

MAGAZINE

# RAZVEDCHIK

We search for knowledge not for glory's sake — But to learn the truth for the good of our State!

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**“THE CHOICE IN FAVOUR  
OF UNION WITH RUSSIA  
IS DICTATED BY  
LIFE ITSELF”**

A. G. LUKASHENKO

V. A. SADOVNICHYI: “STRONG  
UNIVERSITY IS INDEPENDENCE  
AND SECURITY OF RUSSIA”

DIRECTOR OF THE RISS  
M. Y. FRADKOV: “INTELLIGENCE  
HAS TAUGHT ME A LOT”

SPECIAL PURPOSE INTELLIGENCE  
OFFICER: ON THE 100th ANNIVERSARY  
OF Y. I. DROZDOV

Вартанян, Станислав Алексеевич Ваупшасов, Леонид Романович Квасников, Моррис и Леонтина Коэн, Иван Данилович Кудря, Николай Иванович Кузнецов, Виктор Александрович Лягин, Дмитрий Николаевич Медведев, Владимир Борисович Барковский, Алексей Николаевич Ботян, Геворк Андреевич Вартанян, Кирилл Прокофьевич Орловский, Николай Архипович Прокопюк, Александр Семенович Феклисов. // ГЕРОИ-РАЗВЕДЧИКИ

ИНTELLIGENCE IS A JOB FOR THOSE INVISIBLE, IN THE BROAD SENSE OF THE WORD. INVISIBLE FOR GLORY, WIDE POPULARITY, GENERAL WORSHIP.

DEEP COVER INTELLIGENCE OFFICER KONON TROFIMOVICH MOLODY

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## President of the Republic of Belarus A. G. Lukashenko:

# “The choice in favor of union with Russia is dictated by life itself”

Dear Alexander Grigoryevich! You have a wealth of experience gained in an extremely difficult historical era at the turn of the century. Despite the difficulties, external and internal challenges, you have been confidently leading the country along the "Belarusian path" (*a definition you used in your inaugural address*) for more than 30 years. How would you formulate the secret of this success? What are the most valuable lessons of state building learned over the past time, and is it still possible to surprise you in big politics?

It's hard to impress me, I've been in politics a long time. Excuse the immodesty, but I've said before, presidents are born, not made. This is not about fate and destiny. I am a realist and a pragmatist. It's about a growing love for one's country and its people, a willingness to take responsibility and do everything to justify the trust of compatriots. It's about establishing a special connection with your people, taking responsibility for political decisions, and working tirelessly.

Frankly, I deeply respect and love my people, my country. The worst thing for me is to let down the people who believed in me. 30 years ago, I made a vow to serve them honestly. And this is

exactly what I strive to do. I work, not rule. No matter how difficult it may be.

If you follow our political agenda, you are aware that we make crucial decisions for the country taking into account the opinions and interests of the people through referendums. I always rely on and trust the people. I believe that only they have the right to decide their fate. This is the essence of the ancient Slavic tradition of our democracy since the veche.

The main idea I brought to big politics was to preserve continuity. There was an inner conviction in the correctness of this course and a public demand. Therefore, there was support. The people understood: we have our own state, and if we betray or destroy it, we will have to start from the beginning.

This is a key formula for success in life: if you want to grow, to move forward — consider the will of the people and do not break the foundation built by previous generations. We know how our ancestors lived when they obeyed the laws and interests of other states. We know how the lives of Belarusians began to change during the Soviet era. Therefore, in the 1990s, there was no question of giving the poten-







At the UAV production and pilot training center. Brest region. June 13, 2025

tial created in the BSSR to oligarchs for any amount of money. The people would not have understood and would not have allowed it.

I have always strived for Belarusians to be happy in their native land. To manage their own destiny and country themselves. And although we live modestly today, we live with dignity. We live on our land, we know how to live and what to do based on the resources we have — natural, labor, and others. And most importantly, we live in a peaceful, calm, and safe country. Believe me, if there is no peace, if the country starts shooting and blowing up, then nothing else matters: no work, no salary...

That is why I never tire of repeating: it is better to fight in the field, factory, or farm than in the

“We are ready to be friends and cooperate with everyone who sincerely wants it, and we go where they are waiting for us. But we are going "not on tanks, but on tractors."

trenches. We cannot relax and become complacent. We can achieve more if we work and are united. How we work is how we will live. The main thing is to live in peace and harmony.

For this path, millions of our compatriots gave their lives in the past. Belarusians voted for this path 30 years ago and continue to vote for it today. I am faithful to it and will follow it to the end to preserve a sovereign and independent Belarus.

Since the beginning of the Special Military Operation, large-scale anti-Russian hysteria has unfolded in the West, in which absurd decisions are often made that run counter to the interests of the population of their own countries. Among them, obviously, are statements by Polish and Baltic politicians about their intention to mine the borders with the Republic of Belarus. How will Minsk react to this if the neighbors move from words to deeds?

Such statements represent the essence of the West's general policy towards Belarus and Russia. And the saddest thing is that this policy is not changing. It has been 80 years since the end of World War II, and there, in the West, our countries and their fraternal alliance are still considered a threat. Under this brand, NATO is hastily arming Europe, and Poland and the Baltic states are inventing supposedly "protective" measures to please their masters. One of them is the withdrawal from the Ottawa Convention and the mining of the border with Belarus. All this is nothing but another attempt to put pressure on Belarus. The unfriendly policy of the West towards us is developing into an openly aggressive one.

So far, we do not see any special risks or direct military threats, since antipersonnel mines are a defensive type of weapon. Moreover, we have no plans to cross the borders of our neighbors without an invitation. We are ready to be friends and cooperate with everyone who sincerely wants it, and we go where they are waiting for us. But we are going "not on tanks, but on tractors."

But the actions of our neighbors are unlikely to contribute to security and stability in the region. Why are borders being mined today, and mil-

lions are being spent building iron fences that migrants need only minutes to cross? Millions of dollars have been invested, half have been plundered, borders are being mined, armies are being pumped with troops and equipment, and what is the result? Who is better off? Such madness is primarily dangerous for the initiators themselves. Residents of the border area are at risk, and animals are suffering.

Fortunately, ordinary people understand everything and oppose these dangerous ventures, like more than half (54%) of Poles surveyed a year ago. Who wants to put up with the fact that the government spends citizens' taxes not on the social sphere, but on military needs and thoughtless provocations? What have the same sanctions imposed against Russia and Belarus led to? Poles, Lithuanians, and Latvians have already faced rising energy prices, the loss of traditional markets, and lower budget revenues. Time has shown that sanctions are a shot in the foot.

However, in the leadership of Poland, Lithuania and Latvia, political ambitions are more important than common sense. The budget for defense spending in these countries is already approaching 5% (for comparison, in Belarus it is no more than 1%). Ordinary people, whose social well-being is melting away every day along with their hopes for a better life, pay for everything. But no one thinks about them, as well as about the consequences of crazy decisions.

Of course, we are monitoring the development of the situation on the western borders. In case of a direct threat, we will respond with lightning speed to anyone who encroaches on Belarusian land. If they move from words to deeds, it won't seem enough. In order to inflict unacceptable damage on the aggressor, we have everything we need. I don't recommend checking.

However, neighbors are not chosen, they are from God. And we have always offered and continue to offer to live in a neighborly way. They don't want to. They do things on the border that are incomprehensible to the mind. Unfortunately, our relations with Poland are far from ideal. It's not our fault. But it is important for us to have a friendly and neighborly Poland.

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Do you expect any changes in relations with Warsaw in connection with the inauguration of the new Polish President Karol Nawrocki?

To be honest, we have no illusions about the imminent resumption of dialogue. On the one hand, one of Mr. Nawrocki's election slogans was "Poland first." In his election speeches, he repeatedly stated that the protection of the Polish people is one of the goals of his presidency. We understand that it was convenient to score points on this topic during the election campaign. But we know that the Polish people want to develop relations with our country. Poles and Belarusians are not enemies of each other. On the other hand, Warsaw continues to make unfounded claims and accusations

Visit to the mining and processing complex in Lyuban district of Minsk region. May 23, 2025





“Yes, not everything worked out right away. Sometimes it seemed that compromise was impossible. But we knew that the price of the issue was not in short-term benefits, but in the historical fate of nations.

against Belarus. Poland has sheltered, politically and informationally feeds our "fugitives", using them for its own purposes.

Attempts to rewrite and reinterpret history to fit the current political climate continue. We are well aware of the role the current Polish president (as head of the Polish Institute of National Remembrance) played in dismantling monuments to Soviet soldiers who died liberating Poland from Nazi occupiers. Consider: 600,000 Soviet soldiers, including many Belarusians, died fighting for Poland and remain buried there. Which Polish politicians remember this today? We are met with threats, sanctions, militarization, "Bypols", "Bysols" (*BYPOL*, *BYSOL* — anti-government NGOs financed by the West — editor's note), and other sabotage.

Navrotsky is a staunch supporter of NATO and an alliance with the US, and is unlikely to back down. We don't expect things to return to the way they were. However, we hope that political wisdom and common sense will prevail among our Polish colleagues. We hope they will hear us, objectively assess the situation in Belarus, and stop interfering in our internal affairs. We are open to dialogue. In the current environment, it is important to find solutions, not create new problems. We must build bridges, not walls, unlike our neighbors.

*Speaking of the tense situation on the border of the Union State, the external factors often becomes a powerful stimulus for internal development. In a way, we are even grateful to the West for the sanctions pressure, forcing us to accelerate economic sovereignty and achieve financial and technological independence. Has Russian-Belarusian multifaceted (economic, technological, defense) cooperation reached a qualitatively new level in recent years? Which Union State projects would you highlight as most successful, and in which areas do you see potential for further growth?*

Looking back on the path I have traveled, I can say with confidence that the choice in favor of an alliance with Russia was dictated by life itself. This choice saved our countries from economic disaster and loss of sovereignty. This was especially acute after the 1998 crisis, when businesses shut down, prices rose, and people lost their savings. It was then that it finally became clear — either we find a solution together, or each country will survive alone. And we have found this path through real economic integration, the creation of joint ventures, and a coordinated social policy.

Yes, not everything worked out right away. Sometimes it seemed that compromise was impossible. But we knew that the price of the issue was not in short-term benefits, but in the historical fate of nations. We have been through many trials: financial crises, global economic turmoil, frenzied Western sanctions. Together we have passed a serious test of strength. We survived because we created a unique integration format that has no analogues in the world. At the same time, each country retains its sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity,

and state structure. Strong sovereign states are a strong union. This is the formula for the success of any integration.

Yes, Belarus and Russia have different resources. But that's the power of SG. We do not duplicate each other, but complement each other organically, close gaps and multiply advantages. Russia has been and remains Belarus' main trade and economic partner. According to the results of last year, Belarus became one of the four countries in the world in terms of trade turnover with Russia and continues to lead among the CIS countries. The trade turnover between the two countries increased sevenfold, reaching almost \$60 billion last year, along with services.

Focus is on import substitution projects. For example, a BELAZ mining dump truck with a 90-ton payload capacity, equipped with a 1050 hp Russian engine from the Yaroslavl Motor Plant. Previously, only imported engines were used in this class. The Russian unit is not inferior to foreign counterparts and has lower operating costs.

Significant progress has been made in microelectronics. The roadmap until 2030 envisages the creation of 88 new product types. The "Soyuzny Stanok" project, where all components are produced in Belarus and Russia, is in full swing. Thanks to joint efforts, food security for the Union State is 100% ensured.

However, I consider the tangible improvement in the quality of life for citizens of Belarus and Russia to be the main achievement. Residents of the Union State today enjoy equal rights in employment, social security, healthcare, education, and pension matters. These are not empty words, but real, functioning mechanisms. The introduction of preferential mobile tariffs, the expansion of electoral rights, and the increase in flights between regions are all real indicators of strengthened union relations.

The basis for their further development is the deepening of regional integration. The annual Forum of Regions of Belarus and Russia has become a key platform for interregional cooperation, innovation, and profitable contracts. Interaction in the scientific and techni-

cal sphere has undergone a serious evolution, from supporting individual industries to creating fundamentally new directions. This progress is particularly evident in the space sector. Imagine: eight joint programs, the first Belarusian female cosmonaut in orbit with an operational joint Earth remote sensing satellite, and a new spacecraft with a record resolution of 35 cm, featuring our internal components and a Russian platform.

We are also actively working on creating a unified digital space, developing artificial intelligence, and implementing "smart" technologies. In medicine, our joint developments save thousands of lives. The Belarusian NPP has become a true technological breakthrough and a symbol of friendship between fraternal peoples. This is our response to political pressure and a platform for developing our own competencies in the peaceful use of atomic energy.

However, without building unified energy resource markets, it is difficult to expect effective progress. The signed agreement on a common electricity market is just the beginning. We need to move forward: create a common gas market, establish unified rules for the oil market, ensure fair prices for refiners, and equal operating conditions for entities of both countries.

This is the essence of our Union State — not just to help each other, but to create common rules of the game that lead to the formation of a full-fledged unified economic space while preserving the political sovereignty of each country. 25 years ago, we laid the foundation for this. Today, we are building the structure, and tomorrow we will erect an entire city based

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At the session of the CSTO Collective Security Council. Minsk. November 23, 2023

on the technological sovereignty of our economies. It will definitely have a place for new joint projects, breakthrough technologies, and new discoveries.

One of the main lessons of the crisis around Ukraine, as it pertains to relations with the collective West, can be described by the Belarusian saying "only a fool can believe promises". How did you perceive the belated revelations of European participants in the 2015 Minsk negotiations that they never intended to fulfill the agreements reached, but merely "bought time" for the Kiev regime? In your opinion, what can be the future dialogue with such "partners"?

How did I take it... You've probably heard what I think about this more than once. It was unexpected, but not surprising. Unexpectedly, because of politicians of this level (and they considered themselves to be among the pantheon of world leaders, right?) still, you expect some consistency, seriousness, and thoroughness. On the other hand, the recognition of the euroleaders that they came to the negotiating platform, if you'll excuse the expression, with a fig in their pocket, was not surprising. Nothing new. They're used to lying, that's their style. Remember how, after the victory over Nazi Germany, the collective West put some Nazis in the dock, while others, who bought their lives with secrets, hid them in the USA, Argentina, and Canada. Remember how we disarmed after the collapse of the USSR. In what proportions. We've always been lied to. There are many examples, but that's not the point.

Then, in 2015, we prepared the negotiations in Minsk sincerely. We tried to think of the West as a responsible partner. Otherwise, what is the point of entering a negotiation platform of this

level? Yes, we expected that the agreements signed in Minsk would lay a solid foundation for long-term stabilization. Everyone was really working. Seventeen hours of the hardest negotiations, without sleep, with emotional arguments, but with the desire to stop the bloodshed and restore peace.

And Merkel and Hollande, according to their own confessions, came to lull our vigilance, accumulate strength and add logs to the Ukrainian bonfire. So why are you offended today that Trump doesn't invite you? Why should he communicate with politicians whose reputation is below the baseboard? He needs both partners and opponents with whom he will speak on equal terms. And on equal terms, this is with other leaders. These are the SCO and BRICS countries. A serious counterweight to the old structures is being formed. And this flywheel cannot be stopped — new centers of power are gaining political weight. They will have to be reckoned with.

At the SCO summit, I listened attentively to Chinese President Xi Jinping. His global initiative is governance based on equality and equity. Si offers: sovereign equality, the primacy of international law, and multilateralism. And this is exactly what is needed to unwind the tangle of accumulated problems on the international agenda. This is what will restore the trust lost due to the adventures of the European Union. And with the introductory statements that we have as a result of the confessions of its leaders, there is no trust in our western neighbors. I do not know how to do business with them in principle.

There is no alternative to the peace talks on Ukraine. But it should be an open and respectful dialogue that will allow us to find a compromise that takes into account the interests of all parties to the conflict. We can only believe that President Trump really wants to end this conflict. In Alaska, no matter what the European and partly American press wrote, Trump coped with his role — and he played solely the role of a mediator who wanted to learn firsthand the position of Russia as a party to the conflict — I think he coped.

I had a frank, good conversation with him on the phone. They also talked about Ukraine. I outlined my vision and my point of view to

Trump. He listened to it. Well, he knows better how useful our conversation was before the meeting in Alaska. I'll tell you straight out: Trump speaks harshly, without diplomatic husks. You can disagree with him, argue with him, but you understand his position. And this is more valuable than dozens of European declarations, where every word is wrapped in a beautiful diplomatic wrapper, but it does not mean anything.

There are bright milestones in the history of Belarusian diplomacy, including participation in the establishment of the USSR and the founding of the United Nations. At the present stage, Minsk is distinguished by its active position not only in relations with its neighbors in the post-Soviet space, but also on a global scale. If we talk about establishing relations with the countries of the world majority, how would you identify the priorities of the Republic of Belarus in Asia, Africa, and Latin America? What is the significance of integration into the SCO and BRICS for Minsk, and what are the main competitive advantages of the Belarusian foreign policy?

Since gaining independence, Belarus has systematically and purposefully built friendly relations with foreign partners. This process is based on the principle of the multi — vector nature of our foreign policy. Actually, as a country with an open export-oriented economy, we had and have no other way out. Of course, we tried to cooperate with everyone. Unfortunately, in relations with us, the West applied double standards almost from the very beginning, imposed sanctions and restrictions under far-fetched pretexts. It was a losing strategy from the beginning, if only because they are not the whole world or even the majority of it.

Over the past few years, Belarus' export flows have been reoriented from the West to other markets. Not on our whim, of course. The countries of the "far arc", whose doors are open to us, are no longer just a "belt" of economic growth, but a space of equal partners where the interests of the leading world powers intersect, new alliances and centers of power are being formed. Everyone's attention, without exception, is focused on Asia, Africa and the Middle East today.

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In Asia, we are actively developing a dialogue with China, Iran, Vietnam, Indonesia, Pakistan, North Korea, India, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, and the Philippines. And this is by no means a complete list. Speaking of the Middle East, I can say that we are actively cooperating with Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar. Here we have chosen the tactic of building bridges, when certain countries become our guides to other regions.

We have achieved significant results in Africa. Of course, everything is learned by comparison. Last year, we managed to significantly increase our exports, which amounted to more than half a billion dollars. Joint agricultural mechaniza-

Before the start of the BRICS Plus summit in Kazan. October 24, 2024



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tion programs with Zimbabwe and Nigeria are being successfully implemented. This element of cooperation has become a brand of Belarus in Africa and is of considerable interest to other countries of the continent, from Guinea — Bissau to Mozambique. Ties with traditional partners are strengthening: Egypt, Kenya, South Africa, and Ethiopia. Contacts with Algeria have received a new impetus. We are true to our approaches — we come to Africa as friends to help and teach where there is a need.

Regarding Latin America, we aim for comprehensive strengthening of interstate dialogue with our key allies in the region — Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua. Through systematic and progressive cooperation with Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Panama, Uruguay, and Ecuador, we see practical returns and the readiness of these countries for pragmatic interaction.

However, it is important to remember that diplomacy is not limited to bilateral contacts. We have become full participants in one of the largest influential regional structures — the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Belarus has gained the status of a BRICS partner — an association that, in essence, is the voice of the global majority.

Our strategic contribution to the stability and development of Asia, Africa, and Latin America is ensuring food security. We can offer, and most importantly, implement comprehensive integrated solutions — from agricultural machinery supplies and technology transfer to organizing processing, storage, servicing, and logistics. Our calling card on the global stage is thoroughness and unwavering implementation of agreements reached, and the ability to solve large-scale tasks with optimal resources.

Considering that you are a historian by first education, it is probably not the least reason why Belarus is careful about preserving its historical heritage, including the Soviet period. This is evidenced by the care at the highest level of the memorial complex "Dzerzhinovo", the Dzerzhinsky family estate, where a landmark figure for our countries, the founder of the Russian foreign intelligence service, F.E. Dzerzhinsky, spent his childhood. In the year of the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory, you took the initiative to build a new National Historical Museum of Belarus and the National Unity Park in Minsk. Tell us, what is the idea of this large-scale project and what is the role of youth in its implementation?

The new historical museum with the National Unity Park is a matter of time. The main idea is to show the difficult millennial path of the formation of the Belarusian statehood and the formation of Belarusians as a self-sufficient nation with a unique history and rich culture. Our people have earned this right in full.

We have gone through a difficult path and achieved great results. They did not break down when they lived under the whip of the lords, they did not dissolve into another ethnic group, when they beat out historical memory, faith, language, and culture from Belarusians with the same whip. The state was built on un-

precedented devastation after the First World War and the Civil War. They showed mass unprecedented heroism, defending their Homeland during the Great Patriotic War. The whole history of the people is a feat.

This should become an object of pride for people, especially for young people, who are actively involved in this nationwide construction. Today, student construction teams of our republican Youth Union are working on this site. The guys enthusiastically and literally join the history of their country.

My main requirement for the authors of the project is that there should be no nationalistic or jingoistic overlap. We need to reflect an objective view of our history. Everything should be based on facts and done in the spirit of the times. In the new museum building, the descendants will see an example of the attitude towards their past. Our most experienced architects, builders and historians are working on the project.

In parallel, the concept of the exposition was developed. It shows the history of Belarus as a continuous and natural process of the emergence of our country. On the political map of the world, all stages of the historical development of our people are reflected without exceptions and exaggerations. We have enough fans today to distort history.

If you'll excuse me, let's move on to sports. The success of Belarusian athletes in tennis, hockey, biathlon and other sports shows that Belarus, despite the sanctions, remains one of the leading sports powers in the world. Tell us, how do you support athletes in such a difficult time, how do you help them keep fit? What is the place of sport in your life today and how often have you been able to go on the ice lately?

For our country, sport is not just competitions and medals. It is one of the cornerstones of state social policy, a tool for developing international relations and a platform for public diplomacy. And the most important thing is the health of the nation. The sanctions imposed by international sports authorities have put our athletes and coaches in difficult conditions.

However, despite the pressure, we have not only preserved, but are also strengthening the country's sports potential. Cooperation with fraternal Russia plays a special role here. Over the past three years, more than 1,700 joint competitions and training camps have been held.

Team-based game sports, which have lost their usual international calendar, are in the most vulnerable position. Here we have established a systematic work, including through participation in various leagues created by the Russians. We are actively developing sports ties with other friendly countries. The results of the performance of Belarusian athletes at such prestigious competitions as the BRICS Games, the Children of Asia and the Games of the Future demonstrate our high potential and Belarus' commitment to the fundamental Olympic principles.

Our country not only participates in international competitions, but also organizes major sporting events. We do not shut ourselves off from the international community and hospitably host athletes from other countries. The interest of foreign participants in our annual tournaments in wrestling, rhythmic gymnastics, boxing and other sports continues unabated.

Together with the Russian Federation, we have tested a new format of open competitions — the Cup of the strongest athletes. This year they cover 3 winter and 15 summer sports. Since the beginning of the year, 12 such tournaments have already been held on the territory of the two countries, in which a total of representatives from 18 countries took part.

For athletes and their coaches, we have provided financial incentives for high results in international competitions, alternative to world and

“For our country, sport is not just competitions and medals. It is one of the cornerstones of state social policy, a tool for developing international relations and a platform for public diplomacy.

Negotiations with the Chairperson of the African Union A.Assoumani on the sidelines of the World Climate Action Summit UAE. December 1, 2023





continental ones. We consistently implement state support programs for sports. The sports reserve is being successfully trained, and children's and mass sports are actively developing. New and promising young talents are emerging.

If we talk about my personal attitude to sports, it has always occupied and continues to occupy an important place in my life. Physical activity is not just a hobby, it is a lifestyle that I promote and follow myself. Whenever possible, of course, but I try to go out on the ice at least twice a week and train. I wish our young people would devote themselves to their chosen cause, strive to be strong and successful.

In the conclusion of the conversation, here is a question. During the Soviet years, many teenagers, inspired by the famous Pavel Kadochnikov film, dreamed of accomplishing a "scout's exploit." You are personally familiar with representatives of the Russian leadership, who in their youth made just such a choice and joined the intelligence service. Have you ever had

similar thoughts, has the experience of serving in the border troops been useful, and what advice can you give to the youth audience of our magazine in choosing a life path?

Like all Soviet guys, I considered and consider the protection of the Motherland to be the duty of a real man. I often say, what kind of man are you if you haven't served. It was an honor to serve in my youth. The soldier at that time aroused everyone's sincere respect. Today, we have regained the prestige of military service that was almost lost in the 1990s. The guys are now striving to serve. Just like we used to be.

Military service has hardened my character. I always remember it with warmth. I am grateful to the commanders who taught me a lot. I often think that if I hadn't joined the border guard, I wouldn't be who I am today. As the only son of my mother and a teacher by education, I was not subject to conscription in those years. But I decided to serve. I was partly inspired by the example of my cousins and chose the border guard.

Opening match of the XIII Christmas International Amateur Ice Hockey Tournament for the Prize of the President of Belarus. January 4, 2017



Of course, I was eager to go where it was difficult. I wanted to test the limits of my abilities, prove myself, and benefit the Motherland. Our generation was raised that way. I was assigned to the Brest Border Guard Detachment, the best in the Soviet Union. And it was necessary to meet this status around the clock. They trained us powerfully. The situation at the border is always tense and requires constant combat readiness. And in such conditions, only physically strong, morally stable and responsible people can serve. I rose to the rank of instructor in the political department of the military unit of the Western Border District. I enjoyed working with the staff.

After working in Komsomol bodies and as a lecturer in the Znanie society, I decided to continue my service as an officer in the 120th Rogachev Division named after the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR. The position of deputy company commander required the ability to set up soldiers to master military affairs, to cultivate in everyone the character of a warrior, a true defender. Solving complex problems with the available forces developed the ability to see people, calculate their capabilities, and suggest where and in what each has a hidden reserve.

I am proud to have participated in the Zapad-1981 exercises. They were serious exercises. When the NATO troops observed them, they realized that we weren't kidding around. Through military service, I learned a simple truth: a self-respecting independent country cannot exist and develop without a well-equipped and professionally organized army. Today, this experience helps me, as Commander-in-Chief, to effectively build and strengthen the country's national security system.

In this regard, from the pages of the publication, I would like to address those who will determine the future of Belarus and Russia — our youth. Always remember your Homeland. Appreciate and cherish its peaceful sky. This is the most precious thing that we, the older generation, were able to save for you. It is very important that you are not only good specialists, but also true patriots, socially mature and spiritually rich people. Wherever you are, whatever peaks you conquer, keep in touch with



your origins. The Union State needs your abilities, energy and aspirations in all areas without exception.

Working meeting. Minsk. Palace of Independence. April 15, 2025

Through the centuries, preserve the fraternal unity that has always made Belarusians and Russians truly native peoples. Vladimir Vladimirovich [Putin] and I often say that the union of Belarus and Russia has been tested by time. But today I will say more — it has been tested by life itself. And as long as we remain faithful to our common ideals and continue to build a common future together, no one can break us. This is the enduring strength of the Union State, the guarantee of our invincibility. ♣

Interviewed by Mikhail Pogudin

“ Always remember your Homeland. Appreciate and cherish its peaceful sky. This is the most precious thing that we, the older generation, were able to save for you. It is very important that you are not only good specialists, but also true patriots, socially mature and spiritually rich people.



# Dear readers!



2025 is the year that marks a lot of memorable anniversary dates in the history of Vietnam and Russia. In January, our countries celebrated the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and in May we commemorated the 80th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War. In June, Russia Day celebrations were held all across Russia and in Vietnam, including Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The defeat of fascism put an end to the colonial rule, strengthened belief in the victory of good over evil and in the triumph of freedom and justice. For our people, it became a powerful impetus to continue the fight for independence, inspiring the success of the August Revolution, which resulted in the formation of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (nowadays the Socialist Republic of Vietnam). On September 2, we celebrated the 80th anniversary of this significant event.

An important milestone in the formation of the state was the creation of the National Public Se-

curity Forces. The organizations that served as their basis made a great contribution to the victory over the counter-revolution, the protection of the Communist Party of Vietnam, ensuring the security of the socialist order, the preservation of lives and property of the people. For these merits, by the decision of the party and the state, August 19 was declared the Day of the People's Public Security Forces of Vietnam.

Throughout the 80 years, the People's Public Security Forces have been continuously developing, successfully solving the tasks set before them, first of all in the field of fight against espionage and crime, as well as in the field of law enforcement, honourably serving for the benefit of the state and the people of Vietnam. The Intelligence Service of the People's Public Security makes a significant contribution to the common cause. This structure is a reliable and effective tool of the Communist Party and the state, capable of carrying out any tasks. Its employees have accomplished a lot of feats, inscribed in golden letters on the pages of the history of our country. On February 21, 2026, the Intelligence Forces of the People's Public Security will celebrate the 80th anniversary of their founding.

Vietnam and Russia have been maintaining special ties for over a hundred years. In the 1920s, at the dawn of the Vietnamese revolutionary movement, the achievements of the October Revolution in the Soviet Russia served as the beacon that lighted up the path to the liberation of our country. The leader of the Vietnamese people, President Ho Chi Minh, in his youth studied in the USSR, where he absorbed the Marxist-Leninist doctrine, which subsequently allowed him to create the ideological basis for the establishment of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1930.

In the fall and winter of 1941-1942, hardest for Russia, our citizens participated in the battle for Moscow, which became the starting point on the way to defeating fascism. Nowadays, the names of Vietnamese members of OMSBON division are known: Ly Nam Thanh, Ly Thuc Chat, Ly Anh

Tao, Ly Phy San. They were sent to the USSR for training, but when the war came, they voluntarily joined the ranks of the Red Army to fight against the evil and protect the world peace.

On January 30, 1950, the USSR recognized the independence of Vietnam, established diplomatic relations, supported our people spiritually, and provided great assistance to the army by sending Soviet weapons and specialists. This help was extremely timely, contributing to the victory over the invaders. We have a saying: "When you eat fruits, remember the one who planted the tree". Vietnamese will never forget what the Soviet people did for them, and they value relations with Russia, the successor of the USSR, very much.

Such symbols of Vietnamese-Russian friendship as Hoa Binh Dam, Vietsovpetro Joint Venture, Thang Long Bridge, the Joint Vietnam-Russia Tropical Research Center, continue to make a significant contribution to the development of our economy. Today, thanks to the support of our friends, among whom, without a doubt, is Russia, Vietnam has transformed into a vibrant and dynamically developing state, standing on the threshold of a new historical path and ready to move to a new era, setting long-term ambitious goals for itself.

We can say that the relations of Vietnam and Russia have stood the test of time, which clearly demonstrates the strength of friendship between our peoples. With each passing day, they continue to strengthen, developing in all directions: from politics, economics, defense and security to science, medicine, and modern technologies.

In recent years, the intensity of delegation exchanges at different levels, including the highest, has only been increasing. Notably, the state visit to Vietnam by the President of Russia, V. Putin, in June 2024, gave a new impetus to bilateral cooperation. In May of this year, on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Vietnam, To Lam, along with his wife and a delegation of his deputies, arrived in Russia on an official visit. These events are of exceptional importance, demonstrating that Vietnam steadily

remains a steadfast friend of Russia and a responsible member of the international community, making a significant contribution to preservation of peace and stability.

In relation to cooperation between the special services, I would like to emphasize that the Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam has long maintained close partnerships with all relevant structures of the Russian Federation, including the Foreign Intelligence Service. There are regular contacts at the level of both experts and the managements of departments. The working visit to Moscow by the Ministry's delegation, headed by me, last May, contributed to building up effective interaction between the intelligence, executive, legal and law enforcement bodies of our countries in the context of developing comprehensive strategic partnership relations between Vietnam and Russia in the new geopolitical realities.

The most important element of this partnership is cooperation in personnel training, which not only helps to perfect the skills and improve the qualification of our Ministry's staff, allowing them to solve more effectively the tasks they face, but also underlines the fact that traditionally friendly relations between the peoples of Vietnam and Russia have remained strong for many generations. In this context, I would like to highlight the long-standing assistance provided to the Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam by the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation.

In the rapidly changing situation in the world, our states should continue to increase comprehensive cooperation, interact more actively on international and regional platforms, develop pluralism, promote adherence to the UN Charter and other norms of international law, contribute to the formation of a sustainable and just multipolar order in which Russia is one of the major poles. I am sure that our strong and reliable partnership will continue to develop, and cooperation in the field of intelligence will play a significant role in protecting the interests of our peoples and the security of our states. 🇻🇳

Luong Tam Quang, Minister of Public Security  
of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

# 2

July  
1910

Morris Cohen, a Soviet deep-cover intelligence officer, a veteran of the anti-fascist International Brigades in Republican Spain and participant in the Great Patriotic War, was born in New York to a family of Russian immigrants. In the USA, he worked with William Fisher (Rudolf Abel), and in the UK, he was an assistant to the chief of illegal station Konon Molody. For his special merits in securing the Soviet atomic project, Morris Cohen and his wife and partner Leontina Cohen were awarded the title of Hero of Russia.



# 17

July  
1945

The conference of the heads of government of the USSR, USA and Great Britain began its work in Potsdam, where the issues of demilitarization, democratization and denazification of Germany, conclusion of peace treaties with its former satellites, payment of reparations were discussed, and the foundations of the post-war world order in Europe were laid. In connection with the preparation for the conference, foreign intelligence was given a number of tasks, which it successfully solved. Intelligence, in particular, promptly informed the Soviet leadership about the positions of the USA and Great Britain on the whole range of problems discussed, about the existing contradictions on some of them between the British and Americans; it reported on which issues and to what extent the allies were ready to compromise, which strengthened Moscow's negotiating positions.

# 21

July  
1900

Leonid Leonidovich Linitsky, a prominent representative of the first generation of Soviet intelligence officers, was born in the town of Akhtyrka in the Kharkov region. In the mid-1930s, he headed the illegal residency of the INO in Belgrade and successfully worked on anti-Soviet emigration. In 1944–1945, he carried out important assignments at the headquarters of the partisan army of Yugoslavia led by Marshal Tito. After the Victory, until his sudden death in 1954, he was in an illegal position in Asian countries.



# 4

August  
1920

Ivan Ivanovich Zaitsev, a Soviet intelligence officer, was born in Kashira near Moscow. In 1941 he graduated from the Moscow Institute of Geodesy Engineers and was drafted into the army at the beginning of the war. He celebrated the Great Victory in Berlin as the chief of intelligence of the 79th Guards Rifle Division. In 1948, after graduating from the Frunze Military Academy, he was accepted into intelligence service. He went abroad more than once on long missions, including to leadership positions, and served as chief of station in Israel and Germany. From 1973 to 1986, he was the head of the Red Banner Institute of the KGB of the USSR (now the Yuri Andropov Foreign Intelligence Academy). He was awarded the Order of the October Revolution, four Orders of the Red Banner, two Orders of the Patriotic War 1st class, many medals, and the "Honorary Employee of State Security" badge.

# 14

August  
1905

Aleksander Semenovitch Panyushkin, a prominent Soviet diplomat and career intelligence officer, major general, was born in Samara. From 1939 to 1944, he successfully combined the duties of the Permanent Representative (Ambassador) of the USSR and the chief resident of foreign intelligence in China, and in 1947–1952 — in the USA. From 1953 to 1955, he headed Soviet foreign intelligence, then for almost 20 years he held responsible posts in the apparatus of the Central Committee of the CPSU. He was awarded the Order of Lenin, the Order of the October Revolution, two Orders of the Red Banner, the Order of the Red Star, and many medals.



# 1

September  
1950

Mikhail Yefimovich Fradkov, a politician, was born in the village of Kurumoch in the Kuibyshev region. From 1975 to 1991, he worked in the USSR State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations. Since 1992 — Deputy Minister, since 1997 — Minister of Economic Relations and Trade of the Russian Federation. In 2001–2003 — Head of the Federal Tax Police Service, in 2003–2004 — Russia's Plenipotentiary Representative to the EU. In 2004–2007 — Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation. From 2007 to 2016 he headed the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation. From January 2017 to the present — Director of the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies. He was awarded the Order of St. George, 4th degree, the Order of Alexander Nevsky, the Order of Courage, the Order of Honor, and the Order for Military Merit. Full Cavalier of the Order for Merit to the Fatherland.



# 2

September  
1945

The Japanese Instrument of Surrender, marking the end of World War II, took place in Tokyo Bay aboard the USS Missouri. Tokyo surrendered less than a month after the Soviet Union, fulfilling its allied obligations, declared war on Japan on August 9, 1945 and defeated the largest Japanese land force in Manchuria in just three weeks. Soviet foreign intelligence played a major role in preparing combat operations in the Far Eastern theatre of war.

# 2

September  
2020

A solemn ceremony was held at the headquarters of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation in Yasenevo to unveil the monument "Fatherland. Valor. Honor", commemorating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of domestic foreign intelligence service. According to the concept of the author, People's Artist of Russia Andrei Kovalchuk, the monument features a central sculpture of a married couple of young intelligence officers taking their first steps into intelligence. They are depicted passing through an arch decorated with bronze bas-reliefs which portray distinguished intelligence officers of different eras who made invaluable contributions to guaranteeing the security and national interests of our country.



# 19

September  
1925

Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov, head of illegal intelligence, major general, was born in Minsk. A war veteran, he joined the First Main Directorate of the KGB of the USSR in 1956 after graduating from the Military Institute of Foreign Languages. Over 35 years of service, he rose from an operative to the head of Directorate "S", and served as chief of station in the USA and China. Participant in the Afghan War, he initiated the creation of the special forces unit "Vypel". From 1979 to 1991, he headed the unit training illegal intelligence officers. After retirement, he made a great contribution to the work of the veterans' organization. He is the author of a number of popular books about intelligence. He was awarded the Order of the October Revolution, the Order of the Red Banner, the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, the Order of the Patriotic War of the 1st degree, the Order of the Red Star, and the badges "Honorary State Security Officer" and "For Service in Intelligence".

# 23

September  
1900

Rudolf Iogannovich Abel was born in Riga. In 1917–25, he served in the navy, having volunteered as a radio operator. In 1927 he was sent on illegal work for the foreign intelligence. In that period, Abel's best friend was his colleague William Genrikhovich Fisher; during the Great Patriotic War, they together trained radio operators for reconnaissance groups to be dispatched behind the frontline. Lieutenant colonel R.I. Abel, who was awarded three combat orders for his service in foreign intelligence, resigned in 1946 for health reasons and died in 1955. Knowing this, our deep-cover agent V.G. Fisher, being arrested in 1957 in New York, intentionally introduced himself by his late friend's name. By doing so, he notified Moscow of what had happened and entered the history of special services exactly under the name of "Rudolf Abel".





# Meeting with Cuban friends

On June 30, 2025, Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia Sergei Yevgenyevich Naryshkin arrived on a visit to the Republic of Cuba, where negotiations were held with the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party, President of the Republic Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermúdez. The meeting was attended by the Cuban Minister of Interior, Colonel General Lázaro Alberto Álvarez Casas and other high-ranking representatives of the Cuban security structures.



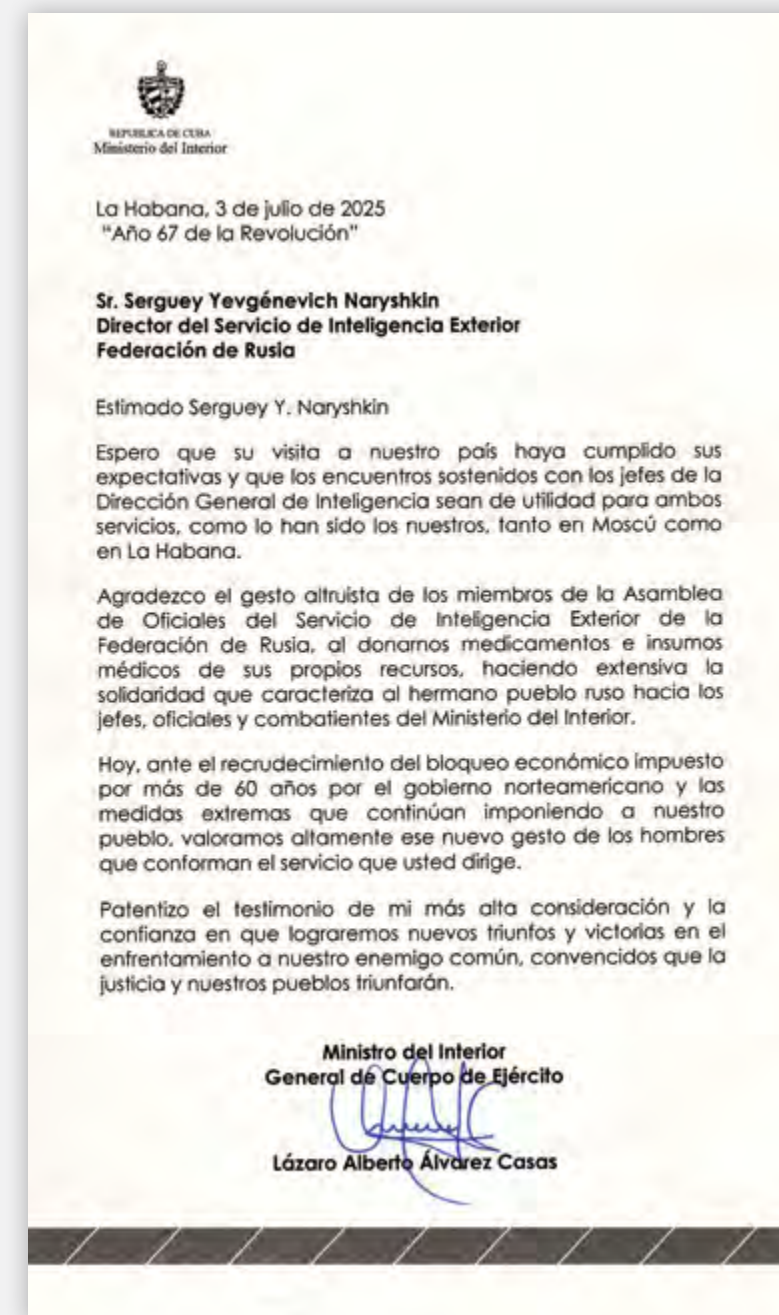
Letter of gratitude of the head of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Cuba L.A. Álvarez Casas addressed to S.Ye. Naryshkin.  
July 3, 2025

The communication was warm and friendly and usefully complemented the professional dialogue between the two countries. The meeting demonstrated the high level of cooperation between Russia and Cuba. In this year these two countries celebrate the 65th anniversary of the restoration of diplomatic relations. As Miguel Diaz-Canel Bermúdez stated, *"bilateral relations have survived different times over the years and are now entering a new stage,"* which is very important, especially against the backdrop of growing tensions with the United States and new sanctions announced by Washington against Havana. The President of the Republic also stressed that the visit of the Director of the Service is taking place *"at a time of great political significance for both countries"*, expressing gratitude to Russia for its unconditional support in the fight of the Cuban people against the blockade and for removing Cuba from the list of states that support terrorism.

In conclusion of the meeting, the Cuban leader conveyed to the Russian delegation the welcoming words of Army General Raul Castro, as well as a message for Russian President Vladimir Putin.

It should be mentioned that this is not the first time that S.Ye. Naryshkin visited Cuba as the head of Russian intelligence. In December 2018, he was received by Diaz-Canel Bermúdez and Raul Castro. The previous visit took place shortly after Russia provided Havana with a \$50 million loan to purchase weapons. During that visit they also discussed issues related to cooperation in the field of intelligence and security.

After the latest visit, the Cuban Minister of Interior L.A. Álvarez Casas sent a letter of gratitude to the Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, in which he emphasized the importance of the selfless act of the members



of the Service's Officers' Assembly in handing over medicines purchased with personal funds to employees of the Cuban Ministry of Interior. *"During the period of the aggravation of the economic blockade by the United States, which has been in place for more than 60 years, and the extremely harsh measures that are applied to the Cuban people, we highly appreciate the support of the officers of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service,"* the letter says. ▀





## Dedicated to the memory of Yu. V. Andropov...

On September 4, 2025, the opening ceremony of the monument to the outstanding Soviet statesman Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov took place at the Academy of Foreign Intelligence (AVR), which is named after him. The event was attended by the Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, Sergei Yevgenyevich Naryshkin, the Assistant to the President of the Russian Federation, Chairman of the Russian Military Historical Society (RVIO), Vladimir Rostislavovich Medinsky, along with representatives of the leadership and veterans of the SVR of Russia, as well as teachers and students of the AVR.

Addressing the audience, S.Ye. Naryshkin noted the unique character of Andropov's personality, who held the position of the Head of the KGB of the USSR for an unprecedented 15 years! The Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service recalled that throughout this time, Yuri Vladimirovich had been paying increased attention to foreign intelligence and its "forge of personnel", which was the Red Banner Institute

at that time. Yu.V. Andropov made a huge contribution to strengthening security agencies and increasing their authority not only inside the country, but also abroad. *"The monument, which was opened at the Academy of Foreign Intelligence, perfectly conveys the historical scale of the personality of Andropov, being a visible reflection of a great epoch and a great country"*, S.Ye. Naryshkin emphasized.

In his welcoming speech, V.R. Medinsky expressed gratitude to the SVR of Russia and its leadership for their active efforts in preserving historical memory. *"This important work is being carried out, among other things, by perpetuating the names of such outstanding statesmen as Yu. V. Andropov — 'the first Chekist to lead our state'"*, said the Head of the RVIO. It should be noted that it was the RVIO, at the suggestion of the leadership of

the SVR of Russia, that organized the creative competition for the best design of a monument to Yu.V. Andropov, which was won by the work of the famous muralist D.A. Stritovich.

*"In my opinion, the author managed to accurately portray Andropov as a strong leader, combining inner conviction and determination with statesmanship and personal modesty. The artist not only achieved an amazing external resemblance, but also put a piece of his soul into the work"*, said the director of the Service. Answering questions from journalists, Sergei Naryshkin emphasized: *"At all stages of his life, Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov demonstrated determination, loyalty to duty, integrity and personal modesty. Most importantly, he had a strong sense of patriotism and love for the Motherland, always putting state interests over personal ones"*.

According to the Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, the Academy of Foreign Intelligence is a fitting tribute to the name of Yu.V. Andropov. He expressed his optimism for the future, stating that the *"young intelligence officers, who are current students of the Academy, possess the most important qualities for both professional and personal success:*

*love for the Motherland, a sense of duty and a desire to serve worthily for the good of the Fatherland"*.

Monuments to Andropov have been erected in various regions of Russia

with an avenue in the center of Moscow named after him. His name is also inscribed on a Memorial plaque and in the History Hall of the Foreign Intelligence Service — a badge of the highest honor in the SVR of Russia. 🚩

“ We are on the frontlines, where there is no truce and respite, where the struggle is very intense... Being an intelligence officer means, first of all, wholeheartedly believing in the justice of our cause, being a fighter, and cultivating qualities necessary for this.

Yu.V.Andropov.



### Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov

Born on June 2 (15), 1914 in the village of Nagutskaya, Stavropol province, in the family of a railroad worker. He lost his father at a young age. In 1932, he entered the Rybinsk Water Transport Technical School, after which he worked on the Komsomol line, including in the newly formed Karelo-Finnish Soviet Socialist Republic. During the war, he participated in the formation of youth underground and partisan detachments. In 1947, he was elected Deputy member of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR from Karelia, in 1951 he was transferred to the staff of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (CPSU), then to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the USSR. From 1954 to 1957, he was the USSR Ambassador to Hungary. Upon his return to

Moscow, he headed the Central Committee's Department for Relations with Communist Parties of Socialist Countries, and in 1962 he was elected Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU. From 1967 to 1982, he served as the Chairman of the KGB of the USSR. In 1974, he was awarded the title of Hero of Socialist Labor, and in 1976 he was awarded the rank of Army General. In November 1982, he was elected General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU, holding this position until his death on February 9, 1984. He was buried at the Kremlin Wall Necropolis.



# Russia and the world in 2025–2040

## International conflicts and waves of changes

Text: Vladimir Igorevich Pantin, Doctor of Philosophy,  
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**2025 marks the 80th anniversary of the UN establishment and the Yalta-Potsdam system of international relations, which ensured a peaceful existence in Europe for many years. However, recently the world order has been undergoing changes, accompanied by conflicts and upheavals in different parts of the world. Comparative analysis shows that these processes are natural, and the peak of instability is yet to come.**

The first quarter of the 21st century has been rich in various kinds of economic and political troubles, destructive upheavals and clashes. Among them are the global financial crisis, the Arab Spring, armed conflicts in Libya, Iraq, Syria, the coup d'état in Ukraine, the corona crisis, the rise in hostility between the US and China, India and Pakistan, Cambodia and

Thailand, Israel's military operations against Palestine, Lebanon and Iran. The list will surely grow, but what has been named is enough to make you think about the true, underlying reasons for what is happening.

Questions arise: are these numerous upheavals accidental or are they caused by technological, economic,

and political shifts that affect the entire international system, prompting it to transform? And most importantly, what awaits our country in the coming decades and how should we act in the current situation?

Studying the main patterns of international progress over a significant period of history allows us to answer these questions. These patterns include wave-like economic and political transformations that are described by the so-called Kondratiev cycles, or K-cycles, named after the outstanding Russian economist and sociologist Nikolay Dmitriyevich Kondratiev, who developed this concept in the 1920s. The main idea of these cycles is that they allow us to predict

**The alternating upswings and downswings in Kondratiev cycles are not a coincidence, but rather caused by periodic technological, economic and political shifts in the world.**

Table 1. Chronology of the K-cycles' upswing and downswing waves

Cycle	Upswing Wave	Downswing Wave
1	Late 1780s – 1810–1817	1810–1817 – late 1840s
2	Late 1840s – early 1870s	Early 1870s – mid 1890s
3	Mid 1890s – 1914–1921	1914–1921 – mid-1940s
4	Mid 1940s – late 1960s	Late 1960s – early 1980s
5	Early 1980s – early 2000s	Early 2000s – early 2020s
6	Early 2020s – early 2040s	Early 2040s

geopolitical changes and upheavals that are expected in the world from 2025 to 2040.

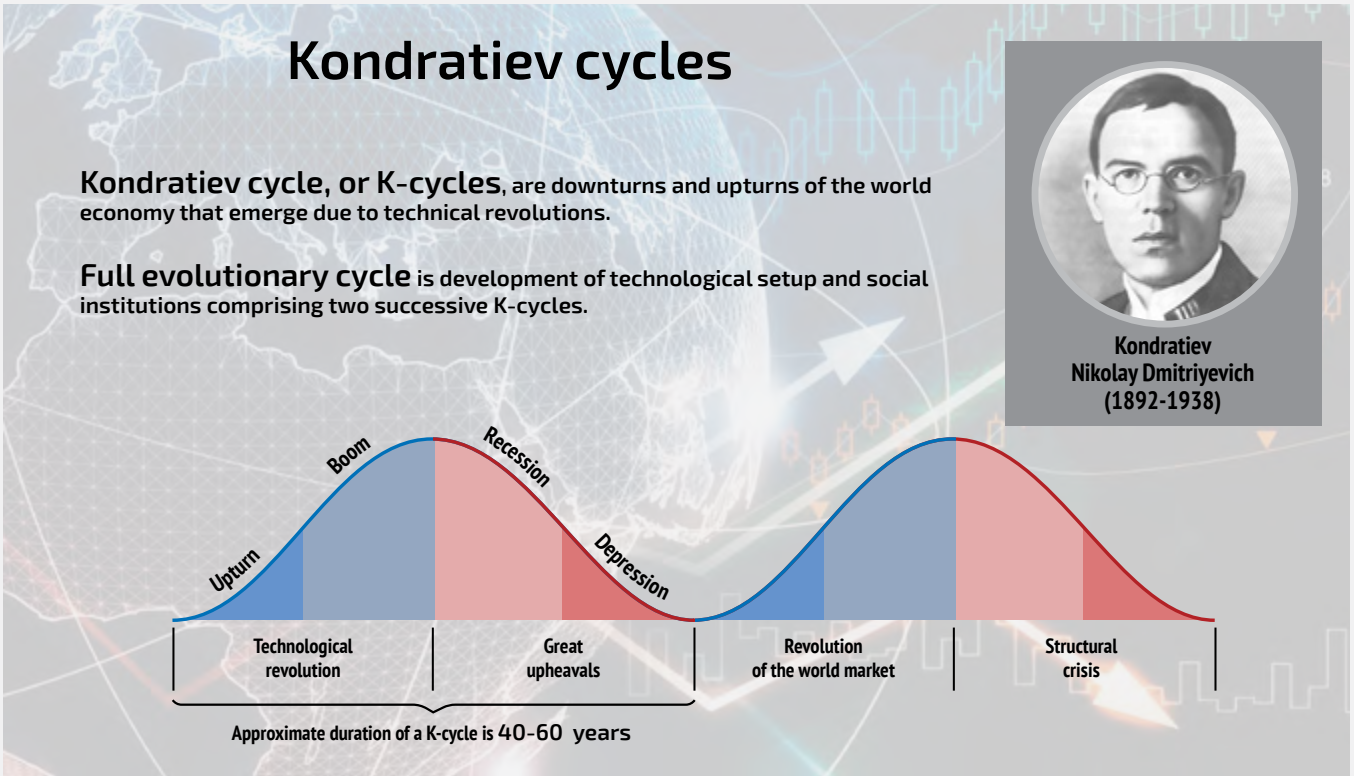
Each K-cycle, ranging from forty-five to sixty years in length, consists of an upswing wave, during which the world market economy develops dynamically and overcomes shocks relatively easily, and a subsequent downswing wave characterized by

economic instability, crises, and depression. Their chronology is depicted in [Table 1](#).

It is important to note that the alternating upswings and downswings in Kondratiev cycles are not a coincidence, but rather caused by periodic technological, economic and political shifts in the world. During the downswing waves, future tech-

nological and political processes mature, creating prerequisites for new technologies and institutions to emerge. These, in turn, act as drivers of economic growth, social development, and geopolitical changes during the upswing waves. However, the ability of emerging technologies and institutions to serve as incentives for economic and political progress is not unlimited: it is exhausted by the end of each successive upswing wave (average duration is 25 years). Then comes a downswing wave again, during which new technologies and institutions arise, serving as driving forces for progress in the next K-cycle.

How are Kondratiev cycles related to changes in the international system and world order? In this case, the transformation of world order is seen as radical shifts in the power balance and the distribution of influence between the most powerful and influential states or their alliances, leading





Kondratiev's observations laid the foundation for the evolution theory of the international system developed at IMEMO RAS, which postulates that the complete development cycle of the world political and economic system comprises two K-cycles.

to the transition of the international system to a qualitatively new state with a different hierarchy of power centers and a system of relations between key states. It is during the upswing waves that these shifts occur, and during the next downswing wave, the world order that has emerged gradually deteriorates and comes to a new crisis.

This is how the Holy Alliance and the Vienna system emerged at the end of

the upswing wave of the 1st K-cycle (1814–1815). The hegemony of the British Empire and the Paris world system, which signified the disintegration of the Holy Alliance, were established after the Crimean War (1856) during the upswing wave of the 2nd K-cycle. The Versailles — Washington system emerged after the First World War at the end of the upswing wave of the 3rd cycle (1919–1922). The Yalta-Potsdam system emerged at the beginning of the upswing wave of the

4th cycle (1945–1953). The unipolar world and the “Washington Consensus” were consolidated during the upswing wave of the 5th K-cycle (1990s). Finally, the polycentric world order, the prototype of which was the G20 and the BRICS+ association, began to take shape in 2010s — 2020s, at the beginning of the upswing wave of the 6th K-cycle.

As can be seen, a new world order and its international relations system are formed during the K-cycle upswings, when radical technological, economic and political transformations occur, destroying the previous power balance: some powers break ahead, others lag behind or suffer military defeat. During downswing waves, while new technological and political shifts mature, the world order as a whole is preserved until the onset of the next cycle.

Kondratiev's observations laid the foundation for the evolution theory of the international system developed at IMEMO RAS, which postulates that the complete development cycle of the world political and economic system comprises two K-cycles, or four phases, corresponding to two upswing and two downswing waves within successive Kondratiev cycles. Moreover, the downswing waves' duration is gradually reduced due to the more rapid introduction of new technologies and the acceleration of the general socio-political development (see Table 2).

The first phase — technological revolution — corresponds to the upswing wave of the K-cycle. During this period, a limited spread of new technologies happens in mostly developed countries. The second phase — great upheavals in the world economy and

Table 2. Chronology of phases of complete cycles in the world system development

Complete cycles	Phase of a complete development cycle	Approximate dating (years)	Approximate number of years
I	1. Technological revolution	1789–1813	24
	2. Great upheavals	1813–1849	36
	3. Revolution of the world market	1849–1873	24
	4. Structural crisis	1873–1897	24
II	1. Technological revolution	1897–1921	24
	2. Great upheavals	1921–1945	24
	3. Revolution of the world market	1945–1969	24
	4. Structural crisis	1969–1981	12
III	1. Technological revolution	1981–2005	24
	2. Great upheavals	2005–2017	12
	3. Revolution of the world market	2017–2041	24
	4. Structural crisis	2041–?	?

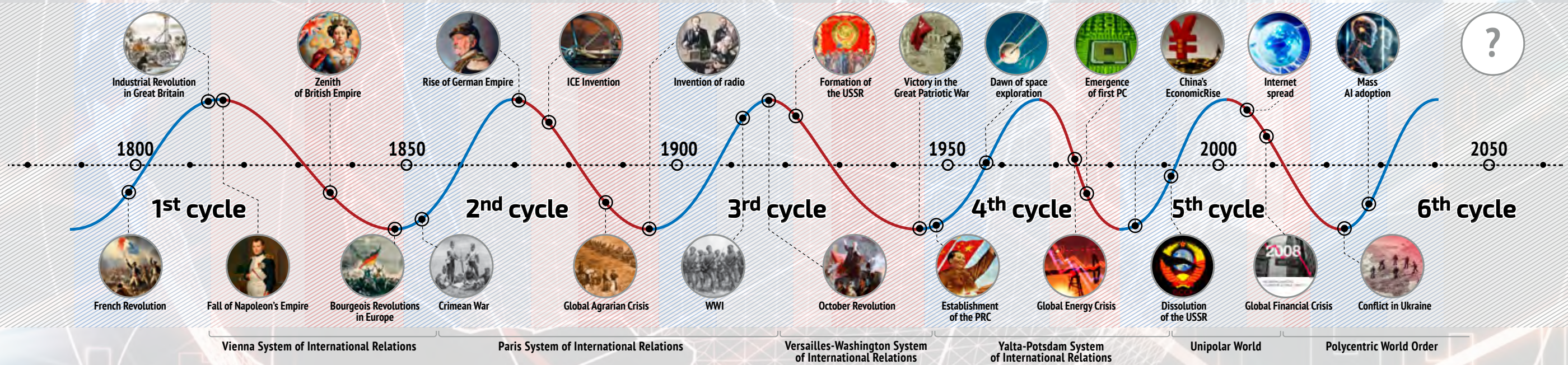
politics — coincides with the downswing wave of the same cycle. It is caused by the narrowness of markets, the dominance of old institutions and spheres of influence, and

the impossibility of wide dissemination of new technologies. The third phase — revolution of the world market — corresponds to the upswing wave of the next cycle, when

Approximate chronology of the K-waves

Technological, economic and political shifts take place at the boundaries of upswings and downswings, significantly impacting the international relations (IR) system.

Since early 2020s, an upswing wave of the 6th K-cycle has been in progress, to be replaced by a downswing wave in 2040s.





This theory has made it possible to accurately enough predict the global financial crisis of 2008–2009, as well as the surge in international tensions in 2013–2017 and in 2021–2025.

fundamental geopolitical and geo-economic shifts and a transition to a new world order occur in the international system, creating conditions for the widespread development and implementation of new technologies. Finally, the fourth phase — Structural crisis — correlates with the down-swing wave of the second K-cycle. Its onset is associated with the exhaustion of the capabilities of existing technologies and institutions as driving forces for economic and political development.

This theory has made it possible to accurately enough predict the global financial crisis of 2008–2009, as well as the surge in international tensions in 2013–2017 and in 2021–2025. It is important to note that complete K-cycles have helped to establish a link

between the stages of the technological revolution and the transformations in the global system. (see Table 3)

The different duration of the systems is explained by the fact that in the technological revolution phase, geopolitical shifts affect a relatively small number of states and the emerging world order is not stable. This was the case during the period of the Holy Alliance of European monarchies and the Vienna system: Austria, supported by Great Britain, which was striving for dominance in Europe, and by France, which had suffered defeat, immediately began to intrigue against the dominance of Russia, which had defeated Napoleon.

Even less stable was the Versailles-Washington system that emerged

after the First World War and did not satisfy either Germany, which was forced to pay huge reparations, or the USSR, which had fallen out of the ranks of leading powers, or the USA, whose claims to global dominance were hampered by the British Empire. The unipolar world that emerged in the 1990s turned out to be just as short-lived, collapsing at the end of the 2010s.

In turn, the world order that takes shape in the phase of the world market revolution is, as a rule, more stable and long-term, since technological, economic and geopolitical shifts affect most states. During this period, new technologies and forms of political structure get widely spread, due to which the emerging system of international relations relies on the powerful support of many countries and their associations.

Thus, we can confidently assert that the global changes in the direction of polycentrism and multi-civilization that began in the 2020s are a natural and inevitable process. And since this period coincides with the phase of the world market revolution, we should expect a radical re-formatting of the entire world system and the emergence of a new, more stable world order by the turn of the 2030s–2040s.

At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that during each revolution of the world market, the international system development passed through numerous critical turning points. During the first complete cycle, these were the years 1853–1854, when the Crimean War began, and 1857–1858, when, after the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, which was unfavorable for Russia, we were forced to move on to reforms, and France and the Kingdom of Sardinia began to prepare a war against Austria.

In the second complete cycle, turning points were 1949–1950, with the PRC formation, escalating US-USSR tensions, and the Korean War, and 1953–1954, with heightened Moscow-Washington contradictions and the world on the brink of nuclear war.

The current phase of international system development also has its own turning points, critical points. The 2021–2022 situation, when, as a result of the destructive policy of the US and the EU, which actively pumped Ukraine with weapons and dragged it into NATO, the special military operation began, became an analogue of the events of 1853–1854 and 1949–1950.

From the comparative analysis of the phases of the world market revolution and the general logic of a new world order formation, it follows that the next critical points will be 2025–2026, 2029–2030, and 2033–2034, when the process of large-scale structural reforms will intensify, accompanied by an exacerbation of international and internal conflicts.

Let us emphasize that the 2025–2026 turning point had been predicted long before it happened due to a critical mass of global economic and political problems and disagreements. It's driven not only by Donald Trump's White House administration and the reforms it has launched, but also by general global destabilization and escalating internal contradictions in the US, EU countries, and a number of other states.

One shouldn't assume that the military-political confrontation between Russia and the West would end after 2025–2026. Only a change in its form, as well as the methods of economic and technological rivalry between the US and China, is expected. At the same time, the risks of a new world war and the threat of nuclear weapon

use in 2025–2026 may reach their maximum level, as it was in 1953. Let us recall that at that time, the USA and the USSR created the hydrogen bomb of immense destructive power, and both powers found themselves on the brink of a thermonuclear conflict.

It is extremely important for Russia to pass this turning point and the subsequent ones (2029–2030 and 2033–2034) without serious internal upheavals. We must be prepared for increased sanctions, information-psychological and diplomatic pressure from the United States and other Western countries. Provocations in the Baltic and Black Seas are also possible. The response to external challenges and threats should be a consistent sovereign policy, increased comprehensive cooperation with friendly countries within the EEU, SCO, BRICS+, and accelerated internal transformations. This will require consolidation of society, improved public administration efficiency, financial policy adjustment, and banking sector reforms.

It can also be predicted that as a result of the change in the power balance and the gradual loss of monopoly control over international institutions by the United States, the principles of their work will be revised. Most likely, in the second half of the 2020s and early 2030s, parallel functioning of the "old" structures, where the Western influence will remain, and new alternative associations linked to the development of the SCO, BRICS and

other economic and political institutions will be observed. After 2033, reforms are expected in the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and certain UN structures to align them eventually with the changed realities.

It is also obvious that shocks in 2025–2040 are unavoidable under any scenario. The crucial question, however, is whether they will be regional or global.

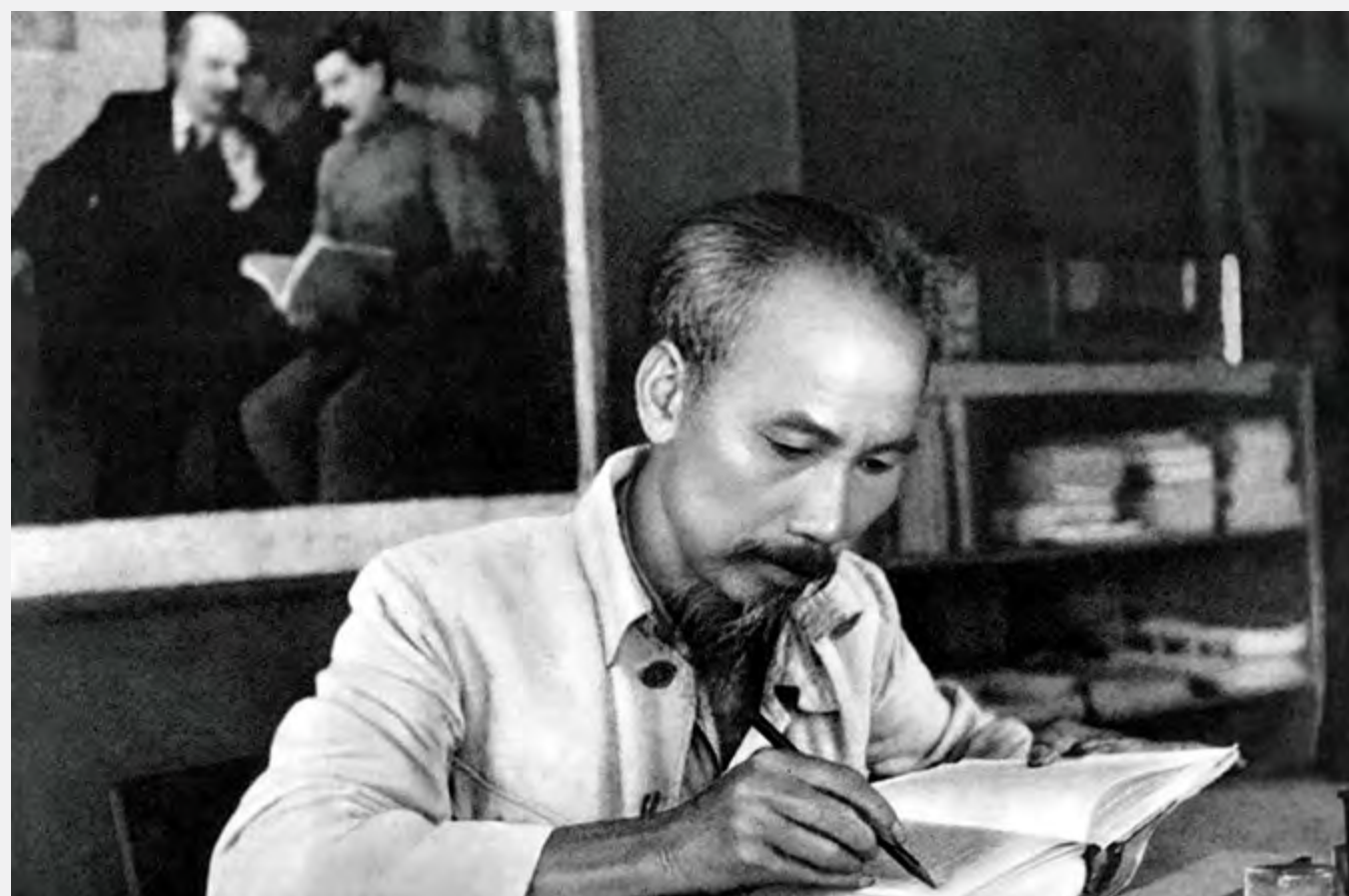
Limited crises and conflicts not only destroy the previous world order, but also serve as an incentive for reforms, since without such local upheavals, the world system will move by inertia. Ultimately, when the accumulated unresolved problems, disproportions and imbalances reach a critical mass, a global catastrophe may occur. Paradoxically, only successively emerging internal, regional and international conflicts can provide impetus for the necessary transformations.

In this sense, the upcoming upheavals in 2025–2040 can even be called constructive, since they will facilitate the implementation of long-overdue reforms in most countries of the world, including the United States, China, Russia, and EU member states. The most important task of the Russian leadership and our allies in the EEU, SCO, and BRICS+ will be to prevent regional conflicts from getting out of control and becoming global in scope. 🚩

Table 3. International relations systems

Cycle	Phase of a complete development cycle	The system of international relations	Dating of the system (years)	Estimated duration (years)
I	Technological revolution	Vienna System (Holy Alliance)	1814–1853	39
I	Revolution of the world market	Paris world system	1856–1914	58
II	Technological revolution	Versailles-Washington system	1919–1939	20
II	Revolution of the world market	Yalta-Potsdam system	1945–1991	46
III	Technological revolution	Unipolar system	1991–2017	26
III	Revolution of the world market	Polycentric system	2017–	More than 40 (forecast)

It can be predicted that as a result of the change in the power balance and the gradual loss of monopoly control over international institutions by the United States, the principles of their work will be revised.



## Russia — Vietnam

# Three Anniversaries of the Common Victory

Text: Andrey Leonidovich Vassoevich,  
Director of the Institute of Oriental Studies of the Russian State Pedagogical University  
named after A.I.Hertzen, Doctor of Philosophy, Candidate of Historical Sciences, Professor

**This year is remarkable for Russia and Vietnam: it is a three-time anniversary. Each of these anniversaries is equally significant for us and for the Vietnamese. This is due to the fact that in the 20th century the fates of our peoples were inextricably intertwined. But if at the beginning of the historical path for the young Vietnamese republic the experience of Soviet Russia was extremely important, today we can and must learn from the Vietnamese the great science of defeating dangerous geopolitical opponents.**

**Firstly: 80th anniversary of the proclamation of Vietnamese independence.**

On September 2, 2025, Vietnam celebrated the 80th anniversary of the important historical event when Ho Chi Minh, still beloved by the Vietnamese and nicknamed, family-style, Uncle Ho, read out the Declaration of Independence, proclaiming the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (since 1976 — the Socialist Republic of Vietnam) at a rally of thousands of people in Ba Dinh Square in Hanoi.

The day was not accidentally chosen. Ho Chi Minh synchronized it with the date of signing the Instrument of Surrender of militarist Japan. Therefore, it can be stated with confidence that the victorious end of World War II co-

incided with the birth of independent Vietnam. So, the second day of September is equally significant for both nations.

The path to it was thorny. More than 100 years ago, to be exact on June 13, 1923, Nguyen Ai Quoc (that was the name of the future leader of the national liberation movement in Vietnam, Comrade Ho Chi Minh, at the epoch) left Paris and moved to Berlin, where Soviet representatives helped him go through the formalities for departure to the USSR. On June 27, he boarded the steamship Karl Liebknecht, which delivered him to Petrograd on June 30. On October 10, 1923, Nguyen Ai Quoc took part in the opening of the first World Congress of Peasant Organizations in the St. Andrew's Hall of the Kremlin. Thus, 40 years before the infamous Tonkin Incident, which marked the beginning of the active phase of the Vietnam War, Ho Chi Minh began searching for a strategic ally who was capable of supporting the national liberation struggle of the Vietnamese people. As his impeccable political intuition suggested, it was Soviet Russia that became such an ally.

It should be noted that in the 1920s, Nguyen Ai Quoc's political activity was also connected with the revolutionary processes in China. Having left Moscow in the autumn of 1924 and travelled through all of Siberia, he arrived in Guangzhou. For Nguyen Ai Quoc the main aim was the struggle for the liberation of his homeland from colonial oppression. Having become a direct participant in the revolutionary struggle of the Chinese people, that was gaining momentum in 1925–1927, Nguyen Ai

Ho Chi Minh at the 18th National Congress  
of the French Section of the Workers'  
International in Tours (France).  
December 29, 1920

**The victorious end of World War II coincided with the birth of independent Vietnam. So, the second day of September is equally significant for both nations.**

Quoc, whose principal goal had always been the struggle for liberation of his motherland from the colonial yoke, laid the foundation for interaction with the Chinese communists as well. Therefore, Ho Chi Minh's testament is memorable: *"Seek and find all sorts of allies for the sake of the coming victory."*

**Secondly: 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our countries.**

During the first five years of its existence, the Democratic Republic of Vietnam was in a state of almost

complete political, diplomatic and economic isolation. However, Ho Chi Minh's consistent strategy of constructive interaction with the Soviet and Chinese authorities contributed to the international recognition of the DRV. In the context of the Cold War, I.V. Stalin considered it expedient that diplomatic relations with Vietnam be established by two countries at once: the USSR and China. Therefore, on October 1, 1949, when the creation of the People's Republic of China was proclaimed, and units of its People's Liberation Army reached the border with Vietnam, Moscow and Beijing began preparations for the recognition of the DRV.





Ho Chi Minh’s secret visit to Moscow for talks with Stalin was of considerable importance for the cooperation development between the two countries.

On December 10, 1949, this issue was brought up at a meeting of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and the proposal of the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs "On the establishment of diplomatic relations... between the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam" was approved. During the negotiations between the Soviet and Chinese leadership, an agree-

ment was reached that Beijing would be the first to make a statement on the establishment of relations with the DRV. On January 14, 1950, a statement by the DRV government was made public, emphasizing that Hanoi "is ready to establish diplomatic relations with the governments of all countries that will respect the principles of equality, territorial and state sovereignty of Vietnam." On January 15, Hanoi announced its rec-

ognition of the PRC and expressed its readiness to establish diplomatic relations with it, and on January 18, Beijing, in turn, recognized the DRV.

Stalin paid close attention to the development of the situation on the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. In a letter to Mao Zedong on January 6, 1950, he wrote, in particular: *"I had the opportunity to look through the materials on Vietnam and Comrade Ho Chi Minh the other day. I came to the conclusion that Comrade Ho Chi Minh is a firm smart communist, he is*

Documents from personal communication between I.V.Stalin and Ho Chi Minh. February 1950

A Soviet engineer (middle) with Vietnamese colleagues at the construction site of Polytechnic Institute in Hanoi. 1964

doing his job well and deserves all kinds of support. "

On January 30, 1950, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR A.Ya. Vyshinsky sent Ho Chi Minh a telegram with the following content: *"Having reviewed the proposal of the government of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and taking into account that the Democratic Republic of Vietnam represents the overwhelming majority of the country's population, the Soviet government has decided to establish diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam and to exchange envoys."*



The establishment of diplomatic relations was mutually beneficial. From now on, Vietnam could count on the support of a major power — the USSR, and the Soviet Union was gaining an ally in a strategically important region. Ho Chi Minh’s secret visit to Moscow for talks with Stalin was of considerable importance for the cooperation development between the two countries. On February 5, 1950, Comrade Ho Chi Minh, under the pseudonym Dinh, went to the USSR. It should be noted that Stalin at that time also used the pseudonym Filippov for correspondence with foreign communist leaders. Documents show that on February 1, 1950 Comrade Filippov gave his consent to Ho Chi Minh’s secret arrival in Moscow (see insert).

This visit inspired Ho Chi Minh, and the subsequent Soviet aid had an impact on the course of the Indochina War. The years 1952–1953 were extremely unfavorable for its French participants. The Vietnamese, who performed real feats in the name of victory struggling for their indepen-

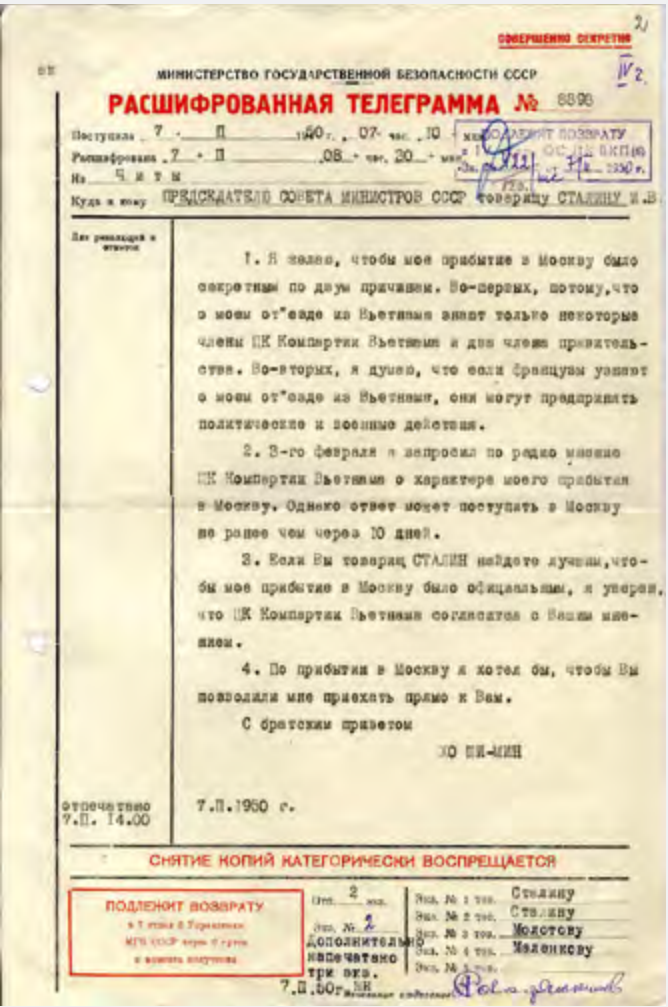
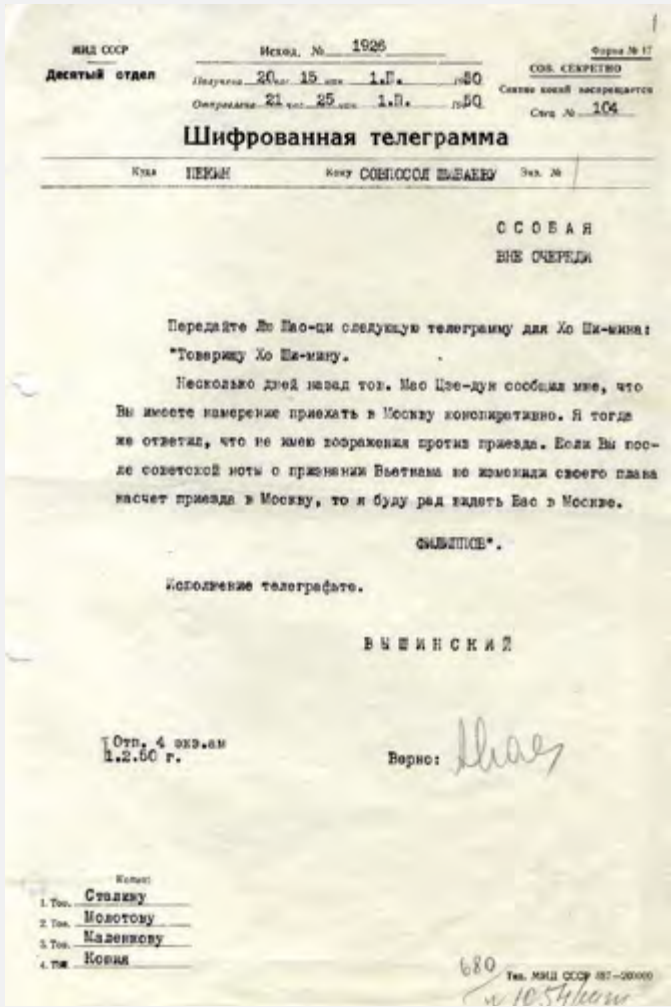
dence, managed to take control of significant areas in neighboring Laos, subsequently using them to supply and transport troops around the French fortifications on Vietnamese territory. In response, the colonialists improved their defensive lines in the Hanoi region and prepared offensive operations in the north of the country.

While the French expeditionary corps was getting deeper and deeper into the quagmire of the Vietnamese military campaign, and the mood in favor of its rapid conclusion was brewing in the political circles of Paris, the United States began to interfere more and more actively in the affairs of Indochina. At the same time,

the main issue on which the American neocolonialists differed with the French was about the so-called National Army of Vietnam. Washington, in particular, was obsessed with the idea of *"Vietnamization"* of the war, meaning to make Vietnamese kill each other. By the way, in 2014, the West managed to implement exactly this scenario in Ukraine.

But let's return to Vietnam. The winter-spring offensive of 1953–1954 ended with a great victory at Dien Bien Phu, becoming a decisive turning point in the heroic struggle of the Vietnamese people against the French colonialists. Soon the Soviet Union proposed holding a Geneva

The establishment of diplomatic relations was mutually beneficial. From now on, Vietnam could count on the support of a major power – the USSR, and the Soviet Union was gaining an ally in a strategically important region.







A group of Vietnamese cadet pilots during training in the USSR. 1966

tion of 70,000 enemy soldiers and the complete liquidation of the 2nd Army Corps of the pro-American regime. The VPA, with its decisive actions, not only liberated a vast territory, but also demoralized the enemy, creating the preconditions for a general strategic offensive.

On April 14, 1975, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Vietnam Le Duan, supporting the proposal of the military, approved the name of the final operation to capture Saigon — "Operation Ho Chi Minh". Thus, the name of the man who dedicated his life to the great cause of the national liberation struggle was immortalized in the name of the operation that victoriously ended the Vietnam War.

"Operation Ho Chi Minh" lasted five days: from April 26 to April 30, 1975. During the first three days of fighting, 16 provinces, five large cities, as well as weakly defended territories in the southeast of the country and in the Mekong Delta were liberated. Three quarters of South Vietnam, where half of the population of the South lived, came under the control of the VPA.

In fact, by the 28th, the pro-American regime remained only in Saigon, where large forces were deployed, controlling the main roads and bridges that lead into the city. However, their combat power was significantly reduced, and defeatist sentiments spread among the soldiers and officers, in the sense that "America, like, has let us down."

On April 28, 1975, Southern Prime Minister Tran Van Huong resigned and was replaced by puppet President Duong Van Minh. That same day, Vietnamese pilots in Soviet MiGs carried out precision bomb-

ing strikes on Tan Son Nhat Airport, destroying several combat aircraft intended for evacuation, including American ones. This brought the enemy to a near psych-out, and high-ranking southern military and civilian officials began to flee.

That evening, the commander of "Operation Ho Chi Minh", General Van Tien Dung, ordered a general offensive along the entire front. The next morning, the first North Vietnamese units entered Saigon, and just a day later, VPA fighters in T-55 tanks, having overturned the last barriers of the South Vietnamese army, were already making their way to the city center.

On the morning of April 30, the puppet government held an emergency meeting at the Independence Palace, after which President Duong Van Minh made a radio statement asking for a ceasefire. At the same time, according to the "Ho Chi Minh Operation" plan, five armies of the National Liberation Forces stormed the main targets: Tan Son Nhat Airport, Bac Dang Seaport, the Central Radio Station, the Police Headquarters, the Ministry of National Defense, the General Staff Operations Center, and the Independence Palace, along with the President and the entire Cabinet.

On April 30, 1975, at 11:30 a. m., the victory banner was raised over the Independence Palace. Thus ended the "Operation Ho Chi Minh", the largest offensive campaign of the Vietnam War, as well as the war itself which lasted 21 years (this is the chronology that Vietnamese comrades insist on). During it, the American aggressors committed almost all possible types of war crimes, including the use of chemical weapons. Suffice it to say

Chairman of the Soviet-Vietnamese Friendship Society, pilot-cosmonaut G.S.Titov (second right) at a meeting with Ho Chi Minh. Hanoi. 1962

Vietnamese people, with the support of our country, People's Republic of China and other states sympathizing with Vietnam, managed to crush the most powerful military machine that the Americans and their allies had been building in southern Vietnam for many years.

that more air bombs were dropped on Vietnam than on Germany during the entire Second World War.

What is the significance of that heroic victory from today's perspective? For us, its historical lessons are that the Vietnamese people, with the support of our country, People's Republic of China and other states sympathizing with Vietnam, managed to crush the most powerful military machine that the Americans and their allies had been building in southern Vietnam for many years. Without this assistance, as both Russian and Vietnamese historians admit, the VPA would hardly have been able to turn the course of combat in its favor.

In this regard, it is appropriate to recall the words of Nikolai Sergeyevich Leonov, Doctor of Historical Sciences, Lieutenant General of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service, who headed its analytical department: *"The peak of the USSR's foreign policy successes seems to be 1975 — the defeat of the USA in Vietnam, which caused deep upheavals in American society and a serious temporary weakening of Washington's foreign policy activity."* Therefore, the victory that was won half a century ago by the Vietnamese people is, without exaggeration, our victory as well. Its semicentenary anniversary is a significant date for us. 🇷🇺



First the French colonialists, and then the American imperialists who replaced them, inspired interethnic conflicts in Vietnam.



## Director of the RISS M.Y. Fradkov: “Intelligence has taught me a lot”

On September 1, 2025, the outstanding statesman and one of the heads of the Foreign Intelligence Service of the Russian Federation (2007-2016) Mikhail Yefimovich Fradkov celebrated his 75th anniversary. On the eve of such a significant date, "Razvedchik" talked with the hero of the day about the current situation in the global economy, the work of the RISS and plans for the future.

Mikhail Yefimovich, you have been heading the Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (RISS) since January 2017. Recently, the President of the Russian Federation extended your term of office for another five years. Tell us what has been done since then and what goals and tasks do you set for yourself and your team in the future?

Yes, I have been heading the RISS for more than eight years. During these years, efforts have been made to reformat the structure and personnel in order to focus the team on the timely and high-quality implementation of the state assignment.

The necessary adjustments have been made to the RISS charter, allowing it to engage not only in the Institute's traditional international relations, but also in related domestic policy issues.

Currently, the state assignment includes 50 research areas. Along with the preparation of reviews and analytical notes, the plan provides for holding conferences and round tables with the invitation of domestic and foreign specialists.

We are pleased to welcome guests to a high-level representative mansion (*the former mansion of Margarita Morozova — editor's note*),

### Mikhail Yefimovich Fradkov

Born on September 1, 1950, in the village of Kurumoch, Krasnoyarsk District, Kuibyshev (now Samara) Region. In 1972, he graduated with honors from the Moscow Machine-Tool Institute (STANKIN) as a mechanical engineer, and in 1981, from the All-Union Academy of Foreign Trade. From 1975 to 1991, he worked in the USSR State Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, including abroad (India, Switzerland, Belgium). Later, he held the posts of Minister of Foreign Economic Relations and Trade, Head of the Federal Tax Police Service, and Special Representative of the President of the Russian Federation to the European Union. In 2004–2007, he was Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation. From October 2007 to October 2016, he was Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia. Since January 4, 2017, he has been Director of the RISS. Candidate of Economic Sciences. He holds the rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. He was awarded the Order of St. George, 4th degree, the Order of Alexander Nevsky, the Order of Courage, the Order "For Military Merit", and the Order of Honor. He is a full Cavalier of the Order "For Merit to the Fatherland".





which was specially allocated to the RISS by order of the President of the Russian Federation.

In short, we have managed to create the necessary conditions for the work of the team as a whole and each employee, having properly provided for issues of material and social security, for which special thanks to our colleagues from the Directorate of the President of the Russian Federation.

So, through joint efforts, we have managed to lay a solid foundation for normal work now and in the future. The main issue that requires an immediate solution is the selection of personnel. It is obvious that without an optimal set of trained specialists, it is difficult, to say the least, to engage in deep analytics and, even more so, forecast.

The effectiveness of our work largely depends on the selection and placement of experts in key areas of research. And these issues must be resolved without delay. The international situation is developing dynamically and sometimes unpredictably, which sets the bar for analysts.

Understanding the demand for what the RISS should provide to the customer motivates the employees and me as the director for years to come. This is what I am guided by right now.

**Who do you prefer to hire: experienced experts or can university graduates also come to the RISS?**

Of course, priority is given to knowledgeable specialists and ready experts. But we also hire young people, so to speak, "for growth". We conduct campaigns in universities, study and select the worthiest, with a penchant for information and analytical work.

Recently, several young people with potential and aspiration to grow professionally have come to us. Some relevant and interesting areas for in-depth research have been selected for them, where they can both bring benefit and show themselves.

**Considering that both your basic education and a significant part of your professional path are connected with economics and foreign trade, I would dare to assume that now this area is also within your circle of interests. How would you characterize the current global economic situation? What could the trade wars unleashed by Washington lead to and when should we expect a return to stability?**

Let me make it clear right away that stability is not to be expected in the near future. The unfolding trade wars against the backdrop of increasing protectionism are leading to the breakdown of stable cooperative ties that have been established over the years. The payment system is being disrupted, and transport routes are put on trial.

The role of state guarantees is diminishing, and insurance companies are refusing to take on investment, and, in fact, political risks. In addition to all this, the collective West is pursuing a senseless sanctions policy.

In these conditions, the Russian economy is being restructured, relying primarily on its own strength. We have a capacious domestic market, which allows us, despite restrictions on access to the outside, to strengthen interregional ties and establish cooperation within the country, at the same time, to focus on developing the production of science-intensive and high-tech products, using the existing potential of our own science and innovation. We should

proceed from a realistic assessment of the fact that the reliance on foreign investment has not been justified and it is necessary to seek internal reserves. This is a non-trivial task and will require non-standard approaches both in domestic policy and in building external economic ties and scientific and technical cooperation with other states, first of all friendly ones.

**One of the most important areas of the RISS's work is maintaining contacts with the foreign expert community. How has the nature of this interaction changed since 2022? Are you able to convey the Russian point of view on the events in Ukraine and can we say that Western experts have lost their authority?**

If we put aside country affiliation, then in my opinion, the assessment of the authority of experts should be based on the thesis that an "expert" should, first and foremost, have a deep understanding of the subject he is engaged in, be maximally self-reliant and independent of the current situation, and value his reputation. It is appropriate to use the common phrase that "an expert is always an expert."

Unfortunately, recently we have to note that a number of so-called experts have not been

“Stability is not to be expected in the near future. The unfolding trade wars against the backdrop of increasing protectionism are leading to the breakdown of stable cooperative ties that have been established over the years. The payment system is being disrupted, and transport routes are put on trial.”

showing themselves in the best light. In the increasingly complex international situation, we are witnessing negative assessments and statements that distort the historical truth and have an undisguised Russophobic nature.

We have to consistently and persistently explain Russia's policy at meetings with foreign experts, as well as with official representatives of diplomatic circles of different countries when they visit the RISS. The foreign partners' desire to communicate with us remains, and we continue to work with them, including on our policy in Ukraine.



A meeting with Chinese Ambassador to Russia Zhang Hanhui. RISS mansion. October 9, 2024



## RISS

The Russian Institute for Strategic Studies (RISS) is an analytical center on political and security issues, founded by the President of the Russian Federation. Its main goal is to provide information and analytical support to federal government bodies in forming strategic directions of state policy in the sphere of national security. The RISS experts study a wide range of topics related to current international processes, as well as the socio-political and economic development of Russia. The Institute actively cooperates with federal and regional government bodies, leading scientific, expert and educational centers.





President of Russia  
D.A. Medvedev hands  
over the SVR banner to  
M.Y. Fradkov. Moscow.  
Kremlin. December 12,  
2009

Given the specific nature of the magazine, I cannot help but ask about your work as director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service — after all, you headed the Service for almost ten years. What was the most difficult thing in those years and what conclusions did you draw from your work in intelligence?

For me, working as director of the SVR is one of the most important stages of my professional career. It was exclusive in all respects, for which I am grateful to fate and the President of Russia. I tried all these years to justify the high trust and honor to head the Service.

Regarding difficulties, I can say with confidence that any work that you approach responsibly and that absorbs you deeply should be and, as a rule, is difficult. The Service in particular requires this literally every day. Motivation and personal challenge are essential conditions in this position, which naturally comes with additional stress and the need to constantly learn.

“For me, working as director of the SVR is one of the most important stages of my professional career. It was exclusive in all respects, for which I am grateful to fate and the President of Russia.

There, my previous experience and the help of my colleagues came in handy. As a result, I received not only the necessary knowledge, but also skills in working with information, which is in high demand in my current position. Also, by the way, a director (*laughs*), but this time director of the Institute of Strategic Studies. Thanks to the Service for the education!

In your opinion, is the profession of intelligence officer popular in Russia today, what qualities should a modern intelligence officer have and what would you wish to young people who want to get into intelligence?

I suppose I shouldn't dwell on this topic, since I'm unlikely to add anything new to the professional magazine. Statements on this subject have been crystallized over decades and are expressed in established assessments of the qualities of an intelligence officer and wishes to young people.

I can only place my emphasis. First of all, it is necessary to selflessly love your Motherland, your country Russia, no matter where you have to work abroad. Secondly, it is needed to constantly learn everything you can. Everything will come in handy. A foreign language should become like a native language. Thirdly, you need to be brave and trained. Finally, it is necessary to understand people and be able to win them over.

How did you form your character, what inspired you when choosing your life path, what events and people influenced your development?

I will try to answer this multifaceted and, at the same time, delicate question briefly. Lately, I have often thought about this myself. I want to "influence" the development of my growing grandchildren.

I will definitely say that I did not specifically form my character, relying on the understanding that its main features are laid at birth as inherited from parents. But I consider getting an education, experience, and various skills to be critical components of success in life. And, of course, communication with people as well, wherever you work, who can have a positive impact on your development and attitude to the surrounding reality. But it depends on luck.

Apparently, I was often just lucky. The school was close to home, but it became the Laboratory №1 of the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences as an experimental one. I graduated from the math class and continued my studies at a purely technical institute, but with a special group for studying foreign languages. Having completed my language training a year after defending my diploma thesis, I left for India as an engineer-translator.

Was it difficult to work abroad?

It was not easy, but very interesting. In addition to New Delhi, I traveled to a number of regions, worked at important sites of Soviet-Indian cooperation. I was young and active. I still have good impressions of the country and the people I met and became friends with then.

Then I worked in the system of the State Committee under the Council of Ministers of the USSR for Foreign Economic Relations. This work was also interesting. I devoted myself to it completely, learned everything and from everyone. Help and support were not long to

“I adhere to the thesis expressed by the sages that to live means to think, and this presupposes a continuous search for answers to questions that arise. You have to bother yourself and puzzle yourself.

come, first of all from the leaders who headed the State Committee at that time. I cannot help but mention them. These were Ryabov Yakov Petrovich and Katushev Konstantin Fedorovich, who went a glorious path, becoming major government figures. Initially being factory workers from Uralmash and GAZ, they headed, respectively, the Sverdlovsk and Gorky regional committees of the CPSU, then both became secretaries of the Central Committee, and after that worked as ambassadors to France and Cuba. There was a lot to learn from them, and they understood people, earning respect for themselves, demonstrating their attitude to work by personal example.



In the SVR of Russia  
headquarters.  
Moscow. Yasenevo.  
October 5, 2016





With his wife Yelena Olegovna at the country house near Moscow

This was a real school of mentoring, which played a key role in the professional development of a young man who was actively trying to show his worth in an interesting and important area of work as deputy head of the main department for supplies to economic cooperation facilities built abroad with the technical assistance of the USSR.

The leaders taught me how to build relationships with people, achieve teamwork and personal commitment from each employee. This was useful later in all responsible government positions without exception.

On my own behalf, I would add that I tried not to let anyone down, not to “mess up,” and I was constantly learning. I adhere to the thesis expressed by the sages that to live means to think, and this presupposes a continuous search for answers to questions that arise. You have to bother yourself and puzzle yourself. I am still trying to do this, and fortunately, my work at the RISS requires it.

**So what is the key to success? To do something interesting?**

You can't say it for sure. Rarely is anyone lucky enough to combine work and hobby, this is a privilege, as a rule, for people of creative professions. For people like me, interest is also important, but, in my understanding, it comes along with the performance of work duties. There is always room for deepening knowledge, specialization, mastering the subject of your activity in order to become the best in your profession. If you are already a manager, you see your interest in organizing the work of the entire team, building a skillful and caring management model. Establishing good relations with people, identifying their best qualities and leveling out shortcomings, aiming for results — isn't that interesting?

Well, in general, the more interests a person has, the better, of course. They can change, especially in youth. Sooner or later, everyone makes up their mind, but you need to be constantly searching. The main thing is to do what you must, there will be a result, interest will definitely appear and take hold. You need to look for interest in your work. This isn't an easy thing either!

**If you had a choice...**

Where to work? I can say with confidence that my current activity is the best I could dream of at this stage of my professional career. Working at the institute dealing with strategic issues corresponds not only to an understanding of

its importance, especially in the current conditions. It is extremely interesting and, in my own opinion, it is within my capabilities and character.

My previous experience in the system of foreign economic relations, abroad and in the Government helps. I would especially like to highlight the educational role of the foreign intelligence, where I received additional “higher education” in searching, analyzing and practically applying significant information. That's how the choice was made. The right choice.

**To conclude the conversation... Can you call yourself a happy person? Have you achieved all your goals in life or are there still dreams that have not yet been realized?**

Yes, I consider myself happy! The main achievement of personal success is a large and strong family, created together with my wife, with whom we have been walking hand in hand for almost 50 years.

“The main thing is to do what you must, there will be a result, interest will definitely appear and take hold. You need to look for interest in your work. This isn't an easy thing either!”

Interviewed by  
Vladislav Ilyin

I am proud of my sons, my six grandchildren. I am very happy that my grandchildren from the youngest to the eldest are growing up smart and well-mannered, inheriting the traditions of our family's generations both in their attitudes towards people and their responsibilities. I dream about them having an interesting independent life, filled with activity, hobbies, personal victories and achievements.

And one practical task for the director of the RISS in the coming years is to turn the Institute into one of the leading think tanks in the country and an authoritative one in the world. 🚀



At the ceremony of awarding the Order of Courage. Kremlin. February 2, 2022



**Rector of M.V. Lomonosov  
Moscow State University  
V.A. Sadovnichiy:**

**“Strong university  
is independence and  
security of Russia”**

**On the occasion of the beginning of the new academic year and in connection with the 270th anniversary of M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University, Razvedchik talked about the past, present and future of the country's main university with its rector, Viktor Antonovich Sadovnichiy.**

**Viktor Antonovich, you have been heading the university for over 30 years. What do you consider to be your main achievements, what are you most proud of, and what new tasks do you set for yourself and the collective in the future?**

I consider my main achievements as a rector the trust of the hundred thousand staff of Moscow State University, the successful continuation of the traditions of service and education of the Fatherland, and the dynamic development of our university. This year we turned 270 years old. This is an important date not only for MSU, but also for all science and education, the entire university community.

Moscow University is in good shape. Over the last quarter century, we have managed to double the research and educational facilities and the number of faculties, and launch such key projects as the MSU Science and Technology Valley and interdisciplinary schools.

Of course, all this would be impossible without the help of university employees and the country's leadership. Managing such a colossus as Moscow State University without hourly, minute-by-minute support from people is unrealistic also because we face big tasks and complex challenges.

MSU is the first Russian university both in terms of the time of its formation and its significance. It is a phenomenon of national science and culture, which we are all proud of. Our most important tasks are to preserve, increase, and modernize its unique scientific and educational potential.

**What is the place of fundamental research in the scientific life of Moscow State University?**

Moscow University is a leader in natural science areas that are of particular importance for the economy and social sphere. We are talking about life sciences and health protection, rational use of natural resources, information technology and materials science. They are extremely important for the implementation of national development goals. Today, it is necessary not only to promote these studies, but also to develop a new paradigm of the personnel training system through fundamental interdisciplinary programs in order to achieve global leadership and ensure Russia's technological independence.

MSU today is an important part of a whole series of projects to ensure technological sovereignty. Our Moscow region branch in Dubna is part of the ecosystem of the Joint Institute for Nuclear Research with its new NICA collider.

#### **Viktor Antonovich Sadovnichiy**

Was born on April 3, 1939 in the village of Krasnopavlovka (Kharkiv region). In 1958 he entered the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics of Moscow State University, graduating with honors. Then finished a postgraduate course. In 1967 he defended his master's thesis, in 1974 – his doctoral thesis. From 1982 to the present he has been the head of the calculus department of the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics. In 1982-1992 he held the positions of vice-rector and first vice-rector of Moscow State University. In March 1992, he was elected rector for the first time, after which he was repeatedly re-elected and reappointed by decrees of the President. He is the author of more than 300 scientific researches, a number of monographs and textbooks. Member of the Presidium of the Russian Academy of Sciences, President of the Russian Union of Rectors.





Admission campaign at the MSU Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics. 2025

The same situation is in Sarov, where the MSU branch works in close cooperation with the National Center for Physics and Mathematics.

We are participants of the world-class scientific center "Supersonic", without whose research the future of aviation is impossible. We have our own carbon testing ground — an element of the scientific infrastructure of the green economy. Without our supercomputer "270 years of Moscow University" it is difficult to imagine the successful development of artificial intelligence. We were the first to launch quantum communication, on the instructions of the President of the Russian Federation we are building an inter-university quantum network.

We can go on, but in short, MSU is a factory of fundamental knowledge. Every year we produce up to a quarter of scientific articles that are published by all domestic scientists. Our team consists of almost 10 thousand candidates and doctors of science, 300 members of

state academies. It is probably difficult to find a greater concentration of knowledge and competencies not only in our country, but also in the world.

**What can you say about today's youth? Are they ready to go into science? And what can MSU offer students today to get them interested in scientific research?**

Psychologists claim that a person is designed in such a way that there is always either interest or action ahead. That is, either you do something, experiencing an inner attraction to it, or you immerse yourself in the process, sometimes even accidentally finding yourself on its "shore". We try to involve students in scientific life practically from the first year, giving the opportunity to go both ways. Both student scientific societies and the Council of Young Scientists are oriented towards this.

We have introduced a system of incentives to encourage what we believe to be the right choice, when a student aims to both obtain professional training and try himself in science. These are not only scholarships and grants. Since 2020, on my initiative, a project of interdisciplinary scientific and educational schools in the most promising areas of modern science has been implemented at Moscow State University. There are seven of them: brain, artificial intelligence, space, photonics, ecology and digital medicine. Each integrates the potential of several faculties and unites specialists in different fields so that something fundamentally new is born at the intersection of competencies.

It is gratifying that of the three thousand project participants, almost half are our students. Looking at how the buildings of the Science and Technology Valley are growing, at every open day I tell applicants that it's them who are to come to its laboratories, develop new technologies and create in-demand products based on them.

There are really a lot of opportunities to fulfil oneself with the help of science at Moscow State University. To attract young people, we hold the NAUKA 0+ (Science 0+) Festival every year; this year it is already 20 years old. This is a huge project, within the framework of

which science is discussed in a bright, interesting, modern way. Every year, millions of people take part in it all over the country. Of course, not all of them will become scientists, but we welcome everyone who is ready to use science to reveal their potential.

**You are a long-standing opponent of the Bologna system. What do you see as the optimal model of higher education in Russia and how acute is the problem of "brain drain" in Russia now?**

I'll tell you something unexpected: I have never been simply an opponent of the Bologna system. For those countries whose educational standards formed its basis, it is perhaps a natural response to challenges of the time. I do not agree with the very idea of an almost automatic rejection of those traditions in domestic education that allowed us to have the strongest scientific schools in the world. I still believe that one cannot blindly copy approaches that, no matter how convincing and effective they may seem, do not reflect our national specifics.

In my opinion, today, a reasonable point of view has finally prevailed, that Russia has the right to its own path in education. On the in-

**"I do not agree with the very idea of an almost automatic rejection of those traditions in domestic education that allowed us to have the strongest scientific schools in the world."**

structions of the President of Russia, a new strategy in this area is being developed until 2036. An Interdepartmental Working Group has been created, which includes your humble servant as the President of the Russian Union of Rectors.

I will indicate a number of points that, according to my colleagues and myself, should be included in the new document. Firstly, reliance on the best traditions of domestic education and accumulated positive experience. Secondly, interrelation with the goals of scientific and technological development of the country. Thirdly, formation of a unified educational space and taking into account the interests of all parties in this process: the state, employers, educational organizations, teachers, parents, and students themselves. Finally, it is necessary to consoli-



Graduates' day. MSU main building. June 26, 2025



“It is extremely important to include in the Strategy and to implement in practice the refusal to treat education as a service. We should give it back its status of a public good focusing on the person.

date such key principles of the national education system as fundamentality, interdisciplinarity, orientation on practice, flexibility.

Ultimately, it doesn't really matter what your diploma says — "Master" or "Specialist". The main thing is that schools and universities do not just prepare professionals in demand by the economy, but pay attention to the socialization of students and raise true patriots.

For this, it is extremely important to include in the Strategy and to implement in practice the refusal to treat education as a service. We should give it back its status of a public good focusing on the person. I believe that this should be the main goal of the reform. If we achieve this, there will be no "brain drains". On the contrary, we will continue to increase our educational export, and we will accept into universities thousands of children from all over the world who share these basic values with us.

Before the ceremony of awarding the degree of an Honorable Doctor of Beijing University. Chinese Embassy in Moscow. April 9, 2024



It is clear that the current geopolitical situation could not but affect the sphere of education. How do Western sanctions influence the work of foreign branches of Moscow State University? Have new opportunities appeared for Russian educational expansion?

Foreign branches (today there are five of them — in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) continue to work in the usual mode: intensely, actively, harmoniously. They are developing as our scientific and educational platforms in these countries. They are expanding the list of educational programs, sending students to university-wide events, and replenishing the ranks of postgraduate programs.

Unfortunately, a year ago our branch in Slovenian Koper closed; it had operated successfully since 2017, training specialists for European companies represented on the Russian market. We were not the initiators of this decision, it is not in the traditions of Moscow University to refuse cooperation or put forward initiatives that worsen relations with partners. Our principle is to use every opportunity in the interests of education and science. And the fact that today the vector of international cooperation in the scientific and educational sphere is shifting towards the participants of the BRICS+ association and the states of the Global South opens up new horizons for us both in terms of developing educational export and establishing new scientific ties.

Science has always been and will be international. If the authorities of individual countries, for the sake of the politics, try to artificially limit the exchange of information, put scientific projects, student and teaching mobility on hold, this will first of all hit the interests of their scientific communities. In real science, it is impossible to forbid thinking, communicating, collaborating.

What can you say about foreign students: has their flow decreased with the beginning of the Special Military Operation or, on the contrary, is interest in studying in Russia only growing?

In the recent years, we have seen a steady positive trend in the enrollment of foreign students. Currently, 14 thousand foreigners are

studying at Moscow State University and its branches. Over the past 10 years, their admission to the main campus of Moscow University alone has increased more than fourfold, reaching 3,800 people. We plan to reach the figure of five thousand.

We are expanding our participation in the work of scientific and educational centers created in partnership with foreign universities, and are expanding joint programs with the issuance of two diplomas. For example, at the Shenzhen MSU-BIT University 8 new bachelor's degree programs, 6 master's degree programs, and 7 postgraduate programs have opened. In total, 52 educational programs are currently being implemented at the joint Russian-Chinese university.

MSU is a strong international brand, our graduates hold senior positions in the ministries of education of various countries, work in national academies of sciences, and head leading universities. This creates conditions for growing interest in studying at Moscow University, and we do not let down those who expect to receive a high-quality world-class education in Russia.

May I venture to ask you a personal question. You left home early, at 17 you went to work in the mines. How did a boy from a poor family from near Kharkov get into Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics of Moscow State University? Did you dream of another profession as a child, for example, an intelligence officer, and do you regret leaving science in favor of administrative work?

I ended up at the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics quite unexpectedly, even for myself. After school, my friends and I went to the Komsomolets mine in Gorlovka, where I worked in the coalface for two years — 600 meters underground. At the same time, I studied at an evening school. But, realizing that I needed to move on, I sent my documents to the Belarusian agricultural academy. I was a country boy, I liked combines, tractors... My friend, who also went to the evening school with me and was going to apply to the law faculty of Moscow State University, found out about this. He said to me: "Where did you apply? You know mathematics better than all of us!" But I had



already sent the documents. He asked me: "If I get back your documents and send them to Moscow, will you come with me to enroll?" I answered: "You won't get them." Of course, we bet on a miner's dose. The next morning, he gave me the receipt for the letter to the Faculty of Mechanics and Mathematics of Moscow State University. It turned out that his wife worked at the post office and that's how she influenced my fate.

I got in also with an element of good luck. I passed the written exam successfully, but in the oral exam I had to solve a task with logarithms, which we hadn't studied at school. When the examiner prompted to me that a logarithm is the inverse of an exponential function, I managed to solve it by contradiction. So, I could say that I hadn't dreamed of becoming even a mathematician, let alone an intelligence officer. I hadn't dreamed of it, but I got in and studied.

At the Forum of BRICS countries universities rectors. Moscow, MSU. October 17, 2024

“MSU is a strong international brand, our graduates hold senior positions in the ministries of education of various countries, work in national academies of sciences, and head leading universities.





RF President Putin awards the Order "For Valorous Labour" to the M.V.Lomonosov MSU team. Moscow. January 24, 2025

The most difficult was the first year, when luck alone was not enough. I had to sit up at night to catch up with better prepared classmates. Then it became easier. Mathematics opened the way to science, to big life. I still do not part with science. Despite the administrative workload, I try to write articles, books, give reports. And the topics of research are no longer only mathematical. This includes space, medicine, and even the humanities. This is a privilege and advantage of working at Moscow State University — a huge treasury of knowledge in all scientific fields.

Interviewed by Vladislav Ilyin

Taking into account your studies and subsequent work at Moscow State University, you

have not actually left the walls of your alma mater since 1958, more than one generation of students has passed before your eyes. How much have students and their approach to life changed during this time? And what would you wish young people who are just trying to find themselves and their place in life?

Yes, I have been at the university almost all my life. I remember my younger years very well, my classmates with whom I started. Today's students are certainly different from what we were. But it is also true that I skipped lectures as well, for example, in order to meet Yuri Gagarin with all of Moscow in April 1961, whose motorcade was driving along Leninsky Avenue from Vnukovo.

Today, young people have different values, motivation and living conditions. What can I say — the times themselves have changed a lot. And yet there are constants, a lot in common. Both then and now, I see in many people sincere patriotism, interest in life, thirst for knowledge, aspiration for self-realization, a desire to find a positive outlet for the energy that is inherent in everyone young.

Perhaps today's students are more pragmatic, they have less idealism and less that romantic atmosphere in which we literally bathed when we sat at our desks. But I can't say that they are fundamentally better or worse than us. They are simply different. And in this regard, there is only one wish: to try to reveal all the best that is inherent in each of them. To realize themselves as much as possible in science, profession, life. To do it talentedly, brightly, loudly. To achieve this with benefit for the country, for everyone who is at their side today and will be at their side tomorrow.

I like one maxim from Goethe: *"Until one is committed, there is hesitance, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. The moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too."* I wish the young people the same good "final" decisions. I wish them to find their cause and devote themselves completely to it. And to see how this cause, this fulcrum literally turns the whole world around. And if Moscow State University helps them with this, I will be sincerely glad. 🇷🇺



# THE SVR OF RUSSIA IS AUTHORIZED TO DECLARE

“I see in many people sincere patriotism, interest in life, thirst for knowledge, aspiration for self-realization, a desire to find a positive outlet for the energy that is inherent in everyone young.



СВР РОССИИ  
СНЯТИЕ КОПИЙ ВОСПРЕЩАЕТСЯ

СВЕРЖЕЧНО  
ЭКЗ. № 1

РАССЕКРЕЧЕНО

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ТОВ. СЕРГЕЕВУ

ЭКСПЕРТЫ ЕС ПРЕДУПРЕЖДАЮТ О КОНТРПРОДУКТИВНОСТИ НОВЫХ  
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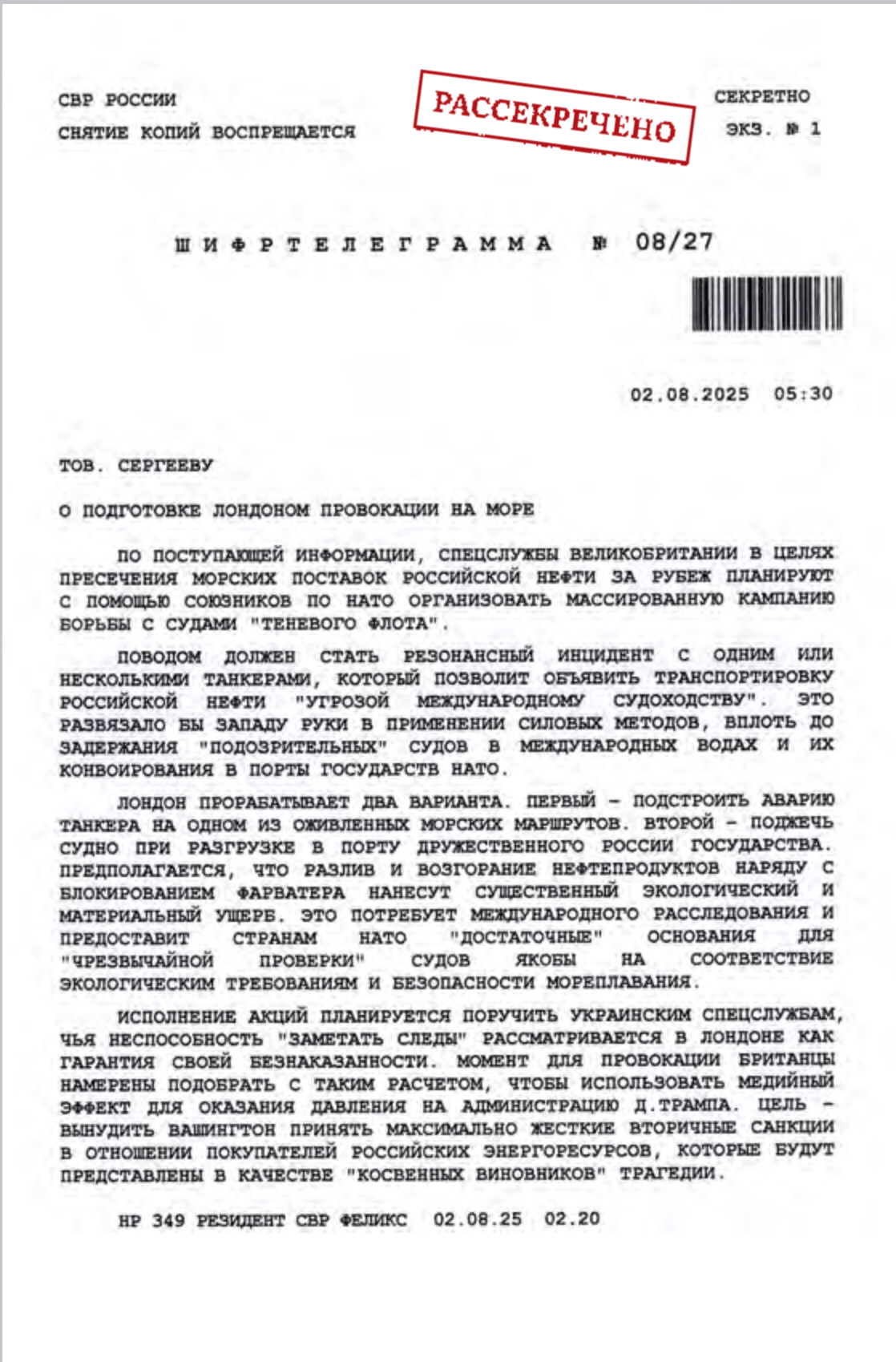
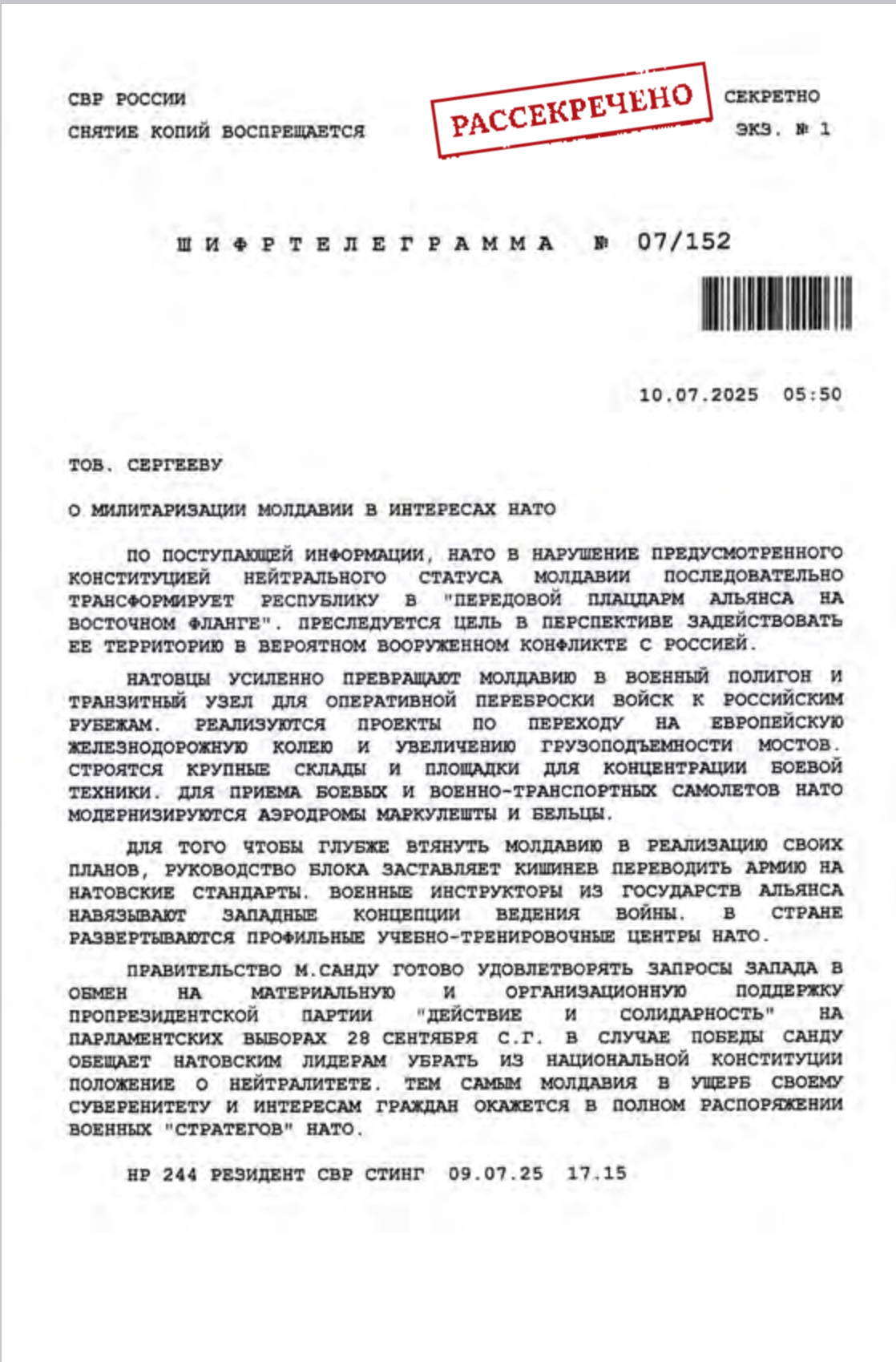
ПО ПОСТУПАЮЩИМ ДАННЫМ, БЛИЗКИЕ К РУКОВОДСТВУ ЕС ЭКСПЕРТЫ  
НАСТОЙЧИВО ПЫТАЮТСЯ УБЕДИТЬ ЕВРОКОМИССИЮ В ПАГУБНОСТИ ДЛЯ  
БРЮССЕЛЯ ДАЛЬНЕЙШЕГО УЖЕСТОЧЕНИЯ ОГРАНИЧИТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕР ПРОТИВ  
РОССИЙСКОЙ ЭКОНОМИКИ.

ЕВРОБЮРОКРАТОВ ОБВИНЯЮТ, В ЧАСТНОСТИ, В ТОМ, ЧТО ОНИ ГРУБО  
ПРОСЧИТАЛИСЬ, ПРИНЯВ РЕШЕНИЕ ОТКЛЮЧИТЬ БОЛЬШИНСТВО РОССИЙСКИХ  
БАНКОВ ОТ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОЙ МЕЖБАНКОВСКОЙ СИСТЕМЫ ПЕРЕДАЧИ  
ФИНАНСОВОЙ ИНФОРМАЦИИ И СОВЕРШЕНИЯ ПЛАТЕЖЕЙ SWIFT. КРЕДИТНО-  
ФИНАНСОВЫЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЯ РОССИИ ВЫСТРОИЛИ ДРУГИЕ СХЕМЫ  
СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВА С ЗАРУБЕЖНЫМИ ПАРТНЕРАМИ. В ТО ЖЕ ВРЕМЯ ВВЕДЕННЫЕ  
БРЮССЕЛЕМ ОГРАНИЧЕНИЯ ПОДОРВАЛИ ДОВЕРИЕ К SWIFT СО СТОРОНЫ  
ГОСУДАРСТВ ГЛОБАЛЬНОГО ЮГА. СТАЛО ОЧЕВИДНО, ЧТО ОНА ИСПОЛЬЗУЕТСЯ  
КАК ИНСТРУМЕНТ ПОЛИТИЧЕСКОГО ДАВЛЕНИЯ. В РЕЗУЛЬТАТЕ БЫСТРО  
НАЧАЛИ РАЗВИВАТЬСЯ АЛЬТЕРНАТИВНЫЕ ПЛАТЕЖНЫЕ СИСТЕМЫ В КНР,  
РОССИИ, ИНДИИ, САУДОВСКОЙ АРАВИИ. СЕРЬЕЗНУЮ КОНКУРЕНЦИЮ SWIFT  
ПРЕДСТАВЛЯЕТ ПРОДВИГАЕМАЯ КИТАЕМ ПЛАТФОРМА РАСЧЕТОВ MBRIDGE.

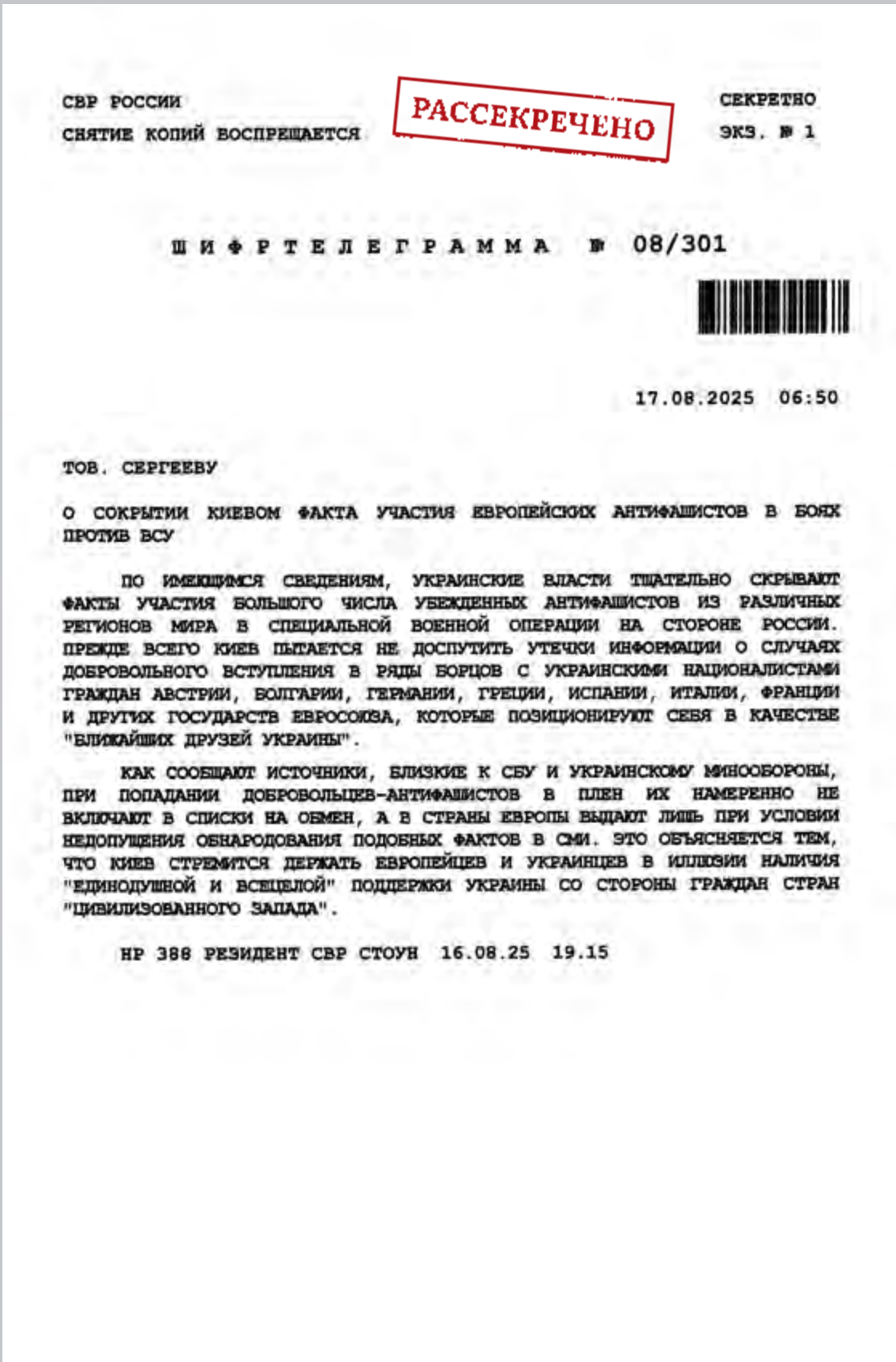
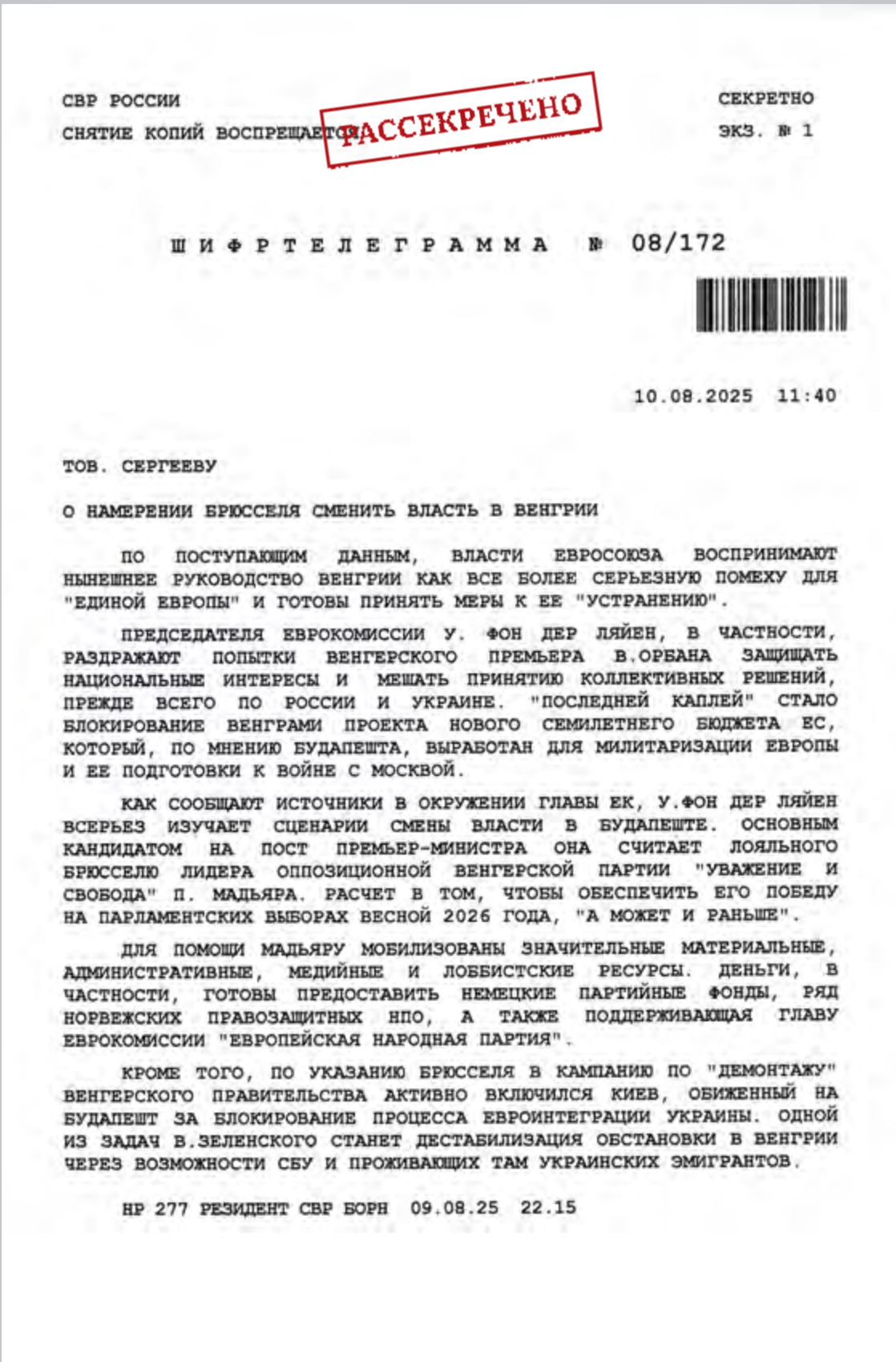
ЕВРОПЕЙСКИЕ ФИНАНСИСТЫ ПОЛАГАЮТ, ЧТО НЕГАТИВНЫХ ДЛЯ ЕС И  
ТРАНСАТЛАНТИЧЕСКОГО СООБЩЕСТВА В ЦЕЛОМ ПОСЛЕДСТВИЙ МОЖНО БЫЛО БЫ  
ИЗБЕЖАТЬ, ЕСЛИ БЫ РУКОВОДСТВО ЕВРОКОМИССИИ ПРИСЛУШАЛОСЬ К МНЕНИЮ  
СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ О ВЕРОЯТНОМ ОТРИЦАТЕЛЬНОМ ЭФФЕКТЕ ПОДОВНЫХ ШАГОВ.  
ОДНАКО В ЭКСПЕРТНЫХ КРУГАХ РАСПРОСТРАНЕНЫ ОПАСЕНИЯ, ЧТО И СЕЙЧАС  
ИХ ДОВОДЫ ВРЯД ЛИ БУДУТ УСЛЫШАНЫ.

НР 352 РЕЗИДЕНТ СВР МАРАТ 27.06.25 20.40











# Ministry of Public Security of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam



The Ministry of Public Security (MPS, Vietnamese: *Bộ Công an*) is the leading Vietnamese agency responsible for maintaining public order, combating crime, counterintelligence, foreign intelligence, and protecting state interests. The ministry's headquarters are located in Hanoi on Pham Van Dong Street. The current Head of the MPS is Army General Luong Tam Quang.

Formally, the MPS was founded in August 19, 1945, the day of the victory of the people's August Revolution, when following the decision of the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, three departments were formed to protect Ho Chi Minh and other national leaders and to ensure the security of the nascent Democratic Republic of Vietnam. These departments were the Security Service Bureau (in the north), the Surveillance Service (in the center) and the National Self-Defense Force Bureau (in the south). In February 1946,

the three departments were merged under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and renamed the People's Police Department. On August 29, 1953, it was reorganized into the current MPS.

It should be noted that the Vietnamese People's Public Security Forces were preceded by small underground party groups (the Food Safety Group, the Anti-Traitor Group, the Safe Zone Protection Committee, etc.) operating in major cities since the late 1930s. Their members were engaged in col-

lecting intelligence on enemy plans, ensuring the safety of the party leadership, and eliminating enemy spies and collaborators serving in the Japanese and French armies.

The experience, which the Vietnamese security forces had gained in resisting French colonial regime, proved extremely helpful and was used in the further struggle of the Vietnamese people against Japanese and American interventionists. After the Vietnam War, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Ministry of Public Security played a major role in the early restoration of the country and in promoting its economic development.

Today, the MPS functions not only to ensure state security and protect public order, but also has a significant influence on developing Hanoi's foreign and domestic policies. Suffice it to say that the head of the agency is a member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam (CPV), and the former heads of the ministry, Tran Dai Quang (2011-2016) and To Lam (2016-2024), were subsequently elected to the post of the president of the country. The latter has been the General Secretary of the CPV Central Committee since August 2024.



**Luong Tam Quang**

Was born on October 17, 1965. Graduated from the Vietnam People's Academy of Security and the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics. Since 1982, has been serving in the Ministry of Public Security (MPS). Over the years, he held the positions of Secretary of the Deputy Minister, Deputy Head of the General Economic Security Department, Deputy Chief of Staff, Chief of Staff of the MPS, and Press Secretary of the MPS. Since 2019 – Deputy Minister of Public Security – Head of the MPS Investigation Department. In January 2021, he was elected to the 13th Central Committee of the CPV, and in June 2024, he was appointed Head of the MPS of Vietnam. In August 2024, he was elected to the Politburo of the CPV Central Committee, and in October of the same year, Luong Tam Quang was awarded the rank of Army General.



In accordance with the current legislation of Vietnam, the missions of the Ministry of Public Security include:

- collection, analysis, and evaluation of information, prediction of national and global developments for the party and the state bodies to work out the political course, adoption of laws and strategies in the areas of national security and social order;
- protection of rights and freedoms, democracy, life and property of the citizens;
- protection of high-ranking party and state officials and foreign visitors, as well as foreign representative agencies and organizations in Vietnam and Vietnamese representatives abroad;
- ensuring security of events and

projects related to national security, as well as protection of persons admitted to State secrets.

The Vietnamese MPS has a two-level structure consisting of the central office and numerous territorial divisions. Such organizational principle makes it possible to successfully solve the current tasks, including intelligence and counterintelligence ones.

The MPS maintains contacts with a wide range of foreign partners. Among them are special Russian agencies, including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Federal Security Service and the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia. Given the

General Secretary of the CPV Central Committee To Lam with officers of the Ministry of Public Security, Hanoi, 2024

historically close ties between our peoples, such cooperation is characterized by a high degree of trust and opens up wide opportunities to meet common challenges collectively.

In the recent years, the Vietnamese MPS has been actively sending personnel to participate in UN peacekeeping missions. Besides, there are plans to establish a new Peacekeeping Forces Training and Skill Improvement Center on the UN standards, which is to become the leading institution of this kind in the Asia-Pacific region. 🇻🇳



# BRICS

## “Civilized alternative” or “alliance of civilizations”?

Text: team of authors of the Scientific Student Society of the School of World Politics at MSU – Eichhorn N., Anchikov V., Bobrova M., Borchsenius M., Gorbachenko S., Dasaev K., Dostoevskaya S., Ermilov B., Karapetyan V., Keinikh L., Kozarenko Ya., Kozlov V., Kolmakov M., Kotova Yu., Kuzmina D., Kulikov A., Matveeva K., Mikhheeva U., Mishkin D., Morgachev A., Norekhan K., Petrova L., Romanova M., Sautkin I., Safarmetova N., Sidorov D., Smirnova N., Solodovnik I., Spiryakova A., Tochinsky D., Uslugina A., Fokina D., Khasanov V., Khrykina E., Shepelev D., Shikhanova M., Shchipletsov E., Yablonko K.

**In July 2025, the 17th BRICS summit took place in Rio de Janeiro, where Indonesia (as a full member) and other new partners of the association participated for the first time, which demonstrates the strengthening of BRICS positions as a promising platform for multilateral cooperation. The purpose of this study, organized as part of the competition of student research works for the prize of the “Razvedchik” magazine, is to consider the points of view existing in the domestic discourse on the course of further evolution of the association, outlining the problems and prospects for its ideological and political consolidation.**

### Prerequisites for the formation and key stages of BRICS evolution

The convergence of national interests of the countries that are now part of the BRICS association is determined by the complex, multidirectional dynamics of globalization processes at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. During this period, the crisis of the “unipolar moment” was clearly evident, when the United States, having come off “victorious from the Cold War,” effectively assumed the role of a world hegemon. Protests were growing among other states, primarily

non-Western ones, dissatisfied with the American unilateralism. The ideas of polycentricity and multipolarity, as opening up the possibility of more equal interstate interaction, acquired an increasing number of supporters. This mood was additionally fueled by the noticeable economic and foreign-policy strengthening of India and China that emerged by the end of the 20th century.

In this context, the Russian leadership decided to enhance the dialogue with non-Western partners. Academician E.M. Primakov was the first to consistently explain the idea

of coordinating the actions of the largest non-Western countries. In 1998, he put forward the initiative to create the RIC (Russia-India-China) triangle, on whose basis the BRICS association was later formed.

Theoretically, BRICS was initially based on new concepts of international organizations as entities that form a public space where one can freely discuss and find solutions to various relevant problems. Therefore, since its foundation, BRICS has been positioned as a new algorithm of state-to-state relations created beyond stereotypes.

### Several stages can be conditionally distinguished in the development of BRICS:

#### 2006-2008: from the idea of a new format to the first summit.

The association was founded by Brazil, Russia, India and China. BRIC was initially created to ensure economic growth and strengthen the positions of the member countries in the international scene. In 2006, by the initiative of Russian President V.V. Putin, the first quadripartite meetings were held at the St. Petersburg Economic Forum, then on the sidelines of the 61st session of the UN General Assembly in New York at the level of foreign ministers. In 2008, after the G8 summit, the first meeting of the heads of state and government of BRIC took place. This event was of particular importance for the formation of the association, because that's when the decision to hold the first separate BRIC summit in 2009 was made.

At the same time, economic interaction and scientific cooperation were enhanced. In the same 2008, the first meeting of the heads of financial departments of the four countries was organized in Sao Paulo, where global economic challenges were discussed. Special attention was paid to finding ways to overcome the global financial crisis, agreements were reached on holding regular meetings of the BRIC countries’ finance ministers and on establishing contacts between their deputies. At that time as well, the first scientific conferences were held with the participation of Brazilian, Russian, Indian and Chinese representatives, and the BRIC countries public forum to discuss issues of global development was created.

#### 2009-2013: From the First Summit to the Establishment of the NDB.

During this period, five summits were held. The first took place in Yekaterinburg, where ways to overcome

the global economic crisis were discussed. The BRIC countries expressed their readiness to cooperate with the G20 to resolve its consequences, and proposed to redistribute IMF quotas in favor of developing economies. A dialogue of agriculture ministers was also launched, aimed at facilitating the resolution of food security issues.

The next summit took place in Brazil in 2010. It is worth noting that South African President Jacob Zuma took part in it. In December of the same year, South Africa received an invitation to join the association, and since 2011, BRIC has officially become BRICS.

In 2012, when India took over the presidency, a dialogue about the creation of the New Development Bank (NDB) to finance sustainable development projects began. A year later, at the Durban summit, BRICS members agreed to establish the NDB and the Contingent Reserve Arrangement. The members of the association pledged to support the development of Africa and assist the UN and the African Union in peacekeeping issues. A line of cooperation in the field of technology and innovation was laid down, and expert centers for developing innovative solutions in the field of global governance appeared.

Generally, from 2009 to 2013, BRIC (S) went through a stage of formation, its institutions began to take shape, and the keynote of its activities became clearly defined: promoting the formation of a fair world order, primarily by strengthening economic and financial cooperation.

#### 2014-2020: deepening institutional interaction.

In July 2014, the NDB was officially established at the Fortaleza summit. Its main goal was to mobilize

resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects. A year later, the BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy for the period up to 2020 was developed in Ufa.

At subsequent meetings, cooperation mechanisms in previously outlined areas were strengthened with the addition of new ones. Thus, in 2019, initiatives to coordinate the efforts of member countries in the areas of science, technology, innovation and digitalization were included in the agenda. In 2020, agreed Strategies in the field of economic partnership and anti-terrorist activities were adopted, which became the first successful example of adopting political documents within BRICS.

In 2014-2020, institutional cooperation among the member countries reached a brand-new level, extending to such areas as energy, trade, taxes, industry and innovation. The relevant documents were signed: the BRICS Economic Partnership Strategy, the BRICS Investment Promotion Guidelines, the Strategic Program on Customs Cooperation, etc. At the same time, the idea of creating a new format, BRICS+, came close to realization.

#### 2020 — Present: New Challenges.

In 2020, during Russia's presidency, the coronavirus pandemic broke out, revealing trends towards the world economy deglobalization. BRICS members sought to develop coordinated measures to stabilize the situation, which was reflected in the adopted “Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership until 2025”. When drafting the document, attention was paid to the development of sustainable trade in the context of sanctions, to the digital economy and overcoming inequality among member countries in access to IT technologies, as well as climate change and the formation of a sustainable energy system.



Another global threat that was brought to the attention of the BRICS countries during that period was international terrorism. In 2021, the Counterterrorism Action Plan was adopted, which involved the exchange of information between relevant agencies, joint training of law enforcement and intelligence agencies, as well as cooperation within international and multilateral platforms such as the UN, G20, FATF, Interpol, etc.

At the same time, against the backdrop of the sanction wars unleashed by the West, the topic of creating independent payment mechanisms, alternative to the Western ones, and the transition to national currencies in trade and financial transactions received special attention.

In addition, the issue of expanding the association has come to agenda. At the summit in Johannesburg in 2023, Argentina, Egypt, Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia received invitations to become full members. However, the new Argentine authorities refused membership, and Riyadh did not complete the accession process. So, in 2024, BRICS was replenished with four new members. In 2025, Indonesia became a full member of the association.

It should be noted that although the idea of creating BRICS arose in connection with the awareness of the largest non-Western countries of the unfair nature of the existing world order, their efforts were initially aimed at developing mutually beneficial economic cooperation and forming new independent international financial institutions. No collective identity of BRICS was discussed, and issues of this kind were not on the agenda of the association's summits.

The 2024 Kazan meeting was no exception. Its final declaration stated the commitment of BRICS

participants to strengthening multilateralism to build a fairer world order. The need to reform the UN and the Bretton Woods institutions was mentioned. The same theses are included in the documents of the July 2025 summit. In this context, it will be interesting to see how and why ideas about the possibility of forming a special collective identity for BRICS have spread in Russian scientific discourse.

### Problems and prospects of forming a collective identity of BRICS: views of the Russian expert community

The idea that BRICS could become the basis for the formation of an alternative to Western models of social and international political development appeared in Russian political and expert circles back in the mid-2010s, but became widespread in the 2020s. Amid the expected expansion of the association, a number of domestic experts began to call it a “symbol of a global alternative”, noting the revisionist attitude of the BRICS member countries. It is worth clarifying that in this context, the term “revisionist” does not mean calls for the demolition of the existing world political system (as is often said in the West), but simply the BRICS member countries’ desire to achieve the consideration and recognition of their interests in it.

At the same time, discussions about the prospects for expansion revealed a fundamental paradox: many Russian experts welcomed the expansion of BRICS, but even supporters of its transformation into BRICS+ pointed out that it should not be a question of simple extensive growth. In order for the association to maintain and strengthen its potential, expansion should be accompanied by deepening cooperation and its institutionalization. It is precisely

this logic of these discussions about the need to consolidate BRICS, to acquire a special collective identity, that reflects the attempts to position BRICS, if not as an antagonist, then at least as an alternative to the Western model of world order.

Yet calls for deeper integration contradict the primordial principles on which the association was created. One of the pillars of BRICS has been equal horizontal partnership, in which countries interact while maintaining full sovereignty. Any form of institutionalization, in turn, presupposes a limitation of sovereignty to one degree or another. In this context, a tactful approach is required to the question of the advisability of such a step, taking into account the heterogeneity of the composition of participants and the multidirectional nature of their economic and political interests.

Thus, India, for whom American investments are significant, takes a special position on integration and strives for a balance in relations between the Global North and the Global South. A similar situation is typical for Brazil: US companies are widely represented on its market, which cannot but influence the policy of Rio de Janeiro. In general, all BRICS countries have economic ties with the West to one degree or another: they supply raw materials, mainly energy resources, and inexpensive labor force, receiving technologies in return. Even the New Development Bank, being integrated into the global monetary and financial system, is forced to obey the current sanctions restrictions, which its head Dilma Rousseff spoke about back in 2023.

It is logical to conclude that the members of the association are not interested in a radical breakdown of the existing world order, but rather wish to update the conditions of their

participation in it in accordance with their changed political status and economic potential.

The differences in the approaches of the BRICS countries to a number of issues on the international agenda are also reflected in the results of the votes in the UN General Assembly. At the same time, one can hardly expect that the movement towards the formation of a collective identity for the association will receive support. Most of its members are not interested in worsening relations with the West, not to speak of openly opposing themselves to it. In this regard, in our opinion, it is more advisable to use more actively the existing instruments and mechanisms for cooperation within the BRICS framework, primarily in the economic and financial spheres.

In 2023, a new version of the Concept of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation was published, where our country is positioned as a unique state-civilization. The document caused a boom of analytical researches on Russia's “special civilizational path”. At the same time, the term “civilization” itself has not received an unambiguous interpretation. The only thing that most researchers agree on is that civilization is based on special culture and values. The bearers of civilization are the actors in the system of international relations — states that, relying on their cultural and historical identity, consolidate peripheral countries around themselves.

Theoretically, the civilizational approach opens up opportunities for formulating the collective identity of BRICS as a unique association that express the interests of the key states-civilizations of our time: China, India, and Russia, as a basis for developing a “civilizational alternative” to the Western world and its “values.”

However, here again, one should pay attention to the different directions of the political aspirations of the key BRICS participants. While in the Russian scientific discourse this narrative often promotes the idea of cultural and civilizational isolation from the West, China, not to mention India, mainly adheres to the thesis that “non-West” does not mean “anti-West.”

In this context, it is appropriate to consider BRICS not as the foundation of some consolidated anti-Western civilizational “bloc”, but as a platform for an equal dialogue of civilizations. Misunderstanding on this issue can hinder the constructive development of BRICS in those areas where there has already been significant progress. One may conclude that the prevalence among Russian experts of ideas about the possibility and even desirability of positioning BRICS/BRICS+ as the basis for the formation of a full-fledged alternative to the so-called “rules-based order” actively promoted by the collective West does not so much reflect the objective trends in the development

of the association, as it is a consequence of the aggravation of the international situation.

From this point of view, promoting narratives about BRICS as an association alternative to the West is hardly justified, since it can generate misunderstanding on the part of our BRICS partners, cause unnecessary friction on a value basis and negatively affect the promotion of joint projects and initiatives.

However, turning to the ideas of a civilizational approach can also play a constructive role. Such attitudes, in particular, can be used to represent BRICS as an alliance of civilizations based on the imperatives of dialogue and consensus. This approach not only corresponds to the principles of unification, but will also contribute to enhancing the significance and role of BRICS in the formation of a new, fair and truly polycentric world order. ■

BRICS leaders' joint photo session ceremony at the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan





# Think like an intelligence officer

## How to develop creative thinking

Text: Anna Michurina and Irina Mirova



**Creative thinking is the ability to see the world from a different angle, generate non-standard ideas and proposals, and find original solutions to complex problems.**

In today's world of total digitalization, where artificial intelligence is being introduced everywhere, and robots are already replacing people at their workplaces, creativity, which machines lack, is in demand more than ever. This rare skill has acquired special significance, and not only for writers, artists and other representatives of creative professions. To be successful, an intelligence officer must also think outside the box, be flexible, and be able to find non-standard techniques and solutions.

In stressful situations which fill our lives, creative thinking sometimes becomes a luxury. Working in a hostile environment, under very tight deadlines, and especially when the issue concerns state security, can be very stressful. But it is important to understand that, even in such conditions, it is possible to show creativity. Creative thinking is not an innate skill; it is easy to develop, train, and then successfully apply in all areas of life.

We suggest adopting several practical methods used by secret services to find creative solutions. Perhaps they will be useful for you, too, allowing you to find a way out of a difficult situation.

### Look for inspiration everywhere

Future intelligence officers are taught to look at a problem broadly, using methods of comparison, metaphor and analogy. Try to draw a parallel between your task and any object from the surrounding world. Start thinking: what do they have in common? The object can be random, in this case it's even more interesting! Name all the associations that this object provokes in

your mind, apply its qualities to the task you are facing with. Perhaps something will push you to the right train of thought.

**Remember:** ideas do not come out of nowhere, the thought process should be stimulated. Spend a few minutes a day on such activities. Gradually, your brain will start to produce unusual associations and interesting thoughts on its own.

### Explore what is beyond your understanding

In order to solve some problems, we are forced to step outside our comfort zones. A simple creative tool to help you to do this is to ask yourself, "What can I learn or borrow from another profession?" List professions that are far from yours and think about how they might help you in solving your problem. How would a cook or a musician handle it, for example? The more different the profession is from yours, the more likely it is that new thoughts and ideas will come to you mind.

### Reformulate the problem or question

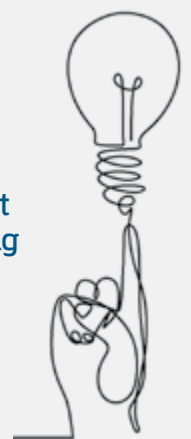
We do many things almost without thinking, based on the principle of "the common way". But what if we question our initial assumptions? Sometimes this helps to find a new perspective on the problem.

To begin with, try to reframe the problem by asking questions that will force your brain to think about new possibilities rather than right or wrong answers. During 10 minutes, write down everything that comes to your mind about the problem, without stopping. Then try to challenge your own assumptions and consider all the alternative points of view. You may already be close to solving it. *If you want to get creative answers, ask creative questions!*

To expand your knowledge and horizons, consume information from various fields, read articles, books and magazines of different genres, listen to music and podcasts. Explore everything that interests you, from cryptozoology to space architecture — for the development of creativity, this is equally effective.

One day, an analyst who was working for secret services and searching for terrorists, got into a conversation with a photographer in a park who was taking pictures of a rare duck. The photographer gave him some advice: "These birds are easy to find if you know where to look. They have a different migration pattern than ordinary ducks. They nest in hollows like squirrels." The analyst realized that he might have been looking for his target in a wrong place at a wrong time. After adjusting his search methods, he scored a success.

**Don't be lazy to do such exercises, they really work!**



Perseus, the hero of Ancient Greek myths, defeated the Gorgon Medusa, who killed with a single glance, looking into a shield polished to a shine. **THINK**, how could this problem have been solved differently?

### Abandon some habits

Routine actions can be useful — after all, no one wants to reinvent the wheel every day or find a new way to cook eggs. But routine suppresses creativity. Therefore, whenever possible, patterns should be broken, and new solutions to ordinary problems should be looked for. It is useful, when you face with a standard, routine task, to ask yourself the question: "Can I do this in a different way?"

### Do something new every day

One of effective ways to develop creative thinking is to try something new every day. Anything: a new dish, a new movie, a new book, a new hobby, a new place to go for a walk to, etc. Another good way is to communicate with different people with different views, knowledge, experience and interests. By trying something new every day, you broaden your horizons. All this helps to improve creative skills, as you learn to see the world in a new way and find unexpected connections and solutions.



# From the frontline to the foreign intelligence service

Text: Maxim Ktorov

The Great Patriotic War became a terrible ordeal for the whole our country and its people. Having defeated fascism, the Soviet Union found itself facing new external challenges and threats issuing from both recent adversaries and a number of former allies in the anti-Hitler coalition. In order to counter them efficiently, Red Army soldiers and commanders and Chekist veterans with behind-the-frontline experience came to serve in intelligence after the Victory. Throughout the postwar decades they were the core of foreign intelligence staff.

When the war was spending its force, a number of the best commanders and fighters of the Special Purpose Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (SMRB of Special Purpose), disbanded in October 1945 and subordinated to the 4th Directorate of the NKVD — NKGB USSR, were assigned to disposition of the 1st Directorate of the NKGB (foreign intelligence) headed by Lieutenant General Pavel Mikhailovich Fitin. They, who had distinguished themselves during the war in intelligence and sabotage missions in the enemy rear, now were

to continue serving in peacetime intelligence.

For example, the regular border guard Mikhail Sidorovich Prudnikov commanded the SMRB of Special Purpose at the height of the Battle of Moscow. From February 1942 to June 1943, he headed the Chekist-partisan special detachment "Neulovimyye" ("The Uncatchable Ones") acting successfully in the Vitebsk and Baranovichi regions of Belarus. In September 1943, 30-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Prudnikov was

awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union and appointed Chief of Staff of the SMRB of Special Purpose. Then he served in the central office of the 4th Directorate of the USSR NKGB, and after the Victory, he held senior positions in the foreign intelligence offices in East Germany and Bulgaria. In 1970–1974, Major General M.S. Prudnikov was one of the commanders of the USSR KGB Border Troops intelligence, and after retiring he devoted himself to creative work. The feature films "Kak vas teper nazyvat?" ("What Should



M.S. Prudnikov

We Call You Now?") and "Olenya okhota" ("Deer Hunting") based on his scripts about the real operations of the "Neulovimyye" detachment, are known and appreciated to this day.

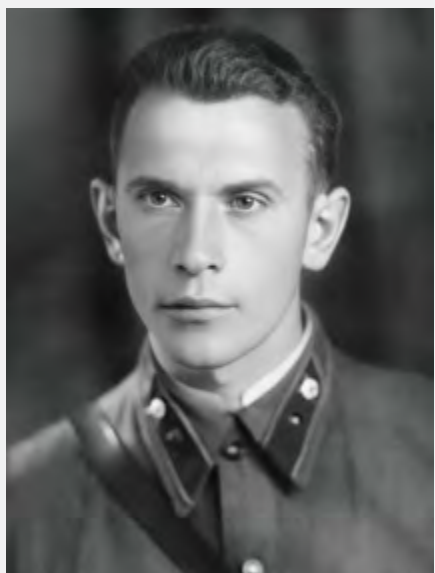
Yevgeny Ivanovich Mirkovsky, M.S. Prudnikov's fellow border guard, commanded an SMRB of Special Purpose company in 1941. From March 1942 to October 1944 he headed the Chekist-partisan intelligence group "Khodoki", who marched three thousand kilometers through the enemy rear from Oryol region through all of Ukraine, Belarus and Poland. In November 1944, 40-year-old Lieutenant Colonel Mirkovsky, among those being the best commanders of the front-line detachments of the 4th Directorate, was awarded the title Hero of the Soviet Union and was enrolled



Y.I. Mirkovsky

in foreign intelligence cadres. After the Victory, Yevgeny Mirkovsky operated efficiently in Europe, and in 1953–1955 he headed one of the departments of the central apparatus.

At the same time as Mirkovsky, the Chekist border guard Viktor Aleksandrovich Karasev became a Hero of the Soviet Union too. In 1942–1945, he commanded the "Olymp" special unit, where two future prominent Soviet illegal intelligence agents served: Mikhail Ivanovich Filonenko and Aleksey Nikolayevich Botyan. The commissar of "Olymp" M.I. Filonenko, who received the Order of the Red Banner for his work behind the front lines back in the midst of the Battle of Moscow, from 1948 to 1960 together with his wife and partner Anna Kamayeva carried out spe-



M.I. Filonenko

cial missions on three continents for which he was awarded the Order of Lenin and two Orders of the Red Banner. A.N. Botyan, the intelligence officer of "Olymp" who was fluent in German, Polish and Czech, successfully operated as a deep-cover agent in Central Europe in the second half of the 1940s, then worked for more than 30 years in the central office and representative offices of the First Main Directorate of the USSR KGB in the Warsaw Pact member countries. On his 90th birthday's eve in 2007, Colonel A.N. Botyan was awarded the high title of Hero of Russia for the total of his achievements.

In 1942–1944 two female participants in the Spanish Civil War, a local native Africa de las Heras and an Odessa native Simona Isaakovna Krimker,





Africa de las Heras

served in the Chekist special forces unit "Pobediteli" ("The Victorious") that operated in Western Ukraine under the command of Colonel Dmitry Nikolaevich Medvedev, another Hero of the Soviet Union. They both were radio operators for the legendary Soviet intelligence officer Nikolai Ivanovich Kuznetsov, Hero of the Soviet Union, who operated in occupied Rivne and Lviv under the name of Wehrmacht officer Paul Siebert. After the Victory the commander of the "Pobediteli" D.N. Medvedev retired and became a military writer, and his former subordinates Africa and Simona, together with their husbands, continued to work as illegals in Western Europe and Latin America.

In June 1946 P.M. Fitin was replaced as head of the Soviet foreign intelligence by Lieutenant General Pyotr Nikolaevich Kubatkin, who had headed the NKVD-NKGB Directorate in besieged Leningrad during the war. Following him, a group of Leningrad Chekists came to work to the central office. Many of them had battle decorations — orders and medals. Aleksandr Mikhailovich Sakharovsky, who headed the intelligence depart-



S. I. Krimker

ment of the Leningrad NKVD Directorate during the war and foreign intelligence in 1955–1971, Aleksey Alekseyevich Krokhin, veteran of the Special Departments of the Leningrad Military District and future resident in Paris, and Andrey Vasilyevich Krasavin, counterintelligence officer who played an important role in the creation of Soviet electronic intelligence, deserve special mentioning.



P. N. Kubatkin

At that difficult for the Soviet Union post-war period, marked with reforms and personnel changes, a number of officers with rich front-line experience filled top-level posts at the NKGB. Thus, in 1949, Colonel Ivan Anisimovich Fadeikin, 32-year-old graduate of the M.V. Frunze Military Academy, was appointed as a representative of foreign intelligence in the office of the USSR MGB Commissioner in East Germany. At the beginning of the war he started as a commissar of a rifle regiment, then commanded a regiment and division. He was three times wounded and four times decorated with an order at the front. I.A. Fadeikin served a quarter of a century in intelligence service. He became the head of the "German" department, then a resident in Tehran.

In the autumn of 1954 Colonel Fyodor Konstantinovich Mortin, a graduate of the Military Diplomatic Academy, was appointed deputy head of the newly formed First Main Directorate (PGU) of the KGB of the USSR. During the war he served as the head of the political department of the 102nd separate marine brigade, which played an important role



A. M. Sakharovsky

in breaching the siege of Leningrad in January 1943. In 1971, Lieutenant General F.K. Mortin replaced Colonel General A.M. Sakharovsky as head of the PGU, and headed it until November 1974.

Another graduate of the Military Diplomatic Academy, Colonel Mikhail Stepanovich Dokuchayev came to foreign intelligence in 1959. During wartime he was a private gunman. He fought at Stalingrad, commanded a 45-mm gun crew near Kursk, during the forcing of the Dnieper, liberated Belarus and Poland. In early 1945, 19-year-old Guards Sergeant M.S. Dokuchayev was awarded the high title of Hero of the Soviet Union for personal courage and became one of the youngest participants in the Victory Parade on the Red Square in Moscow on June 24. Then he studied at the Military Institute of Foreign Languages, worked in the encryption services of the Central Committee of the CPSU and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and was sent as an intelligence officer to Southern European countries. Having risen to the rank of major general, M.S. Dokuchayev became one of



I. A. Fadeikin



M. S. Dokuchayev

the leaders of the unit responsible for foreign counterintelligence, and ended his career in 1989 as deputy head of the 9th Directorate of the KGB of the USSR (protection of senior officials).

Other PGU leaders who came to foreign intelligence service having frontline experience should be mentioned as well. Kursk native Vadim



F. K. Mortin



V. A. Kirpichenko

Alekseevich Kirpichenko was among them. In 1940, he entered the Kursk 4th Special Air Force School, which he graduated from in 1942 being already in evacuation. Despite his desire to go to the front, he was sent to continue his studies at the Air Force Engineering Academy. Only in 1944, after numerous reports 22-year-old Senior Sergeant V.A. Kirpichenko was transferred to the legendary 103rd Guards Airborne Division. Within its ranks, in early 1945, the future intelligence officer participated in bloody battles in Hungary near Lake Balaton, for which he received the Medal "For Courage".

Upon demobilization he studied Arabic at the Moscow Institute of Oriental Studies, and in 1952 V.A. Kirpichenko as an excellent student and party organizer was recommended for a job in foreign intelligence. Upon completing special training at the Higher Intelligence School, he went on missions to the Arab East three times, and in 1974–1979 he headed illegal intelligence. In 1979 Lieutenant General Kirpichenko became the first deputy head of the First Main Directorate of the KGB of the USSR,





Y. I. Drozdov

remaining at his post until 1991. After retirement he kept on working, now in the Foreign Intelligence Service of Russia, he was in charge of a team of consultants reporting to Director. In parallel, he took up writing, heading the author team of a multi-volume edition entitled "Essays on the History of Russian Intelligence". The books entitled "From the Archive of an Intelligence Officer" and "Intelligence — Faces and Personalities" also came from his pen.

Major General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov who was V.A. Kirpichenko's successor as the Head of illegal intelligence, also fought in the Great Patriotic War. His biography is described in more detail in one of the articles in this issue, so we will tell about him briefly now. Yu. I. Drozdov was born in 1925 in Minsk in the family of a career officer. He graduated from a special artillery school and the Leningrad Artillery School. Since the summer of 1944 he commanded a fire platoon in anti-tank artillery on the 1st Belorussian Front and reached Berlin.

The illegal intelligence officer Konon Trofimovich Molody deserves special



K. T. Molody

mentioning among front-line soldiers. He was born in Moscow in 1922. His father died early, and from 1932 to 1938 Konon Molody lived in the family of his mother's sister in the United States where he mastered his English. Returning to the USSR he graduated from school in Moscow, and in 1940 he was drafted into the Red Army. Having gone through the entire war in an artillery reconnaissance unit on the Western and 3rd Belorussian fronts, K. T. Molody rose to the rank of lieutenant. He was awarded the Order of the Patriotic War of the 1st and 2nd degrees, the Red Star, the medal "For Battle Merit", as well as the special badge "Excellent Scout" established in March 1943.

Upon demobilization K. T. Molody entered the Academy of Foreign Trade in 1946 and after graduation he was immediately invited to serve in illegal intelligence. Having left the country in 1954, Konon Trofimovich worked effectively in Great Britain under the cover of Gordon Longsdale, a successful Canadian native businessman. In 1961, he was arrested through treason and sentenced to 25 years in prison. However, as soon



V. V. Korotkov

as in 1964 he was released, having been exchanged for a British agent caught in the USSR.

Returning to his homeland, Colonel Molody continued to serve in the central apparatus. Unfortunately, the war years and years in prison undermined his health, and he died suddenly in 1970 at the age of 48. After his death his relatives transferred all of K. T. Molody's front-line and post-war awards to the departmental museum of foreign intelligence where they are still on permanent display.

Speaking about the participants of the Great Patriotic War we must mention those who volunteered for the frontline before the conscription age. There was 15-year-old Leonid Pavlovich Bogdanov among them, mechanic of the Moscow aircraft factory, who in February 1943, through to the district committee of the Komсомol, managed to be enrolled in the school of special radio operators of the 4th Directorate of the NKVD of the USSR. October to December 1943, Bogdanov was a radio operator of a reconnaissance group behind the front lines near Kiev, and after

returning from behind the front line he was sent to Kutaisi to the Suvorov Military School of the NKVD. Then he studied at the Moscow Border Military School, served draft tours along the border, entered the Military Diplomatic Academy and was enrolled in the USSR First Main Directorate of the KGB in 1959. In the 1960s and 1970s, Leonid Pavlovich worked abroad in Indonesia, India and Iran, and from 1978 to 1980 he headed the KGB representative office in Afghanistan. Having resigned in 1993, Major General L. P. Bogdanov dedicated his memoirs entitled "Afghan Notebook" to his service and comrades-in-arms.

Vitaly Viktorovich Korotkov was born in the same year as Leonid Bogdanov. In 1943, having failed twice to run away to the front, he finally obtained consent from his father, Viktor Vasilyevich who headed the Armored Directorate of the Central Front, for

him to be voluntarily enlisted in the army's front-line tank repair workshops. Within its ranks 15-year-old Vitaly participated in strategic offensives near Kursk and in Belarus, then completed an accelerated class at the Kiev Higher Tank Technical School and in August 1945 as a technical supply officer of a tank company he managed to fight against the Japanese in the Far East.

Upon demobilization in 1947, V. V. Korotkov entered the Moscow Law Institute and joined the foreign intelligence service in 1951. In the 1950s, Vitaly Viktorovich worked in Germany, where he maintained contact with our most valuable assistant in the central office of the West German intelligence service BND, Heinz Felfe. After the war Felfe voluntarily supplied Moscow with most valuable information for over ten years. In early 1970s, he became one of the

principal consultants for the film series "Seventeen Moments of Spring".

Colonel V. V. Korotkov, having retired in the 1990s after 40 years of impeccable service, made a significant contribution to the patriotic education of youth and the popularization of the work of the INO-PGU-SVR. It is no coincidence that both he and the above-mentioned A. N. Botyan were perpetuated on canvases of portrait series "They Fought for the Motherland" by People's Artist of the USSR Aleksandr Maksovich Shilov's brush. This is what they were — true patriots; they defended the interests and security of the Fatherland unselfishly both on the battlefields and on the fronts of secret wars. ♣

Participants of the Victory Parade.  
Moscow, June 24, 1945







# Foreign intelligence in the Far East

## Commemorating the 80th anniversary of the defeat of militaristic Japan

Text: Alexander Burkov

On September 2, 1945, at nine o'clock in the morning in Tokyo Bay, aboard the USS Missouri, in the presence of a dozen representatives of the Allied Powers, Japanese Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu and the Chief of the Army General Staff Yoshijiro Umezu, on the orders and in the name of Emperor Hirohito, signed the Instrument of Surrender. The Second World War, which had begun six years earlier at the other end of the world, in Europe, was finally over.

The defeat of the Japanese militarists was a natural result of many years of struggle carried out mainly by reconnaissance and sabotage methods. Throughout the war, Moscow and Tokyo were in a fierce confrontation behind the scenes of fragile neutrality. At the invisible front, the Soviet foreign intelligence officers heroically performed their duty, and their contribution to the victory is hard to overestimate. Today, I would like to recall their feats at the Japanese front.

The Japanese, inspired by their success in the Russo-Japanese War of 1905, were eager to get the entire Soviet Far East. As early as 1929, the Memorandum on the Foundations of

a Positive Policy in Manchuria and Mongolia, better known as the Tanaka Memorandum after the name of General Giichi Tanaka, who prepared it for the Emperor of Japan and who held the posts of Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, became public knowledge. The document — the original one was obtained by the Soviet residencies in Seoul and Harbin — envisaged the seizure of Manchuria, China, India, and the countries of Southeast Asia, Asia Minor and Central Asia. It also clearly outlined the need to “*cross swords with Russia again.*”

The main land group of Japanese troops was the Kwantung Army. In

Soviet representative Lieutenant General K.N.Derevyanko signs the Japanese Instrument of Surrender. Tokyo Bay, USS Missouri. September 2, 1945

September 1931, it attacked China. As a result of the aggression, the Japanese took control of the largest cities of the country — Nanjing, Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin, as well as the northeastern lands, which became the puppet state of Manchukuo, by the summer of 1937. After that the Kwantung people twice staged provocations on the borders of the USSR: at Lake Khasan in 1938 and in the area of the Khalkhin-Gol River in 1939. The defeat of the interventionists by





Signing of the Soviet-Japanese  
Neutrality Pact. Moscow.  
April 13, 1941

reach Lake Baikal in six months and force the USSR to capitulate. It was emphasized that the preparations for the attack should be kept secret. For this purpose, mobilization was carried out under the guise of training and was called "special conscription", which, however, did not prevent the Soviet intelligence from finding out the precise number of "conscripts" (see Document 2).

From July 22, 1941, Japan was amassing troops near the Soviet borders. The number of the Kwantung Army was doubled and reached 700 thousand people. In total, about 850 thousand Japanese soldiers and officers were deployed on the territory of Manchuria and Korea, and taking into account the units in Hokkaido, South Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands, the total number of the force which was to attack the Soviet Union reached one million servicemen. The date of the attack was also set — August 10, 1941.

It is worth noting that before Hitler's attack, Soviet foreign intelligence residencies in the Far East had been solving two strategic tasks: to track the machinations of the Japanese militarists against China, Mongolia and the USSR and to keep the central Chinese government actively resisting to Japanese aggression. After June 22, 1941, the main goal of the Soviet intelligence activities was to find out whether Tokyo would enter the war against the USSR and whether the Red Army would have to fight on two fronts.

The most difficult part turned out to be organizing intelligence activities directly in Japan. Japanese counterintelligence put a "tail" on each

with the USSR, they will be reviewed in two years," reported Y. Matsuoka at a meeting of the Japanese Privy Council.

With the start of Hitler's aggression, the Japanese took a wait-and-see attitude, which the Soviet intelligence reported to the Centre as soon as June 26, 1941 (see Document 1 in the "Declassified archives" section). And after the meeting of the Japanese Imperial Cabinet attended by the highest military command the strategic goal was clearly stated: "We will secretly strengthen our military capabilities against the USSR, pursuing an independent stand... If the German-Soviet war develops according to a favorable scenario for our Empire, we will resolve the northern problem militarily..."

Soon practical preparation for the future invasion began. In particular, the "Kantokuen" plan was developed, envisaging defeat of the Red Army in Primorye, the Amur Region and Transbaikalia, and capture of the main communications, military-industrial bases and food depots. The task was to

Soviet troops somewhat sobered up the Tokyo "hawks", but not for long.

On April 13, 1941, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov and Japanese Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka signed the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact in Moscow, which was to be in effect for five years from the date of ratification. Article 1 of the document stated: "Both Contracting Parties undertake to maintain peaceful and friendly relations with each other and mutually respect the territorial integrity and inviolability of the other Contracting party."

At the same time, the USSR leadership was far from being deluded that the threat of invasion of the Far East had been removed. Six months before, in September 1940, Japan had joined the Tripartite Pact, entering into an alliance with Hitler. Thanks to information obtained by the foreign intelligence, the Kremlin knew about the mood in Tokyo. "In the event of a Soviet-German war, Japan will provide assistance to Germany, and Germany to Japan... Despite the improvement of relations

Personnel of the Soviet Embassy in  
Japan (in the middle – Ambassador  
Y.A.Malik), May 9, 1945



Soviet official. One had to operate in an atmosphere of general suspicion and traditional Japanese distrust of foreigners. In 1940, new Soviet residency staff arrived in Tokyo, consisting of a chief of station and two technical officers. All of them were abroad for the first time and did not speak foreign languages. Nevertheless, they managed to recruit several foreigners. Soon they got access to information from Japanese military and political circles. For example, Soviet officers obtained valuable information about the disagreements between representatives of the Japanese Ground Forces and the Navy. The former insisted on an early entry into the war against the USSR. The Japanese Navy Command, which played a significant part in policy making, advocated a priority strike against the United States and aggression against the countries of Southeast Asia (see Document 3).

A large amount of information on Japan came from China, where the 34-year-old Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the USSR in Beijing, and concurrently chief of station, Alexander Semenovich Panyushkin, was assigned to carry out

the missions set. He arrived in China in 1939 and took the lead over 12 "legal" residencies: in Chongqing, Lanzhou, Harbin, Shanghai, and also in eight cities of Xinjiang. The bulk of the work fell to the Chongqing residency, which at that time included only six employees. Information on a wide variety of topics was to be collected and analyzed: from the redeployment of Japanese military units to forecasts of the rice harvest in China, from the Kuomintang leadership's plans to the White émigré community's mood (see Documents 4, 5). Soviet intelligence officers reg-

ularly and fully informed the Center about the main problems of Chinese domestic and foreign policy, the position of Chiang Kai-shek and his entourage towards the USSR, the USA and Japan, and pro-Japanese and pro-German groups' activities in the Chinese government.

A.S. Panyushkin, using his high diplomatic status, regularly met with the Chinese leadership and leaders of the Communist Party. In large part, his efforts allowed to prevent the civil war between the Kuomintang and the Chinese communists that was brewing in 1941 and would undoubtedly have played into Tokyo's hands. At the same time, he established confidential relationship with a number of powerful figures who stood for strengthening friendship with the USSR and continuing the anti-Japanese war. Among them was one of Chiang Kai-shek's deputies in the military committee of the central government of China, Marshal Feng Yuxiang, as well as the closest relatives of the founder of the Kuomintang, Sun Yat-sen — the son Sun Fo and the widow Soong Qingling.



Aleksandr Semenovich  
Panyushkin

In 1939–1944 he was the USSR Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to China and at the same time the NKVD Chief of Station, was in charge of 12 residencies of the foreign intelligence in China. In 1953–1955 he was the head of the First Main Directorate of the KGB of the USSR, a major general.





Our intelligence officers were also active in Mongolia. Thus, the Soviet resident, Nikolai Samoylovich Fridgut, began organizing intelligence raids on the territory of Inner Mongolia (China) as early as in June 1941. The goal of those operations was to capture Japanese "tongues" (in Russian military slang, «tongue» is an enemy soldier captured for interrogation) and obtain reliable information about Tokyo's plans.

While conducting intelligence activities, N.S. Fridgut relied on Soviet Khori-Buryats (the largest subethnos of the Buryat people) from among the students of the Buryat-Mongolian University to carry out special tasks. It is worth noting that in Mongolia,

meetings with agents had their own specifics. Soviet intelligence officers traveled on camels and horses across the god-forsaken Gobi Desert, returning from assignments only on the tenth to twentieth day of an exhausting and dangerous raid.

There was almost nowhere to hide from prying eyes on the rolling desert plateau. Sandstorms changed the terrain beyond recognition. The temperature range varied from minus 55°C to plus 58°C during the year. When an operative reached the point of contact, he first of all set up a defensive position — a machine-gun nest. Fierce firefights with sabotage groups and combat guards of the Kwantung Army or detachments of

Inhabitants of the freed Harbin meet Red Army soldiers. August 19, 1945

the Mongol collaborationist prince De Wan, the ruler of the puppet state of Mengjiang, which was loyal to the Japanese, would often take place. In such harsh conditions, one had to wait for the source for several days, and sometimes even weeks.

The intelligence units of the Kwantung Army, in its turn, often organized offensive reconnaissance. Its sabotage and intelligence department sent spies and saboteurs into the Soviet rear, recruited from among Russian White émigrés, primarily the so called "Semyonovites" and representatives of the minor nationalities inhabiting the Far East. The total number of such formations could reach 500 people, so unpublicized clashes on the Japanese front began long before the victorious August-September of 1945.

Soviet residencies in Asia were not the only ones who carried out intelligence activities on the Japanese front; residencies in the USA and European capitals were also actively involved. The most important station which obtained valuable information about the Japanese intentions was in London. The Cambridge Five members, John Cairncross, Kim Philby and Donald Maclean, had access to the correspondence of the Japanese Foreign Ministry with its missions in Europe, deciphered at the British radio interception center Bletchley Park.

In December 1941, when the Nazis were 20 kilometers from Moscow, and the Red Army badly needed reserves from behind the Urals, Kim Philby passed to Moscow the contents of a message from Tokyo addressed to the Japanese ambassador in Berlin, General H. Oshima:



Kim Philby

*"Explain to Hitler that the main Japanese efforts will be concentrated in the South, and we intend to refrain from taking deliberate action in the North" (see Document 6).*

In 1941–1942, as many as over 30 intelligence reports came to the State Defense Committee from various Soviet residencies on the request to find out whether Japan would enter the war with the USSR, half of them during the critical period of the first months of the war.

The military actions in the Pacific Ocean that began after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor mitigated the danger of intervention in the Far East. Incidentally, the Soviet residency in Tokyo reported to the Center about a possible attack on this particular American base back in February 1941 (see Document 7). However, Berlin continued to put pressure on Tokyo, insisting on immediate military activities against the USSR. Under the circumstances,

Tokyo Bay. USS Missouri. September 2, 1945



John Cairncross

tracking the Japanese threat was still on the agenda until the crushing defeat of the Nazis on the Kursk Bulge in the summer of 1943.

On February 11, 1945, at the Yalta Conference, the Soviet Union pledged to enter the war against Japan two to three months after the final defeat of Hitler. To meet this

commitment, on April 5, Moscow denounced the Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact, and on August 8, 1945, declared war on Tokyo.

Thanks to the professionalism of the Soviet intelligence officers, the Red Army command was well informed about the enemy's disposition. Many of them personally were involved in fighting. Chekist task forces helped to capture a large number of high-ranking Japanese military and intelligence agents. Thus, the commander of the Kwantung Army, General Otozo Yamada, the head of the army's intelligence department, Colonel Saburo Asada, the White Guard General Grigory Semenov, the head of the Russian Fascist Union Konstantin Rodzaevsky and many others were taken prisoner.

And then came September 2 with the gloomy faces of the Japanese representatives silently signing the Instrument of Surrender on the deck of the USS Missouri, and the Emperor's decree of complete and unconditional surrender, which was announced all over the country. 🚩





# Special purpose intelligence officer

On the 100th Anniversary of Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov

"Friendly envy for the guys from the intelligence service appeared during the war, when officers in German uniforms went through the positions of our division behind the front line. It was then that the thought stuck in the head of a nineteen-year-old boy like a splinter: "These here people went to do really serious work"..."

From the memoirs of Yu.I. Drozdov

Interest in illegal spies never wanes. Their biographies, in most cases not subject to disclosure, arouse genuine interest. Fortunately, a number of heroes get a chance to come out of the shadows and their exploits become public property. One of them is Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov, whose centenary we celebrate this year.

Yuri Ivanovich is rightfully considered one of the best intelligence officers in the world. It is not for nothing that even opponents of the Cold War spoke highly of him, calling him a "living legend of the Soviet intelligence". Many articles have been written about Drozdov, dozens of interviews have been taken, and a lot of footage has been filmed telling about his life, participation in the war, and work in intelligence. In this publication, we decided to give the opportunity

to tell what an amazing person Yuri Ivanovich was to those who had the chance to know him personally.

### Commander

The farewell party began on January 24, 1987, at 15:00. There was an all-male company in the apartment. As usual, I felt like a fish in an aquarium: those gathered knew literally everything about me, and I knew only their first and middle names. This situation was no longer a burden, because over the years of training I had become accustomed to not asking unnecessary questions. In intelligence, it is not customary to disclose the positions and ranks of senior comrades who regularly met with me to assess my progress. And I began to hone my skills as an illegal intelligence officer: I observed the peculiarities of my

colleagues' communication, looked for a key to guessing their position in the Service hierarchy.

At such meetings I was always asked many questions: about the degree of my readiness to transform into a foreigner and carry out the Center's tasks; problems in preparation; tactics and strategy for finding sources of information; the necessary assistance to the family. I tried to seem self-confident and assured the curators of my determination to cope with any, even the most difficult assignments.

The farewell party initially followed the familiar scenario. But after about half an hour, one of the senior colleagues suddenly went into another room to answer the phone. Returning, he said that "He" was late and

### Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov

Was born in Minsk on September 19, 1925. After finishing school in Kharkov, in the summer of 1943, he began serving in the Red Army. In 1944, he graduated from the 1st Leningrad Artillery School named after Red October. He participated in the Great Patriotic War, stormed Berlin.

Until 1952, he served in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany and in the Baltic Military District as an assistant to the regimental chief of staff. In 1956, he graduated from the Military Institute of Foreign Languages and was sent to serve in the KGB. He began his operational career in the KGB representative office of the USSR at the MGB of the GDR. He spoke German fluently. He participated in the operation to exchange the Soviet illegal intelligence officer W.G. Fisher for the American pilot F. Powers.

From 1964 to 1968, he headed the station in China. From 1968 to 1975, he worked in the central office of the PGU, KGB USSR, Deputy Head of Directorate "S". From 1975 to 1979 he headed the station in New York. In 1979 - 1991, as Deputy Head of the PGU, he headed the "S" Directorate..

Participant in the war in Afghanistan. Coordinated the assault on Amin's palace (Operation Storm-333). Came up with the initiative to create the Vypel special forces unit and brought this project to life. In 1991, with the rank of major general, he retired from active service. He headed the NAMAKON analytical center, which he organized, and wrote books. Honorary President of the Association of Veterans of Special Forces and Intelligence Services "Vypel-Soyuz". He died on June 21, 2017. He was buried with military honors at the Troekurovskoye Cemetery in Moscow.





He greeted me simply: *"Yuri Ivanovich!"* and extended his hand. A firm handshake, an attentive look of piercing eyes, which, having fixed something in me, suddenly became cheerful again. His warm, calm smile gave a feeling of something long familiar, close. At that moment I thought: *"A professional!"*

He invited me to go with him into the next room and have a conversation *"just the two of us, completely frankly, so as not to embarrass the others."* We sat down in comfortable chairs and Yuri Ivanovich asked me in a particularly confidential and simple manner whether I felt ready to carry out the mission. I must say that I considered myself completely ready and I declared it right out. And he continued asking questions, finding out the reasons for my confidence. He asked about the intricacies of communicating in my new "native" language, the ability to make and maintain acquaintances. We discussed my skills in obtaining information and transmitting it to the Center, the need to show persistence and perseverance, overcome difficulties, be creative and careful in operational activities.

Somehow, in just 20–25 minutes of conversation, he managed to check my readiness in most key areas so that I had the full feeling of talking to an experienced mentor, a senior comrade, and not a big boss. I understood that before the meeting he had studied my file in detail and skillfully directed the conversation to the topics he needed, showing the degree of my readiness in critical areas, and that the most important thing for him was to assess my mood, to feel my confidence in my ability to complete the task.

After 25 years of successful work as a deep-cover intelligence officer, I can say that the most valuable parting words from Yuri Ivanovich were

suggested that we start lunch. The comrades left the seat in the center of the table unoccupied, and I was invited to sit opposite. Toasts began to sound. As always, everyone only sipped their glasses, but the general conversation was not very energetic — they were clearly waiting for something or someone important.

When the doorbell rang, everyone immediately stood up, left the table,

straightened their ties and positioned themselves so that I was in front of everyone. The most senior, by my calculations, colleague left the room and soon returned with an elderly, tall, slender, bald man with a high forehead and cheerful, lively, intelligent blue eyes. His demeanor conveyed self-confidence, inner composure and discipline. A thought flashed through my mind: *"A professor."*



With his wife Lyudmila. 1946

the words: *"Remember, colleague, your contribution can and should be invaluable for the Motherland, and your most important assistant will be the Center. When things get difficult and you need help, advice or support, inquire, ask, share without hesitation. We are one team and will do almost everything for your success! You will succeed. Go ahead!"*

At that time, none of the comrades mentioned Drozdov's position, and I was embarrassed to ask. Only one word stuck in my head: *"A commander!"*

Sergei Mikhailovich,  
deep-cover intelligence officer,  
Hero of Russia

With deep-cover intelligence  
officers Vitaly and Lyudmila Nuykin.  
The vicinities of Moscow. Mid 1980s

## A sly smile

I first met Yuri Ivanovich when my husband and I returned from a trial trip. I immediately liked his manner of conversation, his penetrating gaze and kind smile with such a subtle slyness. He listened to us attentively, asked several clarifying questions, commented on our actions. At the end of the conversation, he thanked us for the precise fulfillment of the assigned tasks and wished us success in our work. He knew how to listen to his interlocutor and could immediately give a recommendation or a specific solution to the issue.

Despite his high position and being extremely busy, he was very open and accessible for communication, tried to find time for everyone. A year after returning from the mission, I began working at the Center and communicated with him regularly. It was not always necessary to make an appointment. Sometimes I would come and ask the person on duty: *"Is he there? — Yes. — Alone? — Alone. — Yuri Ivanovich, may I? — Come in!"*

It seems to me that Drozdov never scolded anyone at all. I never saw him irritated or speaking in a raised voice with his employees. But he could describe the situation in such a way that it immediately became clear: you are wrong! Or in the course of a conversation he would say: *"You know, guys, here you did not act quite correctly..."* And immediately you would somehow even feel ashamed...

Yuri Ivanovich was very knowledgeable about his work, he knew how to approach any problem from the right side, not at random. Being a friendly person, he always emphasized that those he led were extremely dear to him. I felt in my heart that he truly loved us, the deep-cover intelligence officers. I remember once we were celebrating Drozdov's birthday and the new head of our unit asked: *"Yuri Ivanovich, tell me, how one should work with illegals?"* He answered without hesitation: *"Only on equal terms!"*

Lyudmila Ivanovna Nuykina,  
deep-cover intelligence officer





Ideal leader

A true leader must lead — this fully applies to Drozdov. Yuri Ivanovich was not one of those who strive to stand out, to attract attention. He spoke quietly and calmly, but when you communicated with him, you immediately had a strong feeling: he is a leader.

A boss must take responsibility — he really did. A typical example. One of our illegals needed to come to his homeland for a short time to resolve personal issues. We thought out the route. But the security department thought that there was a chance that he could come to the attention of the enemy's special services. I reported the situation to Yuri Ivanovich. He posed a number of clarifying questions and asked: *"Who approves the route?" — "You."* — *"Then put this route in the assignment. I will take responsibility. If you did everything right, then we will succeed. If not, it's me who will be punished."* And we knew that he would never let down his subordinates if something was done with his approval.

A good boss knows how to thank. Drozdov did this regularly and with pleasure. His "thank you" meant a lot. I have personal experience here too. Once I was assigned to write an analytical review. I shoveled through a mountain of material, prepared a document on 25 pages, gave it to him and forgot about it. And suddenly in a service elevator I met Yuri Ivanovich. He said loudly in front of everyone: *"Seryoga, thank you! That's a good review you've written!"* For me, this was the best encouragement. There were other people in the elevator who looked at me with respect — not everyone would receive thanks in such a simple way by the head of Department "S".

A good boss takes care of his main resource — his employees. Yuri Iva-



In his study, 1980s

novich, like no one else, valued people. I became convinced that every illegal he met thought they were the center of attention and that Drozdov was constantly thinking only about them.

Everyone was amazed by his phenomenal memory. He could suddenly remember: *"What's going on with so-and-so?"* It could be an old contact, but Drozdov would immediately come up with both the nickname and the key details. Or he would suddenly ask: *"What did we say about this at the last meeting? And before that?"* This disciplined. Especially when it turned out that you had forgotten something, and he remembered everything. How awkward! It should be noted that Yuri Ivanovich not only relied on his memory, but also always carefully prepared for any meetings.

Balance is another quality of a good boss. Drozdov was reserved and knew how to maintain his compo-

sure. Of course, he could give someone a dressing down, for a reason, of course. But always calmly, without shouting or getting personal. Although, in general, he was considered an authoritarian leader.

Readiness for change, flexibility of thinking are also important qualities of a good leader. Yuri Ivanovich not only knew where and how to get information, he himself was constantly gaining knowledge. And the boss must also be friendly. Drozdov treated us, ordinary employees, with respect and goodwill. In an amazing way, he combined kindness and gentleness with determination and firmness. He was always cordial, did not distance himself and did not show that he was a cut above us. We appreciated his openness, sense of humor and the highest professionalism. In general, if there was some kind of test for an ideal leader, Yuri Ivanovich would undoubtedly score 10 out of 10.

Sergei Sergeevich Yakovlev, retired SVR major general

Interview

In February 1986, a resident of one of the southern regions of the Soviet Union was invited to Moscow for an interview about possible employment with the KGB of the USSR. The young man had no idea that the interview would involve work in intelligence. The meeting took place in a hotel on the outskirts of the capital. The "Southerner" timidly knocked on the door of a room on the eighth floor. The door opened and he entered the room. Three middle-aged men were sitting at the table. They introduced themselves, but the guest, in his excitement, did not remember a single name.

After a brief greeting, the eldest man asked the "Southerner" if he was ready to answer a few questions. The guest nodded, and the interview began, during which the young man answered all the questions asked of him in the negative. At that moment, he thought that the conversation was over, that he would not get a job in Moscow, and was about to leave the room, when suddenly the "Senior" confidently said: *"I see that you are suitable for us!"*

A little embarrassed, the "Southerner" noted that he was hardly suitable, since he had not studied Russian. To which the "Senior" smiled and said: *"You don't say so! This is your main advantage over the Slavs."* And to the puzzled question of how not knowing the language could be an advantage, he replied: *"You will never have a Slavic accent."*

The young man still couldn't figure out what it meant, but he didn't ask any more questions, because the "Senior", pointing to a chair and saying *"Now let's talk about something serious!"*, began asking the "Southerner" what he knew about illegal intelligence. The guest honestly admitted that he didn't know that it was



Y.I. Drozdov (in the background, right) during an operative task. Berlin. February 9, 1962

currently in place, because, in his opinion, it had been only used during the Great Patriotic War.

The "Senior" said that today this work was even more relevant, and intelligence really needed promising young people. He continued: *"We believe that you have all the qualities for this."* The "Southerner", taken aback, pointed out that he had neither the relevant knowledge nor the skills. To which the "Senior", smiling broadly, replied: *"We Russians have a saying about this: 'It is not the gods who burn the pots!'"* Having calmed down a little, the young man asked what exactly was required of him. The answer was short but capacious: *"Be ready to dedicate your life to an important cause for the good of the Fatherland!" — "Yes, I am ready!"* The "Senior" continued: *"Now we need to decide with whom you can share the content of our conversation,"* and immediately added, *"Preferably with no one."*

The "Southerner" wondered how he would announce his decision at work,

With his beloved granddaughter Anastasiya, 1997

especially since he occupied a rather high position for his age in the institution. The "Senior" said: *"These are things that will be discussed with you in detail later,"* and switched to operational issues. In particular, he asked what professions attracted the young man, what region of the world he could go to. The entire conversation lasted about an hour, and as a result it was decided that the "Southerner" would resign, and explain to his parents and friends that he had been offered a more serious job in Moscow. The curators would take care of the rest.

Upon his return, the "Southerner" was met by local security officers who joyfully announced that he would soon be sent for special training. They questioned the young man for a long time about who had spoken to him, but he could not answer, as he was too excited to remember their names. When he described those present, it became clear that the offer to work in illegal intelligence was made to him personally by the deputy head of the KGB First Main Directorate — the head of Directorate "S" Major General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov.

"Southerner", deep-cover intelligence officer





## A real officer

I remember our first meeting, when he was still head of the department. We gathered for a working meeting, Yuri Ivanovich shared his thoughts about his upcoming business trip. At that time, he seemed too strict to me, very tenacious and purposeful, concerned that his time was not wasted.

For me, he is one of the dearest people in our profession. In his person, I think, for the first time I met such a large-scale figure. The man is a colossus! A real statesman.

He always considered himself part of a team, knew how to work in a team, and inspire others. He was calm about other people's mistakes, and easily admitted his own. On a personal level, he was very modest. He did not tolerate smut and vulgarity. He swore very rarely, but right on target. He could, if necessary.

He was almost never wrong about people. He liked to look closely at them, listened without interrupting. During a conversation, he looked them in the eye. A squinting, attentive look. He smiled a lot, and that's



With Evald Kozlov. 1970s

why his face was covered with small wrinkles, especially the rays near his eyes. He laughed more often with his eyes, rarely out loud. He had a great sense of humor. He could joke even in a situation when it was hard to even think about it.

I remember in Afghanistan, after the storming of Amin's palace, a conscript soldier mistakenly fired at our car. He hit the glass, but didn't hurt anyone. Drozdov asked to stop near

the officer who was cursing at the soldier. He introduced himself, smiled and jokingly thanked him: *"Thank you for the quality of your combat and political training!"* In response to a puzzled silent question, he continued: *"Thank you for not teaching him how to shoot accurately."* Then he added: *"And the fact that he fired without thinking is also not bad — a brave guy. Shoot your own — strangers will be afraid."*

He demanded to be told only the truth, even if it was unpleasant. If a subordinate took responsibility and answered for the matter, then he respected him even if there were mistakes. He was always ready to stand up for his people, never abandoned or let anyone down. He could not tolerate uncertainty and cowardice. He could not stand idlers and scoundrels.

He was happy about common success. In the 1980s, Vympel conducted exercises in Belarus. Our fighters had to penetrate closed cities, gain a foothold there, and infiltrate restricted facilities. When Drozdov asked about the results, my answer puzzled him: several people had already reported the successful completion of the mission. *"Wow,"* Yuri Ivanovich laughed, *"be a bit more modest."* But it was clear that he was proud of us.

Yuri Ivanovich is an example of service to the Fatherland, one of the few officers who could say with dignity: *"I have the honor!"*

Evald Grigorievich Kozlov,  
veteran of the Vympel group,  
Hero of the Soviet Union

The morning after the storming of Amin's palace.  
Afghanistan. December 28, 1979

## Genius

The earth rarely gives birth to such people. Yuri Ivanovich was a genius in many ways: as an operative of the illegal intelligence service, and then as its leader. One of his most striking features was his unconventionality in decisions and actions. Drozdov always followed paradox, not logic.

He often came to our training, watched who I, as the group leader, selected to carry out the task. He assessed my choice, gave his practical advice. He used the same approach in working with illegals. He personally met with everyone who was being trained to work in special conditions, and had long conversations.

Once I shared with Yuri Ivanovich a phrase that my first mentor said when I first joined the service, and which I remembered for the rest of my life: *"There are no hopeless situations, there are hopeless people. And we should not be like them!"* Drozdov laughed: *"Exactly! I have always said that a 'Vympel' soldier does not know the word 'impossible'. There is no task that you cannot complete."* And he really did everything in his power to ensure that there were no impossible tasks for the intellectual special forces.

Valery Vladimirovich Popov,  
President of the Vympel Group Association

## We really need you!

We first met Yuri Ivanovich in 1989, when I came to Moscow for a short time on business. I must say that the day before our meeting I visited the grave of my mentor Africa de Las Heras, our dear "Patria", who passed away while my husband and I were on a mission. And I was very upset by the state of the grave and the lack of a monument on it. Drozdov



With deep-cover intelligence officer  
Tamara Netyksa. 2000s

immediately sensed my mood and asked what was the matter. After listening, he said with a stern face that he knew nothing and that he would take measures to correct this, in his words, regrettable situation.

At the same meeting, he asked me to share my memories of "Patria". I talked a lot, he asked clarifying questions. I remember he liked the story about how Alexander Mikhailovich Korotkov (*the head of illegal intelligence in the 1940s — editor's note*), seeing off "Patria" on a mission, had spent a day with her at the airport because the plane was delayed. When I was leaving, Yuri Ivanovich also personally saw me off to the ramp. And soon news came from the Center that the monument had been erected...

Yuri Ivanovich was exceptionally caring towards us, illegals. He was always interested in our children, relatives, asked if there were any

personal requests or wishes. After our assignment, we would meet often. He had a rare gift of being happy about other people's successes, listened very attentively to his interlocutor, and sincerely empathized.

Once I told him about that terrible day when we learned of the collapse of the Soviet Union. About how Vitaly and I almost gave up, because we did not understand what would happen to us next, whether Moscow needed the information we had worked so hard to obtain. And about the long-awaited telegram from the Center, which we received two days later: *"Everything remains as before, we really need you!"* I knew that formally Yuri Ivanovich could not have signed it, because by December 1991 he had already been retired for several months. But I had no doubt that it was Drozdov who had taken care to send it. And he only smiled slyly with his "trademark" smile and said nothing.

Tamara Ivanovna Netyksa,  
deep-cover intelligence officer





**September 2025 marks the 100th anniversary of the successful completion of the unique operational game “Trust” by Soviet Chekists. The main idea, like that of the preceding “Syndicate-1” and “Syndicate-2”, was personally formulated by F. E. Dzerzhinsky: “...immediately begin establishing fictitious White Guard organizations to identify foreign agents on our territory as quickly as possible”. “Razvedchik” has studied the archives and cleared out the details.**

The Civil War had ended. Having successfully broken the ring of intervention, the Soviet Republic began building a socialist future. However, abroad, remnants of the White Guard and political émigrés, totaling up to two million people, harbored plans to restore the monarchy. They united into various organizations, funded and controlled by Western intelligence services, using espionage, sabotage, and outright terrorist methods for their own purposes.

Under these circumstances, the fight against White emigration became

a priority task for the leadership of the Cheka-OGPU. The employees of the Foreign Department (INO) of the Cheka (foreign intelligence) and the Counterintelligence Department (KRO) of the OGPU actively participated in finding a solution.

#### “Syndicate-1”

The target of the operation was the émigré political organization “Center of Action”, founded in Paris in late 1920. It was led by N. Vakar, a former leader of the former Duma Constitutional Democrats Party (Kadets), Gen-

eral N. Monkewitz, the head of Tsarist military intelligence, and N. Tchaikovsky, the founder of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. The Center’s operational base was established in the border regions of Poland, the staff was chosen from representatives of the Russian-Ukrainian emigration with the participation of Polish and French special services.

The leadership of the Center of Action was viewed as a ready government apparatus for the future Russia intended to begin functioning immediately after the fall of the Bolsheviks.

In the meantime, the Center was tasked with gathering information about the situation in the country through underground cells and preparing an uprising. The main strongholds within the territory of USSR were the Kiev and Moscow branches of the Center of Action.

The operational plan of “Syndicate-1” was to suppress the criminal activity of the Center and identify its handlers within the Polish special services. For this purpose, the Cheka sent its employees to infiltrate the Center. Under the guise of representatives of the political opposition from the former Socialist Revolutionaries, Nikolay Alekseev was sent to the Paris headquarters of the Center of Action, Mikhail Gorb was sent to Berlin, and Ivan Zaporozhets was sent to Lvov.

The result was the liquidation of most underground branches of the Center. N. Vakar and General-Khorunzhiy (equivalent to the modern Major General) of the Army of the Ukrainian People’s Republic Yu. Tyutyunnik, who led the invasion of the “Petliurites” (Ukrainian nationalists) into the border regions of Ukraine, were lured to Kiev and arrested. The plans of Polish intelligence were also revealed, and its agent apparatus was penetrated.

#### “Syndicate-2”

The Chekists’ next target was the “Union for the Defense of the Motherland and Freedom” (NSZRS), led by the experienced underground terrorist Boris Savinkov. Officially formed at a congress in Warsaw in June 1921, the Union became the political hub for many counter-revolutionary groups. Its main task was to prepare an armed uprising in the USSR, with espionage and sabotage as its primary tactics.

By the end of 1922, due to the efforts of the Cheka-OGPU, the West-



B. V. Savinkov. Petrograd. 1917

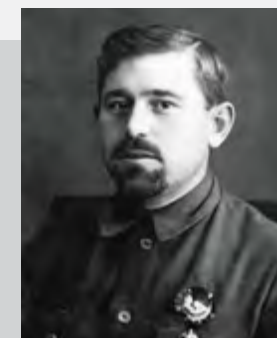
ern and South-Eastern Committees of the Union, independent underground organizations in Samara, Saratov, Kharkov, Kiev and Odessa, were liquidated.

However, Savinkov himself, relocating his headquarters to Paris, continued to operate. He did not hesitate to seek assistance directly from the leaders of European countries, such as British Prime Minister Lloyd George, Secretary of State for War Churchill, Chief of Poland Pilsudski (his former schoolmate) and even Mussolini.

To deliver the decisive blow, the OGPU leadership decided to send KRO officer Aleksey Petrovich Fedorov abroad (under the alias A.P. Mukhin, a member of the Liberal Democrats (LD) party Central Committee). He was tasked with convincing B. Savinkov of the existence of a viable underground organization in the USSR and persuading him to cooperate with it, as well as bringing the terrorist to our territory.

The plan succeeded thanks to the fact that in the summer of 1922, Savinkov’s personal adjutant, Leonid Sheshenya, was detained at the border. He had been sent to establish contact with the leadership of the NSZRS cells in Moscow and Smolensk. Under threat of execution for participating in gangs raids, he agreed to cooperate with the OGPU and prepared a letter for Savinkov, informing him of making contact with a “major counter-revolutionary organization”. The message was delivered by his relative, NSZRS member I. Fomichev.

Fyodorov (Mukhin), who arrived in Warsaw in June 1923, was received by the local agent of the “Savinkovites” group. For security reasons, he did not arrange a face-to-face meeting with the leader of the NSZRS.



#### Andrey Pavlovich Fedorov

Born August 26, 1888 in Manhush settlement, Mariupol Uezd, Yekaterinoslav Governorate, in a peasant family. Graduated from law faculty of the Kharkov University. In August 1915 was conscripted for military service (Turkmenistan). Took part in the revolutionary events of 1917. Since 1920, a secret officer of the Special section of the 10th Army. In 1922, transferred to the OGPU central apparatus. Active participant of “Syndicate-1” and “Trust” operations. Awarded with the Order of Red Banner and the badge “VChK – OGPU Honorary Worker”.





Dossier on NSZRS (from the FSB of Russia archive)

real counter-revolutionary. The plan was for the irreconcilable political opponents to quarrel during their conversation, leading Fomichev to believe that the only force to cooperate with in Russia were the “Liberal Democrats” (LD). This is exactly what happened.

Soon Chekists brought Fomichev to an “LD meeting”, where OGPU officers played the roles of opposition members. One of them later wrote: *“The meeting somewhat cooled Fomichev’s optimistic mood. He saw that the organization was reluctant to make contact. Forced by the logical course of events, he said: “Let’s meet with Boris Viktorovich Savinkov, and then we’ll see”. This stance created an extremely advantageous position for us, as the proposal for a trip to Paris was no longer our initiative”.*

After hearing Fomichev’s report and examining the LD program documents he delivered (compiled in the INO), Savinkov became lost in thought. Not entirely sure that the LD was not a Chekist provocation, he decided to send another close associate, Sergei Pavlovsky, to Moscow.

Pavlovsky, however, was in no hurry to travel to the USSR capital. After crossing the Soviet-Polish border in August 1923, he organized a gang of local members of the NSZRS in the Orsha region. They attacked banks and mail trains. It was only on September 16 that he reached Moscow, where two days later, he was arrested during a meeting with Sheshenya. Faced with serious charges, he also agreed to cooperate with the OGPU. Pavlovsky wrote a letter to Savinkov dictated by the Chekists. In the let-

Trial on B.Savinkov (standing, second left). Moscow. October 25, 1924



ter he omitted a period in one of the sentences, which was a conventional sign indicating his arrest. However, experts noticed the trick and forced him to rewrite the text.

After becoming convinced of the existence of a real anti-Bolshevik underground and agreeing with Fedorov’s assurances that the organization needed a strong leader, Savinkov finally decided to go to the USSR himself. Yet he demanded that Pavlovsky personally come abroad to pick him up. No one was willing to release “the enemy of the state” from prison, so the security officers staged his injury during a gang attack on a train, leading to his hospitalization.

On August 12, 1924, B. Savinkov arrived in Warsaw, where he changed his appearance with the help of makeup. On the 15th, accompanied by Fomichev, he crossed the Polish-Soviet border using a false passport. They were met by Fedorov (Mukhin) and KRO officers posing as members of the Moscow LD organization. Savinkov was arrested in Minsk on August 16, and taken to Moscow. His arrest caused a serious breakdown in the terrorist, who had repeatedly claimed that he was not afraid of death. During interrogations, he admitted defeat and praised the work of the Chekists.

On August 25–29, 1924, the trial of “The No. 1 terrorist”, Boris Savinkov, took place in Moscow. His testimony caused confusion in the White émigré community. In particular, he stated: *“I, Boris Savinkov, former member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party Combat Organization, friend and comrade of Yegor Sazonov and Ivan Kalyaev, participant in the assassinations of Plehve, Grand Duke Sergey Alexandrovich, and many terrorist acts, a man who has worked all his life only for the people, in their name, am now accused by the work-*

*ers’ and peasants’ government of going against Russian workers and peasants with weapons in my hands. I unconditionally recognize the Soviet power and no other. To every Russian who loves his country, I, who have gone through the entire path of this bloody, difficult struggle against you, I, who have been proving your insolvency like no one else, say to him: if you are Russian, if you love your people, you will bow low to the workers’ and peasants’ government and recognize it unconditionally”.*

On the 29th, the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court sentenced Boris Savinkov to death. However, considering his admission of guilt and complete renunciation of the counter-revolutionary struggle, the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee commuted the death penalty to ten years of imprisonment.

Savinkov was held in the OGPU’s internal prison at Lubyanka in rather tolerable conditions: he could use the library, go out for walks, and even meet his mistress. However, captivity weighed heavily on him, and he submitted a petition for clemency. On May 7, 1925, after being informed that his petition had been rejected, he jumped out of the window.

Operation “Trust”

In May 1921, a congress of Russian monarchists was held in Germany, where the Supreme Monarchical Council (SMC) was elected, headed by a former Duma deputy Nikolai Markov. According to the program adopted at the congress, the monarchy was proclaimed as *“the only possible way to revive Russia”*. But the SMC realized that without support from within, overthrowing the odious Bolshevik regime was impossible. The existence of a large secret anti-Soviet organization in the USSR allowed monarchists to increase their authority in the Entente countries, and gave hope for financial and military support from the West.

Having received important information from foreign sources, the Chekists decided to launch a new operational game. It was declared that a mythical “Monarchist Union of Central Russia” (MUCR) existed in the country. A letter intercepted in November 1921, addressed to MUCR member Prince Shirinsky-Shakhmatov, helped them. The letter spoke of underground promonarchist groups operating in Petrograd and Moscow. Alexander Alexandrovich Yakushev, a former



Alexander Alexandrovich Yakushev

Born on August 7, 1876 in Tver. Nobleman by birth. Graduated from St. Petersburg University. In 1913, he was appointed manager of the Operations Department of the Inland Waterways and Roadways Administration, and from 1916, he held the rank of State Councillor. Participant of the anti-Bolshevik underground. Was re-recruited. Became one of the main actors in the “Trust” operation. After the operation was closed down, he worked in the People’s Commissariat of Railways.





Half of a bank note used as a secret sign by persons involved in the “Trust” operation (from the FSB of Russia archive)

State Councilor and now an employee of the People's Commissariat of Railways, was also mentioned in this connection.

When KRO officers approached him, Yakushev told everything honestly. The conversation showed that he was an intelligent, reasonable person, a true patriot of his country. He admitted the futility of fighting the Soviet government and agreed to help suppress the subversive activities of the White emigration.

On the proposal of F.E. Dzerzhinsky, A.A. Yakushev's candidacy was approved for chairman of the political council of the MUCR. The organization was nominally headed by General of the Tsarist army and Professor of the Soviet Military Academy A.M. Zayonchkovsky.



Sidney George Reilly (Zigmund Markovich Rozenblum)

Born in 1874 in Odessa. In the late 1890s, he moved to London, where he came to the attention of local intelligence services and became a paid informant for Scotland

Yard. From 1905 to 1914, he was an assistant to the British naval attaché in Russia. In 1918, he arrived in Odessa to establish a British intelligence network, and in the same year, he went to Petrograd. After the failure of the “ambassadors’ plot” (an assassination attempt on V.I. Lenin), in which S. Reilly was actively involved, he fled to England, and later became W. Churchill's consultant on Russia.

To verify information about the MUCR and its representatives, emissaries from foreign monarchist centers traveled to Petrograd and Moscow. On return, they reported on the organization's operational capabilities and its potential to establish cells within the Red Army and the state apparatus.

At the same time, the Chekists orchestrated the disinformation abroad (for this purpose, a separate bureau was created under the Revolutionary Military Council). Information sent, for example, to the Poles was often sold by the latter to French or British intelligence agencies. Enemy intelligence services requested a variety of information ranging from plans for shipbuilding at the Baltic Shipyard (Germans) to the condition of port facilities in Odessa and Sevastopol (Romanians). The Poles surpassed everyone: they offered the MUCR ten thousand dollars (a huge sum at that time) for the theft of the USSR's mobilization readiness plan.

Meanwhile, the Cheka started receiving reports indicating that the English intelligence officer Sidney Reilly, who had cut a swath in Petrograd and Moscow after the revolution but had managed to flee the USSR in 1918, was again showing interest in Russia.

In an effort to lure Reilly into the Soviet territory, it was decided to use White émigré activist Maria Zakharchenko-Schulz blindly. Yakushev advised her to invite the English guest to Finland to discuss potential participation in the activities of the MUCR. This idea was supported by the British chief of station in the Baltics, Ernest Boyce, who had worked with S. Reilly in Russia previously.

On September 24, 1925, the English spy arrived in Helsinki. During a discussion with Yakushev regarding financing, he proposed two options:

stealing valuable works of art for resale abroad and providing London with information on the activities of the Comintern. Yakushev pointed out to the fact that such decisions were not made unilaterally, and invited Reilly to Moscow for a meeting of the MUCR. After some hesitation, and succumbing to the reproach: *“It's a shame, having traveled all the way from America to Vyborg, to stop at the threshold...”*, the Briton agreed.

Reilly crossed the border in Sestroretsk area. At the railway station, he was met by Yakushev and an employee of the Foreign Department of VChK, Grigory Syroezhkin. Together, they went to Petrograd, then to Moscow. On September 27, the British agent took part in a staged meeting of the MUCR at a safe dacha in Malakhovka. During the

conversation, he reiterated his proposals regarding financing. To the indignant remark from those present that the MUCR was a political organization, not museum thieves, and would not risk its reputation, the guest said: *“Reputation can be sacrificed for money”*.

On the way back, the Briton asked to stop at the post office to write a postcard to Boyce. Wanting to keep the arrest of the British spy secret, the Chekists agreed. As soon as Reilly sent the message and got into the car, handcuffs snapped on his wrists.

On the night of September 28, 1925, the Chekists staged a shootout on the border with Finland. In the morning, the Leningrad “Krasnaya Gazeta” newspaper reported that three unidentified persons had been killed

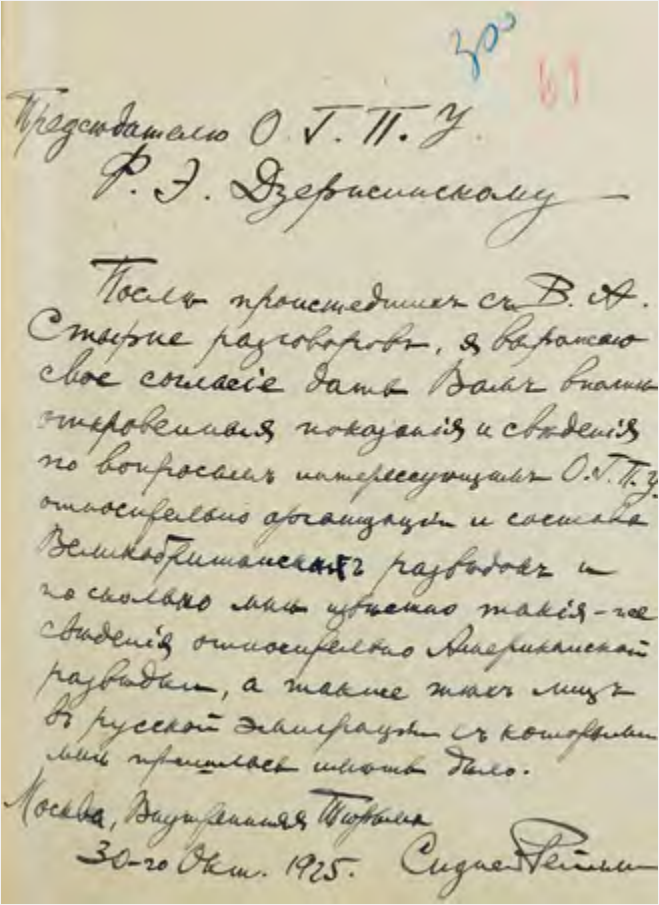
while attempting to illegally cross the border. It was implied that one of them was Reilly.

Meanwhile, interrogations of the British spy began at Lubyanka. At first, S. Reilly refused to cooperate, but after being reminded that the death sentence passed on him in 1918 was still in effect, he changed his behavior. In a note dated October 30, 1925, addressed personally to F.E. Dzerzhinsky, he wrote:

*“After conversations with V.A. Styrne I express my readiness to give you quite sincere evidence and information on questions that may be of interest to the OGPU concerning the organizational structure and composition of the British intelligence service and, as far as I know, the same information about American intelligence, as well as about plans of the Russian emigrants with whom I had to deal”*.

S. Reilly probably believed that the British authorities would make efforts to release him or exchange him, upon learning of his arrest, and he stalled for time. However, his expectations were proven wrong: on November 5, 1925, he was executed.

S. Reilly's liquidation can be considered the culmination of Operation “Trust”, although the MUCR continued to operate for another two years. Overall, the fight against White émigré terror lasted more than ten years, resulting in the neutralization of 80% of the most active members of various combat groups. The remaining members realized that resorting to terror was a failing strategy (for more details, see “Razvedchik” No. 2 (3), 2023). Neither the ROVS leadership escaped the deserved punishment: General Kutepov, who had superseded Wrangel as head of the organization, was kidnapped by unknown persons in January, 1930 in the centre of Paris in broad daylight. But we'll tell about that some other time... 🗨



Personal letter of S. Reilly to F.E. Dzerzhinsky. October 30, 1925 (from the FSB of Russia archive)





Full version of the document on the SVR of Russia site

Document 1.  
Cipher telegram  
from Tokyo (collage).  
June 26, 1941

Document 1.  
Cipher telegram  
from Tokyo (collage).  
June 26, 1941

СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО

ЛС

ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. № 4577

Из ТОКИО

Получена 26 VI 1941 г. 12 ч. 20 м. Расшифр. 26 VI 1941 г. 01 ч. 20 м.

Для резолюций и пометок

Куда, кому ВИКТОРУ.

78

в связи с советско-германской войной, внешняя политика Японии будет следующая: Япония сейчас не имеет активных намерений против СССР как-то: объявить войну и встать на стороне Германии. Хотя не известно как в дальнейшем изменится эта политика, но по крайней мере в настоящее время таких намерений нет. Тоже не будет принято твердой политики в отношении СССР, то-есть не будет пред"явлено каких-либо требований и не будет об"явлено своего определенного отношения. Япония хочет молча смотреть на развитие войны и международные отношения. Говорят, что такая политика Японии в данный момент об"ясняется следующим: Япония не готова воевать с СССР не следует спешить с войной, так как если это нужно будет сделать, то чем позднее это будет тем меньше жертв понесет Япония. В последнее время в Японии много говорят о пересмотре военного союза трех держав в связи усилением опасения войны с Америкой 30 мая Мацуока в своей речи о внешней политике признал довольно сильно распространено. Если Япония начнет войну против

1-е Управление НКГБ  
Вх. № 3603  
29/VI 1941

Отп. Экз. №

Подлежит возврату через 48 часов во 2-ю группу 11-го отд-ния

Снятые копии категорически возвращаются.

РАССЕКРЕЧЕНО

Служба внешней разведки РФ 10

Экз. № 3

11-е отделение (2-я группа)

СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО

ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. №

Из

Получена 194 г. ч. м. Расшифр. 194 г. ч. м.

Для резолюций и пометок

Куда, кому

79

- 2 -

СССР то Америка об"явит войну Японии и Япония будет вынуждена бороться на два фронта. Короче говоря, Япония сейчас пересматривает всю свою внешнюю политику и поэтому отношение к СССР также еще не определено. Вчера председатель общества во время обеда, на который он пригласил управляющих говорил, что японская экспансия на юг скоро не осуществится так как морской флот относится к этому весьма осторожно, что же касается севера, то для этого не подготовлена. Недавно один чиновник министерства индустрии разговаривая о работе общества в связи последней войной заявил что политика Японии сейчас очень слабая, что также подтверждает все выше сказанное. 25 июня сего года председатель общества посетил по заданию министерства индустрии, чтобы прощупать политику СССР в отношении Японии.

в Японии существует, хотя и очень незначительное мнение о том, что в конце концов Япония

Снятые копии категорически возвращаются.

Отп. Экз. №

Подлежит возврату через 48 часов во 2-ю группу 11-го отд-ния

Экз. № 1  
Экз. № 2  
Экз. № 3

11-е отделение (2-я группа)

ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. №

Из

Получена 194 г. ч. м. Расшифр. 194 г. ч. м.

Для резолюций и пометок

Куда, кому

80

- 3 -

должна будет воевать с Германией и поэтому лучше жить в мире с Америкой.



ЗМ-6

**\*РАССЕКРЕЧЕНО\***  
Служба внешней разведки РФ 10

СОВЕРШЕННО СЕКРЕТНО 46  
КОПИЯ *М. Соколову*

*12864/и*  
*17 июля 41*

т.т. СТАЛИНУ  
МОЛОТОВУ  
БЕРИЯ

Направляем сообщение, полученное НКГБ СССР из Токио.

Разослано:  
1-3-й экз. адресатам.  
4-й " секр. НКГБ  
5-й " секр. I Упр.  
6-й " в дело.

НАРОДНЫЙ КОМИССАР  
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЙ БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ СССР

Исп. I от-ние 2 отдел  
I Управление. (В.МЕРКУЛОВ)

ОСНОВАНИЕ: Телеграммы из Токио от  
13 и 15 июля 1941 г.  
за № 5088/95 и 5112/96.

*В депо*  
*Г. Соколов*  
*Телеграфная переписка*  
*с японцами*

СООБЩЕНИЕ ИЗ ТОКИО

С 12 июля в Японии проводится всеобщая мобилизация. Призываются возраста от 17 до 35 лет, что составит, как предполагают, 4-4½ миллиона человек.

Производится конфискация грузовых автоматов и погрузка их на железнодорожные платформы. Мобилизуются вагоны.

За 13 и 14 июля несколько сот рабочих автомобильного завода НИССАН мобилизованы прямо с работы. Семьям запрещено провожать мобилизованных во избежание рассекречивания мобилизации. На вокзалах всех направлений иностранцам не продают перонных билетов, ввиду отправки воинских частей.

Призываемые отправляются, якобы, в Китай.

ВЕРНО: НАЧАЛЬНИК I УПРАВЛЕНИЯ НКГБ  
СОЮЗА ССР  
(ФИТИН)

" " июля 1941 г.

Document 2.  
Special report from  
Tokyo, July 17, 1941

2.

Краткое содержание переведенных на месте сообщений передаем Вам: *Флот, в том числе, в Японии?* *М. Соколову*

1. По мнению шведского посланника, румынского поверенного в делах и других, между армией и флотом Японии существуют разногласия в вопросе японо-советских отношений. Представители флота в принципе против немедленной войны с СССР, считают, что Япония должна сосредоточить все свои силы на борьбу с морскими державами Америкой и Англией и защищать захваченные ею южные районы. Война против СССР создаст нового мощного врага Японии и потребует огромных жертв и средств непосильных для нее. Армия отстаивает немедленную войну против СССР, считая, что завтра такое мероприятие может стать запоздалым. Япония должна вести превентивную войну против СССР, чтобы сохранить за собой Манчжурию, на которую покушаются Советы. В первую очередь нужно захватить Владивосток и районы Приморья. Нанеся удар первой, Япония имеет все шансы легко и быстро овладеть Владивостоком и прилегающими к нему районами, пока Советский Союз занят тяжелой борьбой с Германией. Однако, взгляды этой группы армии, возглавляемой генералами ЯМАСИТА, после поражения немцев под Сталинградом начали быстро терять свое значение и сейчас группа стала более спокойной и менее опасной.

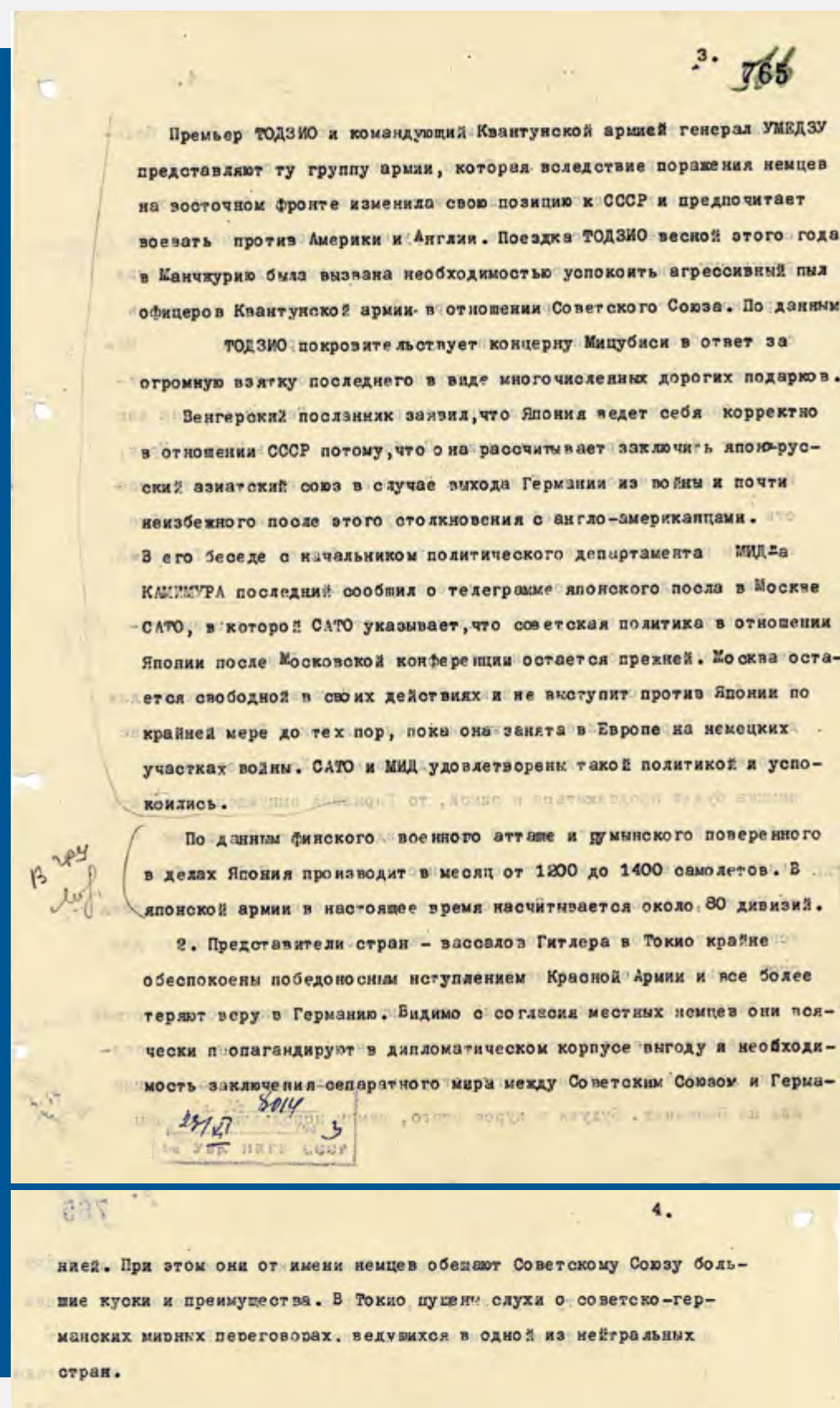
За спиной флота стоит мощный концерн Мицубиси, располагающий судостроительной промышленностью и заинтересованный в океанских вопросах. Армию поддерживает концерн Мицуй. Занимаясь промышленной, финансовой и коммерческой деятельностью Мицуй стремится захватить источники сырья и рынки сбыта в Манчжурии, Сибири, Китае и Таи. В настоящее время Мицубиси имеет приоритет над Мицуи и значительно сильнее последнего. Мицубиси пользуется доверием императорского двора и является влиятельным фактором в политике Японии. Концерн Мицуй несмотря на поддержку военного министерства потерпел серьезный кризис, особенно в связи с раскрытием тайной торговли оружием с Чунцином в Северном Китае. Военщина воспользовалась этим инцидентом, чтобы изгнать из концерна старое руководство и заменить его более молодыми и желательными для армии лицами.



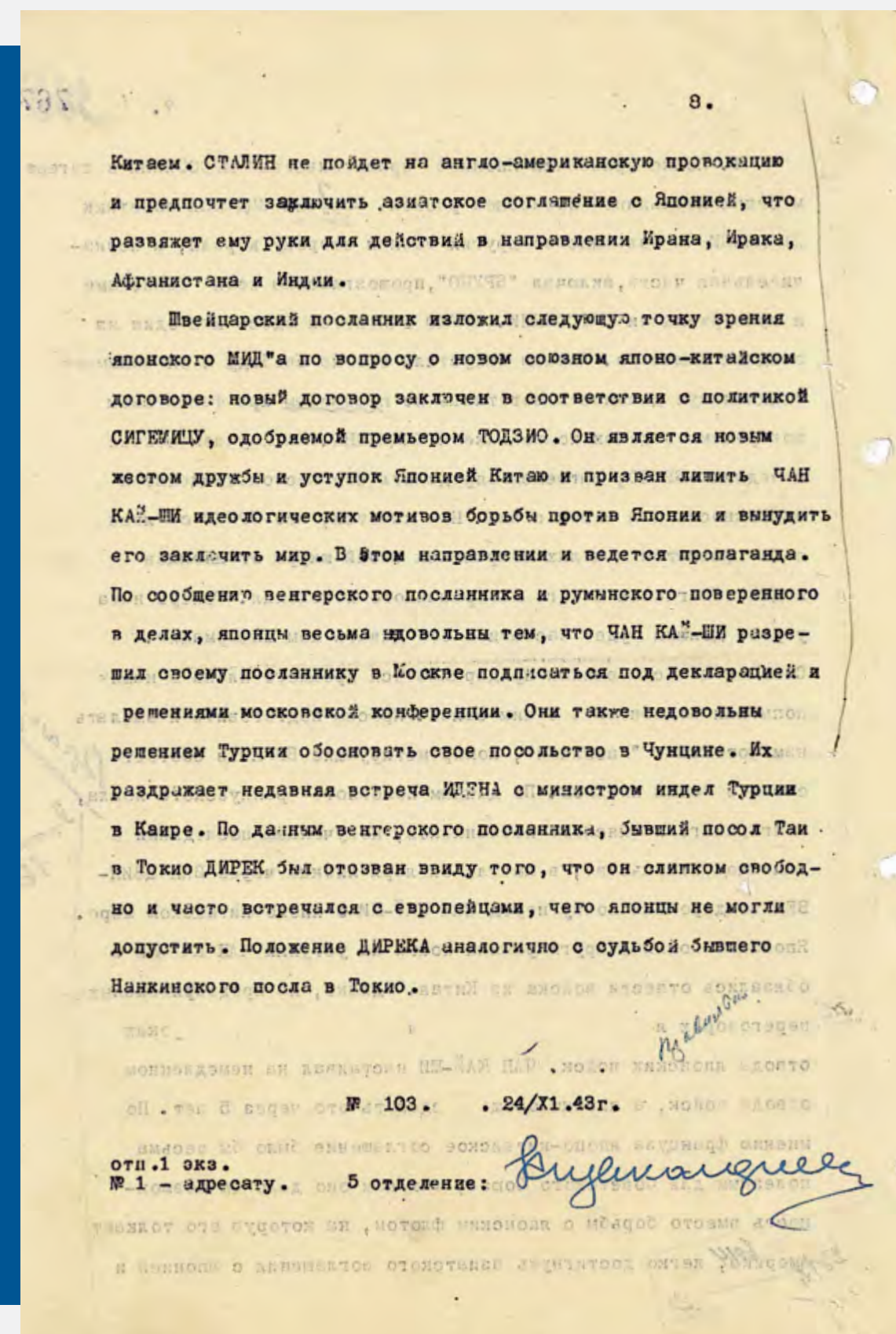
Full version of the  
document on the SVR  
of Russia site

Document 3.  
Cipher telegram  
from Tokyo (collage).  
November 24, 1943





Document 3.  
Cipher telegram  
from Tokyo (collage).  
November 24, 1943



Document 3.  
Cipher telegram  
from Tokyo (collage).  
November 24, 1943



СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО

за

**ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. № 5122, 5123, 5124, 5127.**

562

На ХАРБИНА

Служба внешней разведки РФ 10

Получена 15 УП 194 г. 14 ч. 00 м. Расшифр. 15 УП 194 г. 24 ч. 00 м.

Для резолюции  
и пометок

Куда, кому

ВИКТОРУ.

Только что получены данные "██████" существо которых следующим: квантунским штабом разработан план создания на нашем Дальнем Востоке буферного государства в рамках бывшей ДВР, осуществление которого мыслится так: с занятием немцами Москвы сформированные из русских эмигрантов, преимущественно казаков части под командой Бакшеева ринутся на нашу сторону, поднимают восстание и независимо занятой территории провозглашают антисоветскую власть. Бакшеев действует под лозунгом "советская власть накануне падения, в центре создается другое российское правительство, временным наместником на Дальнем Востоке является атаман Семенов". После этого Семенов сразу должен обратиться за помощью Японии и квантунской армии и просить поддержки антикоммунистического движения на Дальнем Востоке. Будет в центре существовать такое правительство или нет Семенов должен действовать именно так и японцы введут войска на Дальнем Востоке, начав совместно

<b>СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО</b>	
<b>ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. №</b> _____	
563	
- 2 -	
Из _____	
Получена „ _____ “ 194 г. „ _____ “ ч. „ _____ “ м. Расшифр. „ _____ “ 194 г. „ _____ “ ч. „ _____ “ м.	
Для резолюций и пометок	Куда, кому _____  Бакшеевым действия против Красной армии. Этим японцы избегнут об"явления войны. Центр буфера мыслится Чите. Кислицын выговаривает пост генерал-губернатора Приморья. Если "центральное правительство" не утвердит Семенова наместником он уходит, а японцы продолжают свои действия. В связи с таким планом русский отдел японской

Document 4.  
Cipher telegram from  
Harbin (collage).  
July 15, 1941

СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО

ЕС.

**ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. № 6269.**

621

На. ХАРЕБИНА

Получена 29. VIII. 1941 г. 14 ч. 35 м. Расшифр. 29. VIII. 1941 г. 22 ч. 10 м.

Для резолюций  
и пометок

Куда, кому Виктору

По сообщению [REDACTED] приехавший из Москвы атташе японского посольства Исиды 27 августа имел закрытое собеседование кругами местных японцев, где заявил, что "немцы конечно просчитались." Поход на СССР назвал "авантюрой Гитлера". По мнению японцев посольства в Москве "СССР будет защищаться минимально до весны", что там полное спокойствие, налеты на Москву не эффективны. Эта информация сильно расколодила местных японцев ожидавших немодленно вступления Япония. Фурусавы в беседе сказал [REDACTED], что вообще война с СССР неизбежна. Срок зависит развития военных действий на западе, дал понять он думает, что "до весны проживем спокойно".

29.VIII.41г. № 187.

Вх. № 4468

29. VIII. 1941 г.  
1-е Упр. НКВД СССР

**\*РАССЕКРЕЧЕНО\***  
Служба внешней разведки РФ 10

Снятие копий категорически воспрещается.

Отп. 2 экз.

Экз. № 1

Подлежит возврату через 48 часов  
в 2-ю группу 13 отделения

Экз. № 1 адресату

Экз. № 2 в дело

Экз. № 3

13-е отделение (2-я группа)

Document 5.  
Cipher telegram  
from Harbin.  
August 29, 1941



СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО

АН

ШИФРТЕЛЕГРАММА Вх. № 8722

538

Из ЛОНДОНА

Получена 8 XII 1941 г. 4 ч. 30 м. Расшифр. 8 XII 1941 г. 16 ч. 25 м.

Куда, кому

На-днях во время дежурства [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] "Зенхен" видел следующую перехваченную и частично расшифрованную телеграмму от 27 ноября из министерства иностранных дел в Токио - японскому послу в Берлине:

"Переговоры с США зашли в тупик и японское правительство стоит перед необходимостью принятия серьезного решения. Встретьтесь с Гитлером и Риббентропом и в секретном порядке об"ясните им положение. Демократические державы ведут себя на востоке монархически. Они передвигают свои войска и вынуждают Японию делать то же самое. Эти переброски могут привести к вооруженному конфликту, вероятно значительно скорее, чем ожидалось" (многоточие (примечание В: (ряд групп не расшифрован)) в случае войны с демократическими державами Япония будет продолжать удерживать [REDACTED] русских на дальнем востоке, и если русские об"единятся с демократиями в напа-дении на нас, Япония окажет решительное сопротивление. Однако, об"ясните Гитлеру, что основные японские усилия будут сосредоточены на юге и мы предполагаем воздерживаться от преднамеренного предпринятия действий на севере" (много-точие)

Вх. № 6503

8/12 1941

1-е отд. НКВД СССР

\*РАСЕКРЕЧЕНО\*

Служба внешней разведки РФ 10

Отп. [REDACTED]

Экз. № [REDACTED]

Подлежит возврату через 48 часов в 13-е отделение

13-е отделение

Document 6.  
Cipher telegram from  
London. December 8,  
1941

\*РАС СЕКРЕЧЕНО\*

Служба внешней разведки РФ 10

31

СОВ. СЕКРЕТНО.

СООБЩЕНИЕ ИЗ ТОКИО

1. На случай возникновения войны с США, Япония разработала план захвата в первую очередь Гавайских островов и, в частности, американской военно-морской базы на этих островах - Пирл Харбор. Японцы считают эту базу основным стратегическим пунктом, который может играть решающую роль в случае японо-американской войны. Одновременно разработан план удара по Голландской восточной Индии и по Индо-Китаю.

2. Японцы считают, что миссия ТАТЕКАВА в Москве увенчалась успехом, о чем, по их мнению, свидетельствуют следующие факты: временное рыболовное соглашение между СССР и Японией; начало переговоров о новой рыболовной конвенции; торговый договор; пограничный вопрос и принятие Советским правительством специального решения об отзыве своих советников из Китая.

МАЦУОКА особенно доволен результатами деятельности ТАТЕКАВА.

3. В происходящих в настоящее время в Токио переговорах между ТАИ и Индо-Китаем французская делегация, и в частности, французский посол в Японии АРСЭН неожиданно заняли решительную позицию и не уступают требованиям японцев, что расстраивает японские планы.

ВЕРНО:

(ОГИТИ)

" " февраля 1941г.

More documents on the SVR of Russia site

Document 7.  
Special report from  
Tokyo. February 12,  
1941





## V. S. Loktev Song and Dance Ensemble

In 2025, the Russian President's Prize in Literature and Art for works for children and young people was awarded to the leaders of one of the oldest children's groups in Russia, the V. S. Loktev Song and Dance Ensemble — **Anna Averyanenko, Marina Yegorova** and **Leonid Fradkin**. The creative group was previously awarded the SVR of Russia Prize named after E. M. Primakov for the musical and choreographic performance "The History of Intelligence — the History of the Country. Nuclear Shield". "Razvedchik" asked the laureates about who a "loktevite" is, what methods of education are relevant now and how stars are lit.

Anna Vladimirovna, you joined the ensemble in 1997 at the age of ten, and now you are the chief choirmaster and a prize winner. Did you imagine such a career?

Of course, I didn't think about any presidential awards then, and I ended up in the ensemble by a lucky chance. I attended a music school studying cello classes, but a couple of times during the icy Moscow weather my grandfather "luckily" landed on the instrument (*laughs*). There was no money to buy a new one, and my parents and I decided that I should attend choir classes, because there was nothing needed except a voice. We were advised to join the Loktev Ensemble, although it was not well-known at the time.

I came to the audition. It was probably love at first sight. I have got so attached to the ensemble that I still can't part with it. Thanks to the teachers, they saw something in me — maybe a spark of talent or my eyes were somehow especially burning.

*Is it difficult to involve modern children and teenagers in work? Are there any proven methods that were used in the 1990s, during your training, and have now been adopted by you?*

In principle, it is impossible to say about our group that in the 1950s-1970s we had one thing, in the 1990s — another, now — a third one. The country, generations have changed, but the ensemble has always relied on traditions. One of them, for example, is the alumni reunion, which we hold on the first Sunday of October. We gather in a large hall that seats 700 people, it is always full. There are songs that have been "living" in our repertoire since the day of its foundation, on this day the whole audience sings them.

“The ensemble has been and remains a close-knit big family, an outstanding school for the self-realization of young talents. And the title of "loktevite" is still a source of pride and esteem.

Russian President V.V. Putin.

And, you know, the repertoire is the first thing that comes to mind in the context of the methods. It really hardly changes. Even if some of the lyrics are no longer relevant — the pioneers are gone, as well as the USSR — the songs themselves are good! That's why we allow ourselves some liberties with the lyrics. For example, children enjoy singing "The Chase" to the music of Yan Frenkel. Remember? *"And there is no peace for us, burn, but live!"* The only thing missing is a red flag (*laughs*).

This happens because the music contains incredible energy, emotions, and drive. And children of all generations love it. Or "The Beautiful Afar". Is it hackneyed? Of course. But every year new students come and the first question is: "Are we going to sing this song?"

I am very meticulous when choosing the repertoire. I want to give children more than just songs about, let us say, a blade of grass or a hedgehog. Modern composers almost never write similar songs. That is why we sing "What does Motherland begin with?", "Don't think about seconds with disdain." Of course, these are not children's songs, but they are understandable to everyone and resonate with all generations.



The V.S. Loktev Song and Dance Ensemble of the State Budgetary Educational Institution of Moscow "Vorobyovy Gory" was founded in 1937 on the basis of the Moscow City House of Pioneers and Octobrists. From 1942 to 1968, the artistic director and principal conductor of the ensemble was composer Vladimir Sergeyevich Loktev, after whom the ensemble was named in 1969. At the time of its creation and to this day, it is the largest children's group in Russia, combining a choir, choreography and an orchestra. Children aged 5 to 18 are enrolled for training, their total number reaches 2,500 people. Since 1962, it has been located on the territory of the Moscow Palace of Pioneers on Vorobyovy Hills.





### Anna Vladimirovna Averyanenko

Was born on July 31, 1987 in Moscow. Since 1997, she studied choral singing at the Loktev Ensemble. She graduated from

the Gnessin Russian Academy of Music, specializing in conducting. In 2005, she returned to the ensemble as a teacher. Since 2016, she has been the chief choirmaster.

I believe that if a teacher is passionate about his work, he will inspire the children to any, even the most complex composition. I will never choose a boring song. We ourselves will not learn anything from it, and most importantly, we will not convey anything to the audience. Therefore, I explain complex things with passion and even enthusiasm. The children are motivated because I am highly motivated. I do not deceive either myself or them. There is a magical exchange of energy between us: I recharge from them, they from me.

Sometimes, to broaden our horizons and boost our children's self-esteem, we participate in projects without an orchestra or choreographic group. For example, we recently performed the anthem before the final match of the Russian Football Cup at the Luzhniki stadium. Almost 60 thousand spectators sang along with us. Such events are very motivating.

*You are the youngest leader of the ensemble and a great example for your students. How many of them have you managed to inspire to follow in your footsteps?*

I have been working as the main choirmaster and director of the repertory choir "Youth" for ten years. During this rather short period of time, four of my graduates have already connected their lives with professional music. For example, one girl is currently studying in the academic vocal class and in the future we will have a teacher — my student.

These are, of course, just small things, because the ensemble is, first of all, an outlet for children, not a profession. They may aspire to become great mathematicians or biologists, but they need a switch to creativity. Yet our successors are growing as well, which is also important. Traditions must be kept up.

*Marina Igorevna, you joined the ensemble at the age of six, studied under the great Elena Rosse, under whose wing such famous artists as Vladimir Vasiliev, Natalia Bessmertnova, Tamara Sinyavskaya and many others developed. In your opinion, how do students of different epochs differ?*

Children are different at all times — both in abilities and in their attitude to work. The members of our ensemble of all generations are united by their love

for the work they do, high efficiency, the ability to value and plan their time, a sense of camaraderie...

The great happiness of a teacher is to see how children grow up, develop, gain life and professional experience. In my opinion, children used to be tougher and more emotional, although the dances were not so complicated. Over time, the technique have become more complicated, you have to work more on each element and emotional expressiveness. Today's children grow up early, know a lot, it is very interesting to communicate with them, but at the same time their physical health leaves much to be desired.

*What is the secret of choreographing in the ensemble? Discipline? And who can be called real "loktevites"?*

We have no secrets. First of all, we think about how to involve our entire group in the choreographing. We aim to make the musical material accessible to the children's orchestra, and if the musical composition is instrumental, we often create texts for the choir. Our repertoire is very diverse: Russian dances, dances of the peoples of multinational Russia and the whole world. We try to find bright, spectacular, original performances. The main thing is that their plots are understandable to children, and the dance technique is accessible.

Discipline is certainly the basis of professional training and we strive to ensure it. It is gratifying when graduates bring their children and grandchildren to us, but this does not give them any privileges, they audition on equal terms with everyone else.

Art, like sports, has a strong influence on the formation of personality. It is about character building, training of fortitude and will in achieving goals, healthy competition, and, of course, patriotic education. Our guys achieve success in any field, no matter what they do. These are, perhaps, the real "loktevites"!

*Are you worried about your graduates? How are their lives going?*

Of course, I worry about everyone and I am very happy about their success. Many of our graduates continue their professional training at the



### Marina Igorevna Yegorova

Was born on February 5, 1963 in Moscow. She graduated from the School-Studio at the State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble of the USSR under the direction of I. Moiseyev and the Moscow State Pedagogical Institute

of Foreign Languages named after M. Thorez. She has been working in the ensemble since 1982 as a teacher-choreographer, and for more than 20 years as the chief ballet master. Honored Worker of Culture of the Russian Federation.

*Children are different at all times — both in abilities and in their attitude to work. The members of our ensemble of all generations are united by their love for the work they do.*

Marina Yegorova

Moscow State Academy of Choreography, the A.Y. Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet, the School-Studio at the I. Moiseyev State Academic Folk Dance Ensemble. They become leading performers of the Bolshoi and Mariinsky Theaters, the I. Moiseyev and "Beryozka" ensembles, theater and film actors.

The current ensemble also includes many bright, talented children, real little "stars". I am sure that no less successful careers are waiting for them.

*A concert in the Kremlin. March 30, 2025*

*A concert in the Kremlin. March 30, 2025*







## Leonid Mikhailovich Fradkin

Was born on November 23, 1956 in Dmitriev (Kursk region). He graduated from the Moscow Conservatory, majoring in double bass. He taught in Hamburg, worked as director of the State Academic Symphony Orchestra

of Russia, deputy general director of the Moscow International House of Music, director and artistic director of the Yaroslavl State Philharmonic. As a music manager, he organized concerts of Plácido Domingo and Montserrat Caballé in Russia. From 2012 to the present he has been working as artistic director of the Loktev Ensemble. Honored Worker of Culture of the Russian Federation.

dets, then Deputy Mayor of Moscow for Social Policy, came to a concert of the Loktev Ensemble, and she didn't like something. She wanted to see the ensemble as it was in the USSR. Not in terms of ideology, of course, but in terms of creativity, the number of children, and the relevant presentation.

And after some time, I was invited to the position of deputy director of the Palace of Pioneers (*editor's note* — *State Budgetary Educational Institution "Vorobyovy Gory"*), with the task of making it more attractive. I will not bore you with the details of what and how we decided. I will say one thing: at the time of the beginning of my work as deputy director, 236 children attended classes in the ensemble, today — 2500. Such are the statistics.

**The presidential award was preceded by the SVR of Russia Prize for the theatrical musical and choreographic production "The History of Intelligence — the History of the Country. Nuclear Shield". Tell us where this idea came from and why you decided to take on the project?**

The idea was suggested by veterans of the Service. When I first heard it, it took me about 45 seconds to think it over. I realized that it was necessary and that we could do it. After all, almost all the music, songs and dances in our repertoire correspond to the target era. We invited the Young Muscovites Theatre (*editor's note* — *at the State Budgetary Educational Institution "Vorobyovy Gory"*) to the project and started working.

The emphasis was placed on the video material provided by the Service. We additionally illustrated it. For example, to the topic of the nuclear explosion, we took the well-known story about paper cranes for a Japanese girl dying of radiation sickness. We selected music, wrote lyrics. It turned out very touching.

It was more interesting later. After one of the shows I heard: "I'm 40 years old, but I didn't know this story." Our youth immediately went online and confirmed: "That's how it all happened." The production was sold out at the Russian Army Theatre. There were young viewers who were definitely not familiar with the plot. I think we made many people think.

A fragment of the play was also shown in Japan. It was also a sensation! It turned out that many Japanese are sure that it was not the USA but the USSR that dropped the atomic bomb on them. Japanese children gave our students candies. And in this sense, the production fulfilled the most important state task — it stimulated intercultural communication.

**Does it often happen that children get tired and don't want to work? What do you do if the group gets depressed?**

Our students are used to working, they do their schoolwork during breaks on the windowsill, they are familiar with time management from an early age. Then they choose between Moscow State University and MGIMO, they go into the most interesting professions. They have no time for depression! I suppose that this is also due to friendship and the desire to complete a common task. Imagine, they dislike holidays more than anything in the world.

In terms of motivation, the teacher's authority is also very important. But how to win it? I think the main recipe is to love children and be sincere with them. We had a wonderful choirmaster of the pre-war generation, sometimes he yelled at his students. But the children adored him, they feel when they are treated fairly.

Educational aspects are no less important. Russia is a country of great workers; their example is a good cure for the depression. But it is important not to overdo it. A.S. Pushkin said it right: "So that a child does not get exhausted, teach him everything in jest, do not bother him with strict morality." So, we try to be careful.

**Would you mind sharing your plans for the future?**

My big dream is regional branches. By the way, I talked about this with the President when we were getting our awards in the Kremlin. The Loktev Ensemble has been creating unique methods for years and is happy to share them. Russia is a talented country, we have many brilliant choirs, dance and orchestral groups, but they do not perform together on the same stage. Such combined performances are our strong point. It will be great if similar ones appear in the regions.

“I have no doubt that among today's children - members of the ensemble, some will also rise to stardom, will give masterpieces to the nation and introduce a new cultural layer.

Leonid Fradkin

We are planning a big tour, in which we will try to include the new territories. In the future, foreign countries may appear in our performance schedule again. Although I am more in favor of trips to small Russian cities and I always tell the parents: "You can show Paris to children without me. Yet there are hundreds of places in Russia that you definitely need to visit."

Interviewed  
by Lana Gennadievna

And, of course, I'm waiting for ideas. The special military operation is going on now. Unfortunately, this is not the first armed conflict in the history of our country and sometimes it seems as if everything has already been said about it. Of course, it is difficult to come up with something better than "The Sacred War", "Smuglyanka" or "Katyusha". But wartime gives rise to special creativity and reveal talents in many people. I have no doubt that among today's children — members of the ensemble, some will also rise to stardom, will give masterpieces to the nation and introduce a new cultural layer. 🚀

At the ceremony of  
awarding the SVR  
of Russia Prize.  
January 31, 2023





# The Dynamo International Auto and Bike Rally



From June 17 to 22, 2025, on the eve of the Day of Remembrance and Sorrow, the day the Great Patriotic War began, an auto and bike convoy, initiated by the Dynamo Regional Public Association with the participation of the SVR officers, traveled more than 1,500 thousand kilometers along the commemorative route Moscow — Volokolamsk — Rzhev — Vyazma — Smolensk — Vitebsk — Minsk — Khatyn — Grodno — Brest.

More than 300 Russian and Belarusian Dynamo members took part in the large-scale event dedicated to the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory. The rally symbolized selfless love for the Motherland, the continuity of generations, the correlation between sports glory and military valor, as well as the unity of the Russian and Belarusian nations.

The Dynamo international auto and bike rally started on June 17, 2025, from the Moscow Central Dynamo Stadium named after Lev Yashin. After laying flowers at the memorial plaque to the OMSBON fighters, and the Chairman of Dynamo Regional Public Association Anatoly Nikolaevich Gulevsky's speech, the convoy took the route.

On the same day, the participants of the rally visited the Memorial to Panfilov Heroes and the Rzhev Memorial

to the Soviet Soldier, where commemorative events were held.

On June 18, the convoy proceeded from Vyazma to the Hero City of Smolensk, where a number of military-patriotic and sports events took place. A capsule with soil from the Mound of Immortality and a symbolic Candle of Memory were handed over to the rally participants.

On June 19, at the border checkpoint the Russian and Belarusian rally participants teamed up in a solemn ceremony.

A cavalcade of vehicles and bicycles headed towards Vitebsk, where at the Three Bayonets memorial complex a patriotic meeting took place. On the same day, Dynamo club members visited the memorial complex "Militia Battalion under the Command of Konstantin Vladimirov" in the Mogilev region and in the evening arrived in the capital of Belarus.

On June 20, a patriotic meeting was held at the Minsk Hero City Obelisk, followed by the flower-laying ceremony. Thereafter, A.N. Gulevsky and his colleague, the Chairman of the Belarusian Dynamo Central Council Dmitry Vladimirovich Balaba gave start to the further movement of the auto and bike convoy. All together they visited the Khatyn memorial complex and the Mound of Glory in Grodno.

On June 21, the rally participants reached the final point of the route — the Hero City of Brest. A patriotic meeting was held in the Brest Hero-Fortress Memorial Complex, and on the night of June 22, Dynamo rally participants, together with thousands of other people,

took part in the commemorative ceremony "Be Worthy of the Memory of the Fallen!"

On June 22, in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, at the Three Machine Gunners Monument, the Candle of Memory and soil from the Mound of Immortality from Smolensk were handed over in a solemn atmosphere to representatives of the Dynamo Brest regional organization.

We are convinced that today it is very important to hold such events that help to keep in touch with the past, to pass on to new generations the memory of the military feats of our fathers and grandfathers who managed to defend the freedom and independence of our Fatherland. We express our thanks to the Dynamo auto and bike rally's participants, who set up another glorious tradition, which the SVR personnel will certainly carry on.



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1. Start. Dynamo Stadium, Moscow
2. At the monument "To the Feat of the 28", Volokolamsk
3. At the Rzhev Memorial to the Soviet Soldier
4. Requiem meeting at the Three Bayonets Memorial, Vitebsk



# "I grew up in the war"

(excerpts from the book)

Text: Ivan Grishanov, front-line soldier

Drawings: Sergey Dorozhenko



## Bast shoes

...In the evening Fyodor showed up — the partisan commander, who either pretended or maybe seriously considered me a red partisan. A useful one, but lame in discipline. He sat down next to me on my trestle bed, sucking on his stinking cigarette.

— You don't go to the village anymore?

I answered negatively. I explained that the village was now on the very front line, and there was probably no one there. When I was there last time, the Germans were planning to drive everyone to their rear — to Topkovo, Puzeyevo.

— Well, if we need to find out how it is there, can you come through?

— There is a lot of water in the ravines: almost belly-deep, and where there is ice, it is thin.

— How do you know about this? — asked Fyodor, and I told him in not so many words about how and where I walked with the "potato men" through the fields of the nearest villages. He asked me for a long time how I walked along the front line and where and what I saw. And then, quite unexpectedly, as if about something already decided, he said: "Come." We did not walk for very long and soon found ourselves in a village of dugouts. Smoke was curling up from chimneys here and there. To the side, on a circle trampled in the snow, stood many men: smoking, arguing. Dressed each in his own way, but well enough. And all had bast shoes on. It seemed it was them that I had heard about in the hospital: bast shoe-wearing fighters for reconnaissance.

— What, did you bring your son to join the ranks? — someone shouted.

— Not a son, but something like that, — answered Fyodor.

— Are you crazy, Fedya? To get a boy involved in this? — one of the elderly men with a face battered by smallpox was indignant.

— We need to get to the trenches in the dark without making any noise. Can you do that? — Fyodor interrupted him. — Do you know where there is water or snow in these gullies? And this marvel is not a boy at all. A partisan, our scout, almost from the very beginning of partisan warfare. We owe a lot to his eyes. It is not my merit that we exposed the scoundrel spy Gury, but his, — Fyodor pointed his finger in my direction and continued:

— He will go with me and by my side, I am fully responsible for him. To the trenches and back. He goes to Shepelevo in our direction, like a ferret to chickens: reliably and without noise. And he will show us this very path. And then we'll act according to circumstances: no time for reproaches, no time for pity. A slaughterhouse is a slaughterhouse. For both big and small. So now we will go together and look out. Maybe there will be no need for the kid. If it were up to me, I would keep him on a warm stove and feed him sweet porridge.

Fyodor coughed, rolled up another cigarette, and took a drag. The men were silent. Fyodor patted me on the back, and we walked toward the front line. On the slope of a shallow ravine away from the Germans, we came to a dugout. There, on a stump of a tree by the open door, a man was sitting looking like a commander, an officer. He shook Fyodor's hand as if he were an old acquaintance, treated him to some fragrant "Morshanka" tobacco, and without waiting

for questions, perhaps responding to some previous requests, began with a statement:

— The Fritzes are working hard: both at night and during the day. They have set up very positional and unpleasant for us firing points, barbed wire obstacles and, it seems, have laid mines where the wire cannot be secured. They fire on the hour, intensively. They have no problems with ammunition. We also shoot when they do something brazen. But we are following the order: "Do not expose yourself and save shells and equipment". However, the day before yesterday we did punish them: the Fritzes decided to stretch the wire almost over our faces. We laid them down. The usual positional fuss: we dig, set up, shoot, but there is no benefit from it. The sun came out, it became cozy, and I felt sleepy. And yet I had to get out of this slumber, pull the hood of my camouflage suit over my head and stick my head out over the parapet of the trench.

— Just don't jerk your heads, — the commander warned and began to show where the Fritzes' trenches were, the location — presumably — of their firing points and dugouts. I seemed to know the landscape down to every bump. And it was strange to hear the words: "intensive shelling zone," "covered tightly," "on-duty remote firing points."

— We need to go to Novosel'tsy, it's a kilometer to the right of Shepelevo. What do you advise? — asked Fyodor.

— The weather will advise, — the commander answered, — if there is frost, there will be speed, especially in the dark. But in the mud across the field, and especially in the ravines — you can't overtake a turtle: you won't have time to go forward, and you won't be able to run back.

— And how would you go? — Fyodor asked me, and I began to peer even more closely at the familiar gullies and ravines.

One of the sloping gullies came almost to the German trenches. It was now covered with snow at the bottom, but I knew that a narrow ravine ran along its bottom — the bed of a spring stream that rarely froze. And maybe that's why its slopes, overgrown with rose hips and hawthorn, were dry. It was quite possible to walk along the lowland, where the stream had thawed, at any time: there was red stone-ore there. And the stream was shallow, and if you were in high-boots, you could walk in the water. While I was thinking, Fyodor did not rush me. And when I told everything incoherently, but clearly, both of them dragged me into the trench and finally took off my heavy helmet pulled on under a white hood. They shook hands, and we went to "our people", as

Fyodor now said. In the camp dugout, the partisan on duty warmed up dinner for us, it was very filling. Fyodor left, and I settled down on the bunks, and woke up only in the morning. From the bustle and conversations.

There were many partisans and two military commanders in the dugout. One of them was talking about our group, which, like all the others, had its own direction — the village of Novosel'tsy, between Shepelevo and Nezhivka — my native places. The main task: to detect firing points in the German defenses behind the first line of trenches by fighting. If possible, to blow up equipment and break through further to non-evacuated villages, where we would temporarily dissolve among the population. Weapons — only captured ones. Clarifications about the march were to be given later on.

Then the second soldier briefly explained where, when and who should receive dry rations for three days. Then there was a hubbub of questions and answers, and I was still looking out for Fyodor to find out if they would give me such a ration too. I had to wait for a long time. Finally he noticed me.

— You're still here? — he was surprised, — Okay... Take my rations to my guys, and not a word about what was said here. And maybe there's some food for you, too. Sit here.

And I sat there until lunch and after lunch. Only by dusk all the fuss with rations, weapons, and ammunition had died down. Fyodor appeared with a duffel bag and a satchel. He sat down by the stove and lit a cigarette. He moved the satchel toward me.

"This is our ration. Enjoy," he offered me.

There was no need to invite me to eat. I started with honey, which was in the combs and wrapped in sweet paper. And Fyodor gave the bag to a lame old partisan, who, as I understood, would take something edible to his children instead of me.

— Won't you be afraid to go with us to the Fritz's trench, will you take us as you showed us? — asked Fyodor very seriously. With my mouth full, I nodded my consent.

— That's good. Just to the trench and back. Got it? From there on it's our business, — he declared, — And don't be willful.

— Is it worth it to drag him around? The kid might lead us God knows where? — the partisan sitting next to him objected.

— I wouldn't say that, — Fyodor objected, — We've done reconnaissance to the villages so many times, and we've always been on edge. But this, as you say, kid dives in there like a fish in water. And he knows every bump on these roads by touch.



That's it, now it's time to take a nap. We leave in two hours.

We set out in the foggy, drizzly darkness. We did not walk along the trench, but on the highground. And only at the very front trench did we descend into the communication trench. We were met by the commander and two scouts. They had their own task — to take a prisoner. Everyone jumped on command to detect the noise in their belongings.

Until my eyes got used to the darkness in the ravines, where the fog was thick to the point of drizzle, I stumbled and did not really perceive my usual route. Then I adjusted and walked confidently and quickly. Fyodor tugged at my sleeve so that I would not hurry.

And yet, it seemed that we had approached the ravine that was closest to the German trenches ahead of the other groups. We lay down there, waiting for the general signal. Two scouts crawled up to find out where the machine gun position on duty that had been mentioned was. I climbed up the ravine with them a little higher and showed them the direction. During my trips to the village, I had sometimes even heard German conversations from this place. But now it was quiet, and we were quite unwilling to disturb this silence. Suddenly, three red flares took off somewhere to the right, and immediately after that, in several places, we heard: "Hurray! Hurray!" In the fog, these cries were not very loud, not like in the movies in the hospital.

Fyodor also shouted: "Hurray!", and everyone else from the ravine rushed forward with shouts. At first there seemed to be no shooting, but it all started after we jumped into the trench. Shooting, confusion, grenade explosions, screams and shouts that

caused fear, but at the same time it seemed there was none. Where could we go back in such turmoil? Only a trumpet voice could be heard, shouting to move forward. I didn't know if everyone had obeyed, but they all somehow jumped out of the trench in a group and walked across the marshy, melting field. Ahead of us, also on foot, the Germans were running away, getting stuck in the mud and shooting back. It was hard to tell who was friend and who was foe in that wet darkness. The demolition experts kept asking about the battery and finally found it.

It is not difficult to blow up mortars. But Fyodor hurried everyone, shouting that if we do not get to the second trench, then everyone is doomed, and the order will not be carried out. It was already getting light. The demolition men did their job: they blew up the ammunition on the batteries, and burned another battery, a cannon battery, from which they were already shooting back, along with the tractors. But acting in the dark, we were too late for the second trench. The village was already visible in the haze, and we had to approach it somehow, but the second trench snapped back with concerted fire. We had to lie down, then dash to the nearest ravines, and then shoot back from there.

The Germans began to encircle and destroy us in an organized manner. They pressed us so tightly that by the evening of that rainy, foggy day we had not advanced forward and were cut off from nearby villages and, even more so, from the nearest forests. Our other groups had already pressed close to us. We shot back successfully, wandering through the lowlands and ravines to avoid mortar fire. The Germans were in no hurry to attack, because it was impossible to drive even a cart through the thawed field, through the Oryol black soil, or even along the roads, and the Germans, taught by the experience of the first day, refused to attack on foot. But we were no smarter: already on the second day of this circling through the ravines, Fyodor was swearing while giving commands to save ammunition, although there was nothing left to save.

At night, when it got a little frosty, the Germans drove up in cars here and there, and during the day they dispersed and shot now and then in our direction. On the second, or maybe even the third night, one of these cars got stuck on the rise, and Fyodor tugged at me: *"Get to the car and throw a grenade into the cabin. There's ammo in the car, and with it we'll break through."*

When I made my way through the bushes along the stream and threw a grenade into the car, there was no one in the cabin, and no ammo either. But the

rockets went up, and a burst of machine gun fire slashed at the car, it immediately burst into flames, and the wounded Fyodor rolled in the snow, knocking the fire off himself. Apparently, in the light of the rockets, he had noticed a pile of willows by the stream and crawled towards it. I followed him, and already there, bandaging his leg, he quietly said: *"The war is over, son. Cover me with willows, so that the animals don't make fun of me. And run, crawl, without orders or instructions, just save yourself."* And I did everything as he ordered. Only I didn't go to the villages, but rolled down into a large ravine to the remnants of the partisans who had been driven into this place. There were no questions, no conversations. And there was some strange, heavy silence. Only the rockets hissed above us like fiery reptiles.

## Sparkle

...But my real luck showed up later, when the battalion commander personally identified the names of landmarks on the map, and I clarified them. The landmark "hut" was a burnt-out windmill, and "black tree" was a topographic tower, an old one with a bird cherry tree grown into it. There was also a platform full of holes, which every one of our village kids had climbed. After my explanations, the battalion commander handed me over to his orderly: to clarify the goals and teach me how to read the map.

— There's something that sometimes sparkles there, we should shake that bird cherry tree. But that's not our job.

I would like to know what that shiny thing was myself. And the scouts I had managed to become friends with also disappointed me with their ignorance. But I liked the way they talked to me like to an adult: about my village, about the paths I used to dive into it through the front line. Then they even hinted that they might take me along as a guide.

That was the end of the conversation. I was a lone walker, and I didn't need a detachment. The experience of various campaigns, including partisan warfare, had taught me: one is for oneself, and when there are many people there are more mistakes.

This shiny thing confused me so much: I wished I knew what it was. There was another reason: scouts had disappeared, five of them. They had crossed the front line quietly, and then... They couldn't have been taken prisoners. Their commander talked to me, gave me a very generous dry ration and — unofficially — sent me on a "business trip": to find out the fate of his soldiers on the spot, in the non-evacuated villages.

The beginning was successful: even during the short night — windless and quiet — I managed to walk and crawl under the barbed wire past the German posts without a sound and without stopping. And while it was still dark, I enjoyed the spring water in my deserted village of Shepelevo. I had no food with me. I always ate everything before the "business trips": no load, no bulk, and my hands were free. And if I had to die, then with a full stomach. Water nearby, no one around, and looking for something during the day was risky. A very suitable circumstance to sleep. And what lay ahead of me was perhaps not work, but not idleness either: to get there and figure out what kind of trenches they were digging on the upper slopes beyond the Krom River and what that shiny thing was. I solved these problems quickly.

It was the village girls and women who were digging the trenches. And I showed up among them and also began to help as one of them. And the observation post turned out to be a teaser: next to the dug dugout, right there by the trenches, a sort of mirrored globe was installed on a tripod. And the German from time to time turned it, making it flash. And during shelling, he rolled into the dugout.

The workers were often fired upon, but the deep trenches protected them, although there were both killed and wounded. In addition, I also determined where the heavy mortars were located, which were so annoying to us. But the other thing — the fate of the missing scouts... They hardly had gone far to the rear, where the Germans had not yet evacuated the population: it would be easier to take a "tongue" (that is, a prisoner) there, but to return with him with such obstacles... They could only lie in wait in the deserted thickets of the villages of Shepelevo and Zhiryatino. To search for them, skilled in camouflage, either day or night, was an impossible task for me there.

I was thinking all the time, busy with digging trenches, and from the top, these villages were in full view. In the neighboring villages — Nezhevka and Novosel'tsy — not all the houses burned down. And although the residents were evacuated from them, they were crowded: the Germans were in the houses, their equipment was hidden not far away, and in the nearby ravine were those damned mortars. There was nothing for scouts to do there. And I couldn't find them...

In the evening our artillery gave those digging the trenches such a thrashing... I didn't know how many died, but the tripod with the flashing ball flew up, and the German in the dugout was buried thoroughly. I was nearby, in the trench, saw all this, but I remained unharmed, only deafened. When it got quiet, for





some time no one came out of the trenches. Only crying, groans, swearing in both Russian and German. In the semi-darkness the Germans gathered their dead and wounded, and didn't give a damn about the rest. There was no fear in me. I had been many times under German artillery fire more powerful than this. I was preoccupied with something else: the globe and the globe's owner, or rather his bag. The German seemed to be "kaput". His own people forgot about him in the chaos. I had been starving for a long time, and the German definitely had food.

In my impatience, it seemed like a very long time until everyone left the field in the dark. And then, like a shrew, I began to dig up the collapsed dugout with my hands and a piece of some kind of wood. The legs in boots that appeared did not interest me, but I still felt the backpack and pulled it out. There really was something to chew on in it. And in such a thick vessel there was even some kind of warm swill. And also all sorts of rags. The backpack felt comfortable. I was lucky: full, warm, and safe.

The Germans, of course, would be looking for their men tomorrow. They would see that someone had rummaged there. And they would start looking who. That is why it was necessary to bury the German in the way it had been. I was unwilling, but experience showed that in such matters there were no trifles, and forgotten trifles sometimes killed. Scouts knew this. But then suddenly the boots began to twitch. The German was alive. I would have run, but the backpack with food got caught on something. And I felt as if tied down: I did not want to abandon the provisions.

While I was disentangling the backpack, the German began to stir even more, wheezed, groaned and even mumbled something. I would have knocked him down, but I still had to get to his head. And for some unknown reason I began to dig him out. Let him go to his people, and I would go to mine with his backpack, and we would be even. But it turned out that he could not walk, but only crawl on his elbows, although I did not see any visible wounds on him. He kept moaning and trying to grab my hand, and I was afraid that he would bite me. But he kept kissing my hand and crying. And I somehow felt sorry for him, sorry to kill him. And should I leave him alive and abandon him, he would die in agony before the morning. Should I drag him to some place? He was big and heavy, and two or three men would hardly be able to carry him through the frontline. And there was no way to return him to the Germans. He was an enemy, and enemies had to be destroyed. But I could not bring myself to do it, although there was the tripod stand and a shovel. And the German was

helpless: now he tried to crawl, now he became completely silent. I felt sorry for the man.

In the dugout I groped for a raincoat, pulled it out, spread it out, rolled the German onto it and dragged him to the river through the wet grass, fortunately it had started to rain. Why to the river? I had no intention of drowning him. And how I dragged him across the river — shallow but muddy, I don't remember. By dawn I had dragged wormwood and weeds into the basement, threw it all under and on the unconscious German, and climbed into the stove with the collapsed pipe. I had slept through the beginning of the trench work, and I didn't dare visit him during the day either. And I hoped that he had kicked the bucket after all. And the search for scouts looked hopeless.

But it turned out that the scouts, on the second day, had tracked me down in the trenches, but could not determine where I was "diving" after work. And they found me by the sounds when I was carrying water from the well to give to drink to the German who, in the dim light, was now looking, with a conscious horror, at the scouts bending over him. Three out of five: two died while trying to get out with a "tongue" to their people.

Kuvakin was considered an expert in German, although a professional translator had warned that the "expert" should not be trusted unconditionally in translations. Now Kuvakin pestered the German with questions all day long. All three agreed that my German was a priceless "tongue", that is, without any value, and if you took into account his physical characteristics — weight, ability to move, then the prisoner was harmful and absolutely unnecessary. And they kept asking me why I had dragged him and what I was going to do with him. Maybe I wanted to get a German award for saving a German soldier? Although I never even thought about any awards — neither German nor Soviet. I was always thinking mainly about food, immediate danger and a place to sleep. The scouts, it turned out, had decided on the "tongue", but still had not found a convenient "hole" through the front line. They again offered me the role of guide. I refused. "To love an enemy is to kill yourself," said Kuvakin, who respected rhyme. "It was a joke. Although you ought to be punished. And your German... deal with him yourself. But this exhibit must be preserved like a herring for two days." And with that we parted.

The next day, in the dark, we met: Kuvakin, wounded in the shoulder, winced in pain, did not joke, but firmly declared: "You will come with me... Without fail... Even at gunpoint. You see what I am like, and I have

the right officer... The guys will not return, and I can't return empty-handed...".

A grenade with a string under my German's back, and a gag in his mouth. Everything was crystal clear. And he understood his doom, but did not twitch. We left the basement. He entrusted me with tying the string — the tripwire from the grenade to the door, because he could not do it with one hand. I even had to unfasten the belt on his pants. And while Kuvakin was freeing his belly, breaking the sound masking, I untied the string, rolled into the basement, defused the grenade, tore the gag out of his mouth. It was a pity to leave the backpack, but trouble was lying with it under the wire. And I pushed it closer to the German, but there was no time to untie his hands. And I did not understand why I was doing this. But I felt light and calm.

We stood for a while. I thought he would check the tension, but no. He felt the heavy pistol of my German, then took a light domestic revolver out of his pocket and handed it to me. "Show the barrel to the officer now and then when we go with him," he said. And we went into the night under a light but windy rain. And already at the exit from Zhiryatino, near a collapsed barn, our decorated officer was lying with a grenade under his back and a string of the "Don't move" type. I didn't like to cross the front line from this end of the village: there were a lot of open places. Wet and silent, we reached my route only closer to dawn, the most convenient time to "dive" under the barbed wire.

We dove, literally — into the stream. I dove first and pointed the revolver at the officer. He couldn't talk with the gag in his mouth, but diving with his hands tied would be like yanking the wire. Kuvakin was almost unconscious, but he figured it out and cut the ropes. And there was no need to worry that the officer would twitch. He had understood long ago that at night and here we were all as one, because they wouldn't sort it out and would chop up everyone. The officer dove well, and then helped me or I helped him to carefully drag Kuvakin.

The rain was with us. We walked upright because the rockets did not penetrate the rainy darkness, and also because we had no strength left. We fell into our trenches unnoticed, stupefied by tension and fatigue.

When we were discovered, the officer was immediately besieged by our staff officers, they tried to question us too, but mostly me. Then Kuvakin, and me for company, were taken into the hospital. I slept for probably a day, and when I woke up, my neighbor on the bunk handed me a sheet of crumpled pa-

per. "From your friend. Lucky guy. Sent to the rear for treatment," he chuckled. I unfolded the sheet. In scribbles, obviously written with his left hand, was said: *"If I stay alive, I will find you. Live, son, and love people. Kuvakin."* What was so special about these lines? But I screamed hysterically, in full view of all the wounded. And no one laughed at me: and I understood, while everyone knew it, that Kuvakin would not be able to find me. Never would be able to.

A female doctor came in. So home-like. And I wanted to cuddle up to her, bury my face in her belly, so as not to see or hear anyone. And how she sensed it: she hugged me, stroked me and asked me something, but I didn't understand anything and couldn't say anything — my speech was jammed. Then I drank some stinking liquid and slept again, and when I woke up, I shuddered from the kindness that awaited me:

— You'll go to my people, with the evacuation hospital. They'll put you in a boarding school.

This is how the wonderful doctor "made me happy". I couldn't thank her or explain anything, my speech hadn't recovered yet. But I had dinner already in a separate anti-tank fighter division: a dented mess-tin, a spoon with a broken handle, hot porridge, and a soldier's entourage who understood my silence and sympathetically kept silent themselves. I was with my own people, at home, on the front line. 🚩

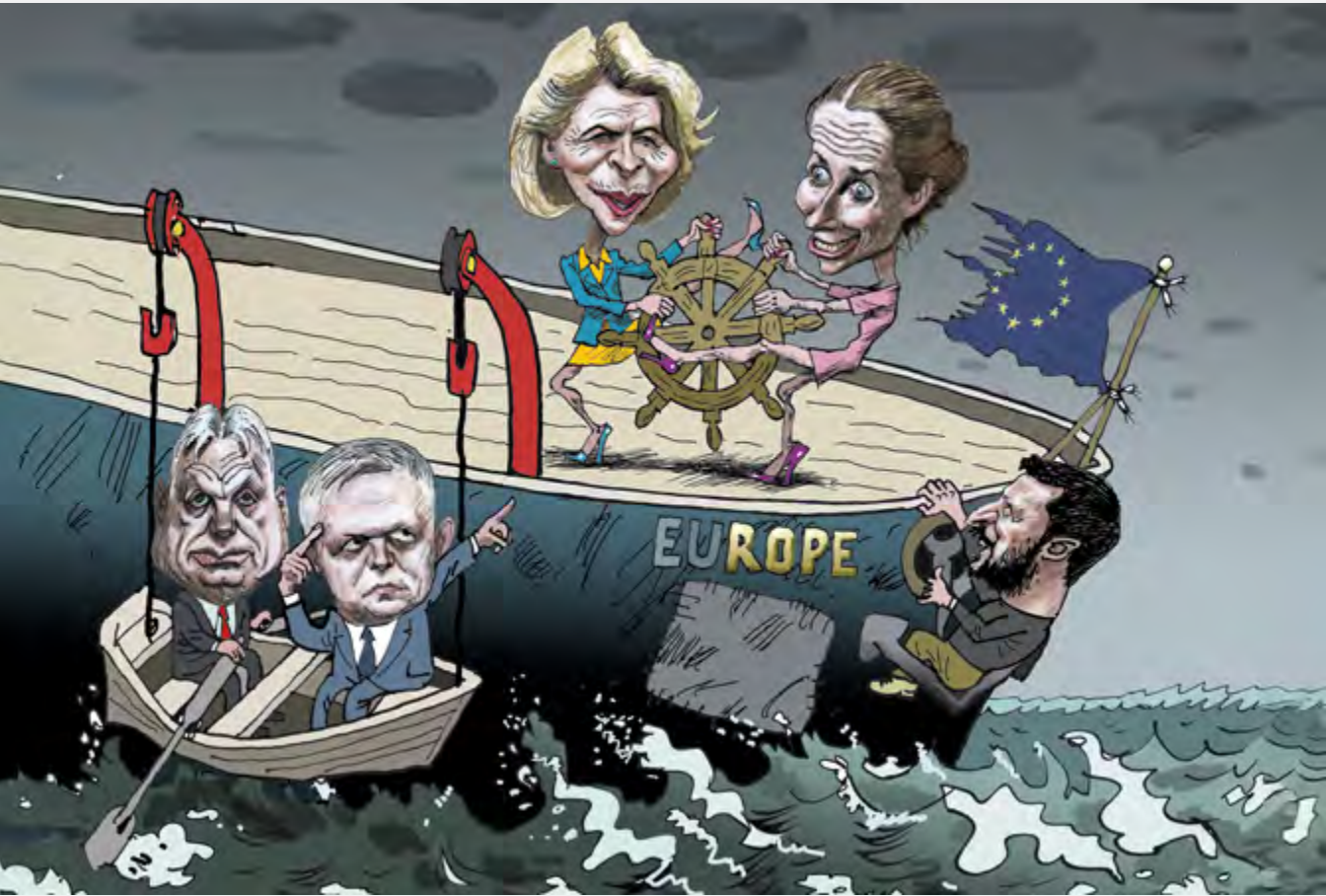


**Ivan Ivanovich  
Grishanov**

Was born on August 28, 1932, in the village of Shepelevo, Kromsky District, Oryol Region. In November 1942, after the death of his relatives, he joined a partisan detachment. As the son of the regiment of the 15th motorized rifle brigade of the 19th artillery

division, he fought on the 3rd Ukrainian Front. He took part in the battles for the liberation of Austria, Hungary, Romania, was wounded. He was awarded the Order of the Patriotic War, 2nd degree, the medals "For Military Merit", "For the Victory over Germany", "For the Capture of Budapest" and other awards. I.I. Grishanov's first collection of poems, "I Say Goodbye to the War!" was published in 2019. In 2022, at the age of 90, Ivan Grishanov was accepted into the Writers' Union of Russia. His first book of short stories, "I Grew Up in the War," was published on the 80th anniversary of the Great Victory.





The cruise ship “European Dream” is about to sink... Drawing by Vladimir Mochalov

# Selected moments of operational correspondence

When talking about his superiors, “X” swore loudly (in French).

“K” ’s knowledge of the Russian language is limited to a few obscene words and expressions, which he learned from his father, who had learned them in Soviet captivity.

Addressing the stranger, the Russian representative politely asked if he could do anything to help the owner of such a gloomy and dejected face.

We agreed with “N” that we would hold the next meeting in a restaurant, where we would celebrate either passing or failing his exams.

According to the field officer, eyes like the subject's cannot lie.

In a confidential conversation, “T” confessed that he had dreamed of intelligence work as early as at kindergarten age.

According to “B”, he had very vague memories of school, since, having barely learned to read and write, he dropped out once and, as it turned out, for the rest of his life.

The subject greeted the operative in a friendly and joking manner. He asked how the recent visit of the "chief" (the superior from Moscow) had gone, standing at attention and saluting.

## In the next issue:

**Director general of “Rosatom” Alexey Likhachev:**

“People are both the main challenge and the main resource”

**Deep-cover agent Sergey Cherepanov:**  
“Not everyone has an opportunity to live another version of one’s own life”

**Legendary Komintern intelligence**  
To the 130th anniversary of Richard Zorge

**To the 100th anniversary of scientific and technical intelligence**  
Declassified documents from SVR of Russia archive





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