

September 19, 1956

**Memorandum from Lt. Gen. Zheleznikov, to the
Secretary of the Central Committee of the
Communist Party of Georgia, Comrade P.V. Kovanov**

Citation:

"Memorandum from Lt. Gen. Zheleznikov, to the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Georgia, Comrade P.V. Kovanov", September 19, 1956, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Georgian Presidential Archive, Fond 14, opis (finding aid) 31, delo (file) 297. Translated by Svetlana Savranskaya.

<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/117339>

Summary:

Report on border crossing by possible Turkish and American intelligence agents along the Soviet-Turkish border.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

SPECIAL DEPARTMENT FOR THE TRANSCAUCASIAN MILITARY DISTRICT
OF THE COMMITTEE OF STATE SECURITY
AT THE USSR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

19 September 1956

No. 2/8098

Tbilisi

Top Secret
Copy No. 2

To the SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF
GEORGIA

Comrade Kovanov P. V.

I report that the last months of 1956 were characterized by an increase in infiltrations by Western agents from Turkey across the land border into the areas of deployment of the troops of the Transcaucasus Military District, and by an increase in [the number of] visits to the Transcaucasus, and mainly the areas of troop deployment, by foreign tourists and officials of capitalist diplomatic missions among whom persons engaged in intelligence work were noted.

Over the course of June, July and August, two Turkish agents and two American intelligence agents were dispatched from the Turkish side across the state border. All of them received meeting quarters on the territory of Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan.

In addition, on 11 August of this year, an unimpeded crossing of the border from Turkey by four unknown criminals took place in the area of Akhaltsikhe in the Georgian ASSR [Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic]. On 22 August they crossed back into Turkey approximately in the same area. In the exchange of fire, which occurred when they were returning from the USSR, one violator was killed. Fake documents, with which agents of foreign intelligence [services] are usually equipped, were found on him.

Military identity card number series GD No. 694861 issued by the Leninakan City Military Committee and passport series U-OF No. 676430 issued by the First Police Department of Kutaisi were confiscated from the body.

This attests to the fact that the Turkish intelligence [service] knows well the procedures of preparation and issuing of documents in the area.

The analysis of the instructions received by the above-mentioned three agents from the Turkish and the American intelligence [services] shows that the intelligence [services] exhibit serious interest in obtaining detailed information about the location, number and equipment of the military units, and also pay attention not only to the general information, such as in what area a certain group [of forces] is located, but to detailed reports on the location of particular units.

For example, agent "VOLGIN," who arrived from Turkey in July of this year, pointed out that the Turkish intelligence [service], which had information about the location of the 4th army battalions, instructed him to find out precisely in which settlements the units of those battalions were quartered and with what weapons they were equipped with.

Agent Sochlyan, who arrived from Turkey at approximately the same time, was instructed to carry out reconnaissance of the units of the Yerevan garrison.

The intelligence [services] devote great attention to the collection of information about the air force units and to the changes in their equipment, which are taking place at the present time.

For example, the same Turkish agent "C" received an assignment to find out whether new secret airports were being built in the neighborhood of Yerevan.

The American agent Moroz, who was deployed in the area of Leninakan in July of this year, had orders to find the airport near the settlement Saganlugi (Tbilisi region), and to find out what kind of aviation was based at that airport, and to what extent this airport was equipped to handle modern aviation. He was also ordered to obtain by any means (to steal or to pressure the servicemen to sell to him) a catalog with the description of the front section of the MIG-17 airplane.

Regarding the issue of the [Soviet] Navy, these agents received the following instructions: agent "M" was instructed to go to Baku and collect information about submarines, and in particular, about missile and radar equipment on them.

Turkish intelligence instructed agent "B," mentioned above, to establish the location of the Navy headquarters in Baku, and as well as the types of ships based in the port of Baku.

It was recommended to the agents that they collect that information both by means of personal observation and from conversations with people who possess the relevant information.

For example, it was suggested to agent "B" that while he collected information about the number [of men in] a certain unit, quartered in the winter accommodations, he should also determine the length and width of the barracks, the number of floors, the number of windows, and how many guards were on duty. If [the troops] were quartered in camp conditions-to count the number of tents.

It was recommended to determine the types of naval vessels by means of visual observation. For this purpose, the agent was shown pictures of various types of Soviet ships at the intelligence [service] offices, including several types of our submarines.

As was mentioned above, it was suggested to the American agent "M" that he should not hesitate to use violence or bribery of servicemen in order to obtain the catalog description of the MIG-17 plane.

All of the above-mentioned agents received the assignment to identify morally unstable people and individuals dissatisfied with the Soviet regime to encourage them to cross into Turkish territory, or to use them for intelligence purposes on our territory.

For example, Turkish agent "C" received an assignment to select such people from among those previously tried for various crimes, to collect biographical and personal information from them, to report it to Turkish intelligence, to encourage the most adversarily inclined of them to cross into Turkey, and to supply them with a pretext for that.

Agent "B" was assigned to escort one person to Turkey, to collect information about two residents of Baku, including one officer of the 4th Army, and to prepare one other person for subsequent relocation to the Crimea with an assignment from Turkish intelligence. It is characteristic that it was recommended to the agent that he should arrange his first meeting with the person under consideration [in order] to get to know him in a restaurant with some drinking, but to follow him beforehand by the means of outside surveillance. The same agent had the assignment to study the public mood of the population in connection with the struggle against the Stalin's personality cult and condemnation of Bagirov.

The efforts of Turkish intelligence to encourage Soviet citizens to betray their Motherland is expressed in other ways as well.

In 1955, and especially in the summer of 1956, numerous incidents were registered in which Turkish servicemen, and in some cases civilians as well, struck up conversations with soldiers of our border forces soldiers, and in the course of such conversations conducted anti-Soviet propaganda and encouraged them to cross over into Turkish territory, promising them safety and guarantees that these people would not be transferred back to the USSR.

Those facts were most often noted with regard to border troops units 38 and 39 on the section [between] Akhaltsikhe and Leninakan. Similar incidents were also noted on the section of the border with Iran. In certain cases those actions succeed, which was proven by the escape to Iran of three servicemen of the Azerbaijan border troop district between May and August, 1956. As interrogations of the traitors of the Motherland ROTANOV, BONDAREV, and GORBUNOV have shown, all of them were subjected to intelligence interrogations in Turkey, and they have given the foreign intelligence [services] sensitive information about the troops of the Transcaucasus Military District. It is characteristic that all these persons were encouraged to cooperate with Turkish, American, and British intelligence [agencies].

Some unstable elements and adversarily inclined persons from among the Soviet citizenry also show an interest in the Soviet-Turkish border--they arrive at the villages located close to the border, including the areas of troop deployments, with treacherous designs and search for ways to cross into Turkey or Iran. Such incidents are most often, registered in the regions of Batumi, Akhaltsikhe, Leninakan, Yerevan, Nakhichevan, and Lenkoran.

During the eight months of 1956, 22 people who attempted to betray their Motherland were detained in those areas.

In 1955, and especially 1956, the influx of various foreign tourist and other groups and of official representatives of capitalist diplomatic missions, who systematically visit various regions of the Transcaucasus, has increased.

Most often, such foreigners are representatives of the United States, France, England, Turkey, and some other countries. These individuals, and especially diplomatic personnel, make visits to mainly strategically important regions of Sukhumi-Tbilisi, Kutaisi-Yerevan-Baku, and Leninakan-Batumi. Groups of troops are stationed in those regions and along the highways leading to those [regions].

Observation of foreigners has registered their intention to collect information about the troops by means of visual observation, photography, and use of other technology. The foreigners devote great attention to investigation of highways important from the military point of view, such as the Georgian military road, the road through the Suram and other mountain ridges.

There were some noted incidents of meetings between the foreigners and re-émigrés, and people who moved to establish permanent residency in the Transcaucasus republics from countries in the Middle East, from France, and other countries, and who mainly settled in the Armenian territory.

A large number of tourists visit the region of the Black Sea Coast, where in August of this year packages with NLF (National Labor Front) anti-Soviet literature were discovered, addressed to the population and servicemen of the Soviet Army.

The circumstances described above were pointed out to all KGB Special Departments in the region. They were instructed to conduct counterintelligence work taking into account the information presented above.

Head of Special Department of the KGB
At the USSR Council of Ministers for Transcaucasus Military district
Lieutenant General

(ZHELEZNIKOV)