
Sweden

Ambassador exposed as KGB general

by Clifford Gaddy in Stockholm

The ambassador of the U.S.S.R. to Sweden, Boris Pankin, is a top-ranking KGB official who was until his appointment to the Stockholm post—and possibly still is today—head of the powerful Department A (Disinformation) of the KGB's First Chief Directorate. This sensational revelation was published in West Germany in early May in the newspaper *Die Welt*. It has so far been ignored in Sweden.

Consider the following timetable of events:

On Sept. 19, 1982, Olof Palme emerges as the winner of the Swedish parliamentary elections, bringing him back into power after an interlude of six years. Only days later, the new Soviet ambassador to Sweden, Boris Pankin, arrives in Stockholm. On Sept. 30 Pankin is officially accredited as ambassador. At 12:50 the next day, Oct. 1, two Swedish army recruits on duty observe the periscope of a submarine on its way into Haarsfjaerden. The submarines are trapped inside Swedish waters. An intensive hunt begins.

On Oct. 7, the Swedish Navy reports that a trapped submarine may be about to break out from the northern part of Haarsfjaerden. Seven depth charges and three mines are detonated before a "cease-fire" order is suddenly issued. The trapped submarine escapes. According to military sources, the cease-fire order was given by Olof Palme personally.

The next day, Oct. 8, Palme formally takes office as prime minister.

The Greek connection

The exposé of Pankin's rank as KGB general came on May 2 in *Die Welt* in an article tracing the story of how the KGB's Disinformation Department had financed a new newspaper in Greece, *To Ethnos* (*The Nation*). Founded in 1981, *To Ethnos*—ostensibly a "bourgeois" newspaper—quickly became the largest-circulation newspaper in Greece, contributing to the election victory of Socialist Andreas Papandreou.

Meanwhile, however, the blatantly pro-Soviet views presented in *To Ethnos* aroused the suspicion of investigative journalists and one of them—New Yorker Paul Anastasi—discovered that East bloc intelligence had channeled millions of dollars to the paper through dummy companies in Switzerland, Luxembourg, and Sweden. The Swedish connection

included prominent members of both Moscow-controlled communist parties, the VPK and the APK, in Sweden.

In his recently published book, *Parte to Tee Ethnos sta Cheria* (*Take the Nation in Your Hands*), Anastasi describes how the two main Greek figures coordinating the *To Ethnos* operation, Georgios Bobolas and Yannis Yannikos, established contact with Moscow for the project back in 1977-78. Writes Anastasi: "One of the participants in some of these first conversations, which were led on the Soviet side by the then head of the KGB's Disinformation Department and currently ambassador to Sweden, Boris Pankin, was the current party boss Konstantin Chernenko [emphasis added]."

Pankin the 'journalist'

In a specially arranged interview in the "Magasinet" TV program on March 15 (moderated, appropriately, by Annika Hagstroem, herself a member of the Communist Party, APK, and formerly a journalist at the communist newspaper *Norrskensflamman*), Pankin reported the following:

During the 1960s and until the early 1970s, Pankin was editor of *Komsomolskaya Pravda*. He then became head of the Soviet Copyright Commission, spending a great deal of time in Geneva and Paris. He was appointed as ambassador to Sweden in 1982.

According to Anastasi's new information, therefore, the post as head of the Copyright Commission was merely a cover for Pankin's actual status as head of the Disinformation Department of the KGB. Pankin thus took over the Disinformation Department at precisely the point when the whole department was being upgraded in importance. The KGB's Disinformation Department (formally, "Department A" under the First Chief Directorate, or Foreign Operations Directorate) has always been one of the most important, but "détente" opened up totally new opportunities for Soviet penetration of the West. Consequently, Department A, which is responsible for the planning, coordination, and support of all Soviet propaganda operations abroad, was expanded and elevated in status to a "service." It is likely that Boris Pankin was promoted to rank of KGB major general when he became head of Service A.

To answer the question of Pankin's role in Sweden, the reader might reflect once more on the pattern of events surrounding the submarine incursions in Swedish waters since Oct. 1, 1982 and compare this pattern to the designated special function of Service A, what the Russians term *aktivnyye meropriyatiya*, or literally "active measures." According to one source on the Soviet intelligence services, the book *KGB* by Brian Freemantle, "active measures" include: "written or oral disinformation, forgery, the creation of false rumor, manipulation and control of foreign media, the manipulation of political action in foreign countries, the use of agents of influence, the use of clandestine radio stations, use and manipulation of foreign communist parties and international front groups, support for international revolutionary and terrorist groups and if possible political blackmail."