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Open Sources Solutions, Intelligence and Secrecy¹

The OSS Symposium and the Intelligence Revolution

The Open Sources Solutions (OSS) conference held on December 1-3, 1992 in Washington, as organised by Richard Steele, a marine intelligence officer, dealt with how open sources can be used to solve all problems intelligence and security of government and corporations are faced with. The conference was attended by about 750 people from defence intelligence, CIA, corporate intelligence and of most advanced firms in computer and communication technology.

This OSS conference will be a memorable event in the world history of Intelligence & Security (I&S) of all social systems from governments, corporations, universities to churches, sport clubs etc. etc. For, the use of open sources solutions is becoming an integral part of the emerging innovations of social systems intelligence and security. The OSS symposium is a specific part of that innovation responding to the demands of our times. It is resulting from the emergence of multidimensional intelligence revolutions as perceived by such observers as the President of France Giscard D'Estaing, Chairman of the Nippon Electronic Corporation T. Kobayashi and the former director of USA CIA Will Colby². At the same time, "we are witnessing the emergence of an intelligence science integrating the research of all aspects of intelligence, from biological and individual to machine and governing intelligence"³.

Four OSS cases from History

Open sources solutions of intelligence problems has a prehistory that awaits to be researched. As early as 1972, at the beginning of my studies of intelligence and security of social systems, I perceived and wrote that the availability of open sources is resulting in that "Spying is dying" and is often counterproductive. Here are four among many such signals of OSS I have detected that helped me come to the above conclusion. In

¹Paper for the Proceedings of the Open Source Solutions Symposium, December 1-3, 1992, Washington, D.C.

²According to a private communication from Colby, five aspects of intelligence have been undergoing a revolutionary change in our time: a rapid technological change, increasing transparency, insight and control by the public, privatisation in the sense that all social systems are becoming aware of the need for intelligence and security function, and new purposes for the intelligence and security in social systems.

³S. Dedijer, "Does IBM Know what business it is in?" Social Intelligence, vol 1, No 2, 1991

1920ies the USSR proclaimed the USA consulate in Riga, Estonia as "the foremost spy center" headed by USA vice consul George Kennan. As he writes in his memoirs, George Kennan, gathered newspapers and journals from all parts of the USSR and wrote reports that made USSR see red. Second, the director of CIA Smith asked in 1950ies a group of USA university scientists and engineers not connected with USA defence to outline from open sources what weapons the USA should procure. Smith immediately classified the report as "top secret", for it came very close to the actual weapons procurement program of USA. Sometimes in late 1940ies president Nehru of India and Bertrand Russell asked prof. Kothari, to derive from open sources the effect of nuclear bombing of Japan. The Kothari report came very close to the actual findings produced under conditions of secrecy by the USA Defence Department. In 1975 I met my former commander of the 101st US Airborne general Maxwell Taylor and gave him some thoughts on intelligence and security including a document by the Task force on Secrecy of the USA Department of Defence Committee of Scientists I found in the USA Congressional Record. General Taylor sent my materials to the Science Committee. As the result I got letters from all its members, among them Edward Teller, "the father" of the hydrogen bomb. In it he says that the secrecy in science and in weapons procurement only hurts the development of the USA industry and economy, but that USA public is not ready to do away with it.

The OSS-Secrecy Intelligence Paradox.

Listening to all the speeches at the OSS symposium, I had the opportunity to perceive and point out as the last speaker to what is at first sight, a paradox. Secrecy has always been and will continue to be an essential resource in all human endeavours including in intelligence and security. As the sociologist G. Simmel noted in 1906⁴, secrecy is a basic human resource, "one of the great achievements of humanity". As my student P. Petursson⁵ noted "an important part of understanding organisations, decision making, planning and leadership would be left out if we did not study the function of secrecy in organisational contexts and processes. Secrecy exists both in organisations and between them and no real understanding of many of its aspects is possible if we forget this secrecy factor or pretend that it is not there."

Hence, how does the emergence of OSS relate to the demands of secrecy in I&S.? Secrecy remains a very important tool in the whole

⁴ "The Sociology of Secrecy", *American Journal of Sociology*, January 1906

⁵ P. Petursson, "90% of the Working Day Secret and Confidential An Explorative Study of Management", *Lund University Social Intelligence Course*, September 1977.

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process of Intelligence and Security of social systems. The increasing production of information as the essential resource in human interactions makes it possible to acquire all the necessary information by an intelligent system from open sources. Various degrees of secrecy must be applied to all phases of the identification and processing of the problem for which this information is gathered from open sources: its analysis, evaluation and use to make decisions. In our time, however, an analysis of the use of secrecy in I&S systems shows that most of it is due to bureaucratic power struggles.⁶ With the increase of global and local transparency and democratisation the secrecy necessary for effective I&S systems is diminishing. Thus new techniques are being developed in Business Intelligence & security based on Open Sources Solutions, for example, benchmarking⁷ and reverse engineering. Thus for intelligent individuals and organisations "Intelligence is finding the information that is out there and using it effectively!"⁸

⁶ For the crucial role of bureaucratic secrecy in USA I&S community the following three books by politically conservative observers of it: A. Codevilla, "Informing Statecraft-Intelligence for a New Century", 1992, L. Colodny and Robert Gewrtlin "Silent Coup-The Removal of a President" 1991, T. Mangold, "Cold Warrior-James Jesus Angleton: The CIA's Master Spy Hunter", 1991.

⁷ "Benchmarking . is industrial research or intelligence gathering that allows a manager to compare his or her function's performance to the performance of the same function in other companies", p 8 in R.C. Camp "Benchmarking. The Search for Industry Best Practices that Lead to Superior Performance" Quality Press 1988

⁸ T. Joöenssen, head of Strategic Planning SAS, in lecture to the "Business Intelligence -A New Business Innovation for 1990ies ?" course, Economic Department Lund University, Sweden.

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