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3

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# *TERRORISM*

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## *“ACTIVE MEASURES”*

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### *and SDI*

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*By RANDALL HEATHER*

**THE MACKENZIE INSTITUTE  
FOR THE STUDY OF TERRORISM,  
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# Terrorism, "Active Measures", and SDI

by  
RANDALL HEATHER

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## PREFACE

This paper presents facts about West European terrorism against NATO and against defence-related research and production, particularly that which relates to the Strategic Defense Initiative, SDI.

Viewed individually within the myriad terrorist acts of today's world, these attacks may not attract special attention. When analysed collectively, as Randall Heather does in this publication, a disturbing pattern emerges. The main object of this paper is to document this recent development in terrorist strategy.

As a secondary task, the author attempts to relate the established facts of murder and destruction to certain diplomatic, propaganda, arms control and mysterious events that have occurred concurrently with the terrorism. This part of the paper raises more questions than it answers, but by narrowing the field it may help direct research – official and classified as well as academic and open – into fruitful areas.

*September 1987*

M.T.

## TERRORISM, "ACTIVE MEASURES", AND S.D.I.

"So there was not war; there was nothing except the accomplishment of a further stage in the infiltration of peace with the depravity of war, which threatens now to make the two hardly distinguishable."

*Rebecca West<sup>1</sup>*

### *Introduction*

Dr. Karl-Heinz Beckurts, director of research at the West German electronics giant Siemens, was by any measure an accomplished scientist. He was closely involved in a vast range of research projects both civilian and military. Through his position at Siemens and his background in neutron physics and aspects of nuclear technology, Beckurts also served as an advisor to the Bonn Government concerning West German participation in the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). Personal security surrounding Beckurts was heavy. He travelled in an armoured BMW sedan escorted by two bodyguards in a trailing car. In this manner, on the morning of July 9, 1986, Dr. Beckurts was being driven to work from his home outside Munich.

The method of attack rendered the security arrangements useless. As Beckurts' driver entered the town of Oberdill he eased the BMW from a side road into the rush-hour traffic. Seconds later, Beckurts and his driver were dead, the armoured car a burning wreck. The West German terrorist group Red Army Faction (RAF), who immediately claimed responsibility for the murders, had mounted a bomb at the base of a tree and detonated it by remote control. The ten kilogram device had been packed into two gas cylinders; when it exploded it lifted the heavy car six metres into the air and sent flames three times as high. The RAF communique specifically mentioned Beckurts' alleged involvement in SDI research and "secret negotiations".<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Svante Oden is (or was) an internationally known Swedish scientist who specialized in underwater acoustics. He was involved in a number of special research projects for the Swedish navy and was believed to be perfecting a device capable of detecting minute underwater movement. Although he had turned down a number of invitations to lecture in the Soviet Union, he had visited the United States several times, where the U.S. Navy showed an interest in his work.

On July 30, 1986, Oden, an experienced sailor, set out alone from the harbour at Grisselhamn, Sweden, on the Gulf of Bothnia, in his ten-metre research vessel to conduct underwater experiments. The next day his boat was found drifting, empty, near the Finnish island of Ahvenanmaa some fifty kilometres from its starting point. The vessel had been emptied of its scientific equipment and Oden had vanished. Swedish intelligence suppressed news of the incident while conducting an investigation. The news was broken to the public in December 1986.<sup>3</sup>

Ashad Sharif was a twenty-six year old computer analyst working for Marconi Space and Defence Systems at Stanmore, near London. He had, it appeared, everything to live for. At Marconi he was involved in underwater acoustics research for the UK Ministry of Defence – responsible and challenging work – and he had just been promised a promotion. He was also engaged to be married. On October 28, 1986, Sharif left his home near London in his Audi 80 and drove 200 kilometres westwards to Bristol where he was to meet a Labour Member of Parliament on a “routine matter” concerning his fiancée’s forthcoming arrival from Pakistan.

That night Sharif was found dead in his car on Siston Common, eight kilometres from Bristol city centre. A rope had been placed around his neck and tied to a nearby tree so that he was strangled as the car pulled away. There were no witnesses. Later, a member of the dead man’s family reportedly saw a long-handled wrench on the front floor of the car, where it might have been used to hold down the accelerator pedal. A coroner’s inquest returned a verdict of suicide although no reason for such an act was discovered. The details of the inquiry were not made public.<sup>4</sup>

These three events are representative of some of the facts and mysteries and allegations that form a backdrop to the United States’ efforts to develop an effective anti-missile defence system. The first, the death of Beckurts, is a matter of fact. It illustrates the West European terrorist offensive against NATO and its recent concentration against defence technology, especially that which may be related to SDI. Dr. Oden’s disappearance is also a matter of fact, but there is at present no explanation as to why and how he was lost.

The same limits apply to the third example – Ashad Sharif’s death. Here the mystery deepens because the event was not isolated. Two months earlier, another researcher and acoustics specialist from Marconi, Vimal Dajibhai, was found dead at the foot of Clifton’s suspension bridge, near Bristol. On March 30, 1987 David Sands, a project manager at a Marconi subsidiary, swung his car off the road into the side of a disused cafe. As the trunk contained two five-gallon cans of gasoline and the car was travelling at about 120 kilometres an hour, Sands died immediately in the inferno.

Death came to other British defence scientists in varied forms: carbon monoxide poisoning, a plastic bag over the head, drug overdose, and

another fall from a bridge. Victims were involved in research such as the “Stingray” super-smart torpedo, “Cosmos”, an underwater simulation project linked to SDI, the “Tigerfish” air-to-sea missile, satellites, and computer hardware and software. Mysterious incidents have overtaken at least eight British defence scientists between August 1986 and April 1987. The facts are not in doubt; the reasons and implications are.

This paper examines the development of anti-NATO terrorism in West Europe and its modification in response to SDI. Here, the facts are plentiful. Next, the paper discusses the Soviet Union’s concept of *aktivnyye meropriatia*, “Active Measures”, and asks questions concerning possible current activities. These questions address, first, possible links to anti-NATO and anti-SDI terrorism and, second, possible connections with Dr. Oden’s disappearance and the mysterious events in England.

### *West European Terrorism in the 1970s*

**T**errorism generated by domestic West Europeans has undergone a significant transition from the 1970s to the 1980s. The activity of the late 1960s, carried over to the 1970s, was marked by a strong although incoherent ideological fervour which today is rarely seen. Gone are the heady days of Giangiacomo Feltrinelli, the Italian millionaire who supported revolutionary causes throughout Europe with his own money. He died in 1972 when a bomb he was attaching to an electrical pylon went off too soon. Gone too are the long, drawn-out kidnapping dramas such as those that led eventually to the RAF murder in 1977 of Hans-Martin Schleyer and the Red Brigades’ murder in 1978 of Aldo Moro. Such terrible events, hung about with quasi-anarchist, quasi-Marxist rhetoric, involved victims who were high-profile members of the political or economic establishment. They were not killed immediately, as they easily could have been, but were held hostage to extend the drama, generate media coverage, and increase leverage in negotiations with the authorities. It was terrorism as Brian Jenkins described it at that time, as “theatre”.

Although the 1970s generation performed rationally at the instrumental level of tactics, such as in hostage-taking and negotiation, they generally lacked any rational overall strategy. They resembled the 19th century anarchists, who knew how to make bombs and throw them, but had not the first idea how to progress toward revolution. Certainly, the Red Brigades had far more political clout than their West German opposite numbers, but even in Italy terrorists failed to make the jump from élitist terror to popular politics. Indeed, the more violent their acts, particularly the Schleyer and Moro killings, the more the public reacted against the groups, creating the climate for improved co-operation between governments, intelligence sharing, and tougher anti-terrorist laws. These developments contributed to the downfall of 1970s European ideological terrorism.

### Current Trends in European Terrorism

West Europe in the 1980s has been subjected to severe levels of terrorism, much of it imported from the Middle East, where territorial or nationalist motives have become hopelessly tangled with ideology, religion and state interests. Linkages between terrorist groups in various regions make it difficult to draw sharp dividing lines between "domestic" and "international" terror, but nevertheless in Europe the former remains sufficiently distinct for its changed nature to be observed. Today's West European terrorists appear less emotional and more deadly. If they were still primarily concerned to catch the headlines, to commit "propaganda by deed", they could be judged a failure in the 1980s against their own performance a decade earlier.

But it seems that such is not the present objective. Today's domestic terrorism is *directed*. The agenda is businesslike and not theatrical. Ideology may still be the driving force, but this is disciplined, a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The terrorism focuses on NATO targets, defence industries, scientists, and high technology. Bombing a pipeline or an arms factory, or the murder of a government defence official, are far cries from mobilizing the masses for the millennium. Today's attacks are small acts of international warfare.

As an example, when on February 1, 1985, two Red Army Faction terrorists broke into the house of Dr. Ernst Zimmermann, head of the West German company Motor-und-Turbinen Union which makes tank and aircraft engines for NATO, they shot him dead almost immediately. There was none of the drawn-out drama of kidnapping, ransom demands, negotiations, manifestos and media hype that in the 1970s had been used to symbolize a great terrorist victory over "the system".

In the reality of the Zimmermann case, the terrorist victory was not so much symbolic as instrumental: the "enemy" – NATO – had lost a valuable asset. The killing was coldly efficient, generating only modest and short-lived media attention. In addition, of course, other industrialists and scientists were no doubt expected to get the message on their professional grapevines: stop working for NATO, or die.<sup>5</sup>

A secret meeting of various West European terrorist groups is reported to have taken place in Portugal in mid-1984. This seems to have been the beginning of closer co-operation and joint anti-NATO activities. On January 15, 1985, France's *Action Directe* (AD) and the Red Army Faction issued an announcement of joint operations against their "common enemy". In a five-page statement these groups outlined "the essential tasks of the Communist guerrilla in Western Europe". The document listed real and alleged projects that its sponsors wished to stop: the deployment of "Euromissiles", the revitalization of the Western European Union, the creation of a Rapid Action Force in France, co-operation over NATO arms procurement, discussions regarding possible German participation in the French *Force de Frappe*, and *Force de Frappe* integration

within NATO.<sup>6</sup>

True to their word, within ten days of releasing their statement, these groups mounted a successful operation to shoot and kill General René Audran outside his Paris apartment. The General had been chief arms salesman for the French Ministry of Defence.<sup>7</sup> AD and RAF claimed the murder.

The informal alliance of anti-NATO terrorist organizations also included Belgium's Communist Combatant Cells, and groups called GRAPO in Spain, 17 November in Greece, FP-25 in Portugal, and the Action Group Against Nuclear War in the Netherlands. Later, the power of Italian terrorism joined the war, as the Red Brigades dedicated at least some of their resources to attacking the Western Alliance. By no means did the constituent groups abandon their national agendas; they seem merely to have agreed that NATO was one enemy they all had in common. The central component of the offensive is shown at Appendix A. This chronology excludes many incidents in Greece, Portugal and elsewhere, and minor events.

### Target SDI

In July, 1986, SDI assets were made prime targets within the anti-NATO offensive. Beckurts was murdered on the 9th. In addition to his responsibilities to Siemens, he had been chairman of the Fraunhofer Institute in Aachen, where research in advanced laser technology is conducted. The Institute was bombed on the 24th. The next day a car bomb was detonated outside the offices of Dornier Aerospace in Immenstaad. Dornier had recently signed an agreement with the American Sperry Corporation to develop an instrument pointing system, used to focus sensors or telescopes in space – potentially of great value to SDI. The Red Army Faction claimed responsibility for both crimes.

There followed a series of attacks in several European countries against military or "technology" targets, which could actually or potentially be linked to SDI research. These included actions against CSF Thomson and Westinghouse in July and August respectively, Panavia, makers of the Tornado fighter, on September 15, an optical research institute in Tübingen on September 18, the Copenhagen office of AEG on October 29, IBM's research centre in Heidelberg on November 16, and the home of Günter Spur, director of the Fraunhofer's Berlin office, on November 20.<sup>8</sup>

Meanwhile, assassinations continued. Gerold von Braunmühl was killed on October 10 and Georges Besse on November 17. Besse's death was not a puzzle. As the head of a high-profile French industrial firm, Renault, which accepted defence contracts, he was always at risk. Von Braunmühl was political director of West Germany's foreign ministry with special responsibilities for arms control. Perhaps this was why the Red Army Faction, which had not attacked a high government official for nine years, killed him. The attack took place one day before Reagan

and Gorbachev met at Reykjavik. The RAF's communique, typed on the same typewriter as used for the Beckurts message, referred to the victim as a "secret diplomat" who played a "key role... in the imperialist system". One of the weapons used in the attack had killed Hans-Martin Schleyer in 1977.<sup>9</sup>

If there were lingering doubts that SDI was being singled out for attack, these were presumably stilled on March 20, 1987. General Licio Giorgieri of the Italian defence ministry was Director General of the Department of Space and Armaments Procurement. He was also an important figure in Italy's decision to participate in SDI research and to attempt to obtain SDI contracts for Italian companies. As Giorgieri was being driven home from his office, two youths on motorcycles and armed with pistols pulled alongside his vehicle. The gunmen opened fire into the car, hitting Giorgieri five times in the neck and lower body. The attack was claimed by the "Union of Communist Fighters", but as their communique was issued in Rome, Genoa, Turin and Milan, this was evidently a Red Brigades operation. In their statement, the terrorists explained that the murder was justified "*exclusively* because of the responsibilities he [Giorgieri] exercised as a result of Italy's adhesion to the Star Wars project". They added that "Italy must have nothing to do with Star Wars and must withdraw from NATO".<sup>10</sup>

The establishment of the "anti-NATO alliance" of West European terrorists, involving co-operation between three major and several more minor groups, and a complete switch of operating procedures and propaganda presentation, could scarcely have been accidental. One chapter in the history of European terrorism closed and another opened.

### *The International Department and "Active Measures"*

**T**he International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union acts as the Party's co-ordinator of the two arms of Soviet foreign policy – the overt diplomacy of the foreign ministry, and the overt and covert "active measures" of the propaganda departments, the KGB, overseas communist parties, the front organizations, especially the World Peace Council, and the "national liberation movements". The Department, then, supervises both the "peace offensive" and terrorist liaison, a not incompatible combination, as we shall see.<sup>11</sup>

Early Russian communists condemned individualistic or spontaneous terrorism, such as that practised by the anarchists and Russian populists, because of its uncontrolled and often counter-productive nature. Tactics which simply let off steam *without* advancing the revolution were regarded as childish. Violence that supported a rational revolutionary strategy, by raising consciousness, mobilizing and training a people's army, and

weakening the regime was, however, welcomed by the revolutionaries. In 1905 Lenin urged the Combat Committee of the St. Petersburg Bolsheviks to

"...Supply each group with brief and simple recipes for making bombs, give them an elementary explanation of the type of work, and leave it all to them. Squads must begin military training by launching operations immediately, at once. Some may undertake to kill a spy or blow up a police station, others to raid a bank to confiscate funds for insurrection, others may drill to prepare plans of localities, etc... Let every group learn, if it is only by beating up a policeman; a score or so victims will be more than compensated by the fact that this will train a hundred of experienced fighters, who tomorrow will be leading hundreds of thousands."<sup>12</sup>

This statement set the tone for all subsequent communist policy towards terrorism: if it assists in creating the "objective conditions" for revolution or plays a positive role in the revolution itself, then it is good. If it serves hostile causes or becomes an end in itself, it is bad. In presentational terms, the USSR in recent years has attempted to separate support for "national liberation movements" from support for small terrorist groups. "Liberation wars" receive full ideological and propaganda backing. If they demonstrate a winning potential, the leaders of such revolutions also receive military and diplomatic support. Although the tactics of such assistance are kept secret, the strategy is acknowledged. A great deal of terrorism assistance is provided within this framework, because the "liberation movements" that receive fraternal assistance pass on training, intelligence and weapons to terrorists lacking such status, and because many of the "movements", are part of the international terrorist menace in their own rights.

In 1971, Boris Ponomarev was *de facto* head of the International Department. He wrote in the journal *Kommunist* that year of his sympathy for "radical" Western groups and included the Provisional IRA in the "national liberation" category. However, there is little doubt that the USSR was embarrassed when, in October the same year, several tons of Czechoslovakian arms were intercepted by the British at Schipol airport en route to Northern Ireland and the Provisionals. Soviet presentational policy changed. World opinion was hardening against terrorism and, instead of opposing this trend, Moscow fell into line while at the same time trying to redefine terrorism as being "reactionary" and "imperialist". Propaganda denied that either Moscow or "liberation movements" had anything to do with terrorism.<sup>13</sup>

### *Support for Terrorism*

In spite of denials, we know that covert support for terrorism has continued, albeit on a small, secret and deniable scale. In her book *The Terror Network*, Claire Sterling described links between East European intelligence services (all of which are subordinate to the KGB) and terrorists in West Germany, Italy and France. She explained that

“East Germany’s role... was no matter of speculation. It had been running a full life-support system for the West German terrorist underground since 1970, when the Baader-Meinhof’s first safe-house was set up in East Berlin. Apart from instant sanctuary, it furnished false documents, money, para-military training, protected entrance and exit routes and a kind of safety-deposit for the Gang’s stored weapons.”<sup>14</sup>

Before his death in 1972, Giangiacomo Feltrinelli made twenty-two visits to Prague, while many of the original Red Brigades leaders also spent time in Czechoslovakia. Training camps for terrorists and “liberation fighters” were set up in the Soviet Union at Simferopol, Odessa, Baku and Tashkent; in Czechoslovakia at Karlovy Vary, Doupov and Ostrava; in East Germany near Pankov and at Finsterwalde. Cuba and North Korea also ran such camps. After the Israel Defence Force overran PLO bases in Lebanon in 1982 it was discovered that the USSR had opened its full range of military training schools and academies to PLO students.

Military assistance to European terrorists also continued to be available from the “liberation movements”. In the case of the PLO this arrangement stimulated the co-operation between Arab and European groups that was such a strong feature of 1970s terrorism, one that remains potent. Libya’s Colonel Gaddafi also supported international terrorism, as have the leaders of Syria and Iran.

Notwithstanding this assistance, terrorist movements, like revolutionaries generally, could never be created from abroad; each group needed strong domestic roots, a homespun cause or local variant of an international cause, and sufficient local support to provide security and political sympathy. Italy’s Red Brigades had these in fair measure, but neither France’s *Action Directe* nor the Red Army Faction in their earlier manifestations possessed more than headline appeal. What the European terrorists needed was a grand mobilizing cause. In 1980, it would seem, this was provided by Boris Ponomarev, his International Department, and the World Peace Council.

### *Terrorism and “Peace”*

The 1980s “Peace Offensive” was put on the road by Ponomarev at two major conferences in 1980. The first, for European communists, was held in Paris in April. The second, hosted by the World Peace Council and catering to fellow-travellers and “innocents” from the West, was held in Sofia in September. In his keynote speech, Ponomarev listed the tactics and propagandist themes that were to shape the offensive. In addition he apparently sanctioned terrorism in the cause of “peace” in these thinly veiled words:

“...it is now more than ever essential to foster among the mass of the people a sense of irreconcilable opposition, a sense of anger and wrath if you like, to the preparations for nuclear war.”

He then defined the enemy – “professional militarists”, “monopolists”, the “military-industrial complex”, the Pentagon, CIA, bankers, and transnational corporations. Ponomarev continued:

“It would be a good thing to remind the militarists and the tycoons of the war-industrial complex about this, and to tell them in their face: you bear the responsibility before humankind... The wrath of the peoples should already now be turned against those who are cashing in on the arms race. *They should be continuously reminded of the fate that befell the nazi war criminals who started World War II.*” (emphasis added).<sup>15</sup>

In the 1930s, Soviet spy Kim Philby approached persons he wished to seduce into betraying their country by asking if they would join him in his “important work for peace”.<sup>16</sup> After the Norwegian foreign office official, Arne Treholt, had been unmasked as a KGB spy and agent of influence, Johan Galtung, former director of Oslo’s Peace Research Institute, reportedly suggested that the man be named “Minister for Peace”.<sup>17</sup> When peace and Soviet world victory are seen as synonymous, as they are to communists and may sometimes appear to confused peace activists, working for “peace” and serving Moscow are one and the same.

In his Sofia speech, Ponomarev had identified “legitimate targets” and gone on to say that it was “essential that the whole world should know their names...” When in January 1986 police raided an RAF hideout, they found lists of West German businessmen, including Beckurts, who were allegedly working on SDI.<sup>18</sup> Beckurts was also named by the West German communist youth magazine *Sparticus* as being involved with SDI.

On September 21, 1986, two days after Italy had signed-up for SDI research, *Pravda* used words apparently calculated to encourage further antagonism when it said:

“The sharp criticism expressed by the broad segments of Italian society at Rome’s joining of SDI is quite understandable. It shows that a majority of Italians clearly see the dangers of such an action and *the unpredictability of its consequences.*” (emphasis added).

### *Terrorism and Revolutionary Warfare*

By 1977 the Baader-Meinhof gang was on its last legs. There was a brief revival in June 1979 when an unsuccessful attempt was made on the life of the Supreme Commander of NATO forces in Europe, General Alexander Haig. This isolated bombing was not the start of the anti-NATO campaign, although with hindsight it can be seen as a warning of what was to come. Between the 1980 “peace” meeting in Sofia and the joint Red Army Faction-*Action Directe* communique in January, 1985, most of the ragged and small-scale West German terrorism that did occur was aimed at targets that were both NATO and American. In Belgium, the Communist Fighting Cells began to target NATO *per se* a month or two earlier than AD and the RAF.

As the public debate in Belgium over the deployment of Cruise missiles increased in intensity, the Cells launched a series of bomb attacks, often against the NATO fuel pipelines. On December 4, 1984, no less than six attacks were launched. This part of the campaign faded partly because of Belgian police successes, and partly because the Belgian government approved the plan of deployment in March 1985.

Abraham H. Miller was among the first analysts to see the potential of the anti-NATO Alliance as a new form of terrorism, narrowly directed and creating at least the theoretical possibility of a sub-revolutionary situation.<sup>19</sup> He explained how, by attacking NATO, this new generation of RAF had found an issue with the potential to attract sympathizers from Western Europe’s alienated youth – indeed in May 1985 the West German police did discover a group called “illegal militants” who served as part-time terrorists and may have assisted at the killing of Audran. More recent assessments suggest that the illegal militants are surrounded by what is termed the “semilegal periphery” and, beyond that, the “legal sympathizers”. The USSR has not dared publicly to congratulate the alliance. Nor is there evidence that the International Department and the KGB were instrumental in setting up the new movement and its agenda. Once generalized instructions have been issued from on high, as Ponomarev provided them at Sofia, the Marxist faithful can be relied upon to follow under their own steam. Propaganda urging violence is simply another way of issuing orders.

It is, moreover, reasonable to suppose that the East bloc support network established in the 1960s and 1970s remains intact. Indeed, improved West European anti-terrorism procedures might possibly have forced the groups into greater dependence on sponsor states. Questions: would

such dependence expose the groups to closer supervision by intelligence services which might ultimately convert them into something resembling agencies of those services? Or have the terror groups figured out their own agenda which just happens to coincide with Soviet objectives?

Whether the groups are following the red flag or following instructions, their work at present seems to be largely confined to the “military” field – killing and destroying NATO assets. This present emphasis is not incompatible with the slow development of a broader, political agenda in which today’s experienced fighters “tomorrow will be leading hundreds of thousands”. This analyst argues that the transition in European terrorism reflects the contrast between the 19th century anarchists and the revolutionary vanguard of 1917, between the terrorism Lenin deplored and the terrorism he unleashed. There is, however, no indication that the present level of anti-NATO terror has the potential of becoming the sort of “liberation war” that Moscow could openly support. The most that can be said is that some of the pieces are in place.

### *Soviet Reactions to SDI*

In March 1983 U.S. President Ronald Reagan announced an initiative to establish a space-based anti-missile defence system, the Strategic Defense Initiative, or “Star Wars” as critics and the media dubbed it. Because of this project’s uncertain technical viability, its certain high cost, and its ambiguous role within a Western strategy of nuclear deterrence, domestic debates within America and the Western Alliance were inevitable. Soviet reactions to a proposal that threatened to overturn their hopes of achieving a first strike capability against America were of course negative, although initially muted.

The Soviets are impressed by the “Manhattan Project” capability demonstrated by the United States whenever that country has put its mind to an ambitious scientific project. Developing the first atomic weapon and putting men on the moon were examples of “achieving the impossible” through collective endeavour. Consequently, however inviable SDI may have seemed to its critics, fear of United States success may nevertheless have settled like a dark cloud over the Kremlin when Reagan made his announcement.

The task of countering this development would presumably have fallen, on the one hand, to the defence scientific establishment – to keep long-standing Soviet research into space defence at least level with the United States’, and, on the other, to the International Department – whose “active measures” could be used to prevent or at least delay American progress towards the goal of a functioning SDI.

Additionally, active measures might be designed to punish European allies who co-operated with the American space defence research. By exacting a toll, such measures might discourage governments, corporations and scientists from future assistance. By propaganda presentation

### *The United Kingdom and SDI*

The incidents in England appear in the chronology at Appendix A and are described in greater detail, with sources, at Appendix B. One of the threads that runs through many of the mysterious deaths in the UK as well as Dr. Oden's disappearance is research into underwater acoustics. This branch of military science has important connections to SDI research. "Cosmos", originally an underwater research project at Marconi Underwater Systems, is reported as having been adapted for SDI – drawing on the technical breakthroughs of the "Stingray" torpedo and other projects. According to the March 12, 1987 issue of *Computer News*, a delegation from the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative office in Washington had recently visited Marconi. The journal also estimated that the UK was some three years ahead of the U.S. in aspects of underwater research, and ten ahead of the USSR. Others who died in England were working on satellites, computer hardware, and software – all potentially SDI-related.

In assessing the UK deaths, attention should be paid to the high stress levels reportedly associated with work at Marconi, especially at times of cut-backs and, indeed, at some military academies such as the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham. Suicide rates are higher in such circumstances. In one case at least, that of Victor Moore, the evidence points strongly to suicide. Moreover, the fact that suicide remains the official verdict in several of the cases provides a warning not to leap to alternative conclusions without strong evidence.

### *The Space Rocket Story*

On July 6, 1986, a story appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* by Tad Szulc, a Washington journalist who has specialized in intelligence matters. This stated that, after the explosion of an Ariane rocket on May 30, French authorities had reopened their investigation, being quoted as saying that "initially we had no reason to raise the question of sabotage, but now we have reason to ask that question". According to the report, French defence minister André Giraud raised the matter in Washington because of the series of catastrophes involving American space launchers. In August and September respectively of 1985, an American Titan and a French Ariane rocket had exploded after launch; in 1986 the score had been Challenger in January, a Titan in April, a Delta in May, and the second Ariane later in the same month.

The suspicion that sabotage might have been the cause of some at least of these rocket explosions arose in part because of the disappearance in July 1983 of US Air Force Captain William Howard Hughes Jr. Hughes had specialized in space-launch command, control and communications, including the training of range officers in charge of destroying rockets malfunctioning after launch. Intelligence officers, who reportedly be-

lieved that Hughes was either captured by Soviet agents or voluntarily defected to the USSR, considered him "worth his weight in gold" to the Russians, and saw a clear link between the missing captain and possible sabotage of American and French launches.

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### *A Violent Option?*

While the Soviet options of sweet reasonableness and coercive diplomacy can be demonstrated with some assurance, the existence of a third, violent option remains speculative. In Europe, as we have seen, the switch in terrorist targeting to SDI occurred in July 1986. This was the month of Beckurts' death and Oden's disappearance. The first death in England occurred a few days after the Swedish incident. This start-up period came after the Geneva summit, where the USSR's coercive diplomacy was seen to fail, and before Reykjavik, where that failure was converted into a propaganda success.

The deaths that began in England on August 5, 1986, whatever their cause or causes, seem not to have been the work of terrorists. There is no British domestic terrorist equivalent to *Action Directe*, the Red Brigades or Red Army Faction – communists fighting in the Leninist cause. Irish terrorists might have been invited to join the anti-NATO alliance, and indeed there had been some co-operation between the IRA and RAF in earlier years. However, there is no evidence that the Provisionals or the Irish National Liberation Army possessed the spare capability or the desire to enter into the 1980s alliance. Had they done so, we would doubtless have heard all about it. Indeed, the secrecy of these incidents excludes them from a technique that depends on publicity to carry terror to a mass audience.

Even if terrorism was an unlikely factor, some mysterious hand might have been at work. This, clearly, was in the mind of John Cartwright, MP and Alliance Party spokesman, when he wrote to the defence procurement minister Lord Tregarne:

"I do not wish to be accused of inventing plots more suited to a TV thriller than real life, but I think the circumstances of these...cases, and the possible links between them, stretch the possibility of coincidence too far."<sup>23</sup>

of the active measures as domestic opposition to SDI, that program's divisive potential within NATO could also be enhanced.

The International Department has evidently exercised two options in its fight to stop SDI in its tracks. These are the options of sweet reasonableness and of coercive public diplomacy. Questions may be asked concerning a possible third and violent option involving physical attack on the project and its designers.

#### *Sweet Reasonableness*

With hindsight it appears likely that Politburo members, headed in March 1983 by Yuri Andropov, pinned their hopes on stalling tactics until, as they must have wished, a liberal presidential successor to Reagan would occupy the White House after the November 1984 election. A few days after Reagan's announcement, Andropov alleged that SDI was not defensive but rather a part of a U.S. effort to acquire a first strike capability. He also warned of the damaging prospects for arms control. On April 9, 1983 the International Department paid for a full-page advertisement in *The New York Times*. This contained an "Appeal to All Scientists of the World" to oppose this dangerous initiative, on the somewhat contradictory grounds that it could never be made to work. These were arguments calculated to strengthen the position of those in the West who opposed SDI. The World Peace Council and its huge international network hardly touched the topic during this phase, perhaps because the Soviets wanted to make it easy for the next president to back off SDI without being accused by his conservative opponents of surrendering to Soviet propaganda, as President Carter had been after giving way over the "neutron bomb". This first option of sweet reasonableness failed when President Reagan was re-elected.

#### *Coercive Public Diplomacy*

With nothing to be lost by turning up the heat, the Department evidently adopted its second option. In January 1985 the Soviet Foreign Secretary agreed to resume bilateral negotiations with the U.S. on nuclear arms and space weapons. The World Peace Council summoned its presidential committee of communists and reliable fellow travellers to issue a "No to 'Star Wars' Appeal to the Peoples of the World". This was followed by a pamphlet entitled "The U.S. Space Offensive: Road to Nuclear Annihilation". In the West, peace movements that had scarcely mentioned SDI immediately followed the Moscow lead and the issue dominated the peace offensive. The topic was also used as a vehicle in the continuous attempt to isolate America from its NATO allies. The International Department was presumably pleased when in November 1985 the Canadian government decided not to co-operate in SDI research.

In the larger battle, however, November 1985 was also the month when

the second option failed. Between the 19th and the 21st, President Reagan faced Communist Party of the Soviet Union General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev at the Geneva summit. The Soviet propaganda campaign had brought significant political pressure to bear on Reagan to make SDI concessions in return for some otherwise popular arms control deal. When the President refused to yield on this key issue, Gorbachev must have realized that coercive public diplomacy had not succeeded. More bad news for the Soviets was to follow. On December 6, 1985 the United Kingdom formally signed an agreement to participate in SDI research, and there were hints that other NATO partners, Italy and West Germany, were nearing similar agreements.

It seems likely that even before the October 11-12, 1986 Reykjavik summit meeting between the two leaders, the Soviets had essentially abandoned hope that Reagan would "negotiate away" SDI research and development. Evidently, the Soviets set up a propaganda ambush. Breaking all the established diplomatic conventions, Gorbachev tore up the agenda agreed in advance by foreign affairs advisors and presented Reagan with an "either/or" trap. Either he would accept a glittering disarmament package at the price of abandoning SDI, or he would be labelled as the symbol of evil that stood between a fearful world and the promise of deliverance.<sup>20</sup>

So quick on the heels of the summit was the World Peace Council and the Novosti Press Agency Publishing House in issuing long, carefully written statements by Gorbachev and others, in all major languages, that it is reasonable to suspect that the main themes and propaganda objectives of these condemnations of the Reagan position at Reykjavik had been worked out in advance. In Canada, for instance, they were available in quantity at the Canadian Peace Alliance's convention in Winnipeg on October 31. Obviously, if Reagan had changed his mind under the pressure of the second summit, Reykjavik would have reversed Geneva and provided a belated triumph for the second option. As it was, the occasion was used to identify the enemy and to "foster among the mass of the people a sense of irreconcilable opposition, a sense of anger and wrath..." Two days after the talks broke down, Gorbachev spoke on Soviet television of "the infamous SDI" having become

"...an epitome of obstructing peace, as a strong expression of militaristic designs and an unwillingness to get rid of the nuclear threat looming over mankind. It is impossible to perceive this program in any other way. This is the most important lesson of the Reykjavik meeting."<sup>21</sup>

There is ample evidence from opinion polls in Western Europe that President Reagan and SDI have been successfully discredited before public opinion, with Gorbachev emerging as the apostle of peace.<sup>22</sup>

### *The United Kingdom and SDI*

The incidents in England appear in the chronology at Appendix A and are described in greater detail, with sources, at Appendix B. One of the threads that runs through many of the mysterious deaths in the UK as well as Dr. Oden's disappearance is research into underwater acoustics. This branch of military science has important connections to SDI research. "Cosmos", originally an underwater research project at Marconi Underwater Systems, is reported as having been adapted for SDI – drawing on the technical breakthroughs of the "Stingray" torpedo and other projects. According to the March 12, 1987 issue of *Computer News*, a delegation from the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative office in Washington had recently visited Marconi. The journal also estimated that the UK was some three years ahead of the U.S. in aspects of underwater research, and ten ahead of the USSR. Others who died in England were working on satellites, computer hardware, and software – all potentially SDI-related.

In assessing the UK deaths, attention should be paid to the high stress levels reportedly associated with work at Marconi, especially at times of cut-backs and, indeed, at some military academies such as the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham. Suicide rates are higher in such circumstances. In one case at least, that of Victor Moore, the evidence points strongly to suicide. Moreover, the fact that suicide remains the official verdict in several of the cases provides a warning not to leap to alternative conclusions without strong evidence.

### *The Space Rocket Story*

On July 6, 1986, a story appeared in the *Los Angeles Times* by Tad Szulc, a Washington journalist who has specialized in intelligence matters. This stated that, after the explosion of an Ariane rocket on May 30, French authorities had reopened their investigation, being quoted as saying that "initially we had no reason to raise the question of sabotage, but now we have reason to ask that question". According to the report, French defence minister André Giraud raised the matter in Washington because of the series of catastrophes involving American space launchers. In August and September respectively of 1985, an American Titan and a French Ariane rocket had exploded after launch; in 1986 the score had been Challenger in January, a Titan in April, a Delta in May, and the second Ariane later in the same month.

The suspicion that sabotage might have been the cause of some at least of these rocket explosions arose in part because of the disappearance in July 1983 of US Air Force Captain William Howard Hughes Jr. Hughes had specialized in space-launch command, control and communications, including the training of range officers in charge of destroying rockets malfunctioning after launch. Intelligence officers, who reportedly be-

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Cartwright went on to note that three of the individuals concerned had been working on "aspects of underwater vibration simulation which has extensive implications for SDI" and that Sands' work was similarly connected.

We come to the questions. If, having adopted the violent option, the Soviets found that their terrorist assets could not reach into Britain, was it possible that they employed trained assassins? Could some or all of the men who died in England have been the victims of such agents? In 1978 Georgi Markov, Bulgarian dissident-in-exile, was assassinated in London, almost certainly by an agent of the *Komitet za Durzhavna Sigurnost*, the Bulgarian Secret Service, which is under KGB control. Indeed, it is said that the KGB often uses Bulgarians to carry out "wet affairs", the KGB term for assassinations. Allegations that the attempt on the life of the Pope in 1981 was arranged by the same service are "not proven". The evidence of some Bulgarian complicity is, however, overwhelming.

A supplementary question asks if an alternative agency for murder might be the "sleeper network" of agents believed to be in place in every Western country, whose role is to surface immediately the cold war begins to turn hot and carry out assassinations and sabotage. Checking the combat readiness of such agents must be a near-impossible task for the KGB and Soviet military intelligence, so might it not be tempting to test the system on "legitimate targets" such as defence scientists? The use of sleepers would presumably have another advantage over East bloc agents brought in specially. Since sleepers have perfect "legends", living as members of the local community, the exposure of one as a killer would not necessarily establish a link with the East.

If the date when the UK deaths began is cause for suspicion, so is the manner of their ending. The chronology shows a steady drum beat of incidents from August 1986 through April 1987. Then it ceases. And it seems to stop the moment that people begin to ask questions, to put two and two together. Murder dressed as suicide can easily deceive; but massacre dressed in this disguise is another matter.

#### "Not for us to wonder"?

After three scientists had died mysteriously, and when journalists began asking questions, they reportedly received a somewhat discouraging response from an unnamed Ministry of Defence spokesman: "It is not for us to wonder".<sup>24</sup> Not everyone agreed. *Computer News* deserves credit for breaking the story in a series beginning on March 5, 1987. But it was the *Financial Times*, a world-circulation daily, that on April 3, 1987 carried the bizarre circumstances to a wide and influential

audience. Only after the press became interested did the full scope of the tragedy become apparent. According to the April 19 issue of *Sunday Today*, the British Security Service, MI5, had begun investigations that month. For one reason or another, the sequence of strange events stopped as soon as official and public interest had been roused.

As for the unfortunate Dr. Oden, there is evidence that Soviet *Spetsnaz* special forces regularly operate along Sweden's coasts in disregard of international law.<sup>25</sup> Sweden being a peaceful and open society, Soviet agents could have known all about Oden's work and routine. Did the KGB or *Spetsnaz* rendez-vous with his boat at sea, and abduct him? Oden's case may not have been unique. According to journalistic reports, three West German scientists disappeared during 1986 and the first half of 1987. John Cartwright reportedly said that he had the names of other defence scientists in Europe who had died in mysterious circumstances.<sup>26</sup>

The questions raised in this paper cannot be answered yet. It might be as mistaken to jump to the worst conclusions without evidence, as to evade the questions altogether, on the grounds that it is not for us to wonder. "Active measures" are as much a form of contemporary warfare as machine guns in 1914 or dive bombers in 1939. Presumably, they deserve to be studied with as much care and concern as the tactics and weapons of earlier ages.

- <sup>1</sup> Rebecca West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon: A Journey through Yugoslavia* (New York: Viking Press, 1941), 1984 Penguin edition, p 19.
- <sup>2</sup> *Financial Times*, 10, 18 July 1986; Associated Press report, 10 July 1986; *New York Times*, 26 July 1986.
- <sup>3</sup> Associated Press report, 4 December 1986; *Sunday Star* (Toronto) 10 May 1987.
- <sup>4</sup> For details and sources of incidents in UK, see Appendix B.
- <sup>5</sup> *Economist*, 9 February, 1985; *Newsweek*, 11 February, 1985.
- <sup>6</sup> *Pour l'Unité des Révolutionnaires en Europe de l'Ouest*, signed Action Direct and Red Army Faction, January 1985.
- <sup>7</sup> Associated Press reports 25, 26 and 31 January, 1985.
- <sup>8</sup> These attacks are summarized in James S. Denton and Peter Schweizer, "Murdering SDI", *National Review*, 31 July, 1987, p 37.
- <sup>9</sup> *Financial Times*, 11 October, 1986; *Kessing's Contemporary Archives*, 31 December, 1986, Article Ref A 34828.
- <sup>10</sup> Associated Press reports 21, 22 March, 1987; *Sunday Telegraph*, 22 March 1987; *Washington Post*, 24 March, 1987; *Sunday Star* (Toronto), 10 May, 1987.
- <sup>11</sup> See Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy* (New York and Oxford; Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984).
- <sup>12</sup> V.I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1972 edition) vol 9, pp 345-346.
- <sup>13</sup> See Vera Tolz, "Soviet Press Treatment of Terrorism", Radio Liberty Research, RL 161/86, 17 April, 1986.
- <sup>14</sup> Claire Sterling, *The Terror Network* (New York; Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1981) – 1986 Berkley Book edition, p 270.
- <sup>15</sup> Boris Ponomarev, Speech, "Safeguard Humanity from Another War", *Against the Threat of Another World War* (Moscow; Progress Publishers, 1983).
- <sup>16</sup> See Nigel West, *Mole-Hunt* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1987), p 2.
- <sup>17</sup> *Dagbladet* (Oslo), 5 August, 1985, p 5, quoted Kirsten Amundsen, "The Case of Arne Treholt", unpublished Ms, 1985.
- <sup>18</sup> Associated Press report, 10 July, 1987.
- <sup>19</sup> Abraham H. Miller, "The Evolution of Terrorism", *Conflict Quarterly*, vol V, no 4, Fall 1985, pp 5-16.
- <sup>20</sup> See Eugene V. Rostow, "Why the Soviets want an Arms-Control Agreement, and why they want it now", *Commentary*, February, 1987
- <sup>21</sup> Speech by General Secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Mikhail Gorbachev on Soviet television, 14 October, 1986.

- <sup>22</sup> According to a US government poll conducted after Reykjavik, 35% of Britons blamed Reagan for the breakdown of the talks as opposed to 9% who blamed Gorbachev. Figures elsewhere were West Germany, 43% and 6%; France, 12% and 15%. Asked which side was making the greater efforts for peace, Britons answered 20% US, 46% USSR; West Germany, 18% and 42%; France, 35% and 20%. Britons and West Germans, by small majorities, trusted Gorbachev more than Reagan. See Dean Godson, *SDI: Has America Told Her Story to the World?* (New York, Oxford; Pergamon-Brassey's, 1987), pp 17-18.
- <sup>23</sup> Reported Associated Press, 2 April 1987.
- <sup>24</sup> Quoted Associated Press, 31 March, 1987.
- <sup>25</sup> See Marian Leighton, "Soviet Strategy Towards Northern Europe and Japan", *Survey*, Autumn-Winter 1983, pp 112-151; John J. Dziak, "The Soviet Approach to Special Operations", Barnett, Tovar, Shultz, eds, *Special Operations in US Strategy* (Washington DC; National Defense University Press, 1984), pp 95-120.
- <sup>26</sup> See William Lowther, "Who is killing the scientists of Europe?", *Sunday Star* (Toronto), 10 May, 1987.

## SELECT CHRONOLOGY

November 1984 – April 1987

(Events of a diplomatic or similar nature are shown in italics)

**1984**

|             |                       |  |
|-------------|-----------------------|--|
| November    | US                    | <i>Ronald Reagan is re-elected President.</i>  |
| 21 November | Brussels,<br>Belgium  | Offices of the US electronic company Motorola are bombed. The Belgian terrorist group Communist Combattant Cells (CCC) claims responsibility.  |
| 26 November | Liege,<br>Belgium     | Two military communications masts are destroyed by a bomb. CCC claims responsibility.  |
| 6 December  | Moscow,<br>USSR       | <i>CPSU Secretary General Konstantin Chernenko speaks out strongly against SDI on Soviet television, condemning it as part of a "militarization of space".</i>   |
|             | Oudenarde,<br>Belgium | A bomb explodes at a NATO fuel pumping station in central Belgium. CCC claims responsibility.  |
|             | Paris,<br>France      | A bomb explodes at the offices of NATO's Central European Operating Agency, near Versailles outside Paris, which manages the 5,900 km NATO pipeline network. CCC claims responsibility but also states that an unspecified "international communist group in France" assisted. |
| 11 December | Verviers,<br>Belgium  | Six bombs explode along NATO's emergency fuel pipeline near Brussels. CCC claims responsibility stating that it is fighting a "war against NATO".  |
| 18 December | Oberammergau,<br>FRG  | A bomb planted at a NATO training school fails to explode. RAF claims responsibility.  |
| 30 December | Mannheim,<br>FRG      | A US Army communications centre is bombed. RAF claims responsibility.  |
|             | Dusseldorf,<br>FRG    | A US Army liaison office is bombed. RAF claims responsibility.   |
|             | Weisbaden,<br>FRG     | A bomb is defused outside a US Air Force base. RAF claims responsibility.  |
| 31 December | Bonn,<br>FRG          | The military offices of the French embassy are bombed. RAF claims responsibility.  |

1985

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|-------------|--|--|
| 3 January   | Heidelberg, FRG                        | A bomb explodes at a molecular biology centre at Heidelberg University. RAF claims responsibility.   |
| 7-8 January | US/USSR                                | <i>US Secretary of State George Schultz and Soviet Foreign Secretary Andrei Gromyko agree to resume bilateral negotiations on nuclear arms and space weapons.</i>  |
| 15 January  | Paris, France<br><br>Brussels, Belgium | France's <i>Action Directe</i> (AD) and the RAF release a five page statement announcing the start of joint operations targetted at NATO.<br><br>A large car-bomb explodes at the gates of the NATO support activity building near NATO headquarters. CCC claims responsibility. After declaring in October 1986 that attacks would only be directed "against the imperialist bourgeoisie" and never against "the people", CCC announces a new bombing campaign in which human life will not be respected. |
| 21 January  | Stuttgart, FRG                         | A known RAF sympathizer, Johannes Thimme, is killed and his female companion is seriously injured when a bomb they were wheeling in a baby carriage towards a computer centre explodes prematurely.  |
| 25 January  | Paris, France                          | General René Audrun, chief arms salesman in the French ministry of defence, is shot and killed outside his Paris apartment. Joint responsibility claimed by AD and RAF.  |
| 1 February  | Gauting, FRG                           | Dr. Ernst Zimmermann, head of Motoren-und-Turbinen Union (makers of tank and aircraft engines), is shot and killed at his home. RAF claims responsibility.   |
| 10 March    | USSR                                   | <i>Death of Konstantin Chernenko.</i>  |
| 11 March    | USSR                                   | <i>Election of Mikhail Gorbachev as general secretary of the CPSU Central Committee.</i>   |
| April       | Helsinki, Finland                      | <i>The leadership of thirteen Soviet front organizations, led by the World Peace Council, meet to co-ordinate the start of its anti-US Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) propaganda campaign under the slogan "No to Star Wars".</i>  |
| 8 April     | Mutlagen, FRG                          | A section of the NATO fuel network is bombed. "Fighting Ulrike Meino/Revolutionary Cells" claims responsibility.   |
| 30 April    | Paris, France                          | Two telecommunications firms connected with the French arms industry are bombed. AD claims responsibility.   |
| 10 May      | FRG                                    | A section of the NATO fuel network is bombed.  |

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| 26 June        | Paris, France                        | General Henri Blandin, controller-general of the French armed forces, is shot at and missed by two men on motorcycles. AD claims responsibility.   |
| 18 July        | Paris, France                        | <i>President Mitterand rejects the formal participation of France in the SDI project but allows individual French firms to bid for SDI contracts. Mitterand also announces the start of the EUREKA research project to co-ordinate European efforts towards a missile defence.</i> |
| 8 August       | Frankfurt, FRG<br><br>Weisbaden, FRG | US Air Force base at Rhein-Main is bombed. Two dead and 21 injured. RAF and AD claim joint responsibility.<br><br>A US soldier is murdered. RAF claim responsibility.  |
| 15 November    | Woensdrecht, Netherlands             | Three military air bases are bombed, including Woensdrecht north of Antwerp, where US cruise missiles are due to be stationed. Responsibility is claimed by the previously unknown "Action Group Against Nuclear War".   |
| 19-21 November | Geneva, Switzerland                  | <i>Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev meet in Geneva.</i>   |
| 6 December     | London, UK                           | <i>The British government signs a formal agreement with the United States to participate in SDI research.</i>  |
| 15 December    | Provins, France                      | Alain Peyrefitte, former justice minister and senior member of Prime Minister Chirac's RPR party survives an assassination attempt. A bomb explodes in the rear of one of his two cars: he had chosen the other. A mechanic is killed. AD <i>deny</i> responsibility.              |

1986

|             |                 |   |
|-------------|-----------------|---|
| January     | FRG             | Police raid on RAF hideout finds list of West German businessmen thought to be seeking SDI contracts.   |
| 10 February | Florence, Italy | Lando Conti, former mayor, longtime associate of the minister of defence and consultant to SMA, an Italian company making radar and electronic equipment, is shot and killed while driving to a city council meeting. Italy's Red Brigades (RB) claim responsibility. |
| 27 March    | Bonn, FRG       | <i>The West German government signs an agreement with the United States to allow West German companies to participate in SDI research contracts.</i>  |
| 5 April     | Paris, France   | It is revealed that an Algerian, Tunisian and two Libyan diplomats have recently been expelled from France for allegedly preparing terrorist attacks against US installations in Western Europe.  |

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| 15 April     | Paris, France   | Guy Brana, vice-president of Patronat (CNPF), the French employer's association, is shot at outside his home. He is not injured. AD claims responsibility.  | 11-12 October | Reykjavik, Iceland | <i>US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev hold summit meeting.</i>  |
| 6 July       | Paris, France   | Bombs explode at the offices of Thomson CSF and Air Liquide. AD claims responsibility.  | 10 October    | Bonn, FRG          | Gerold von Braunmühl, political director of the FRG foreign ministry and specialist in arms control, is shot and killed as he returns home from work. RAF claims responsibility.   |
| 9 July       | Munich, FRG     | Karl-Heinz Beckurts, head of research at Siemens electronics and specialist in nuclear energy and neutron physics, is killed by a remote controlled bomb while he is being driven to work. RAF claims responsibility.                   | 28 October    | Bristol, UK        | Ashad Sharif, an analyst with Marconi Space and Defence Systems and specialist in underwater acoustics, is found dead in his car at Siston Common near Bristol with a rope around his neck and the end tied to a tree. Police at the time suspect suicide. Details at Appendix B, Part II.   |
|              | Paris, France   | Offices of the élite CID anti-crime squad are bombed. A police Chief Inspector is killed and twenty-five persons are injured. AD claims responsibility.   | 16 November   | Heidelberg, FRG    | International Business Machines (IBM) computer research centre sustains serious damage from a bomb attack.   |
| 24 July      | Aachen, FRG     | A branch of the Fraunhofer Institute, specializing in laser research, is bombed. RAF claims responsibility.   | 17 November   | Paris, France      | Georges Besse, chairman of Renault, a major arms manufacturer, is shot and killed returning home from work. AD claims responsibility.  |
| 25 July      | Immenstaad, FRG | The Dornier Aerospace Corporation, a leading FRG military contractor and subsidiary of Daimler-Benz AG, is car bombed.  |               |                    |  |
| 30 July      | Sweden          | Dr. Svante Oden, expert in underwater acoustics, disappears in his boat off the coast of Sweden while conducting experiments. Although the boat is discovered, neither Oden nor his equipment is found.                                 | <b>1987</b>   |                    |  |
| 5 August     | Bristol, UK     | Vimal Dajibhai, a computer engineer working for Marconi Undersea Systems on defence contracts as a specialist in underwater acoustics, is found dead at the foot of Bristol's Clifton suspension bridge. Details at Appendix B, Part I. | 3 January     | Luxembourg         | More than 100 NATO tanks are damaged through sabotage at a military depot.   |
| 15 August    | Wuppertal, FRG  | Branch of the US-based Westinghouse Corporation at Wuppertal, north of Cologne, is bombed.  | 4 January     | Essex, UK          | Richard Pugh, a computer hardware designer and consultant to the UK Ministry of Defence, is found dead at his home in Essex with a plastic bag over his head. Police initially suspect accidental death. Details at Appendix B, Part III.  |
| 8 September  | Cologne, FRG    | The Constitution Protection Agency headquarters, the FRG's counter-intelligence service, is bombed.   | 8 January     | Loughborough, UK   | Avtar Singh Gida, a specialist in acoustics technology, disappears while conducting underwater experiments at the Foremark reservoir. While on contract to the UK Ministry of Defence, he is believed to be doing research linked to Marconi Undersea Systems. On 21 May 1987, Gida is found working at a shop in the "red light" district of Paris. Details at Appendix B, Part IV. |
| 15 September | Munich, FRG     | The offices of Panavia, the FRG-UK-Italian consortium which builds the Tornado fighter aircraft, are bombed.  | January       | UK                 | Dr. John Brittan, computer specialist at the Royal Armaments Research Establishment, is found dead of carbon monoxide poisoning at his home. Police suspect accidental death. Details at Appendix B, Part V.   |
|              | Munich, FRG     | The NATO liaison office for Munich and the Bavarian government environmental service are bombed.  | February      | Portsmouth, UK     | Victor Moore, Marconi Space and Defence Systems engineer, dies of drug overdose in circumstances pointing to suicide. Details at Appendix B, Part VI.  |
| 18 September | Tubingen, FRG   | An optical research institute at Tubingen, south of Stuttgart, is bombed.   |               |                    |  |
| 19 September | Rome, Italy     | <i>The Italian government signs a Memorandum of Understanding with the United States to participate in SDI research.</i>  |               |                    |  |

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| 22 February | Oxfordshire, UK | Peter Peapell, former Ministry of Defence scientist and senior lecturer at the Royal Military College of Science, is found dead of carbon monoxide poisoning under his car. Details at Appendix B, Part VII.   |
| 5 March     | London, UK      | <i>Computer News</i> publishes first of a series on the mysterious deaths.   |
| 20 March    | Rome, Italy     | Air Force General Licio Giorgieri, director-general of aeronautical and space armaments and leading figure in Italy's bid for SDI contracts, is shot and killed by two men on motorcycles, while returning home from work. The Union of Communist Fighters claims responsibility.  |
| 23 March    | FRG             | A bomb explodes at the British Army and Royal Air Force base at Rheindahlen, West Germany injuring 31 people. Several groups claim responsibility.   |
| 30 March    | Basingstoke, UK | David Sands, a defence engineer at Easams (a company owned by Marconi Space and Defence Systems) working on a secret radar defence system, diverts from his usual route to work and drives his car at high speed into the side of a disused roadside cafe. Explosion and fire is intensified by two five gallon cans of petrol in the trunk of his car. Police believe it to be a simple road accident, but do not rule out suicide. Details at Appendix B, Part VIII. |
| April       | Berkshire, UK   | Robert Greenhalgh, a computer defence systems salesman, is found with his wrists slashed lying under a railway bridge near his home at Wooding, Berkshire. Police treat the case as a suicide attempt. He dies later. Details at Appendix B, Part IX.  |
| 3 April     | London, UK      | <i>Financial Times</i> examines the evidence in feature article.   |
| 13 April    | Munich, FRG     | A bomb explodes at the Munich offices of TST, a computer firm that does business with West German security and intelligence agencies, specializing in cryptographic equipment.   |
| 19 April    | London, UK      | <i>Sunday Today</i> reports that MI5 has begun an investigation.   |

## MYSTERIOUS INCIDENTS IN BRITAIN

## I. Vimal Dajibhai

5 August 1986

Vimal Dajibhai, aged 24, married, was a computer software engineer for Marconi Underwater Systems at Croxley Green, near Watford, and lived in Kenton, north of London. Dajibhai joined Marconi in 1983 after studying underwater acoustics at Loughborough University where he was an acquaintance of Avtar Singh Gida (see part IV). At Marconi he had reportedly worked on the guidance system for the Tigerfish air-to-sea missile and the Stingray "super-smart" torpedo project. Friends reported that, through his Stingray work, Dajibhai was also involved in "Cosmos", a simulation project linked to the Strategic Defense Initiative. Shortly before his death, Dajibhai accepted a new high-paying job with a computer firm in London's financial district.

On 5 August 1986, Dajibhai left a note for his wife explaining he would be home late. He then drove 105 miles from London to Bristol despite there being no known connection between him and that city. That night he fell 260 feet to his death off the Clifton suspension bridge spanning the Avon River, a popular suicide spot. There were no witnesses. Examination of the body revealed a small puncture mark in his left buttock and his pants had been unbuckled and pulled down. Although a non-drinker, traces of alcohol were detected in his blood, and wine, along with two paper cups, was discovered in his car. A card from a Hindu cult and a pair of slippers were also found.

The Bristol coroner returned an open verdict as friends and relatives of Dajibhai testified at an inquest that he had apparently no reason to commit suicide. Two separate post-mortems were performed on the body although results of the second have not been made public. The card found in the car is believed to have belonged to a work associate who was a sect member. Dajibhai had apparently visited the temple once but was described by his family as being a confirmed agnostic.

Associated Press: 19 March, 31 March, 5 April 1987.

*The Guardian*: 18 November 1986, 6 March, 21 March 1987.

*Daily Telegraph*: 20 March 1987.

*Financial Times*: 3 April 1987.

*Today*: 18 November 1986.

*The Times*: 19 March, 20 March 1987.

*Computer News*: 5 March, 12 March, 19 March 1987.

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## II. Ashad Sharif

28 October 1986

Ashad Sharif, aged 26, a computer analyst with Marconi Space and Defence Systems at Stanmore, lived in Walthamstow, east of London. It is believed Sharif was working on an underwater vibration simulator (Zeus project) with direct involvement in the Stingray self-guided torpedo project for the Ministry of Defence. While previously employed at British Aerospace he is believed to have worked on the Zircon spy satellite. Sharif had recently been promised a promotion and was engaged to be married.

On 28 October 1986, Sharif drove 130 miles from his home to Bristol. He had friends in the area as he had once worked in the city. He was scheduled to meet with a Labour MP, Eric Deakins, on a "routine matter" regarding his fiancée's upcoming arrival from Pakistan. That night Sharif was found dead in his car at Siston Common, five miles from Bristol city centre. He had been strangled as his Audi 80 moved away from a tree to which a rope was fastened and tied around his neck. There were no witnesses. A member of Sharif's family is reported to have seen a long wheel hub spanner on the car floor near the acceleration pedal. Three cigars were found in the car although Sharif was a non-smoker.

A coroner's inquest returned a verdict of suicide; however, no apparent reason could be discovered. A tape recording found in the car was "tantamount" to a suicide note according to police, although the actual text of the tape was not made public. A member of Sharif's family who claimed to have heard the tape said the message "had nothing to do with death". Police later commented "off the record" that Sharif's apparent suicide may have been linked to a sexual liaison with his former landlady. The main findings of the inquest were not made public.

Associated Press: 19 March 1987.

*The Guardian*: 18 November 1986, 6 March, 21 March 1987.

*Today*: 18 November 1986.

*Financial Times*: 3 April 1987.

*The Times*: 19 March, 20 March 1987.

*Computer News*: 5 March, 12 March, 19 March, 26 March 1987.

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## III. Richard Pugh

4 January 1987

Richard Pugh was a computer hardware designer and consultant to the Ministry of Defence.

On 4 January 1987, Pugh was found dead at his Essex home with a plastic bag over his head. A police inquiry returned a verdict of accidental death.

*Today*: 19 April 1987.

*Financial Times*: 3 April 1987.

## IV. Avtar Singh Gida

8 January 1987

Avtar Singh Gida, aged 26, married, was completing the final stages of his Ph.D. at Loughborough University specializing in underwater acoustics. Part of his work was conducted under contract to the Ministry of Defence and Marconi Space and Defence Systems. It is believed he was working on underwater acoustic imaging and helping to produce a report on a high-power sonar transmitter.

On 8 January 1987, Avtar Gida and a fellow researcher were conducting acoustical tests on the Foremark Reservoir near Loughborough, Derbyshire. They separated for lunch and Gida was not seen again. Although he was experiencing family problems believed linked to the serious illness of his father, he was described as being cheerful the day of his disappearance. Gida's wedding anniversary was 10 January and he had already purchased his wife a gift. His passport was missing. Gida was thought to have drowned but an underwater search by police divers and acoustic sweep of the reservoir failed to find his body. Police listed him as missing.

During May, Gida was discovered in the St. Denis area of Paris working in a "sweat shop" under an assumed name. On 24 May he was reunited with his wife in London. Police consider the case closed and did not press charges as no crime is believed to have been committed.

*Financial Times*: 3 April 1987.

*Agence France Press*: 21 May 1987.

*The Guardian*: 21 March, 2 April 1987.

*Daily Telegraph*: 20 March, 21 May, 25 May 1987.

Associated Press: 19 March 1987.

*The Times*: 19 March, 20 March 1987.

*Computer News*: 19 March 1987.

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V. Dr. John Brittan

(?) January 1987

Dr. John Brittan, a computer expert with the Royal Armaments Research Establishment, was found dead of carbon monoxide poisoning in January 1987. An inquiry returned a verdict of accidental death.

*Today*: 19 April 1987.

*The Times*: 23 May 1987.

VI. Victor Moore

(?) February 1987

Victor Moore, aged 46, married, was a design engineer for Marconi Space and Defence Systems at Portsmouth. Moore apparently worked on a number of Ministry of Defence contracts including satellite research. One unconfirmed report stated that he was involved with Marconi's bid for a Strategic Defense Initiative contract. Although his wife admitted that Moore talked little of his research, she believed it was linked to the government facility at GCHQ Cheltenham.

In 1985, Moore developed duodenal ulcers apparently associated with a high stress situation regarding his work at Marconi. Although with Marconi for 30 years he was known to dislike defence-related research. After spending most of 1986 on sick leave he applied for early retirement. Marconi rejected his application and gave him three months notice. Afterwards he became increasingly disturbed and began to drink heavily. Ten days after his wife and children moved out of their home fearing for their safety, Moore was found dead of a drug overdose. Police believe it to be a suicide.

*Today*: 19 April, 26 April 1987.

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VII. Peter Peapell

22 February 1987

Peter Peapell, aged 46, married, was a senior lecturer at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham, near Swindon, and lived in Oxfordshire. Until 1984 Peapell had served as a scientist for the Ministry of Defence. The Ministry stated that he was currently involved in unclassified research into Soviet advances in beryllium metallurgy, although other sources claim he was also involved in secret defence work.

On 22 February 1987, Peter Peapell returned home from what his wife described as a pleasant evening out. That night he was found dead of carbon monoxide poisoning lying beneath his car. The engine was running and the garage door closed. A coronor's inquest returned an open verdict. His wife stated that he was happy and could see no reason for suicide.

*Associated Press*: 5 April, 10 April 1987.

*Globe and Mail*: 6 April 1987.

*Today*: 6 April 1987.

*Daily Telegraph*: 6 April 1987.

*The Guardian*: 6 April 1987.

*The Times*: 23 May 1987.

David Sands, aged 37, was a project manager/computer researcher for Easams in Camberley, an electronics company owned by Marconi which is reportedly an SDI contractor. Married with two children, in late 1986 he purchased a house worth over \$500,000 at Itchen Abbas, Hampshire. According to a spokesman at Easams, Sands had worked on a number of confidential projects for the Ministry of Defence, having just completed a three-year contract. The Ministry stated that Sands was currently involved in a tender for an air defence systems contract which was described as being "extremely sensitive".

During March 1987, David Sands and his family travelled to Venice on vacation, returning home around 27 March. While Sands was away, it is reported that Special Branch officers visited Easams and spoke with the firm's security officer and the personnel manager. On Saturday, 28 March, Sands' wife phoned the police reporting he had disappeared, but he returned home at 10:30 pm saying that he had gone for a drive "to sort things out". On 30 March at 7:30 am, Sands left in his car for work mentioning that he would return home if he felt unwell. After following his usual route for a time Sands took a U-turn onto a secondary road. His Austin Maestro was then driven at approximately 130 k/h into the side wall of a disused roadside cafe at Popham, near Basingstoke, Hampshire. The explosion on impact was heightened by two five-gallon cans of gasoline in the trunk of the car. Sands' body, still strapped in by a seat belt, was burnt beyond recognition with identification possible only through dental records.

Although recently distressed at his father's illness with cancer, Sands' wife stated that he was generally very happy at home and with his work. At Easams he was considered a first rate team leader as well as a quiet and efficient worker. On 22 May, a coroner's investigation returned an open verdict concluding that there was no positive evidence Sands had committed suicide, but that evidence presented also ruled out foul play.

*Daily Telegraph*: 1 April, 2 April, 23 May 1987.

Associated Press: 31 March, 5 April, 10 April, 22 May 1987.

*The Guardian*: 1 April, 2 April 1987.

*Financial Times*: 3 April 1987.

*The Times*: 23 May 1987.

Robert Greenhalgh, aged 46, was a computer defence systems salesman for the British company, ICL. ICL is principal contractor for the Royal Navy's OPCON Command and Control Centre at Northwood.

In April 1987, Greenhalgh was found with his wrists slashed lying under a bridge on a railway line near his home at Wooding, Berkshire. He apparently fell the 20 metres from the bridge to the ground. Police were treating the case as an attempted suicide. Greenhalgh died a few days later in hospital.

*Today*: 19 April 1987.

*The Sunday Star* (Toronto): 10 May 1987.

*National Review*: 31 July 1987.