



Alexander Orlov: The FBI's KGB General, by Edward Gazur, © 2001, Carrol & Graf Publishers, New York 2002.

pp. 259-60

KGB General Lushkov, Chief of the KGB Border Guard for the far eastern maritime provinces of the Soviet Union, had defected from his post in the middle of June and all legal *rezidents* abroad were being alerted. Lushkov had been recalled to Moscow under the same set of circumstances that his doomed comrades in the KGB had previously faced. He finally surfaced in Japan and worldwide coverage was given to his plight.

With Lushkov's defection, Orlov could now concoct a legend around his escape and use it as a basis for his warning letter to Trotsky. Fortunately Orlov and Lushkov had been cotemporaries in the KGB and had become friends during their careers. As a consequence, Orlov was somewhat familiar with Lushkov's family background. He then had to gather information regarding Lushkov's defection through research first in Montreal and then in Philadelphia as the details had to hold up to scrutiny.
xxxxx

pp. 444-5

Often at their meetings Stalin would use vulgar and profane language and resort to telling sexual oriented jokes, or male sexual references to otherwise well-respected persons. In these instances, it was wise to join in the laughter at his remarks or run the risk of alienating him. Most times during a personal briefing Orlov would sit at a desk directly across from the dictator and at these times it was apparent that Stalin had extremely bad breath. In time, Orlov

learned that the cause for his bad breath was decaying teeth, which was apparently why he would normally nod an affirmative or negative reply rather than open his mouth in a vocal response.

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After supper, the two fiends [Orlov and Pavel Alliluyev, brother in law of Stalin] walked along the river Seine. They spoke of the horrendous events taking place in the Soviet union and at one point Orlov asked his companion what was the truth behind the execution of Tukhachevsky and the Red Army generals. Alliluyev stopped walking, grasped Orlov's upper arm and then, in a very slow and deliberate manner, addressed Orlov with the words, 'Alexander, don't ever inquire about the Tukhachevsky affair. Knowing about it is like inhaling poison gas.' Orlov had to wonder how much 'poison gas' his friend had inhaled when, several years later in 1939, he read in one of the official organs of the USSR, either *Pravda* or *Izvestia*, an obituary saying that Alliluyev, Commissar of the Tank Corps of the Red Army, had died unexpectedly while carrying out his official duties. The announcement was signed by Voroshilov and several other Red Army officers, but to Orlov the absence of Stalin's signature was suspicious. The cause of death was not given.

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In his memoirs, Orlov wrote extensively about the major players...
When his memoirs are finally published in 2002, the world will be enlightened further.

p. 551

Orlov's personal papers were donated to the National Archives in Washington DC on 23 October 1974 on the authority of the Probate Court for Cuyahoga County. This was in the depth of the Cold War and, because of national security interests at the time, his papers were sealed for a period of twenty-five years. However, these papers were subject to selective review by US government agencies charged with the internal security of the United States and/or agencies concerned with foreign intelligence, or representatives or individuals designated by those agencies. Today, I only have a slight recollection of the specific contents of his personal pa-

pers but I do recognize that they will have a strong impact on history.

p. 570-2

In 1994, another possibility came to my attention while reading *Deadly Illusions*. In the very last paragraph of the book in the Afterword section, dated February 1993 under the name John Costello, the author drops a bombshell that would have lit up the sky for anyone trained in intelligence and espionage. The matter deals with a KGB spy ring that was recruited in the 1930s at Oxford University in England contemporary to the spy ring at Cambridge University. It appears that Costello may have stumbled on a piece of crucial information that revealed Orlov's connection to an Oxford University spy network in one of the documents that was probably inadvertently given to him from the KGB archives when he was researching his book. Costello writes that,

One of the most tantalizing clues that has dropped out of the KGB Orlov dossier appears in the 1964 'damage assessment report' which finally absolved the runaway General of treachery. It records that agents whose names Orlov 'knew very well' continued to operated from the time he surfaced in the United States in 1953 until 1963, 'that is until their exfiltration into the USSR'. Since the only 'exfiltration' was that of Philby in 1963, it is not impossible that he was followed by other British comrades whose names appear on the Oxford Register for 1938. (Copied from *Deadly Illusions* and not from the Edward Gazur book)

However, before he could reveal anything further, the fifty-two-year-old Costello died on 26 August 1995 aboard a transatlantic flight from London to Miami. The Washington Post in its 31 August 1995 edition published an obituary of him, but perhaps more revealing and to the point was a companion article in the London Times that Costello's death may not have been from natural causes but may have been the result of a conspiracy theory that involved the KGB. In this article, entitled 'Mystery over spy writer's death', by Andrew Pierce, it was observed that an inquiry was under way into the death of Costello, who was threatening to expose an

Oxford University spy ring contemporary with the Philby, Burgess, Maclean cell at Cambridge, noting that conspiracy theories were a favourite subject of Costello's...

It is apparent that Costello uncovered more from the KGB archives than he admits to in *Deadly Illusions* for, at the time of his sudden death, he was researching his forthcoming book, *A Feast of Scorpions*, which planned to expose the Oxford spy cell. It is clear that Costello knew the identities of members of the Oxford cell by the following statement that his editor, James Wade, made at the time of Costello's death, relative to the book Costello was working on: 'It will cause stir. But for legal reasons, it is unlikely to name KGB contacts who are alive. There are household names, however. It will also indicate that there was a Soviet cell at Oxford, less famous than the one at Cambridge, which was operating at the same time.'

It is highly conceivable that Costello met his untimely death at a point when he was about to expose the 1930s' KGB spy cell at Oxford. The only beneficiary that had a motive and stood to gain from the death of Costello was the KGB and it is possible to assume that, if Costello did not die of natural causes, the only remaining suspect is the KGB. Costello's research indicates that Orlov 'knew very well' the identities of the Oxford spy cell. Perhaps therefore Orlov met the same fate in 1973 that Costello met in 1995, both at the hands of the KGB.

The possibility that Costello was eliminated by the KGB cannot be ignored by the same standards that today I judge that Orlov's death may have been at the hands of the KGB. The motive behind Costello's and Orlov's deaths could have been the same, the KGB's prevention of the exposure of the Oxford cell.

For those skeptics who believe that the KGB is untainted in these matters, I refer them to United States Senate Internal Security Subcommittee hearings of 21 September 1960 and 26 March 1965. This Judicial body compiles fifty-one instances during the period 1926-60 where the Russian intelligence services disposed of their enemies through abduction, kidnapping and imprisonment as well as failed attempts through these methods. In addition,

two cases of KGB burglary are recorded. Since 1960, I am aware of additional KGB crimes that would add substantially to the original list.

Corroboration that the KGB used poison as a means to eliminate its enemies came as late as 1994, when the memoirs of KGB General Pavel A. Sudoplatov were published in the book *Special Tasks*. Sudoplatov was recognized by the American intelligence community as the post-war chief of the KGB's Spetsburo, which carried out foreign assassinations, and he admits in his memoirs that he was responsible for assassinations, including that of Leon Trotsky, under the direct orders of his superiors. Sudoplatov had been a deputy to KGB Chairman Lavrenty Beria and after Beria fell from grace in 1953, Sudoplatov was arrested and held for five years before he was given a formal trial in 1958. Among the charges were that as head of the Administration of Special Tasks under Beria, Sudoplatov had carried out secret assassinations of people hostile to Beria by administering poisons and then covering up their deaths by making them appear to be accidental, and that from 1942 to 1946 he had supervised the work of the toxicological laboratory that tested poisons on people condemned to death [...]

[...] Sudoplatov traces the programme of toxicological research to the time of Lenin, when it became a special section of Lenin's Secretariat. In 1937, the research group under Maironovsky at the Institute of Biochemistry was transferred to the jurisdiction of the KGB. Maironovsky became chief of the toxicological research group and, in addition to his research, carried out death sentences on the direct orders of ministers and commissars of security Beria, Yezhov, and Merkulov. In Sudoplatov's time, the KGB toxicological laboratory was called 'LAB X' in official KGB documents.

[...] Sudoplatov stated that, as he looked back [...] 'I feel sorry for [...]; but in the Cold War years we did not concern ourselves with what methods we used to eliminate people who knew too much.'

As I look back, I cannot help but feel that Orlov and Costello 'knew too much' and could have been eliminated by the hands of the KGB's 'LAB X'.

There is no reason to believe that 'LAB X' does not exist today because of the end of the Cold War. Whatever name the toxicological laboratory is now called, its mission is the same.

Shortly before his death, John Costello told at a reception to Mrs. Alexandra Schlesinger, wife of the historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., that he feared for his life, adding that it was because he had discovered something of tremendous magnitude. It was rumored that Costello had Aids and that he died of it. All this sounds like nonsense.

No one dies suddenly of Aids unless the person is terminal and, positive or not, a man who boards a flight in good physical form does not die in his seat unless hit by a brain seizure or a sudden heart stop. None of those were given as the cause of death. Mrs. Schlesinger told this to Giovanni Volpi around 1998.

18 July 2002

Mrs. Alexandra Schlesinger tells Giovanni Volpi about her call to Vern W. Newton, author of *The Cambridge Spies* (1991):

At the time of Costello's death, Newton was the head of the FDR Library.

VN's description of Costello of whom he was a good friend:

Yes, he was probably gay. Newton obtained the autopsy report and showed it to a doctor he knew. There was no HIV (as was rumored). The doctor found as the only probable cause of death, congested lungs (this does not wash).

After John Costello's death, Costello's British research assistant [probably his companion] based in Miami, called Newton to say that Costello wanted his research papers to be donated to the FDR Library, in case something might happen to him. Newton accepted. The British assistant said "I'll get back to you." Sometime after that and not hearing from him, Newton called back to discover that the phone number was disconnected, the apartment vacated and that the assistant had vanished not to be seen or heard from by Newton again. Soon after Costello's death, the CIA held a memorial in his honor. Newton did not see the assistant at that ceremony where he heard that "probably" Costello's brother had asked for his papers which were sent back to him in England.

John Wade was Costello's US editor. He wrote a couple of books and published some by himself.

John Costello did not smoke or drink and was a health freak. He died at 52, looking younger than his age and boarded that London-Miami flight brimming with health.

Newton does not believe in conspiracies ...and writes about espionage. But what about coincidences and things that don't jibe? There are plenty here if you count in Edward Gazar's suspicions and Mrs. Schlesinger's last encounter with Costello.

All this certainly does not contribute to make Costello's death seem natural and if there are suspects, one can add the British to the already rumored KGB.

31 July 2002

Call to Dr. Martine Louis at Geneva Hôpital Cantonnal. Dr. Louis confirms that the findings as explained by Mr. Newton do not stand. Only a massive overdose of drugs or a major heart failure or a big brain seizure, all of which apparently did not appear in the autopsy, can make you find an apparently sleeping man dead in his seat. If an autopsy is

done 24 hours after death, there will be liquid in the lungs as nothing is circulating any more; but this was surely taken into account by the Miami police, if they are the ones who did the autopsy. Furthermore, Mr. Newton must have been very strongly introduced for the Miami police (or was it, instead, the CIA) to give out a copy of the autopsy.

31 July 2002

Call from G. Volpi to Mrs. Schlesinger: She spoke to Bob Epstein of the NY Review of Books. James Wade is a strange individual. He wrote books titled *Drop Us a Line Sucker*, *Jerusalem the Endless Crusade*, with Andrew Sinclair, *Shock and Awe*, published by the National Defence Publishing Co.

Wade, who is labeled as a business man who lives in Switzerland, is known to write preposterous letters and to do bizarre enquiries. At the NYRB no one knows him as an editor.

A Joan Thompson was mentioned by Mrs. Schlesinger, but she must be asked again.

2010

See above p. 527. No memoirs have yet shown up.

Since more than a year a book about Alexander Orlov by Boris Volodarsky is announced on-line, including Amazon. At some point it was labeled as available. You'd order it and the refusal would follow. Now, since a few days on Amazon, there is just one copy of the book for sale at \$2,499.99. Sometimes there is humor in those 99s. What is going on? Why should Orlov still be feared?

This is the cover of the phantom book:

The Orlov KGB File: The Most Successful Espionage Deception of All Time by Boris Volodarsky (Paperback - Jan. 1, 2010)

[1 new](#) from **\$2,499.99**

