

# The modern Intelligence person

## Abstract

Intelligence services nowadays are bureaucratic organizations. However, as their bureaucratic machine gets bigger, so do their specialization and differentiation. But this specialization is not necessarily efficient. A Minister in the government or head of an Intelligence agency nowadays is responsible for thousands of employees that are subjected to his authority, hence he can't really supervise them, since he can't gain control on such a big number of people and issues. One of the problems derived from this bureaucratic situation is when a certain policy is being accepted, all the Intelligence work flows and accumulates in a certain direction, and it is extremely difficult to do something in order to change policy that has been accepted [15].

The decisions in many cases are not reached out of wisdom, consideration or intuition, as it should have been in the case of a spy according to Cookridge, but according to their suitability to general policy prevalent at that time. This can be destructive for Intelligence services in which quality is as important as efficiency of the mechanism itself. Perhaps more than in any other activity, Intelligence is dependent upon qualities such as initiative and creativity that are hard to integrate successfully in a bureaucratic setup [13].

In current article, the Intelligence persons of the new era and their working methods in the bureaucratic complexity, will be presented.

Keywords: Intelligence, CIA, KGB, MSA, cyber, spy, Intelligence, Intelligence agent.

E.H. Cookridge delineates the qualities of an ideal Intelligence agent and what is the desired personality profile, Americans have assembled for agents of Office of Strategic Services:

1. Morals of an agent must be high and he must be dedicated to his job.
2. He must be vigorous, enthusiastic and active.
3. Resourceful, practical and quick witted person. He must demonstrate good judgment and to know how to treat people and to interpret ideas.
4. Emotionally stable, with high tolerance under pressure, peaceful and quiet, open-minded and healthy.

5. Having the skill to work with another, to work as a team member, to understand weaknesses of others and to be free from those weaknesses.
6. He must know how to inspire people to cooperate, how to organize people, to manage and lead them. He must be prepared to accept responsibility.
7. He must act privately, strive at anonymity, know how to keep his mouth closed and keep a secret.
8. He must be capable of deceiving and to defraud at times of need.
9. He must be agile, uncompromising and bold.
10. Have the talent to notice everything, being capable of estimating observations and attributing them to the greater whole of things [5].

President Dwight Eisenhower also described the demands expected from an Intelligence person. The nature of work in which an Intelligence person is dealing with demands of him to be loyal, have excellent skills, be someone who can be trusted and who does not care only for oneself. Successes of Intelligence persons are not published and heroes don't get medals publicly. The motive to his activity is profound patriotism, a feeling that he serves his people and country [1].

As opposed to the classic spy definitions of Cookridge and Eisenhower that emphasized initiative, patriotism and resourcefulness, and as opposed to the desired qualities for diplomats, that emphasize broad general knowledge and manners of a person of the big world, Edward J. Epstein, chairman of one of the teams in the United States Air Force Academy Committee in Colorado Springs in 1984, defined a modern Intelligence person totally differently. Epstein, who was amazed from the character of Intelligence persons whom the committee has questioned and their bureaucratic approach to the profession, declared: "They are not interested in Intelligence. They are not interested in the Soviet Union. They are not interested in Communism. They are not fighters of the Cold War. They are systems analysts. They are technocrats. They are bureaucrats. They are specialists in establishing an organization that functions well and in working in such an organization". The modern Intelligence person, if that being the case, is a bureau-technician [10].

And indeed, the Intelligence services nowadays are bureaucratic organizations. However, as their bureaucratic machine gets bigger, so do their specialization and differentiation. But this specialization is not necessarily efficient. A Minister in the government or a head of an Intelligence agency nowadays is responsible for thousands of employees subjected to his authority, hence he can't really supervise them, since he can't gain control on such a big number

of people and issues. One of the problems derived from this bureaucratic situation is when a certain policy is being accepted, all the Intelligence work flows and accumulates in a certain direction, and it is extremely difficult to do something in order to change policy that has been accepted. In the United States, where the tendency has always been to organize everything in an extremely exaggerated manner, a greased bureaucracy has been created in the Intelligence services, with an emphasize on hierarchy, specialization and supervision. The decisions in many cases are not reached out of wisdom, consideration or intuition, as it should have been in the case of a spy according to Cookridge, but according to their suitability to general policy prevalent at that time. This can be destructive for Intelligence services in which quality is as important as efficiency of the mechanism itself. Perhaps more than in any other activity, Intelligence is dependent upon qualities such as initiative and creativity that are hard to integrate successfully in a bureaucratic setup [6].

### **Training of a modern Intelligence person**

The job of a modern spy is to examine, analyze and deliver the information which was collected precisely and clearly to his superiors. Training of new personnel must begin from the get go, however, the Intelligence Community is not ready for such an extensive effort. Most of the jobs in Intelligence are routine, and therefore people must be trained differently for different jobs. Training of a field person will be different from training of an interpreter and an analyst, and it is different from training of a person responsible for collection of electronic material, for instance. The only way to improve the function of Intelligence services is to select candidates with the right qualities and give them a good training. The CIA tends to recruit people to be used as analysts in a relatively early stage in their professional lives, usually when they have just finished their college education. The tendency to recruit candidates straight from the university is misguided and wasteful in the opinion of researcher Walter Laqueur, since these young people are not yet aware of their inner feelings. In his opinion it is difficult to estimate the capability of people before they have experienced things in the "real world", outside the university walls. It might be that a candidate has an excellent record as a student, it might be that he can write spectacular reports, but he still has not experienced significant decision-making [8].

Specific analytic training for analysts is limited. Most of past training was concentrated on training of operators, field people, and not necessarily analysts. To the training division of the CIA there is a course in methodology and in research techniques, as well as a line of general

courses and seminars. But there are not enough of those. Most of the training is also given from Central Intelligence Agency, and it is held in academic institutions or in other governmental Ministries. The severe problem in training analysts is to train them to separate between what is important and what is not important in an ocean of material they go over. Analysts tend to read all the relevant material to their subject out of fear they might overlook an important item or a clue that will lead them to an important revelation. This phenomenon is called the puzzle theory, meaning, a little piece of information can be the missing piece, therefore no report or satellite photo is to be overlooked. Current tendency is to reduce the amount of raw material that gets into the hands of analysts by processes that will first scan the material and pass to the hands of analysts only material that looks as most important [15].

As his American colleague, an 80's KGB officer is described as a sophisticated graduate of department of economy or science, that works hard in New York or in a big European city, develops contacts of friendship with people of influence of the broad variety of private and political elite: politicians from the center and right-wing, not just from the left-wing, professional leaders from all political aspects, important newspapers editors and journalists with different political views, and also outstanding people from business and banking world. Harry Rositzke claims that the KGB is interested in people that can influence decision-making in factories that assemble trucks, people that can influence the terms of loans or investment programs in Siberia [11].

KGB agents search through newspapers, magazines, official publications and congress reports. They are present as viewers in open meetings of governmental committees. They compare materials that appeared in print with agents' reports and send all this to Moscow. The profile of an average Israeli Intelligence person is one with ordinary appearance, does not draw attention, but talented. Every candidate goes through a line of tests of psychological fitness, and then background checks that will give him security clearance. They must learn codes, use of weapons, self-defense, foreign languages and cosmopolitan customs: how to dress, how to converse in society. The 80's Intelligence Officer not only collects and analyzes current information that will help the political echelon to make decisions, but also follows officers of the adversary Service, and at times of need contacts them and cooperates with them, not as his predecessor in the 50's [11].

The expertise of an Intelligence person is management of information and his duty includes:

1. Collecting information.

2. Analyzing the information.
3. Distributing the information.

The social responsibility of an Intelligence Service is summarized in protecting the state through collecting, analyzing and distributing information related to state security. The social responsibility of an Intelligence person, is thus different from that of other professionals, since the customers of an Intelligence person is the entire society and not this or the other individual [8].

Intelligence persons have different specialization fields as: military, political or economical information, or investigating states or specific areas. A modern Intelligence person's skills must be mostly intellectual and they are related to an extensive study and training. However, there is no specific study course that produces at the end of the road, Intelligence Officers. Despite the fact that most Intelligence persons nowadays have official academic education, this education has a general character and it is not an essential condition for the work. As opposed to other professions in which there are qualifications tests or that require a certain degree, an Intelligence person mostly require his training (if not his education) in a framework of the Intelligence organization itself, especially in a form of on-the-job training [6].

Although an Intelligence person has a professional or university educational background in a certain field, fields of specialization in Intelligence are less limited than in other professions. Professional mobility can be, and in many cases is horizontal, meaning a person who worked in analyzing information related to a certain field for years, can receive a new job which connection to what he has been doing until now is minimal, if any. Professional promotion inside the Intelligence Community is also different from other professions. No one would think of appointing as head of a medical department in a hospital a person who is not a doctor. Oppositely, heads of Intelligence agencies can come either from inside the system or can be brought from the outside, and it is also true regarding other senior positions in the Intelligence Community. For instance, out of the 15 CIA leaders between the years 1946-1992, six came from military and three from the field of business. Only three were professional Intelligence People [15].

### **Intelligence work**

In the narrow meaning of the word it is divided into two: collecting information and processing raw material in order to transform it to "Intelligence", after has been found reliable. At the end of

processing of the information on the field, comes Intelligence situation estimation. The problem of finding suitable people for senior Intelligence positions, that will have proper psychological, moral and mental skills and the required professional capabilities, bothered the minds of Intelligence Services in all generations. Presently, the Intelligence person usually has a university degree, and has a lot of knowledge in a specific professional field. The modern Intelligence person does not have prophetic powers [16]. Everything he can do, and everything he was trained to do is to intelligently introduce the information regarding the reasons and intentions of the enemy that the collecting system has collected, and to estimate possible actions of the enemy. The two prominent qualities required from a research person are imagination (creativity) and analytical capability (criticism). An analyst must be a person with creative imagination, unless he will fail as early as in the first stage – the stage of raising possible theories. Additionally, he must be critical towards his own theories and those of his peers. The criticism he forwards should be based on facts, the collected information. It is also advised that the analyst will have extensive knowledge and lots of experience, in order for him to be equipped with the information base required to discredit wrong theories. On the other hand, too much experience usually limits the capability of imagination and channels a researcher to predefined channels [2].

### **Information overload from technological sources**

The Intelligence world of present time is mainly a technological one, and the modern Intelligence person is one who receives technological messages and tries to decipher them. Until World War II, Intelligence was mainly Intelligence collected by people, HUMINT. It included information that is at arm's reach like newspapers, books, radio transmissions or diplomats' reports. It included, as well, Intelligence actions that were performed by field personnel. Following the World War II, SIGINT, Intelligence derived from electronic means was developed. This new section in the Intelligence world, the SIGINT (Signal Intelligence) section or TECHINT (Technological Intelligence), enjoy much expansion in recent years. Modern Intelligence agencies use less and less people in order to collect information and more and more sophisticated technological equipment such as satellites, surveillance stations and advanced computers [3]. Intelligence persons, in the line of their duty should listen to military, diplomatic and commercial messages, which are broadcasted on radio waves, telex and micro-waves. They have lists of organizations, institutions and people to eavesdrop automatically. For instance the NSA personnel receive and copy the radio-telephone calls of soviet officials driving their cars in

Moscow, and listen to conversations between soviet ships sailing in the Atlantic Ocean. They can listen to transmissions of soviet satellites from space, or to record a report of a construction manager in a missile launch site in Siberia. A clerk in the NSA described in 1980 the extent of the agency's ability to track electronic messages around the world. "There are three satellites above the Atlantic Ocean each can transmit in about 20,000 circles. There are eight transatlantic cables with about 5,000 circles. We listen to all of those" [14].

Until the eighties, the new technology focused mainly on listening to conversations between people, but the rapid technological changes made the United States National Security Agency start listening to all sounds, and to look at all the reflections appearing as a result of use of the sophisticated listening and review systems available for its use. The Agency now receives not only talks of people with people but also electronic transmissions of various kinds, including for instance, enhanced image photos, infra red photos that show a target by the amount of heat it reflects and radar photos. The new technology naturally requires an entire army of technicians and other skilled personnel to activate it and read its messages, and in addition, a bureaucratic system to manage the technicians, supervise them and budgets of the different sections. In addition, there is a constant need to train same technicians and get them occasionally through courses in nearly daily renewing techniques [12].

The main problem for an Intelligence person of present time is therefore, an overload of electronic transmissions he must see and decode. American satellites and Intelligence airplanes, for instance, produce photographed material in such a big quantity that it is not possible to examine all of them, even more so, to decode their meaning. Communication transmissions, as well, flow to the hands of analysts in such a breathtaking speed, that the decoders manage to read only a fraction of them. In addition, the technology has become restricted to such a narrow circle, that the number of Intelligence Officers that understand it wholly gets smaller from year to year. Harry Rositzke indicates that an American Intelligence interpreter these days must handle "an abundance of information from all sources: millions of words every day in radio broadcasts from abroad, thousands of reports of embassies and consulates, a flow of listening reports, boxes full of photos, kilometers of recorded electronic transmissions and a few agents' reports." The concern is that an interpreter that is left stunned by this situation, will be hanged on any sparkle of unusual information, whether it is important or not. For instance, an analysis of developments in prices of oil, that was prepared in 1974 – and that was based mainly on information collected by the United States National Security Agency – NSA, contained as became clear afterwards,

only a very little material that was not published before in newspapers like the "Wall Street Journal" or the "Financial Times" [7].

The great information overload stacked on the desk of an Intelligence person, an overload created following technological breakthroughs, caused an additional problem of how is it possible to select the **relevant** information that is required by a customer, meaning for the political echelon, from the sea of electronic material collected from satellites and other sources. For example, the American Air Force claimed that the United States National Security Agency – NSA, didn't supply it the information it needed in order to be updated on movement of forces of foreign countries.

An example brought by the air force was that on the Chinese border there were supposed to be sixty Soviet divisions. The air force asked the NSA to find those divisions with photos, but the NSA failed to supply the demand. The air force asked then, data on the quantity of radio transmissions received from that area and their analysis, but once again, NSA personnel could not find it, or did not succeed to separate relevant material from other material. The NSA on its part claimed that the information was indeed collected, but the problem was finding it, analyzing it, and giving it to the customer. This example shows the Achilles heel of the bureau-technicians, which is that technology, as advanced as it may be, will not always be able to fill the place of a classic spy, that breaks into a foreign embassy and copies its code booklets, or photographs the movements of those sixty divisions on the Chinese border. Following is another example of importance of Intelligence in the old system. In the fifties, when the West wanted to find out the thickness and resistance power of the side panels of Soviet tanks, for instance, the way to do this was to find someone from the other side of the Iron Curtain to find and deliver this information to the Western states. In the eighties, the CIA wanted the same kind of information. Satellite photos and other electronic techniques could not help in this case. The only way to do this was by the CIA station personnel in New Delhi who managed to bribe four Indian officers in active service that passed them the required information on Soviet weapon that was supplied to the Indian army [4].

### **In summary**

In a democratic state Intelligence needs to be employed as eyes and ears that alert about danger of coming aggressiveness. The role of Internal Security Services in a democratic state is to defend the state from spies and foreign agents, from terrorism and subversive activity from the



outside and underground organizations from within. In democratic societies, Intelligence services constitute the main enemy of every person or group that is interested in bringing the regime down. However, those who do not belong to radical groups, also suspect the Intelligence in messy deeds. In the essence of Intelligence being a secret organization it constitutes a threat. The role of an Intelligence agent is much more difficult than in the past, he must contribute and relate to the electronic cyber non-stop, with massive deployment to achieve data in many languages and by means that did not exist in the past and became a fact and essential for every surveillance, operation or action.

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