



# governmentattic.org

*"Rummaging in the government's attic"*

Description of document: Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI) The Games They Play: Russian Strategic Political Deceptions (July 2008) - Thesis

Requested date: 01-June-2022

Release date: 14-November-2024

Posted date: 25-November-2024

Source of document: FOIA Request  
Gregory Koch  
Director, Information Management Office  
ATTN: FOIA/PA  
Office of the Director of National Intelligence  
Washington, D.C. 20511  
Email: [ODNI\\_FOIA@odni.gov](mailto:ODNI_FOIA@odni.gov)

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is a First Amendment free speech web site and is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file. The public records published on the site were obtained from government agencies using proper legal channels. Each document is identified as to the source. Any concerns about the contents of the site should be directed to the agency originating the document in question. GovernmentAttic.org is not responsible for the contents of documents published on the website.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC

November 14, 2024

Reference: ODNI Case No. DF-2022-00303

This letter provides an interim response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the Office of the Director of National Intelligence (ODNI), received June 1, 2022, requesting 22 specific theses written by students at the National Intelligence University.

Attached to this response are four theses, which were processed under the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended. During the review process, the foreseeable harm standard was considered and it was determined that the documents may be released in part, with certain information withheld pursuant to the following FOIA exemption:

- (b)(6), which applies to information that, if released, would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy.

Please be advised, we continue to process your request. If you are not satisfied with this specific response, a number of options are available. You may contact me, the FOIA Public Liaison, at ODNI\_FOIA\_Liaison@odni.gov, or the ODNI Requester Service Center, at ODNI\_FOIA@odni.gov or (703)-275-1313. You may also submit an administrative appeal to the Chief FOIA Officer, c/o Chief, Information Management Office, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Washington, DC 20511 or emailed to ODNI\_FOIA@odni.gov. The appeal correspondence should be clearly marked "Freedom of Information Act Appeal of Adverse Determination" and must be postmarked or electronically transmitted within 90 days of the date of this letter.

Lastly, the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) of the National Archives and Records Administration is available with mediation services and can be reached by mail at 8601 Adelphi Road, Room 2510, College Park, MD 20740-6001; telephone (202) 741-5770; toll-free (877) 684-6448; or email at ogis@nara.gov.

Sincerely,



Erin Morrison  
Chief, Information Review and Release Group  
Information Management Office

**ABSTRACT**

**TITLE OF THESIS:** The Games They Play:  
Russian Strategic Political Deceptions

**STUDENT:** (b) (6), MSSSI 2009

**CLASS NUMBER:** NDIC 2009      **DATE:** July 2008

**THESIS COMMITTEE CHAIR:** (b) (6)

**COMMITTEE MEMBER:** (b) (6)

From the inception of the Soviet Union at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Russians have been conducting strategic political deceptions by using active measures. Such deceptions were frequently aimed at the West and in particular the United States. During the 1980s, the United States government, as well as various Sovietologists, began investigating and describing Soviet strategic political deceptions. Currently though, little is written, known, or discussed of present day Russia strategic political deceptions, either by the U.S. government or by scholars. What is currently known in public forums comes from defected KGB officers. This lack of knowledge by the United States allows for the possibility of present day deceptions.

In this thesis the author asks the question, “*How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception, and is it similar to deceptions during the existence of the Soviet Union?*” In order to address this research question, the thesis looks at Russian strategic political deceptions in two parts. The first part addresses the history of the organization behind such deceptions as well as the history of deceptions by the Soviet Union dating back to 1919. The second part studies specific strategic political deceptions

of the past and the present. Both the organization and the actual deceptions themselves were evaluated based on characteristics.

This thesis presents three case studies that analyze characteristics of past deceptions compared to possible present day deceptions. The first case study addresses the organizations behind strategic political deceptions, comparing two organizations of the past to a possible organization of the present conducting strategic political deceptions. It examines the new Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries in comparison to departments known to participate in strategic political deceptions prior to 1991.

The second and third case studies analyze two separate types of strategic political deceptions: disinformation campaigns and influence operations. The present day example of a possible disinformation used in this study is the Washington Post monthly insert, "Russia Beyond the Headlines." The present day example of a possible influence operation is the poisoning of the Ukrainian President, Victor Yushenko, during the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential elections. Similar to the first case study, five examples were chosen from the past and were compared to an example from present day.

It was found through the analysis in the three case studies, that in fact Russia is still conducting strategic political deceptions and there is the possibility of a new organization mentioned above assisting in such deceptions. These findings are important to the U.S. government and intelligence community because it shows that the United States and the West need to study, analyze and understand Russia at a deeper level in order to prevent, or at least predict, strategic political deceptions in the future.

**THE GAMES THEY PLAY:  
RUSSIAN STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS**

by

**(b) (6)**

JIEDDO

NDIC Class 2009

Unclassified thesis submitted to the faculty  
of the National Defense Intelligence College  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Science of Strategic Intelligence

July 2008

The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and  
do not reflect the official policy or position of the  
Department of Defense or the U.S. Government

## **DEDICATION**

To my chair and reader for their patience in this process, and believing that there was a something good underneath it all...

To my dear friends and family who supported me and provided the comic relief I desperately needed...

And last but not least, to my faithful dog Phebe who stayed up the long nights with me this past year.

## CONTENTS

List of Graphics .....	vii
------------------------	-----

### Chapter

1. THE RUSSIAN GAME OF DECEPTION.....	1
The Topic.....	1
Justification.....	3
The Research Question.....	4
The Hypothesis.....	6
Defining Key Terms.....	7
Scope and Limitations.....	8
Thesis Overview.....	8
2. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE TO RUSSIAN STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS.....	11
Introduction.....	11
In the Years Prior to 1991.....	12
In the Years Following 1991.....	22
Conclusion.....	24
3. METHODOLOGY.....	26
4. THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS: THE ORGANIZATION BEHIND THE DECEPTION, 1919 TO PRESENT DAY.....	35
Introduction.....	35
The Comintern, 1919-1943.....	36
The International Department and the Active Measures Organization, 1943-1991.....	44
Active Measures Organization Following the Collapse of the USSR, 1991 to the Present.....	51
Conclusion.....	56

5.	THE FINDINGS: EXAMINING STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS.....	58
	Introduction.....	58
	Case Study One: An Organization Conducting Strategic Political Deception Through Active Measures.....	59
	Case Study Two: Disinformation Campaigns.....	67
	Case Study Three: Influence Operations.....	76
	Conclusion.....	83
6.	CONCLUSIONS.....	86
	Review of the Research Question.....	86
	Review of the Hypothesis.....	87
	Final Conclusions and Implications.....	88
	Future Research Possibilities.....	89
	Conclusion.....	90
	<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>91</b>



## LIST OF GRAPHICS

### Chart

3.1	Soviet Organizational Structure for Active Measures, circa 1950.....	46
3.2	Soviet Organizational structure for Active Measures, late 1980s.....	50

### Table

3.1	Classification of Active Measures.....	47
3.2	The Evolution of Russian Intelligence Agencies, 1954 to Present.....	52
4.1	Comparison of Organizational Characteristics.....	66
4.2	Comparison of Disinformation Campaign Characteristics.....	75
4.3	Comparison of Influence Operations.....	82

## CHAPTER 1

### THE RUSSIAN GAME OF DECEPTION

*“The Russian bear was easier to deal with when it looked more like a bear than it does now.” -Margaret Thatcher<sup>1</sup>*

#### THE TOPIC

At the end of the Cold War, it could be perceived that the West was hoping for a peace loving and calm Russian state, where nuclear warheads were not aimed directly at the United States and spies were not a dime a dozen on the streets of Washington. Although the years have passed since the end of the Cold War, and the mighty giant of the Soviet Union dissolved, the priorities of the Cold War have not disappeared. In fact, Oleg Kalugin, a former KGB general, was recently quoted as saying that the United States is “Priority No.1” and “there has been a total restoration, even an intensification of Russian spying on America.”<sup>2</sup> This restoration seems to have occurred under the presidency of Vladimir Putin during the past eight years in Russia.<sup>3</sup> The intensification has been seen in the various intelligence and security organizations of the Soviet Union,

---

<sup>1</sup> Marian Leighton, *Soviet Propaganda: As A Foreign Policy Tool* (New York: Freedom House, 1991), 160.

<sup>2</sup> Julie Anderson, “The HUMINT Offensive from Putin's Chekist State,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 277.

<sup>3</sup> Russia: The Evolution of the FSB, *STRATFOR*, March 18, 2008. [http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia\\_evolution\\_fsb?ip\\_auth\\_redirect=1](http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia_evolution_fsb?ip_auth_redirect=1) (accessed July 6, 2008).

including the SVR (Foreign Intelligence Service), the FSB (Federal Security Service), and the GRU (Main Intelligence Directorate of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation.).<sup>4</sup> Russia can be described as a counterintelligence state due to the characteristics, values, and actions that ring true from the walls of the Kremlin. This means that Russia operates in an environment in which the goal is to keep the enemy at a distance, not allowing them access to information; it is a very defensive technique. Russia is also described as being “top-heavy with intelligence talent,” “a state defined and dominated by former and active-duty security and intelligence officers.”<sup>5</sup> This indicates that if Russia is top heavy with intelligence officers, and former KGB generals believe that the intelligence organization within Russia is stronger then ever, there is a good chance that Russia is not only a strong intelligence state, but that it is also conducting counterintelligence operations. These operations could include deception operations and any country could be fair game.

It is known in the United States, from reports that the U.S. government produced in the 1980s examining Soviet deceptions, that the Soviet Union committed strategic political deceptions at the blink of an eye during the Cold War.<sup>6</sup> The question now is, in this new millennium, do such acts of deception still occur? Only a small amount (what is mentioned in the memoirs of KGB defectors) is known or written about present day Russian deception, possibly because there are other distractions in the world today that allow for the importance of Russia to slide off the radar. It seems that the past has not

---

<sup>4</sup> Russia: The Evolution of the FSB, *STRATFOR*.

<sup>5</sup> Reuel Marc Gerecht, “A Rouge Intelligence State? Why Europe and America Cannot Ignore Russia,” *European Outlook* no. 2, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (April 2007).

<sup>6</sup> Several reports were produced during the 1980s which detailed what were known strategic political deceptions at the time. These reports and their relevancy will be discussed further in Chapter Two of this thesis.

been left behind, Russia might still be running strategic political deceptions; deceptions which are carried out by an intelligence arm that has been previously mentioned and has only grown stronger since the fall of the Iron Curtain. If Russia is conducting deceptions reminiscent of the Soviet Union it should come as no surprise as the resumes of many of today's Russian leaders are full of extensive KGB experience.<sup>7</sup>

## JUSTIFICATION

It is important for the United States to be able to recognize, evaluate, and track Russian strategic political deceptions because such deceptions could detrimentally affect America and its citizens. Russian deceptions could change United States' decisions, and if the United States lacks the knowledge necessary to identify and counter, Russian deceptions then there could be significant impacts for U.S. national security. In the past ten years, the United States has learned the effects of being caught unprepared due to a lack of knowledge. The September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks were a wake up call for the United State, because the United States lacked persons knowledgeable about the Middle East. The 9/11 Commission discussed that there were significant gaps in intelligence that were a direct result of an inability to collect intelligence as well as analyze it. The United States could face a similar situation in Russia. After the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. intelligence community was mandated to reduce its force by 17.5

---

<sup>7</sup> Andrew E. Kramer, "Former Russia Spies Are Now Prominent in Business," *New York Times*, December 18, 2007

percent.<sup>8</sup> U.S. Intelligence Agencies shrank because there was no longer a looming threat, and it is presumed by the author that with this reduction in force came a reduction in Russian focused departments based on the perception of world threat at the time. Without linguists and area experts, Russia could become the next Middle East crisis. The United States has learned that when you are least prepared, they attack. This does not mean that Russia is planning an attack on America or U.S. assets, but what this does mean is that Russia could be committing strategic political deceptions and no one may be the wiser. If the United States does not possess the capabilities to study, recognize, and understand Russian strategic political deceptions then how can America prepare itself in order not to be deceived farther down the road? This question alone shows the importance of this thesis and the questions that it will ask concerning Russian strategic political deceptions.

## THE RESEARCH QUESTION

In this thesis the author asks the question, “*How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception, and is it similar to deceptions during the existence of the Soviet Union?*” A strategic political deception threatens the national security of the country on the receiving end of the deception. As defined by the theorist Richards Heuer, a *strategic deception* “aims to manipulate elite perceptions in order to gain competitive

---

<sup>8</sup> Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the US Intelligence Community, *Preparing for the 21st Century: An Appraisal of U.S. Intelligence* (March 1, 1996), 149, <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/int/report.html> (accessed July 21, 2008).

advantage.”<sup>9</sup> This means that the ultimate goal of a strategic deception is to change how those in leadership positions think. This change in leadership perception is in favor of the deceiver. A strategic deception can be either militarily or politically themed.<sup>10</sup> A *strategic political deception*, by this thesis’s author, is a deception created to influence people and organizations who advise policy makers of another country.

There are various examples of known strategic political deceptions throughout history, particularly deceptions that have been enacted by Russia or the former Soviet Union. A few examples, which will be discussed at length in subsequent chapters, are the Trust Operation in the 1920s, the WiN Operation in the 1940s, as well as various disinformation campaigns some of which surrounded the AIDS virus.

What is not known, are those strategic political deceptions occurring since the collapse of the Soviet Union. The lack of knowledge represents a gap in intelligence and information. This gap could be linked to a reduction of Russian linguists as well as experts in the area and/or a reduction in funding for Russian related collection. The approach of this study is to learn from the past about Russia’s actions in the area of strategic political deception in order to identify a present day strategic political deception. The ability to identify strategic political deceptions does not merely consist of recognizing the events that lead up to a deception but also an analysis of the organizations behind such deceptions. There is knowledge of the past but little knowledge of the present organization assisting in these possible deceptions. Few books or reports have been written covering strategic political deception in the post-Cold War

---

<sup>9</sup> Richards J. Heuer. “Strategic Deception and Counterdeception: A Cognitive Approach,” *International Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (June 1981): 294-327.

<sup>10</sup> In Russia a military deception is know as *maskirovka*.

era. In order to discover such deceptions, information will have to be pieced together from the memoirs of KGB officers as well as the description of events in Western newspapers.

## **THE HYPOTHESIS**

This author hypothesizes that *Russia still engages in acts of strategic political deceptions, and organizations which support such deception are just as strong and active as they once were if not more so.* There are various examples that point to the possibility of such deceptions occurring, as well as the assumption that once a country is an intelligence state, it is always an intelligence state. The strategic political deceptions of today may not be a mirror image of yesterday, but there is the possibility that similar characteristics exist between the two time periods of pre-1991 and post-1991.

### **Key Questions**

From the research question, three key questions were presented. This thesis examines the following additional questions:

- What is the organizational structure prior to 1991 and post 1991?
- What are examples of strategic political deception prior to 1991 compared to those post 1991? What are the similarities and trends?

## DEFINING KEY TERMS

A *strategic political deception*, as defined in this thesis, is a deception created to influence people and organizations who advise policy makers of another country. The actions taken by the Russian government when conducting strategic political deceptions are termed *active measures*.

*Active measures* are different from what the United States considers espionage; it is much more than just espionage. Active measures are offensive actions used to “influence the policies of foreign governments, disrupt relations between other nations, undermine confidence in foreign leaders and institutions and discredit opponents”<sup>11</sup> Active measures incorporate various different actions, which include agents of influence, forgeries, covert media placements, controlled media, economic activities, written and oral disinformation, and manipulation of mass organizations.<sup>12</sup>

Active measures can also be classified into white–overt, gray–semi-covert, and black-covert operations.<sup>13</sup> More will be discussed on this classification system in Chapter Four. Strategic political deceptions and the active measures conducted incorporate different branches of the Russian intelligence services. Deceptions can occur inside and outside of Russia, although more primarily outside of Russia because the target is frequently the West and the United States.

---

<sup>11</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*, (United States Information Agency, June 1992) 6-8.



## **SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS**

The aim of this thesis is to determine if Russia still conducts strategic political deceptions against the United States. This thesis will look at two separate time periods throughout its entirety. The first period is from 1919-1991, encompassing the rise of Communism and the Soviet Union. The second period is from 1991 forward, analyzing the years following the fall of Communism and the Soviet Union. This thesis is limited to these time periods in order to adequately compare a defined Soviet rule versus the present day state of Russia and its “democracy.”

This thesis is limited to information available and information written. Much of what is known today about Soviet active measures or Russian strategic political deceptions come largely from defected KGB officers or articles written in journals and current newspapers. It is very hard to determine that a deception is occurring until long after the fact, unless the deception is identified to be occurring at that very moment. The key to a good and successful deception is secrecy. This thesis tries to overcome that hurdle by identifying current strategic political deceptions and comparing them to deceptions in the past, to determine if the characteristics are similar.

## **THESIS OVERVIEW**

In order to understand strategic political deceptions or active measures, Chapter Two will review related literature pertaining to strategic political deceptions as well as the intelligence organization within Russia. Various books and reports have been written

in the past years pertaining to the overall strategic picture of intelligence in Russia. This chapter gives the background information needed to understand the organization behind strategic political deceptions. In Chapter Three, a discussion of the methodology used in the experiment is presented. The methodology describes the historical research and three-part case study that was conducted in order to prove the author's hypothesis correct. Chapter Four studies the history of the organization from the Comintern in 1919 to the founding of the International Department in 1943, through the present day strategic political deception organization. This Chapter also discusses the goals of the organizations conducting strategic political deceptions during each period as well as providing examples of deceptions from that time. The thesis experiment occurs in Chapter Five. The experiment includes three separate studies: a comparison of the organization behind strategic political deceptions, a case study on disinformation, and a case study on influence operations. Each case study uses various characteristics to prove whether the organization or deception is similar to such events in the past. Chapter Six provides a brief summary and review of items covered within the thesis. The Chapter also includes a discussion of implications of the research for the intelligence community as well as recommendations for future research.

Moving forward into this thesis, the goal is the answer the research question as well as the key questions, in order to identify the threat that Russia poses to the Western world today in terms of strategic political deceptions. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the United States is the number one priority of the Russian government, indicating that they will go to great lengths in order to gain prominent status in the world. In previous times, it appeared that Russia was willing to do almost anything in order to

defeat the West. This desire stretched into the realm of deception where seemingly ludicrous stories concerning the Western trafficking of baby body parts from South America were produced in order to deface Western values and convince third world countries that the United States was a monster.<sup>14</sup> The next few chapters will demonstrate the organizations and operations which occurred in the past in order for Russia to believe it was prominent as well as showing that Russia is trying to regain its prominence once more through strategic political deceptions.

---

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 245.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE TO RUSSIAN STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Over the past several decades there has been a substantial amount written about the act of Russian deception and even Russian strategic deception, both political and military. Resources pertaining to the subject of Russian strategic political deceptions such as books and governments reports provide information for the years prior to 1991. Unfortunately, such books and reports do not exist for the years following the collapse of the Soviet Union. This lack of information could, in part, be due to the change in the world following the end of the Cold War. At that time, Russia slowly began to fade in the eyes of the United States as a grave intelligence threat as other countries gained America's attention. The reviewed literature below is divided into two sections. First, books and government documents prior to 1991 are reviewed, while the second section reviews what has been written following 1991. In order to best understand Russian strategic political deception, it is imperative to understand the history of the Russian intelligence state.

## IN THE YEARS PRIOR TO 1991

Russian deception and its intelligence state have existed for years. This can be dated back to times of the Russian czars and its security service the Okhrana.<sup>15</sup> Dr. John J. Dziak authored a book in the late 1980s that documents the history of the KGB. He traces the roots of the Russian KGB intelligence service to the original czar's Okhrana, which evolved into the Cheka under the rule of Vladimir Lenin and the father of the KGB, F. E. Dzerzhinsky. This evolution of the Okhrana to the Cheka occurred in December of 1917.<sup>16</sup> Lenin and Dzerzhinsky together created a counterintelligence state in order to defend Bolshevik Russia against traders, counter-revolutionaries, and the West. With the Cheka carrying out the dirty work of Bolsheviks, the modern Russian nation of fear and deception was born. Although active measures continued to play a role through Lenin and subsequent leaders Dr. Dziak points to a return to the Dzerzhinsky intelligence state following Stalin's death in the late 1950s. This return began the removal and replacement of several heads of the state, as well as the re-organization within the intelligence organization itself.<sup>17</sup> Dr. Dziak's account of the rise of the Cheka and its transformation into the KGB leads to an understanding of how the counterintelligence state of Russia is known today; particularly considering the background of various leaders within the former Russian President Putin's government had a history in the KGB or other branches of the intelligence organization. In his final chapter, Dr. Dziak states, "The counterintelligence state is not going to liberalize itself

---

<sup>15</sup> John J. Dziak, *Chekisty: A History of the KGB* (Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1988), 4.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 145-165.

out of existence.”<sup>18</sup> Although that statement was written in 1988, it demonstrates that the Sovietologists of years past understood the vitality of the intelligence organization within the Soviet Union, and the strength that it would continue to have even after the fall of communism and the rise of a “democracy.”

To continue in understanding the roots of the intelligence organization, the Central Intelligence Agency produced a report that was released by the Security and Intelligence Foundation in 1989 entitled *The Trust*. This document is one of the few items written on the Trust and provides a detailed account of the Operation. The Trust Operation began in 1921 and lasted until around 1927.<sup>19</sup> The advent of the Trust Operation occurred in conjunction with the introduction of Lenin’s New Economic Plan (NEP).<sup>20</sup> The Trust Operation created front organizations and campaigns of disinformation to deceive the West and the monarchists into believing that the Soviet Union and Communism was faltering, only days away from collapse. The disinformation produced by the Trust Operation through pamphlets, news articles, etc, all produced a similar message: “Don’t make war against the USSR or execute acts of terror for great changes are taking place and Russia soon again will become a respectable member of the community of nations.”<sup>21</sup> The disinformation produced by the Trust Operation promoted the Soviet Union, although generally the propaganda produced was false. The Trust Operation is a pure example of a successful Russian strategic political deception, and

---

<sup>18</sup> Dziak, *Chekisty*, 169.

<sup>19</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987), 6.

<sup>20</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The Trust*, ed. Pamela K. Simpkins and K. Leigh Dyer (n.p.: Security and Intelligence Foundation, 1989), 1.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

establishes, as well, the grounds for future operations. The importance lies in the work done by the intelligence services as well as the close relationship that existed between such sources and the government. Similar to Dr. Dziak's *Chekisty, The Trust* report provides a historical perspective that is, as previously mentioned, imperative to the understanding of present day Russia.

In the early fall of 1985, a conference was convened at the Naval Postgraduate School to discuss soviet strategic deception. From this conference a collection of essays dealing with both the political and military deceptions conducted by the Soviet Union were compiled by Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker. The essays written in *Soviet Strategic Deception* mold together to breakdown the history, theory, and organization of Soviet deception. The term soviet deception is extraordinarily broad. It deals with not only military deception or *maskirovka*, but also political deceptions. The editors of *Soviet Strategic Deception* state that a political deception canf come in two overarching forms: perception management, which targets decision makers, public opinion, etc; and intelligence deception, targeting intelligence analysts.<sup>22</sup> The other important factor concerning deception is that it can be planned and conducted in either peacetime or wartime; the Soviets and the Russians are not discriminatory on their timing. Dr. Dziak, who provides the first chapter, "Soviet Deception: The Organizational and Operational Tradition," gives several examples of Soviet deceptions such as the previously mentioned Trust Operation. What is important in this chapter though is that he points to a time around 1959 when the organization behind deception changed. He states that a shift in how the government was run created a need for centralized deception bureaucracy.<sup>23</sup> The

---

<sup>22</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Dailey and Parker, xviii.

Soviet Union was no longer run the by the strong and powerful hand of Stalin and around 1959 there appears to have been a desire to return “to the Leninist counterintelligence culture sans Stalin.”<sup>24</sup> The leadership of the KGB changed hands and priority was placed on “positive, create political activity under the proper direction of the party leadership.”<sup>25</sup>

The collection of essays in *Soviet Strategic Deception* addresses the various types of soviet strategic deceptions as well as providing a few regional examples of deception. In the third chapter of the book, author John Lenczowski identified themes of Soviet strategic deception and disinformation. The author identifies two major themes of deception. The first one being the “Basic Psychological Technique: Exploitation of existing tendencies of thought,” which follows the idea that the Soviets were successful in deception operations because of the West’s own thought process; in other words, we deceive ourselves.<sup>26</sup> The second overarching type of deception is “The Central Deception: the Soviet Union is no longer communist,” where the Soviets tried to convince the world that communism was decreasing and/or virtually disappeared (seen in the Trust Operation).<sup>27</sup> These two major themes of deception both show the ability of the Soviets to easily exploit the Western world, due to the trustworthy nature of the West particularly the United States.

Mr. Lenczowski in his article also identifies twelve Soviet themes of disinformation:

---

<sup>23</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Dailey and Parker, 4.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.



- The Ideology is Dead
- Hawks and Doves in the Kremlin
- The Individual, and Not the Party, Counts in the USSR
- The Soviet Union Has Changed
- Soviet Military Doctrine is Defense-Oriented
- The Soviets Have a Self-Interest in Mutual Arms Control
- The U.S. Is Not Under Attack: The Indirect Approach
- The U.S. is Not Under Attack:” The Direct Approach
- International Communism No Longer Exists
- Exculpatory Themes: The U.S. Military Threat and Soviet Insecurity
- Themes to Keep the United States on the Defensive
- Themes to Keep the U.S. from Taking the Offensive <sup>28</sup>

The identifiable common thread throughout these themes is that communist ideology was on the decline, not important, and/or not as important as the Western world had made it out to be. This thread is seen in the themes of “The Soviet Union Has Changed” and “The Ideology is Dead,” both themes where emphasis is placed on a lack of Communism in the Soviet Union.<sup>29</sup> Occasionally the themes seem to turn the tables on the Western world. Themes such as “The U.S. Military Threat” insinuate that the West has been the cause of much of the conflict between the Soviet Union and the outside world. This is because the Soviet Union led its citizens to believe that it was the West, which placed emphasis on communism and the nuclear arms race.

In an earlier chapter of *Soviet Strategic Deception*, author and theorist Richards J. Heuer discussed what he saw as the three overarching types of strategic deception; active measures, counterintelligence, and *maskirovka*.<sup>30</sup> Many of the themes included from Chapter Three of *Soviet Strategic Deception* are relevant in each of these types of strategic deception. Heuer (as well as other authors previously) pointed to the

---

<sup>28</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Dailey and Parker, 59-71.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 59-60 and 64.

<sup>30</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Dailey and Parker, 21.

misperceptions in the understanding of Soviet deception by the Americans. There is no direct translation of active measures into an American intelligence lexicon, nor does covert action correspond with a specific Soviet ideology.<sup>31</sup> This contributes to the difficulty in the United States' understanding of strategic deceptions. According to Heuer some of this difficulty in understanding comes from the fact that Soviets were able to combine both covert and overt measures in the same operations.<sup>32</sup> Operations are a mixture of the different types, overt, covert, and clandestine. The lesson from Heuer is that when studying Soviet (now Russian) strategic deceptions it is imperative to be cognizant of the different aspects and organizations that conduct deceptions. Deceptions are multi-layered in the plans, using multiple types of active measures (i.e. front organizations and propaganda) and organizations to implement them.

During the 1980s, the United States government began to take a serious and public look at Soviet active measures; reports were produced and hearings were held in the government. One hearing in particular occurred before the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence in the House of Representatives on July 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> in 1982. During this two-day hearing, the Committee on Intelligence heard testimony from John McMahon, the Deputy Director for Central Intelligence and John Stan, Deputy Director Operations, as well as from Martin Portman and James Freilach, both of CIA Operations Directorate. On the second day of hearings, Mr. Stanislav Levchenko, a former KGB major, testified on his experiences and knowledge of the Soviet active measures.<sup>33</sup> When

---

<sup>31</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Dailey and Parker, 47.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 24

<sup>33</sup> Stanislav Levchenko was a KGB major who worked undercover as a journalist for the Russian *New Times* in Tokyo, Japan for numerous years before defecting to the United States in 1979, leaving

asked by the committee chairman what he thought were the most important type of active measures conducted by the KGB, Mr. McMahon stated that he believed that agent-of-influence operations and propaganda were the vital to the Soviet Union.<sup>34</sup> The testimony of all participants was extremely beneficial in the understanding of Soviet active measures, but what is even more important are the exhibits and evidence that were provided to the Committee. Exhibit 1 from the hearing was the “Interagency Intelligence Study: Soviet Active Measures.” This study indicated that the United States was the predominant receptor of Soviet active measures as well as documenting what was considered at that time to be Soviet active measures. These active measures included:

- Manipulation or control of the media
- Written or oral disinformation
- Use of foreign Communist parties and front organizations
- Clandestine radio broadcasting
- Economic activities
- Military operations
- Other political influence operations<sup>35</sup>

The study also hypothesized what would be considered future trends in Soviet active measures:

- Greater attention to security, disarmament, and “peace” issues
- Increased “objectivity” and reasonableness” in propaganda elements of active measures, and a tactical de-emphasis of Communist ideology
- Greater operational sophistication in the manipulation of influence assets and in the production and use of documentary forgeries
- Greater willingness to work with religious groups and non-Communist political parties, as well as greater use of single-issue and ad hoc front groups instead of the older and larger well-known Communist-front organizations
- Continued use of allies, proxies, and surrogates, such as Cuba

---

behind his wife and son in Russia. Levchenko wrote an autobiography, *On the Wrong Side: My Life in the KGB*, and later obtained U.S. citizenship.

<sup>34</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*, 97th Cong., 2nd sess., July 13-14, 1982, 9.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

-Continued opposition to Western instruments of social and economic influence in the Third World, and greater advocacy of the creation of new international institution and organizations – such as a Third World press “order”- that promote Soviet influence<sup>36</sup>

These predictions for future trends created in the 1980s, are important to take note of today as the relationship between Russia and the West continues to grow and change in different ways.

Congressional hearings were not the only documents produced in the 1980s that looked at Soviet active measures. In both the summers of 1987 and 1988, the United States Department of State produced a report entitled, *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87 (and 1987-88)*. The report produced covering the years of 1986-87 explored the changes within the Russian intelligence organization that conducted active measures as well as the disinformation campaigns involving the AIDS epidemic, chemical and biological warfare (CBW), operations in Afghanistan, and the forgeries of various official U.S. documents. One of the most predominant front groups at the time in the 1980s was the World Peace Council (WPC). The WPC was “devoted to promoting the U.S.S.R.’s defense and disarmament proposals and to denigrating those of the United States.”<sup>37</sup> The WPC was created following World War II in the name of peace and coexistence.<sup>38</sup> The World Peace Council is still active today, and in fact held its most recent world congress in Caracas, Venezuela in early April of 2008. On the posters advertising the congress, Caracas was

---

<sup>36</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*, 32.

<sup>37</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, United States Department of State, August 1987, viii.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

claimed to be the “world capital of peace and anti-imperialist struggle.”<sup>39</sup> Those who support the World Peace Council today are not necessarily revolutionaries, trying to overthrow and undermine the Western world. The Council could be viewed, by someone without the appropriate knowledge, as an organization that truly is promoting peace. The idea that such organizations can be created and on a daily basis trick people into believing that they are something they are not, leads into some of the fundamental misconceptions of Soviet strategic deception. It is easy for the Soviets to conduct such deceptions because “Soviet active measures and propaganda take place against a backdrop of legitimate foreign relations activities – economic, diplomatic, and cultural interactions.”<sup>40</sup> The 1986-87 report produced by the State Department concerning active measures included an interview with Mr. Stanislav Levchenko, a former KGB major, who discussed how easily it had been up until that point for the Soviet Union to trick the Western world. He chalks this up to “a factor of elementary naiveté.”<sup>41</sup> This naiveté could almost be called a Western need to see the good in everyone, and not believe in the possibility or the reality of bad. While the Soviets and Russians have a history of being suspicious of everyone and everything, this is not something that has yet engrained in the minds of the American government. At the time of the interview in 1987, Levchenko believed that United States was beginning to learn, particularly because at that time several forgeries of official U.S. government documents had been found and attributed to the Soviets.

---

<sup>39</sup> “World Peace Conference,” World Peace Council, <http://www.wpc-in.org> (accessed June 1, 2008).

<sup>40</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, x.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

During the 1980s, the United States Department of State was not the only author publishing on the Soviet use of propaganda as a type of active measure. In 1984, Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson published a book entitled *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*. The authors pointed to a fundamental difference between Soviet objectives in their actions and objectives of the Western world. The Soviets think in long-term goals, they look far into the future for possible outcomes. The Soviets are also willing to expend all means to reach their final goal; there is no price to big.<sup>42</sup> This idea plays into the different types of active measures and their history. The authors discuss the introduction of propaganda into the Soviet philosophy by Lenin in 1900 with the publication of the newspaper *Iskra (Spark)*.<sup>43</sup> Even though *Iskra* was published at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, propaganda became a primary action used by the Soviets against the Western world. The authors also describe propaganda as having characteristics of “flexibility and adaptability.”<sup>44</sup> Such characteristics have allowed the Soviets to have such high rates of success in the use of propaganda. The authors later described their researched conducted in the analysis of the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* and the propaganda themes that they determined to be important throughout the period of 1960 to 1980.<sup>45</sup> Schultz and Godson were able to isolate ten general themes, all of which were similar to the themes of disinformation addressed by Mr. Lenczowski in the book *Soviet Strategic Deception*. The authors of *Dezinformatsia* further discussed the use of covert political techniques such as agents-of-influence (as previously mentioned by other authors and

---

<sup>42</sup> Richard H. Schultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy* (Washington: Pergman-Brassey's, 1984), 15.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>45</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 54.

within the Congressional hearings), covert propaganda, and disinformation.<sup>46</sup> These covert political techniques also included the World Peace Council and the propaganda that has been produced by the WPC.

Also in the 1980s, David Rees wrote an article entiteled “Soviet Active Measures: The Propaganda War,” in *Conflict Studies*, the journal of the Institute for the Study of Conflict. His ideas seem to have been pulled directly from *Dezinformatsia*, almost a direct summary of what was written by Shultz and Godson. Rees does make a good point in the conclusion of his article stating that, “Lenin viewed Soviet political warfare in the West as a way of decisively weakening his adversaries without using military force.”<sup>47</sup> This concept describes how strategic political deceptions were conducted in the Soviet Union as well as in modern day Russia. Further strategic political deceptions will be discussed in Chapter Four of this thesis.

## IN THE YEARS FOLLOWING 1991

Following the end of the Cold War very little was written about Soviet strategic political deceptions or the active measures used to achieve them. It appeared at the time a new Russian government was being established which would change how Russia operated, particularily considering that the very instiution of Communism that the Soviet Union had been founded under was disappearing as well. Although writings concentering active measures diminshed, the United States Information Agency released a report in the

---

<sup>46</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 54.

<sup>47</sup> David Rees, “Soviet Active Measures: The Propaganda War,” *Conflict Studies* no. 169 (1984), 26.

summer of 1992 entitled, *Soviet Active Measure in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*. This report discussed active measures in the years of turmoil and turnover in Russian. The information presented in the report provided further examples of active measures conducted by the Soviets against the United States. One example is the use of "alarmist themes." These alarmist themes including one that the report entitles "The Russian Winter." In this theme the Soviets tried to garner support from the United States with raising the concern of "How are we (the Russians) going to make it through the coming winter?"<sup>48</sup> This report also gives a detailed description of a typology for active measures discussing the difference between black, gray, and white active measures. The differences in these active measures are described at length in Chapter Four of this thesis. Overall, black active measures described active measures which were covert in nature. Gray active measures are semi-covert and white active measures are primarily overt actions conducted by the Soviet or Russian organization behind strategic political deceptions.<sup>49</sup>

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain there have been various former KGB officers who have come forward and written (or had written about them) various books describing their time within the intelligence organization and the jobs they sustained during that time. Such books like *The Sword and the Shield* and *Commrade J* allow the Western world an opportunity to look into the intelligence organization from an insider's perspective. The new millenium has brought more books such as *Blowing Up Russia: The Secret Plot to Bring Back KGB Terror* by Alexander Litvinenko, the former KGB

---

<sup>48</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*, 16

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 6-8.



officer who died in 2006 of a suspected poisoning. Each of these books confirm to the Western world that strategic political deceptions have occurred in the past, and the possibility of them occurring today is very real. The book *Comrade J*, written by Pete Early, tells the life of Sergei Tretyakov, a SVR colonel, who worked in the United States following the end of the Cold War.<sup>50</sup> In the book there is a discussion of covert active measures used by KGB in the 1970s. One of operations was the emplacement of disinformation into environmental and peace journals about the affects of a nuclear attack, the number one of which affects would create so much dirt in the atmosphere that the sun would be unable to shine again.<sup>51</sup> The author of the book quotes Tretyakov as says that “I was told the Soviet Scientist knew this theory was completely ridiculous. There were no legitimate scientific facts to support it. But it was exactly what Andropov [head of the Russian government at the time] needed to cause terror in the West.”<sup>52</sup> It is accounts such as this one that allow what is already known by the West to be confirmed. It also allows for the West to build a case of Soviet past opposition practices while into possible current deceptions.

## CONCLUSION

Various pieces of work, such as books like Dr. Jack Dziak’s *Chekisty* or the collection of essay entitled *Soviet Strategic Deception*, as well as government reports

---

<sup>50</sup> Pete Early, *Comrade J: The Untold Story of Russia's Master Spy in America After the End of the Cold War* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007), 2.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

produced by the U.S. State Department and Congress have been able to document the existence of strategic political deceptions conducted by the Soviet Union and present day Russia throughout the past sixty years. What is learned from these sources is that the Russian intelligence organization and apparatus dates back to the foundation of the Cheka under the leadership of Lenin and F. E. Dzerzhinsky. It is during the 1980s, that an explosion of information in government reports and hearings appears concerning active measures. This could be in part due to the increase in U.S. intelligence capabilities as well as an increase in KGB defects to the United States. Defectors such as Stanislav Levchenko, Vasili Mitrokhain, and more recently Alexander Litvinenko provide an intimate knowledge of active measures and operations that are conducted under that heading, giving an intimate knowledge that the Western world might never come to know if it was not for their stories. Much of what is known about the operations and the organization is from what they have been able to tell the West.

This review of literature relating to Russian strategic political deception provides an understanding of what is publicly known about strategic political deceptions conducted by the Soviet and Russian intelligence organization. The review is important in answering the thesis's research question "*How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception, and is it similar to deceptions during the existence of the Soviet Union?*" It is important because it provides a background of information in order to better understand the possibility of present day Russian strategic political deceptions.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the history and previous incidents of Russian strategic political deceptions in order to determine whether Russia is conducting such deceptions today. This is an important problem to study, not only because of the potential implications of deceptions against the United States but the affects strategic political deceptions might have on the rest of the world. A deception conducted against the United States can change how they, the United States, views a situation or their policy on a situation, which in turn can affect other countries. This thesis asks the questions “*How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception and is it similar to deceptions during the existence of the Soviet Union?*”

As previously defined in this thesis, a *strategic political deception* is a deception at the highest levels of the echelon that influences the policy makers of another country or territory to think or react in a manner that is congruent with the intentions of the deception maker. The book *Soviet Strategic Deception* defines the objective of soviet deception to “influence the opinions and policies of foreign countries by manipulating their perceptions of Soviet activities and objectives.”<sup>53</sup> In other words, a Russian strategic political deception is aimed to affect the perception of Russian activities and

---

<sup>53</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987), xvii.

objectives. The actions taken by the Russian government when conducting a strategic political deception are termed *active measures*. Active measures include such actions as agents of influence, forgeries, front organizations, and propaganda<sup>54</sup>

Simply by reading the world news one could hypothesize that Russia might possibly be conducting strategic political deceptions in the present. There have been various nefarious activities or events (either linked to Russia or not) in the past few years that might indicate some type of deception activities. These activities include various long-range Russian bomber flights along their Western and Eastern borders. Most recently in February 2008, two Russian bombers were spotted flying within close range of the USS Nimitz in the Pacific Ocean.<sup>55</sup> Another example of a nefarious activity that has made world headlines is the death of former KGB officer Alexander Litvinenko. Litvinenko died in London in November 2006 from what is believed to be poisoning by polonium-210, a radioactive material.<sup>56</sup> Although his death has not been directly linked back to the Russian government or security services, it is widely hypothesized that they may have had a hand in the death, because of Litvinenko's outspoken criticism of the Russian government and (then) Russian President Vladimir Putin.<sup>57</sup>

These activities, which have begun to make world news, led to questions asked by this thesis's author about what such events really were. In the case of the long-range

---

<sup>54</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991* (United States Information Agency, June 1992), 8.

<sup>55</sup> US 'intercepted Russian bombers', *BBC News*, February 12, 2008.  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/ft/-/2/hi/europe/7240197.stm> (accessed July 8, 2008).

<sup>56</sup> Timeline: Litvinenko death case: Ex-Russian agent Alexander Litvinenko died in a London hospital on 23 November 2006 from radiation poisoning, *BBC News*, July 27, 2007.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/6179074.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/6179074.stm) (accessed July 8, 2008).

<sup>57</sup> For more information concerning Alexander Litvinenko and his criticisms of the Russian government, please see his book written shortly before his death entitled, *Blowing Up Russia: The Secret Plot to Bring Back KGB Terror*.

bomber flights, is Russia simply showing that it still has functioning planes with the ability to reach out? The death of Litvinenko asks the question of what Russia's involvement was, and are there more such incidents? Are there other activities that Russia is conducting that the West does not recognize or know about? This leads into the overarching research question of the thesis, which asks, "*How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception, and is it similar to deceptions during the existence of the Soviet Union?*"

From the overall research question emerged several other key questions. These key questions are:

- What is the organizational structure prior to 1991 and post-1991?
- What are the examples of strategic political deception prior to 1991 compared to those post-1991? What are the similarities and trends in these examples?

The author hypothesized that "*Russia still engages in acts of strategic political deceptions and the organizations which support such deception is just as strong as it once was if not more so.*"

In order to answer these questions and prove the hypothesis correct the author used a qualitative based research design involving three case studies. A qualitative research design involves studying an event and the circumstances surrounding that event.<sup>58</sup> Qualitative research design can use various methods of study including the case study. The case study method looks at "a particular individual, program, or event...in-depth for a defined period of time."<sup>59</sup> In this thesis, the case studies allowed the

---

<sup>58</sup> Paul D. Leedy and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 8th ed. (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005), 133.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 135.

identified possible deceptions to be better understood through an in-depth look at the situation. The study included two main parts. The first part was a historical analysis of the organization behind Russian strategic deception. The second part is three separate case studies that compare characteristics. The first case study involves a comparison of the organizations, while the second and third case studies each represent a type of strategic political deception comparing characteristics of the past to characteristics of the present. This design of comparing characteristics was used because specific characteristics were the best indicators in order to determine resemblance in events or the possible lack there of.

The thesis as well as the historical research and case studies (which will be discussed in subsequent paragraphs) were limited to a specific time frame. The key questions discuss two time frames, one prior to 1991 and one post-1991. The deciding date of 1991, which distinguishes between the past and the present, was chosen due to the events that occurred in Russia in 1991, leading to the collapse of communism and the establishment of a new democratic government. Within the thesis itself and the experiments, most of the information is not earlier than 1919. This is also due to another change in political system within Russia. Just prior to 1919, the ruling czar family was overthrown in Russia by a people's revolution. If deception occurred under the czar, it is documented or studied. By limiting this study to the years 1919 through 2008, it allows for the information and events to be relevant and understood by those reading the thesis.

To accomplish the experiment, the author first gathered historical information pertaining to the organization behind Russian strategic political deceptions. This information was gathered by starting with one or two known Soviet deceptions, gathering

information pertaining to them, and branching out in terms of people or organizations involved in the deception. From there, more and more information was learned about the structure and organization of Soviet deception, which in turn led to study of other deception operations. The information collected through research built upon itself lending to other sources and information.

Various books as well as congressional hearings and reports written by the U.S. government were analyzed in order to build the history of the organization prior to 1991. These books and reports include *Lenin and the Comintern* written by Branko Lazitch and Milorad M. Drachkovitch in 1972 and *Soviet Strategic Deception* which is a collection of essays from a conference at the Naval Postgraduate School edited by Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, as well as *Soviet Influence Activities: Active Measures and Propaganda 1986-87 and 1987-88*, and *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991* written by various factions of the United States government. The books and reports just provided only name a few of the resources used, although most are in the realm of being written by Soviet experts, government organizations, or defected former Soviet spies. These resources were used because they provided the most accurate and verifiable history of strategic political deception by the Soviet Union.

Further research was conducted to piece together the organization in the years since the fall of the Iron Curtain (1991 to 2008). There is little information available which details the organization behind strategic political deceptions in modern day Russia.<sup>60</sup> In order to answer the research question the author studies written materials mainly from the recent publication of books by various former KGB officers who have

---

<sup>60</sup>In this thesis, modern day Russia described the years following the collapse of Communism and the end of the Cold War, circa 1991.

defected to the United States or the West, either during the 1980s or after the collapse of the Soviet Union. They included, but not limited to, the previously mentioned Alexander Litvinenko. The history of the organization is important to this thesis because it helps to explain the background and goals of the strategic political deceptions as well as answering the first key questions regarding the organizations.

The historical study of the organization aided in accomplishing the first case study, which studied the characteristics of organizations from the past and present involved in strategic political deception. It is important to note that all of the case studies were conducted in a similar manner. This manner chose known examples from the past (prior to 1991) were chosen as well as one example from the present (post-1991). The known examples are understood as being “known” because they are documented and discussed in history. A list of characteristics was identified through research that pertained to each case study. From there, a comparison was conducted looking at those characteristics of the past examples compared to characteristics of the present example. This was done in order to determine whether the present example fit the mold of the past known examples. If the present example shared similar characteristics with the past, then it was determined that indeed a deception was occurring. If characteristics were not similar then it was evaluated that a deception was not occurring.

The first case study analyzed the organization behind strategic political deceptions. Two known conductors and planners of strategic political deceptions from the past (which were identified in the historical study) were chosen, as was an example from the present. The known conductors of deception in the past were the Comintern, which operated from 1919 to 1943, and the International Department, which operated



from 1943 to 1991. The possible organization of the present that was chosen is the new Presidential Department for Interregional and Cultural Ties. This organization was chosen based on its establishment and announced goals in 2005.<sup>61</sup> Although this new department was chosen, in future times, another department could be used to determine its possible role in Russian strategic political deceptions. The author then identified five common characteristics portrayed by the Comintern and the International Department that were found during the historical research. The characteristics were applied to all three of the organizations to see which characteristics matched and which characteristics did not. Then the list of matched characteristics of the present day possible organization, the Presidential Department for Interregional and Cultural Ties, was compared to the past organizations to see if there were similarities in the characteristics.

The second and third case studies each represented a different type of strategic political deception, and used six examples. Similar to the first case study (although different in the number used) five examples from the past (pre-1991) were chosen while one example from the present was chosen (post-1991). The second case study focused specifically on disinformation campaigns. Disinformation is a “deliberate attempt to deceive public or government opinion; can be oral or written.” This type of deception can be seen in different mediums such a newspaper, radio, television, etc. as propaganda. In this case study the five examples from the past included The Trust Operation (1921-1927), the disinformation campaign that the CIA killed President Kennedy (circa 1964), an Australian map forgery of nuclear targets (1981), the disinformation concerning the creation of the AIDS virus in a U.S. lab (1983), and the disinformation concerning the

---

<sup>61</sup> Putin Appoints Velvet Counterrevolutionary, *Kommersant, Russia's Daily Online*, March 23, 2005. <http://www.kommersant.com/page.asp?id=556859> (accessed June 10, 2008).

trafficking of baby part parts. (1987-88). The example from the present that was chosen is the Washington Post monthly insert, “Russia Beyond the Headlines.” In this case study seven characteristics that pertained to disinformation campaigns were chosen. Similar to the first case study, all six examples were evaluated for each of the seven characteristics. Then the characteristics that matched the present-day example were compared to the characteristics from the past examples to determine if a strategic political deception of disinformation was occurring. These characteristics include offensive foreign policy, primarily true information, primarily false information, anti-US and the West theme, pro-Soviet/Russia theme, government funded, and overt vs. covert operation.<sup>62</sup>

The third case study examined influence operations as a form of strategic political deception. Influence operations are intended to change the perception of a situation or insinuate Soviet policy, while disguising Soviet involvement.<sup>63</sup> Five examples of known influence operations on the part of the Soviet Union were chosen from the past (pre-1991) to compare to a possible influence operation of the present (post-1991). The influence operations chosen for the past are the Trust Operation (1921-1927), the WiN Operation (1947-1952), the World Peace Council (circa 1949), the Soviet Church, and the role of the KGB operative Arne Herlov Petersen (1970s-80s). The example from the present is the poisoning of the Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko in the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential election. In this case study five characteristics that pertained to disinformation campaigns were chosen, and the same manner of the second case study

---

<sup>62</sup> These characteristics will be discussed at length in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

<sup>63</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1987-88* (United States Department of State, August 1988).

the characteristics were matched and then compared. The characteristics in this case study include offensive foreign policy, targets anti-Revolutionary/Soviet/Russia, Black/Covert Operation (indicating no direct linkage to the Soviet or Russian government), anti-US and the West theme, and pro-Soviet or Russia theme.<sup>64</sup>

The findings of each of the case studies were communicated by a graph. This graph lists the characteristics on the right side of the graph while running each of the examples chronologically across the top. The characteristics that apply to each of the examples are marked with the figure “X.” If an “X” does not exist on the graph and that frame is blank, that is an indicator showing that the characteristic did not pertain to the example. This graph method allowed for easy comparison between the examples pre-1991 to the one example post-1991. In possible future research, this allows for other post-1991 examples to lined up at the end of the graph and compared easily.

The discussion of strategic political deceptions conducted by Russia is not one that will die down soon, although the understanding and knowledge of them may never be sufficient. In writing this thesis and conducting the experiment, the author is hoping to provide indicators and characteristics that could be used in the future to determine whether a strategic political deception exists. There is the chance for false positives, but that is also the nature of deception itself. It is important for the West, specifically the United States, to continue to study, understand, and look for Russian strategic political deceptions. The United States is still considered “Priority No.1” by the Russians.<sup>65</sup> This indicates that America is never far from the next possible deception by the Russians.

---

<sup>64</sup> These characteristics will be discussed at length in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

<sup>65</sup> Julie Anderson, “The HUMINT Offensive from Putin's Chekist State,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 277.

## CHAPTER 4

### **THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS: THE ORGANIZATION BEHIND THE DECEPTION, 1919 TO PRESENT DAY**

*“Comrades, our entire system of ideological work should operate as a well-arranged orchestra in which every instrument has a distinctive voice and leads its theme, while harmony is achieved by skillful conducting. The main demands on party leadership of ideological work are constantly to check the tone of propaganda against our policy goals and people’s interests, and to ensure the ‘word becomes deed,’ as Lenin put it. Propaganda is called upon to embrace every aspect of social life and every social group and region and to reach every individual.” - Konstantin Chernenko, 1983<sup>66</sup>*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In order to best understand strategic political deception it is imperative to understand where such deceptions originated from through out the years. The previous chapters discussed the overall knowledge of Soviet deception, but that is not enough to comprehensively understand the issue. Even though the security and intelligence services of Russia and the Soviet Union are internationally recognized elements, it is important to remember where they originated. These elements existed even before the October Revolution of 1917 and the change in government; they were just not Communist services at that time. As mentioned in Chapter Two, the czars had their own security

---

<sup>66</sup> Herbert Romerstein, “Soviet Active Measures and Propaganda: Influence Activities in the Gorbachev Era,” *Media Report, The Mackenzie Institute* no. 17 (1989).

service, the Okhrana.<sup>67</sup> Such organizations were not new or unique to Russia in 1917. The roots of the present day intelligence services and organization that conduct strategic political deceptions (or active measures) are traced back to Lenin and the beginning of communism in Russia.

In this chapter, the organizational history of the organization that conducts “classic active measures” will be discussed, as well as overarching goals of each period. To the author of this thesis’s knowledge, the history of the organization from 1919 through present day has never been pulled together in a coherent whole. Less is currently known about the present day organization as compared to knowledge of the past organization. There are three major periods through out the history of the organization. The first period is the foundation of the Comintern, the second is the dissolution of the Comintern and the rise of the International Department, and the third phase is the organization following the fall of communism.

### **THE COMINTERN, 1919-1943**

The history of the organization behind strategic political deceptions begins with the foundation of the Comintern. In March of 1919, Lenin and his supports founded the Comintern, or Communist International. The Comintern, also known as the Third International, was a continuation of the work down by the Second International, and its predecessor the First International. Each of these “Internationals” were periods of evolution and change within the Socialist and Communists movements, in Russia as well as Western and Eastern Europe. The Internationals acted as an organization of revolution

---

<sup>67</sup> John J. Dziak, *Chekisty: A History of the KGB* (Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1988), 4.

for Communism. The First International was formed in 1871 (or 1874 depending on the source) as a movement “from what was not Marxist.”<sup>68</sup> Over a decade later, in 1889, the Second International replaced the First International following another evolution in politics and society.<sup>69</sup> The foundation of the Comintern, or Third International, is noted as being different because it did not progress out of a peaceful movement, it was the result of revolution. A second difference that has been noted is that the Third International brought about change from the top down, instead of being moved from the bottom up. This difference leads directly to the philosophies of Lenin and the Bolshevik Party.<sup>70</sup>

The original goal of the Comintern was to bring together and oversee the various Communist parties throughout the world, as well as promoting the virtues of Communism. Following the foundation of the Third International, a Communist group could not exist until Lenin and the Comintern approved its status. The flaw in the beginning was that many of the Communist groups around the world did not actually exist or were only in their fundamental stages of creation when the Comintern was formed.<sup>71</sup> For at least two or three years prior to the founding, Lenin had been repeating repeatedly that the Second International had died in its tracks, and the Third International was already upon the world.<sup>72</sup> There was some opposition to the establishment of the

---

<sup>68</sup> *The Comintern: Historical Highlights: Essays, Recollections, Documents*, ed. Milorad M. Drachkovitch and Branko Lazitch (New York: Frederick A. Praegar Publishers, 1966), 5.

<sup>69</sup> Branko Lazitch and Milorad M. Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 202.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

Third International, but it seems from history that the more Lenin repeated that the Third International already existed, the more it seemed true to be in the ears and the eyes of the world.

In the first year of inception, the Comintern not only propagated propaganda, disinformation, and secret activities, but the Comintern itself was almost a form of propaganda.<sup>73</sup> There were very few members of the Comintern, and many of the actions conducted were meant to convince the world that the Comintern was a functioning world body bringing together Communists and Communist values. There were also actions to convince outsiders that Communist revolution was on the rise in the 1920s. Before going further into discussing the actions of the Comintern, it is important to discuss propaganda and its role prior to the Comintern.

Propaganda is seen as a useful tool due to its ability to reach out to large audiences. At the turn of the century in Russia and Europe, rarely other sources could collaborate or disagree with misinformation. Propaganda is also easy because it does not have to be a complete fabrication. The use of propaganda was not new to Russia at the advent of the Comintern; the Bolsheviks had been using propaganda as a tool for several years. In September of 1914, Lenin was released from internment and in the following years he frequently debated those who opposed his ideas and thoughts for the future of politics and society in Russian press.<sup>74</sup> The press, in various locations, published many of Lenin's theses, letters, and ideas; these publications could be considered the early use of propaganda. Further propaganda was used in Switzerland in 1915 as well as the

---

<sup>73</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 135.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

publication of pamphlets outlining Lenin's fight against the Zimmerwaldists in 1917.<sup>75</sup> It appears that in the fight for revolution and Communism, propaganda was an extremely useful tool for the Bolsheviks, one that appeared to have been priceless for them – money was not a problem. Two million rubles was granted to the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs (NKID) to distribute propaganda pamphlets amongst soldiers. In fact in early 1918, the propaganda work was placed directly under the new Department for International Propaganda of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs.<sup>76</sup> The Bolsheviks and Lenin understood the usefulness in distributing printed materials in order to move their message outside of the Russian borders. The letters, theses, and speeches, which were printed in newspapers such as *Izvestia*, *Iskra*, and *Pravda*, only assisted the Bolsheviks in their goals of Communist revolution in Russia and Europe at that time.<sup>77</sup>

Although propaganda was the overarching tool used by the Comintern, the newspapers were not the only technique used as a means to disseminate propaganda and disinformation. Lenin "believed that preparation for the revolution must start with well-conducted agitation and propaganda from within the central party organization."<sup>78</sup> Cover organizations as well as agents of influence were used as means of deception to spread the party line. The Red Cross was used as cover to place Russian agents within Europe in order to disseminate propaganda, as well as the use of Soviet Ambassadors to the West.<sup>79</sup> Emissaries were sent to Western and Eastern Europe, the United States, as well as Asia to

---

<sup>75</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 22.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 33.

<sup>77</sup> The word *pravda* in Russian translates directly to the English word, *truth*.

<sup>78</sup> Lazitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 293.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.



establish Comintern branches.<sup>80</sup> These Comintern branches worked to unite the various groups that would support Communism as well as distributing “information” and supporting the idea of people’s revolution in the country they were working. These branches were virtually unknown to the country where they were housed. One of the best examples of these branches was the Western European Secretariat (W.E.S.), which was based in Berlin, working to bring together the various groups in Germany.<sup>81</sup> The W.E.S. “was the principal center for the dissemination of Communist propaganda in Western Europe.”<sup>82</sup> Although other branches were established, none seem to have been as successful as the W.E.S.; many were shut down shortly after being opened.

As time progressed and revolutions did not occur in Europe, the Comintern was forced to change some of its tactics. Due to the lack of revolutions, Russia became the only member of the Comintern, even though it was meant to be an organization of Communist groups representing various countries. This lack of other countries helped to evolve the Comintern into a part of the Soviet government.<sup>83</sup> This change in course occurred around the time of the implementation of Lenin’s New Economic Policy (NEP) in 1921, and the creation of the USSR (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics).<sup>84</sup> It is also noted that there was a certain “disappearance of candor” with Lenin around this time period. No longer were his works, such as theses, speeches, and texts, distributed, they

---

<sup>80</sup> Lazitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 147.

<sup>81</sup> Lenin had always viewed Germany as the key to Communist revolution in the West.

<sup>82</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 181.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>84</sup> Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 6.

were kept behind closed doors.<sup>85</sup> The Comintern also ceased to be a “public” and known organization.

In the late spring of the following year, Lenin was partially paralyzed due to a stroke and his roles within the Comintern and other organizations were reduced, although he did make an appearance at the Fourth Congress of the Comintern in the fall of 1922.<sup>86</sup> In January of 1924, Lenin passed away, and shortly after Josef Stalin took a more active role than previously had in the Comintern. Stalin’s role continued to increase in the Comintern until 1929 when he took control of the organization, although leaving the details up to his “henchmen”.<sup>87</sup> The hierarchy of the Comintern consisted of the ECCI, or Executive Committee of the Communist International, under which was the Little Bureau (or Commission) and the Secretariat.<sup>88</sup> It was believed though that the Little Commission (*malaia komissiiia*) was the “real directing organ” where Stalin made the ultimate decisions, while the Secretariat only existed for formality purposes.<sup>89</sup> Although there were leadership heads of the Comintern, it can be assumed that they were mainly for show. The Comintern had been founded with thought and conversation, but with Stalin in charge those two actions ceased to exist.<sup>90</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 147.

<sup>86</sup> Branko Lazitch and in collaboration with Milorad M. Drachkovitch, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973), 220.

<sup>87</sup> Lazitch, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*, 382.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, xvii.

<sup>89</sup> *The Comintern: Historical Highlights: Essays, Recollections, Documents*, ed Drachkovitch and Lazitch, 59.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

In 1935, the Comintern, under the leadership of Stalin, was instructed to strengthen communism in non-communist areas.<sup>91</sup> Whether this worked or not is unknown because shortly after that instruction began the great purges implemented by Stalin. Stalin was an extremely paranoid person, and feared anyone around him who might disagree. Stalin laced the Comintern with Cheka/OGPU and Secret Police in order to find dissidents. Shortly thereafter came “Stalin’s Comintern genocide.”<sup>92</sup> There was tremendous turnover in those who worked for the Comintern during Stalin’s great purges. Stalin’s ultimate goal was to have under him a group that he could trust, and be assured would not work against him or try to over throw him.

In the years following the purges the Comintern remained under the control of Stalin, even though his role was from behind closed doors. In May of 1943, Stalin dissolved the Comintern.<sup>93</sup> Documents translated state in the final order of the Comintern that the fight within the individual countries in the “labor movement,” was too complicated to be overseen by an international organization.<sup>94</sup> It is important to note that four years later in 1947, following the end of World War II, the Cominform was established and was assumed the successor to the Comintern. It was called the “new international communist organ” with the ultimate goal of “establishing a communist

---

<sup>91</sup> *The Comintern: Historical Highlights: Essays, Recollections, Documents*, ed Drachkovitch and Lazitch, 124.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*,172.

<sup>93</sup> Lazitch, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*, 382

<sup>94</sup> “Dissolution of the Communist International,” *The Communist International, 1919 - 1943*, <http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/dissolution.htm> (accessed June 3, 2008).

dictatorship in all countries of Eastern Europe.”<sup>95</sup> The Cominform did not last long; it dissolved in 1948, and officially disappeared in 1956.<sup>96</sup>

It is also important to keep in mind that while the organization behind Russian active measures (or strategic political deceptions) can trace its history directly back to the Comintern, at the same time the predecessor to the KGB, the Cheka (All Russian Extraordinary Commission to Combat Counterrevolution and Sabotage) was created. As previously mentioned in Chapter Two (and earlier in this chapter), the Cheka was an evolution from the czar’s security services, the Okhrana, “the Cheka came into existence in response to the conditions that arise when a minority is determined to rule alone.”<sup>97</sup> Vladimir Lenin and Felix Dzerzhinsky formed the Cheka in December 1917, and based its original responsibilities to domestic operations.<sup>98</sup> As the demands of Russia evolved as did the objectives of the Cheka. The Cheka was particularly skilled at using *agent provocateurs* in order to lure anti-Bolsheviks and counter-revolutionaries into traps (and/or the Soviet Union itself). The Cheka ran the Trust Operation, which was previously discussed in Chapter Two of this thesis.<sup>99</sup> Prior to the 1940s though the Cheka’s role was primarily focused on “suppressing counterrevolutionary forces.”<sup>100</sup> The roles of the Cheka continued to evolve as was as its organization, eventually becoming

---

<sup>95</sup> *The Comintern: Historical Highlights: Essays, Recollections, Documents*, ed Drachkovitch and Lazitch, 256.

<sup>96</sup> Mark Kramer, “The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy,” *Soviet Studies* 42, no. 3 (July 1990), 430.

<sup>97</sup> Dziak, *Chekisty*, 21.

<sup>98</sup> Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 24

<sup>99</sup> The Trust Operation will be discussed extensively in Chapter 5.

<sup>100</sup> Richard H. Schultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy* (Washington: Pergman-Brassey's, 1984), 21

the GPU, then the OGPU and the KGB (with various merging in-between).<sup>101</sup> As previously, mentioned Dr. Dziak provides one of the most comprehensive histories of the Cheka in his book *Chekisty*. In Appendix E of the book, Dr. Dziak provides an excellent and extremely detailed chart depicting the evolution of the Cheka from Lenin's times through Stalin and the 1970s.<sup>102</sup> Although the history of the KGB is not the focus of this thesis, its role in strategic political deceptions is important as well its own rising to understand such deceptions.<sup>103</sup>

## **THE INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT AND THE ACTIVE MEASURES ORGANIZATION, 1943 – 1991**

In 1943, as the Comintern was dissolving, the International Department was created.<sup>104</sup> It appears that the International Department was intended have similar roles to those of the Comintern. In the beginning though the actual roles and functions of the International Department were publicly unknown. For a period, between it's founding and Stalin's death, the International Department did take over the role of liaison between Communist parties in foreign countries. This role changed though when the Department for Liaison with Communist and Workers' Parties of Socialist Countries was formed as

---

<sup>101</sup> Dziak, *Chekisty: A History of the KGB*. 184

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 184-185.

<sup>103</sup> A chart will be provided towards the end of this chapter showing the evolution of the KGB.

<sup>104</sup> There is a conflicting report in the book *Dezinformatsia* that the International Department was not founded until 1957 upon the break up of the Foreign Affairs Department into three separate sections, one of which was the International Department. *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*, 22.

part of the Central Committee. The new department assumed the responsibility of acting liaison with ruling Communist parties.<sup>105</sup>

Many of the changes that occurred in the International Department during the 1950s came to be under the leadership of Boris Ponomarev. Ponomarev had previously worked for the Comintern, first writing articles in the 1930s, and then working in the ECCI, managing to survive the great “Stalin Comintern genocide.”<sup>106</sup> During the 1950s, the Soviet Union became more prevalent in Third World countries due to the work done by the International Department, including work with Communist parties and the support of front organizations in such areas.<sup>107</sup> The role of the International Department was not limited to front organizations or the period of the 1950s. During the 1980s, the Soviet Union continued to work in Third World countries including various areas in Africa where disinformation and propaganda concerning the AIDS virus was distributed.<sup>108</sup> The objectives of the operations conducted by the International Department, as well as the entire organization for active measures, continued to evolve throughout time as changes occurred in world politics. Operations were not limited to liaisons with foreign communist parties.

The evolution of the active measures organization during the Cold War consisted of three departments under the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) Secretariat. The chart below depicts the Soviet organizational structure for active measures.

---

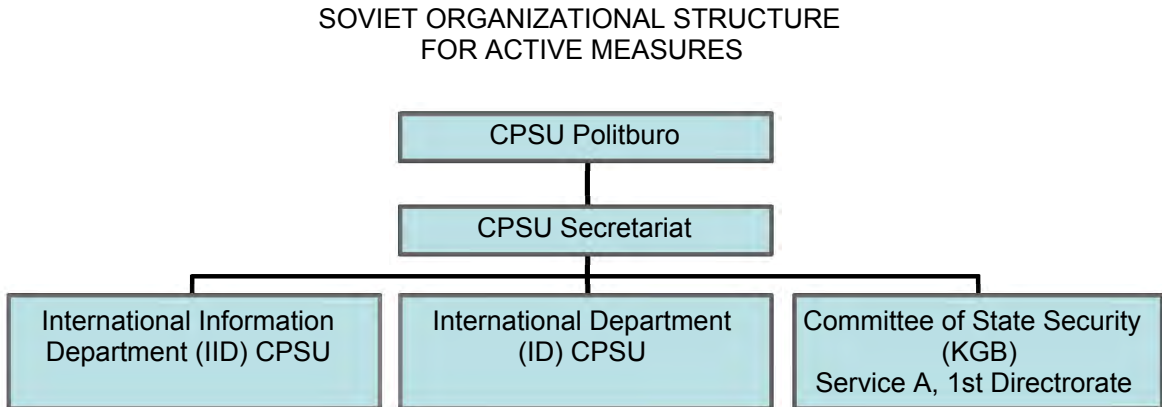
<sup>105</sup> Kramer, “The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy,” 430.

<sup>106</sup> Lazitch, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*, 318.

<sup>107</sup> Kramer, “The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy,” 431.

<sup>108</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87* (United States Department of State, August 1987).

**Chart 3.1 Soviet Organizational Structure for Active Measures, circa 1950s**



Source: House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*, 97th Cong., 2nd sess., July 13-14, 1982.

All three departments that came about during this evolution reported directly to the CPSU Secretariat. These three departments were the International Information Department (also known as the Ideology Department), the International Department, and the KGB. Each of these departments had their own roles. During the Cold War, active measures appear to have been well coordinated and integrated. The KGB frequently implemented operations while working in congruency with the International Information Department and the International Department. Frequently the First Directorate would work to emplace and support organizations used for propaganda. Final approval for operations rested with the Politburo and the Secretariat.<sup>109</sup> The International Information Department (IID) was the newest branch of the three, created in 1978 in order to assist in the creation of themes and the production of propaganda. The creation of the IID allowed the International Department to focus on the various Communist groups and front

---

<sup>109</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87.*

organizations under its control.<sup>110</sup> Each of these departments typically handled a different type of active measures whether it was categorized as white, gray, or black. The below table depicts the type of active measure and the action associated with it.

**Table 3.1 Classification of Active Measures**

<u>TYPE OF ACTIVE MEASURES</u>	<u>ACTIONS</u>
BLACK Active Measures (KGB) (Covert)	Agents of Influence Forgeries Covert media placements Controlled media
GRAY Active Measures (ID) (Semi-Covert/Overt)	Foreign Communist Parties Front Organizations Friendship Societies Soviet NGOs
WHITE Active Measures (IID) (Overt)	News Media (ie. TASS, <i>Pravda</i> , Novosti Press Agency - APN, Radio Moscow, Radio Peace and Progress) Information Department in Soviet Embassies

Source: *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991* (United States Information Agency, June 1992), 6-8.

As shown in the table above, the KGB's Service A, First Directorate was in charge of black or covert active measures, indicating that they were clandestine in nature and could not be traced back to the KGB or the Soviet Union. These operations consisted of agents of influence, forgeries, and covert media placements. Although the main target was the United States, active measure operations or strategic political deceptions existed in various places such as Japan, Great Britain, and various Third World Countries.<sup>111</sup> In fact, 35% of Soviet officials stationed abroad in the early 1980s were undercover KGB

<sup>110</sup> Ladislav Bittman, *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation: An Insider's View* (Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985), 44.

<sup>111</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*, 97th Cong., 2nd sess., July 13-14, 1982. Some specific operations will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this thesis.



agents.<sup>112</sup> Frequently KGB agents portrayed the cover of Russian journalists. By representing themselves as a journalist they were able to accomplish two things. First, they were able to obtain a certain level of access and knowledge of officials of whose country they were stationed in. Secondly, the “journalist” was able to place stories into the foreign press; stories which consist of disinformation or propaganda. Disinformation does not have to consist of an entire piece of lies; it can only be a small percentage in order to create influence. KGB officers were not only sent to be journalists but they became representatives at the United Nations as well as scientists, educators, and academics.<sup>113</sup> Forgeries were also a tremendous part of the operations that fell under the KGB. Such forgeries included documents between American officials as well as documents from American officials to the NATO Secretary General and others. Although several forgeries were caught, there is still an unknown amount that slipped by the Western governments.<sup>114</sup>

Gray active measures, as shown in Table 3.1, were semi-covert and primarily handled by the International Department. This type of semi-covert operation consisted of front organizations as well as the continuation of their previous role in acting as a liaison between the Soviet government and the foreign Communist groups. Some of the international front organizations supported by the International Department include the World Peace Council (WPC), the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL).<sup>115</sup>

---

<sup>112</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*.

<sup>113</sup> Bittman, *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation*, 27.

<sup>114</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*.

<sup>115</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 24-25.

White active measures, as shown in Table 3.1, were overt actions supervised by the International Information Department (later becoming the Ideology Department in the late 1980s); the direct relation and control between the Soviet news services and the Soviet government made these actions possible. One of the departments within the Novosti Press Agency (APN) actually specialized in active measures.<sup>116</sup>

During the late 1980s, the role of the International Department itself expanded under Gorbachev's leadership. There was extensive reorganization that occurred granting the International Department its old tasks of overseeing all Communist parties throughout the world (regardless of whether or not it was a ruling Communist party). The Department was actually moved under the new Commission on International Policy.<sup>117</sup> Although its organization changed, active measures appear to have continued from assisting Gorbachev and the new *glasnost* policies of the 1980s to the production of various books that questioned the purposes of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). There was also the strong disinformation campaign against the AIDs virus, suggesting that it was created by the United States on purpose, a false story of the trafficking of baby body parts, and the various campaigns to influence the United Nations.<sup>118</sup> The International Information Department also underwent an organizational change, becoming the Ideological Department and assuming responsibility for culture, science and education.<sup>119</sup> Chart 3.2 below depicts the new structure of the organization behind

---

<sup>116</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991* (United States Information Agency, June 1992), 120.

<sup>117</sup> Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," 442.

<sup>118</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1987-88* (United States Department of State, August 1988).

active measures during the late 1980s. The three main departments that conducted strategic political deceptions were placed under commissions to oversee the work being completed.

**Chart 3.2 Soviet Organizational Structure for Active Measures, late 1980s**



Source: Herbert Romerstein, “Soviet Active Measures and Propaganda: Influence Activities in the Gorbachev Era,” *Media Report, The Mackenzie Institute* no. 17 (1989).

The late 1980s saw changes within the active measures organization, but at the same time, change was beginning throughout Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. The Berlin Wall fell in December of 1989, followed shortly by unrest within the Soviet Union. In 1991, Communism fell and Boris Yeltsin was elected as Russia’s first “democratic” president.<sup>120</sup> The entire USSR disintegrated with various countries being granted independence from the Soviet Union. These events signaled the end of the Cold

---

<sup>119</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1987-88*, 24.

<sup>120</sup> Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 24.

War and a change to the formation of government and intelligence in Russia. This change occurred in the fundamentals of the government and stretch from the intelligence and security branches to social services. The difference in fundamentals was between a communist founded country and that of democratically based government.

### **ACTIVE MEASURES ORGANIZATION FOLLOWING THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR, 1991 TO THE PRESENT**

Following the disintegration of the USSR, came eight years of democratically elected president Boris Yeltsin. During the Yeltsin presidency the KGB was broken up, reorganized, and then organized again. It went through several transitions from the KGB to the Ministry of Security (MB) in 1992 to the Federal Counterintelligence Service, or SVK, in 1993, and then finally to the Federal Security Service, or FSB, in 1995, which now focuses its work domestically.<sup>121</sup> The chart below depicts a more consolidated version of the history of the KGB and security services. The chart shows the evolution of the KGB in 1954 through its change to the FSK in 1991, followed by its evolution into the FSB in 1995 and the splintering off of various other agencies from 1995 through 2003. As the chart will describe, President Putin has been working to consolidate the various intelligence agency into one or two branches. President Putin did this as a means to curb many of the problems that are created when there are too many agencies doing the same job. The intelligence organization had become “a mere shadow of its former

---

<sup>121</sup> Alexander Litvinenko and Yuri Felshtinnksy, *Blowing Up Russia: The Secret Plot to Bring Back KGB Terror* (New York: Encounter Books, 2007), xxiii.

menacing self” when it was broken into various different groups.<sup>122</sup> By consolidating the agencies, President Putin is clearly trying to gain a stronger intelligence organization.

**Table 3.2 The Evolution of Russian Intelligence Agencies, 1954 to Present**

↓ <b>KGB, 1954</b>	Encompassed all domestic and foreign intelligence, counter-intelligence, internal security (equivalent to the FBI), communications security and non-military forces (including border guards and government officials security).
↓ <b>FSK, 1991</b>	As the post Soviet successor the KGB, responsibilities and jurisdictions remained identical.
↓ <b>FSB, 1995</b>	Soon split into a slew of other agencies each independent of one another and no longer under the FSB umbrella. (Other intelligence branches such as the Military Intelligence, GRU, also existed outside of the FSB and new agencies.)
↓ ← <b>FSB</b>	FEDERAL SECURITY SERVICE Main domestic counterespionage agency
↓ ← <b>FSO</b>	FEDERAL GUARD SERVICE Oversaw Security for government officials
↓ ← <b>FBS</b>	FEDERAL BORDER SERVICE Oversees the 400,000 border guards
↓ ← <b>SVR</b>	FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE Main foreign espionage and counterespionage agency
↓ ← <b>FAPSI</b>	FEDERAL AGENCY OF GOVERNMENTAL COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION Oversaw communication channels, monitoring telephone and Internet activity
↓ ← <b>FSB</b>	PRESIDENTIAL SECRET SERVICE Oversaw security for the President and his family, and also spied on the other intelligence braches, reporting directly to the President
↓ → <b>UNIFIED</b> <b>2003 to Present</b>	Russian President Vladimir Putin has been consolidating power back under the FSB, brining FAPSI, FBS, FSO, and the Presidential Secret Service back under one umbrella, and planning to consolidate the remaining agencies
<b>FSI</b>	In 2008, the federal Service of Investigations will be created as a splinter of the FSB. It will consolidate all investigating department and enforcement bodies of Russia.

Source: Russia: The Evolution of the FSB, *STRATFOR*, March 18, 2008. [http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia\\_evolution\\_fsb?ip\\_auth\\_redirect=1](http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia_evolution_fsb?ip_auth_redirect=1) (accessed July 6, 2008).

<sup>122</sup> Russia: The Evolution of the FSB, *STRATFOR*, March 18, 2008. [http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia\\_evolution\\_fsb?ip\\_auth\\_redirect=1](http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia_evolution_fsb?ip_auth_redirect=1) (accessed July 6, 2008).

Although the SVR and the FSB do have ties directly back to the KGB which took part in strategic political deception, what is noticeably missing on the table above are any form of International or Ideological Departments, the two departments which had a strong hand in conducting active measures during the Cold War. It can only be assumed that active measures has continued in Russia regardless of the political or economic situation within Russia; it is just not well documented in unclassified forums at this point. Former Russian President Putin (now Prime Minister Putin) was a KGB officer himself, and it is estimated that the intelligence service, military and otherwise, have strengthened within Russia under his administration.<sup>123</sup> In fact, in the summer of 2007, “Putin commended Russia’s foreign intelligence service (SVR) and ordered the SVR to ‘increase its capabilities, as demanded by the international situation and internal political interests.’”<sup>124</sup> Time Magazine reported in early 2006 that a senior U.S. intelligence official had told them that Russia is running at least 100 known spies under official covers in the United States.<sup>125</sup> This number does not take into consider the number of unknown spies as well as the number of spies being running in other Western countries. Although no names a specifically written, the article also mentions the possible use of front organizations or companies used by the Russians in order to acquire information about American military technology.<sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup> Julie Anderson, “The HUMINT Offensive from Putin's Chekist State,” *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2007): 277.

<sup>124</sup> Pavel Felgenhauer, “Kremlin Saber Rattling Increase Ahead of SCO Summit,” *Eurasia Daily Monitor, Jamestown Foundation* 4, no. 150 (August 2, 2007) <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/2007-167.30.cfm> (accessed July 6, 2008).

<sup>125</sup> Timothy J. Burger and Brian Bennett, “The Russians Are Coming,” *Time*, January 30, 2005. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1022559,00.html> (accessed July 6, 2008).

<sup>126</sup> Burger and Bennett, “The Russians Are Coming.”

The mention of the possibility of such front organization as well as the perceived number of “official” spies operating in the United States leads to the very strong possibility that strategic political deceptions are still occurring even if there are not known organizations within the structure of the FSB. Several events are hypothesized to have been a form of strategic political deception. One of these events is the planned apartment bombing in Ryazan, Russia in September 1999. Following a series of apartment bombings in Moscow, a bomb was discovered by an occupant in an apartment building in the Russian town of Ryazan. After the bomb was discovered and questions occurred about those seen emplacing the device, the Russian security services claimed that they had placed the bomb as part of a training exercise.<sup>127</sup> This led to even more questions asking why would the intelligence and security services conduct such an exercise and were they actually planning on setting off the bomb had they not been caught? Was the plan to blame the terrorists for this bombing as well as the previous ones? In retrospect, was this an example of a new strategic political deception conducted inside of Russia?

A more recent example that possibly shows the resurgence and strength of the intelligence and security services in Russia is the recent death of the former KGB Lieutenant Colonel, Alexander Litvinenko. Litvinenko believed he had been poisoned by Russian intelligence services because he had spoken out against the Russian government. Before Litvinenko died, he published a book describing what he believed to be recent actions of the Russia intelligence services.<sup>128</sup> There is also a hypothesis that the cartoons

---

<sup>127</sup> World: Europe, *BBC News*, September 24, 1999. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/456848.stm> (accessed July 6, 2008).

<sup>128</sup> Litvinenko and Felshtinnksy, *Blowing Up Russia*.

published in the Danish newspaper depicting the Prophet Mohammad may have in fact been an act of the SVR.<sup>129</sup> Going further, could the imprisonment of former Yuokes Oil man Mikhail Khodorkovsky in 2005 have been an active measure on the part of the FSB to undermine those of wealth within Russia? Is there propaganda being published concerning the status of Russia, its economy and democratization? If such propaganda is occurring, as well as the above-mentioned actions, what organization is conducting such operations? Is it the SVR and FSB, or is there a new organization involved in strategic political deceptions?

Although not widely discussed in Western press, in 2005, then Russian president Putin created the Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries. This new department was subordinated under Dmitry Medvedev, who is now the current Russian President. Little is known of the department, although a quote from the first department head, Modest Kolerov, was published stating, “Russia is to prove to the neighbors that it is beaming European values even to the greater extent than the European Union itself.”<sup>130</sup> When the department was established the Russian press headlined the articles discussing the department creation as “Putin Appoints Velvet Counterrevolutionary.”<sup>131</sup> It is believed that the goal of the department is to reach out to former soviet territories. It is also believed that this reaching out focuses towards Pro-Russian groups in order to prevent further revolutions towards the West. If this organization is trying prevent pro-Western revolutions in former Soviet territories, such

---

<sup>129</sup> Thomas Boghardt, “Active Measures: The Russian Art of Disinformation,” *AIRSHO Magazine*, October 2006, 20-26.

<sup>130</sup> Putin Appoints Velvet Counterrevolutionary, *Kommersant, Russia's Daily Online*, March 23, 2005. <http://www.kommersant.com/page.asp?id=556859> (accessed June 10, 2008).

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.



as the title of the article mentioned above suggests, then this new organization could possibly be taking over the role that was left void when the International and Ideological Departments shut their doors in 1991.

## CONCLUSION

Strategic political deceptions, also known as active measures, have played a role throughout the history of Russia and the Soviet Union. Vladimir Lenin and the Bolshevik party, in their fight to gain power of Russia at the turn of the 20th century, used both front organizations and propaganda in order to influence people and governments around the world. As the Soviet Union went through various transformations under the different leaderships from Lenin to Josef Stalin and forward, as did the organization that handled active measures. Originally, the Comintern and the KGB predecessor the Cheka conducted strategic political deceptions. Following World War II, the International Department along with the International Information Department (later becoming the Ideological Department) and the KGB conducted strategic political deceptions. These deceptions included front organizations, propaganda, and agents of influence to name only a few.<sup>132</sup> Today's Russian intelligence services have grown stronger than ever under the power of Vladimir Putin.<sup>133</sup> Russian spies are still run in the West as well as possible front organizations.<sup>134</sup> It can be presumed that they will only grow stronger under the new presidency of Dmitry

---

<sup>132</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*, 6-8.

<sup>133</sup> Anderson, "The HUMINT Offensive from Putin's Chekist State."

<sup>134</sup> Burger and Bennett, "The Russians Are Coming."

Medvedev, Putin's handpicked successor, especially considering that Putin has remained on as the Russian Prime Minister.

This chapter of historical research is important to the research question because it provides the background of the organization behind strategic political deceptions as well as what is currently known about the organization. It also answers the first key question of the thesis, "*What is the organizational structure prior to 1991 and post-1991?*" Without answering this key question, it is difficult to understand the first case study in Chapter 5, which examines key characteristics between the past and the present in order to determine whether the Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries is a conductor of Russian strategic political deceptions. A historical understanding of the organization behind such deceptions also contributes to an understanding in the forthcoming case studies concerning disinformation and influence operations.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE FINDINGS:

#### EXAMINING STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTIONS

*“Soviet Active Measures need to be countered by public exposure. They are infections that thrive only in darkness, and sunlight is the best antiseptic.” – Unknown<sup>135</sup>*

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, three separate case studies will be reviewed concerning active measures. The goal of each case study is to compare present day actions of the Russian government to actions of the Soviet government in order to determine whether or not strategic political deceptions or active measures still occur in present day Russia. Each case study examines one example from the present (1991 forward) and compares it to several examples from the past. (1919 through 1991) The examples are compared based on characteristics they exhibit which are attributed to that particular area of strategic political deception.

The first case study examines the new Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries in comparison to departments known to participate in strategic political deceptions prior to 1991. The second and third case

---

<sup>135</sup> “Soviet Active Measures,” Address Before the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations (transcript), 1984.

studies look at two separate types of strategic political deceptions: disinformation and influence operations. The present day example of possible disinformation used in this study is the Washington Post monthly insert, “Russia Beyond the Headlines.”<sup>136</sup> The present day example of a possible influence operation is the poisoning of the Ukrainian President, Victor Yushenko, during the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential elections.

It is important to note that in the experiment there is the possibility for false positives. To help prevent such a situation, case studies two and three each use several examples from the past in order show what such a deception entails and what such a deception does not entail. The use of multiple examples helps to reduce the chances of a false positive. It is also important to note that the very nature of deception increases the risk of false positives, as sometimes it is almost impossible to determine whether a deception exists. Frequently it is not known that a deception exists until long after it has been completed.

### **CASE STUDY ONE: AN ORGANIZATION OF STRATEGIC POLITICAL DECEPTION OR ACTIVE MEASURES**

In this case study, there will be a comparison based on characteristics of two organizations from the past that are known to have conducted strategic political deceptions or active measures, to an organization of the present which is believed to be conducting active measures. The past organizations used in the case study are considered “known” because the United States government has previously recognized them. This

---

<sup>136</sup> “International Spotlight: Russia Beyond the Headlines,” Washington Post, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/specialsale/spotlight/russia07/russia070830/index.html> (accessed June 10, 2008).

case study does not use multiple examples in the years prior to 1991 due to the simple fact that there have not been numerous organizations creating strategic political deceptions within the Soviet Union. The new Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries will be compared to the Comintern and the International Department.

### **Past Organizations**

As mentioned in Chapter Three, Lenin and his Bolshevik supporters established the Comintern, also known as the Third International, in 1919 as an overarching Communist organization. The ultimate goal of the Comintern under Lenin's vision was to bring together and oversee the various Communist parties throughout the world, as well as promoting the virtues of Communism.<sup>137</sup> Lenin believed that revolution would occur throughout Europe creating a massive Communist following. The Comintern conducted such active measures as disinformation campaigns in print and radio and the use of emissaries abroad in Western countries. Although propaganda was the overarching tool used by the Comintern, the newspapers were not the only technique used as a means to disseminate propaganda and disinformation. Lenin "believed that preparation for the revolution must start with well-conducted agitation and propaganda from within the central party organization."<sup>138</sup> Cover organizations as well as agents of influence were used as means of deception to spread the party line.<sup>139</sup> As time progressed

---

<sup>137</sup> *The Comintern: Historical Highlights: Essays, Recollections, Documents*, ed. Milorad M. Drachkovitch and Branko Lazitch (New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1966), 5.

<sup>138</sup> Branko Lazitch and Milorad M. Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972), 293.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

and revolutions did not occur in Europe, the Comintern was forced to change some of its tactics. The Comintern was no longer working in a defensive mindset. In fact, due to the lack of revolutions, Russia became the only member of the Comintern, even though it was meant to be an organization of Communist groups representing various countries. This lack of other countries helped to evolve the Comintern into a part of the Soviet government.<sup>140</sup> After Lenin died in the winter of 1924, the Comintern fell directly under the leadership of Joseph Stalin, the new leader of Russia.<sup>141</sup> Under Stalin, the Comintern continued to work to promote Communism in Western democracies. In May of 1943, Stalin dissolved the Comintern.<sup>142</sup> Documents translated state in the final order of the Comintern that the fight within the individual countries in the “labor movement,” was too complicated to be overseen by an international organization.<sup>143</sup>

Also as previously mentioned in Chapter Three, the International Department was created in 1943 following the dissolving of the Comintern.<sup>144</sup> The origin roles of the Department were similar to those originally of the Comintern which included acting as a liaison with Communist parties in foreign countries. In later years, the International Department had direct responsibility for front organizations as well as Soviet Non-Governmental Organizations and Friendship Societies.<sup>145</sup> During the 1950s, the Soviet

---

<sup>140</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*, 52.

<sup>141</sup> Branko Lazitch and in collaboration with Milorad M. Drachkovitch, *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973), 382.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 382

<sup>143</sup> “Dissolution of the Communist International,” *The Communist International, 1919 - 1943*, <http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/dissolution.htm> (accessed June 3, 2008).

<sup>144</sup> Mark Kramer, “The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy,” *Soviet Studies* 42, no. 3 (July 1990), 429.

<sup>145</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991* (United States Information Agency, June 1992), 6-8.

Union became more prevalent in Third World countries due to the work done by the International Department, including work with Communist parties and the support of front organizations in such areas.<sup>146</sup> The role of the International Department was not limited to front organizations or the period of the 1950s. During the 1980s, the Soviet Union continued to work in Third World countries including various areas in Africa where disinformation and propaganda concerning the AIDS virus was distributed.<sup>147</sup> The objectives of the operations conducted by the International Department, as well as the entire organization for strategic political deceptions, continued to evolve throughout time as changes occurred in world politics. The International Department dissolved though in 1991 when the Communism and the Soviet Union fell.<sup>148</sup>

### **Present Organization**

The organization that the author has chosen as a possible present organization conducting strategic political deception in today's Russia is the newly created Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries. This department was created in the spring of 2005, and placed under then Chief of Presidential Staff, Dmitry Medvedev (who is now the current Russian President).<sup>149</sup> The original head of the organization was Modest Kolerov, although Kolerov was dismissed in October of 2007 by then President Putin. Nikolai Tsvetkov was named as Kolerov's

---

<sup>146</sup> Kramer, "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy," 431.

<sup>147</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87* (United States Department of State, August 1987).

<sup>148</sup> Richard Sakwa, *Russian Politics and Society*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2002), 24.

<sup>149</sup> Putin Appoints Velvet Counterrevolutionary, *Kommersant, Russia's Daily Online*, March 23, 2005. <http://www.kommersant.com/page.asp?id=556859> (accessed June 10, 2008).

replacement.<sup>150</sup> After the creation of the department it was noted on President Putin's website that the organization's role "lies in the independent states formed on the territory of the former USSR."<sup>151</sup> Journalists called Kolerov "a crusader against orange revolutions."<sup>152</sup> The organization was created shortly after the "Orange Revolution" in the Ukraine where a pro-western candidate, Victor Yushenko, won the election against a pro-Kremlin candidate. It is believed that the goal of the department is to reach out to former Soviet territories such as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania to name only a few. It is also believed that this reaching out is focused towards Pro-Russian groups in order to prevent further revolutions that move in the direction of Western policy (vs. moving in a pro-Russia direction).

### **Characteristics**

Five characteristics that can be attributed to the Comintern and the International Department were chosen in this case study. The first of these characteristics is the "Promotion of the Soviet Union (or Russia)." This means that the organization operates in a way that portrays the Soviet Union or Russia in an overly positive light beyond the realms of normal promotion. Richard Shultz and Roy Godson in their book *Dezinformatsia* describe this as political warfare technique "to confuse world public opinion concerning Soviet global ambitions, creating a favorable environment for Soviet

---

<sup>150</sup> Putin Reshuffles Presidential Department for Ties with Foreign Countries, *Interfax*, October 23, 2007.

<sup>151</sup> "Spin Doctor Kolerov Appointed to 'Prevent Velvet Revolutions' in CIS Profiled," *Interfax*, March 23, 2005.

<sup>152</sup> "Russian Official on Relations with Lithuania, View Neighbor as 'Enemy'," *Lietuvos Zinios*, June 19, 2006.



foreign policy.”<sup>153</sup> An example of this would be the Comintern’s promotion throughout the world during World War I that Russia and the Bolshevik party through Communism was bringing change and equality throughout the world. Russia was promoted as the epicenter to change; “Lenin’s Communism struck them as a weapon which they needed in order to gain power and achieve the national and social liberation of their peoples.”<sup>154</sup> The Comintern, throughout its existence promoted Russia and the Soviet Union in a positive light.

The second characteristic is the “Presence in a Foreign Country.” This means that the organization had/has operating cells within another country, indicating that it did not just work within the confines of the Soviet Union or Russia. This can be seen in both the Comintern and the International Department. The Comintern for example had branches throughout Western Europe in places like Berlin and Amsterdam. These offices were used to promote Communism and the Soviet Union.<sup>155</sup>

The third characteristic is “Peaceful Acts of Deception.” This means that murders, poisonings, vicious attacks cannot be attributed to this organization. An example of a peaceful act of deception is propaganda or the support of friendship societies. During the Cold War, the International Department supported and ran the World Peace Council (WPC), which was the “pre-eminent Soviet front group, which was devoted to promoting the USSR’s defense and disarmament proposals and to denigrating

---

<sup>153</sup> Richard H. Schultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy* (Washington: Pergman-Brassey's, 1984), 40.

<sup>154</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1.*, 237.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 164-183.

those of the United States.”<sup>156</sup> The World Peace Council gathered under the guise of peace, in essence being a “peaceful act of deception.”

The fourth characteristic is “Known Organization.” This indicates whether or not the organization is a secret beyond the Soviet Union or Russia (outside of the scope of foreign government and intelligence circles). In both cases of the Comintern and the International Department, these two organizations were known departments in the Western world.

The fifth characteristic is “Semi-Covert/Gray Measures.” As previously discussed in Chapter 3, active measures are distinguished into three categories – black, gray, or white. Gray active measures involve Foreign Communist Parties, Front Organizations, Friendship Societies, and Soviet NGOs.<sup>157</sup> For the purpose of this case study, gray active measures will also represent the involvement in pro-Russian/Kremlin parties in other countries. Another example of a front group is the International Association of Democratic Lawyers (IADL), which had no direct affiliation with the Soviet Union but was supported by the International Department.<sup>158</sup>

---

<sup>156</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, ix.

<sup>157</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*, 8.

<sup>158</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 24-25.

**Table 4.1 Comparison of Organizational Characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Comintern (1919-1943)</b>	<b>International Department (1943-1991)</b>	<b>International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries (2005 – Present)</b>
Promotion of Soviet Union (or Russia)	X	X	X
Presence in a Foreign Country	X	X	X
Peaceful Acts of Deception	X	X	X
Known Organization	X	X	X
Semi-Covert/Gray Measures	X	X	X

Source: Author

### **Results**

After comparing and reviewing the characteristics between the organizations of the past, the Comintern and the International Department, and the new Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, the author has determined that the new organization created in 2005 is in fact similar to organizations of the past. The chart above shows the matching characteristics between the new department and both the Comintern and the International Department. This indicates that it is highly probable that the Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries is participating in strategic political deceptions. Although the table above shows matching characteristics with the International Department, from the historical research previously discussed it seems that the new Department might be more similar to the Comintern. The Comintern reached out towards Communist parties that

could have created revolution within Europe and the West.<sup>159</sup> The new Department reaches out to pro-Russian groups in former Soviet Bloc countries (areas which were originally under the Comintern prior to their inclusion into the USSR) in order to prevent Western revolution or even to move a possible revolution in the favor of Russia. This new Department is a known department, and there are no pretenses, now, to what it is trying to achieve in its operations. This is similar to the beginning of the Comintern. At this point, there have been no known cases of anything but peaceful deceptions. While the new Department is a known organization, it can also be considered a front organization with the premise of promoting cultural ties while in fact conducting deceptions. In the future, much like the Comintern, the Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries might become more secretive in their actions, as well as their work with other Russian intelligence services.

## **CASE STUDY TWO: DISINFORMATION CAMPAGINS**

In this case study the strategic political deception technique of disinformation is examined. Disinformation is the “deliberate attempt to deceive public or government opinion.”<sup>160</sup> Disinformation can because used in various different mediums such as propaganda (written or oral) or front organizations. Five examples of known disinformation campaigns on the part of the Soviet Union have been chosen from the past to compare to a possible disinformation campaign of the present. The examples from the

---

<sup>159</sup> Lazitch and Drachkovitch, *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1.*, 202-240.

<sup>160</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1987-88* (United States Department of State, August 1988).

past include the Trust Operation, conspiracy theories surrounding President Kennedy's assassination, a map of destruction targets in Austria, disinformation concerning the AIDs virus and the trafficking of baby parts. The example from the present is the *Washington Post* monthly insert, "Russia Beyond the Headlines," which promotes Russia through print medium.

### **Past Examples**

The first example prior to 1991 is the Trust Operation. As previously touched upon in Chapter Two, the Trust Operation was a multifaceted operation conducted by the intelligence service, the Cheka, and focused on counterrevolutionaries in the Western world (this includes the United States and Europe). The Trust Operation encompassed several active measures including the use of disinformation, front organizations, and agents of influence. It was created by the Bolsheviks to reduce counter-revolutionary movements abroad as well as try to convince the West that not only was Communism not as powerful as believed, it would fail to succeed overall. The Trust Operation began approximately around 1921 and lasted until around 1927, operating under the cover title of the Moscow Municipal Credit Association.<sup>161</sup> The disinformation produced by the Trust Operation through pamphlets, news articles, etc all reinforced a similar message: "Don't make war against the USSR or execute acts of terror for great changes are taking place and Russia soon again will become a respectable member of the community of nations."<sup>162</sup> The disinformation produced by the Trust Operation was overall not anti-

---

<sup>161</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987), 7.

Western themed; it was pro-Soviet Union, although generally the propaganda produced was false.

The second example of disinformation comprises the body of reports, books, and news articles published which attribute President John F. Kennedy's assassination to a CIA plot. In the Western world, it is well understood that Lee Harvey Oswald, who was working alone, assassinated President Kennedy. Throughout the Cold War, several items were published countering those known fact. One of the first items was a book published in 1964 by Carl Aldo Marzani and written by Joachim Joesten, a German author. The book is entitled, *Oswald: Assassin or Fall Guy?* The KGB theorized that the CIA was behind the assassination of President Kennedy. The KGB insinuated that the CIA used Oswald in particular because he had previous ties to the Soviet Union and Communism, which would allow him to be an easy "fall-guy."<sup>163</sup> Through the author and the book, the KGB was able to make contact with a New York lawyer, Mark Lane, who was a conspiracy theorist of the assassination. Money was given to Mark Lane unknowingly through various different means in order to assist in his research of the possibility of a CIA plot.<sup>164</sup> The propaganda and disinformation surrounding the Kennedy assassination continued throughout the Cold War. *The New Times*, a journal produced in the Soviet Union and given money by the government, published an article in 1977 entitled "On the

---

<sup>162</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The Trust*, ed. Pamela K. Simpkins and K. Leigh Dyer (n.p.: Security and Intelligence Foundation, 1989). 6.

<sup>163</sup> Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 227.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, 228.

Trail of a President's Killers.”<sup>165</sup> Again, blame was placed on the CIA for the assassination.

The third example of disinformation is the claimed map of Austria in 1981. It was alleged in an article published in the newspaper *Komsomolskaya Pravda* that a map had been found within the United States government that marked targets in Austria “for nuclear destruction.”<sup>166</sup> It is known that this was a false allegation, but it demonstrates the anti-US theme of Soviet propaganda during the Cold War. It was not necessarily believable to the Austrians but considering that fact that Austria was not part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) a report suggesting that the United States was marking nuclear destruction targets would be aggravating and spark some fear, accomplishing Soviet foreign policy goals of the time.

The fourth example of disinformation is the propaganda campaign that blamed the AIDs virus on the U.S. government. The Soviet Union claimed that the AIDs virus had been created in a laboratory at Fort Detrick, Maryland as part of a project by the U.S. government to create a new weapon. Propaganda concerning the AIDs virus first began in Indian media and then continued in the Soviet press. The Soviets point to the India media starting the propaganda, although the Indian media points to Soviet influence. As the story was covered more and more by the Soviet press, an East German biophysicist professor was frequently used as an expert stating that the virus could have only been manmade. The story was not contained to the Soviet Union and India; it was also spread throughout Third World countries where knowledge was minimal about the disease to

---

<sup>165</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 83.

<sup>166</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*, 97th Cong., 2nd sess., July 13-14, 1982.

begin with.<sup>167</sup> The Soviet Leader Mikhail Gorbachev was quoted as saying that “we tell the truth and nothing but the truth,” in July of 1987 at the height of the AIDS disinformation campaign.<sup>168</sup>

The final example of disinformation propagated by the Soviet Union was the claim of a market for baby parts during the late 1980s stating, “rich Americans were butchering Third World children in order to use their bodies for organ transplants.”<sup>169</sup> This campaign was meant to suggest the amorality of the Western world, by adopting children, giving them hope, but then only using them for their organs in order to save their own biological children. The story began in Honduras and Guatemala and then moved throughout the Western world.<sup>170</sup> At one point the European Parliament voted on a motion concerning “baby parts.”<sup>171</sup> This disinformation campaign was a story that appealed to the masses, particularly those who were poorly educated, with anti-Western themes.

### **Present Example**

The example of a disinformation campaign in present day is the publication of an advertising supplement in the *Washington Post* entitled “Russia Beyond the Headlines.” This insert began in August of 2007, and appears on a monthly basis.<sup>172</sup> It is not only

---

<sup>167</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, 33-38.

<sup>168</sup> Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 245.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>170</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, 6.

<sup>171</sup> Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 245.



published in the *Washington Post*, but also published as well in *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Economic Times*, and the *Times of India*. It is originally produced by the government founded and funded newspaper, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* in Russia. The *Gazeta* was originally founded in November 1990, and now has a circulation of 400,000. They have offices throughout Russia, the former CIS, and such European cities as London and Madrid.<sup>173</sup> It is written on the website of “Russia Beyond the Headlines” that its goal is “to dispel stereotypes.”<sup>174</sup> The April 30<sup>th</sup> edition of the insert included stories concerning Russia looking for other means of energy, young Russians describing their lives in modern Russia, as well as story describing the close friendship between Thomas Edison and Tolstoy.<sup>175</sup> Although the stories are not complete falsities they do fall within the lines of disinformation and propaganda portraying Russia in an overly positive light, downplaying much of what has been written and hypothesized about Russia as of late: the prospect of her heading towards a closed society once again.

### **Characteristics**

In Table 4.2 on page 75, seven characteristics were chosen by the author to describe strategic political deceptions that are disinformation campaigns. The first characteristic is “Offensive Foreign Policy.”<sup>176</sup> Various authors have described this as

---

<sup>172</sup> “International Spotlight: Russia Beyond the Headlines,” *Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/specialsale/spotlight/russia07/russia070830/index.html> (accessed June 10, 2008).

<sup>173</sup> “About the Newspaper,” *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*, <http://www.rg.ru/about.html> (accessed June 10, 2008).

<sup>174</sup> *Russia Beyond the Headlines*, [www.rbth.rg.ru](http://www.rbth.rg.ru) (accessed June 10, 2008).

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*

recurrent theme to Soviet deceptions. This characteristic describes foreign policy actions that are not in reaction to another event. They occur from the beginning with their own agenda and goals without being retaliation. An example of “offensive foreign policy” is AIDS disinformation campaign produced by the Soviet Union. This was not in reaction to another event, but was simply an action conducted on the part of the Soviets to deceive and upset the West.

The second and the third characteristics used relate directly to one another. Disinformation campaigns sometimes use “primarily truthful information” and sometimes use “primarily false information.” It depends on the ultimate goal of the disinformation. Frequently campaigns that contain more false information than true information are directly related to campaigns with themes of anti-West or anti-U.S.<sup>177</sup> “Truthful information” campaigns can include items, such as the Washington post insert “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” which for the most part is not a fallacy, although some of the information provided might be heightened in favor of Russia. “False information” campaigns include such example as the Trust Operation, which projected the image to the Western World that Communism was not as strong as the Lenin, and the Soviet Union was making it out to be.<sup>178</sup>

The fourth and fifth characteristics describe whether a disinformation campaign produces information that promotes the goodness in the Soviet Union and Russia, or whether the disinformation is geared towards discrediting the United States and the West. The differences between these two themes are easy to determine. Again, “Russia Beyond

---

<sup>176</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 112.

<sup>177</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Dailey and Parker, 59-71.

<sup>178</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The Trust*.

the Headlines” leads itself to the goodness in the Russia while such stories as the AIDS campaign previously mentioned works to discredited the United States.

The sixth characteristics looks at whether or not the disinformation campaign is government funded. For example, “Russia Beyond the Headlines” is produced by the government founded and funded newspaper, *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* in Russia.<sup>179</sup> Although several Western newspapers publish it, “Russia Beyond the Headlines” is considered an advertising supplement.<sup>180</sup>

The final characteristic used in this case study is whether the campaign was conducted covertly or overtly. This characteristic asks if it is openly known that the Soviet or Russian government have a hand in the campaign, or whether it is one that is covert and the role of the government is covered up. For example, the Trust Operation was conducted covertly. The front organization involved in the Trust Operation as well as the individuals involved were not known to be working for the Soviet government. It was not until after the operation was shut down that Soviet government admitted to the event occurring.<sup>181</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> “About the Newspaper,” *Rossiiskaya Gazeta*.

<sup>180</sup> “International Spotlight: Russia Beyond the Headlines,” *Washington Post*, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/specialsale/spotlight/russia07/russia070830/index.html> (accessed June 10, 2008).

<sup>181</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The Trust*.

**Table 4.2 Comparison of Disinformation Campaign Characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>The Trust (1921-1927)</b>	<b>President Kennedy Murdered by the CIA (circa 1964)</b>	<b>Austrian Map Targets (1981)</b>	<b>Creation of AIDS in US lab (1983)</b>	<b>Trafficking of Baby Parts (1987-88)</b>	<b>“Russia Beyond the Headlines” (2007 – Present)</b>
Offensive Foreign Policy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Primarily True Information						X
Primarily False Information	X	X	X	X	X	
Theme: Anti-US and the West		X	X	X	X	
Theme: Pro-Soviet/Russia	X					X
Government Funded	X	X	X	X	X	X
Overt vs. Covert	Covert	Both	Covert	Both	Covert	Overt

Source: Author

### **Results**

After reviewing the various characteristics of the five examples prior to 1991 and comparing those characteristics to “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” the example from the present, it appears that the insert is in fact a piece of disinformation on the part of the Russian government. Not only is it similar to previous disinformation campaigns, but also it is very similar to propaganda used during the Trust Operation in the 1920s. The results in the table above show that throughout the Cold War it appears that disinformation was very anti-U.S. and anti-West. Although covert in nature, the propaganda in the Trust Operation promoted the Soviet Union, as well as down-played

the role of Communism in the country at the time.<sup>182</sup> Communism is not the ruling party of Russia today, but there has been much talk about the strict rule of Russian under the previous presidency of Vladimir Putin. By publishing “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” the Russian government is trying to portray Russia as an open country, even one with long lasting ties to the United States (through the Edison/Tolstoy story), trying to portray the message that Russia is not the scary bear it has been made out to be. This plays into the characteristics of the information published in the newspaper being “Primarily True Information” as well as the “Theme: Pro-Soviet/Russian.” Also as previously discussed the supplement is paid for by a government funded Russian newspaper.<sup>183</sup> These characteristics all lend to the “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” being an overt piece of Russian propaganda.

### **CASE STUDY THREE: INFLUENCE OPERATIONS**

In this case study the strategic political deception technique of influence operations is examined. Influence operations are intended to change the perception of a situation or insinuate Soviet policy, while disguising Soviet involvement.<sup>184</sup> These influence operations can utilize covert front organizations as well as agents of influence. Five examples of known influence operations on the part of the Soviet Union have been chosen from the past to compare to a possible influence operation of the present. The influence operations chosen for the past are the Trust Operation, the WiN Operation, the

---

<sup>182</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The Trust*.

<sup>183</sup> “About the Newspaper,” Rossiiskaya Gazeta.

<sup>184</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1987-88*.

World Peace Council, the Soviet Church, and the role of the KGB operative Arne Herlov Petersen. The example from the present is the poisoning of the Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko in the 2004 Ukrainian Presidential election.

### **Past Examples**

The first example of influence operations is the Trust Operation. As mentioned in the previous case study concerning disinformation, the Trust Operation was a multifaceted operation conducted by the intelligence service, the Cheka, focusing on counterrevolutionaries in the West. This operation is also considered an influence operation because it worked to change the perception in the West of the Soviet Union. They were able to accomplish this change of perception through the infiltration of various counterrevolutionary agencies and the ability to “neutralize opponents.”<sup>185</sup>

The second example is the WiN Operation, occurring from 1945 through 1952. It is little known operation in which Soviet and Polish security forces joint together to infiltrate the WiN, Wolsnoc I Niepodleglosc, a former part of the Polish Home Army. The Soviets and Polish security services first convinced the West that the WiN had collapsed, then were able to convince the West that in fact it had not collapsed and that there was a faction operating underground the desperately needed the Western support. Similar to the Trust Operation, the Soviets were targeting counterrevolutionaries in Poland, while at the same time demonstrating its ability to deceive the West.<sup>186</sup>

The third example used in this case study is the front organization, the World Peace Council (WPC). The WPC was founded in 1949, with the original intention to

---

<sup>185</sup> *Soviet Strategic Deception*, ed. Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, 7.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

“focus on Soviet peace campaigns,” as well as various propaganda materials and the organization of World Congresses.<sup>187</sup> The WPC operated in 130 countries around the world and was based in Helsinki.<sup>188</sup> The WPC appealed to Cold War world where the fear of being wiped out by nuclear weapons existed. The Soviets, while building up their own arms arsenal, used the WPC as an influence operation to convince the world that an arms race was a poor idea, as well as directing attention towards the West and their arsenals, keeping attention away from Soviet weapons.

The fourth example is the use of the Soviet Church as an influence operation. For almost twenty years at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Church was disowned by the Soviet Union. During World War II, Stalin saw the value in using the church as a way to influence the masses.<sup>189</sup> Eventually the Russia Orthodox Church became laced with KGB officers, although to the outside world it retained its separation from the Soviet government. The church was used as a “foreign policy representative,” inviting various Western and Third World leaders to see the openness of the State.<sup>190</sup> The use of the Church is similar to the Trust Operation in the goal of dissuading the outside world from seeing the reality within the Soviet walls. During the 1980s, the Church was “used to support Soviet policy positions on defense and disarmament issues.”<sup>191</sup> The Russian Orthodox Church, whether they originally wanted to or not became an arm of the Soviet government during the Cold War.

---

<sup>187</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 24.

<sup>188</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*.

<sup>189</sup> Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 486.

<sup>190</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, 8.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*

The fifth example is the role of the KGB operative Arne Herlov Petersen. It is known that Petersen began working as a KGB contact in the mid 1970s, and his work constituted the role of an agent of influence.<sup>192</sup> Petersen's reach extended across various different mediums. His responsibilities included acting as a "propagandist, an activist and clandestine conduct of funds to support Soviet-instigated "peace movement" activities, a source of information on progressive Danish journalists and other Danish citizens and of interest to the KGB, and a purveyor of forgeries."<sup>193</sup> Petersen was a member of the Denmark-North Korea Friendship Society, passing falsified U.S. government documents to North Korea under the cover of the Society while at the same time not portraying the documents as originating from the Soviets. Petersen's written propaganda also included attacks on Western leaders such as then British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and United States Congressmen.<sup>194</sup>

### **Present Example**

The example used in this case study representing a possible influence operation in present day is the poisoning of the Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko during the 2004 elections. In 2004, the Ukraine was holding its third presidential election between a pro-West candidate, Victor Yushenko, and a pro-Kremlin candidate, Viktor Yanukovich. In early September of that year, Yushenko sat down with the Ukraine security Services for dinner. Later that night he fell gravely ill with TCDD dioxin poisoning. It is believed

---

<sup>192</sup> Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 428.

<sup>193</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*



that Yushenko ingested the dioxin through food, and the agreement amongst doctors is that it could not have been accidental.<sup>195</sup> The amount of TCDD dioxin was highly concentrated, pure, and 1,000 times above the normal amount found in the atmosphere. This type of dioxin was used during Vietnam War as Agent Orange as a method to clear forests.<sup>196</sup> TCDD dioxins exist everywhere, and are normally found at sights of forest fires, cooper smelting, or incineration of waste, although these would not be pure TCDD dioxins.<sup>197</sup> Yushenko's face was horribly disfigured from the poisoning although he continued to campaign and won the election in December of 2004 by 52%.<sup>198</sup> It is still unknown today in 2008 who poisoned Yushenko. The Ukrainian security services still deny any hand in the event and Russia claims as well not to have been involved. It is important to note that there is a standard incubation period for a dioxin poisoning, which indicates that either the dioxin was a specially engineered type not seen before or the poisoning occurred before the dinner in September. Neither of these hypotheses has been answered.

### **Characteristics**

This case study of influence operations uses five different characteristics as a comparison basis. The characteristics are listed on the left side of Table 4.3 on page 83.

---

<sup>195</sup> Elisabeth Rosenthal, "Yushchenko Able to Serve, but Will Need Longtime Care," The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/27/international/europe/27dioxin.html> (accessed June 24, 2008).

<sup>196</sup> "Yushchenko 'given Agent Orange ingredient'," The Guardian, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2004/dec/17/ukraine> (accessed June 24, 2008).

<sup>197</sup> "Dioxins and Furans," U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, <http://www.epa.gov/pbt/pubs/dioxins.htm> (accessed June 24, 2008).

<sup>198</sup> C. J. Chivers, "Yushchenko Wins 52% of Vote; Rival Vows a Challenge," The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/12/28/international/europe/28ukraine.html> (accessed June 24, 2008).

The first characteristic used is “Offensive Foreign Policy.”<sup>199</sup> As mentioned in the previous case study, this characteristic describes foreign policy actions that are not in reaction to another event. For example, the Trust Operation is “offensive foreign policy” because it was not in reaction to a single event, it was an overarching operation to deceive and change the perception of the Soviet Union in the Western world.

The second characteristic asks whether or not the operation “Targets anti-revolutionary, anti-Soviet, or anti-Russian” groups. This means that operation is specifically against those who are against the Soviet Union or Russia. Again, an example of an operation that targets anti-revolutionary, anti-Soviet, or anti-Russian groups is the Trust Operation. This operation, as well as the WiN Operation, specifically sought after those anti-revolutionaries in order to sway their opinion. In the case of the Trust Operation, the front organizations involved occasionally captured and executed anti-revolutions after they were persuaded to visit the Soviet Union.<sup>200</sup>

The third characteristic is “Black/Covert Operation - No linkage to Soviet/Russian government.”<sup>201</sup> This indicates that there appears to be no open linkage between the operation and the Soviet or Russian government. An example of this is the case of Arne Herlov Petersen mentioned above as the fifth example from the past. Petersen worked as a KGB contact for years, publishing disinformation on behalf of the Soviet government without any ties to the Soviet Union or the KGB.<sup>202</sup>

---

<sup>199</sup> Schultz and Godson, *Dezinformatsia*, 112.

<sup>200</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, *The Trust*.

<sup>201</sup> *Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*, 8.

<sup>202</sup> Andrew and Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield*, 428.

The fourth and fifth characteristics examine two different themes in influence operations; anti-U.S. and West operations and pro-Soviet or Russian operations. As mentioned in the previous case study the difference between the two themes is the emphasis on anti or pro. Although they appear to be similar themes, they are in fact different. Examples of anti-U.S./West characteristics are the items published by KGB operative Petersen that attacked Western leaders.<sup>203</sup> A pro-Soviet themed operation can be seen in the world done by the Soviet Church on behalf of the government (without public acknowledgement of the relationship), which promoted the virtues of the Soviet Union, and all the good Communism was bringing to Russia and the other Soviet States.<sup>204</sup>

**Table 4.3 Comparison of Influence Operation Characteristics**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>The Trust (1921-1927)</b>	<b>WIN Operation</b>	<b>World Peace Council (circa 1949)</b>	<b>Soviet Church</b>	<b>Arne Herlov Petersen</b>	<b>Poisoning of Victor Yushenko (2004)</b>
Offensive Foreign Policy	X	X	X	X	X	X
Targets Anti-Revolutionary/ Soviet/ Russia	X	X		X	X	X
Black/Covert Operation - No linkage to Soviet/Russian government	X	X	X	X	X	X
Theme: Anti-US and the West		X			X	X
Theme: Pro-Soviet/Russia	X		X	X		

Source: Author

<sup>203</sup> House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, *Soviet Active Measures*.

<sup>204</sup> *Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*, 8.

## **Results**

The results from this study indicate that the poisoning of Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko is in fact an influence operation similar to those conducted during the Soviet Union in the year prior to 1991. The characteristics of the Yushenko poisoning match up to four out of the five Soviet influence operation characteristics. They are similar in particular to the WiN Operation of the 1940s as a method of “offensive foreign policy” as well as the anti- U.S./West theme. The Yushenko poisoning is also similar in all of characteristics to the actions of the KGB agent of influence Arne Herlov Petersen in the 1970s and 1980s. These results included the operation being covert as well as targeting anti-revolutionaries. These results indicate that the Russian government probably had a hand in the poisoning of Victor Yushenko. It fits into their goals of targeting anti-revolutionaries (or in present day anti-Kremlin or anti-Russian) as well as the act of conducting offensive foreign policy. It is also an important factor that the Yushenko poisoning occurred in the Ukraine, as it is a former territory of the Soviet Union, a place which Russia would like to keep a close eye on.

## **CONCLUSION**

The three case studies in this chapter comparing characteristics of the past to possible organizations or operations occurring today demonstrate that Russia is still active in conducting strategic political deceptions. In the first case study, it was seen that the new Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries is quite similar to the known Comintern and International Department (both

known former conductors of strategic political deceptions). Similarities were indicated in the all five characteristics, including the “promotion of the Soviet Union,” “presence in a foreign country,” “peaceful acts of deception,” “known organization,” and “semi-covert/gray measures.” These similar characteristics demonstrated that in fact new Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries could be a conductor of Russian strategic political deceptions.

The second case study showed that the advertising supplement, “Russia Beyond the Headlines” published by the *Rossiyskaya Gazeta*, and placed in various papers throughout the world, is an example of modern Russian disinformation. It is quite similar to the disinformation used during the Trust Operation, both using a “pro-Soviet/Russia” theme in their propaganda pieces. “Russia Beyond the Headlines” also demonstrates a form of “offensive foreign policy” which is seen not only in disinformation operations but in influence operations as well.

The final case study demonstrates that the poisoning of the Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko is a present day example of an influence operation on the part of the Russian government. Although no direct ties can be made at this point between the Russian government and the poisoning, the characteristics of the event are a hallmark of previous influence operations. The characteristics which indicated that the Yushenko poisoning was an influence operation are the facts that the operation targeted an anti-Russian figure (Yushenko), as well as there being an inability to make any links back to the Russian government.

The results of these case studies answer the thesis research question, “*How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception, and is it similar to deceptions*”

*during the existence of the Soviet Union?”* Russia is engaging in strategic political deceptions through disinformation campaigns such as “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” and influence operations like the poisoning of Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko. Not only is Russia still engaging in strategic political deceptions, but from the comparison of characteristics it was found that those deceptions are quite similar to ones from the times of the Soviet Union. Although the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, the measures taken over the course of seventy years under Communist rule have not been forgotten and continue today, some of which might occur under the new Presidential Department for Interregional and Cultural Ties.

## CHAPTER 6

### CONCLUSIONS

*“Russia has now regained a sense of self-respect. We spent so many years feeling there was something wrong with us-others lecturing us on how we should live and where we should go. But we have overcome our inferiority complex.”*

- Valentina Matviyenko, St.Petersburg Governor<sup>205</sup>

### REVIEW OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

This thesis analyzed the original research question presented: *“How is Russia engaging in acts of strategic political deception, and is it similar to deceptions during the existence of the Soviet Union?”* Russia has a long known history of conducting strategic political deceptions. Due to this history, the possibility of deception existing today is tremendous. This research question brought up various others questions concerning the organization behind Russian strategic political deceptions as well as the different types of strategic political deceptions and the active measures used to conduct them.

In answering this research question, the author discussed the historical highlights of the Russian intelligence services. What was learned throughout this thesis is that

---

<sup>205</sup> Marshall I. Goldman, *Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 208.

much of the information known today about the Soviet and Russian intelligence services is from KGB defectors writing books or testifying in front of Congressional Committees. This thesis looked beyond the intelligence services; it also analyzed the organization behind strategic political deceptions both in the past and present. Specific examples of strategic political deceptions were used to explore the research question through a series of three case studies.

## **REVIEW OF THE HYPOTHESIS**

The author's original hypothesis stated: "*Russia still engages in acts of strategic political deceptions, and the organization which supports such deception is just as strong and active as it once was if not more so.*" The research conducted and the three case studies used in this thesis prove the author's hypothesis correct. It was found that a present day organization, the Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, is possibly conducting strategic political deceptions. This new department is quite similar to the Comintern and its actions between 1919 and 1943, as well as the International Department, which operated from 1943 to 1991. The first case study showed that Presidential Department for International and Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries shared all five of the characteristics with the previous two organizations from the past. This indicates that the new Department is part of the organization behind modern day Russian strategic political deceptions.

The further research conducted further found that there are strategic political deceptions occurring today. The second and third case studies each analyzed five events



from the past compared to one event from the present. The characteristics for each deception were noted and then compared to the facts and known elements of each of the events. It was demonstrated that both of the present day events are in fact very reminiscent of previous strategic political deceptions. From the evidence gathered, it is highly probable that the *Washington Post* insert “Russia Beyond the Headlines,” and the poisoning of Ukrainian President Victor Yushenko are both strategic political deceptions. “Russia Beyond the Headlines” represents a disinformation campaign while the poisoning of Victor Yushenko is an influence operation. It is understood from the historical research that both of these present-day deceptions are highly reminiscent of strategic political deceptions from years prior to 1991.

## **FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

In conclusion, through the research case studies conducted, it is proven that Russia is still conducting strategic political deceptions. The case studies conducted show motive, opportunity, and means on the part of the Russian government to conduct such deceptions. These strategic political deceptions are in fact similar to those conducted during the time period of the Soviet Union. It was also proven in this thesis, that a new organization similar to ones of the past is possibly conducting deceptions in present day.

The implications of this research and knowledge are important to the intelligence and defense communities within the United States because it proves that Russia has a history of deception practices under the Soviet Union. This thesis showed that such deception practices are repeated in today’s world. It is important for the United States

and the West to recognize such practices and learn from them in order to identify future strategic political deceptions conducted by Russia. If the United States and West forget about Russia's history of deception or the strong organization behind those deceptions, then it is forgetting about various humiliations and defeats of the West. Such humiliations came from events like the Trust Operation and the WiN Operation. The underlying goal of this thesis is to prevent future humiliations by learning from the past.

In identifying various characteristics for disinformation campaigns and influence operations, it enables an analyst in the future the ability to pick another example from the present and compare it to the past through the characteristics presented in this thesis. Further characteristics could be chosen in order to reduce the risk of false positives due to the nature of deception. This thesis and the experiment inside can act as the building block for an analyst working to identify strategic political deceptions. Humiliation and defeat are not the only consequences of a deception; there is also the adverse effects that could occur on U.S. or Western foreign policy if Western decisions are based on what is seen on the outside, not what is behind the deception.

### **FUTURE RESEARCH POSSIBILITIES**

The author of this thesis believes that there is room for further research possibilities. There have been recent incidents in and around Russia, or known to be conducted by Russia that could be some sort of strategic political deception. It would be interesting to compare multiple different events throughout the Putin Presidency in order to find similar characteristics, tactics, or organizations used. This would assist in

developing a better hallmark of today's Russian strategic political deceptions. This hallmark could be used a blueprint within the intelligence community to determine the possibility of a strategic political deception. Again, it is important to study and research such deceptions because they are occurring, and they are perpetrated against the West.

## **CONCLUSION**

Under President Putin, Russia appears to have strengthened tremendously. If the West is not prepared for this growing strength, and not armed with knowledge to counter Russian tactics, there will ultimately be consequences to pay in the future. These consequences could simply be economic but they could also range to issues of national security for the United States. As proven by this thesis, Russia's strategic political deceptions of today are very similar to those conducted by the Soviet Union, both prior to and during the Cold War. Although Russia has suffered some setbacks in the past fifteen years, such as the economic collapse in the late 1990s, it has, as a country, been growing stronger governmentally. It is imperative that the United States studies and understands Russia in the future in order not to be deceived in the game of deception that Russia plays.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- "About the Newspaper." Rossiiskaya Gazeta. <http://www.rg.ru/about.html> (accessed June 10, 2008).
- Anderson, Julie. "The HUMINT Offensive from Putin's Chekist State." *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 20, no. 2 (Summer 2007).
- Andrew, Christopher, and Vasili Mitrokhin. *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of the KGB*. New York: Basic Books, 1999.
- Baker, Peter, and Susan Glasser. *Kremlin Rising: Vladimir Putin's Russia and the End of Revolution*. New York: A Lisa Drew Book/Scribner, 2005.
- Bittman, Ladislav. *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation: An Insider's View*. Washington: Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985.
- Boghardt, Thomas. "Active Measures: The Russian Art of Disinformation." *AIRSHO Magazine*, October 2006.
- Burger, Timothy J., and Brian Bennett. "The Russians Are Coming." *Time*, January 30, 2005. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1022559,00.html> (accessed July 6, 2008).
- Central Intelligence Agency. *The Trust*. Edited by Pamela K. Simpkins and K. Leigh Dyer. Security and Intelligence Foundation, 1989.
- Cherkashin, Victor with Gregory Feifer. *Spy Handler, Memoir of a KGB Officer*. New York: Basic Books, 2005.
- The Comintern: Historical Highlights: Essays, Recollections, Documents*. Edited by Milorad M. Drachkovitch and Branko Lazitch. New York: Frederick A. Praegar Publishers, 1966.
- Commission on the Roles and Capabilities of the US Intelligence Community. *Preparing for the 21st Century: An Appraisal of U.S. Intelligence*. March 1, 1996. <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/int/report.html> (accessed July 21, 2008).
- "Dioxins and Furans." U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/pbt/pubs/dioxins.htm> (accessed June 24, 2008).

"Dissolution of the Communist International." The Communist International, 1919 - 1943. <http://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/dissolution.htm> (accessed June 3, 2008).

Dziak, John J. *Chekisty: A History of the KGB*. Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1988.

Earley, Pete. *Comrade J: The Untold Story of Russia's Master Spy in America After the End of the Cold War*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2007

Epstein, Edward Jay. *Deception: The Invisible War Between the KGB and the CIA*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989.

Felgenhauer, Pavel. "Kremlin Saber Rattling Increase Ahead of SCO Summit." *Eurasia Daily Monitor, Jamestown Foundation* 4, no. 150 (August 2, 2007). <http://www.cdi.org/russia/johnson/2007-167.30.cfm> (accessed July 6, 2008).

Gerecht, Reuel Marc. "A Rouge Intelligence State? Why Europe and America Cannot Ignore Russia." *European Outlook* no. 2, American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research (April 2007).

Goldman, Marshall I. *Petrostate: Putin, Power, and the New Russia*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Golitsyn, Anatoliy. *New Lies for Old: The Communist Strategy of Deception and Disinformation*. New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1984.

Herspring, Dale R., ed. *Putin's Russia; Past Imperfect, Future Uncertain*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003.

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. *Soviet Active Measures*. 97th Cong., 2nd sess., July 13-14, 1982.

"International Spotlight: Russia Beyond the Headlines." Washington Post. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-adv/specialsale/spotlight/russia07/russia070830/index.html> (accessed June 10, 2008).

Ivanov, Igor S. *The New Russian Diplomacy*. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2002.

Jonkers, Roy. "Weekly Intelligence Notes #43-02." Association of Former Intelligence Officers. [http://www.afio.com/sections/wins/2002/2002-43.html#In\\_Memori](http://www.afio.com/sections/wins/2002/2002-43.html#In_Memori) (accessed May 7, 2008).

Kramer, Mark. "The Role of the CPSU International Department in Soviet Foreign Relations and National Security Policy." *Soviet Studies* 42, no. 3 (July 1990).

- Kuchins, Andrew, Vyacheslav Nikonov, and Dmitri Trenin. "U.S.-Russian Relations: The Case for an Upgrade." Carnegie Moscow Center, 2005.
- Lazitch, Branko, and Milorad M. Drachkovitch. *Lenin and the Comintern: Volume 1*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1972.
- Lazitch, Branko, and in collaboration with Milorad M. Drachkovitch. *Biographical Dictionary of the Comintern*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973.
- Leedy, Paul D., and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod. *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. 8th ed. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., 2005.
- Leighton, Marian. *Soviet Propaganda: As A Foreign Policy Tool*. New York: Freedom House, 1991.
- Lipman, Masha. "Putin's Power Vacuum." *The Washington Post*, July 14, 2007
- Litvinenko, Alexander, and Yuri Felshtinnksky. *Blowing Up Russia: The Secret Plot to Bring Back KGB Terror*. New York: Encounter Books, 2007.
- Lucas, Edward. *The New Cold War: Putin's Russia and the Threat to the West*. New York: Palgrave MacMillian, 2008.
- "The making of a neo-KGB state." *The Economist*, August 25, 2007.
- MccGwire, Michael. *Perestroika and Soviet National Security*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1991.
- "Putin's People." *The Economist*, August 25, 2007.
- Rees, David. "Soviet Active Measures: The Propaganda War." *Conflict Studies* no. 169 (1984).
- Romerstein, Herbert. "Soviet Active Measures and Propaganda: Influence Activities in the Gorbachev Era." *Media Report, The Mackenzie Institute* no. 17 (1989).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The World Peace Council and Soviet "Active Measures."* Washington, D.C.: The Hale Foundation, 1983.
- Russia Beyond the Headlines. [www.rbth.rg.ru](http://www.rbth.rg.ru) (accessed June 10, 2008).
- "Russia: The Evolution of the FSB." *STRATFOR*, March 18, 2008. [http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia\\_evolution\\_fsb?ip\\_auth\\_redirect=1](http://www.stratfor.com/analysis/russia_evolution_fsb?ip_auth_redirect=1) (accessed July 6, 2008).
- Sakwa, Richard. *Russian Politics and Society*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2002.

- Schultz, Richard H., and Roy Godson. *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*. Washington: Pergman-Brassey's, 1984.
- Service, Robert. *Russia: Experiment with a People*. London: Macmillan, 2002.
- Shevtsova, Lilia. *Putin's Russia*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2003.
- Soviet Active Measures in the "Post-Cold War" Era 1988-1991*. United States Information Agency, June 1992.
- Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1986-87*. United States Department of State, August 1987.
- Soviet Influence Activities: A Report on Active Measures and Propaganda, 1987-88*. United States Department of State, August 1988.
- Soviet Strategic Deception*. Edited by Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker. Lexington: Lexington Books, 1987.
- Trenin, Dmitri and Bobo Lo. "The Landscape of Russian Foreign Policy Decision-Making." Carnegie Moscow Center, 2005.
- Truscott, Peter. *Putin's Progress: A Biography of Russia's Enigmatic President, Vladimir Putin*. London: Simon and Schuser, 2004.
- "World Peace Conference." World Peace Council. <http://www.wpc-in.org/> (accessed June 1, 2008).