" would then serve as evidence offered by the U.S.A. to the world about the atrocities of "the Evil Empire".

When Secretary of State George P. Schultz announced to the world that the Soviet Union had shot down KAL 007 with 269 civilians aboard, he set the stage for an intense rhetorical confrontation between the Superpowers: "the government of the United States assumed the burden of convincing both its domestic constituency and the international community that the action of the Soviet Union was a natural result of a barbaric communist system" (Young and Launer, 19).

According to Seymour Hersh, there was a lot of pressure into the night of September 1 from policymakers in the government on the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the National

¹⁴ The International Civil Aviation Organization, "Report of the Completion of the Fact-Finding Investigation Regarding the Shooting Down of Korean Air Lines Boeing 747 (Flight KE 007) on 31 August, 1983" (Montreal: 1993), 1. The ICAO is the U.N. affiliate in the field of civil aviation. The main task of the ICAO is to secure international cooperation and a high degree of uniformity in regulations and civil aviation standards.

Security Agency (NSA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) to analyze what had happened. As the morning press briefings were being prepared, the American intelligence system had not developed specific evidence showing that the Soviets had knowingly shot down a civilian airliner.¹⁵ Although the information at hand was far from complete, the Reagan administration decided not to opt for a cautious policy. Instead it chose to take a harsh and rhetoric stance against the Soviet Union. According to Cees Wiebes, “the basis for the vigorous American propaganda effort was not complete and accurate information, but rather raw and disputed intelligence data which Washington ‘wanted’ to hear at that stage”.¹⁶ Secretary Schultz’s press briefing tried to convey the impression that the Soviets had knowingly shot down a civilian airliner, but he also gave an impression that U.S. intelligence personnel were capable of reading Soviet radar activity and monitor air-to-ground communications as they actually unfolded. In the aftermath of the incident it became difficult for the U.S. Government to argue that monitoring had not been carried out in real time, but accomplished automatically by voice-activated recorders that were analyzed only later.

President Reagan’s rhetorical strategy aimed at vilifying the Soviet Union, which did not admit responsibility for the destruction during the first days after the downing. Reagan repeatedly referred to the Soviet government as a regime and characterized the downing of KAL 007 as a “terrorist act” and as an “atrocity”. The Reagan Administration emphasized that the KAL 007 incident was a world affair, since the U.S.S.R. did not abide by the same rules as civilized countries do. Nevertheless, the harsh rhetoric that was unleashed by the Reagan Administration made it into a bilateral U.S.-Soviet affair. According to Cees Wiebes, “the U.S. reaction hardened little by little, but remained a mixture of restrained reaction and hard rhetoric” (Wiebes, interview 2000).

¹⁵ Seymour Hersh, *The Target is Destroyed* (New York: Random House, 1986), 119.

¹⁶ Dr. Cees Wiebes is a professor of political science at the University of Amsterdam and a long time student of the KAL 007 incident. I interviewed him in October 2000.

Telling a Story Out of School

Alvin Snyder came to the USIA as a Wick appointee in 1982 and was named director of the Television and Film Service.¹⁷ He had no problem with practicing advocacy journalism as long as the essence of the truth was conveyed. It became Alvin Snyder's task to tailor the message so that the U.S. Government would be successful in isolating Moscow at the United Nations as well as in the eyes of public opinion around the world. The task at hand was to create a slick video from the available information (the audio tapes of air-to-ground communications and the intercepted radar tracks). The videotape would then be presented as evidence of Soviet atrocities at the United Nations Security Council on September 6, 1983, when Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick would present a complaint on behalf of the United States, the Republic of Korea, Canada and Japan.

The media can be an awesome force when mobilized in order to advocate propaganda on behalf of the government. The efforts of Snyder and his colleagues were to be broadcast around the world by satellite, marking a new era of government-to-people public diplomacy. According to Snyder, the video was going to be a powerful document made in order to exploit the KAL 007 incident because Schultz had promised Reagan that the U.S.A. would launch a massive public relations effort to capitalize politically on the affair (Snyder, interview 2000). However, intelligence analysts from the CIA and the NSA had told Schultz that the Soviet Air Defense Command was probably confused as to the identity of the plane. Thus, they might have thought they were downing a U.S. spy plane since an RC-135 had been flying in the vicinity of the Kamchatka Peninsula.

Snyder decided to keep the visuals simple and highlight the words of pilot 805, Genadi Osipovich. Snyder and his team decided that the words of the interceptor pilots' would effectively carry the message that the Reagan administration wanted to convey: that the U.S.S.R. had cold-bloodedly downed a civilian airliner. This was the first time that video

¹⁷ Alvin Snyder had worked for CBS and NBC before Wick employed his services in order to give the new TV-service, Worldnet, a sense of direction. He is currently a freelance journalist in the capital.

was to be used as evidence in a Security Council proceeding. In order to imprint the words of the pilot in the minds of the viewers, Snyder and his team had made a freeze frame on the pilot's confirmation of the kill: "the target is destroyed" (Snyder, 62).

Disinformation was a potent weapon in the Cold War, and in this particular case the Reagan Administration chose to ignore intelligence data that contradicted the political case it was trying to build against "the Evil Empire". What is it that supports Alvin Snyder's claim of having been a "warrior of disinformation"? With the benefit of hindsight, Snyder has chosen to publicize that he became an instrument in the Reagan Administration's war of words. Former colleagues who oppose Snyder's views argue that he is telling a story out of school because he openly flouts the loyalty code of public diplomacy. In this case, it was Snyder's job to spin a story out of the information at hand that could shape public perception of the KAL 007 incident. Snyder claims that he became an unwitting warrior of disinformation since he had only been given selective information to go with when preparing the presentation of the KAL 007 incident for the U.N. Security Council.

Furthermore, Snyder suspects that the NSA might have deleted parts of the conversation between the Soviet fighter pilots and their ground controllers from the tape that Kirkpatrick presented as evidence (Ibid., 70). He also believes that the U.S. Government's clandestine agencies had information that was withheld for political reasons. Snyder and his crew presented the Soviet interceptor pilot as if he had a positive identification of the aircraft, and as if he made no attempts to warn the intruder before shooting it down. Afterwards, Snyder learnt from sources in the State Department and from the 1993 ICAO report's transcripts that he had been duped into transmitting lies without knowing it at the time.

The Kirkpatrick Drama

Disinformation may have a very big impact on its first hearing. According to the broadcast news axiom, it is the original version of the story that counts. Therefore, the facts that

surfaced later did not really change the story because the impact had already been made through Kirkpatrick's drama on September 6 with the Security Council as the stage.

U.N. Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick's presentation of the KAL 007 incident had elements of a morality play and a modern trial insofar as it had a victim, a prosecutor and a villain. The stage was also set for the occasion since four large monitors were placed high above the delegates' heads to offer them the horror of the KAL 007 drama. In this case, the worldwide satellite broadcast would enable public opinion in many countries to assume the role of a world Jury. The theme of the moralistic prosecutor, U.N. Ambassador Kirkpatrick, was to denounce the villain, the Soviet Union, and isolate it from the community of civilized nations. The setting that Snyder and his colleagues had prepared for the drama resembled the setting of October 1962, when U.N. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson used still photographs in the Security Council to call the attention of the Council to "unmistakable evidence" that facilities for launching nuclear missiles were being installed in Cuba.¹⁸

In her Security Council speech, Kirkpatrick's reinforced Reagan's rhetoric with her exhortative style. "Nothing was cut from the tape", said Kirkpatrick as she introduced her trump card, the tape of the Soviet pilots.¹⁹ The presentation was staged to produce the maximum dramatic effect. The restrained voices of the Soviet pilots could be heard as they intercepted KAL 007 and confirmed the downing to their ground controllers. Ambassador Oleg Troyanovsky refused to turn around to look at the monitor Snyder's team had placed directly behind him. Instead, he stared icily ahead and behaved as the unapologetic bureaucrat that Snyder's team wanted to portray (Snyder, 69). Kirkpatrick followed the hard

¹⁸ Allan Gerson, *The Kirkpatrick Mission: Diplomacy Without Apology, America at the United Nations 1981-1985* (New York: The Free Press, A Division of Macmillan, Inc., 1991), 200.

¹⁹ United States Mission to the United Nations, "Statement by Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations in the United Nations Security Council on the Complaint of the United States, the Republic of Korea, Canada and Japan, September 6, 1983".

line consistently and argued that the Soviet Union decided to shoot down a civilian airliner and then to lie about it:

Contrary to Soviet statements, there is no indication whatsoever that the interceptor pilot made any attempt either to communicate with the airliner or to signal it for it to land in accordance with international practice.... Perhaps the most shocking fact learned from the transcript is that at no point did the pilots raise the question of the identity of the target aircraft.... (Kirkpatrick, 4-5)

However, she acknowledged that the Soviet interceptor pilot had said that “the target isn’t responding to IFF”, the international interrogation by which military aircraft identify friends or foes (Ibid.).

The delegations behind the drafted resolution lobbied permanent and non-permanent members actively, but several of the countries that were approached wanted to abstain. The text of the resolution draft had to be watered down in order for the U.N. Security Council to pass a resolution. In fact, there was a lot of skepticism about the anti-Soviet campaign among the non-aligned nations. Hence, the resolution draft had to be softened considerably in order to avoid a major embarrassment for the U.S. Government and its allies. The operative paragraph of the resolution said that the Security Council “deeply deplores the destruction of the Korean airliner and the tragic loss of civilian life therein” (Gerson, 210).

One might argue that the U.S. Government disseminated disinformation at the U.N. Security Council. Clearly, Alvin Snyder and Jeane J. Kirkpatrick were turned into unwitting “warriors of disinformation” when they produced and presented the audiotape because they did not have access to the full story. Intelligence data soon popped up that did not accord with Kirkpatrick’s presentation. On September 11, the State Department had to release revisions to the tape transcript. Thorough review of the transmission on the tape showed that the interceptor pilot had fired tracer rounds to warn the intruder. The corrections came in addition to the information blunders presented by George Schultz, whose press conference had left the impression that the U.S.A. was capable of monitoring KAL 007 and the interceptor fighters in real time.

Alvin Snyder claims that the video document that he and his team had prepared for U.N. ambassador was misleading and inaccurate. He argues that NSA experts admitted one month after the downing that further analysis of tapes showed that Osipovich had flown behind and below KAL 007 while firing warning rockets (Snyder, 70). *Izvestia* journalist Alexander Shalnev once told Snyder that the U.S. media show at the U.N. had been the most devastating propaganda blow the U.S.S.R. suffered during the entire Cold War (Snyder, 71).

Criticism of Alvin Snyder's views

During my interviews in Washington, D.C., with Snyder's former USIA colleagues, Herbert Romerstein, Todd Leventhal and Michael Schneider, I got to know that they disagree with his views.²⁰ They all knew each other well as they worked together during Charles Wick's directorship. Snyder's old colleagues gave me the impression that he had broken the bond of loyalty to the service by writing his book, *Warriors of Disinformation*, where he argues that he was duped into disseminating disinformation. Herbert Romerstein criticizes his old colleague for being particularly confused about the KAL 007 tape, which to his mind was authentic and not distorted in any way (Romerstein, interview 1999). With regard to the KAL 007 incident, Romerstein maintains that the U.S.A. used exactly what it had in its possession when the tape was shown at the U.N. Security Council. According to his experience, the Soviet Union was solely responsible for all the disinformation in connection with the KAL 007 incident. He claims that the Soviets knew that it was not a military spy plane at the time of the downing. Romerstein and Leventhal both made it perfectly clear to me that they do not think that the ICAO report of 1993 changed the message of the story: The Soviet Union shot it down on purpose and lied about it (Leventhal and Romerstein, interview

²⁰ My interviews in Washington, D.C. with former USIA officials focused on the particular traits of spinning and disinformation. Michael Schneider worked for the Office of Policy at the USIA during the Wick era in the 1980's while Herbert Romerstein and Todd Leventhal were regarded as the USIA's leading experts at exposing Soviet disinformation.

2000). They emphasized that they criticized Snyder for his book at public meetings because they felt that Snyder had distorted the truth just to sell a book.

Michael Schneider claims that Snyder was a spinner who misinterpreted the KAL 007 incident. By telling a story out of school, Snyder betrayed old friendship (Schneider, interview 2000). Schneider refutes Snyder's allegations on the basis of his professional experience from the USIA. Schneider acknowledges that the USIA was selecting information about the Soviet Union and Communism to make a case against them, but to his mind that did not include disinformation: "Our ground rules since Murrow and Kennedy was that all information disseminated from the USIA had to be attributable" (Ibid.).

In response to the criticism offered by his former colleagues Snyder told me that neither Romerstein nor Leventhal were present when the tape was produced during three very hectic days. Snyder maintains that the USIA's TV-Department was not given the full story about the confusion at Soviet military command, which the State Department and the clandestine agencies knew about at the time.

According to Robert Allardyce, the USIA's agenda was quite straightforward in the case of KAL 007.²¹ The KAL 007 incident became the accidental battleground in the larger Cold War. Allardyce supports Snyder's suspicions and argues that intelligence data and transcripts were doctored by the National Security Agency (NSA) before they were presented by Jeane Kirkpatrick at the U.N. Security Council (Allardyce, interview 1999). Allardyce claims that Snyder and his USIA crew were minor players who were in the right spot at the right time. The task of putting together Kirkpatrick's tape was a one-time-shot at a specific moment in time. He claims that the USIA was a willing participant in preparing the disinformation shown at the U. N. Security Council, but does not think that any of the players in the USIA were capable of imagining the awesome depths of the tragedy from

²¹ James Gollin and Robert Allardyce, *Desired Track: The Tragic Flight of KAL Flight 007* (Findlay, Ohio: American Vision Publishing, 1995). Allardyce is an aviation expert and a former TWA pilot focusing on the technical aspects of the KAL 007 incident.

which they were attempting to milk in such a way as to embarrass the U.S.S.R. (Allardyce, interview 2000).

The Findings of the 1993 ICAO Report

The ICAO report blames the Soviet Union for the downing, but acknowledges that the Soviet officials had legitimate reasons to be confused:

The USSR command centre personnel assumed that KE 007 was a United States RC-135 aircraft. ...[T]he interceptor pilot was instructed by his ground control to attempt to attract the attention of the crew of the intruding aircraft by firing his aircraft's cannon and flashing its navigation lights. (ICAO, 2)

The so-called "black boxes", the cockpit voice recorder (CVR) and the digital flight data recorder (DFDR) tapes were recovered by the U.S.S.R during an intense search that followed the downing of KAL 007.²² A copy of the CVR tape and the CVR and DFDR armored containers were handed over to the Republic of Korea by the Russian president, Boris Yeltsin, in late 1992. The ICAO in Paris, France, got the original CVR and DFDR tapes in January 1993. The tapes and their contents are the center-piece of the 1993 ICAO report.

Ten years would go by before the transcripts of the CVR and the DFDR were released. Consequently, these transcripts were not made available to Snyder and Kirkpatrick when they produced and presented the KAL 007 audiotape based on air-to-ground communications. The political realities of the Cold War prevented the Soviet Union from releasing communications transcripts that would testify to Soviet culpability for the downing and reveal Soviet confusion as to the identity of the intruding aircraft. According to the ICAO report, the location of the main wreckage was north of the Moneron Island off the southwest coast of the Sakhalin Island. The report states that no bodies were recovered, although Soviet divers had noticed some human remains.

The ICAO report claims that KAL 007 started to deviate to the right (north) of its direct track to waypoint Bethel soon after departure from Anchorage. The deviation resulted in its penetration of sovereign Soviet airspace above the Kamchatka Peninsula and the Sakhalin Island. The ICAO could not find any evidence which indicated that the flight crew of KAL 007 was aware of the flight's deviation from its planned route nor that they knew of the presence of an interceptor (Ibid., 2). Even though the ICAO could not find any evidence of physical incapacitation of the flight crew, the report states that the significant changes of time zones must have affected the crew. Thus, the report suggests that the disruption to their circadian rhythms may have affected the crew's fitness for duty (Ibid., 57). Implicitly, the ICAO report claims that an inattentive and tired crew contributed to the tragedy. Obviously, the ICAO report would have become a stronger document if the ICAO team had questioned the interceptor pilot about the downing, but they were unable to do so.²³

A question of great interest is whether the U.S. and Japanese intelligence facilities were able to track KAL 007 and the Soviet interceptors in real time, thus being able to prevent the tragedy. Unfortunately, the ICAO report did not discuss this question. The ICAO commission only refers to statements by U.S. and Japanese government representatives with regard to tracking. Therefore, the report claims that U.S. military radar installations in Alaska were not aware in real time that KAL 007 was flying west with an increasing northerly deviation. Similarly, the military radar installations of the Japanese Defence Agency (JDA) were aware that an aircraft was being tracked in Soviet airspace above the Sakhalin Island, but the Japanese said that they were not aware that it was a civil airliner that had gone off its intended track (Ibid., 1).

²² The CVR records the last thirty minutes of crew voice communications while the DFDR records various parameters of the aircraft's navigation and control systems over the entire flight.

²³ Even though the ICAO report uses *Izvestia's* articles to support its findings, the ICAO does not name the interceptor pilot. Many of the KAL 007 investigators, including Andrei Illesh of *Izvestia*, refer to Lt.Col. Genadi Osipovich as the pilot behind the words "the target is destroyed".

The ICAO report lends credibility to those who argue that KAL 007 strayed off course unwittingly. The ICAO report of 1993 criticizes the flight crew for not having implemented the proper navigation procedures to ensure that KAL 007 remained on its assigned course throughout the flight:

The maintenance of a constant magnetic heading and the resulting track deviation was due to the crew's failure to note that the autopilot had either been left in heading mode or had been switched to INS when the aircraft was beyond the range (7.5 NM) for the INS to capture the desired track (Ibid., 59).²⁴

Thus, the main finding of the 1993 ICAO report argues that the cockpit crew misprogrammed the coordinates for waypoints on route Romeo-20 that were entered into the inertial navigation system (INS). Significantly, the ICAO report concludes that it was virtually impossible for any technical malfunction in the INS to have resulted in KAL 007 maintaining a constant magnetic heading for more than five hours. In lack of clear evidence, the ICAO report simply argues that an inattentive crew made a fatal oversight when entering the coordinates for waypoints into the INS.

A Comparison Between the "Innocent Lost" Theory and the "Conspiracy" Theory

Many speculations and theories have been floating around ever since the downing of KAL 007 in 1983. There are two mainstream approaches to the KAL 007 incident. On the one hand, there are the so-called "innocent lost" theorists. They support the claim made by the ICAO report that the plane strayed off course unwittingly as a consequence of human error and/or malfunctioning equipment. Supporters of the "innocent lost" theory tend to think that the case of KAL 007 is solved once and for all. Thus, innocent lost theorists argue that

²⁴ KAL 007's primary navigation instruments were its Inertial Navigation Systems – INS. "[T]he Inertial Navigation Systems ... sense an aircraft's altitude and movement changes as they occur, and relate these changes to the aircraft's course or its preplanned route from point of origin to destination. The course is laid out as a series of "waypoints" along the route ... " (Gollin and Allardyce, 7-8).

the Soviet Union was fully responsible for downing KAL 007 and that there is no reason to accuse the United States for any involvement in the tragedy.

On the other hand, the "conspiracy" theorists reject the "innocent lost" theory and claim that the crew knew all the time where KAL 007 was headed and that the plane deliberately violated Soviet airspace. Most supporters of the "conspiracy" theory claim that KAL 007 took part in an espionage operation orchestrated by U.S. clandestine intelligence. By provoking a response from the Soviet military forces, communications and radar systems would be activated so that U.S. intelligence could gather electronic intelligence from its enemy. "Conspiracy" theorists tend to believe that the incident helped the Reagan Administration's agenda insofar as it broke the back of the peace movement in Western Europe and enabled the U.S.A. to deploy cruise and Pershing II missiles on European soil.

James E. Oberg, a NASA space engineer, supports the findings of the ICAO report as the final answer to the mystery and defends the U.S. Government against what he believes to be unwarranted criticism from "conspiracy" lunatics. He argues that it was a chain of accidental circumstances that caused the tragedy and that the problems began at take-off when an inattentive crew selected a magnetic heading mode for the autopilot to steer the airliner towards the west coast of Alaska. Thus, he supports the findings of the ICAO in claiming that the crew either forgot or manually engaged the INS when they were too far off the course it was automatically computing. The result was that the aircraft continued to follow its original compass heading unwittingly (Oberg, interview 2000).²⁵

Murray Sayle is another ardent "innocent lost" supporter. As a journalist, he is at a disadvantage in evaluating the technical evidence of the case. Nonetheless, Sayle points to the findings of the ICAO and claims that the DFDR recorder testifies that Captain Chun dialed a magnetic compass course of 246° into the control panel of the autopilot.²⁶

²⁵ James E. Oberg, "Soviets Report: Moscow Lied About KAL 007" in *The Wall Street Journal*, April 23, 1991, A22. I interviewed Oberg in September 2001.

²⁶ Murray Sayle, "Closing the File on Flight 007" in *The New Yorker*, December 13, 1993.

Thereafter, Chun simply forgot to transfer command of the autopilot to the INS. In short, Sayle argues that KAL 007 was not steered by its INS because Captain Chun coupled his autopilot to KAL 007's magnetic compass (Sayle, 92-93). As a result, the airliner followed a compass course of 246° across the Pacific Ocean until it was downed. Sayle believes that the crew of KAL 007 did not know they were off-track or that a Soviet fighter tried to intercept the airliner.

Another outspoken "innocent lost" supporter is investigative journalist Seymour Hersh. Even though he argues that the aircraft strayed off course unwittingly, he does not believe in the same scenario as Sayle and Oberg do.²⁷ Instead, Hersh argues that "finger-trouble" in the cockpit was the direct cause of the tragedy: "If the position had been inserted as W139 degrees instead of the correct W149 degrees, Flight 007's path would have been close to the one actually flown" (Hersh, 269). He offers a possible explanation in which Flight Engineer Kim Eui Dong made the fatal error by entering the runway ramp position as W139 degrees longitude instead of W149 degrees into Captain Chun's unit, while the co-pilot and the flight engineer got the correct coordinates entered into their INS computers. Somehow all three INS agreed, although Captain Chun's machine was programmed incorrectly.

Relying on the INS mis-programming thesis of Boeing 747 Captain Harold Ewing, Hersh finds it probable that captain Chun made a programming error of his own doing: "Chun correctly entered into his INS the coordinates for the latitude of the new waypoint but failed to change the original INS longitude coordinates for Bethel in the computer" (Ibid., 291). In this scenario, KAL 007 was now flying towards an unknown waypoint because of sloppy cockpit performance. Hersh and Ewing argue that Captain Chun's INS, which was navigating the aircraft, was one waypoint behind the two other INS computers. Co-pilot

²⁷ The ICAO, Oberg and Sayle all claim that KAL 007 continued to fly southwest on a constant magnetic heading and that the plane deviated because the crew failed to note that the autopilot had either been left in "heading mode" or had been switched to INS, when KAL 007 was beyond the range for the INS to capture the desired track.

Son's and flight engineer Kim's INS computers would then continue to count waypoints in a sequence that differed from Captain Chun's computer.

David Pearson, Michel Brun and Robert Allardyce are the most active supporters of the "conspiracy" scenario. They argue that a constant magnetic course did not match the track actually flown by the airliner. In *KAL 007: The Cover-Up*, sociologist David Pearson claims that the constant magnetic heading theory advocated by the ICAO and the "innocent lost" supporters does not hold up. Pearson argues "that a 246-degree magnetic heading would not have taken the plane to Sakhalin Island but about 100 miles farther south".²⁸ Pearson dismisses the INS mis-programming theory because instruments in the cockpit would have warned the crew if a series of errors had put KAL 007 off course. In short, he does not believe that three experienced airmen failed to look at their instruments for hours on end.

KAL 007 investigators David Pearson and John Keppel hired acoustic expert Lawrence Porter to do an analysis of the communications recorded on the night KAL 007 was downed. According to David Pearson and Robert Allardyce, Porter discovered a background voice saying "a person should warn him" in a conversation between Anchorage ATC and a radar operator at Elmendorf Air Force Base, as KAL 007 was entering the buffer zone (Ibid.,349; Allardyce, interview 2000). Pearson and Allardyce both claim that this proves that U.S. air traffic controllers tracked KAL 007 in real time and that they were fully aware of KAL 007's deviation from its course for hours prior to the downing.

Pearson uses the acoustic findings of Lawrence Porter as evidence of U.S. complicity in the downing. According to Pearson and Allardyce, acoustic expert Lawrence Porter enhanced inaudible material by using computer equipment. The final message from KAL 007 was rendered in a radically different manner from the transmission presented by the ICAO. Whereas the ICAO argued that KAL 007's final transmission was "rapid

²⁸ David E. Pearson, *KAL 007: The Cover-Up* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1987), 276.

decompression” and “descend to one zero thousand”, Porter rendered the final audio message as “[G]onna be a bloodbath, real bad”.²⁹ Pearson concludes that U.S. civilian and military personnel knew that the aircraft was headed for Soviet airspace before the downing and did nothing to direct it back on course.

In *Desired Track*, Gollin and Allardyce claim to have navigational evidence that contradict the views of the “innocent lost” supporters: “Indeed, the direct course flight path seems to us plausible *only as a preplanned, deliberately flown route*.”³⁰ Allardyce argues that the NSA and the CIA stonewalled the incident because any other explanation than “innocent lost” would imply U.S. complicity in a covert mission or that U.S. intelligence failed to warn the aircraft about its deviation from course (Gollin and Allardyce, 73). Robert Allardyce told me that his interpretation of the navigational evidence suggests that captain Chun was on a military mission which purpose was to bring the U.S.S.R.’s defense to the highest possible state of military alert (Allardyce, interview 2000).

Pearson, Gollin and Allardyce are in agreement when they claim that KAL 007 turned to the right on its approach to Sakhalin Island. Allardyce and Gollin claim that radar returns demonstrate that a deliberate northward course change was required to produce an intrusion over Sakhalin.³¹ They argue that radar returns prove that KAL 007 started to deviate as early as seven minutes after take-off and about 40 nautical miles west of Anchorage. They firmly believe that periodic changes in heading indicate that the aircraft was being flown manually. Gollin and Allardyce castigate the constant magnetic course theory of the ICAO completely because the radar returns contradict a scenario in which the crew never once intervened in steering the aircraft. Gollin and Allardyce conclude that a constant magnetic heading course

²⁹ ICAO, 35; Pearson, 353; Allardyce and Gollin 156.

³⁰ Gollin and Allardyce, 61, italics in original.

would have required the crew's active manipulation of the compass knob to compensate for winds and magnetic variation (Ibid., 192).

In *Incident at Sakhalin*, Michel Brun argues that KAL 007 was an integral part of a major U.S. cover-up in the Cold War.³² As KAL 007 approached the Russian island of Sakhalin, so too did a number of U.S. military and reconnaissance aircraft in an ill-conceived intelligence and provocation operation that turned into an air battle where ten or more U.S. aircraft were shot down (Brun, 189-190). Michel Brun and John Keppel argue consistently that the Reagan administration emphasized confrontation rather than détente with the Soviet Union and that the operation was undertaken as part of a doctrine of "lateral escalation": The United States could respond to Soviet actions in one area by exploiting Soviet vulnerabilities elsewhere. During my interview with Keppel he told me that the operation was a success for the Reagan Administration since it achieved what it wanted: The downing of KAL 007 discredited the Soviet Union, it contributed to the subsequent passage of the U.S. military budget in almost maximum form, it got the Pershing II and cruise missiles deployed in Europe, and the Soviets became thoroughly alarmed by and afraid of the Reagan Administration (Keppel, interview 2000; Brun, 253).

Keppel told me that there would have been all kinds of debris surfacing on the water if KAL 007 had gone down off the island of Moneron as claimed by the ICAO. Brun and Keppel argue that the first signs of debris from the aircraft appeared off Sakhalin only after nine days. They claim that this proves that KAL 007 did not crash near Moneron, but much farther to the south. To support their case, Brun and Keppel point to a massive current of warm water, the Tsushima Shio, that flows from south to north on the eastern side of the Sea

³¹ Pearson, 321; Allardyce and Gollin, 103. In an interview in March 2001, Allardyce claimed that a sharp turn to the north occurred near the Sakhalin Island and that there was at least one significant course change in the area close to the Kamchatka Peninsula.

³² Michel Brun, *Incident at Sakhalin: The True Mission of KAL Flight 007* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 1995). The introduction credits former diplomat John Keppel for having co-authored the book. Mr. Keppel acknowledged his involvement in the book as well as his critical views of the ICAO report in interviews with him.

of Japan. They argue that the current determines the direction in which floating debris drifts. On the basis of the current argument, they conclude that the north-flowing current carried floating debris from KAL 007 north from its true crash site off Honshu to the beaches off Sakhalin and Hokkaido.

A Victim of the Cold War

During my field trip to Washington, D.C., I met with Mrs. Nan Moore Oldham who lost her son John aboard KAL 007.³³ As could be expected, I met with a very sad and bitter woman who seemed tired after many years of agony in the aftermath of the downing of KAL 007. She was a central person in organizing “The Families of American Victims of the KAL 007 Tragedy” in 1983. For many years, she led the bereaved family members’ call for an investigation by Congress. She has been advocating the need for a congressional investigation ever since the downing.

Nan Moore Oldham thinks it is impossible for a high-tech airliner to get lost along the Romeo-20 route. She completely rejects the “innocent lost” theory and does not think that the ICAO commission has solved the case of KAL 007. According to Mrs. Oldham, any attentive captain could easily find the islands and waypoints along the flight path. She points to the triply -redundant INS, which means that navigation is secured even in the unlikely event of navigation failure in one system: “I don’t believe for a minute that a mistake in programming the INS could explain the plane being off course” (Oldham, interview 2000). Therefore she argues that KAL 007 did not stray off course because of a navigational error. She claims that motives for the flight had to be intelligence gathering and probing of the Soviet response pattern. As a supporter of the “conspiracy” theory, she also believes that the U.S. and Japanese intelligence operations had real-time knowledge about what was going on.

Conclusion

It seems clear to me that Washington engaged itself in cultural diplomacy primarily as a means of supporting American foreign policy objectives. Clearly, we must see the creation of the USIA in this light. From the inception of the USIA the mandate of the agency was to “tell America’s story abroad”. I strongly believe that tension between cultural diplomacy and political propaganda was inherent in the bureaucratic structure of the USIA, an agency which was devoted to idealistic educational exchanges as well as Cold War political advocacy.

The idealist-internationalist Doves believed that exchanges were a reflection of America and that, given time, educational exchanges such as Fulbright would carry its own message. I believe that this stream of thought is best reflected through Carter’s Second Mandate for the USIA. Carter genuinely believed that Americans had something to learn from other countries and explicitly expressed the importance of educational programs in the interest of mutual understanding between the U.S.A. and other countries. I also believe that the other stream of thought is best reflected through the Reagan Administration’s use of the USIA. The nationalist-realist Hawks tended to interpret the role of the USIA differently than the Doves of the USICA had done. The Hawks saw the machinations of the Soviet Union as an enemy of American values and therefore as a foreign policy problem that needed to be addressed. Clearly, the Hawks tended to see the USIA as a missionary working in the interest of U.S. foreign policy objectives. Richard Pells expresses a balanced opinion about the USIA's dilemma to which I subscribe: “From its inception, USIA was a schizophrenic agency. It acted as a clearinghouse for culture as well as a ministry of information and

³³ I interviewed Mrs. Oldham about the KAL 007 incident in Washington, D.C., in July 2000. She told me that her apartment had been bugged in the past. I had to switch my tape recorder off when she talked about information she regarded as sensitive.

propaganda. It was authorized both to tell the truth about the United States and to make foreigners more appreciative of America's domestic institutions and global ambitions".³⁴

I do think that Alvin Snyder has good cause to claim that he and U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick were turned into unwitting "warriors of disinformation" in producing and presenting the story to the world through the morality drama staged at the U.N. Security Council. Snyder's video described wanton murder by the Soviets when U.S. Air Force intelligence data described legitimate Soviet confusion as to the identity of the intruder. Snyder's claim of being misled is supported by the findings of Seymour Hersh. In my opinion, Hersh has a point in claiming that intelligence assessments were overruled by the U.S. clandestine agencies and the State Department in order to make a political case. Snyder's claim of having been misled into presenting disinformation is to a great extent supported by the findings of the ICAO report of 1993. The transcripts of the ICAO report showed data that did not accord with the presentation U.N. Ambassador Kirkpatrick had made at the U.N. Security Council ten years earlier. Snyder's argument is that U.S. Government officials knew about legitimate Soviet confusion at the time of the downing, but the Reagan Administration chose to give the story a spin that enabled the Administration to castigate the Soviets in accordance with "the Evil Empire" rhetoric.

I believe that the case of KAL 007 leaves no doubt with regard to the USIA's role as an instrument for foreign policy advocacy. It was the wartime experience and the Cold War that created the USIA. When there was no Cold War to fight, Congress decided that there was no need for the USIA anymore. Hence, the USIA pursued a double agenda during the Cold War where political advocacy was given more prominence than cultural diplomacy. Only the future will tell whether the State Department will place cultural diplomacy on the same footing as foreign policy.

³⁴ Richard Pells, *Not Like Us: How Europeans have loved, hated, and transformed American culture since World War II* (New York: Basic Books, A Division of HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1997), 84.

Did KAL 007 stray off course unwittingly as the ICAO report claims? The language of the ICAO report is carefully worded and appears to be a political document as well as a scientific report. Allardyce and Gollin present a few compelling arguments when they criticize the ICAO report: it seems unlikely for a Boeing 747 to have flown on a constant magnetic heading for more than five hours. It is indeed strange that a qualified crew did not intervene actively in navigating the aircraft to make sure that the current heading would compensate for windage and magnetic variation. From a neutral point of view I think that the evidentiary validity of the ICAO report appears to be weak. It seems plausible that U.S. and Japanese intelligence operations were capable of tracking the straying airliner in real time. Still, the evidence at hand is insufficient and does not enable any KAL 007 investigator to take a decisive stand. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the U.S. Government has used plausible deniability to silence any accusations of U.S. culpability.

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CARIBBEAN CRISIS - DIAGNOSIS OF DECEPTION

James Hansen / 7 May 2001

[Editor's Note: This is the first installment of a three-part article written by Hansen on the Cuban Missile Crisis. The article originally appeared in *Studies in Intelligence*. A full copy of the article may be found at <http://www.cia.gov/csi/studies/vol46no1/index.html>]

Introduction

The Cuban Missile Crisis is perhaps the most intensively studied crisis of the modern day. Yet we have paid little attention to its deception aspects. Today we may do so, thanks to US, Russian, and Cuban accounts that together reveal the many deception activities that accompanied the crisis.

Why This Matters Today

The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 was highlighted in early 2001 by the motion picture "Thirteen Days," yet beyond the entertainment value this crisis has great significance for the present day and for our ability to recognize foreign deception. The crisis may even have greater significance today than it had 10 or 20 years ago.

The crisis -- which the Russians call the "Caribbean Crisis" and the Cubans call the "October Crisis" -- had everything to do with denial and deception (D&D). The craft of denying the US information on the dispatch of the missiles and deceiving US policymakers was the foundation of Nikita Khrushchev's entire venture. One issue of current and future significance is our ability to anticipate, contend with, and overcome the D&D efforts of a growing number of foreign adversaries.

The crisis had everything to do with the proliferation of advanced weapons. The dispatch of SS-4 and SS-5 surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs) so close to the US upset the strategic balance in an alarming way. It is difficult to imagine a contemporary crisis of such magnitude that would so gravely threaten the US. The proliferation of advanced weapons -- missiles and nuclear/chemical/biological means -- is a current and future intelligence issue that warrants great resources and the keenest minds.

The crisis matters today because some things do not seem to change much. In late February 2001, press reports noted that US satellites had detected Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad, a Russian enclave between Poland and Lithuania. The satellites reportedly detected them in June 2000 as they were being shipped by sea from St. Petersburg, and have since tracked their arrival at a bunker near an airfield there. According to an informal 1992 agreement between the US and Russia, Moscow had pledged to remove all tactical nuclear weapons from forward areas and has always insisted it has done so. The fact that Russia deployed these weapons in Kaliningrad to menace Poland and the Baltic nations, while denying that it has done so, harks back to past Soviet practices.³⁵

Maskirovka

Past service as a DIA senior analyst in the 1980s gave me an appreciation for the Soviet flair for D&D, known in Russian as *maskirovka*. Its central tenet is to prevent the adversary from discovering Soviet intentions -- deceiving him about the nature, scope, and timing of a

³⁵ Bill Gertz, "US Spy Satellites Pinpoint Russian Nuclear Arms in Baltics," *Washington Times*, 15 February 2001, p. A1. See also "Russia's Disturbing Lies," *Providence Journal-Bulletin*, 25 February 2001, p. 8C.

Soviet operation. In Western military tradition, the essence of D&D is the attempt to strike at the opposing commander's mind and to maintain ultimate economy of force by defeating the adversary's plan for battle without necessarily engaging his forces in combat. In modern times, D&D has been thought of primarily as a strategic operation directed at the highest and most central level of joint planning.

Current Russian military thought largely echoes the understanding of the West, except that the term *maskirovka* covers a broad range of concepts. At the strategic planning level, *maskirovka* refers to strategic deception; yet at the troop level, it may refer to camouflage. The four general categories of *maskirovka* include camouflage for concealment, imitation (decoy positions or equipment), demonstration maneuvers (feints or simulated movements), and disinformation.³⁶

Russian planners have made *maskirovka* an integral part of their military concepts, and state that the planning and use of *maskirovka* means are an essential component of the operations of all their forces. Their texts indicate that *maskirovka* is treated as an operational art to be refined and polished. There are recognized authorities in the field, professors of military science and officers who have built their careers on refining *maskirovka*. These specialists are well versed in the full range of *maskirovka* techniques ranging from the camouflage of small units to political disinformation directed at the highest decision-making levels of adversary countries.

In 1979, DIA noted that the Soviet Army has probably employed large-scale battlefield deception "more frequently and with more consistent success than any other army."³⁷ The Soviets practiced extensive *maskirovka* before their move into Czechoslovakia in 1968. Soviet-trained forces have used it successfully as well, to include North Vietnamese units before the Tet Offensive in 1968 and Egyptian forces in crossing the Suez Canal in 1973.

³⁶ Jennie A. Stevens and Henry S. Marsh, "Surprise and Deception in Soviet Military Thought," *Military Review*, July 1982, pp. 25-35.

³⁷ Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), *Soviet/Warsaw Pact Ground Forces Camouflage and Concealment Techniques*, DDI-1100-161-78, January 1979, p. vii.

During 1962 Soviet civilian and military officials employed a full array of *maskirovka* techniques, involved in the scheme to cloak the deployment of missiles in Cuba. This work is an appreciation for those techniques -- seen here together for the first time -- as well as a call for continued awareness in anticipation of future contingencies.

Secrecy Dominates The Initial Planning

General Anatoli Gribkov -- then a senior member of the General Staff -- provides revealing insight into the early planning. He notes that after Nikita Khrushchev decided to emplace the missiles in Cuba in Spring 1962, the General Staff detailed only five officers -- four generals and colonel -- to serve as the center of its planning apparatus for the operation. Colonel General Semyon Ivanov, chief of the General Staff's Chief Operations Directorate (GOU), was in overall charge.³⁸ During that Summer, their circle of collaborators and contacts expanded throughout the various armed services, but secrecy and need-to-know prevailed. The most senior officers brought into the plan were at least told that Cuba was involved in the operation, but only a very few were informed of the exact nature of the mission.³⁹

The discussion of this concept and the final decision was limited to a very small group of officials. Those at the very center included Anastas Mikoyan, Frol Kozlov, Defense Minister Marshal Rodion Malinovsky, and Marshal Sergei Biryuzov, commander of the Strategic Rocket Forces (SRF).⁴⁰ Alternate (non-voting) Presidium member Sharaf Rashidov was brought in as well.⁴¹

There was no unanimity about the likelihood of pulling off a successful deception. Marshal Biryuzov and his experts believed that the deployment could be made expeditiously and

³⁸ General Anatoli I. Gribkov and General William Y. Smith, *Operation ANADYR. US and Soviet Generals Recount the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Chicago, Berlin, Tokyo and Moscow: edition q, inc., 1994), p. 24. This is a vital source, given General Gribkov's role in the planning and implementation.

³⁹ Gribkov and Smith, *ibid.*, p. 24.

⁴⁰ Raymond L. Garthoff, *Reflections on the Cuban Missile Crisis*, revised edition (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1989), pp. 12-13.

⁴¹ Dino A. Brugioni, *Eyeball to Eyeball. The Inside Story of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (New York: Random House, 1991), p. 84. The author was a key figure at the National Photographic Interpretation Center (NPIC) in 1962.

secretly, thinking that the US would not discover the missiles. Anastas Mikoyan was surprised at this judgment, and believed the marshal to be a fool.⁴² Sharaf Rashidov was confident that the missiles could be hidden, claiming that they could be placed so as to blend in with the palm trees. To General Gribkov, only somebody inexperienced in military matters could reach such a conclusion, given the preparations needed for each missile site.

Throughout the early planning, no secretaries were ever brought in to prepare final typed texts. The proposal that the Defense Council adopted was itself handwritten -- by a colonel with good penmanship -- and it grew into a full-fledged plan, still handwritten, that Marshal Malinovsky approved on 4 July and that Khrushchev approved on 7 July.⁴³ From May through October, for reasons of security no communications about the proposed, planned, and actual Soviet deployments in Cuba were sent even by coded messages. Everything was hand-carried by members of the small coterie of senior officials who were directly involved.⁴⁴

The Cover Plan...North to Siberia?

The General Staff's cover story for the operation was designed to mislead both Soviets and foreigners alike about the destination of the equipment. "Anadyr," the Soviet code name for the operation, shows just how far and thorough the deception was. It is the name of a river flowing into the Bering Sea, the capital of Chukotsky Autonomous District, and also a bomber base in that desolate region. On all the plans that lower-level Soviet commanders were allowed to see, Operation Anadyr was meant to indicate to them -- and to Western spies -- that the action was a strategic exercise involving the movement of troops and equipment to the far north of the USSR.

The General Staff planners promoted the Siberian illusion to conceal the mission. The soldiers, engineers, and others called up for the Cuban expedition were to be told only that they were going to a cold region. Those needing more precise instructions, such as missile

⁴² Garthoff, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁴³ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

⁴⁴ Garthoff, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

engineers, were told that they would be taking ICBMs to a site on Novaya Zemlya -- a large island in the Arctic where nuclear weapons have long been tested.⁴⁵

To preserve that illusion, many units were even outfitted with skis, felt boots, fleece-lined parkas, and other Winter equipment.⁴⁶ Moreover, the four ground forces regiments that were ultimately dispatched to Cuba were drawn from the Leningrad Military District -- perhaps an effort to backstop the cover plan. The deception was so thorough that it fooled even senior Soviet officers who had been sent to Cuba. One general there asked General Gribkov why Winter equipment and clothing had been provided, and was admonished to "think like an adult." General Gribkov stated to him that "It's called Anadyr for a reason. We could have given away the game if we had put any tropical clothing in your kits."⁴⁷

First Trips... "Petrov" and "Pavlov" in the Tropics

Secrecy surrounded the first Soviet delegation that went to propose the audacious plan to Fidel Castro and other Cuban leaders. It arrived in Havana with little fanfare on 29 May, amidst a delegation of agricultural experts headed by Sharaf Rashidov. Traveling in this group were several missile construction and other military experts whose job it was to determine whether the missiles could be deployed in secrecy. Included in the group was Colonel General Ivanov.⁴⁸ Ambassador Aleksandr Alekseev took Raul Castro aside to explain that the "Engineer Petrov" in the group actually was Marshal Sergei Biryuzov, and that he needed to meet with *el lider maximo* without delay. Only three hours later "Engineer Petrov" was shown into Fidel's office.⁴⁹ The Cuban leadership unanimously and enthusiastically gave its approval in principle.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Aleksandr Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, "One Hell of a Gamble." *Khrushchev, Castro, and Kennedy, 1958-1964* (New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), p. 191. This valuable source relies on material from Soviet/Russian archives.

⁴⁶ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁴⁷ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁴⁸ Garthoff, *op. cit.*, p. 15, as well as Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁴⁹ Fursenko and Naftali, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

Soviet maritime policy began to shift in accordance with these first trips. In June and July, the USSR began to charter Western ships to carry general cargo from the Soviet Union to Cuba, and reserved their own freighters for carrying military cargo.⁵¹

During 2-17 July, a Cuban delegation led by Defense Minister Raul Castro traveled to Moscow to discuss Soviet military shipments, including nuclear missiles. Khrushchev met with Raul Castro on 3 and 8 July. Raul Castro and Soviet Defense Minister Malinovsky initialed a draft treaty that governed the deployment of Soviet forces to Cuba. This pact was not to be publicly released until a visit that Khrushchev planned to make to Cuba in November.⁵²

During this time, the Russians established an air bridge to covertly dispatch officers and specialists to Cuba. On 10 July, General Issa Pliyev -- commander of the Soviet contingent in Cuba -- left Moscow by air for Cuba along with his party. To illustrate the deception effort, even General Pliyev set off in alias, having been issued a passport with the last name of "Pavlov."⁵³ By now, "Peter" and "Paul" had both set foot in Cuba!

On 12 July, the General Staff sent a group of 67 specialists by air. They journeyed as "machine operators," "irrigation specialists," and "agricultural specialists." The principal problem is that they were given specialties about which they knew nothing; as such, their covers would not withstand any questioning by actual specialists. It was then too late to explain how or even why their false occupations had been assigned, but they were urged to consult the few genuine specialists traveling with them to gain some rudimentary knowledge of their ostensible jobs.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ James G. Blight, Bruce J. Allyn, and David A. Welch, with the assistance of Davis Lewis, *Cuba on the Brink. Castro, the Missile Crisis, and the Soviet Collapse* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1993), p. 8. This valuable source relies greatly on the input of key Soviet/Russian and American officials who had a hand in the crisis.

⁵¹ Brugioni, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

⁵² Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

⁵³ Fursenko and Naftali, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁵⁴ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38.

On 16 July, a Tu-114 transport aircraft flew from Moscow to Havana, and on 17 July Havana announced that Cuba and the USSR had signed an agreement establishing a regular Moscow-Havana civil air route. Most intelligence analysis thought that the Tu-114 flights most likely were bringing Soviet military officers to Cuba, as well as sensitive electronic and signal-monitoring equipment.⁵⁵

Another Cuban delegation traveled to Moscow during 27 August-2 September, led by Ernesto "Che" Guevara and the head of the Cuban militia. The purpose was to introduce Fidel Castro's revisions into the draft treaty, and the two brought the corrected and final missile agreement to Moscow. The Cubans proposed that the deployment be made public in order to head off any American overreaction, yet Khrushchev successfully argued for continued secrecy.

Loading in the Soviet Union

Soviet units within the USSR destined for Cuba traveled by rail. All men and equipment were assembled, loaded, and moved by rail only at night and under reinforced guard. The trains' routes and final destinations were kept secret. Mail and telegrams along the way were strictly prohibited.⁵⁶

The shipments from the Soviet Union were spread among eight different ports. Four ports were in the north: Kronstadt, Liepaya, Baltiysk, and Murmansk. Sevastopol, Feodosiya, Nikolayev, and Poti on the Black Sea were used as well.⁵⁷ This dispersed loading effort helped to mask the immensity of the overall effort. Western officials had no access to these ports, now suddenly closed off. It was normal for Soviet ports to be closed when munitions were being loaded, but this time the big SSMs were being put on the ships under the strictest of security conditions and under the cover of darkness.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Brugioni, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

⁵⁶ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁵⁷ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁵⁸ Brugioni, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

The troops and equipment were housed securely at the nearest military facilities during the two or three days normally required to load a single ship. They were prohibited from leaving the area, and were put under guard. All the troops' communications with the outside world was cut off. No letters, telegrams, or telephone calls were permitted, a rule that applied equally to the ship crews and their officers.⁵⁹ The crews of the ships -- many of which made more than one trip -- were forbidden shore leave and correspondence.⁶⁰ Each cargo was loaded and each troop contingent embarked on these ships under such strict secrecy that couriers -- rather than radio or telephone lines -- carried all messages between the ports and the Defense Ministry in Moscow.⁶¹

Even the ship captains were not told where their cargo was to be delivered. Before casting off, the troop commander and the captain would jointly receive a large sealed envelope. Unfastening it, they would find a smaller envelope to be opened only at a certain set of geographic coordinates in the Atlantic Ocean. For that ceremony, they would be joined by an officer from the KGB's Special Department. This letter would tell them to proceed to a Cuban port and authorized them to inform the ship's company of the destination.⁶² The concern for secrecy carried over even to the last sentence of the letter each captain opened: "After familiarizing yourself with the contents of this document, destroy it."⁶³

Every ship involved in Operation Anadyr carried thick folders prepared by Defense Minister staff officers who had assembled background information on a number of countries with which the USSR had good relations. Buried in these packets -- so that not even the compilers would know the real focus of the operation -- were the study materials on Cuba.

The captains were instructed to take all possible evasive action in the event of an attack or effort to board their ship. Should evasive action be impossible, they were to "destroy all documents with state and military secrets."⁶⁴ If it appeared that a foreign group was about

⁵⁹ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁶⁰ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁶¹ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

⁶² Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁶³ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

⁶⁴ Fursenko and Naftali, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

to seize the ship and its contents, the captain and the head of the military echelon on board would have to take measures to adequately protect the personnel -- and to sink the ship. Should their ships experience mechanical failure en route and needed help, some captains were to explain to any ships offering assistance that there were exporting automobiles.⁶⁵ The last provision is puzzling, as the USSR then had few cars of any kind and was not recognized as an automobile exporter.

The comprehensive *maskirovka* measures hid well the ultimate size of the Soviet contingent. The plan approved in early July called for moving 50,874 men. The total included personnel for field hospitals, bakeries, mechanical workshops, and other support units, all with a three-month supply of food and fuel. During September, the plan was revised to eliminate submarine and surface ship squadrons, due to concern about possible resupply problems as well as concerns that their presence might sound an alarm bell in Washington. The September changes cut some 5,640 naval personnel from the deployment, leaving the remaining contingent of 45,234. Of that number, 3,332 turned back while at sea in October. As such, the actual Soviet strength on Cuba when President Kennedy imposed the quarantine on 24 October was 41,902 -- quadruple the size that US intelligence agencies had figured.⁶⁶

Secrecy Makes for a Rough Passage

Soviet ships made false declarations when they exited the Black Sea and the Bosphorus. Little or no information was available on the unloading plans or types of cargo carried. Cargo records were falsified and the tonnage declared was well below what was being carried. Although the ships would declare from Odessa, it was known that they had loaded at other ports. Often ships going for Cuba declared for Conakry, Guinea. When the volume of traffic increased, a number of ships would not give their destinations but would simply state that they were carrying "general cargo" and "awaiting orders."⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Fursenko and Naftali, *op. cit.*, p. 192.

⁶⁶ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

⁶⁷ Brugioni, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

Transit through the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles Straits presented a special challenge. Nor only were soldiers kept below, but the captains were under orders to keep all foreigners off the vessels, even the Turkish pilots who usually guided civilian ships through those tricky waters. Whenever the Turkish pilots appeared and approached the Soviet ships, the Soviet crews -- instead of providing ladders -- would lower bulging parcels of vodka, brandy, caviar, sausages, and other delicacies. Gribkov noted that this transparent bribery worked well: "Everyone likes to get presents, even pilots."⁶⁸

The Soviets had adopted *maskirovka* measures when they first began to load and send weapons to Cuba. In attempts to conceal and protect shipments of weapons carried as deck cargo, they covered the weapons with packing crates or placed them in special shipping containers. Items of certain telltale military equipment had been boarded up with planks to make them look like superstructures of the ships, and even on-deck field kitchens were disguised.⁶⁹ At sea, the combat and specialized equipment was stored below, out of sight. Ordinary automobiles, trucks, tractors, and harvesters were placed on the top deck to convey the impression that only civilian or agricultural gear was being transported. The distinctively military hardware -- such as missiles and launchers -- was crated and shielded with metal sheets in order to defeat infrared photography.⁷⁰

A good example is the freighter *Poltava*, which sailed to Mariel in September. On its deck were cargo trucks, none of which were associated with the missiles. There were no external indicators indicating that it was carrying missiles, yet US experts believed that the ship was carrying MRBMs deep in its hold.⁷¹ Generally the Soviets used large-hatch ships of the *Poltava* and *Omsk* classes to deliver such missiles in 1962.

⁶⁸ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

⁶⁹ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁷⁰ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁷¹ Brugioni, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-150. The SS-4 MRBMs (medium range ballistic missiles) had a range of up to 2,500 kilometers. The SS-5 IRBMs (intermediate-range ballistic missiles) had a range of up to 5,000 kilometers. The SS-4 MRBMs were deployed first in Cuba.

Moscow also resorted to diplomatic means in efforts to offset US reconnaissance. In July 1962, the Soviets described US reconnaissance missions in international waters as “harassment,” and requested through their GRU officer in Washington, Colonel Georgi Bolshakov, to stop these flights for the sake of better bilateral relations.⁷² This was clearly an effort by Khrushchev to delay the discovery of weapons related to Operation Anadyr, and the use of GRU officer Bolshakov was a nontraditional means of establishing both a back channel and simultaneously an unwitting conduit of influence messages. Bolshakov met with Robert Kennedy more than a dozen times.

Most of the voyages lasted from 18 to 20 days. Due to strict *maskirovka* measures, the troops below were not let out from belowdecks except at night for a few minutes in small groups to exercise and get some fresh air.⁷³ During the tropical days, heavy tarpaulins covered the hatches of the lower decks where the troops were berthed. There was very little air circulation, and the inside temperatures climbed to 120 degrees Fahrenheit or higher. Rations were issued only twice each day and only in darkness.⁷⁴ Many Soviet troops on board swore that they would never again set foot on another ship. Such restrictions made conditions on board nightmarish, but the cover story held up. General Gribkov states that “US intelligence discovered neither the true significance of the surge in Soviet shipping to Cuba nor the mission of our troops on the island until nearly all the men had come ashore and -- still moving in large numbers only by night -- had been deployed to their assigned positions.”⁷⁵

About the Author...

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⁷² Fursenko and Naftali, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

⁷³ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁷⁴ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁷⁵ Gribkov and Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

1968 – A Tumultuous Year

1968 began badly when North Koreans seized the Navy surveillance ship *USS Pueblo* while she steamed in international waters. Her crew was imprisoned, tortured and held for nearly a year. That was just the beginning.

After months of secret preparations, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese launched a series of surprise attacks upon military and civilian installations all across South Vietnam on 31 January 1968. North Vietnamese forces laid siege to the U.S. Marine base at Khe Sanh and overran the ancient capital city of Hue. Altogether thirty-six of South Vietnam's forty-four provincial capitals were attacked by the Viet Cong. In Saigon, American Military Policemen fought pitched battles against the Viet Cong on the very grounds of the U.S. Embassy. Despite the surprise, American and South Vietnamese forces recovered quickly and fought off the Communists. Hue was re-captured by U.S. Marines, and American and South Vietnamese soldiers after three weeks of heavy fighting that destroyed much of the city. The Marine base at Khe Sanh was relieved after a 77 day siege.

Militarily, Tet was a disaster for the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. The Viet Cong lost most of their experienced troops and leaders. The North Vietnamese suffered heavy losses as well. However, politically Tet marked a major turning point. American public confidence in the war effort suffered heavily. The offensive called into question the claims of impending victory that had been announced in the weeks just prior to the offensive.

Back in the United States, the year 1968 was marked with violence. Democratic Presidential Candidate Robert Kennedy was assassinated in Los Angeles in June and civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated in April in Memphis. Racial strife and riots swept America's cities. Violence between anti-war protesters and police broke out at the Democratic Convention in Chicago in August.

With America tearing herself apart, the war in Vietnam, and the crew of *USS Pueblo* imprisoned by the North Koreans, President Lyndon Johnson announced on 31 March 1968 that he would not to run for re-election.

In Eastern Europe, the reformist government of President Alexander Dubcek was attempting to create "Socialism with a Human Face" in CzechoSlovakia. Known as the 'Prague Spring,' this reform effort led to relaxations on personal freedoms and re-assertions of human rights. Threatened by the implications of such reforms, the Soviet Union crushed the Prague Spring at the end of August by leading an invasion with five of its Warsaw Pact allies. The Soviets proved once again that brute force was their only response to reform.