

The “KGB Wanted List” and the Evolving Soviet Pursuit of Defectors

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In July 1972, Artush Hovanesyan (also sometimes called Oganesyán), a young officer working for the Armenian Soviet Republic’s State Security Committee (KGB), walked across the border from Soviet Armenia into Turkey with his wife and defected. He brought with him a top-secret KGB book dated 1969 that contained the names of individuals whom the KGB was seeking around the world for violations of Soviet law.¹ The book carried the long bureaucratic title, *Alphabetical List of Agents of Foreign Intelligence Services, Traitors to the Homeland, Members of Anti-Soviet Organizations, Members of Punitive Units, and Other Criminals Under Search Warrant*. In the West, it came to be known more simply as the “KGB Wanted List.” Individuals on the list ranged from Soviet soldiers who had surrendered to the German Wehrmacht during World War II and supported German occupation police units, to intelligence and military personnel who had defected while being stationed in Soviet occupation forces abroad, to merchant sailors and members of Soviet tourist groups who had refused to return from their trips abroad. Because Soviet law prohibited Soviet citizens from leaving the country or remaining abroad without authorization, defectors featured prominently on the list.

Glimpses into the 1969 edition of the list have been a valuable source of information about the Soviet pursuit of defectors and state criminals from the time Hovanesyan brought it with him. However, recent declassifications of materials from the archive of the Security Service of Ukraine archive (HDA-SBU, housing records of the former Ukrainian KGB) and research by Russian historians with access to other editions of the list have created new opportunities to study defectors and the Soviet response to them. This

1. Frank Rafalko, ed., *A Counterintelligence Reader: An American Revolution into the New Millennium*, Vol. III (Washington, DC: National Counterintelligence Center, 2004), p. 287; and Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *The Storm Birds: The Dramatic Stories of the Top Soviet Spies Who Have Defected Since World War II* (New York: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1989), pp. 247–248. Brook-Shepherd refers to Hovanesyan as Organesyán (sic).

article shows that the KGB's view of defectors evolved and that the Soviet state security services were far from omnipotent even on Soviet territory. It further shows that the Russian Federation's pursuit of defectors under Vladimir Putin nowadays bears many similarities to the Soviet era.

The "KGB Wanted List"

The list of wanted individuals was distributed to KGB stations (*rezidentury*) around the world to give them descriptions of people at large whom the Soviet government considered dangerous criminals. The list included the name, year of birth, personal background, physical description, career, and date of defection or disappearance of each individual; the names and locations of family members and whether the wanted individual was corresponding with them; the last known whereabouts and known aliases; the Soviet judicial sentence passed in absentia; and the KGB office responsible for the case. Physical descriptions included height, face and body shape, hair and eye color, and other identifying marks. The wording in descriptions of subjects came from a pick-list of adjectives that was consistent across the Soviet state security agencies and originated at least as early as 1946.² Many of the people on the list were located abroad, but some had disappeared inside the vast expanse of the Soviet Union. Either way, the book offered a ready-made target list for KGB officers.

According to Petr Deryabin, a KGB officer who defected in 1954 and was himself listed in the 1969 edition, the "KGB Wanted List" was published jointly by the Second Main Directorate (Counterintelligence) and the Thirteenth Directorate (Special Tasks) based on Soviet state security files.³ When a Soviet citizen defected, the KGB could choose from three possible operational actions: lure the individual back to the Soviet Union to face prosecution; re-recruit the individual in his or her post-defection job; or, in extreme cases, assassinate the defector abroad. In many cases, a defector, especially a state security or military officer, received a sentence of execution in absentia, and that sentence could be fulfilled either through a Second Chief Directorate operation luring the individuals back to the Soviet Union, often using a family member or friend as bait, or through a Thirteenth Directorate operation to

2. People's Commissariat of State Security of the Latvian SSR, "Anketa arestovannogo," February 1946, in Latvijas Valsts Arhivs (LVA), LVA-6.2/K-59/13654.

3. Peter Deriabin and Frank Gibney, *The Secret World* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1982), pp. 337–339.

assassinate them abroad. After World War II, an unknown but likely small number of defectors were targeted for assassination, although the defections of two of the KGB’s assassins, Nikolai Khokhlov and Bohdan Stashins’kyi (Bogdan Stashinskii), in 1954 and 1961, respectively, restrained that option. Sensational reports of Khokhlov’s and Stashins’kyi’s assassination operations received wide publicity in the West, much to Soviet leaders’ chagrin, forcing the Soviet government to reconsider the international repercussions of state-sponsored assassinations. Serhii Plokhyy presented a comprehensive account of Stashins’kyi’s defection and the publicity that followed it in his 2016 book, *The Man with the Poison Gun*.⁴

Since the 1970s, information about individuals listed in the 1969 edition of the KGB Wanted List has gradually appeared in public. In 1977–1978 the National Alliance of Russian Solidarists (*Narodno-Trudovoy Soyuz Rossiiskikh Solidaristov*, or NTS), an anti-Soviet Russian émigré group, published serially in its Germany-based newspaper *Posev* the names of about 600 émigrés who appeared on the list. NTS published only the names and withheld the personal information but offered to provide émigrés their own entry from the list privately upon request.

One of those émigrés was Vladislav Krasnov, a Soviet journalist who defected in Sweden in 1962. He took up the NTS’s offer to see his entry, but he went further and requested to study the whole list to analyze the phenomenon of defection in general. NTS officials declined to provide the full list on privacy grounds, but they gave Krasnov a subset of the entries, containing 470 people who had defected after World War II. Krasnov published an analysis of those entries in his 1985 book *Soviet Defectors: The KGB Wanted List*, quantifying nationalities, careers, levels of education, locations and methods of defection, and other factors.⁵ Per the NTS’s instructions, Krasnov’s statistical analysis gave only aggregated numbers and excluded the names of all but a few defectors. Krasnov’s research materials, now housed at the Hoover Institution Archives at Stanford University, include biographical descriptions for 475 people.⁶ However, names have been redacted and the order of the entries scrambled to prevent the list from being recompiled alphabetically. Krasnov’s book did, however, include the names of the over 600 people that the NTS

4. Serhii Plokhyy, *The Man with the Poison Gun* (London: Oneworld, 2016).

5. Vladislav Krasnov, *Soviet Defectors: The KGB Wanted List* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1985).

6. In addition to the 470 entries that the NTS gave Krasnov, his research collection also includes five World War II entries, probably by mistake.

had published in *Posev*, disconnected from their biographical descriptions.⁷ The year after the publication of his book, Krasnov testified before a U.S. Senate hearing on the existence of the “KGB Wanted List” and the phenomenon of defection in general.⁸

Because Krasnov’s research materials are incomplete, the total number of entries in the 1969 edition is uncertain but probably about 2,000. In 1982, Deryabin referred to the list in a revised edition of his book, *The Secret World*, giving a brief history of it and discussing his own entry. He estimated that it contained about 2,000 entries in total.⁹ Gordon Brook-Shepherd also mentioned the list briefly in his 1989 book *The Storm Birds* in the context of Hovanesyan’s 1972 defection, estimating that it contained “thousands of names.”¹⁰ In January 1992, the newly created Russian journal *Rodina* ran an article that discussed the wanted list and provided the text of the KGB order that created the 1969 edition, similarly estimating that it contained several thousand entries.¹¹

Since the 1970s, only a few names of people included in the list have appeared in public connected to their biographical details. Krasnov and Deryabin wrote about their own entries. The 1992 *Rodina* article reproduced the complete entries for eight people for whom the NTS had presumably granted permission to publish their material. A few additional snippets have been made public since then, but they are sparse. For example, the U.S. National Counterintelligence Center (NACIC) published a history of U.S. counterintelligence in 2004, edited by veteran counterintelligence officer Frank Rafalko, which noted the presence of several defectors on the list: Ismail Akhmedov, Grigorii Burlutskii, Petr Deryabin, Olga Farmakovskaya, Yurii Krotkov, and Yurii Rastvorov.¹² The NACIC book also noted that Hovanesyan brought the book with him when he defected, although it failed to mention that two other Soviet intelligence officers, Anatolii Granovskiy and Yuriy Nosenko, were also listed.

Subsequently, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) released a trickle of material that identifies people whose names appeared on the list.

7. Krasnov, *Soviet Defectors*, pp. 171–178.

8. U.S. Congress. Senate, Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Governmental Affairs, *Federal Government’s Handling of Soviet and Communist Bloc Defectors*, 100th Cong., 1st Sess., 8, 9, 21 October 1987, Vol. 4 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1988), pp. 668–684.

9. Deryabin and Gibney, *The Secret World*, pp. 337–339.

10. Brook-Shepherd, *The Storm Birds*, p. 247.

11. “Iz Dosye NTS,” *Rodina*, No. 10 (January 1992), pp. 13–15.

12. Rafalko, ed., *A Counterintelligence Reader*, pp. 66, 68, 69, 71, 195, 197, 287.

In 2007, the CIA declassified a “CI [Counterintelligence] Information Report” dated 3 October 1972 giving the complete entry for a CIA-recruited source, Rostislav Antonov.¹³ In 2022, the CIA also declassified a 1974 biography of Anatolii Golitsyn and his wife in connection with the John F. Kennedy Assassination Records Act, noting that the Golitsyns were both included in the 1969 edition along with their sentences for execution.¹⁴ I identified several Soviet intelligence officer defectors from the list in my 2020 book *Soviet Defectors*.¹⁵ Ironically, a Freedom of Information Act request to the CIA and the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation for the 1969 list yielded responses that neither agency any longer possesses it, despite information that the CIA has previously declassified from it.

The 1992 *Rodina* article reproduced the 1969 edition’s instructions for handling the individuals in the wanted list. Intelligence operations related to the wanted subjects were run jointly by KGB stations (*rezidentury*) abroad and domestic offices of the Soviet Ministry of Internal Affairs (MVD). The names of subjects were recorded in alphabetically arranged MVD card files and in watch lists at local militia offices. Any new information about either the subject or one of the subject’s associates was to be added to the file and reported to the KGB. It was especially important to report any indication that a subject was hiding on Soviet territory or might be infiltrated into Soviet territory from abroad for an intelligence mission. The KGB Second Main Directorate was responsible for the list, and counterintelligence was its primary task. It was also important to monitor any family members or close associates who were corresponding with the wanted individuals and might be hiding information about their whereabouts. In such situations, the KGB would place an agent or a trusted person near the subject’s associates to surveil their activities or sometimes recruit the associates themselves as clandestine sources to give notice that a subject had turned up.¹⁶ The “KGB wanted lists” analyzed here focused specifically on those who violated treason and defection-related laws, and it is just one of several search lists that the KGB and MVD maintained for law enforcement purposes.

13. CIA, CI Information Report, “Rostislav Lvovich Antonov,” 3 October 1972, in CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room; CIA, “Shebalin, Sergey Lvovich,” biographical summary, n.d., in CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.

14. CIA, “Golitsyn Biographical Highlights,” 16 May 1974, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Warren Commission Files, Doc. 104-10172-10262.

15. Kevin Riehle, *Soviet Defectors: Revelations of Renegade Intelligence Officers, 1924–1954* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020).

16. “Iz Dosye NTS,” pp. 13–15.

Other Editions

For most of the past four decades, the 1969 edition of the KGB Wanted List was all that was available publicly, but that situation has changed. Among the Soviet-era KGB records declassified by the archive of the Security Service of Ukraine is an edition of the KGB book dated 1979.¹⁷ Because of overlaps in people listed in the two editions, the emergence of the 1979 edition has allowed a larger portion of the 1969 list to be recompiled than had previously been possible and biographical details to be connected to many names redacted in Krasnov's materials. Russian historians who were granted access to Russian intelligence archives have also referenced other earlier versions inaccessible to Western researchers. The various editions give deeper insights into changes in the Soviet Union's pursuit of defectors and show an evolution in the people who were deemed by Soviet state security agencies to pose political or espionage threats. Alterations in the document's title over time indicated the priority that the Soviet Union placed on certain types of people.

The first editions of the list appeared during World War II, compiled by the wartime Soviet military counterintelligence organization, the Main Counterintelligence Directorate (known as SMERSH for "death to spies"). A 1944 edition was titled *Alfavitnii Spisok Izmennikov Rodiny, Agentov Inorazvedok, Karateley i Drugikh Gosudarstvennykh Prestupnikov, Podlezhashchikh Rozysku*. That title focused primarily on German intelligence and counterintelligence agents and was marked as "No. 2," indicating that it was likely an update.¹⁸ In 1945, the Lithuanian Republic office of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) published a similar list, titled *Alfavitniy Spisok No. 1 Podlezhashchikh Rozysku Agentov Razvedki in Kontrrazvedki Protivnika, Izmennikov Rodine, Pedateley, Stavlennikov i Posobnikov Okkupantov*. It contained the names of more than 3,000 Lithuanians who had either worked for the pre-war Lithuanian security services, been members of anti-Soviet underground organizations, or supported Germany during the war.¹⁹ These lists were post-World War II adaptations of operational search lists compiled in the 1920s

17. KGB, *Alfavitniy Spisok Izmennikov Rodiny, Agentov Inorazvedok, Karateley i Drugikh Gosudarstvennykh Prestupnikov, Podlezhashchikh Rozysku* (hereinafter, KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979) (Moscow: KGB, 1979), State Security Archive, Kyiv, Ukraine, Fond 13, File 885.

18. The cover of the 1944 edition was posted to Wikipedia Commons in February 2021, available online at https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Файл:Pyotr_Kozlov_%22Bykov%22_in_the_Alphabet_list_of_agents,_by_Smersh,_1944.jpg

19. KGB, *Alfavitniy Spisok No. 1 Podlezhashchikh Rozysku Agentov Razvedki in Kontrrazvedki Protivnika, Izmennikov Rodine, Pedateley, Stavlennikov i Posobnikov Okkupantov* (Vilnius: NKVD, 1945), stored at the Genocide and Resistance Research Center of Lithuania, Vilnius, Lithuania.

after the Russian Civil War that named former White Army officers who evaded capture inside Russia.²⁰

The title of editions compiled in the 1950s and 1960s expanded to *Alfavitniy Spisok Agentov Inostrannykh Razvedok, Izmennikov Rodiny, Uchastnikov Antisovetskikh Organizatsiy, Karateley i Drugikh Prestupnikov Podlezhashchikh Rozysku*. These versions also emphasized foreign intelligence agents, but, like the 1945 Lithuanian version, they also added the concept of “traitors to the homeland,” which meant defectors and non-returnees.²¹ These documents, unlike the Lithuanian list, covered individuals from across the Soviet Union, not limited to any single Soviet republic.

In 1979, the name changed again to *Alfavitniy Spisok Izmennikov Rodiny, Agentov Inorazvedok, Karateley i Drugikh Gosudarstvennikh Prestupnikov, Podlezhashchikh Rozysku*. The 1979 placement of “traitors to the homeland” first in the title possibly indicated the priority placed on defectors, as well as adding “state criminals” among those listed.

Of the 475 cases listed in Krasnov’s research files, 359 had appeared in the previous edition of the KGB Wanted List. The year of the previous edition was redacted from most of those entries. However, for two entries, the year 1963 appears to have been mistakenly retained. Thus, the edition prior to 1969 was likely published in 1963. If a person’s name had appeared in the previous wanted list, the entry listed the page number and location on the page of the previous entry. If a person had not appeared previously, the entry refers to an *orientirovka*, which was a document that added a person to the wanted list between printed editions and contained a description of a person and the reason for his or her listing.

There are several surprising entries in the 1969 edition listed with *orientirovki*, meaning that they had not appeared in a previous edition. Among them were Igor and Svetlana Gouzenko of the Soviet military intelligence service (GRU), who defected in Ottawa in 1945.²² Evgenii Abryutin and

20. Andrey Ganin, “Rozysk Organami OGPU Byvshikh Ofitserov v 1922–1925 gg.,” in Russian Federation Federal Penitentiary Service, *Perspektivnye Napravleniya Nauchnikh Issledovaniy po Istorii Ugolovno-Iсполnitelnoy Sistemy Rossiyskoy Federatsii*, Proceedings of the All-Russian Academic-Practical Conference, 31 March 2020 (Moscow: “Center for Training and Educational Work” Scientific Research Institute, 2020), pp. 82–88, available online at <http://orenbkazak.narod.ru/PDF/rozysk.pdf>

21. Russian historian Kirill Aleksandrov, who has written extensively on the Russian Liberation Army (*Russkaya Osvoboditel'naya Armiya*, or ROA), listed three editions of the list, from 1954, 1959, and 1961, as sources he used in his 2006 book *Armiya Generala Vlasova 1944–1945* (Moscow: Eksmo Yauza, 2006), all of which have the same title. Russian intelligence services have not declassified those lists, so they are not publicly available.

22. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, pp. 82–83.

Aleksandr Mikheyev were also not listed in the 1963 edition.²³ They had both collaborated with German forces during the war but were subsequently hired as Ministry of State Security (MGB) interpreters after the war and then defected in 1946 and 1948, respectively. Krasnov, the author of the 1985 book about the KGB Wanted List, was added via an *orientirovka* in 1969, even though he defected in 1962. In all, sixteen people who defected before 1963, and thus whose names could have been in the 1963 edition, were added by *orientirovki* between 1963 and 1969.

The 1979 edition contains 800 entries, less than half the number in the 1969 edition. Of those, 585 are repeats from the 1969 edition, meaning that only 215 new people were added to the 1979 edition. Similar to the 1969 edition, there were eighteen people who had committed crimes prior to 1969 that landed them on the wanted list but were added by *orientirovka* sometime between 1969 and 1979. Notable among them is Kaarlo Tuomi (aka Rudolph Saastamoinen), a Soviet GRU illegal who defected in the United States in 1959 but whose name was not added via an *orientirovka* until 1971.²⁴

Of the 585 repeats in the 1979 edition, 318 were wanted for their collaboration with German forces during World War II, meaning 40 percent of the 800 total entries referred to actions that had occurred over 30 years previously. The Soviet government did not place a statute of limitations on collaboration with Germany during World War II, especially participation in German police units, or “punitive” (*karatelnye*) units as they were called in Russian. In 1968, for example, KGB Chairman Yurii Andropov gave an account of state security convictions that had occurred during the previous year, noting that the KGB “brought to justice 738 persons, 263 for particularly dangerous state crimes, and 475 persons for other state crimes.” Those convicted of criminal offenses included “121 traitors and war criminals from the German-Fascist occupation.”²⁵ This pursuit of Nazi sympathizers was, of course, not unique to the Soviet Union. Western powers continued to investigate former Nazis into the 2020s. The 1978 Holzman Amendment to the U.S. Immigration

23. KGB, *Alfavitniy Spisok Agentov Inostrannykh Razvedok, Izmennikov Rodiny, Uchastnikov Antisovetskikh Organizatsiy, Karateley, in Drugikh Prestupnikov, Podlezhaschchikh Rozysku* (hereinafter, KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1969 redacted) (Moscow: KGB, 1969), person numbers 107 and 470, redacted copy in Vladislav Krasnov Writings, Hoover Institution Archives.

24. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, p. 281.

25. KGB, “The KGB’s 1967 Annual Report,” 6 May 1968, in Russian State Archive of Recent History (RGANI), Fond 89, Opis’ 5, Delo 3, Listy. 1–14, translated by Vladislav Zubok for the Wilson Center Cold War Intelligence History Project, History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive, available online at <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/110403>

and Naturalization Act opened the legal path for deportation from the United States of anyone who “ordered, incited, assisted, or participated in persecution because of race, religion, national origin or political opinion” in connection with the Nazi regime of Germany.²⁶ As recently as October 2021, Irmgard Furchner, a 96-year-old German woman, was tried in Germany for her employment as a secretary to the commandant of the Stutthof concentration camp during World War II.²⁷

Execution Sentences

KGB wanted lists identified the judicial sentences passed against individuals in the list, ranging from 7 years imprisonment to execution. Krasnov’s materials from the 1969 edition show 287 judicial sentences passed against listed subjects (60 percent of the total population), of which 227 were for execution. In contrast, the 1979 edition shows only 190 subjects with judicial sentences (24 percent). The wide discrepancy in the percentages is likely due to the fact that Krasnov’s incomplete research materials do not contain the names of individuals who defected during World War II, whereas the complete 1979 edition does. Nevertheless, although wartime collaboration continued to be a state crime into the 1980s, it was seldom grounds for a sentence of execution.

Most of the sentences passed against individuals in the 1979 edition were for execution (167 of 190), but only eleven of those had collaborated with German forces or participated in “punitive” units. Only two of those eleven were sentenced because of their wartime activities. The remaining sentences were levied against those who had conscripted into a Soviet military unit after the war and then defected in the late 1940s. The vast majority of those who were sentenced to death were Soviet military or intelligence personnel who had defected in the first decade after World War II, and most of the execution sentences were passed within two years of defection. Only 24 of the execution sentences in the 1979 edition came after 1955. That is consistent with Krasnov’s data from the 1969 edition, in which only 66 sentences came after

26. Michael J. Creppy, “Nazi War Criminals in Immigration Law,” *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal*, No. 12 (Spring 1998), p. 449.

27. Kate Connolly, “Former Nazi camp secretary goes on trial over murders of 11,000 people,” *The Guardian*, 19 October 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/19/former-nazi-camp-secretary-trial-murders-11000-people-irmgard-furchner>

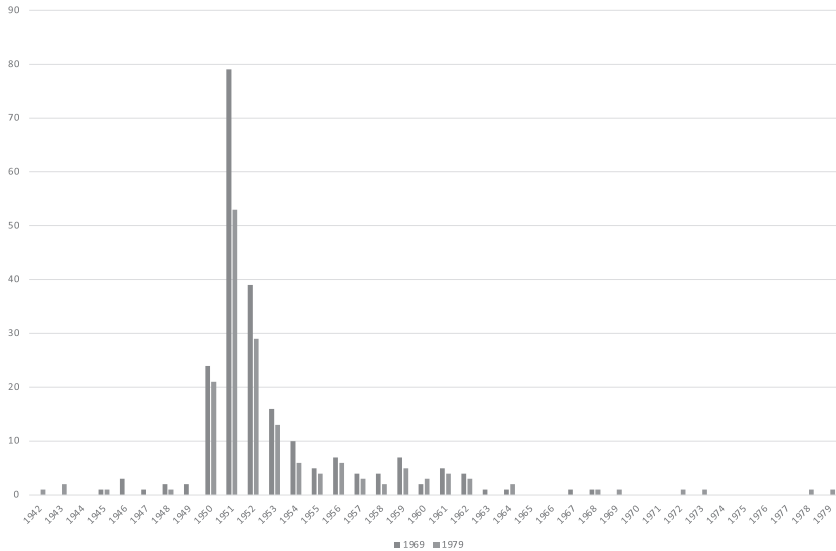


Figure 1. Sentences of execution listed in the 1969 and 1979 editions of the KGB Wanted List.

Note: The figures for 1969 are based only on Krasnov's list; there could be other execution sentences in the data not released to Krasnov. Most of the sentences in the 1979 edition are repeats from the 1969 edition. In addition to the data in this chart, Krasnov's 1969 figures also listed eight execution sentences without years for people who defected between 1947 and 1953. The sentences were likely carried out in the early 1950s. The 1979 edition also listed two execution sentences without years, both of which were repeats from the 1969 edition.

1955.²⁸ The final four years of Joseph Stalin's life saw the heaviest application of the execution sentence during the post-1945 period (see Figure 1).

In addition to execution sentences, the 1969 edition identifies 35 people who were sentenced to 25 years in corrective labor camps, which was practically the equivalent to a death sentence. The 25-year sentence was established on 26 May 1947 to replace the death penalty, although the death penalty was reinstated on 12 January 1950 for "traitors, spies, and saboteurs."²⁹ From

28. For an analysis of execution sentences listed in the 1979 edition of the KGB Wanted List, see Felix Corley, "The KGB Wanted List 1979: Death Penalty for Defectors?" available online at https://www.academia.edu/62244015/The_KGB_Wanted_List_1979_Death_Penalty_for_Defectors

29. George C. Guins, "Penalties and Rewards in Soviet Law," *Washington Law Review*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (1950), pp. 206-222.

1948 to 1950, according to the 1969 edition, 24 people received 25-year sentences of forced labor. The remaining eleven sentences were dated from 1954 and later. Despite the use of these 25-year sentences, death sentences never ceased. The 1969 edition lists four people sentenced to execution in 1948 and 1949.

The 1979 edition lists twelve 25-year sentences, nine of which were repeats from the 1969 edition. The remaining three were lower-level defectors—a stowaway on a ship, a tourist, and a merchant seaman—who defected in 1955–1957. Because all of these individuals were abroad when their sentences were handed down, it is likely that none of them ever served time.

Commonalities and Differences Between Editions

Although there is significant overlap of entries between the 1969 and 1979 editions, some significant entries are missing in 1979 that were in earlier editions. For example, aircraft engineer Grigorii Tokaev, who defected in 1947; Nikolai Borodin, a medical researcher who defected in 1948; Vladimir and Evdokiya Petrov (real names Vladimir Proletarskii and Evdokiya Kartseva), husband and wife intelligence officers who defected in 1954; Chaim Nashpitz, a World War II SMERSH officer who defected in 1956; and Olga Farmakovskaya, an interpreter who defected in 1966, were all still alive in 1979 but did not appear in the list.³⁰ Their omissions, along with the significantly decreased number of entries in the 1979 list overall, further compounded by the relatively few people added from 1969 through 1979, seem to indicate that the Soviet Union was more selective about its pursuit of defectors in the 1970s. Former KGB officer Oleg Kalugin made a claim that supports that assessment. He said that senior KGB officials in the 1970s decided not to make a fuss over older defectors, quoting Andropov as saying, “To hell with them. They’re old men now. Leave these old geezers alone. Find Oleg Lyalin or Yurii Nosenko and I will sanction the execution of these two.”³¹ Lyalin and Nosenko, both KGB officer defectors, were listed in the 1979 edition.³²

30. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1969 redacted, person numbers 89, 111, 126, 132, 241, and 456.

31. Oleg Kalugin, *Spymaster: My Thirty-Two Years in Intelligence and Espionage in the West* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), pp. 109, 275.

32. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, pp. 194, 230.

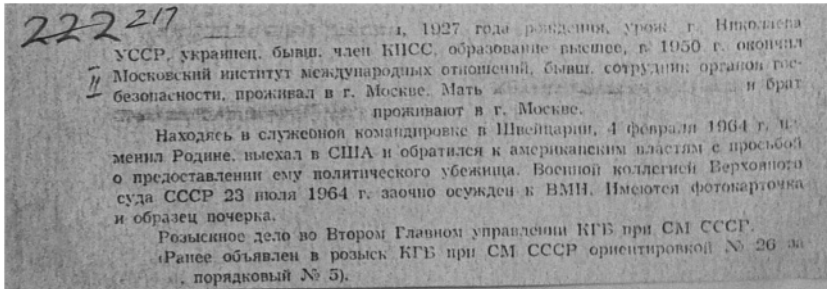


Figure 2. Redacted entry for Yurii Nosenko from 1969 edition of the KGB Wanted List

Source: Vladislav Krasnov's notes.

Nosenko had also appeared in the 1969 edition, which created controversy within the CIA regarding the list's legitimacy (see Figure 2).³³ Some CIA officers were convinced that Nosenko was a false defector dispatched to deceive the CIA. His name on the list was proof to them that the list was yet another element of a massive KGB deception plot, thus casting suspicion on any other defector named in it.³⁴ That controversy increased when Hovanesyan, who had brought the 1969 edition out with him when he defected, chose to redefect to the Soviet Union in September 1973. Some questioned whether he had been a false defector all along, although he probably just had difficulty adjusting to life in the United States.³⁵ However, with the emergence of the 1979 edition, there is little reason to assess that either list was a deception. The "Master Plan," which came to be the label for the belief among some CIA officers that the Soviet Union was conducting a massive campaign to deceive and destroy the West, claimed that the KGB was extremely powerful and capable of launching coordinated, detailed deception campaign. However, Nosenko also appeared in the 1979 edition, which Soviet leaders had no reason to think had fallen into the hands of Western intelligence services (see Figure 3). His inclusion in the 1979 edition supports the assessment that the KGB was seeking him and thus that he was not a dispatched defector.

The CIA's "Master Plan" conspiracy theory was partly based on the assumption that the KGB was in control of the Soviet system and that it was

33. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1969 redacted, person number 217.

34. CIA, Center for the Study of Intelligence, *Of Moles and Molehunters: A Review of Counterintelligence Literature 1977–1992* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1993), p. 55.

35. Brook-Shepherd, *The Storm Birds*, pp. 247–248.



Figure 3. Entry for Yuri Nosenko in the 1979 edition of the KGB Wanted List

invariably successful in its operations. To those who subscribed to this theory, Nosenko's reporting in 1964 that the KGB had not pursued Lee Harvey Oswald when he defected to the Soviet Union in the late 1950s seemed unfathomable for an agency that was thought to monitor all activities in the Soviet Union. Why would the KGB decline to recruit a U.S. Marine veteran, let him marry a Soviet citizen, and then let him redefect back to the United States and assassinate the U.S. president? For those officers, Nosenko's inclusion on the KGB Wanted List was more evidence that he was a bogus defector, just as his reporting about Oswald had been. However, the KGB Wanted List belies the notion of an omnipotent KGB. The 1979 edition listed 80 people who still lived inside the USSR and had melted into Soviet society. Many had joined German occupation units on Soviet territory early in the war and remained there when German forces withdrew in 1943–1944. Some had been living in the USSR for more than 30 years, and the KGB was still looking for them. If the KGB was so powerful, why could it, along with the MVD, not find Soviet citizens living inside the USSR?

Unanswered Questions

The 1979 edition raises other thorny questions. One name that appeared in both the 1969 and the 1979 editions was Oleg Tumanov, a Soviet sailor who defected in November 1965 by jumping overboard from a Soviet naval vessel

into the Mediterranean Sea and swimming to the Libyan shore.³⁶ Tumanov claimed, implausibly, in his 1993 book that he was recruited as a KGB agent even before his defection.³⁷ However, Richard Cummings, the former director of security of Radio Liberty in Germany, more plausibly reported that Tumanov was approached by the KGB and recruited in about 1972 after he had arrived in Germany.³⁸ Tumanov's name was in the 1969 KGB Wanted List, giving the KGB in Germany a target for recruitment. His recruitment in the early 1970s would reasonably be expected to prompt the KGB to remove his name from the 1979 edition. After all, the purpose for his inclusion on the list had seemingly been achieved. However, his name is present in the 1979 edition. The reason for this is unclear, but it may indicate that he had wavered in his cooperation with the KGB. After Tumanov defected back to the Soviet Union in 1986, the Soviet Union used him for propaganda purposes to criticize the United States, likely because his value as an intelligence agent had faded.

Another anomaly in the 1979 list is the small number of women. Of the 800 entries, only seventeen were for women, 2 percent of the total. Five of the same women had also appeared in the 1969 edition, meaning only twelve new women were added in the 1970s. The seventeen included four musicians, three wives of other defectors, two scientists, a television editor, an interpreter, a student, a store clerk, an economist, a merchant sailor, a World War II intelligence officer, and a KGB illegal. The World War II intelligence officer was Nina Chaplygina, a Komsomol activist recruited by the North Caucasus Front intelligence department and dispatched behind German lines for an intelligence mission in 1942, only to surrender to German forces and compromise her intelligence team members.³⁹ The KGB illegal was Waltraud-Helga (Valentina) Rusch, who operated in West Germany and defected along with her husband Evgenii Runge in 1967.⁴⁰

Among the 470 names that Krasnov analyzed for his book were 21 women, or 4 percent of the total. Separate from his analysis of the KGB Wanted List, Krasnov also compiled from openly available sources the names

36. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1969 redacted, person number 23; and KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, p. 322.

37. Oleg Tumanov, *Tumanov: Confessions of a KGB Agent* (Chicago: Edition Q, 1993), pp. 13–24.

38. Richard Cummings, *Cold War Radio: The Dangerous History of American Broadcasting in Europe, 1950–1989* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co., 2009), pp. 175–176.

39. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, p. 347.

40. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, redacted 1969, person numbers 422 and 430; KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, pp. 269, 270.

of 226 additional Soviet citizens who defected in 1969-1984, subsequent to the date of the list he was analyzing.⁴¹ Of those 226, 48 were women, or 26 percent, much higher than the number in the 1979 edition. Additionally, there were several significant female defectors omitted from the 1979 edition. Another World War II intelligence officer, Lidiya Esenina, whose profile fits closely with Chaplygina’s, is not listed.⁴² Also missing are an MGB lawyer who defected in 1949 after warning the suspects of MGB investigations and helping them to escape;⁴³ Raya Kiselnikova, who defected in 1970 in Mexico City and revealed Soviet intelligence operations and officer identities;⁴⁴ as well as Evdokiya Petrova and Olga Farmakovskaya, mentioned previously. Even accounting for the possibility that some of these may have died before 1979, there is no doubt that other Soviet women defected, including some who revealed sensitive and damaging information. It is unclear why the KGB chose to include so few of them in the 1979 edition of the wanted list.

Cases Assigned to KGB Headquarters

Each entry in the KGB wanted lists identifies the KGB office responsible for the individual’s case. The assigned office was responsible for developing sources who could provide information about the person’s whereabouts and correspondence. Most of the assigned offices are located in the person’s home region or city or where the wanted person’s family members lived. However, a few cases were assigned directly to KGB headquarters, most to the Second Main Directorate, which oversaw high-profile counterintelligence investigations. The 1969 material available to Krasnov lists twelve defectors whose cases were managed by the Second Main Directorate, nine of which were KGB officers or their spouses before their defection:⁴⁵

- Vladimir and Evdokiya Petrov, defected in 1954
- Yurii Rastvorov, defected in 1954

41. Krasnov, *Soviet Defectors*, pp. 190–199.

42. Esenina’s interrogation reports are located in Gestapo records that fell into U.S. custody after World War II and are stored in the U.S. National Archives; Gestapo/RSHA, file number 173-b-16-12/126, NARA, Record Group 242, Entry UD 23B, Box 13.

43. This officer, whose name is not available, was interviewed for the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System, March 1951. Schedule A, Vol. 27, Case 525 (interviewer A.D.), type A4.

44. Jeremiah O’Leary, “Defector Assails Russia,” *The Evening Star* (Washington, DC), 16 March 1970, p. 9.

45. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, redacted 1969, person numbers 6, 158, 217, 241, 337, 422, 430, 450, and 456.

- Nikolay Khokhlov, defected in 1954
- Petr Deryabin, defected in 1954
- Anatolii and Svetlana Golitsyn, defected in 1961
- Yurii Nosenko, defected in 1964
- Evgenii Runge and Waltraud-Helga Rusch (husband and wife spies), defected in 1967

In addition to those nine, the 1969 edition also listed three others whose cases were assigned to the Second Main Directorate:⁴⁶

- Yuriy Krotkov, defected in 1963
- Olga Farmakovskaya, defected in 1966
- Vladimir Matusevich, defected in 1968

All three were members of tourist groups when they defected, Krotkov in the United Kingdom, Farmakovskaya in Lebanon, and Matusevich in Norway. Their cases were likely elevated to KGB headquarters because they were KGB recruited agents, who monitored and reported on the people around them to the Second Main Directorate. Krotkov admitted to being an agent after his defection, and the KGB recruited Farmakovskaya as an interpreter to monitor the people to whom she was assigned, including Canadian journalist Peter Worthington.⁴⁷ Less is known about Matusevich's connections to the KGB, although his inclusion in the short list suggests that he was recruited as an agent prior to his defection.

The 1979 edition lists fifteen defectors assigned to KGB headquarters elements, most of whom were KGB officers, including some repeats from the 1969 edition:⁴⁸

- Yurii Rastvorov
- Nikolay Khokhlov
- Petr Deryabin
- Anatolii and Svetlana Golitsyn
- Yurii Nosenko
- Evgenii Runge and Waltraud-Helga Rusch

46. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, redacted 1969, person numbers 89, 198, and 226.

47. John Barron, *KGB: The Secret Work of Soviet Secret Agents* (New York: Reader's Digest Press, 1974), pp. 123–140; and Rafalko, ed., *A Counterintelligence Reader*, pp. 197–199.

48. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, pp. 70, 90, 230, 256, 269, 270, and 342.

As noted, Vladimir and Evdokiya Petrov were notably absent from the 1979 edition. There were also two post-1969 KGB officer defectors added to the 1979 edition:⁴⁹

- Oleg Lyalin, defected in 1971, along with Irina Teplyakova, his mistress who defected with him
- Anatolii Semenov, defected in 1976; redefected in 1981

Like the 1969 edition, the 1979 edition also included non-KGB officers whose cases were assigned directly to the KGB Second Main Directorate. Yuri Krotkov was retained from 1969. However, by 1979, Vladimir Matusevich's case was transferred to the Moscow Oblast KGB Directorate, and Farmakovskaya was omitted altogether. In the opposite direction, Oleg Tumanov, whose case in the 1969 edition was handled by the Moscow Oblast KGB Directorate, was transferred to the Second Main Directorate sometime before 1979, which suggests that he had been recruited in the interim and then betrayed his KGB association.⁵⁰ Also added to the Second Main Directorate was Arkady Shevchenko, a Soviet diplomat who defected in 1978 and who admitted being a reluctant co-opted agent.⁵¹

Vladimir Rezun (pen name Viktor Suvorov), a GRU officer who defected from a diplomatically covered position in Switzerland in 1978, was unique among all the entries in both lists for being the only individual whose case was assigned to the KGB headquarters Third Main Directorate, the directorate responsible for military counterintelligence.⁵² Other GRU officers were listed (e.g., Igor Gouzenko, Vadim Shelaputin, and Kaarlo Tuomi), but Rezun was the only one whose case was handled by KGB Headquarters; all others were handled by the local KGB offices in their hometowns.

Closed Cases

As time passed, some cases included in the KGB Wanted List were no longer necessary. Cases were closed for various reasons, some because the subjects had died, others because they were re-recruited or redefected, and others possibly

49. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, pp. 194, 286, and 312.

50. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, p. 322.

51. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, p. 357; and Arkady Shevchenko, *Breaking with Moscow* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985).

52. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1979, p. 259.

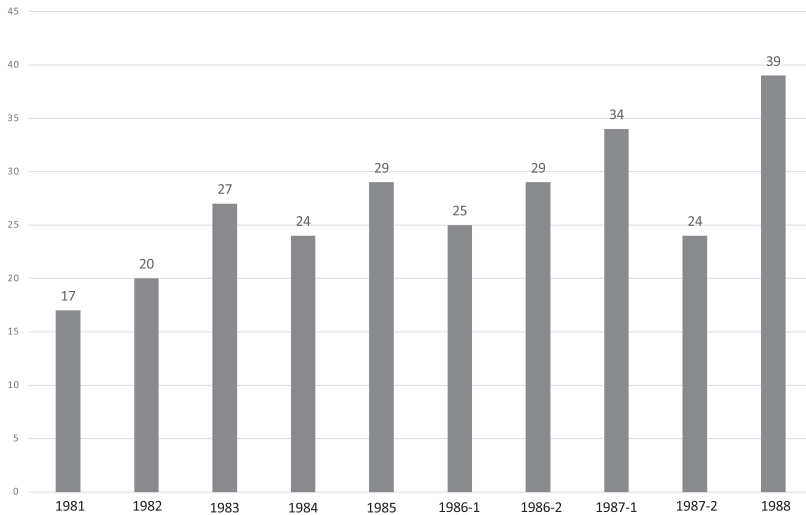


Figure 4. Cases Closed from the 1979 KGB Wanted List.

because they were no longer considered a threat. Krasnov's research materials from the 1969 edition contain nine entries with stamps showing the cases included on annual lists of closed cases. The closed cases included Mikhail Mondich, a SMERSH interpreter who defected in 1947 and died in 1968, and Grigorii Pavlov, an MGB officer who defected in 1953.⁵³ Because Krasnov's files include only around 24 percent of the total entries in the 1969 edition, the likelihood is that other cases were also closed.

The 1979 edition contains handwritten notations showing the closing of 268 cases from 1981 through 1988 (see Figure 4). The case closings occurred in ten groups, once each year from 1981 through 1985, twice each in 1986 and 1987, and again once in 1988, showing a gradually increasing number of cases closed.

Of the 268 subjects whose cases were closed, 149 had supported Germany during World War II and were born before 1925, so many had likely died or were no longer considered a threat. NKVD officer Anatolii Granovskii did not appear in the 1979 edition because he died in 1974. Additionally, at least one individual among the closed cases, KGB officer defector Anatolii Semenov, redefected in December 1981, so his case was closed in 1982.

A judicial sentence passed against an individual made it less likely that the individual's case would be closed. Only 29 of the 268 closed cases in the 1979

53. KGB, *Alphabetical List*, 1969 redacted, person numbers 196 and 439.

edition had Soviet judicial sentences passed against them. Of these, 18 had received sentences of execution. Although some of the 18 had likely died—14 would have been 64 years old or older when their cases were closed—others are known to have still been alive when their cases were closed, including GRU officer Igor Gouzenko, who defected in 1945, and ballet dancer Rudolf Nureyev, who defected in 1961. Otherwise, some of the closed cases may be related to Oleg Kalugin’s recollection that senior KGB officials decided to focus on higher-priority defectors, leaving others to live their lives unhindered.

Reflections in Russia Today

According to several sources, the Russian government today has reportedly resurrected “wanted lists” like those that existed in the Soviet era. The MVD maintains a list of wanted criminals, the Federal Wanted List (*Federalniy Rozysk*), which identifies individuals sought for criminal prosecution but who are hiding from Russian law enforcement agencies, such as the MVD, the Federal Security Service (FSB), the counternarcotics police, the Federal Penitentiary Service, and the customs service.⁵⁴ According to the Russian emigration services firm Al-Pary, which assists clients in emigrating from Russia even if their names appear on the Federal Wanted List, the list is primarily focused domestically and, as of 2012, contained nearly a million names.⁵⁵ The individuals on the Federal Wanted List are mostly wanted for criminal offenses, such as murder, drug-related crimes, and financial crimes, not necessarily national security or political crimes, such as defection or treason.

Although the full Federal Wanted List is much larger than any Soviet-era KGB wanted list, a subset of that massive database, the International Wanted List (*Mezhdunarodniy Rozysk*), is more analogous to the 1969 and 1979 editions of the KGB Wanted List, containing an estimated 1,600 names as of 2012.⁵⁶ It is still focused primarily on criminal offenses, not political ones, and names included on it are often submitted to Interpol as international arrest warrants.⁵⁷ Unlike during the Soviet era, defection, which was the

54. Margarita Maslova, “Osobnosti Federalnogo Rosyska,” *Petrovka* 38, 12 June 2012, available online at <https://petrovka-38.com/arkhiv/item/osobnosti-federalnogo-rozyska>.

55. “Federalniy Rozysk i Ego Osobnosti,” Alpary.net, n.d., available online at <https://alpary.net/kontakt-8.html>.

56. Ibid.

57. “Druga Polkovnikov-Milliardero FSB Obyavili v Mezhdunarodniy Rozysk,” *Lenta.ru*, 1 August 2019, available online at <https://lenta.ru/news/2019/08/01/drug/>.

predicate for including most individuals on KGB wanted lists, is not usually a crime in the post-Soviet era because most Russians can legally emigrate. However, that does not apply to Russians with security clearances. Beginning in 2010, state security employees were restricted from traveling abroad unless they required urgent medical treatment not available in the Russian Federation.⁵⁸ In October 2019, the Russian State Duma approved a bill that tightened foreign travel even further, prohibiting former state security employees from leaving the Russian Federation for any reason for up to five years after they ceased working for the service.⁵⁹ This law followed soon after public revelations that former Russian presidential administration official Oleg Smolenkov had defected to the United States in 2017. Further restrictions have followed Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, limiting the travel of senior Russian officials abroad, including lawmakers, governors, and senior managers of state-owned companies.⁶⁰ Individuals who may be conscripted into the army are also prohibited from emigrating.⁶¹ The concept of defection has returned for officials who have access to sensitive information, could fight for Russia, or could be used by an adversary for propaganda purposes.

During the Putin era, politically significant émigrés, such as former intelligence and state security officers, have again become the focus of more aggressive international FSB searches like those dictated by KGB wanted lists, including the return of assassinations abroad when the targets are located. A former FSB officer reported to the Russian émigré organization Dossier Center that the FSB maintains and regularly updates a so-called “liquidation list” that includes people who are considered traitors or economic or political opponents of Vladimir Putin's regime. This list is compiled by the FSB's First Service, the modern descendant of the KGB's Second Main Directorate involved in countering foreign intelligence threats to Russia.⁶² Like the KGB Wanted List, this list of targets is likely a subset of a larger “wanted list.”

58. Vladimir Ryzhkov, “Controlling Russians Through Travel Bans,” *The Moscow Times*, 26 May 2014, available online at <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2014/05/26/controlling-russians-through-travel-bans-a35830>.

59. “Zakonproekt o Vozmozhnosti Zapreta na Vyezd za Rubezh Eks-sotrudnikov FSB Prinyat v 1 Chtenii,” *TASS*, 17 October 2019, available online at <https://tass.ru/obschestvo/7012648>.

60. Pyotr Kozlov, “Russia Imposes Stringent Controls on Officials' Foreign Travel,” *The Moscow Times*, 27 March 2023, available online at: <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2023/03/27/russia-imposes-stringent-controls-on-officials-foreign-travel-a80587>.

61. “Russians Banned from Travel to Hand Over Passports within Five Days,” *Reuters*, 11 December 2023, available online at <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russians-banned-travel-hand-over-passports-within-five-days-decree-2023-12-10/>

62. “FSB za Granitsey,” *Dossier Center*, n.d., available online at <https://fsb.dossier.center/abroad/>

The highest-priority individuals on the FSB’s list are former government officials or intelligence and law enforcement officers who left Russian and collaborated with foreign states, the modern equivalent of the “agents of foreign intelligence services” and “traitors to the homeland” on KGB Wanted Lists. Others include anti-Kremlin émigrés and certain foreigners who are of concern to the Kremlin, such as Ukrainians. The FSB dispatches special forces officers, the modern descendants of the KGB Thirteenth Directorate, clandestinely around the world in teams of two or three to locate traitors and collect potential targeting information. A Dossier Center source claimed that Putin is aware of the list and monitors assassination plans to stay abreast of potential political repercussions.⁶³

Russia’s continued pursuit of former intelligence and state security officers is a manifestation of the KGB phrase “there is no such thing as a former chekist” (“*бывших чекистов не бывает*”).⁶⁴ In Russia today, as in the USSR in the past, once a person is given the special trust of being an intelligence or state security officer, there is no turning back without consequences. Aleksandr Litvinenko, who was assassinated in London in 2006, was likely an example of a person on a modern equivalent of the KGB Wanted List. As a former FSB officer, he was among the traitors the FSB would pursue, like intelligence and state security defectors during the Soviet era. The British inquiry into Litvinenko’s death concluded that there was a “strong circumstantial case that the Russian State was responsible for Mr. Litvinenko’s death” and that “Putin’s conduct towards Mr. Lugovoy [Litvinenko’s suspected assassin] suggests a level of approval for the killing of Mr. Litvinenko.”⁶⁵

The FSB regularly collects intelligence on the whereabouts of Russians whom the FSB considers traitors. The journalist Andrei Soldatov, an expert on Russian security services, reported having been interrogated by the FSB in 2008 about his possible connections to Sergei Tretyakov, a former Foreign Intelligence Service (SVR) officer who defected in 1999.⁶⁶ Tretyakov died in

63. Ibid.

64. A “chekist” is a member of a former Soviet state security service, named for the first Soviet state security service, known by its acronym VChK. For an analysis of this phrase, see Kevin Riehle, “Post-KGB Lives: Is There Such a Thing as a Former Chekist?” *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (2023), pp. 492–515.

65. Robert Owen, *The Litvinenko Inquiry: Report into the Death of Alexander Litvinenko* (London: HM Government, 2016), pp. 239–240.

66. “Sledstvennoe Upravlenie FSB,” *Agentura.ru*, available online at <https://www.agentura.ru/dossier/russia/fsb/structure/su/> For details about Tretyakov’s case, see Pete Earley, *Comrade J: The Untold Secrets of Russia’s Master Spy in American After the End of the Cold War* (New York: Berkeley Publishing, 2007).

2010, although his death was likely due to an accident, not assassination.⁶⁷ Soldatov himself was placed on a wanted list by the Russian MVD in June 2022, although the nature of the charges against him is murky.⁶⁸ The Russian government's attempt to assassinate Sergey Skripal, a former GRU officer, in Great Britain demonstrated detailed knowledge of his location, indicating continuing monitoring. Additionally, in 2019, Russian state media outlets identified the U.S. city where Oleg Smolenkov was residing with his family.⁶⁹ Smolenkov allegedly had enjoyed high-level access as an employee in the Russian presidential administration, placing him among the high-priority targets. Coming just a year after Skripal's attempted assassination, the publication of Smolenkov's address was possibly a deliberate FSB leak to send an ominous message to Smolenkov and other defectors that the agency could track him down. In June 2023, *The New York Times* reported that the Russian government planned a 2019 operation to assassinate Aleksandr Poteev, an SVR officer who defected to the United States after having compromised an SVR program of sleeper agents in the United States. The operation failed but indicated the continuation of plans to pursue defectors abroad.⁷⁰

Russia placed a moratorium on death sentences in 1996 in line with its entry into the Council of Europe. Thus, none of the people pursued abroad since then were subjected to judicially imposed death sentences, as had happened with similar cases during the Cold War. However, in June 2006, the Russian parliament passed a law that allows the Russian president to authorize the military and special services to "deprive a person of life" outside the boundaries of the Russian Federation to counter threats to Russia.⁷¹ The Russian government, including Putin personally, still views the death penalty as an option in certain egregious cases, such as terrorism or treason, especially after Russia's expulsion from the Council of Europe after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.⁷² Over the past few years, Russian operatives have

67. "Autopsy: Russian Spy Chief Defector Choked on Meat," *NBC News*, 20 September 2010, available online at <https://www.nbcnews.com/id/wbna39268000>

68. Leyla Latypova, "Russia Places Top Investigative Journalist on Federal Wanted List," *The Moscow Times*, 7 June 2022, available online at <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/06/07/russia-places-top-investigative-journalist-on-federal-wanted-list-a77923>.

69. "Semya Shpiona Smolenkov Sbezhalo is Svoego Doma v SSHA," *Lenta.ru*, 11 September 2019, available online at <https://lenta.ru/news/2019/09/11/runaway/>

70. Ronen Bergman, Adam Goldman, and Julian Barnes, "Russia Sought to Kill Defector in Florida," *The New York Times*, 21 June 2023, available online at <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/19/us/politics/russia-spy-assassination.html>.

71. Russian Federation, Federal Law No. 35-FZ, 3 June 2006.

72. Sergey Podosenov, "Bolee Poloviny Rossiyan za Vozvrashchenie Smertnoy Kazni," *Izvestiya*, 1 July 2013, available online at <https://iz.ru/news/552802>; and Thomas Nilsen, "Dmitry Medvedev Vows to

assassinated perceived opponents of Putin’s regime in numerous Western and Third World countries.

In the post-Soviet era, the FSB also includes Chechen militants around the world on the FSB’s International Wanted List.⁷³ In Russia’s assessment, Chechen militants are terrorists, the FSB’s 21st-century functional equivalent of Nazi collaborators named in the Soviet-era wanted lists. The FSB has also allegedly been involved in a series of assassinations of Chechen militants. From 2004 to 2019, at least twenty Chechen leaders and their supporters were targeted by assassination operations outside the Russian Federation, including twelve in Turkey, three in Ukraine, two in Austria, and one each in Qatar, United Arab Emirates, and Germany.⁷⁴ The first Putin-era assassination of a Chechen militant took place in 2004 in Qatar, perpetrated by GRU operatives. Since 2008, FSB “Vypmel” special operations units were probably behind most of the operations, although supporters of Ramzan Kadyrov, the ruthless leader of Chechnya and a loyal acolyte of Putin, have carried out operations of their own.⁷⁵ The GRU has increased its involvement in external covert operations as well, including assassinations of people involved in military-related activities.

Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine has further expanded Russia’s wanted list. In December 2021, the FSB announced that it had initiated searches for 106 supposed supporters of a Ukrainian neo-Nazi group who were located inside Russia and added the name of the organization’s founder to the International Wanted List.⁷⁶ U.S. intelligence officials in February 2022 claimed that Russia has compiled lists of Ukrainian political figures to be targeted for arrest or assassination if Russia were to invade Ukraine.⁷⁷ The FSB

Reintroduce Death Penalty,” *The Barents Observer*, 26 February 2022, available online at <https://thebarentsobserver.com/en/security/2022/02/dmitry-medvedev-calls-russia-reintroduce-death-penalty>.

73. Maaz Bilalov, “Interpol ne imeet prava? Chechentsy i Ekstraditsiya iz Evropy,” *RFE/RL*, 6 July 2021, available online at <https://www.kavkazr.com/a/31342452.html>.

74. Kevin Riehle, *Russian Intelligence: A Case-Based Study of Russian Services and Missions Past and Present* (Washington, DC: National Intelligence Press, 2022), pp. 207–210.

75. “Russia Assassinated at Least Thirteen Chechens Abroad before Victim Returned Fire in Kyiv,” *EuroMaidan Press*, 21 June 2017, available online at: <http://euromaidanpress.com/2017/06/21/russia-assassinated-at-least-14-chechens-abroad-before-it-failed-on-osmayev/>; and “Have Russian Hitmen Been Killing with Impunity in Turkey?” *BBC*, 13 December 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-38294204>

76. “V 37 Regionakh Rossijskoy Federatsii Vyyavleny 106 Storonnikov Ukrainskoy Neonatsistskoy Molodezhnoy Gruppyrovki ‘M.K.U.’,” Federal Security Service, 13 December 2021, available online at <http://www.fsb.ru/fsb/press/message/single.htm%21id%3D10439373%40fsbMessage.html>

77. Amy Mackinnon, Robbie Gramer, and Jack Detsch, “Russia Planning Post-Invasion Arrest and Assassination Campaign in Ukraine, U.S. Officials Say,” *Foreign Policy*, 18 February 2022, available online at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/02/18/russia-ukraine-arrest-assassination-invasion/>

may also be pursuing political émigrés from Belarus. In January 2022, a Belarusian oppositionist, Ales Mikhalevich, claimed that his name had been included on the FSB's International Wanted List, the modern equivalent of the KGB's wanted list.⁷⁸

Conclusion

The Soviet Union viewed defectors alongside foreign collaborators as particularly heinous criminals. The concept of defection was more prevalent during the Soviet era than at any other time in history, with the possible exception of current-day North Korea. Keeping track of defectors, especially those who had previously enjoyed the trust of the Soviet government, like military and intelligence officers, was an important priority for the KGB and the Soviet MVD. The KGB's wanted lists were a mechanism for communicating the identities and locations of defectors to KGB stations around the world and to local MVD units for surveillance.

Today, the revival of Soviet-era state security mindsets and activities apparently includes the resurrection of “wanted lists,” along with all the operational options associated with them. Vladimir Putin, as both FSB director in the 1990s and then president of Russia, and most senior FSB and GRU officials, are unabashed chekists who may have had access to the 1979 edition of the KGB Wanted List themselves while they served as Soviet intelligence officers. They are the embodiment of the phrase “there is no such thing as a former chekist” and have returned to the pursuit of defectors, whom they continue to see as vile criminals worthy of pursuit and, if necessary, unceremonious execution.⁷⁹

78. “Neskolko Upravleniy FSB Schitayut Menya Lichnym Vragom,” *Novaya Gazeta*, 24 January 2022, available online at: <https://novyagazeta.ru/articles/2022/01/24/neskolko-upravlenii-fsb-schitaiut-menia-lichnym-vragom>

79. Riehle, “Post-KGB Lives.”