

November 1958

East German Ministry of State Security, 'New Methods of Operation of Western Secret Services'

Citation:

"East German Ministry of State Security, 'New Methods of Operation of Western Secret Services'", November 1958, Wilson Center Digital Archive, BStU, ZA, MfS-HA IX Nr. 4350, pp. 341-360. Translated by Paul Maddrell. Names redacted in accordance with the German Law on State Security Records.
<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/118653>

Summary:

Assessment by the Stasi of changes to operations made by the main Western secret services in response to Khrushchev's November 1958 diplomatic note to the United States, Britain, and France demanding an end to the occupation of West Berlin.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from Leon Levy Foundation

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

Main Department IX/1

New methods of operation of Western secret services

I. The following material is based on experience of investigative work of the last few months as well as information obtained from the exchange of information with other responsible departments.

Applies to all secret services: [they] react to the political situation in each case - party and government.

For example:

- chemistry conference
- proposals USSR and GDR for the resolution of the West Berlin question

Characteristic:

Immediate reaction on the part of all intelligence services to proposals - particularly Americans and Federal Intelligence Service -

Officers worried, confused - however, unlike politicians of the Western Powers they assessed the situation relatively realistically; that is to say: comprehensive re-ordering of their work.

(a) foreigners and officers of the Federal Intelligence Service go to West Germany

(b) general conversion to radio and preparation for war
important: not only specialist radio operators;

(c) use of the most modern technology;

(d) covert addresses [in] West Germany, dead drop boxes, and smuggling routes on the Western state border and the sectoral borders.

II. American secret service:

Yank dealt heavy blows in 1956, work completely re-ordered, agents switched off^[1], German employees dismissed.

Lie detector - extensive questionnaires stating parents, siblings, home - [two words blacked out]

Recruitment on mass basis.

Work transferred from West Berlin to West Germany. Already various offices transferred to Frankfurt/Main and Kassel.

[handwritten note: [illegible name] and others - Kassel office with telephone numbers from West Berlin

New methods in recruitment, cooperation, communication of intelligence -

Equipping for war

Sails under other flags. [handwritten note: Schütz [name]]

Recruitment methods:

Recruitment - refugee GDR-citizens; West German citizens, who come as asylum-seekers to the GDR; 5th Column;

Railway-workers, lorry drivers, and sailors on internal waterways, who are employed in interzonal travel;

Scientists and GDR citizens, who visit West Germany.

Sailors who dock in West German ports;

Refugees ask acquaintances and relatives to visit them in West Berlin, there introduce them to secret service.

Poles and Czechs who are staying in West Germany are supplied with forged travel visas.

[handwritten note: name blacked out - Visa. Border region - DLB store for documents and technical aids]

Cooperation:

Personal meetings are no longer carried out in bars, only in cars and safehouses which are mostly unknown to the agents.

Permanent change (wechsel) of safehouses - personal meetings are limited as much as possible - for example: Brehmer - one year

Meetings in West Berlin with "PM 12"^[2] or plane from West Berlin to West Germany

Tasks: transmitted by radio [handwritten note: no radio traffic [illegible word] Brehmer]

For example: Brehmer

Courier connection via DLB.

Communication of intelligence:

West German covert addresses have been given out to almost all agents.

Addresses do not exist, post office workers take them out, spy reports written with invisible ink (tablets - almost all tablets suited to making invisible ink) are also encoded. [handwritten note: and typewritten]

To a greater degree agents are equipped with radio sets - deadline 28 May 1959^[3], replacement sets stored in DLBs.

With the radio sets - tape recorders, radio signals are transmitted on to these, tape plays at ten times normal speed over the transmitter - therefore hard to locate.

Along the sectoral borders and Western state border smuggling routes for people and DLBs

Resident agents are equipped with radio-telephones - for example: [name of agent blacked out] [handwritten note: Schneeberg [illegible word] Aue]

Regional radio headquarters: Frankfurt/Main, Fulda, Offenbach.

[Handwritten note: radio with tape and pencil - then illegible]

Technical aids:

Beyond those already stated:

(a) Cameras:

built into glasses case, into wristwatch, cigarette lighter, and fountain pen.

Chiefly the Minox is used - automatic camera with telephoto lens for railway junction - for example: [name of agent blacked out]

(b) Bugging equipment: BASA/microphone - e.g. [name of agent blacked out]

Tapping of telephone cables on roads and in telephone exchange, bugging devices are attached to tape recorders which run for 24 hours. Bugging devices which are equipped with a transmitter have been installed in chandeliers and pocket torches. For example: [name of spy blacked out].

(c) Devices which record radioactive emissions fixed to railway tracks so as to detect uranium transports - for example: [name of spy blacked out]

(d) Transport of technical devices, codes, and instructions takes place in packaging materials which are in common use in the GDR, e.g. cans of beef, tins of paint, bars of chocolate, accordions, vacuum cleaners.

III. British secret service:

is divided in West Berlin into:

12 Berlin Intelligence Staff (BIS)^[4] carries out only military espionage - mostly groups, partly using army officers without experience of secret service work as members

and

Secret Intelligence Service (SIS) - carries out:

- (a) military espionage
- (b) economic^[5] and political espionage

Fundamentally rejects the creation of espionage groups.

Base of both departments of the British secret service on the premises of the Reich sports ground (Olympic Stadium Prohibited Zone).

They are directly responsible to the Prime Minister.^[6]

Recruitment methods:

Utterly rejects mass recruitment, chiefly makes use of refugees who write to their circle of acquaintances and relatives. [handwritten note: compare with [name blacked out] - direct work on the person in the GDR - summoned^[7] by means of letters.

In making recruitments the officers speak openly of the British secret service and as evidence that cooperation will be secure state that no British agents have yet been sentenced on the territory of the GDR, otherwise there would have been articles in the democratic^[8] press.

[They] eagerly recruit GM [Geheime Mitarbeiter: secret co-workers], GI [Geheime Informatoren: secret informants] or contacts of the MfS, tell agents to join the SED. [handwritten note: strongly working for "P-sources"^[9]

Maintaining the connection:

The agents are mainly given telephone numbers 93 51 40 or 45.

When calling these numbers from a public telephone in West Berlin the caller's money is returned after the conversation ends.

[handwritten note: respect when calling - call from [then illegible]]

When the exchange answers, the agent asks for an extension number given to him by the intelligence officer. However, these are agent numbers.

Meeting places: safehouses; cars; car-parks at night; [handwritten note: lorries - with perfectly installed meeting rooms - drive around Berlin - illegible word (cover)]; occasionally also in barracks and in the Olympic Stadium - meetings in bars are ruled out.

Furthermore, it is to be noted that the British secret service uses the wives of agents as couriers.

The conduct of espionage:

Infiltrates agents on long-term basis into state apparatus and party organizations and mass organizations; tells them to appear progressive

[10], to join the SED.

Lets agents report orally using microphones,

Information written on Japanese tissue paper, original documents in briefcases with secret compartments.

Gives agents radio sets, however they are not yet in operation, only in case of war, DLBs also only for case of war.

Cover addresses have not yet appeared. [handwritten note: West Germany]

Camera built into petrol cans and briefcases.

IV. French secret service:

Sûreté National - organizes counter-espionage - above all [against the] MfS - [Unger [name]] West Berlin, Müllerstraße, uses violence in interrogations.

DR[11]/Marine - works on Baltic coast - chiefly via Hamburg.

DR/SR[12]: (a) army (b) air force (c) political and economic espionage

Strict separation of responsibility.

Main base in Germany: Baden-Baden.

West Berlin Quartier Napoleon - Reinickendorf, Kurt-Schumacher-Damm -

Use German employees for recruitment and introduction

Cooperation chiefly with French officers.

Since [Soviet] Note on Berlin[13] use of German employees on a greater scale.

French are making preparations for withdrawal.

Equipping agents with radio sets.

Recruitment methods:

Zoo Station[14] - black market dealer in optical goods - [handwritten note: House of the East German Homeland] - refugee camps about refugees (Fluchtlingslager über Republikfluchtige) - [two words blacked out] - [handwritten note: exploitation of "Heimatverbände" - revanche[15]].

Aids:

Japanese tissue paper (Seidenpapier)- shoes with hollow sole - radio sets - winder and board which opens out as well as Morse key. [handwritten note: [agent] does not need to be a radio operator]

Radio sets with tape just like the Americans.

Communication of intelligence:

DLBs, covert addresses in West Germany, couriers - personal meetings in safehouses and bars - radio connections.

Characteristic features:

French secret service is currently generous with financial resources - pays in advance monthly salary for one year, makes agents buy motorbikes and radio sets.

V. Federal Intelligence Service (BND):

1. Structure:

Change in the structure (1. Intelligence collection, 2. Sabotage - Subversion and 3. Counter-espionage)

Now: 1. Spying [handwritten note: Near intelligence collection: GDR; Deep intelligence collection: People's Democracies; Far intelligence collection: USSR]; 2. War; 3. Intelligence collection and work on hostile intelligence services.

[handwritten note: that is a more prominent feature of the BND's character]

That is to say: concentration now on war and hostile intelligence services.

Structure of offices (organization) remained as known up to now Headquarters (GD - Geheimdienst), general agencies (GV - Generalvertretungen), district agencies (BV - Bezirksvertretungen), sub-agencies (UV - Unterververtretungen), local branches (FL - Filialen), and agent controllers (VMF - Vertrauensmannführer).

Cover: as up to now (firms, trade representatives, and suchlike.)

[handwritten note: without (official) guard - only porters]

The BND's methods of activity:

(a) research[16] and recruitment: main territory of research: West Germany, returnees, visitors to West Germany

Post and foreign offices - surveillance - collecting addresses

partly West Berlin - exploitation of offices which GDR citizens call at, e.g. Federal Support Offices (131-type pensions[17]) etc.

Selection of recruitment candidates:

Up to now - chiefly Fascists, Wehrmacht and police officers

Today - still the case - but Federal Intelligence Service seeks so-called "party faithful" - people who outwardly support the policy of the Party and state.

[handwritten note: compare [name blacked out] - exploitation of grievance and compromising material]

Recruitment:

Known up to now - German theme - reunification of Germany among other phrases - activity in Nazi Germany revealed

New line: activity in Nazi Germany not revealed - if it is, then flag[18] not revealed.

[handwritten note: general testing by means of 08 tasks, then P-sources (Weinderlich [name])]

(b) Working methods with agent networks:

1953-1956 offices (FI[19]) in West Berlin - severe blows by MfS

Transfer of all official offices to West Germany "to the secure hinterland."

Officers of the Federal Intelligence Service only now come to West Berlin for meetings.[20]

Constant changing of meeting places (hotels), e.g. [name blacked out]

Transfer to city districts located far from one another, only now partly in bars.

[handwritten note: drives in taxis of more [illegible word]]

Instruction:

meetings also in West Germany

reduce number of meetings.

That is to say: the work from West Germany of the Federal Intelligence Service will increase in future.

(c) Methods of communicating intelligence:

Secret text [(ST)] process - covert addresses - [handwritten note: ST - Blue] particularly covert addresses in West Germany/water pressure process, drying process with prepared paper.

The peculiarities of covert addresses in West Germany: addresses of people who do not exist or second address (forwarding job) covert address passes on all messages to a second address - post office boxes and storage card - likewise second address.

- giving of instructions by means of films

13 points - economic spy.

15 points - political spy.

19 points - military spy.

21 points - military/economic spy.

- warning calendar (Warnkalender) handed over on films.

- increased laying of DLBs round Berlin and above all towards West Germany (motorway, railway lines)

[handwritten note: compare [deleted] telephone smuggling, secret service smuggling (channels and [illegible word])

- dispatch of parcels (parcel of biscuits) with money and intelligence on type-through paper (ST process) to second person.

Particular novelty - supplying all agents with radio sets - that is to say:

transmitter - extremely small - with a winder/figures - duration of a normal transmission 20-30 seconds - "radio operator" does not need to be a radio expert.

reception devices: (shortwave converter) - attachment to radio with headphones - to receive instructions, whereby each operator receives: key, date, time of day, and time when headquarters will repeat [message].

(speech traffic - not machine)

Types of radio sets: "Eisenach," "Rema/800," "Dominante," "Stradivari/E9" and all sets with 2 loudspeakers.

Transports and hiding places:

Transport concealed in tins of preserved food from HO [Handelsorganisation: a state-owned network of shops and hotels], even unopened, has been maintained up to recent instructions.

Children's toy - like cars and toy railway sets etc.

Utensils (pocket mirror) and cigarettes etc.

[Handwritten note: petrol cans - paint tins and some use with set parcel with pieces of clothing pieces of clothing in general]

Couriers:

There are specific instructions for selection and collaboration

For example: people who travel a lot (professionally), long-distance drivers, sailors, and suchlike, sales representatives, courier material not to be concealed on body, concealment during transport must offer the chance of abandoning the material easily.

(e) Other technical aids:

MINOX cameras

- Robot Star and Robot Junior with cable release and powerful telephoto lens.
Particularly during observation of MfS offices and officers.

3. Particular installations under attack:

Economic espionage against key parts of the people's economy (for example: chemistry, coal, energy, or big construction sites - Rostock harbour)

[handwritten note: see in connection with returnees]

Military espionage - all installations of the Soviet army and NVA [Nationale Volksarmee: the East German army.]

Stepped-up activity against the MfS and the organs subordinate to it.

Aim: to penetrate, study, spy, "play games," smash existing IM [Inoffizielle Mitarbeiter: informants] groups.

Also spying on officers of MfS by means of observations, investigations, conversations, bar visits, drinking bouts, and suchlike.

Introduction of compromised MfS employees to secret service.

Conclusions:

1. consistent political instruction of officers; each officer - each department must [form] from this corresponding conclusions for investigative work.

2. increases sharing of experience - give more attention to operational evaluation.

3. evaluation of investigation cases - more attention to presentation of evidence.

Counter-espionage uses too little operational technology to obtain official evidence.

for example: photographing meetings by means of an observer.

Case [name blacked out] - operational combination tank -

Case [name blacked out] - [handwritten: (photographed handing over spying equipment)]

therefore important: as the intelligence service now instructs its agents in interrogations to require evidence to be presented [handwritten: e.g. arrest order e.g. [name blacked out]] - no basis for arrest without confession.

[handwritten: informants' information: show evidence - otherwise no confession]

previously: MfS would make use of beatings and other physical means - agents thereby intimidated - the interrogator impressed by correct behaviour - confession.

4. All members of Departments IX, VII, M, XIV to be instructed about opportunities for concealment -

most meticulous inspection of all objects found on spies - more use to be made of Department K - [handwritten note: quartz lamp, magnets, X-rays]

personal participation of interrogators in house searches.

5. In the future more agent radio operators (every spy can possess a radio set) - question every agent about knowledge of radio - conversations about this with controllers, training and technical devices received - if it is suspected that the agents

possess a radio, search with a detection device.

6. Question migrants from West Germany whether they have been recruited.

Experiences of the last few months - increase in number of people recruited and sent into the GDR.

See also Yank method.

particularly Department IX^[21] to Western state border - acquisition by some officers of English and French language skills.

^[1] This is intelligence jargon for suspending or ending cooperation with agents. [author's note: Abgeschalten, meaning "switched off" i.e. agent becomes inactive].

^[2] This was a visa issued by the East German People's Police (the Volkspolizei), permitting East Germans to visit West Germany or West Berlin.

^[3] This was when Khrushchev's ultimatum expired.

^[4] The number 12 was a legacy of Occupation days, when each of the various intelligence staffs in cities occupied by the British had different numbers. The intelligence staff in Berlin had the number 12.

^[5] For the MfS, economic espionage included scientific espionage, since scientific institutions (the research departments of the big nationalized enterprises and research laboratories and institutes) formed part of the economic complex. Scientific espionage was a key part of the tasking of SIS and the other major Western services.

^[6] Translator's note: The Berlin Intelligence Staff, as a military staff, was under the control of the Secretary of State for Defence. The Secret Intelligence Service is responsible to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

^[7] meaning: to West Berlin.

^[8] In communist jargon "democratic" means "Communist."

^[9] The term used in the text is "P-Quellen." This means "Penetrierungs-Quellen": penetration sources.

^[10] The term "progressive," in the Communist lexicon, meant either Communist or sympathetic to Communism.

^[11] "DR" probably stands for "Direction de Renseignements" (intelligence directorate).

^[12] "SR" stands for "Service de Renseignements" (intelligence service).

^[13] Meaning the Soviet Government's Note of 27 November 1958 to the United States, Britain, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany.

^[14] This is a reference to the Zoologischer Garten railway and subway station in West Berlin.

^[15] The "Heimatverbände" were the associations of German expellees from lost German territories in Central and Eastern Europe. The French secret service was exploiting their "revanchisme."

^[16] "Research" here means identifying people who were likely to be good spies and finding out as much as possible about them.

^[17] This clearly refers to a type of pension.

^[18] "Flag" here means the recruiting secret service.

^[19] "Filialen". See note 39.

^[20] Meant here are meetings with their agents.

^[21] This being the Investigation Branch, which created this document.