
Spetsnaz

The special terrorist capability of Soviet military intelligence

by Vin Berg

In Rangoon, Burma, half the cabinet of South Korea is killed in a bomb explosion. In Sweden, the entire nation is blacked out for 24 hours. In the United States, five ranking officers of the strategic missile, coastal defense, and Rapid Deployment Force commands are dead or missing in a two-week period. In West Germany, two drivers for the East German Deutrans trucking firm possessing photographs of NATO military installations are arrested as they attempt to re-enter East Germany. In France, the arrest of Bulgarian truck drivers recovers documents of the nuclear power commission. Throughout Europe, there is a steady increase in truck traffic from the East bloc.

Intelligence professionals characterize these incidents in a single word: spetsnaz. The drivers arrested in West Germany proved to be East German Army parachutists, attached to special units under command of Soviet military intelligence (GRU). Similar conclusions were arrived at by French authorities regarding the Bulgarians. Interrogation of captured North Korean demolition experts in Rangoon yielded the same assessment. Only the "official" Swedish version of the black-out, and the "official" FBI version of the dead and missing officers, purport otherwise.

Spetsnaz (*Spetsialnogo Naznacheniya*—Special Purpose) Forces is the designation given to a unique operational capability of the Second Department of the Soviet General Staff. No report on the terrorist threat to the Olympics can ignore it.

Spetsnaz units are much more than U.S. Green Berets or British Special Air Services. The West, in fact, has no comparable capability against the East. The spetsnaz forces do include Green Beret-type elite commando assault-units, stationed in East Germany, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, the three Warsaw Pact states bordering the West. French sources report spetsnaz units of this type based in Romania, trained for missions against France. Other Warsaw Pact forces have their own spetsnaz units under GRU command, as do the armed forces of North Korea, Cuba, and other Soviet allies. Islamic spetsnaz units are the core of an insurgency against the Yugoslav government in Bosnia.

The East German spetsnaz commandos are designated HVA/Section V and interface 400,000-strong factory-militia units. Each factory militia has two six-man spetsnaz sabotage units attached, specifically trained to either destroy or seize and direct the operation of a designated factory complex in West Germany by a designated factory militia in East Germany. For Rostock, East Germany, the target is Hamburg, West Germany; for Matthias/Thesen shipyards in Wismar, the target is HDW/Kiel shipyards. Interflug Airlines is prepared to take over Lufthansa; Ost-Post to take over the Bundespost (the West German postal service). The attached spetsnaz units are to be parachuted into West Germany 24-48 hours prior to regular army/factory militia invasion.

However, the spetsnaz forces encompass not only commando units—and these in much greater numbers than the West—but professional assassins, both men and women, who wear civilian clothes; the crews of merchant ships and Aeroflot airliners; the crews of mini-submarines; and widespread networks of deep-cover agents in the West, both foreign nationals and Russians trained in the national language, appropriate dialect, and even local colloquialisms. Such "sleepers" wait to be "awakened" for pre-designated acts of sabotage and assassination.

Finally, selected members of all major Soviet athletic teams, including the Soviet Olympic team, are professional, active-duty spetsnaz.

Sabotage and assassination

The spetsnaz have designated tasks which include:

- "anti-VIP measures": the assassination of political and military leaders of targeted countries;
- surveillance, communications, and demolition behind enemy lines: the pin-pointing of nuclear and other military installations for air or missile strikes or on-ground sabotage, and sabotage of mobile command and communications structures, airfields, roads, and other vital military infrastructure;
- sabotage of power systems, oil and gas storage depots, and the electricity grid of targeted countries.

The spetsnaz commandos are also the obvious choice of instrument for non-random terrorism. There is reason to believe, for example, that spetsnaz professionals from the East are now in the leadership of Western and Middle Eastern terrorist organizations, while there also occur deployments of regular-army spetsnaz professionals from the East bloc for individual acts of terrorism in which no "slip-ups" are wanted.

"Victor Suvorov" (pseudonym), a defector to the West who says he was an officer in a Red Army spetsnaz unit, reports that the spetsnaz forces consist of basically three groups: commando combat units, units of professional athletes, and foreign agents. The training of foreign agents takes place on an individual basis at special centers on Soviet territory; they are returned to their native land, buy houses close to airfields, bridges, missile emplacements, power stations, and other important targets. Unless orders come from the GRU, they may "do nothing criminal," and in the case of sabotage and assassination agents, may not even gather intelligence throughout their entire lives.

The combat units, which are to be parachuted behind enemy lines just prior to the onset of general warfare, are selected conscripts, intensively trained and maintained at such a high level of combat readiness that each year of service is counted as 18 months.

'Athletes' with a deadly mission

Among the hard-core spetsnaz professionals are the athletes. The training of professional athletes is done in small groups and sections, and consists of physical training, "in some cases to Olympic level," foreign languages, the study of the territory likely to be fought in ("in the course of sports trips abroad"), as well as communications, demolition, and assassination.

One can infer from what Suvorov writes of Russian athletes, that the same applies (perhaps not to the same degree) to all Russian "cultural exchange" groups—dancers, musicians, and so forth. Theirs, he specifies, is an "anti-VIP" specialty—assassination of Western leaders.

"Suvorov," writing in the Swiss publication, *International Defense Review*, reports:

In order to conceal the existence of the professional nucleus of the spetsnaz, the brigade anti-VIP HQ companies are detached from their parent brigades to become Military District, Group of Forces, or Fleet athletics teams. The spetsnaz regiments, which are manned entirely by professionals, are disguised as sporting teams belonging to the Central Army Sporting Club (ZSKA). The same method is used by the KGB, and professional KGB saboteurs belong to the Dinamo Sporting Club. The Soviet Union's combined Olympic team is, for the most part, made up of professionals from these two very wealthy and highly successful clubs. . . .

The Soviet Union needs prestige and one way of providing this is by winning Olympic medals. The country needs an organization with draconian discipline to squeeze the maximum effort out of the athletes. At the same time, the spetsnaz needs athletes of the highest calibre who have the opportunity to visit areas in which they may have to operate. . . . The athletes, for their part, need opportunities for training and need to belong to an organization that can reward them lavishly for athletic achievement, give them apartments and cars, award commissioned ranks in the forces, and can arrange trips outside the Soviet Union. The spetsnaz thus provides a focal point for the interests of state prestige, military intelligence, and individuals who have dedicated themselves to sport. . . .

The ZSKA sports club sends its athletes all over the world and the fact that these athletes have military ranks is not hidden. The KGB, which also has the role of assassinating enemy VIPs, has its own similar organization. . . . It is of note that the number of women athletes in spetsnaz is unusually high.

According to several sources, hours before the Soviet Union invaded Czechoslovakia in 1968, a Soviet athletic team in an Aeroflot jet reported that it had lost its way to air-traffic control in Prague, and requested permission to land. Upon arrival, a few hours before the full-scale Red Army invasion, the athletes, armed with Kalashnikov automatic rifles, silenced pistols, and grenade launchers, seized and held the airport. The same spetsnaz athletic team subsequently captured Czech President Alexander Dubcek.

Similarly, spetsnaz units were parachuted into Afghanistan in both November 1978 and December 1979, seizing the palace and assassinating top members of the government—in the latter case, two days prior to Soviet occupation of the country.

Current deployments

The CIA and French intelligence sources leaked to the Western public the existence of the spetsnaz forces in September and October 1983, at the time of a marked rise in their deployment as part of the Russian military junta's buildup toward global confrontation. The objective, as described by one source, is "to divorce the sympathy of the population from the authorities, and by covert means upset the stability and smooth functioning of the society. . . . This is the type of situation which the Soviets would like to achieve, because it will increase their chances of a quick victory."

The October 1983 bombing that killed 16 members of the South Korean government at a Buddhist shrine in Rangoon, Burma is known to have been the act of a North Korean spetsnaz commando-unit, trained and commanded by the Soviet GRU. Swedish military authorities have photo-

Terrorist underground:

The Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), the most sophisticated of the radical groupings currently threatening the Los Angeles Olympics, is in the thick of operations targeting U.S. military facilities in Western Europe. When 37 radicals in West Germany cut through fences surrounding the U.S. army base in Mutlangen April 21, with a mission to sabotage the deployment sites for U.S. Pershing II missiles, RCP'ers were among them, informed sources report. The RCP and 12 other Marxist-Leninist groups on March 12 formed a new "Revolutionary Internationalist Movement," which experts believe is dominated by elements of British Intelligence. We present here a dossier on the RCP, one of 30 case studies published in EIR's new Multi-Client Special Report, "The Terrorist Threat to the 1984 Summer Olympics."

Leaders

Bob Avakian: Chairman and original founder of the RCP; currently in exile in Paris; charged with riot disturbance during Chinese Premier Deng Xiao-ping's visit to Washington, D.C. in 1979; with William Hinton and Paul Jacobs started the Revolutionary Union (RU), the predecessor of the RCP; member of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) Flint War Council that established the Weatherunderground in 1969; associate of Black Panther leaders Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, and Eldridge Cleaver; had a personal meeting with Mao Tse-Tung in 1970.

Clark Kissinger: Although it is not clear if Kissinger is an actual member of the RCP, he led the World Without Imperialism Contingent, an RCP front, on a November-December 1983 tour of West Germany, where the Contingent took part in violent demonstrations and held meetings with the Revolutionary Cells (RZ) and Red Army Fraction (RAF) support-network; was the national secretary of the original SDS, a leading activist in the Committee for Concerned Asian Scholars run from Cornell University, and is an active associate of the Institute for Policy Studies.

William Hinton: Founding and central committee member of the RU; State Department propaganda analyst for the Office of War Information in China, 1943-1947; technical adviser to the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration in China, 1947-53; later authored *Fanshen*; was a guest lecturer at the Washington, D.C. Institute for Policy

graphed markings on the ocean floor establishing that, of six Soviet subs known to have been operating in the Stockholm Archipelago in October 1982, two were mini-submersibles of the type operated by spetsnaz saboteur- and assassin-crews. Sweden's total power outage one year later could only have resulted from sabotage of the single transformer station whose failure was responsible for the black-out—a designated spetsnaz task.

A key element in spetsnaz operations is the deployment of commercial trucks into Western Europe. The drivers are spetsnaz professionals, often Soviet tank commanders. They are principally engaged in surveillance, but also weapons-smuggling, delivery of Western currency to GRU "sleepers" and Western subversive movements, sophisticated-equipment theft, and assassination and kidnaping operations.

EIR investigators of a September 1981 attempted vehicular homicide against West German political figure Helga Zepp-LaRouche, wife of EIR founder Lyndon Larouche, concluded that it was a spetsnaz deployment. The "truck driver" who forced Zepp-LaRouche's car off the Autobahn near Hannover had only recently "fled" East Germany.

In France, a police search-and-seal operation against suspected Bulgarian spetsnaz drivers was called off under pressure from Minister of Transportation Fiterman, a cabinet representative of the French Communist Party. Fiterman had recently visited Moscow, where he met with Deputy Prime Minister Geidar Aliyev, who is directing the Islamic insurgency in Bosnia, Yugoslavia. Aliyev's current responsibilities include transportation. Although Fiterman's protests prevented a French police crack-down, Bulgarian truck traffic notably declined thereafter.

Such "fifth column" activity is not restricted to France. Foreign communist parties provide logistical and surveillance services including maintenance of safe-houses and arms caches for access by spetsnaz units.

The West German Communist Party (DKP), with aid of millions conduited from Russia through East German Stasi channels, is a controlling influence in the mass-based Green movement there. In the course of "factory occupations" protesting West German defense production, the DKP's "green" agents have thoroughly profiled the facilities for spetsnaz deployment. This is known to include the HDW/Kiel shipyards, a site of "greenie" occupation which is the designated target of the factory militia of Matthias/Thesen shipyards in Wismar, East Germany, to which two spetsnaz commando units are attached.

In the United States, the Communist Party U.S.A. is the key operational back-up for all identified U.S.-based terrorist capabilities, and is the coordinator for both public and secret actions planned against the 1984 Olympics. The assigned tasks of the CPUSA are to be understood as an inclusive part of potential GRU-spetsnaz activation in Los Angeles during the Summer Games.