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## “OUR SOLIDARITY IN THE STRUGGLE IS THE GUARANTEE OF OUR VICTORY”\* THE COUNTERINTELLIGENCE ANTI-TERRORIST APPARATUS IN THE EASTERN BLOC IN THE 1980S. A CZECHOSLOVAK PERSPECTIVE

At the turn of the 1970s and 1980s the Communist bloc was forced to respond to the threat of international terrorism. It becomes apparent from the documentation of the former Czechoslovak Security services that all of the Eastern European states controlled by the Soviet Union gradually established specific counter-espionage units that focused on the covert surveillance of terrorist groups and their contacts and, at the same time, special anti-terrorist units for direct intervention against the perpetrators of terrorist acts.

Czechoslovak State Security based the organisation of its anti-terrorist measures partly on its own experience, but particularly on information obtained from its partners. This was shared multilaterally at joint meetings of representatives of counter-espionage apparatus (Prague 1979, Varna 1987) and also obtained on visits to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), German Democratic Republic (GDR), Hungarian People's Republic (HPR), Polish People's Republic (PRL), Bulgarian People's Republic (PRB) and even the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).

The minutes of meetings and records of study visits to “fraternal” security forces – and in some cases of the trips connected with them – were presented to the leadership of the Czechoslovak Federal Ministry of the Interior, and contain interesting findings about the current state of the organisation of counter-espionage work across Eastern

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\* Quotation from the end of speech reported on the International Conference of Counterintelligence Representatives of Communist Countries by the Head of the Delegation of the Interior Ministry of the Bulgarian People's Republic. Security Services Archive (SSA) Prague, Fund (f.) Directorate of Counter-Intelligence for the fight against exceptional and special forms of criminal activity (hereinafter A 28), archive (arch.) number (no.) 1. International Conference of Counterintelligence Representatives of Countries of the Socialist Community on International Terrorism, April 1979.

Europe. This was directed against both international terrorism and what was known as internal terrorism, which included organisational training and tactics for the deployment of special rapid-reaction anti-terrorist units. Some additional subjects covered include hitherto unknown information and findings that could yet be accessed in those countries where the relevant formations and units operated.

The goal of this article, written based on the research of archival funds preserved from the Czechoslovak State Security, is to be a tool for the further analysis of the Soviet bloc State Security Services' activities that were focused on the monitoring of international terrorism and special counter-terrorism units; as well as to point out specific differences in their organisation, training and doctrine. It is not a history of international terrorism in relation to Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>1</sup>

## UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

Officials from the Counter-Intelligence Directorate for the fight against exceptional and special forms of criminal activity (Directorate XIV of the National Security Corps, SNB) led by the assigned Head of the Directorate, Col. Zdeněk Němec, met with leading representatives of the Committee for State Security (*Комитет государственной безопасности*, KGB) of the USSR, during their first working visit to Moscow in mid-May 1981. They were informed that the problem of international terrorism had begun to be considerably more obtrusive in the Soviet Union over the last two years. Nevertheless, it had not developed so intensively as to require the setting up of a new special unit.<sup>2</sup>

The organisation of the "fight against terrorism" was concentrated under the leadership of the Deputy Chairman of the KGB USSR, the Head Lt. Gen. Grigory Fedorovich Grigorenko, and his First Deputy Maj. Gen. Vitaly Konstantinovich Boyarov in the Main Directorate II (counterespionage) KGB USSR. Lt. Gen. Filip Denisovich Bobkov and his Deputy Maj. Gen. Lev Nikolayevich Chirikov headed Directorate V (ideological diversion, dissent) KGB USSR, which was, according to the record of the Czechoslovak delegation, part of Chief Directorate II KGB USSR. They were responsible for processing issues of "internal terrorism" (both at a local and a central level) committed by Soviet citizens on the USSR's territory. One of its operational sections<sup>3</sup> was responsible for the countrywide records of mentally disturbed persons, drug addicts, and other criminal elements who were potential perpetrators of this criminal activity. In the case of individual republics, the KGB operated at various organisational levels of sections, departments or operational

<sup>1</sup> Due to the limited extent of this study, it does not include references to contemporary expert literature (Jordan Baev, Premyslaw Gasztold, Adrian Hanni, Jeffrey Herf, Lutz Maeke, Miroslav Mareš and Jakub Petlák, Daniela Richterova, and others), which is not predominantly focused on the activities of State Security Services but on the operations of individual terrorist groups.

<sup>2</sup> SSA Prague, f. Directorate of Counter-Intelligence for the fight against exceptional and special forms of criminal activity (hereinafter: A 28), arch. no. 35. Study visit to the USSR – report, 18.5.1981.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently the 7th Section of Directorate V KGB. See P. Žáček, P. Košícký, "Československo-sovětská agenturně operativní spolupráce. StB a KGB proti tzv. ideodiverzním centrum, 1987–1989", *Paměť národa* 2006, vol. 3, p. 37.

groups. Directorate V annually registered approximately twenty cases of terrorism locally and ten centrally.<sup>4</sup>

Directorate VII KGB (operations, arrests, directives) USSR under Lt. Gen. Alexey Dmitryevich Beschastnov was responsible for protecting governmental authorities and Party organs, important buildings, equipment and installations against terrorist attacks, while Directorate III KGB (military counterintelligence) USSR was responsible for processing and uncovering instances of terrorism, hijacking/kidnapping and violence in the Soviet armed forces.

The main tasks of the Section for Foreign Counterintelligence “K” of Main Directorate I KGB USSR<sup>5</sup> included the fight against enemy intelligence services, ideologically divergent infiltration, and international terrorism, was in charge of protecting Soviet citizens, offices and institutions abroad. The section organised its own Agency-Operational activity, gathered intelligence from official sources and passed all the information on to Main Directorate II KGB USSR.

Direct responsibility for processing international terrorism was held at Chief Directorate II KGB USSR by the 11th Section “T” under Col. G. A. Baranov. Forty-nine members were employed in this field, managing, coordinating, checking and implementing work on operations of high importance. Members of the section kept detailed records of the state of counterintelligence activity in this field and analysed every piece of information they obtained so they could anticipate such criminal activity. Their work included the processing and monitoring of foreigners entering the USSR, without regard to nationality.

Up to May 1981, the 11th Section of Main Directorate II KGB USSR did not have its own organisational opposite numbers in the KGB structures in the individual republics. However, there was at that time a proposal to set up independent sections with Directorate V KGB in five of the USSR’s republics.

The 11th Section’s mission was to lead an unremitting fight against international terrorism “to prevent it infiltrating the territory of the Soviet Union”, also to process the foreign community in cooperation with the other directorates, and to prevent organised terrorism on the USSR’s territory. When required, it also had “to intervene decisively and effectively and eliminate the focal point of hostility” in cooperation with the Special Unit of Directorate VII KGB USSR.

Organisationally, the 11th Section consisted of two departments: the First Department was responsible for preventing the entry of terrorists into the Soviet Union, in the course of which it worked closely with Main Directorate I KGB USSR and used operational espionage records. It also focused on information obtained in the territory of the Soviet

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<sup>4</sup> More specifically, representatives of Directorate V KGB reported that in 1976 terrorist acts using explosives were committed in Georgia. They similarly recorded cases of the murder of “representatives” (apparently Party representatives), although in this case the motive was not terrorism. Criminal acts with a threat to take hostages had not previously taken place in the USSR. SSA Prague, f. Directorate of Counter-Intelligence for the fight against exceptional and special forms of criminal activity (hereinafter: A 28), arch. no. 35. Study trip to USSR – report, 18.5.1981.

<sup>5</sup> In the Czechoslovak delegation’s record a Col. Sirgogin was described as Head of the Section of Foreign Counter-Intelligence of Main Directorate I KGB; however, in 1979–1987 this post was held by Maj. Gen. Anatoly Tikonovich Kiryev. See L. Pawlikowicz, *Aparat Centralny 1. Zarządu Głównego KGB jako instrument realizacji globalnej strategii Kremla 1954–1991* (Warsaw, 2013), p. 193.

Union, as part of its evaluation and analysis. In May 1981 it recorded 4,006 persons as members of terrorist organisations (compared with the situation three years earlier when only incomplete data on 300 persons was available); of these, data on 1,800 persons was obtained from the security services of the Communist bloc.

The 2nd Department was responsible for counterintelligence processing of the most serious operations and signals, using all agent-operational sources with the aim of rapid clarification. It seems that significant results in this sector were achieved before and during the Olympic Games held in Moscow in the summer of 1980.<sup>6</sup>

The 11th Section was responsible, with Directorate VII, for implementing specific measures for the protection and security of 200 buildings (embassies, trade representations, banks, etc.) against terrorist attack. The plans contained all the data needed for the rapid and effective deployment of security services forces and resources including communications, so that every attempt could be nipped in the bud.<sup>7</sup>

The Special Unit of Directorate VII KGB USSR, intended for the elimination of specific instances of terrorism by all necessary means, was described by “Soviet friends” as an important element of the complex leadership in the fight against international terrorism. This 125-strong anti-terrorist unit, located in Moscow and intended for deployment anywhere, answered directly to the Chairman of the KGB USSR Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov; nevertheless, Chief Directorate II KGB USSR became the authority for its deployment.<sup>8</sup> It was understood that it could be reinforced by special army units if needed.

The Deputy Head of this unit, Col. Robert Petrovich Ivon, stated that it was composed of officers (70% senior officers, 30% junior officers) who had passed through basic military service, had a seven-year service commitment, and fulfilled a number of conditions: political maturity, commitment to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet people, excellent state of health, physical agility and mental resilience. The selection was made from the ranks of members of the KGB USSR who were under twenty-six years of age. The principle of exacting standards and absolute secrecy was applied within the unit.

The internal structure of the anti-terrorist unit was based on the system 1 + 4, whereby 25 persons could be deployed within five minutes outside working hours, and 75 persons inside working hours. The influence of the family, women and children, and training without specific deployment in an action, and so on, were described as negative phenomena affecting morale.

<sup>6</sup> In this connection the 11th Section of Directorate V KGB USSR was created as early as June 1977. See P. Žáček, P. Košícký, *Československo-sovětská agenturně operativní spolupráce*, p. 37.

<sup>7</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 39. Material for operational consultation of the Ministry of the Interior of the CSSR. Report from working trip to the USSR, 23.6.1981.

<sup>8</sup> This was the Special Purposes Unit (*группа специального назначения*) “А” KGB USSR, known as “Alfa”, formally created as part of the 5th section of Directorate VII KGB based on an order from the Chairman of the KGB in the Council of Ministers of the USSR Y. V. Andropov, no. 0089/OV of 29.7.1974. The Hero of the Soviet Union and Colonel of the Border Guard (later Maj. Gen.) V. D. Bubenin (1974–1977) was put at the head, but was later replaced by Col. R. P. Ivon (1977), Maj. Gen. G. N. Zaitsev (1977–1988) and Maj. Gen. V. F. Karpuchin (1988–1991). See A. Kolkapidi, *Likvidatory KGB. Specoperacii sovětských specslužb 1941–2004* (Moscow, 2004), pp. 522–523; *Specnaz Rossiji. Enciklopedija*, ed. V. Stepakov (Moscow, 2007), pp. 7–13; M. Boltunov, *“Alfa” – sverchsekretnyj otrjad KGB* (Moscow, 1992); <http://shieldandword.mozohin.ru/kgb5491/specnaz/alfa.htm>.

The up to date headquarters of this anti-terrorist unit with the latest arms and equipment was instrumental in ensuring its successful activity; it had its own exercise facilities, shooting range, pools and everything needed for training. Specially modified sets of weapons, aids, and some equipment, prevented their misuse and ensured readiness for rapid deployment. The Czechoslovak delegation also learnt that more special units would be created with the setting up of new formations intended for the fight against terrorism.<sup>9</sup>

Two years later, from 16 to 19 May 1983, a working discussion took place with a delegation from Main Directorate II KGB USSR<sup>10</sup> at Directorate XIV SNB in Prague. Its leader, Head of 11th Section Col. G. A. Baranov, identified the “Muslim Brotherhood” terrorist organisation and various Armenian extremist organisations as their main opponents. He also noted that Afghan terrorists similarly were causing the KGB USSR a lot of problems, for example, some were travelling across Europe using 15–20 passports that could not be identified even with the help of computer technology. The basic tactical approach was to have hundred per cent control of border crossings and then prevent entry with weapons into the Soviet Union’s territory.

Col. Baranov complained moreover that the 11th Section received little information “on terrorism policy” from Main Directorate I KGB USSR. He also saw a problem in the slow pace of information transferred through Directorate XIV SNB and proposed that a direct information channel be established between the two partner units. “We are talking about information where there is danger in delay, and any intermediaries cause hold-ups in the possible implementation of effective measures.”<sup>11</sup> In connection with this, he mentioned that some of the information obtained “relating to terrorists” from sources in West German police units and passed on by the Ministry of State Security of the German Democratic Republic, frequently was concerning fighters in national liberation movements. Last but not least he stated that special units and anti-terrorist formations already existed in individual republics and regions of the Soviet Union.

The analytical specialist of the 11th Section, N. N. Ciganov, also emphasised the need for direct contact, especially when exchanging information about persons of interest travelling between the lands of the Soviet bloc, so that advance warning about them and their hostile activities could be secured. “He defined the main antagonist (the Muslim Brotherhood, the Armenians) and the need to obtain information on these organisations.”<sup>12</sup>

Col. Vítězslav Kába, First Deputy Head of Directorate XIV SNB, confirmed for their Soviet friends the complexity of identifying and screening persons of Arab ethnicity active in travelling to countries within the Soviet bloc. He therefore proposed that in order to lead a united and coordinated fight against the influence of “internal terrorism”, the KGB USSR should organise more multilateral consultations of the security services

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<sup>9</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 39. Material for operative meeting of the Interior Minister of the CSSR. Report from working visit to the USSR, 23.6.1981. See M. Kovář, *Zvláštní jednotky celého světa* (Prague, 2014), p. 138; [http://shieldandword.mozohin.ru/kgb5491/structure/2GU/11\\_2.htm](http://shieldandword.mozohin.ru/kgb5491/structure/2GU/11_2.htm).

<sup>10</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 341. Discussions with the USSR delegation – report, 6.6.1983.

<sup>11</sup> See P. Žáček, “Kontrarozvědný protiteroristický aparát východního bloku v osmdesátých letech dvacátého století”, *Sborník Archivu bezpečnostních složek* 2017, vol. 15, pp. 240–244.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 244.

of the Warsaw Pact countries, during which new security political evaluations would be implemented and obligatory joint tasks established.<sup>13</sup>

A month later the First Deputy Commander of the Emergency Regiment of the Czech Socialist Republic Public Security (*Pohotovostní pluk Veřejné bezpečnosti ČSR*) Maj. Dr. Břetislav Zdráhala and the Commander of the Emergency Unit of the Slovak Socialist Republic Public Security (*Pohotovostní útvar VB SSR*) Maj. Dušan Kušnier visited Moscow where Col. Yevgeny Artemevich Maltsev and Col. Nikolai Vilemovich Rudenko of the Directorate of Interior Troops of the Interior Ministry of the USSR introduced them to the organisations and tasks of the Felix Edmundovich Dzerzhinsky Division.

This formation, composed of professional officers and soldiers on military service, was trained as a riot control unit that could operate at the strength of a whole division, a regiment, or a battalion. Its main task was the protection of public order and the struggle against terrorism and gangs, air piracy, bank and post office robberies, and so on. The equipping of the riot unit resembled that of the emergency regiment in Prague. Its members were issued with equipment which included protective shields of Czechoslovak manufacture, rubber truncheons and tear gas.

The divisional training ground in Moscow was in a building with an obstacle course and a facility representing a post office, a bank and a cinema that was also used by units of the militia. A special company gave a practical demonstration there of the liquidation of terrorist groups in streets and in buildings and the liquidation of hijackers from a Tupolev Tu-104 aeroplane. In the specially equipped gymnasium, the Soviet comrades demonstrated a high level of training in self-defence, karate, and throwing assault knives and entrenching tools.

At the modern shooting range for all types of weapons, members of the Dzerzhinsky Division demonstrated sharpshooting, and presented a three-shot launcher for 23 mm calibre teargas grenades (penetrating and normal), an AGC-17 40 mm calibre grenade-launcher (29 grenades), with a range of 1800 metres, and finally a single-shot grenade-launcher fixed to a submachine gun effective from 100 to 400 metres. The grenade-launchers were intended for the liquidation of terrorist and marauding groups.

The Czechoslovak delegation also inspected the armoured vehicles (BYM), equipped in the division workshops with adapted roadblocks, and a 160 cm high wire mesh, which could be pneumatically expanded to a width of 6 metres. Another specially adapted vehicle OT (BUM), intended for the neutralisation of terrorist groups in high-rise buildings and aeroplanes on runways, was equipped with a 19-metre hydraulic arm with a bullet-proof two-man cockpit furnished with a periscope and apertures for shooting.

The final evaluation of the Czechoslovak delegation's visit and a presentation on the main tasks of the interior troops was given to the Commander of the Troops of the Interior Ministry of the USSR's Army, General Ivan Konstantonovich Yakovlev.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>14</sup> SSA Prague, f. Office of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, unprocessed. Meetings of the Minister of the Interior of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic with his Deputies, 27.10.1983. Report on the outcomes of the working visit to the Directorate of the Interior Troops of the Interior Ministry of the USSR 5.7.–8.7.1983, 12.9.1983.

## GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

In mid-September 1981, the leadership of Directorate XIV SNB travelled to Berlin to draw on the considerable experience of the East German State Security apparatus.<sup>15</sup> One of the Deputy Heads of Department XXII of the Ministry of State Security (*Ministerium für Staatsicherheit*, MfS) of the German Democratic Republic, Lt. Col. Horst Franz, said they considered the fight against international terrorism and other especially dangerous criminal acts to be one of their most important tasks. For specific geographical, political and historical reasons they had already created a special unit to eliminate this hostile activity as early as 1973. It was directly subordinate to the Deputy Minister (currently Maj. Gen. Gerhard Neiber) and to the Head of the Permanent Operational Staff of the Ministry of State Security of the GDR (currently Maj. Gen. Otto Geisler).<sup>16</sup>

An independent Department XXII (*Terrorabwehr*)<sup>17</sup> was created in 1975 – likewise directly subordinate to the Deputy Minister – whose task was to fight against terrorist activity on the GDR's territory (internal terrorism) and the perpetration of exceptionally dangerous criminal acts on the GDR's citizens, as well as the protection of the GDR's citizens (and state property) in capitalist foreign countries, and the counterintelligence processing of information on terrorist organisations and groups aimed at uncovering potential attacks against the countries in the Communist bloc (external terrorism).

The Department focused on repressive, educational and preventative operations. Its counterintelligence agency-operative activity, especially with undercover colleagues, was of a highly secret nature both on the territory of the GDR and in other Communist countries. In several serious cases, especially as far as the protection of embassies or citizens of the GDR was concerned, this activity took place within the territory of the capitalist states, including security and military actions with the help of special units.

Department XXII was the administrative departmental unit responsible for the fight against internal and external terrorism. All its information, knowledge and materials were focused on this issue; it had its own analytical and informational facility that processed this data for the needs of the services and for keeping the party and state authorities informed. Other operational parts of State Security likewise involved in the fight against

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<sup>15</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 49. Study visit to the GDR – report, 16.10.1981.

<sup>16</sup> The Permanent Operational Staff of the MfS GDR was established for the management, coordination and deployment of all the forces and resources of the Special Unit, including service officials with power of decision among its members. Through the mediation of the Head, the staff planned, organised, managed and accepted measures in the course of carrying out specific actions. It had model (project) plans of buildings at its disposal, as well as overviews by specialists, and so on (*ibidem*). It was later transformed into the Minister's Working Group (*Arbeitsgruppe des Ministers*, AGM). See D. Childs, R. Poplewell, *The Stasi. The East German Intelligence and Security Service* (London, 1999), pp. 71–72; J. Gieseke, “German Democratic Republic” [in:] *A Handbook of the Communist Security Apparatus in East Central Europe, 1944–1989*, ed. K. Persak, Ł. Kamiński (Warsaw, 2005), p. 196.

<sup>17</sup> The XXII Working Group (*Arbeitsgruppe XXII*) was first created in the context of the MfS, the XXII Department (*Abteilung XXII*) not until 1979, and finally, until 1.3.1989, Main Department XXII (*Hauptabteilung XXII*). P. Siebenmorgen, “*Staatssicherheit*” der DDR. *Der Westen im Fadenkreuz der Stasi* (Bonn, 1993), p. 217; *Das MfS-Lexikon. Begriffe, Personen und Strukturen der Staatssicherheit der DDR* (Berlin, 2012), pp. 145–147.

terrorism were bound to inform the section about events and facts they discovered, and where relevant the Special Unit of the Ministry of State Security of the GDR too, which would implement security military measures according to need.

From the point of view of counterintelligence, the Department monitored left-wing and ultra-left-wing oriented terrorist organisations and groups as thoroughly as their right-wing, ultra-right-wing and fascist equivalents. From the political point of view however, their evaluations were differentiated and, based on this, corresponding requisite measures were adopted. The “German friends” were thus opposed to terrorism, but were nevertheless forced to do all they could to ensure that their own agents’ activity – which provided “very valuable information” – did not compromise them in the capitalist world as a state that supported terrorism.

Department XXII’s activity focused on uncovering hostile intentions and plans directed against the GDR by international terrorism, anticipating that every hostile action would be thwarted, and also on carrying out preventive and prophylactic measures of an individual or more widely provocative nature. These aims were realised with the use of all possible agency-operational sources, including a secret agent network fulfilling highly demanding specific tasks which included armed terrorist acts.

The Department kept a database of persons identified as dangerous from the point of view of state security and criminality, and this was scrutinised by counterintelligence. Similar attention was focused on persons entering the GDR from capitalist and developing countries as tourists, businessmen or participants in various symposia, consultancies and negotiations, who were suspected of membership of terrorist groups and organisations.

Department XXII cooperated closely with other operational units, both the intelligence Main Directorate A (*Hauptverwaltung Aufklärung*, HV A), and counterintelligence Main Department II (*Spionageabwehr*, HA II), but especially Main Department VI (*Passkontrolle, Tourismus, Interhotel*, HA VI) of the MfS, which was involved in the fight against people-smuggling organisations, the management of the department of passport control and the monitoring of the Interhotels where foreigners travelling on visas stayed. Earlier conflicts in this field were overcome, so there no longer seems to be any problems in the field of cooperation.

From 1 August 1975 until September 1984, Col. Dr. Harry Dahl<sup>18</sup> led Department XXII with three deputies: Lt. Col. Horst Franz, previously mentioned, Lt. Col. Klaus Achtenberg and Col. Günter Jäckel. The organisation of the unit was divided into sections:

- section 1 – counterintelligence processing of ultra-right, neo-fascist and militarist organisations and groups in cases where the emergence and activity of terrorism was anticipated,
- section 2 – internal terrorism (explosives, sabotage), investigation and documentation with the help of forensic means and techniques,
- section 3 – left-wing oriented terrorism and its adherents on the territory of the GDR,

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<sup>18</sup> See J.O. Koehler, *Stasi. The Untold Story of the East German Secret Police* (Boulder, 1999), p. 364 ad.; SSA Prague, f. Historical files, arch. no. H-720-7. Operation “CARLOS” – request from the GDR, 5.8.1982.

- section 4 – provocative elements of a criminal nature in the field of criminal acts of terrorism (trafficking in narcotics, theft of weapons, explosives, and so on),
- section 5 – the top secret liquidation of some perpetrators,
- section 6 – the fight against international (external) terrorism involving specific organisations and groups,
- section 7 – analysis and information, with an evaluation group dealing with official sources including, for example, daily broadcasting of the radio station Tirana in the German language.

The organisational security of the passage of work, headquarters, economic and other questions were taken care of by an internal section. There were more than 150 members of staff altogether working in the department; however, their Czechoslovak colleagues were not granted more precise data. In individual regional directorates the department had a directly managed assigned officer on the staff of the regional head.<sup>19</sup>

In the field of repression, neutralisation, and also preventive and prophylactic activity, Department XXII worked closely with the top secret Special Unit, subject to the Deputy Minister and managed by the Chief of Staff of the MfS, with the greatest probability – as it seems the Czechoslovak delegation incorrectly assumed – integrated into the VIIIth Main Department (*Beobachtung, Ermittlung*, HA VIII). This unit, composed exclusively of members of State Security, was part of the special formation of the Permanent Operational Staff of the Ministry of State Security of the GDR, at the head of which stood Col. Heinz Stöcker and his Deputy Lt. Col. W. Mayer.<sup>20</sup>

The unit was deployed almost every day to eliminate perpetrators of terrorist and other especially dangerous criminal acts (assassinations, hijacking of vehicles and persons for blackmail with physical force, sabotage, explosions), free hostages, and undertake difficult searches for armed offenders. It also helped to protect Party and state organs, their guests, Party and state buildings, and so on. It carried out preventive and prophylactic actions focused on the arming of mass anti-social demonstrations or “provocations” against the East German security and technical-engineering measures on the border with West Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany.

The Special Unit fulfilled specific tasks in the course of protecting air transport, embassies, citizens and the GDR’s property in capitalist and developing countries and on the territory of the Communist bloc countries.<sup>21</sup> It intervened independently on the GDR’s territory only when it was the first on the scene of the crime, otherwise in cooperation with other security units and elements, including the Guard Regiment of F.E. Dzerzhinsky and the motorised regiment of the Ministry of State Security of the

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<sup>19</sup> When required, this designated officer of Department XXII MfS was subordinated to the Chief of Staff of the regional directorate for the preparation and deployment of what were called non-structural units. SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 49. Study visit to the GDR – report, 16.10.1981. See T. Wunschik, *Die Hauptabteilung XXII: “Terrorabwehr” (MfS-Handbuch)*, BStU (Berlin, 1996), pp. 49–50.

<sup>20</sup> For the permanent intervention unit for “special tasks” (AGM/S) and its remit, see J. Gieseke, *Stasi. Tajná policie NDR v letech 1945–1990* (Prague, 2013), pp. 220–226 and further P. Siebenmorgen, “*Staatssicherheit*” der DDR, pp. 254–255.

<sup>21</sup> See M. Kovář, *Zvláštní jednotky celého světa*, p. 103.

GDR. In some cases it was deployed with special units of the People's Police (*Volkspolizei*), which had its own helicopters.

Politically mature, professionally trained and physically fit officers with the right class background and aged between nineteen and thirty-five were included in the Special Unit on a voluntary basis. They also had to have secondary and tertiary education and be members of the Socialist Unity Party (SED). There were specialists in the following professions: snipers, sharpshooters at short and long range, divers able to assassinate someone under water, and specialists (pyrotechnicians) for work with explosives. Apart from armaments and equipment, means of communication and transport from the supplies of the Warsaw Pact armies, the unit used combat equipment and resources of their own manufacture, for example, spikes of various kinds with a rope, rods, hooks, knives, mirrors, handcuffs, and so on. Their deployment had to be proportionate to the type of perpetrator and the offence committed.

The Special Unit's main principles for deployment included unobtrusive preparation, rapid and uncompromising execution of an action, complete discipline of the members, exclusion of all unauthorised persons, minimisation of possible damage, the safety of citizens and operating members, and protection of life and health insofar as operational interests were not affected. The actions were carried out according to various pre-prepared variations; always, it seems, "in harmony with the principles of socialist law".

Organisationally, the Special Unit was divided into assignment groups, which as a rule were made up of a leader and five members – two snipers, a pyrotechnician, a radio-operator and a driver. The number of members depended on the extent, nature and danger of the operation to be mounted. The leader took responsibility for the training, directed the assigned group and had to carry out the assigned task with it "without any sort of compromise".

Members of the group were trained to be interchangeable, each of them capable of taking on the role of radio operator or pyrotechnician, engaging in close combat (self-defence, karate), and fulfilling the tasks independently or with others. The preparation of the members of the Special Unit was directed predominantly towards political education, "so they would know why and against whom – insofar as terrorism and other dangerous criminal activity were concerned – they were fighting", as well as (special) operational and tactical (technical) training and its principles, psychological problems, shooting, health, with special training for divers, pyrotechnicians, and so on.<sup>22</sup>

The daily regime was as follows: twenty-six members were on standing alert; the guard officer of the unit had a permanent overview of everyone on standby and the availability regime; he used plans for alerts, and implemented and organised measures connected with the deployment of the unit – to the point that the Permanent Operational Staff of the Ministry of State Security of the GDR began to carry out its role.

A commando made up of basic service soldiers of the MfS's central reserve units<sup>23</sup> operated similarly in the context of the Special Unit. Its main tasks included the liquidation

<sup>22</sup> See M. Schell, W. Kalinka, *Stasi – nekonečný příběh. Osoby a fakta* (Prague, 2005), pp. 213–215.

<sup>23</sup> Soldiers on compulsory national service who on reaching the age of 18 voluntarily signed a service agreement could serve in the central reserve units of the MfS for a period of three years. To start with they were

of terrorists and perpetrators of other violent criminal acts. It was deployed for preventive reasons during state holidays and other events of social and national importance.

The East German comrades did not reveal any exact data about the assigned units, but they did let out unofficially that more than 200 members of State Security were involved in them. In the case of military conflict they were trained to carry out actions in the enemy's rear.<sup>24</sup>

At the conclusion, the Deputy, Maj. Gen. Neiber, boasted that the MfS had acquired a perfect overview of terrorist organisations, forms and methods of operation, built a high-quality analytical and informational system, and knew the operational situation in this field. “They have identified a base of persons in the GDR willing to make contact with terrorist organisations and fight with the most brutal methods against the very fundamentals of the social structure. They maintain surveillance of persons undesirable from the criminal point of view whom the enemy will rely on should the international or internal political situation worsens. He emphasised that even though they do not identify with the terrorist organisations' methods and do not support their activity, they nevertheless carry out agency-operational measures to ascertain their attitudes and intentions against the GDR and other Countries of the Socialist Camp. This work requires a highly specialised workforce and puts exceptional demands on confidentiality, for the enemy can make use of any sort of platform against the international labour movement”.<sup>25</sup>

Another discussion was held in mid-August 1982 at Directorate XIV SNB in Prague, when attention was focused on organisational questions.<sup>26</sup> The Head of Department XXII MfS Col. Dahl and the Head of Section XXII/1 Maj. Voigt both proposed that the concept “terrorist” should be clarified. It was clear that for practical reasons – to protect their own network of agents – they did not want to rely on the Western description of such a person, but needed to approach the matter from the point of view of the class war. “From Marxist-Leninist positions, they do not agree with individual terror, but in the final stages of the revolutionary situation, in harmony with Lenin's idea, terror has to be regarded as a form of political violence, and Communists are prepared to use it from this point of view. There is therefore no reason why they should forbid entry to the territory of the GDR to persons who fight against capitalism in this way; from their point of view, such people are not terrorists. If measures of a repressive and administrative nature were taken against such persons they could be used as propaganda against the Countries of the Socialist Camp, in that they could present us as a countries of limited freedom that punish fighters against capitalism”.<sup>27</sup>

They therefore wanted to implement a differentiated approach to these “so-called terrorists” and recommended against enforcing dogmatically differing kinds of catalogues

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trained to carry out security operations (accompanying aircraft and so on) and in the third year deployed for the liquidation of offenders. After ending their military service they could enter State Security or the Special Unit of the MfS GDR. SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 49. Study visit to the GDR – report, 16.10.1981.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibidem*, f. Secretariat of the Ministry of the Interior (hereinafter A 2/9), arch. no. 716. Report of an unplanned working visit to the GDR carried out by functionaries of the XIV Directorate SNB, 16.10.1981.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 28, arch. no. 182. Subject: Discussion with delegation from the GDR – minutes, 23.8.1982.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibidem*.

and lists of terrorists containing what often seemed to be obsolete and distorted data. In reply to a question about agency-operational operations, they said that the choice of agent had to be approached in a differentiated way according to the nature of the environment in question, and the possible connections abroad. Their approach using this method is shown by the division of the fight against terrorism under the following headings: left-wing extremism, right-wing extremism, criminally objectionable persons, targets that cannot be distinguished, anonymous threatening letters and telephone calls.

The representatives of Department XXII added some interesting data regarding the Special Intervention Unit which, on the basis of the appropriate guidelines, was supposed to be directly subordinate to the Minister of the Interior. This unit with special military training – whose members were schooled in the fundamentals of operational work, locating and monitoring suspects, inspecting buildings, undercover photography, securing buildings and protecting agents – was also used (from their point of view misused) for the elimination of undesirables. After about five years of service its members could transfer to the reserve pool for the operational unit.

A building was constructed for the Special Unit about a thirty-minute ride from the headquarters in Berlin (on a site of 52 hectares) with sporting facilities and garages for special vehicles, not far from a wooded area and lakes. For the sake of secrecy they were not allowed to come into contact with other units of the MfS.<sup>28</sup>

About a month later, on 28 September 1982, an exceptional working meeting between representatives of the Head of Directorate XIV SNB Lt. Col. V. Kába and the representative of the Head Department XXII of the MfS Col. Jäckel took place on the East German side of the department of passport control at Boží Dar.<sup>29</sup> During this meeting it was again emphasised *inter alia* that the East German comrades believed it to be of fundamental importance to concentrate all information in one place. All MfS units and the Ministry of the Interior were obliged to pass on information connected in any way with terrorism and violent criminal activity to Department XXII, as it was responsible for countering extremism and terrorism.

To increase the effectiveness of the work and to secure the maximum overview of the situation on this sector, one independent workplace with three branches at the regional directorates had been newly set up. In the regions it had to take over responsibility for collecting all information, background knowledge and case histories, processing territorial plans oriented towards activity and evaluations, and carrying out analyses. As far as cadre and service were concerned, the members of these workplaces remained subordinate to the regional directorates; methodologically however they were managed by Department XXII, which simultaneously took on a coordinating role with regard to the regional directorates.

Last but not least, the Czechoslovak side was informed that an organisational change was in preparation, which meant that in cases of violent criminal acts Department XXII

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<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> For Department XXII MfS, in addition to Col. G. Jäckel, the Head of Section XXII/1 Maj. H. Voigt and the interpreter Capt. Schmalzer took part in the discussion. *Ibidem*, arch. no. 184. Re: Exceptional working discussion with the MfS GDR – minutes, 8.10.1982.

would take over the management of the Department of Passport Control from Section VI of the MfS.<sup>30</sup>

Another working meeting took place in Prague at the end of September 1983, at the level of the leadership of Directorate XIV SNB and Department XXII MfS dealing with international terrorism.<sup>31</sup> At the introduction the leader of the East German delegation Col. Jäckel reiterated that his department was structured like a main directorate (more accurately main department) and bore the responsibility for issues of a terrorist and violent nature in the MfS. The head of the section continued to have three deputies, one for right-wing terrorism and neo-fascism, another for left-wing extremism and the third for international terrorism. There were two sections dealing with left-wing extremism – Section XXII/3 was oriented towards Trotskyites and similar trends, and XXII/8 concerned with left-wing extremism; both operated within the territory of the states of the Soviet bloc. Section XXII/5 continued to be responsible for special intervention activity.

In this context the members of the section dealt with a large range of activities, from working with agents through the storming of aircraft and thwarting hijackers, to the elimination of terrorists. The specific content of their counterintelligence work was always kept secret. The section also had a two- to three-member working group at each regional directorate which had responsibility for this work within the region and also carried out analyses of its efficiency.<sup>32</sup>

## THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC

A fundamental rethink in the intensification of the struggle against international terrorism took place at the Ministry of the Interior (*Népköztársaság Belügyminisztériuma*) of the Hungarian People’s Republic at the end of the 1970s and this issue became one of the main tasks of Counterintelligence.

In 1979, by order of the Interior Minister, an advisory committee to the Minister was set up in which the heads of all the security services were represented (Intelligence, Counterintelligence, Police Force, Border Guards, Fire Service and Customs). The committee, which sat twice a year and in the event of emergencies, addressed conceptual questions, provided analyses of major problems, and organised systematic training for operational responses in emergencies.<sup>33</sup>

The aim of the measures adopted was intended to ensure a unified approach on the part of the Police Force and State Security, which carried the main responsibility in

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 358. Discussion with the delegation of the MfS GDR 27–30.9.1983 in Prague, 3.11.1983.

<sup>32</sup> See P. Žáček, “Kontrarozvědný protiteroristický aparát východního bloku v osmdesátých letech dvacátého století”, pp. 249–257.

<sup>33</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 621. Report of planned discussion between delegations from Directorate XIV SNB and Directorates III/II Interior Ministry of the Hungarian People’s Republic, 8.–10.10.1985. Information from the speech by the leadership of the delegation of Directorates III/II Interior Ministry of the Hungarian People’s Republic.

the fight against international terrorism. An operational unit for planning, organising and coordinating activities aimed at anticipating and preventing acts of international terrorism was created under the control of State Security.

The Hungarian authorities paid special attention to ensuring the security of the international airport and the main railway lines and highways. For example, in the case of a terrorist attack, the head of the Department of Passport Control in Budapest could call for operational reinforcements to strengthen his unit. Planning for measures to be taken to eliminate terrorist groups was prepared under the leadership of competent commanders at other passport control points and in the border regions. All District Directorates of the militia were issued with sniper rifles with infrared optical lenses; other territorial authorities (local, municipal and District Directorates) were to be similarly equipped.<sup>34</sup>

At the end of May 1981 the delegation of Directorate XIV SNB in Budapest learnt that all the Counterintelligence components of State Security were to be subordinated to Directorate II of the Main Directorate III (III/II) Interior Ministry of the Hungarian People's Republic under the leadership of Maj. Gen. Miklós Rödej, who was also responsible for the struggle against international and internal terrorism.

The protection of Hungarian citizens against terrorism and violence in capitalist countries abroad was carried out by Intelligence Main Section I of Directorate III, closely cooperating with Counterintelligence of Directorate II and Technical of Directorate V of Main Directorate III, Tracking of Directorate III, Investigation of Section II, the Customs Service of the Border Guard, and other formations.

In the context of Directorate II, the 6th Section under Lt. Col. Lajos Pálinkás dealt with air piracy, hijacking of transport and other violent politically motivated criminal acts. Everything else under the scope of terrorism was handled by the 8th Section (active foreign traffic) under Lt. Col. Dr. József Varga. This covered hotels, Departments of Passport Control and was conducted in close cooperation with the Border Guard and Customs Controls.

Of the 150 members of the Section, one-third of its personnel held legitimate positions in hotels, the Customs Service, Departments of Passport Control and so on. A mere eight members focused full time on terrorism, and they were concerned with other issues in addition to this specialisation. However, in an emergency the whole workforce could be deployed to deal with a specific case of terror.

It was the duty of Internal Intelligence at HQ of the State Security and at the operational sections of the District Directorates to hand all reports about terrorism to the 8th Section of Directorate II of Main Directorate III. After evaluating the information and knowledge obtained, Lt. Col. Varga would decide whether action would continue directly at the Section or at regional units of Internal Intelligence. He also approved proposed measures, set tasks, and controlled their execution. The Section annually registered around 150 signals on terrorism through the channels of Internal Intelligence.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 1. International conference of representatives of Counterintelligence of countries of the Socialist community on international terrorism, April 1979. Speech by the leader of the delegation of the Interior Ministry of the Hungarian People's Republic.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 36. Study visit to the Hungarian People's Republic – report, 11.6.1981.

In October 1985 the Hungarian side announced the creation of a 20-member strong (1 + 19) independent section of Directorate II of Main Directorate III, which addressed the issue of international terrorism operationally and managed specific individual employees at the District Directorates.<sup>36</sup> Its main task was to acquire information to forestall emergencies in the field of international terrorism.

The Section had the delegated power to institute preventative measures using the State Security Apparatus and even the Public Security units, who would use their own mobile intelligence and technical means to execute rapid and effective agency-operational activities in an operation in the territory concerned. Its link to the special anti-terrorist unit was only of a methodological nature.

The Hungarian Minister of the Interior arranged for all information about terrorism to be sent directly to this Section, including announcements of losses and thefts of explosives and other criminal activity that could develop into terrorist activity. The Public Security prepared for the Section a list of dangerous persons capable of violent actions with the use of weapons, and it was their duty was to have these persons monitored. Foreign Intelligence and the Section for “the struggle with the right-wing” also received specific terrorism-related tasks. The leadership of the Interior Ministry regarded the agency-operational tasks in the struggle against terrorism and its needs for technical equipment and personnel security as high priority.<sup>37</sup>

The Interior Minister or his Deputy headed the nationwide anti-terrorist organisational committee, of which the most important members were the heads of the operational directorates of State Security and the Commander in Chief of the Public Security.

Any suspicion, signal or specific case relating to the field of terrorism had to be reported to the Central Supervisory Service of the Interior Ministry. Subsequently these pieces of information were received by the committee and in return it decided about the implementation of agency-operational and registration measures (evidently including lustration of persons and organisations of interest), further measures to search out members of terrorist organisations entering the country or already living in it, cooperation with abroad, deployment of forces and means, if necessary placing undesirable persons on the index “with the principle of non-admission and limitation of entry to the Hungarian People’s Republic”.<sup>38</sup> Individual actions were continuously analysed and on the basis of these analyses other specific measures were adopted including eventual methods of resolution.

Intervention against terrorists and perpetrators of violent criminal acts in Hungary were carried out exclusively by the Revolutionary Regiment of the Public Security and if a decision was reached about the physical elimination of the terrorists then it was undertaken by this unit of the Interior Ministry. Its members however were not familiar with the working methods of the State Security organs in the sector for the struggle against terrorism.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 621. Report of planned discussion between delegations from Directorate XIV SNB and Directorates III/II Interior Ministry of the Hungarian People’s Republic, 8.–10.10.1985.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, Information from the Speech by the head of the delegation of Directorate III/II Interior Ministry of the Hungarian People’s Republic.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 36. Study visit to the Hungarian People’s Republic – report, 11.6.1981.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibidem*.

The representative of the Head of the Main Directorate of the Public Security Lt. Col. János Bohár and the Commander of the Revolutionary Regiment of the Public Security Col. Pál Fodor stated that from 1969 to 1971 the troops of the Interior Ministry were disbanded. A 1,700-men strong unit of the Revolutionary Regiment of the Public Security was subsequently created in Budapest and another in Miskolc composed of 500 professional soldiers. They were not fully constituted until 1976.

The Revolutionary Regiment of the Public Security was composed of four battalions and one special department that was concerned with the struggle against terrorism. One so-called Action Squad was organised in every company, trained to intervene against terrorists. In particular, members of the regiment participated in 500 raids against criminally maladjusted persons annually, escorted personnel trains, and provided guard and postal services in the summer months during Operation "Balaton". In cooperation with the District Directorates of the Ministry of the Interior they provided security and maintained public order on throughout the entire Hungarian territory, monitored transport routes, carried out investigations into criminals and missing persons and their apprehension, participated in important political and state operations and fulfilled tasks during catastrophes, natural disasters, etc. Last but not least, they were deployed in fulfilling specific anti-terrorist tasks.<sup>40</sup>

Recruits from the civilian environment were accepted into the regiment after completing their eighteen-month basic military service. In the course of selection emphasis was placed on their "class background, political commitment and physical condition". Most members of the regiment – the majority under 35 years old – had a basic school education and were drawn from the other ranks. About 45% of the unit belonged to the Party. Political preparation and education was carried out during the two-year basic political schooling. There was an annual turnover of about 270 regiment members.

Members were required to serve a complete twenty-four hour shift, half the time being spent on immediate tasks, eight hours on stand-by duty with political and professional preparation, and four hours resting. Then they were free for 48 hours. Members of Action Squads were committed to the same routine.<sup>41</sup>

According to the head of the combat group of the Action Squad, Maj. Miklos Szabó, nine Action Squads were set up from 1973, six in Budapest and three in Miskolc. The selection was made from the best members of the Revolutionary Regiment of Public Security. Further requirements, in addition to political conviction and professional readiness, were their voluntary agreement to join and to undertake the demanding training. However, in comparison with their colleagues they received enhanced financial rewards of between 200 and 500 forints per month.

Each Action Squad consisted of 1 + 20 members divided into five groups, each of which consisted of four snipers, four observers, five members of an attack group, four from technical sub-groups and two signallers. Members shared the usual tasks and training. The squad had two hours of special training a week focusing on terrorism (that is, eight hours a month), and three days of schooling and employment once a quarter.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 39. Report from work visit to the Hungarian People's Republic, 23.6.1981.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 36. Study visit to the Hungarian People's Republic – report, 11.6.1981.

Their weapons and equipment, predominantly of Hungarian manufacture, were supplemented by imports from Western states. All their essential requirements, for combat, transport and communications, were to a very high standard.

The high-level training of the Action Squads took place under top secret conditions in their own exclusive training area under extremely rigorous conditions which carried with them a high accident rate. The groups could be deployed independently, or as a squad, or if necessary, in conjunction with other squads. There had to be three Action Squads of 60 soldiers on standby daily, capable of being launched in fifteen minutes.<sup>42</sup>

The units travelled in their own transport, including tracked vehicles and Mi-2 helicopters on loan from the Ministry of Defence.

The regiment had pre-prepared model plans for deployment to airports, embassies of western states, post offices, banks and main stations, including agreed forms of cooperation with Border guards and the Main Directorate of the Public Security and the sealing-off of parts of individual cities.

Members of the Revolutionary Regiment of the Public Security acquired theoretical experience gradually from the Soviet Union and the GDR but primarily from experience in Cuba where the most mobile and generally best trained anti-terrorist units operated.<sup>43</sup>

Another working visit to Hungary took place at the end of September 1985 in which the Head of the Special Purposes Unit (*Útvar zvláštního určení, ÚZU*) of Directorate XIV SNB Lt. Col. František Záhrobský and the Commander of the Emergency Regiment of the CSR Public Security Maj. Zdráhala participated *inter alia*, with the aim of acquiring up to date information about the organisational structure, preparation, tactics, and material and technical equipment, and, as the case might be, about the deployment experiences of special units intended for the elimination of terrorist operations.

The Commander of the Revolutionary Regiment of Public Security Col. Dr. Ferenc Neméth, the Chief of Staff Lt. Col. Mihaly Vörösmarty and the chairman of the Party organisation Maj. Sandor Nagy provided relatively comprehensive information for their colleagues: the regiment was still organised in four battalions (three in Budapest and the remainder in Miskolc), and each battalion had three companies, composed of four squads. The first squad of each company, known as the Action Anti-Terrorist Squad, consisted of the commander, his deputy, four snipers, four members of an intervention group and four technicians. In the course of carrying out an operation the Action Squad was directed by the commander of the company and it was briefed by the independent “Action Anti-Terrorist Department” of the Revolutionary Regiment.

The preparation of the Special Units intended primarily for the elimination of dangerous armed perpetrators was divided into two phases: a five-week intensive course and periodic refresher training. During emergency service in the Revolutionary Regiment, members of the special units were often deployed in patrol and transport services in large towns with a high level of criminal activity.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 39. Report of a working visit to the Hungarian People's Republic, 23.6.1981.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 2/9, arch. no. 700. Report of a working visit to the Hungarian People's Republic, 23.6.1981.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 28, arch. no. 619. Report of a working visit to the Hungarian People's Republic, 8.10.1985.

The training base for the special units was considered to be of a high standard. There were two shooting ranges in the Revolutionary Regiment's building itself, one of them audio-visual (built at a cost of one million forints) and the other out of doors, used primarily for training in short range shooting. The shooting range for long range weapons and an area for special combat training (with mock-ups of an aeroplane, a railway wagon, a house, and so on) was located in a training area 20 km from Budapest.

The intervention tactics of the special units did not differ greatly from those of the Special Purposes Unit of Directorate XIV SNB.<sup>45</sup> The first priority was to ensure the life and health of hostages, their liberation, and then the protection of civil order and the neutralisation of the perpetrator. The Hungarian Action Squads did not have a great deal of experience of being deployed on security operations. During an average year they had intervened in 3–5 cases of eliminating armed perpetrators, including army deserters. In the final ten years there had not been a single case involving hostages.<sup>46</sup>

## POLISH PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

On 15 April 1978 Minister Stanisław Kowalczyk issued a directive regulating the main tasks of the separate parts of the Ministry of the Interior (*Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych*) of the Polish People's Republic, especially the State Security Services and Public Security, focusing on the prevention of and fight against terrorism. Units of the Security Services were responsible for active armed intervention; while Directorate III had a coordinating function; and special units of the militia were also required to liquidate the terrorist group in the event of terrorist acts taking place.

The directive stipulated the following tasks for the separate units of the Security Services:

- Directorate I (Foreign Intelligence) systematically uncovers the intentions of terrorist organisations with regard to Poland and processes the information from contacts their representatives make with Polish citizens living abroad. At the same time it collects information about the methods and tactics of the fight against terrorism waged by the components of the police forces in capitalist countries and ensures the protection of Polish diplomats, embassies and other organisations against terrorist attacks,
- Directorate II (Counterintelligence) exposes any attempts by Western Intelligence services to make use of extremist groupings in the execution of terrorist acts directed against the Polish People's Republic, and provides for the efficient protection for foreign diplomatic missions in Poland and their personnel from terrorist attacks,
- Directorate III (the fight against anti-state activities) carries out and coordinates operational activity in the prevention of terrorist acts; it traces and eliminates groups and individuals suspected of terrorism, and carries out the preventive monitoring

<sup>45</sup> On this, see E. Stehlík et al., *URNA. 30 let policejní protiteroristické jednotky* (Mohelnice, 2011), pp. 234–270.

<sup>46</sup> See P. Žáček, "Kontrarozvědný protiteroristický aparát východního bloku v osmdesátých letech dvacátého století", pp. 244–249.

of Polish citizens who have struck up contacts with representatives of extremist and terrorist organisations while abroad,

- the Office for the Protection of the Government (*Biuro Ochrony Rządu*) provides for the enhanced protection of persons belonging to the State and Party nomenclature who could become the target of terrorist attacks.

An important task of the security elements was the constant analysis of current political events and of all trends from the point of view of any possible penetration by political terrorism. Every aspect of terrorist acts abroad was evaluated, on the one hand analysing the individuals involved, the method of preparation and the execution of a terrorist act as well as its political impact; and on the other, to answer the question as to whether the conditions and opportunities existed for the execution of similar terrorist acts in Poland.

Every case bearing the marks of terrorism was documented in detail, not only with regard to the involvement of individuals or groups representing a threat, but also in terms of evaluating operational and investigative activity. Members of terrorist organisations were registered in the operational records, which also recorded all their activities and any communications bearing the marks of terrorism, thus providing an opportunity to establish the extent of potential danger.

These analyses became the basis for the implementation of effective forms and methods of exposing and neutralising persons planning or preparing to carry out a terrorist act. Methods of leading the fight against terrorism were thus improved, as was the anticipation of possible terrorist acts in the psychological and political fields, as well as physical. The preparedness of individual units, the effectiveness of their reactions and the coordination of the separate units' activities was periodically assessed.

A special intervention unit and several platoons positioned at the Provincial Commands for direct intervention against terrorist groups and individual terrorists were created in Warsaw under the command of the Headquarters of the Citizens' Militia (*Komenda Główna Milicji Obywatelskiej*) and guidelines for the deployment of these units were published. All their members went through special training, including the use of pyrotechnics and explosives, and they were equipped with special weapons and other technology.<sup>47</sup>

The most recent information about Polish anti-terrorist units dates from March 1984. The Deputy Interior Minister of the Polish People's Republic, Brig. Gen. Józef Beim, who was simultaneously Commander in Chief of the Citizens' Militia, and the head of the steering committee for the control and management of security in national emergencies, informed the Czechoslovak side of the following: 'The Citizens' Militia is also responsible for the physical repression of terrorism and mass unrest. The local police force performs surveillance and collects intelligence, but only the Citizens' Militia can undertake direct intervention. For this purpose they have specially trained units known as commandos each of whose members must be capable of at least two specialist skills. One unit of

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<sup>47</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 1. International Meeting of Counterintelligence Representatives of the Countries of the Socialist Community on International Terrorism, April 1979. Speech by the Head of the Delegation of the Interior Ministry of the Polish People's Republic. The first Polish counter-terrorist unit within the Citizens' Militia (*Wydział Zabezpieczenia Komendy Stołecznej Milicji Obywatelskiej*) was established under Finnish influence in 1976.

women has also been formed, most of them former sportswomen, who are also specially trained and have acquitted themselves very well in putting down street unrest and during demonstrations. The special intervention units have at their disposal their own transport including helicopters and aeroplanes.

Large reaction force units likewise exist at the level of the province; these are special troops of the commando type who are regularly deployed first in operations. The troop counts of these special units are different, depending on the issue and the security situation in individual provinces and vary in strength from one company to a whole battalion. In Warsaw this unit is the size of a regiment, that is, 260 persons.<sup>48</sup>

A delegation from the Interior Ministry of the Polish People's Republic was invited to Prague in the beginning of April 1982.<sup>49</sup> From independent discussions between the Deputy Commander of ÚZU Directorate XIV SNB Capt. Václav Babický and the Commander of the special intervention force of the Main Headquarters of the Citizens' Militia (*Komenda Główna Milicji Obywatelskiej*) in Warsaw, Capt. Edward Misztal, the Czechoslovak side learnt that this unit of 47 men was composed of a command group, five special units and a rearguard.<sup>50</sup> Although other special units operated in individual provinces, the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior was thinking about an essential improvement in its status in connection with the internal situation in Poland.

Members of the force were armed predominantly with Soviet Kalashnikovs and grenade launchers, Czechoslovak Škorpioň machine pistols and Polish Rak submachine guns, Dragunov sniper rifles, Makarov pistols and American Smith & Wesson revolvers. They had twenty-two vehicles, some armoured, at their disposal; an armoured Cadillac stood out among the personnel carriers. The main aircraft used by the force consisted of Soviet helicopters Mi-2 and Mi-8 in paratrooper version, adapted to move one special unit complete with its vehicle.

The training of its members was exceptionally demanding, designed in conditions as close as possible to the real thing with the aim of handling specific combat situations in an armed intervention. Apart from physical training (endurance, speed and dexterity) and shooting (the handling of short and long range weapons), attention was focused on airborne training, which among other things taught members how to carry out operations under difficult conditions using helicopters (flying, hovering, use of crane, rappelling onto flat and pitched roofs and into different spaces, including wooded areas, and so on).

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<sup>48</sup> *Ibidem*, f. Office of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, unprocessed. Meetings of the Interior Minister of the CSSR. Information about the outcomes of the fraternal working visit of the Interior Minister of the CSSR Comrade Vratislav Vajnar to the Polish People's Republic 12–14 March 1984.

<sup>49</sup> The Polish delegation included the Commander in Chief of the Citizens' Militia (*Milicja Obywatelska*, MO) Brig. Gen. Jerzy Ćwiek (leader), the Head of the Preventive Sector MO Maj. Ryszard Pocztarek, Deputy Head of the Operative Sector MO Maj. Piotr Prochnowski, and the Head of the Special Intervention Force of the Chief Headquarters MO in Warsaw Capt. E. Misztal; the members of the Czechoslovak delegations were the appointed Head of Directorate XIV SNB Col. Z. Němec, the Acting Deputy Commander of ÚZU Directorate XIV SNB Capt. V. Babický, the Head of Public Security Municipal Directorate in Prague Col. Dr. Květoslav Masák and other functionaries. *Ibidem*, arch. no. 167. Report on the visit and discussions with the delegation IM PRL to Czechoslovakia, 10.4.1982.

<sup>50</sup> See M. Kovář, *Zvláštní jednotky celého světa*, p. 112.

Another part of the training, for example special tactics, likewise followed the main aim, for instance, the all-round training of members of the force for intervention operations.

Psychological stamina was considered to be of major importance. As part of their training, members of the force had to climb tall buildings and to fly aeroplanes and helicopters without undergoing standard training, to develop their ability to assess height.

The Special Intervention Force had its own doctor who was present at every training and deployment of its members. New recruits could not be accepted, nor existing members deployed to fulfil combat tasks without his recommendation. This had been a requirement following the force's previous experiences and one exceptional case when, during a swimming exercise carried out fully dressed and equipped, including boots and weapons, one member of the force had drowned.

Members of the Special Intervention Force of the HQ of Citizens' Militia in Warsaw trained primarily to carry out security tasks (and, as the case might be, later become “good workers” in other sectors). During their training therefore decisive emphasis was placed on security tasks rather than military ones.

During the declaration of martial law on 13 December 1981 the force had to carry out exceptionally demanding tasks precisely and reliably. It shared *inter alia* in the occupation of the School of Fire Fighters from helicopters, secured influential functionaries of Solidarity, KOR and other counterrevolutionary organisations and, as was said about them, “opened the gates and doors” of factories and other buildings where counterrevolutionaries were concentrated “without keys”.

There is a particular irony in the fact that Capt. Misztal's force was also responsible for the security of Pope John Paul II during his visit to Poland. For this purpose a special protective cage was constructed, using which it was possible to lift the Pope quickly from a dais or a crowd of people and transport him by helicopter to a safe place.<sup>51</sup>

In July 1984 a group focusing on the struggle against terrorism was formed at Directorate III of the Interior Ministry. Its tasks included the observation of persons and groups, as well as the organisation of preventive activity against the planning of terrorist acts within Poland, the coordination of operational work for all the bodies involved in the struggle against terrorism, and the documentation of terrorist acts. In addition, it carried out the evaluation and analysis of levels of threat of terrorist activities and shared in the formation of a strategy for the struggle against terrorism; in the course of which it cooperated with the Interior Ministry and other state authorities, and last but not least the security units of the other Warsaw Pact states. This special group in the struggle against terrorism also completed a comprehensive analysis of the threat posed by political terrorism.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> See P. Žáček, “Kontrarozvědný protiteroristický aparát východního bloku v osmdesátých letech dvacátého století”, pp. 257–258.

<sup>52</sup> SSA Prague, f. Directorate of Counterespionage (hereinafter A 34/1), arch. no. 969. *Materiály mnogostoron-nego soveshchanya organov bezopasnosti bratskych socialisticheskikh stran po problemam borby s terorizmom* (24–27 november 1987, Varna), Sofia 1987, pp. 161–162. Doklad rukovoditelya delegatsii IM PNR.

## BULGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC

The fight against terrorism was to be the “constant” focus of attention of all the departments of the Ministry of the Interior (*Министерство на вътрешните работи*) of the Bulgarian People's Republic. As early as the beginning of 1978, the Ministry of the Interior issued a circular which mandated the adoption of sufficiently adequate measures for a more effective use of forces and technology in the struggle against terrorist activities of every kind, with special reference to Western intelligence services which it appeared were “making use of terror as a way of ever more actively and purposefully initiating subversive activity” against the countries in the Communist camp.

Measures were adopted, in addition to departmental passport controls, to strengthen the controls and protection of the state frontiers so that attempts to import poisonous and radioactive substances, firearms and ammunition could be detected, and the legal and illegal penetration of “traitors to the homeland” and of foreign terrorists and extremists limited. At the same time the Bulgarian People's Republic tightened up its passport regime with regard to both its own citizens and foreigners.

Initially, Directorate VI of the Ministry of the Interior was the unit of the State Security that collected information about planned terrorist actions centrally. Special groups were created as necessary, covertly monitoring – and where necessary eliminating – suspicious persons. The leadership of the Interior Ministry was informed straightway about the most serious intelligence finds. Directorate VI maintained direct contact with the central and regional directorates of the Interior Ministry, where experienced “comrade operational workers” were employed, with the aim of promptly analysing intelligence and frustrating terrorist plans.

In addition, Directorate I (Foreign Intelligence), Directorate II (Counterintelligence), and Directorate VI carried out joint intelligence activities with the aim of penetrating, monitoring, compromising, dispersing, and mutually antagonising various hostile émigré organisations whose aims were to carry out terrorist acts on the territory of the PRB or against Bulgarian representative offices abroad. After obtaining credible information of terrorist plans, the competent authorities of the relevant state would be informed through diplomatic channels with a request that measures be adopted to restrict terrorist activity. “We carry on the struggle against hostile Bulgarian émigrés with the direct assistance of the KGB of the USSR, the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the CSSR, and other fraternal bodies of the State Security. The death of the traitor to his homeland, Georgi Markov, an active employee of the BBC and Radio Free Europe radio stations, put the hostile émigré community in total shock”<sup>53</sup>

Official discussions took place in Sofia from 27 to 30 September 1983 between delegations of Directorate XIV SNB and Main Directorate II of the Interior Ministry of the

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<sup>53</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 28, arch. no. 1. International Conference of Counterintelligence Representatives of Countries of the Socialist Community on International Terrorism, April 1979. Speech by the Head of the Delegation of the IM PRB. See *International Terrorism in the Bulgarian State Security Files. Documentary Volume*, ed. E. Kostadinov, The Committee for Disclosing the Documents and Announcing Affiliation of Bulgarian Citizens to the State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian National Armed Forces (Sofia, 2010), pp. 26–46.

PRB.<sup>54</sup> The Bulgarian delegation was led by the First Deputy Head of Main Directorate II, Maj. Gen. Georgi Mladenov,<sup>55</sup> who informed the Czechoslovak side of the decision in May by the Collegium of the Interior Ministry, that a group to coordinate the struggle with terrorism had been created and was to be headed by the Deputy Minister and the Head of Main Directorate II.

At the same time an independent operational section against International Terrorism was established under the command of the Counterintelligence Directorate.<sup>56</sup> Regional units also began to devote increased attention to terrorism, with an extra one or two members working on this full time.<sup>57</sup>

The Deputy Minister and Head of Main Directorate II Lt. Gen. Georgi Metodiev Anachkov later expanded on this, saying in his speech that: “[...] they do not have major problems with terrorism on the territory of the PRB, only isolated cases carried out by individuals. From the point of view of international terrorism issues he believes it would not be tactically sound to proceed to open confrontation with terrorist organisations, but that they should intervene only when behaviour threatening our interests is detected. He stated that the concept of dealing with these questions is the same on both sides. Our Bulgarian friends focus on foreign students, especially those of Arab nationality. They intend to develop and deploy forces against international terrorism, to organise this both at a central and at a local territorial level. They have more success in detecting international terrorism when they are successful in detecting criminal activity in its preparatory stage. They intend to concern themselves only with those terrorist organisations which present a direct threat to the PRB, for which they have adequate forces and resources at their disposal.”<sup>58</sup>

In December 1979, on the basis of an order from the Interior Ministry, an independent specialised motorised squadron was created as an anti-terrorist unit.<sup>59</sup> In the middle of the following year a selection of the most promising members of municipal units and district administrations was made. However, more than 80 members were dismissed from the unit subsequently because of poor physical fitness or lack of discipline.

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<sup>54</sup> The Czechoslovak delegation was led by the Head of Directorate XIV SNB Col. Z. Němec and the Commander of ŮZU Directorate XIV SNB Lt. Col. F. Záhrobský. The representative of the FMV in the Bulgarian People's Republic Maj. Gen. Vladimír Stárek was present at discussions. SSA Prague, f. A 34/1, arch. no. 343. Discussions with the delegation of the IM PRB – report, 10.11.1983.

<sup>55</sup> Other members of the delegation were the Deputy Head of the Municipal Administration in Sofia, Lt. Col. A. Vlkov, the Head of the Section for Internal Terrorism Policy of Directorate VI Interior Ministry Col. A. Cenov, Head of the Analysis Section of Main Directorate II Interior Ministry Col. K. Zlatkov, and the Head of the 17th Section for Internal Terrorism Policy of Main Directorate II Interior Ministry, Lt. Col. St. Stefanov. *Ibidem*.

<sup>56</sup> This concerned the 17th Special Section of Main Directorate II Interior Ministry, originating from an order of the Interior Minister on the 8.6.1983. See J. Baev, K. Grozev, “Bulgaria” [in:] *A Handbook of the Communist Security Apparatus*, p. 43.

<sup>57</sup> Among specific cases were the hijackings of three aircraft (two in 1972 and one in 1981 from Burgas). “Our friends informed us about the organisation of counterintelligence work in connection with this hijack and about what was described as the participation of a citizen of the PRB in the assassination attempt on the Pope”. SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 343. Discussion with delegation from the IM PRB – report, 10.11.1983.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>59</sup> Interior Minister Col. Gen. Dimităr Stojanov, through his order K-4404/10.12.1979, established the Independent Special Operational Motorised Squadron of the Militia (*Самостоятелен Специализиран Оперативен Мотомилиционерски Батальон*, COMB), led by Lt. Col. N. Ganchev. See M. Kovář, *Zvláštní jednotky celého světa*, p. 30.

The unit was headed by the Commander, with his Deputy for Political Affairs, and with their staff. The “strike core” of the battalion was composed of three companies each of two platoons, with a connecting platoon and support service. There were 200 members (17 officers, 183 sergeants) in total. New recruits from the ranks of the Public Security forces were, in the course of selection, screened for physical skill and for suitability from both a political and psychological point of view. The building that housed the unit was close to the capital city Sofia in the direction of Plovdiv.

The special battalion carried out the following main tasks: countering individuals and groups engaged in terrorist actions, provision of enhanced security, and the protection of especially important buildings. The unit likewise shared in providing security for major political events within the capital city and the country at large.

In spite of being a unit of the Public Security forces, the special battalion was directly subordinate to the Interior Minister and the First Deputy Minister of the Bulgarian People’s Republic and so Public Security did not in practice have this unit at their disposal. It was equipped with Soviet technology.<sup>60</sup>

## SOCIALIST FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF YUGOSLAVIA

From 23 to 26 November 1981 a delegation from Directorate XIV SNB went on a completely atypical journey to the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, where discussions took place in Belgrade with representatives of units subject to the Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs (*Савезни секретаријат за унутрашње послове СФРЈ*, FSIA) of the SFRY.<sup>61</sup>

The official discussions on the grounds of the Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs took place in a friendly atmosphere, and the representatives of the Yugoslav security forces answered almost every question concerning the organisation and activity of their special anti-terrorist unit. However, the speech by the Head of the Federal Counterintelligence Directorate of the State Security Service (*Служба државне безбедности*) of the FSIA, Col. Stanko Cholak, was markedly reticent. He talked very briefly and on a general level about the work of the secret police, their organisation and execution of both counterintelligence and intelligence activities in the fight against terrorism.<sup>62</sup>

Col. Cholak indicated that the main sources of information and knowledge about the hostile activities of “Yugoslav nationals” organised and trained by terrorist organisations

<sup>60</sup> See P. Žáček, “Kontrarozvědný protiteroristický aparát východního bloku v osmdesátých letech dvacátého století”, pp. 258–261.

<sup>61</sup> Assigned to the Czechoslovak delegation were the Head of Directorate XIV SNB Col. Z. Němec, his Deputy Lt. Col. V. Kába and the Commander of ÚZU Directorate XIV SNB Capt. V. Babický. The Yugoslav side was led by the Head of the Militia Brigade FSIA Col. Slavko Strika, its other members were the Head of the Directorate of the State Security Service FSIA Col. Stanko Čolak, the Head of the Directorate of the Republic’s Secretariat of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Serbia Col. Jovan Vuković, Maj. Ing. Djuro Bijelić, directing the activity of the Section for Special Technology of the Militia Brigade FSIA, and Maj. Vojislav Radonjić, adviser in the Department for International Relations FSIA. SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 156. Study visit to Yugoslavia – report, 12.1.1982.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 2/9, arch. no. 729. Study visit to Yugoslavia – report, 12.1.1982.

were citizens of the SFRY, émigrés, workers on short- or long-term contracts abroad, and other persons. “Every piece of information acquired is reviewed and the appropriate measures taken, even as far as the physical elimination of enemy persons on the territory of foreign states”.

In addition he said that embedded members of State Security operated in each of the six Yugoslav federal republics and in the two autonomous regions, Kosovo and Vojvodina, concentrating on the struggle against terrorism in each given territory. Col. Cholak’s Central Directorate oversaw the methodology of their activity and coordinated their work. He did not however speak about the organisation or the focus and activities of his unit.

The Head of the Directorate spoke evasively on the extent of the information they had on international terrorism. “He said they did not know about [international terrorism] and that every such terror is the business of the country in which it was committed, whoever it is by and whoever against”<sup>63</sup>

The Czechoslovak delegation learnt from its Head Col. Slavko Strika and his colleagues in the staff of the Militia Brigade FSIA that special militia units did exist in Yugoslavia. These special units, which were regionally based, were numerically strong and formed according to need from the reserves of militia members and other persons called to active service from the reserves, and specially prepared for this task.<sup>64</sup>

In contrast, the special units intended for the struggle with terrorism and similar violent criminal activity were fewer in number, being composed of members of militias in active service, well equipped with special technology, and trained to perfection.

There were 1,400 members of the Militia Brigade FSIA, directly subordinate to the Federal Secretariat of the Interior of the SFRY (with the same number of members in reserve, using the same weapons and firearms, and capable of achieving full readiness within 24 hours). Their basic tasks included the security and protection of buildings of special importance, embassies of foreign states in Belgrade and consulates of those states in the federal republics, diplomatic missions of the SFRY abroad, and the transport of valuables by the Yugoslav central banks within the country and abroad. The Militia Brigade of the FSIA was divided into units according to the tasks allotted, for example, for the protection of buildings of special importance, embassies and so on.

A special unit allotted to counter terrorist acts and similar enemy activity was also part of the brigade.<sup>65</sup> This was divided into:

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<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 28, arch. no. 156. Study visit to Yugoslavia – report, 12.1.1982.

<sup>64</sup> The Yugoslav security organs drew from the armed organisation “Social Self-Defence”, described as one of the main elements ensuring the security of the country, especially if it were under exceptional threat; in this context the upbringing of citizens of the SFRY had to have a “strongly nationalist” orientation deriving from the assumption that every citizen bears responsibility for the security and protection of his homeland, property and persons. *Ibidem*.

<sup>65</sup> This was a special anti-terrorist unit (*Специјална антитерористичка јединица*), established 16.12.1978. See M. Kovář, *Zvláštní jednotky celého světa*, p. 160. In the federal republics and autonomous regions of the SFRY small units of an analogous nature existed which were activated especially in the case of a threat to the state, a state of war, disturbance of public order, emergence of terrorist and sabotage groups in the country, hijacking, siege of various buildings by terrorists, or natural and other catastrophes. SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 156. Study visit to Yugoslavia – report, 12.1.1982.

1. Commander, special units and staff.
2. Operational (special strike) component composed of a reconnaissance group, sniper group, action group and groups of chemists and technologists.
3. Technical group, supporting the operational section, consisting of transport, ambulance and headquarters.
4. Airborne group (helicopters).

Each unit comprised 120 members, 70 of them belonging to the operational part and 50 to the support section (transport, rearguard, helicopters, and so on).

Any member of the Militia aged over 21 could become a member of the special unit after completing security training and three years remove probation. The upper age limit was 32, although in the case of the head of a unit it could be 40, in which case a medical commission would decide on the length of service. The choice was made on the basis of political and cadre suitability, motivation, excellent physical and mental condition and state of health.

The basic training of a member of the Militia was, before he could be included in the special unit, divided into two phases. First he underwent half a year of theoretical preparation in the Security Institute of the FSIA, to familiarise him with information about the terrorist groups, their organisation and tactics, and the history of combating them in Yugoslavia and abroad. The second phase – lasting a year – was tactical preparation focused on his own training, especially practice in anticipated situations arising from interventions by the special unit (for example, neutralising a terrorist or a group of terrorists when an aeroplane was hijacked or hostages were being held in a building, and so on).

The commander prepared the training of the special unit one month in advance, taking into consideration the past performance of the local emergency service. The training plan was approved by the Head of the Militia Brigade of the FSIA.

The training and education was extremely challenging, adapted to the guerrilla struggle and military conditions. It began with a tough three-month programme in a naval sabotage school (including training with river patrol boats); the snipers also underwent a month's army training. Members of the special unit were instructed in parachuting, as well as mountain climbing and diving and the use of armoured personnel carriers. Shooting with different types of weapon, self-defence, karate, judo and sambo were practised. At the same time the unit commanders cooperated with the Yugoslav army, especially in the provision of divers and mountain troopers. Winter training took place with the Alpine Mountain Brigade.

In the words of Col. Strika, the main emphasis was placed on physical fitness, physical training and endurance, and the psychological resilience to cope with the hardest and most challenging tasks, even using guerrilla tactics to infiltrate the enemy (going as far as physical elimination). Attention was consistently aimed at the development of courage, endurance, self-control, precision in performing tasks, and responsibility in carrying them out on the part of the individual and the whole unit as well.

The standard weapons presented in the course of demonstrations on the shooting range and in the classroom (pistols, revolvers, machine guns, sniper rifles) were of American, French and West German manufacture. Only one sniper rifle and a specially adapted revolver for firing chemical substances were of Yugoslav manufacture.

The chemical weapons shown to the Czechoslovak delegations were a Yugoslav hand held projector of chemical substances, influenced by American models, as well as special chemical substances shot with firearms at relevant objects and various types of chemical grenades of Yugoslav and American manufacture.

Members of the special unit were equipped with body armour of various production, quality, and purpose. Apart from that they had the airborne helmet *Fallschirmjäger Stahlhelm* of West German production, a model from 1975.

Communications equipment was divided into three basic types – short range for personal communication within the intervention unit, medium range for communication between the intervention unit and the command centre coordinating the help of other militia units, and long range for direct communication with the centre.

Special equipment used by the special unit included a robot of English manufacture used to inspect and move explosives and so on, controlled at a distance of 15 meters and, with the help of an extension cable, as far as 100 meters. The robot was equipped with a television camera with a monitor for the controller. Also at their disposal were various types of detectors used to search for detonators and explosives, a special X-ray for examining suspicious packages, abseiling brakes of French manufacture, and additional equipment for abseiling members of the unit from helicopters, as well as diving equipment (various types of divers’ instruments, boats with special motors).

The special unit was equipped with heavy-duty BMW motor cycles, various types of personnel carriers of domestic and foreign manufacture intended for use on rough terrain and on high roads, medium-sized vehicles for carrying passengers and freight, as well as buses and armed transporters, similar to the Czechoslovak OT 64, of Romanian manufacture.

Where aircraft were concerned, the Militia Brigade FSIA used a special unit of transport helicopters of American and West German manufacture. A demonstration of parachute drops on the roof of the building of the special unit from an AS 330 PUMA helicopter was arranged for the benefit of the Czechoslovak delegation.

Members of the special unit were supplied with a special uniform, and had additional equipment for operations using helicopters, armoured transporters, and so on. It was possible to assume from the discussion about equipment that: “[...] they also operated in civilian dress, as well as in various uniforms used in Yugoslavia and apparently even abroad. [...] During the discussions the Yugoslav representatives described their experiences from recent events in the autonomous region of Kosovo, where – owing to an incorrect decision, caused by a poor knowledge of the local situation and a lack of respect for the recommendations of the local head – three members of a special unit were shot while being deployed to neutralise an armed offender”<sup>66</sup>

The Militia Brigade commander was responsible to the Federal Secretary of the FSIA for the deployment of the special unit. It was the latter who would issue the order to carry out the operation. A temporary operational staff was then formed, always led by the relevant territorial head who issued orders and made decisions. The Secretary of the

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibidem*.

Federal Republic or autonomous region and the Head of the Special Unit who fulfilled the tasks assigned by the staff and approved by the Federal Secretary were also members. There were two parts to the staff: the service group and the political leadership.

Types of plans for possible actions played a significant role in the preparation and training of members. Plans were worked out for the execution of a varied range of operations on the territory of Yugoslavia and abroad (representative offices, other foreign institutions and offices of the SFRY). Such plans were made for specific buildings that were assumed to be the potential object of a terrorist act or attack, in an attempt to anticipate and prevent such acts or to react should this happen.

At the conclusion of their stay the members of the Czechoslovak delegation were received by the Deputy Federal Secretary Dmitri Krajger.

The delegation were able to confirm that Yugoslav state security had acquired knowledge and experience concerning the struggle against terrorism not only from their own cases and actions but also from Western special units and services; “however” it was not willing “for the time being to share this with representatives of security units of the countries of the Warsaw Pact”. The orientation of the functionaries of the special units of the Militia Brigade of the FSIA was described as highly nationalist, reflecting the current situation in Yugoslavia, strongly marked by the country’s relationship on the one hand with the Chinese People’s Republic and Romania and on the other with the FRG, USA, Australia and other Western states.

The training, equipping and arming of the Special Unit of the Militia Brigade FSIA was strongly influenced by experience from the partisan struggle in the past and by the present security situation in the SFRY. “A dominant role is also played by the mentality and thinking of Yugoslavs according to which ‘everyone is a threat to Yugoslavia’ and therefore almost everyone is armed”. On the organisational side, and where its equipment and training are concerned, the unit resembles in large measure similar anti-terrorist units in capitalist states. The command of the Militia Brigade FSIA and its Special Units moreover went on a study visit with the West German anti-terrorist unit GSG 9.<sup>67</sup>

## CONCLUSION

The Czechoslovak Federal Minister of the Interior took as his starting point in the development of counterintelligence measures against international terrorism and its organisations, with the Special Purposes Unit (ÚZU) as a special anti-terrorist unit, and the experiences of other states of the Communist bloc. In addition to the information and experience gained at multilateral meetings of representatives of the security services (Prague 1979, Varna 1987), the Czechoslovak authorities obtained advice by sending official representatives on study visits abroad. The aim of these visits to the Soviet Union and Hungary was to gain insight into the state of counterintelligence responses to the

<sup>67</sup> See P. Žáček, “Kontrarozvědný protiteroristický aparát východního bloku v osmdesátých letech dvacátého století”, pp. 261–266.

issues involved in the struggle against exceptional and particular forms of criminal activity; especially the organisation of counterintelligence against international and internal terrorism, and last but not least, advice on training, equipment, weapons, and the deployment of rapid reaction units.

Their Soviet and Hungarian “friends” were moreover informed about the reasons that led to the creation of Directorate XIV SNB, about its mission, and current and future tasks. “In a joint analysis of all the important aspects of the increase in terrorist activity and of the activities of terrorist organisations, supported by the reactionary forces of imperialism and used by hostile special services, the acute danger of the transfer of this activity [terrorism] to the countries of the Socialist camp was pointed out as a justification”.<sup>68</sup>

Based on the experience of the security units of Czechoslovakia’s neighbours and allies, it was recommended that the powers of the Interior Minister and the First Deputy Czechoslovak Interior Minister deploy and define ÚZU more specifically. In concert with other central counterintelligence directorates, the most important buildings posed a possibility of penetration by terrorists, and also the forms of transport which could be hijacked should be identified and the responsibilities of appropriate operational components established. For this purpose the systematic mapping of the whole of Czechoslovakia was envisaged. After the Czechoslovak representatives returned from their study trips in Yugoslavia, the KGB and the East-German Stasi both wanted them to share the information obtained.<sup>69</sup>

The knowledge and information provided by the Hungarian “friends” was used to support the decision of the Czechoslovak Federal Interior Ministry to set up a single autonomous headquarters for the fight against terrorism. Some elements of the equipment, weapons and personal protective equipment for the front-line troops were available to the special unit of the ÚZU. The Czechoslovak authorities however had doubts over the adequacy of their members’ training. The subordination of the unit under the Revolutionary Regiment of Public Security appeared likewise to be ineffective. The classification of its members below officer status into patrol and advisory services was not a guarantee that demanding tasks could be fulfilled; the principle of secrecy was completely reviewed at the same time. An important conclusion which emerged from the two visits was the need for close consultation and cooperation, from the point of view of both security issues and the Czechoslovak Special Purposes Unit.<sup>70</sup>

East German colleagues were similarly informed about the reasons which led the Czechoslovak Party and state authorities to the creation of a new counterintelligence organisation. “In the course of the discussions, our German friends emphasised the need for constant confidentiality, line-management, mutual cooperation and consultancy in the sector of the fight against terrorism. They considered the creation of Directorate XIV

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<sup>68</sup> SSA Prague, f. A 28, arch. no. 39. Re: Report on unscheduled study visits to the USSR and the HPR made by functionaries of Directorate XIV SNB. Explanatory report, 23.6.1981.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 35. Study visit to the USSR – report, 18.5.1981.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 36. Study trip to HPR – report, 11.6.1981.

SNB where counterintelligence protection and special units are under one command to be a positive move”.<sup>71</sup>

The study trip had again fulfilled its role. Emphasis was placed on confidentiality and the political and ideological preparation of members of the Directorate, in the same way as the development of cooperation in the field of the exchange of intelligence, information and experience and issues of interest.<sup>72</sup>

In mid-1982 both sides were very satisfied that their traditional cooperation and exchange of information with regard to smuggling organisations had expanded into the field of terrorism. “The attitude of mutually informing each other has in this respect a coordinating nature and also creates a basis for a correct approach to the struggle against terrorism and special attention to persons who slip through the currently defined categories of especially dangerous persons”.<sup>73</sup>

Col. G. Jäckel revealed, in the course of discussion about cooperation with Yugoslav state security, that the East German comrades had a different relationship with regard to the Yugoslav authorities. “According to the information they received, the Yugoslavs play a very devious role in issues of terrorism; that is, the State Secretary for the Interior, who has moved to the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry with all his staff, argues that he no longer has anything in common with the Interior Ministry”. They were worried especially over the Yugoslavs’ close cooperation with the West German authorities and with Interpol. “They provide information to the Hungarian authorities through INTERPOL and have the task of training them”.

The representative of the head of Directorate XIV SNB Col. V. Kába agreed and added: “With the help of INTERPOL the Yugoslavs are trying to reach us through the Hungarian authorities and we therefore investigate any requests from our Hungarian friends very carefully. However, he mentioned that even though we mustn’t forget this and we know that the Yugoslavs have contacts with the BND [*Bundesnachrichtendienst*, West German Federal Intelligence Service] and the Austrian STAPO, we still cannot distance ourselves from them”.<sup>74</sup>

It is not surprising that it was the study trip to Yugoslavia that was the only one that in part failed to fulfil its mission. “The discussions and visit to the SFRY were later recorded with a certain reserve and mutual mistrust”. For the most part, the form of training of members of the special units of the Militia Brigade of the FSIA proved unsuitable for the preparation of Czechoslovak units. Many of the weapons, and much of the equipment, communication and transport technology, was exclusively of Western origin, which was likewise rejected. The conclusion was logical: “In the field of the foreign contacts of Directorate XIV SNB focused on developing closer cooperation and consultation with the partnership elements of the USSR, the GDR and the HPR”.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 49. Re: Report on an unplanned working visit to the GDR carried out by employees of Directorate XIV SNB, 16.10.1981.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 176. Plan of activity of Directorate XIV SNB for the second half of 1982, 30.6.1982.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibidem*, arch. no. 358. Discussions with the delegation of the MfS GDR from 27.–30.9.1983 in Prague, 3.11.1983.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, f. A 2/9, arch. no. 729. Study visit to Yugoslavia – report, 12.1.1982.

Interesting documents about the counterintelligence investigation of terrorist organisations and the preparation, organisation and partially even deployment of special anti-terrorist units were derived from the records of the working visits by staff of the Directorate XIV SNB to their partners in the former Soviet bloc in Central and Eastern Europe. Each of the security forces visited by the Czechoslovaks in the 1980s – in chronological order: Soviet, Hungarian (2x), East German, Polish, Bulgarian and Yugoslav – approached the struggle against terrorism differently, although *de facto* they derived from a single model.

The analysis and presentation of this information (and also its application to Czechoslovak conditions) clearly deserves appropriate professional attention. The theme is plainly one of importance, if only for the reason that the data on the activity of these selected security forces visited by the Czechoslovak delegation is not in every case fully available even in the countries themselves.

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## **“Our Solidarity in the Struggle is the Guarantee of our Victory”. The Counterintelligence Anti-terrorist Apparatus in the Eastern Bloc in the 1980s. A Czechoslovak Perspective**

At the turn of the 1970s and 80s, the Czechoslovak security apparatus formed an interest in the undercover and espionage activities of the various state security forces in Communist countries in the Eastern Bloc tasked with operations against international terrorism and the training and deployment of special antiterrorist units. Following the establishment of a counterintelligence directorate for “special and unusual types of criminal activity” (the 14th Department of the National Security Corps or SNB), the leadership of the new structure was given the opportunity to make several international study trips to the Soviet Union, Hungary, East Germany, Poland, Bulgaria and even Yugoslavia. Reports from those official visits to security institutions in other Communist countries were filed with the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Internal Affairs. The accounts capture a cross-section view of the status of counterintelligence structures tasked with containing international terrorism (and partly also so-called “domestic” terrorism) in Eastern Europe, including the organisational structures, training programmes and tactics for deploying special anti-terrorist units. During those meetings, representatives of the Czechoslovak state security services (Státní Bezpečnost, StB) and public law enforcement and criminal police (Veřejná Bezpečnost, VB) were given access (obviously limited) to information concerning the activities of the 2nd Main Directorate of the KGB (USSR), the 5th Directorate of the KGB (USSR), but also the special Alpha Unit of the 7th Directorate of the KGB (USSR), the 2nd Directorate and the 3rd Main Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in People’s Republic of Hungary, and the line units of the Revolutionary Regiment of Public Security, the 22nd Main Department of the Ministry of State Security (Hauptabteilung XXII MfS, “Terrorabwehr”) and the special units subordinated to a special working group of the permanent operational staff of the Ministry of State Security (AGM/S MfS) of the German Democratic Republic, the central apparatus of the Polish Security Service, as well as the special security unit in the Main Directorate of the People’s Police, the 2nd Main Directorate in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, People’s Republic of Bulgaria, the special motorised regiment, the federal directorate of counterintelligence at the Secretariat of Internal Affairs, the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the special anti-terrorist unit of the Militia Brigade. The aim of this article is to serve as a reference work based primarily on the information sourced from Czech archives in order to provide new

insights into the collaboration and exchange of information within the Communist Bloc regarding the establishment, training, organisation and, ultimately, deployment of special anti-terrorist units working within the counterintelligence apparatus aimed against the activities of terrorist groups and organisations.

#### KEYWORDS

Communism, East European State Security, KGB, international cooperation, international terrorism, counter-terrorism units

## **„Nasza solidarność w walce gwarancją naszego zwycięstwa”. Kontrwywiadowczy aparat antyterrorystyczny w Bloku Wschodnim w latach osiemdziesiątych. Perspektywa czechosłowacka**

**N**a przełomie lat siedemdziesiątych i osiemdziesiątych XX w. czechosłowackie służby bezpieczeństwa zaczęły interesować się agenturalno-operacyjnymi działaniami organów bezpieczeństwa państwowego krajów komunistycznych bloku wschodniego skierowanym przeciwko międzynarodowemu terroryzmowi, jak i przygotowaniem i użyciem specjalnych jednostek antyterrorystycznych.

W związku z powstaniem Zarządu Kontrwywiadu ds. zwalczania nadzwyczajnych i szczególnych form działalności przestępczej (XIV Zarząd SNB; Správa kontrarozvědky pro boj proti mimořádným a zvláštním formám trestné činnosti, XIV. správa SNB) kierownictwu nowo utworzonej jednostki umożliwiono odbycie kilku podróży studyjnych do Związku Sowieckiego, Węgier, wschodnich Niemiec, Polski, Bułgarii, a nawet do Jugosławii. Relacje o tych podróżach służbowych do bratnich instytucji bezpieczeństwa państwowego, złożone kierownictwu federalnego Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych, uchwyciły we wschodnioeuropejskim przekroju aktualny stan organizacji pracy kontrwywiadowczej skierowanej przeciwko międzynarodowemu i częściowo tzw. wewnętrznemu terroryzmowi, łącznie z organizacją, szkoleniem i taktyką użycia specjalnych antyterrorystycznych jednostek interwencyjnych. Podczas tych spotkań przedstawiciele czechosłowackiego Bezpieczeństwa Państwowego (Státní Bezpečnost, StB; policja bezpieczeństwa) i Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego (Veřejná Bezpečnost, VB; policja porządkowa i kryminalna) zostali, oczywiście w ograniczonym stopniu, zapoznani z działalnością II Zarządu Głównego KGB ZSRS, V Zarządu KGB ZSRS, a także jednostki specjalnej „Alfa”, podporządkowanej VII Zarządowi KGB ZSRS, II Zarządu III Zarządu Głównego Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych Węgierskiej Republiki Ludowej i plutonów bojowych Rewolucyjnego Pułku Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, XXII Wydziału Głównego Ministerstwa Bezpieczeństwa Państwowego (Hauptabteilung XXII MfS, „Terrorabwehr”) i jednostek specjalnych podporządkowanych specjalnemu ogniwu stałego sztabu opera-

cyjnego Ministerstwa Bezpieczeństwa Państwowego (AGM/S MfS) Niemieckiej Republiki Demokratycznej, aparatu centralnego polskiej Służby Bezpieczeństwa, jak i specjalnego oddziału zabezpieczenia głównego kierownictwa milicji, II Zarządu Głównego Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych Bułgarskiej Republiki Ludowej i specjalnego pułku zmotoryzowanego, federalnego zarządu kontrwywiadu Sekretariatu Spraw Wewnętrznych Socjalistycznej Federalnej Republiki Jugosławii i specjalnej jednostki antyterrorystycznej Brygady Milicji. Celem tego artykułu jest, by stał się pewną pomocą warsztatową, opracowaną przede wszystkim na podstawie informacji z czeskich archiwów, która nam otworzy nowy wgląd we współpracę i wymianę informacji o tworzeniu, doborze, szkoleniu, organizacji, a w końcu i użyciu specjalnych jednostek antyterrorystycznych bloku komunistycznego, i zadaniach aparatu kontrwywiadowczego ukierunkowanego przeciwko działalności organizacji i grup terrorystycznych.

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komunizm, służby bezpieczeństwa w Europie Wschodniej, KGB, współpraca międzynarodowa, terroryzm międzynarodowy, jednostki antyterrorystyczne

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