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SPETSNAZ RUSSIA N 3 (174) MARCH 2011

THE HUNT FOR SPIES

THE BROKEN WATCHBAND. MARTHA PETERSON

In 1980 the United States Central Intelligence Agency prepared and began to purposefully implement a top-secret plan for the collapse of the USSR under the code name "Doctrine of Liberation." An important role in this plan was assigned



to undercover agents from among Soviet politicians, diplomats, senior managers, top economists, and employees of closed laboratories and scientific research institutes. And we must pay tribute to the "headhunters" from Langley - they succeeded. Many highly trained specialists fell into their networks and

worked fruitfully in the interest of the United States.

[Photo: capture of Adolf Tolkachev]

Hero of the Soviet Union Gennady Zaitsev, the commander of the Group 'Alpha' in 1977 -1988 and 1992 -1993 Years:

[Translator note: The author of this article was actually Vladimir Nikolayevich Zaytsev, an Alpha Group subordinate of Gennady Zaytsev. Later versions of this article repeated this error. See bio at the end.]

It so happened that I had the opportunity to take part in the apprehension of a spy even before joining "Alpha." At that time I served in the Seventh Directorate of the KGB of the USSR. Remember the movie "*TASS is Authorized to Announce ...*"? It tells how security officers exposed an enemy agent "Trianon." In life, he was Alexander Ogorodnik ("Trigon"), a staff officer in the American Department of the Directorate for Planning Foreign Policy Activities at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He committed suicide during arrest.

But the game with the Americans continued, and a decision was made to catch them red-handed. The events in question took place on the Krasnoluzhsky Bridge in Luzhniki. A Vice Consul of the U.S. embassy, Martha Peterson, showed up for a meeting with "Trianon." We followed her from the embassy, but she managed to change her clothes, drastically changing her appearance.

This is the way it happened. During the evening of July 15, after parking her official car at the "*Rossia*" movie theater she went in. The film *Red and Black*, based on the novel by Stendhal, was featured and the last showing had already started. The surveillance officers [*Naruzhka*] watched her from a distance. Since the intelligence officer was wearing a white dress with large flowers, easily distinguishable from afar.

The "Woman in White" took a seat near the emergency exit and appeared to be watching what was happening on the screen for about ten minutes. Making sure that all around her was quiet, Peterson pulled black trousers and a matching jacket over her dress, buttoned up tightly and let her hair that had been in a bun earlier fall loose.

However, she wisely did not come back to the vehicle, but first took the bus, then

rode a trolley and took the subway - "checked". Only then did she catch a taxi and arrive at the Krasnoluzhsky Bridge. Although at this late hour the place looked quite deserted, in fact, here at various locations positions there were about a hundred operatives from different subunits - they were covertly observing everything going on.

When Peterson climbed the stairs leading to the railway tracks, we - this is happening at night - could not determine who was visiting us. In pants Martha looked like a man. Well, there were experts in our group who knew the gait of every U.S. embassy employee. These experts determined that it was Peterson who had just arrived to place the stash.

She had to go through arches built into the huge piers of the bridge. At this time, she disappeared from sight. In one of the arches she stayed longer than necessary. We concluded that she had left a package. When Peterson turned in the middle of the bridge, went back, and started down the stairs, she was caught red-handed. So that she would realize that it was not hooligans, but representatives of the government, I was dressed in a police officer's uniform.

Madame Peterson courageously fought back from our officers, who looked for a small surveillance receiver fastened to her body, while shouting loudly to warn the agent who was supposed to pick up the package.

Seeing that the arrest was being dragged out, I helped the boys by grabbing her firmly by the hand and squeezing her wrist. At the same time I broke her bracelet watch, in which, as it turned out, the microphone connected to the recording device on her body was located. While riding in the vehicle I repaired the watchband, but, nevertheless, the U.S. Embassy sent a note to our Ministry of Foreign Affairs later about the broken watch and bruises on her arms.

What were we to do? After all, during the arrest Madame Vice Consul showed brilliance in foul language and karate techniques (by world ranking she had a sixth dan). So what is there to scream about? ..

Peterson was taken to Lubyanka, where a counselor from the U.S. embassy was called for identification. In his presence we opened the container, which was camouflaged as a cobblestone. There they discovered instructions, a

questionnaire, special photographic equipment, gold, money, and two capsules of poison.

U.S. Ambassador [Malcolm] Toon, who appeared at the Soviet Foreign Ministry immediately after the expulsion of Martha Peterson back to America, expressed his urgent request not to make the incident public, which "would be highly appreciated by the Government of the United States of America."

They say that this passing acquaintance of mine (we were not introduced to each other) in the following years taught in one of the CIA's intelligence schools - teaching future intelligence officers all tricks of behavior that she experienced during her detainment.

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Vladimir Nikolayevich Zaytsev was born in the Smolensk Oblast. From the age of sixteen he worked in a factory. In 1967 he served in the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany. In the Committee of State Security (KGB) of the USSR from 1972. In Group Alpha from 1982 to February 1992. He went from the chief of a section [otdeleniye] of one of the subunits to Deputy Chief of Alpha Group. He is a participant in iconic anti-terror special operations. He spent a "combat tour" in Afghanistan. He was awarded the Orders of the Red Banner (1984), the Red Star (1986), "For Personal Courage," the badge "Honored Officer of the KGB of the USSR." Retired colonel. Repeated Champion of Martial Arts in the central apparatus of the KGB, Master of Sports of the USSR in three sports. Chairman of the Anti-Terror Foundation for Counter-Terrorism. In 2000-2004 worked as an Assistant to the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation M. M. Kasyanov. He supervised the unit of the "power unit" – "Deep State" engaged in operational and investigative activities.