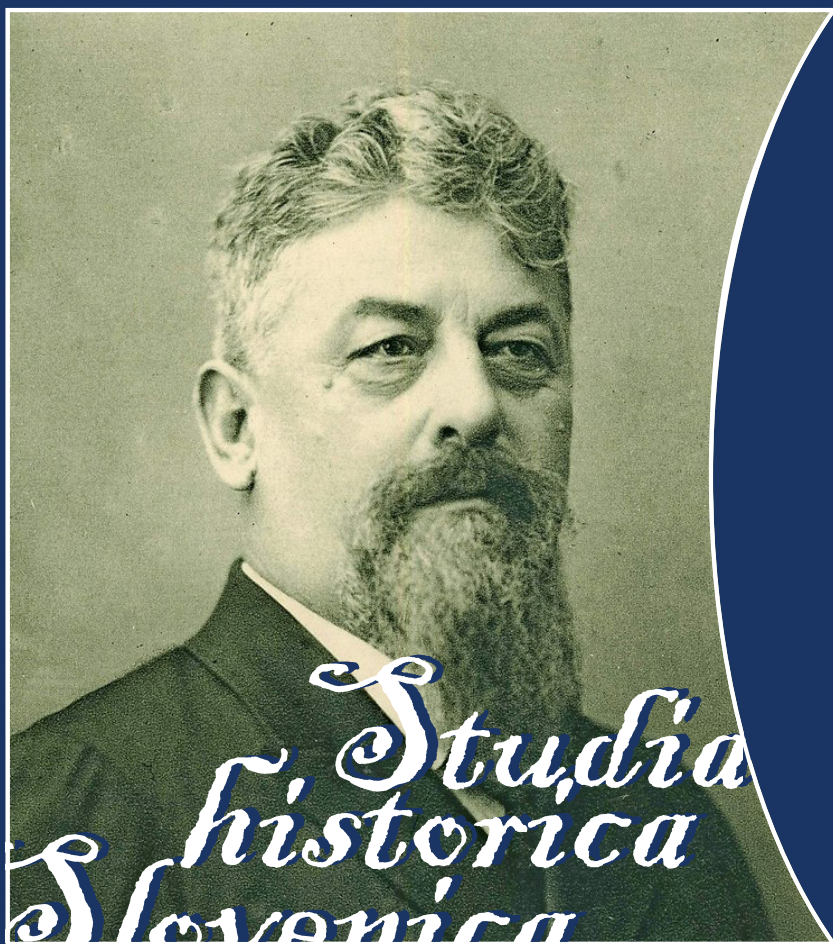


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Operations "Venček" and "Prstan": Monitoring of Mixed Marriages with Eastern European Citizens in Socialist Republic of Slovenia by the State Security Service in the 1980s

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Abstract:

The article examines the monitoring of mixed marriages in the 1980s by the Slovenian intelligence and security agency, the State Security Service (SDV) and federal State Security Service (SDB), which functioned as the secret political police. This study is based on previously unprocessed archival material housed at the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia and two confidential and classified analyses from the 1982 of the operations of the Soviet intelligence service on Yugoslav territory in the 1970s and 1980s, written by employees of the SDB. Mixed marriages, especially those involving Eastern European citizens, were of particular interest to the SDV due to perceived counterintelligence risks that were viewed as potential threats to the system, primarily concerning activities of Eastern European intelligence agencies. In response, the SDV launched at least one operational campaign under the codename "Venček" (Wreath) and conducted an operational investigation named "Prstan" (Ring). Drawing on preserved documentation, the author presents a comprehensive statistical and content-based review of the reports, analyses, and information produced by the SDV during the 1980s.

Keywords:

mixed marriages, State Security Service, 1980s, Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Eastern European citizens

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Introduction¹

Marriages between Yugoslav citizens and Eastern European citizens represent an intriguing aspect of intercultural and international relations during the period of Slovenia and the broader Yugoslav state. A potentially more politically correct term for 'mixed marriages' might be 'heteroethnic partnerships',² defined as marriages in which partners identify with different ethnicities. However, the term mixed marriages will be used here to align with the terminology found in the analyzed archival documents.

The security aspects of mixed marriages, particularly with Eastern European citizens, were intertwined with the broader context of Cold War politics and international relations, as well as the specific political and security circumstances in Yugoslavia. The 1980s in Slovenia were characterized by unique political and social conditions that influenced international relations and, consequently, marriages with Eastern European nationals. Surveillance was a crucial component of international strategy during this period, with both the Eastern and Western blocs investing heavily in intelligence services. A comprehensive review of Cold War surveillance literature reveals the extensive use of intelligence services to maintain state security and political control. Studies particularly focus on the role of surveillance in maintaining the ideological purity and stability of communist states, which often perceived internal dissent and external influences as existential threats.³ Intelligence services on both sides monitored their opponents' activities under a veil of secrecy, employing various espionage methods, including marriages and close relationships ("honey traps"). In some cases, spies entered marriages with nationals of the target country as a cover, while in others, especially among Eastern European citizens, marriage served as a tactic for gaining access or citizenship. Such relationships provided deep cover and access to various social circles.⁴ These methods raised numerous ethical and legal concerns, from violations of individual privacy and sovereignty to the potential collateral damage in covert operations. Moreover,

¹ The discussion was developed as part of research conducted within the program group of the Department of History at the Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor, P6-0138 (A): *Preteklost Severovzhodne Slovenije med srednjo Evropo in evropskim jugovzhodom*, funded by the Javna agencija za znanstvenoraziskovalno in inovacijsko dejavnost Republike Slovenije (ARIS).

² Damir Josipovič, "Slovenski otroci v migracijskih statistikah jugoslovanskega prostora: od migracij družin do 'pionirskih migracij'", in: Janja Žitnik Serafin (ed.), *Slovensko izseljenstvo v luči otroške izkušnje* (Ljubljana, 2015), p. 151.

³ Christopher Andrew, "Intelligence and International Relations in the Early Cold War", *Review of International Studies* 24, No. 3 (1998), pp. 321–330; Bob de Graaf and James M. Nyce (ed.), *Handbook of European Intelligence Cultures* (London–Bulder–New York–Toronto–Plymouth, 2006).

⁴ Michael Jonsson and Jakob Gustafsson, *Espionage by Europeans. A Preliminary Review of Court Cases* (Stockholm, 2022).

the reliability of gathered intelligence was often problematic, as inaccurate information or misleading counterintelligence could mislead operatives. Strict secrecy and a lack of oversight sometimes led to abuses of power and human rights violations. Notably, the opening of secret police archives in Eastern Europe (e.g., the Soviet KGB, East German Stasi, Romanian Securitate, etc.) has enabled scholars to explore espionage narratives and reveal their methodologies, areas of interest, tasks, intelligence objectives, and jurisdictions.⁵ Histories of Cold War surveillance in Western democracies often focus on civil liberties, legal frameworks, and political dimensions, while the personal experiences of those under scrutiny are typically examined within authoritarian or police state contexts.⁶

The Slovenian State Security Service (*Služba državne varnosti* – SDV), functioning as secret political police within the federal State Security Service (*Služba državne bezbednosti* – SDB) framework, played a crucial role in safeguarding Yugoslavia's stability. Domestically, it targeted "internal enemies," including intellectuals critical of the regime, while externally, it focused on countering foreign intelligence services, particularly from Eastern Europe, suspected of infiltrating Yugoslavia and its diaspora.⁷ Mixed marriages, perceived as potential conduits for espionage, became a significant focus of the SDV's surveillance efforts.⁸ Despite the importance of this subject, there is a noticeable

⁵ John Barron, *KGB: The Secret Works of Soviet Secret Agents* (London, 1981); Dragutin Lukić, *Savremena špijunaža* (Beograd, 1982); Zoran Krunic, "Konec hladne vojne in obveščevalno-varnostni sistem SZ oz. Rusije", *Policija*, No. 3–4 (1994), pp. 113–129; Viktor Bortnevski, *White intelligence and counter-intelligence during the Russian civil war* (Pittsburg, 1995); Jeffrey Richelson, *Foreign Intelligence Organization* (Massachusetts, 1998); Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *Mitrokhin Archive: The Kgb In Europe And The West* (London, 1999); Norton Polmar and Thomas B. Allen, *Spy Book. The Encyclopedia of Espionage* (New York, 2004); Ben de Jong, "The KGB in Eastern Europe during the Cold War: on agents and confidential contacts", *Journal of Intelligence History* 5 (2005), pp. 85–103; Robert W. Pringle, *Historical dictionary of Russian and Soviet intelligence* (Mayham, 2006); Artur Gruszczak, "Poland: The Special Services Since the Independence", in: Bob de Graaf, James M. Nyce and Chelsea Locke (ed.), *Handbook of European Intelligence Cultures* (London–Bulder–New York–Toronto–Plymouth, 2006), pp. 279–281; Gidi Weitz, "The Schlaff Saga / Laundered funds & 'business' ties to the Stasi", *Haaretz.com*, 7. september 2009, available at: <http://web.archive.org>, accessed: 1. 3. 2024; Marko Lopušina in Milan Petković, *Enciklopedija špijonaže* (Beograd, 2003); Prokop Tomek, "Czechoslovakia: The Czech Path between Totalitarianism and Democracy", in: Bob de Graaf, James M. Nyce and Chelsea Locke (ed.), *Handbook of European Intelligence Culture* (London–Bulder–New York–Toronto–Plymouth, 2006), pp. 81–89; Istvan Szikinger, *National Security in Hungary. Democracy, Law and Society; Internal security services in contemporary Europe* (London, 2003); Dennis Deletant, "The Securitate and the police state in Romania, 1964–89", *Intelligence nad National Security* 9, No. 1 (2014), pp. 22–49, etc.

⁶ Ebony Nilsson, "Real and Imagined Encounters in the Social History of Surveillance: Soviet Migrants and the Petrov Affair", *Journal of Social History* 56, No. 3 (2023), pp. 585–586.

⁷ Gorazd Bajc, Tadeja Melanšek and Darko Friš, "Uvod v zgodovino spremljanja britanske obveščevalne dejavnosti na Slovenskem – 'samoevalvacije' slovenske SDV", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 20, No. 3 (2020), pp. 839–878.

⁸ Ana Šela, *Služba državne varnosti v desetletju kritike in kriz* (1980–1989) (Maribor, 2023) (hereinafter: Šela, *Služba državne varnosti v desetletju kritike in kriz*).

gap in both theoretical and empirical research addressing ethnically mixed marriages in Yugoslavia, particularly in Slovenia.⁹ Studies on Cold War surveillance of Soviet spies beyond the well-documented cases in the U.S. and U.K. remain scarce,¹⁰ with little attention given to counterintelligence operations targeting mixed marriages between Eastern Bloc nationals and Yugoslav citizens. This research gap is partly due to the classified nature of state security records, restricted access to archives, and the relative recency of these events, all of which complicate academic inquiry. The limited exploration of this topic leaves critical questions about the geopolitical and personal dimensions of Cold War surveillance unanswered.

This article aims to contribute to bridge this gap, at least within the field of historical research. This article presents, for the first time, two significant operations aimed at addressing these concerns. *Operation "Venček"* (1977) sought to detect Eastern European intelligence activities within mixed marriages, while *Operational research "Prstan"* (1987) expanded and systematized this approach. These operations underscore the SDV's efforts to mitigate security risks linked to international relationships and maintain regime stability.

Eastern European Citizens in Slovenia Within the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY)

Mixed marriages between Yugoslav citizens and nationals of other Eastern European countries were relatively common during the 1970s and 1980s. Based on statistical data from Yugoslav population censuses, it can be inferred that the frequency of such unions increased following the establishment of socialist Yugoslavia, which aimed to "establish" new societal value.¹¹

From the 1960s onwards, Yugoslavia's relatively open borders facilitated greater mobility compared to other communist states. As a non-aligned country, Yugoslavia maintained unique relationships with both Western and Eastern European nations. For many Eastern European countries, Yugoslavia represented a gateway to the West due to its political and geographical positioning, fostering increased interactions between its population and that of neighbouring states. Mixed marriages with Eastern Europeans often resulted from cultural

⁹ Mateja Sedmak, "Etnično mešane zakonske zveze kot oblika medkulturnega soočenja: primer Slovenske Istre", *Družboslovne razprave* 18, No. 39 (2002), p.37.

¹⁰ Raymond L. Garthoff, "Foreign Intelligence and the Historiography of the Cold War", *Journal of Cold War Studies* 6, No. 2 (2004), pp. 21–56.

¹¹ Irena Šumi, *Kultura, etničnost, mejnost: konstrukcije različnosti v antropološki presoji* (Ljubljana, 2000), p. 164.

exchanges, academic programs, or economic migration, particularly in border regions like Prekmurje, characterized by ethnically mixed populations.¹²

Cold War tensions also led to heightened security scrutiny concerning immigration from Eastern European countries. In socialist authoritarian regimes like Yugoslavia, intelligence and security services played a pivotal role in monitoring and managing potential risks. As a non-aligned state, Yugoslavia, including Slovenian territories, balanced its relations with both political blocs, enabling diverse international interactions. Immigration to Slovenia, including from countries beyond Yugoslavia, increased after the borders opened in the 1960s, peaking in the 1970s.¹³ In the 1980s, however, migration decreased due to economic crises and tightened immigration policies,¹⁴ though democratization efforts simultaneously heightened interest in retaining immigrants within Slovenia.

Historical research on archival materials reveals significant immigration to Yugoslavia, including Slovenia, from Eastern European countries, accompanied by mixed marriages with citizens from these states. Such unions, particularly with individuals from communist countries like the Soviet Union, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and the German Democratic Republic, often stemmed from cultural and academic exchanges or economic migration.¹⁵ The security dimensions of these marriages were closely linked to Cold War political dynamics and Yugoslavia's specific security circumstances.

Yugoslav intelligence services (republicans and federal)¹⁶ were acutely aware of Soviet strategies,¹⁷ which included subtle channels such as mixed mar-

¹² Atilla Kovács, "Številčni razvoj prekmurskih Madžarov v 20. stoletju", *Razprave in gradivo* 48–49 (2006), pp. 6–37.

¹³ Janez Malačič, "Zunanje migracije Slovenije po drugi svetovni vojni", *Zgodovinski časopis* 45, No. 2 (1999), pp. 299–313.

¹⁴ Carl-Ulrik Schierup, "The 'Migration Crisis' and the Genesis of Europe's New Diversity", in: Carl-Ulrik Schierup et al. (ed.), *Migration, Citizenship, and the European Welfare State: A European Dilemma* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 21–47.

¹⁵ Matjaž Klemenčič and Jernej Zupančič, "Primerjava družbenega in prostorskega razvoja madžarske in italijanske manjšine v Sloveniji, na Hrvaškem in v obdobju po razpadu Jugoslavije", *Razprave in gradivo* 44, (2004), pp. 158–200.

¹⁶ To avoid misunderstandings, the initial SDV will be used to distinguish the republican intelligence and security service, while SDB will refer to the federal service. The SDB, headquartered in Belgrade, effectively assumed the federal role of professional training and coordinating work between the individual services. The republican security services were allowed to carry out operations independently without the consent of the federal service, except in cases concerning the foreign policy of the SFRY, where decisions were made by the SDB of the SFRY (Iztok Podbregar, *Obveščevalno-varnostna dejavnost: procesi, metode, nadzor* (Maribor, 2012), pp. 50–51 (hereinafter: Podbregar, *Obveščevalno-varnostna dejavnost*)).

¹⁷ In the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia (ARS), analytical material on foreign intelligence services has been preserved, with the majority focusing on Eastern European intelligence services (primarily those of the Soviet Union and its satellites). Additionally, extensive annual indicative information on the activities of foreign intelligence services of the Federal Secretariat for Internal Affairs is available, including reports and weekly reviews of developments in the field of counterintelligence.

riages to promote political and economic interests. Consequently, monitoring these unions formed part of a broader security framework aimed at managing risks and ensuring stability in the complex international environment of the Cold War. Following the Tito-Stalin split, the SDV paid special attention to mixed marriages, which could pose threats to the regime either as tools of external infiltration or sources of internal destabilization. As such, surveillance of Eastern European immigrants in Slovenia became an integral aspect of the security policy in the Yugoslav territory.

As noted by the Security Administration of the Federal Secretariat of National Defense (SSNO¹⁸) in its 1982 analysis¹⁹, Soviet citizens residing or temporarily staying in Yugoslavia were pivotal in the implementation of Soviet intelligence activities.

Due to the lack of literature on mixed marriages with Eastern European citizens during the Cold War – or its complete absence – the following analyses or study discussions from 1982 will serve as the primary source for examining Soviet citizens and their mixed marriages in Yugoslavia. These studies were based on intelligence and counterintelligence data collected by Yugoslav federal and republican state security services.

Yugoslavia's relative openness to foreign countries and its well-developed international relations allowed the presence of various categories of Soviet citizens throughout the country, which provided the Soviet intelligence service Committee for State Security (KGB) with broad access to strategic and tactical information. The Soviet intelligence service exploited existing forms of cooperation, such as economic, scientific-technical, cultural, and sports relations, to expand its influence and gather data.²⁰ Particular attention was given to individuals integrated into Yugoslav society through mixed marriages. These individuals often served as observation points or conduits for transmitting information. Additionally, Soviet citizens appeared in various roles, says ranging from economic experts and instructors to students and lecturers, enabling their dispersed presence in strategically significant industrial centers such as Sarajevo, Kardeljevo, and the Makarska Riviera.²¹

Similar to the tasks of the SDV: Carrying out the two fundamental tasks of rooting out and integrating real and imagined enemies of the regime, and shap-

¹⁸ SSNO – Savezni sekretarijat narodne odbrane.

¹⁹ Marijan Močibob, "Korišćenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana koji žive ili privremeno borave u Jugoslaviji", in: *Obaveštajno-bezbednosni sistem SSSR sa težištem na obaveštajnoj i subverzivnoj delatnosti protiv SFRJ i njenih oružanih snaga i mere suprotavljanja* (Beograd, 1982), pp. 61–71 (hereinafter: Močibob, "Korišćenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana").

²⁰ Amir Weiner and Aigi Rahi-Tamm, "Getting to Know You. The Soviet Surveillance System, 1939–57", *Kritika Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History* 13, No. 1 (2012), p. 5 (hereinafter: Weiner and Rahi-Tamm, "Getting to Know You. The Soviet Surveillance System, 1939–57").

²¹ Močibob, "Korišćenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana", p. 63.

ing the population into a new socialist society, Soviet surveillance from the very beginning adopted a distinctly pervasive, interventionist, and active approach, which translated into numerous institutions, policies, and initiatives.²² The Soviet Union and the rest of the East Bloc favored human intelligence (HUMINT) the use of agents to gather information.²³ The SSNO analysis specifically emphasized that Soviet intelligence operations were based on covert methods, often disguised as economic, cultural, or sports interactions as well. Among the categories of Soviet citizens engaged in intelligence tasks, the analysis highlighted economic relations experts, equipment installers and servicemen, military advisors, and cultural and sports delegations.²⁴ Their presence was strategically directed at monitoring key industrial facilities, communication routes, and Yugoslavia's military-economic capacities. The role of transit tourist groups, often engaged in surveillance and information-gathering activities under the guise of cultural and sports events, was also underscored. Special attention had to be given to returnees from the Informbiro period and their family members, who were often perceived by the SDV as ideologically indoctrinated in the Soviet Union.²⁵ Similarly, White émigrés²⁶ and their descendants, who maintained ties with Soviet culture and intelligence structures, were regarded by Soviet services as potential sources of information or influence.²⁷ The analysis further noted that Soviet intelligence activities were often supplemented by citizens of other socialist states, such as Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. Through business and tourism, these individuals ensured a broader scope of Soviet influence while also serving as auxiliary channels for information-gathering. Such dispersed and integrated forms of intelligence activities posed significant challenges for Yugoslav security structures.

At the SSNO, it was noted that, compared to the intelligence services of the United States and other Western European countries, the methodology of the KGB exhibited "greater persistence, diversity, and efforts to establish a presence across all areas of socio-political and economic life."²⁸ According to an analysis the KGB, allegedly employed systematic and extensive methods

²² Weiner and Rahi-Tamm, "Getting to Know YOur. The Soviet Surveillance System, 1939–57", p. 5.

²³ Kristie Macrakis, "Technophilic Hubris and Espionage Styles during the Cold War", *Isis* 101, No. 2 (2019), p. 379.

²⁴ SIAS 1931, t. e. 1463, A-11-12, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1979, Ljubljana, 1980.

²⁵ Božo Repe, *Slovenci v osemdesetih letih* (Ljubljana, 2001), p. 36.

²⁶ White émigrés or White Russian exiles (slv. Beloemigrants) – is the term most commonly used for such Russian émigrés, although some have been of Ukrainian and other ethnicities, and were not culturally Russians.

²⁷ Ebony Nilsson, *Displaced Comrades: Politics and Surveillance in the Lives of Soviet Refugees in the West* (London, 2023), pp. 193–223.

²⁸ Močibob, "Koriščenje u obaveštajanom radu sovjetskih građana", p. 64

to infiltrate Yugoslav society. The report claims that Soviet operatives focused heavily on building social connections, particularly with individuals linked to specific influential structures. These relationships were reportedly deepened to the point where individuals were introduced to diplomatic and consular representatives, facilitating further data collection and even recruitment attempts. The analysis also suggested that the KGB was highly selective, allegedly targeting teachers and students of the Russian language, former supporters of the Cominform, bureaucratic and dogmatic figures, and repatriated individuals who had prior ties to the Informbiro. Particular emphasis was placed on reaching the families of active military personnel or establishing direct contact with members of the Yugoslav People's Army (JLA), with the presumed aim of infiltrating military structures. It is further alleged that Soviet intelligence attempted to consolidate positions through connections with Yugoslav citizens in key roles, particularly those ideologically sympathetic to Soviet policies. Through such connections, the KGB was believed to monitor security services, identify collaborators, assess countermeasures, and influence operations.²⁹ Soviet activities purportedly extended to economic organizations, where Soviet nationals allegedly gathered information on production capacities, organizational structures, and Western-imported technologies.³⁰ According to the analysis, these activities often exceeded contractual obligations and included broader inquiries into economic and political circumstances. It is also claimed that Soviet operatives infiltrated military sectors, observing installations, unit structures, and advanced technologies. They reportedly conducted unauthorized observations of military sites under the guise of research trips, allegedly leading to several warnings and, in some cases, the repatriation of individuals to the Soviet Union.³¹ Eastern Europeans in Yugoslavia were reportedly engaged in subversive and propaganda activities, the intensity of which varied depending on international and domestic circumstances.³² Experts residing in the country for extended periods were said to act cautiously and selectively, while short-term visitors, such as tourists or Informbiro returnees, were allegedly more audacious and openly critical of the Yugoslav system. These activities reportedly included glorifying the Soviet model of socialism, criticizing Yugoslavia's self-management and non-alignment policies, and denying the revolutionary achievements of the Yugoslav state. Soviet citizens often exploited interna-

²⁹ Victor Suvorov, *Inside Soviet Military Intelligence* (London, 1984), available at: <https://militera.lib.ru/research/suvorov8/index.html>, accessed: 1. 3. 2024.

³⁰ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2313, A-31-22, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog za leto 1985, Ljubljana, januar 1986, p. 54.

³¹ Močibob, "Koriščenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana", pp. 66–69.

³² SI AS 1931, t. e. 2902, A-11-14, Letno poročilo USDV – SRS 1981, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1981, Ljubljana, 1982, p. 40.

tional events, such as conflicts in Afghanistan or Poland, to justify Soviet policies and blame the West.³³ As stated in the 1981 annual report on the implementation of tasks by the SDV, Eastern European countries, particularly the Soviet Union and its infiltrators, were reportedly seeking room to maneuver in order to "achieve their long-term political, strategic, and economic goals." For example, following the events in Kosovo – which, in 1981, became the first focal point of tension in Yugoslavia's national crisis that continued to escalate throughout the 1980s³⁴ – Eastern European countries and their institutions (representative offices), economic organizations, scientific, cultural, and other delegations allegedly intensified their efforts to gather information about deviant occurrences in international relations, which were believed to reflect the Kosovo events.³⁵ Particular emphasis was placed on propaganda highlighting Yugoslavia's economic challenges and portraying Soviet achievements as superior. The Soviet Embassy allegedly provided propaganda materials, which were disseminated among Yugoslav citizens, including military personnel. In specific instances, Soviet citizens were reportedly involved in intelligence-gathering.³⁶

The presence of Soviet citizens in mixed marriages had a dual purpose, based on the analysis: facilitating the adaptation of Soviet operatives to the local environment and serving as sources of intelligence. As it is stated in the analysis, subversive-propagandistic activities were primarily aimed at "discrediting Yugoslavia's self-management system and promoting the Soviet model of socialism".³⁷

The following interesting study discussion on mixed marriages with Eastern European citizens in the SFRY, written for the 1982 anthology on the Soviet Union's intelligence and security system, was authored by Boško Orelj, Head of the Counterintelligence Administration, based on reports and findings of the SDB. According to intelligence reports Soviet intelligence activities through mixed marriages extended back to the immediate postwar period. During the war, Yugoslav wounded treated in the Soviet Union often married Soviet women. This trend intensified after the war, particularly as Yugoslav military officers and other cadres trained in the USSR frequently entered such mar-

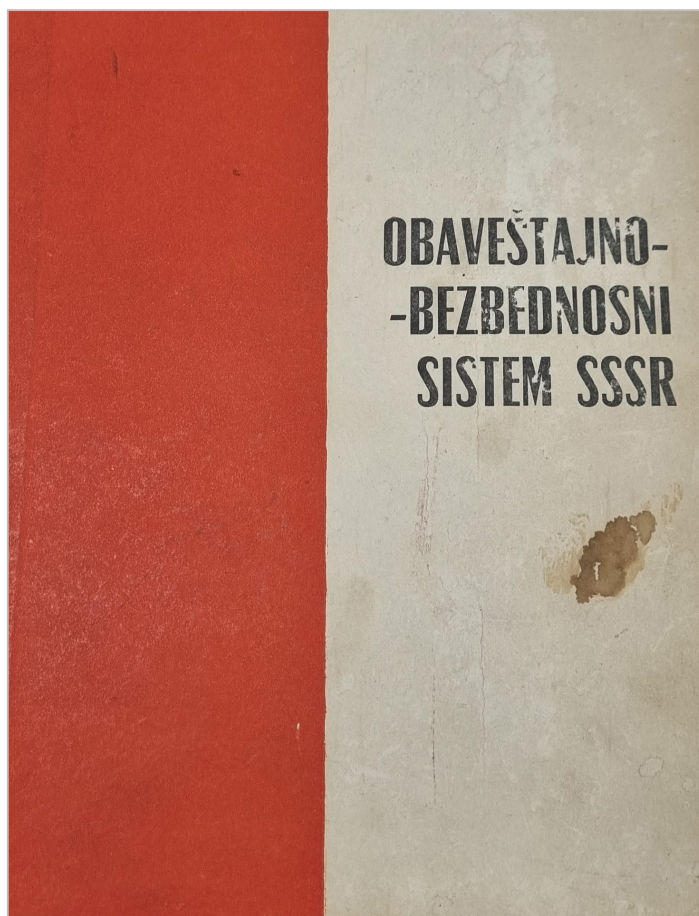
³³ Močibob, "Koriščenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana", p. 64

³⁴ Kaja Mujdrica and Gorazd Bajc, "Pregled francoskih virov o nacionalnem vprašanju Jugoslavije v 80. letih 20. stoletja", *Moderna arhivistika* 7, No. 2 (2024), p. 176.

³⁵ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2902, A-11-14, Letno poročilo USDV – SRS 1981, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1981, Ljubljana, 1982, p. 40.

³⁶ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2902, A-11-14, Letno poročilo USDV – SRS 1981, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1981, Ljubljana, 1982, p. 40; Močibob, "Koriščenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana", pp. 70–71.

³⁷ SI AS 1931, t. e. 1463, A-11-13, USDV-SRS-1980 letno poročilo, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1980, Ljubljana, 1981, p. 24; Močibob, "Koriščenje u obaveštjanom radu sovjetskih građana", pp. 67–68.



The cover page of the collection of study discussions the intelligence and security system of the USSR with a focus on intelligence and subversive activities against the SFRY and its armed forces and counter-measures (Belgrade, 1982)

riages. The SDB assessed that Soviet intelligence exploited these relationships to establish influence within Yugoslav state and social structures. The 1948 Informbiro Resolution revealed the security risks posed by these marriages, as Soviet wives reportedly pressured their husbands to support the resolution or return to the USSR. Some complied, which the SDB identified as having serious security implications. Soviet intelligence also allegedly utilized marriages involving mentioned "beloemigrants" for subversive activities, including propaganda, formation of illegal groups, and intelligence gathering. Following the normalization of relations with the USSR, many repatriated Informbiro supporters returned to Yugoslavia with their Soviet spouses. These wives maintained frequent contacts with Soviet consulates and cultural institutions, enabling continued oversight and potential exploitation for intelligence purposes.

es.³⁸ By the 1970s and 1980s, the number of mixed marriages increased, driven by growing cultural and economic exchanges. This shift was part of a broader trend of changes in household formation patterns and marriage dynamics observed during this period.³⁹

The SDB noted reported that Soviet women often secured employment in sensitive institutions, creating potential security risks due to their occupational distribution. These women maintained ties with Soviet representatives and relatives abroad, enabling Soviet intelligence to monitor their activities and extract information. Orelj observed that Soviet intelligence exploited mixed marriages as a method for influence and data collection, particularly during the Informbiro conflict (1948–1957), when Soviet wives pressured their husbands to support the resolution or return to the USSR. This pressure resulted in serious security consequences. After the normalization of relations, Soviet authorities maintained records of repatriated Informbiro supporters and their families, treating children as Soviet citizens despite conventions on dual citizenship. The Soviet Cultural Center in Yugoslavia served as a hub for intelligence-gathering, fostering propagandistic discussions and ties with Soviet officials. Children of mixed marriages were often exposed to Soviet ideological influence through education in Soviet-run schools in Yugoslavia or the USSR.⁴⁰

Orelj further highlighted instances where Soviet wives maintained ongoing ties with Soviet representatives, engaged in intelligence-gathering, and utilized familial connections to access sensitive information. In some cases, Soviet wives were connected to the military and economic sectors, holding positions that granted access to classified information. The employment of repatriates and their wives in foreign trade companies cooperating with Soviet organizations, according to the SDB, created a legal basis for interactions with Soviet trade representatives, many of whom were intelligence operatives. These repatriates and their families frequently traveled to the USSR, maintaining contacts with Soviet security services and other emigrants. According to SDB reports, the number of mixed marriages increased significantly after 1975, driven by growing scientific, cultural, and economic cooperation between Yugoslavia and the USSR. Soviet intelligence allegedly exploited these marriages to expand

³⁸ Boško Orelj, "Delovanje sovjetske obaveštajne službe protiv SFRJ preko mešovitih brakova", in: *Obaveštajno-bezbednosni sistem SSSR sa težišćem na obaveštajnoj i subverzivnoj delatnosti protiv SFRJ i njenih orižanib snaga i mere suprostavljanja* (Beograd, 1928), 117–118 (hereinafter: Orelj, "Delovanje sovjetske obaveštajne službe protiv SFRJ").

³⁹ Mikołaj Szoltysek, "Rethinking Eastern Europe: household-formation patterns in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and European family systems", *Continuity and Change*, 23, No. 3 (2008), pp. 389–391.

⁴⁰ Orelj, "Delovanje sovjetske obaveštajne službe protiv SFRJ", pp. 118–121.

influence and gather sensitive information. Many Soviet women, often highly educated, married Yugoslav workers and maintained ties with Soviet representatives, particularly through the Soviet Embassy and Cultural Center. These connections enabled infiltration into scientific institutions, military structures (notably the Air Force and Navy), and foreign trade organizations. Soviet agents also used mixed marriages as a pathway for covert movement to the West, posing as Yugoslav citizens.⁴¹ Soviet women in mixed marriages were often suspected of acting as potential agents, employed in sensitive institutions such as the Faculty of Philology (Filološka fakulteta), Radio Belgrade, RTV, and foreign trade companies. Children from these marriages held dual citizenship, which allowed them to use Soviet passports and pursue education in the Soviet Union. Upon returning, they frequently secured positions in important organizations or worked as tour guides for Soviet citizens.⁴²

Orelj concludes that the Soviet intelligence service exploits this situation to build a long-term base with the younger generation. The SDB particularly emphasized the need for continued operational surveillance, the establishment of positions, and the prevention of Soviet influence, especially during crises or wartime situations. Their work recommended a more selective and offensive approach, along with thorough monitoring of individuals from mixed marriages, while acknowledging that not all were directly connected to Soviet intelligence services. According to Orelj's analysis, mixed marriages between Yugoslav citizens and Soviet women posed a significant security risk that required systematic monitoring.⁴³

Mixed Marriages with Eastern European Citizens under the Surveillance of the SDV

The Slovenian SDV, functioning as a secret political police since World War II – initially as Security and Intelligence Servicem (*Varnostno-obveščevalna služba* – VOS), then as Department for the Protection of the Nation (*Oddelek za zaščito naroda* – OZNA), State Security Administration (*Uprava državne bezbednosti* – UDBA), and after 1966 as SDV – dedicated significant attention to the issue of mixed marriages, particularly following the rift with the "Informbiro". The SDV's primary mission was the preventive defense of the ruling regime against

⁴¹ Ibid, 121–123.

⁴² Ibid, 124.

⁴³ Ibid.

"internal" and "external enemies,"⁴⁴ and mixed marriages were perceived as a potential manifestation of both. While its domestic focus was through 1980s centered on identifying internal enemies, such as groups opposing Yugoslavia within the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (SRS), particularly the intellectual "opposition" in the 1980s,⁴⁵ its external activities were largely directed towards monitoring foreign (both Western and Eastern) intelligence services. These efforts extended to Slovenian émigré communities, political exiles, clerical networks, and the cultural activities of Slovenian workers living temporarily abroad.⁴⁶

Table 1: Report on the Implementation of SDV Programmatic Tasks (1979) vs. Report on the Implementation of SDV Programmatic Tasks (1988)⁴⁷

1979	1988
Foreign Intelligence Services	Internal Issues
Political Emigration and Issues of Workers on Temporary Assignments and Living Abroad	Western Intelligence Services
Internal Issues	Eastern Intelligence Services
Protection and Counterintelligence Safeguarding of Specific Individuals, Facilities, Workplaces, and Areas	Subversive Emigration of Yugoslav Nations
Operational Techniques	Protection and Counterintelligence Safeguarding
SDV Defense Preparations	Prevention of Extraordinary Circumstances and Security-Defense Preparations

Throughout the 1980s, the SDV was structured into eight departments, as outlined in its organizational and systemic regulations. This structure, however, was established much earlier, following the reorganization of UDBA into SDV in the 1960s.⁴⁸ For this topic, specifically the monitoring of mixed marriages

⁴⁴ Ana Šela, "Delovanje slovenske Službe državne varnosti v osemdesetih letih 20. stoletja", *Acta Histriae* 30, No. 4 (2022), p. 1140 (hereinafter: Šela, "Delovanje slovenske Službe državne varnosti").

⁴⁵ Ana Šela, "Contributions to the Knowledge of the Slovenian Intellectual 'Opposition' in the 1980s under the Screening of the State Security Service", *Annales* 31, No. 4 (2021), pp. 1137–1158.

⁴⁶ Ana Šela and David Hazemali, "Spremljanje slovenskih delavcev na začasnem delu in bivanju v Zvezni republiki Nemčiji v sedemdesetih letih dvajsetega stoletja: prispevek k poznavanju zgodovine slovenske Službe državne varnosti", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 3, No. 20 (2020), pp. 879–920.

⁴⁷ SI AS 1931, t. e. 1463, A-11-12, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1979, Ljubljana, 1980; SI AS 1931, t. e. 2282, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog za leto 1988, Ljubljana, januar, 1989.

⁴⁸ Ana Šela, David Hazemali in Tadeja Melanšek, "Ustroj in delovanje slovenske tajne politične policije v drugi polovici šestdesetih let dvajsetega stoletja", *Studia Historica Slovenica* 20, No. 3 (2020), pp. 811–838.

with Eastern European citizens, Sector II was initially the most relevant, but following its 1983 reorganization, Sector IV became specifically responsible for monitoring Eastern European intelligence services, based on geographic focus. Sector IV was tasked with the review, analysis, and monitoring of issues related to Eastern Europe. Reports on the SDV's operational tasks indicate that activities related to Eastern European intelligence services fell under the broader framework of operations and analyses of foreign intelligence services during the 1970s and later as Eastern Intelligence Services in the latter half of the 1980s.

As shown in *Table 1*, the prioritization of these activities shifted over time. In 1979, significant financial resources were allocated to the surveillance of foreign intelligence services. However, by the late 1980s, particularly from 1988 onward, the focus shifted towards domestic issues, reflecting the rise of alternative socio-political movements, the publication of the pivotal 57th issue of *Nova Revija* magazine, and the trial of the "Ljubljana Four", Janez Janša, Ivan Borštner, David Tasić and Franci Zavrl.⁴⁹ By 1989, as Slovenia began its transition towards political democratization and pluralization, the SDV's focus on internal enemies was deprioritized.⁵⁰ This area of operation moved to the periphery of its mandate, renamed as the "protection of constitutional order", reflecting the profound transformation in the Slovenian political and security landscape.⁵¹ The scope of operations thus shifted once again to focus on the "external threat" and foreign intelligence services, mirroring the emphasis found in annual reports on the activities of the SDV during the 1960s and 1970s. These earlier reports often highlighted the persistent risks posed by foreign espionage networks, particularly those from both Western and Eastern Bloc nations, emphasizing the need for vigilance against infiltration and subversive activities targeting Yugoslavia's political and economic systems.

Ten years prior the transition, on January 29, 1979, the Presidency of the Central Committee of the League of Communists of Slovenia (*Predsedstvo Centralnega komiteja Zveze komunistov Slovenije* – CK ZKS) convened its 14th

⁴⁹ Also known as the "JBTZ Affair". It is notable, that the role played by the SDV in this incident led to significant changes in the functioning of the secret political police. Partial oversight of its operations was exercised by the Council for the Protection of the Constitutional Order. However, in 1988, in response to demands from assembly deputies, a Parliamentary Commission for Oversight of SDV Activities (*Komisija za nadzor nad delom SDV*) was established. Simultaneously, the Council was restructured into a service under the Presidency of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia, rather than a collective body of the highest state authorities and socio-political organizations, as stipulated by the "Act Amending the Law on the Council of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia for the Protection of the Constitutional Order" of 1988 (Branimir Bračko, "Organi za notranje zadeve v času družbenih sprememb v Sloveniji in Jugoslaviji ter v akciji 'Sever'", *Varstvoslovje* 12, No. 1 (2010), p. 17).

⁵⁰ Janez Osojnik, "Pregled slovenskih virov o plebiscitu 1990", *Moderna arhivistika* 6, No. 2 (2023), p. 271.

⁵¹ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2288, Poročilo o delu SDV v letu 1989, Ljubljana, januar 1990, pp. 15–17.

session to discuss security conditions in Slovenia, based on a report from the Republican Secretariat of Internal Affairs (*Republiški sekretariat za notranje zadeve* – RSNZ).⁵² According to SDV terminology, this group included individuals who had supported the 1948 Informbiro resolution within Yugoslavia. While these individuals were a minority, most were prosecuted and sentenced to imprisonment. Some underwent "resocialization," while the majority abandoned their activities. Only a small subset continued to reject the principles of socialist self-management. This category also encompassed individuals who had pursued education in Eastern European countries during the subsequent period and remained there until relations with the Soviet Union improved. Proponents of these positions were described as advocating for a centralized, state-planned model of governance and promoting closer alignment between Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, as well as other Warsaw Pact countries.⁵³ The report, reflecting Yugoslavia's acute fears of ideological and political disruption, emphasized the necessity of surveillance to preserve socialist self-management. Special attention was given to Informbiro-linked émigrés and their connections with Eastern European states. At the time, 35 Slovene émigrés were reported to reside in the Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries, with some maintaining contact with Slovenia, which authorities perceived as a potential security risk. Additionally, the report addressed the category of mixed marriages, particularly those where the wives retained Soviet citizenship. These individuals were viewed as a potential support base for foreign political and security interests during times of crisis. While the majority of these individuals were politically inactive and confined to narrow social circles, certain individuals within these groups displayed hostile attitudes and propagated criticism of the Yugoslav socialist system.⁵⁴

SDV was primarily responsible for the operational oversight and analysis of all opposition movements and, in their view, hostile activities against the system. In the 1980s, it was partially overseen (from 1981 to 1988) by the Council for the Protection of the Constitutional Order (*Svet za varstvo ustavne ureditve*) under the Presidency of the SRS. Subsequently, following demands from assembly deputies during the trial of the Ljubljana Four, oversight shifted to a special parliamentary commission.⁵⁵ In 1983, the Council discussed the issue

⁵² SI AS 1589, Dislocirana enota I, Informacija s 14. seje Predsedstva CK ZKS o varnostnih razmerah in delovanju opozicijskih sil v Sloveniji, Ljubljana, 8. 2. 1979.

⁵³ SI AS 1931, t. e. 3179, *Priročnik za delo milice na področju varstva ustavne ureditve* (Ljubljana, 1985), p. 17.

⁵⁴ SI AS 1589, Dislocirana enota I, Informacija s 14. seje Predsedstva CK ZKS o varnostnih razmerah in delovanju opozicijskih sil v Sloveniji, Ljubljana, 8. 2. 1979.

⁵⁵ Božo Repe, *Viri o demokratizaciji in osamosvojitvi Slovenije (I. del: opozicija in oblast)* (Ljubljana, 2002) (hereinafter: Repe, *Viri I*), p. 10.

of mixed marriages between Yugoslav citizens and citizens of Eastern European countries. The Council identified several notable characteristics among this group, including an intriguing educational and professional structure, widespread territorial distribution across nearly all municipalities of the republic, unusually rapid career advancements within the organizations of associated labor, and sustained ties with their countries of origin. The Council also expressed concern that such mixed marriages could serve as a potential base for refugees from Eastern European countries moving to the West. It also noted that some individuals among them were involved in illicit trade, sometimes engaging Yugoslav citizens in these activities, making their operations a matter of security relevance. As a result, the Council strongly advocated for organizations of associated labor to incorporate the activities of these Eastern European nationals into security assessments. It further emphasized the need for increased self-protective awareness in monitoring the activities of all foreign nationals in Yugoslavia. The Council also recommended a detailed examination of the activities of foreign nationals from Western countries, emphasizing that these were equally relevant to national security.⁵⁶

In the latter half of the 1970s, the SDV identified a substantiated suspicion in several cases of marriages between citizens of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia and citizens of Eastern European countries. These were suspected to be orchestrated marriages, staged by foreign intelligence services from Eastern European states, particularly the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. In some instances, the SDV uncovered clear evidence of such collaborations, leading to the initiation of preliminary investigations and constant surveillance of the individuals involved.⁵⁷ A particularly challenging issue for the SDV involved emigrants (especially those residing in Austria) who were married to Eastern European nationals. The number of mixed marriages appeared to increase during the late 1960s and early 1980s. For example, in 1979, the SDV identified three foreign intelligence agents within mixed marriages. The total number of such marriages rose from 158 in 1978 to 199 in 1979. Of these, approximately 18% involved individuals with higher education and employment in significant positions within the SRS. Mixed marriages thus increasingly represented a security concern for the SDV, which anticipated a growing number of espionage cases linked to such unions.⁵⁸ This rise in activity underscored the necessity for heightened vigilance and surveillance by the agency.

⁵⁶ "Poročilo o delu Sveta SR Slovenije za varstvo ustavne ureditve v letu 1983", dokument št. 3, v: Repe, *Viri I*, pp. 30–37.

⁵⁷ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2595, RTZ 509, Predlog za uvedbo operativne akcije "Venček", Ljubljana, 13. 6. 1977, p. 1.

⁵⁸ SI AS 1931, t. e. 1463, A-11-12, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1979, Ljubljana, 1980, p. 24.

The SDV employed various methods in its operational work to gather data and monitor individuals involved in mixed marriages. To address these areas and fulfil its tasks, it utilized traditional methods of information gathering, as well as appropriate methods for processing and analyzing data.⁵⁹ In accordance with the *Rules of Procedure of the State Security Service (Pravila o delu SDV)* from 1975,⁶⁰ the methods and means included: preventive operations, operational investigation, initial and advanced processing, operational supervision and actions, evaluation, and the establishment of operational connections and combinations, including double combinations. Additionally, they encompassed photographic and video documentation, covert surveillance and monitoring, clandestine searches, the acquisition and dissemination of information—including disinformation—informative interviews, reporting, issuing warnings, and verifying collected data.⁶¹

- Operational work included informative interviews with Yugoslav citizens and their Soviet partners. These interviews were conducted during applications for the extension of temporary residence, obtaining permanent residence, or acquiring Yugoslav citizenship. Additionally, the SDB carried out comprehensive operational checks on spouses, which involved investigating their backgrounds, personal connections, employment status, and territorial circumstances.
- Operational-technical methods: To monitor suspicious individuals, the SDB employed operational-technical measures such as communication surveillance, covert monitoring, and investigation of personal contacts and movements. Special attention was given to children from mixed marriages, who often held dual citizenship and used Soviet passports to study in the USSR.⁶²
- Use of operatives:⁶³ The SDB established operative positions within the mixed-marriage community, particularly with individuals willing to cooperate in exchanging information. Due to prior connections with

⁵⁹ Ozren Žunec and Darko Domišljanović, *Obavještajno sigurnosne službe Republike Hrvatske* (Zagreb, 2000), p. 45

⁶⁰ SI AS 1931, t. e. 1189, *Pravila o radu Službe državne bezbednosti*, Beograd, 1. 8. 1975.

⁶¹ Šela, "Delovanje slovenske Službe državne varnosti", p. 1145.

⁶² SI AS 1931, t. e. 1189, *Pravila o radu Službe državne bezbednosti*, Beograd, 1. avgust 1975; SI AS 1931, t. e. 1189, *Pravila o radu Službe državne bezbednosti*, Beograd, 6. 1. 1989.

⁶³ There were three types of operatives existed within both the federal and republican UDB. The first was the so-called informant, who reported on the activities of the "enemy." The second was the resident, primarily a secret collaborator responsible for maintaining connections with informants (the "Source"). The third was the agent, a secret operative trained to infiltrate the "enemy's" network and decode their activities. Agents were the least numerous but the most highly valued due to the nature of their work (Srdan Cvetković, "Metode i oblici rada Službi državne bezbednosti u Socijalističkoj Jugoslaviji", *Istorija 20. veka* 2, No. 2 (2009), p. 132; Podbregar, *Obveščevalno-varnostna dejavnost*, pp. 53–54).

Soviet services, some informants were treated with additional caution, as there were suspicions, they might be engaged in a double game in coordination with Soviet intelligence services.

- Covert operations⁶⁴; Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of covert operational combinations, where the SDB used information from existing investigations to develop far-reaching counterintelligence strategies.⁶⁵ It was also determined that the Soviet intelligence service actively directed its citizens to obtain permanent residence or Yugoslav citizenship, which the SDB sought to prevent by monitoring the legality of these procedures.
- Specific targets of surveillance: As the Oreljs' analysis states, Soviet wives in mixed marriages were often employed in important institutions such as foreign trade companies, cultural organizations, and the media. The SDB identified cases where these women maintained close contacts with individuals from Soviet diplomatic and consular representations, thereby facilitating the collection of sensitive information.⁶⁶

The SDV combined these technical surveillance strategies with other approaches, including informative interviews, operational checks, and covert operations. The use of agent networks and double agents allowed for infiltration into target groups, enabling the acquisition of critical intelligence while simultaneously monitoring and disrupting enemy activities. Special attention was devoted to the establishment and control of radio communications (referred to as "radio interception activities"). Their objective was to investigate and uncover agent-intelligence stations operated by foreign intelligence centers in Yugoslavia, monitor radio communications between foreign intelligence centers and their deployed field agents, coordinate and direct their own agent-intelligence centers in the field, as well as disrupt propaganda efforts by forces opposing the state. During the late 1970s, the Slovenian SDV addressed challenges in radio communication control by acquiring advanced covert communication systems. Partnering with British company Racal Tacticom Ltd., SDV tested the Racal MA-4150 portable spy radio (*Picture 2*), which enabled encrypted, long-range communications. Housed in a standard Samsonite brief-

⁶⁴ Covert Action during the Cold War symbolized the ideological conquest for the soul of the world that was the basis of the rivalry between the Western and Soviet (including the East bloc Communist) intelligence services (Kevin A. O'Brien, "Interfering with civil society: CIA and KGB covert political action during the Cold War", *International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence* 8, No. 4 (1995), p. 432).

⁶⁵ SI AS 1931, t. e. 1189, A-40-8, *Pravila o radu službe državne bezbednosti* (Beograd, 6. januar 1989), pp. 49–61.

⁶⁶ Orelj, "Delovanje sovjetske obaveštajne službe protiv SFRJ, p. 124.



The portable Racial radio station was built into a standard Samsonite briefcase (SI AS 1931, t. e. 225, Sistem agenturnih vez Racial, 30. 6. 1983)

case, the system stored encrypted messages for up to a week and achieved a range of up to 5,000 km. Widely adopted by European intelligence agencies during the Cold War, Racial systems offered secure, efficient communication, essential for intelligence operations.⁶⁷

According to the SDV, Eastern European intelligence agencies exploited individuals within these marriages for intelligence-gathering purposes. In certain instances, they detected potential subversive activities, including the presence of so-called "sleeper agents."⁶⁸ This aligns with broader Soviet practices during the Cold War, where sleeper agents integrated into target societies, living ostensibly normal lives until their mission required action.⁶⁹ Sleeper agents are operatives placed in a target country or organization without an immediate mission; they integrate into society, leading ostensibly normal lives, and remain

⁶⁷ Gregor Jenuš, "Tehnologija esdevejskega Jamesa Bonda", Arhiv Republike Slovenije, available at: <https://www.gov.si/novice/2019-06-01-tehnologija-esdevejskega-jamesa-bonda/>, accessed: 1. 3. 2024.

⁶⁸ SI AS 1931, t. e. 1463, A-11-12, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog SDV RSNZ SR Slovenije za leto 1979, Ljubljana, 1980, p. 6.

⁶⁹ Alena N. Eskridge-Kosmach, "Yugoslavia and US Foreign Policy in the 1960–1970s of the 20th Century", *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 22, No. 3 (2009), pp. 383–418.

dormant until activated for a specific operation. Even while inactive, they may collect environmental intelligence, refraining from transmission unless a critical situation arises. These agents often infiltrate the target nation, securing employment and assimilating into the community, effectively "sleeping" until called upon. Frequently, such individuals are expatriates who previously fled the target country and, due to their linguistic and cultural familiarity, are recruited by foreign intelligence services to return as spies. Historically, the use of sleeper agents has been a notable tactic in intelligence operations. For example, during the Cold War, the KGB deployed "illegals" – deep-cover agents who assumed false identities and lived undetected in target countries for extended periods. These operatives were meticulously trained to assimilate seamlessly into foreign societies, often establishing families and careers to bolster their cover.⁷⁰

The SDV observed that a significant number of Eastern European nationals were employed in security-sensitive facilities and institutions or resided in areas critical to national security. This situation heightened concerns about espionage and the potential exploitation of these positions by foreign intelligence services.

According to the report on the implementation of SDV tasks, the presence of foreign intelligence services in mixed marriages with Eastern European citizens was increasingly evident in 1980. That year, 54 such marriages were reportedly concluded, bringing the total number to 253.⁷¹ In a 1989 yearly report by the SDV, the majority of foreign nationals in the SRS originated from Western European countries, with 999 residing temporarily and 404 permanently. Citizens of Eastern European countries in Slovenia included 451 with temporary residence and 101 with permanent residence. Among these, 244 Eastern European nationals were reported to be married to citizens of the SFRY. The most common reasons for their arrival, based on SDV information, were visits to family or acquaintances (158 individuals) and employment (166 individuals). Those employed predominantly worked in mining, construction, and transportation industries, but also in cultural sectors and administrative roles. Additionally, 44 Eastern European nationals were studying in Slovenia, 29 were undertaking specialized training, and 9 were living in the country "in retirement." Notably, 134 Eastern European nationals were recorded as being in Slovenia for "unknown purposes."⁷²

⁷⁰ Diana C. Gill, "Hidden Warriors: The Effect of Espionage in Waging the Cold War", *American Intelligence Journal* 37, No. 1 (2020), pp. 7–10.

⁷¹ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2282, Poročilo o realizaciji programskih nalog za leto 1988, Ljubljana, januar 1989, 27–28.

⁷² SI AS 1931 RSNZ SRS, t. e. 2268, Varnostni vidiki različnih oblik mednarodnega sodelovanja (Stalno in začasno bivajoči tujci in mešani zakoni), Tabela 2: Prikaz najpogostejših namenov prihoda in zaposlitve tujcev v SRS, Ljubljana, 25. 4. 1989, p. 10.

PRIKAZ NAJPOGOSTEJŠIH NAMENOV PRIHODA IN ZAPOSILITEV TUJCEV V SRS																			
DRŽAVLJANSTVO	STATUS V SRS		NAJPOGOSTEJŠI NAMEN PRIHODA										NAJPOGOSTEJŠE PANOGE DEJAVNOSTI						
	ZAKASNO BIVAJUČI	STALNO BIVAJUČI	POBESNI Z BEZAV- S F R J	STUDIJSKI PRAHA	SPECIALI- ZACIJA	ZAPOSLIT- STROKOV.	OBISK SO- POS., ZH.	PREZIVETI NEZNANO	STALNO IN MET. IN BOZAR.	INJUTTS BUDARSTVO	GRADEN- PROMET	TRG., TUR. BOSTIN.	FINANCE. BANCNI.	GOSTIL- STVO	KULTURA PROG., SOC.	UPRAVA	SVOBODNI POKLICI	IZVEN DE- JAVNOSTI	NEZNANO PREJENI
V E D	451	101	244	44	29	166	158	9	134	7	134	9	61	2	63	7	25	94	158
Z E D	999	404	586	101	32	205	453	189	276	17	222	55	45	2	37	142	7	8	595
A Z I J A	283	14	41	122	50	32	28	1	88	1	71	1	18		4	51	2	2	197
A F R I K A	185	4	17	117	23	5	16		27	1	22	3		1	41			101	20
A V S T R A L . - O C E A N .	31	5	7	4	1	3	18	6	7						6	1		18	11
S . A M E R I K A	92	10	20	28	5	13	30	12	17	1	4	2	1		14			49	31
J . A M E R I K A	48	9	16	13	5	5	14	1	19	1	1	4	2		1	9		1	17
H E Z N A N O	17	54	13	3	5	3	13	2		1		2	1		2	11	4		13
S K U P A J	2103	580	939	432	142	532	730	220	538	29	445	76	120	3	46	337	21	26	994
	2 8 6 3	54,99 %	16,10 %	5,29 %	19,82 %	27,29 %	8,19 %	20,05 %	1,08 %	17,25 %	2,83 %	4,47 %	0,11 %	1,71 %	12,56 %	0,78 %	0,96 %	37,04 %	82,86 %

An overview of the most common purposes of arrival and employment of foreigners in the SRS (SI AS 1931 RSNZ SRS, t. e. 2268, Varnostni vidiki različnih oblik mednarodnega sodelovanja (Stalno in začasno bivajoči tujci in mešani zakoni), Tabela 2: Prikaz najpogostejših namenov prihoda in zaposlitev tujcev v SRS, Ljubljana, 25. 4. 1989, p. 10)

Operational Action "Venček"

The *operational action "Venček"* was initiated on June 13, 1977, at the suggestion of the then-head of the SDV Janez Zemljarič, based on Articles 33 and 36 of the SDV Regulations. Initially, it was primarily overseen by Sector II, responsible for external affairs, and later by Sector IV, tasked with monitoring Eastern intelligence services.⁷³

The work of the Sector II included, among other things, the organization and coordination of efforts regarding the collection of information on the operations of Eastern intelligence services through centers in border regions and emigration. It was responsible for monitoring Eastern diplomatic and other missions in the SFRY. A significant portion of its efforts was dedicated to intelligence work concerning the Soviet Union and Hungary. This included maintaining technical equipment abroad to ensure the more efficient execution of tasks. Additionally, it organized and coordinated the collection of data on secret and organized "hostile activities" of groups and individuals from among emigrants who entered the territory of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia. Within the Second Sector, two groups were active: the group for operational work against the intelligence services of the USSR and other Eastern

⁷³ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2595, RTZ 509, Predlog za uvedbo operativne akcije "Venček", Ljubljana, 13. 6. 1977, p. 1–2.

European countries (excluding Hungary), and the group for operational work against the intelligence services of Hungary.⁷⁴ Sector II thus operated as a counterintelligence department with a focus on monitoring the intelligence and security services of Eastern European states. Some tasks, however, were also carried out by Sector V for Documentation and Archives (or, after 1983, Sector X for Analytics), which dealt with documentary tasks, the registration of matters concerning mixed legal issues, such as obtaining citizenship documents, permanent residence, changes to these residences, and similar affairs.⁷⁵

The objective of the *operational action* "Venček" was to uncover the presence of Eastern European intelligence services within mixed marriages and to establish more systematic activity by the SDV in relation to this matter. This was not the first operation of its kind; for example, a similar operation codenamed "Državljan" (Citizen)⁷⁶ had previously been conducted by the SDV. However, "Venček" was the most extensive and best-documented operation, as the largest number of documents regarding it have been preserved in the Archives of the Republic of Slovenia.

In the middle of 1977, an analytical overview was sent to all SDV centers, which, in addition to summarizing previous operational findings, outlined the SDV's tasks related to this operation. According to the analysis, these tasks were organized into three main aspects:

- Through verification, monitoring, and other measures, continuously conduct the selection of mixed marriages of counterintelligence interest. For those where a justified suspicion of cooperation with Eastern European intelligence services was established, special preventive operations (PO) were to be opened.
- Local monitoring was to be established over all mixed marriages, and for those deemed more significant, state security surveillance was also required.
- The next task was to permanently examine mixed marriages from the perspective of potential contacts with Eastern European intelligence services, the creation of informational positions in Eastern European states, and efforts to penetrate the security structures of these countries.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ SI AS 1931 RSNZ SRS, t. e. 1213, G–20–1, *Pravilnik o organizaciji in sistematizaciji delovnih mest v Službi državne varnosti pri republiškem sekretariatu za notranje zadeve*, št. dokumenta I.b – 27/2, 8. 10. 1969, pp. 3–4.

⁷⁵ Šela, *Služba državne varnosti v desetletju kritike in kriz*, p. 44.

⁷⁶ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2595, RTZ 509, Zadeva: Program dela v operativni akciji Venček, 1977.

⁷⁷ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2595, RTZ 509, Predlog za uvedbo operativne akcije "Venček", Ljubljana, 13. 6. 1977, pp. 1–2.

Within the framework of *Operation "Venček"*, the following activities were established:

- The entire body of mixed marriages needed to be periodically compared, selected, and assessed from a counterintelligence perspective.
- By January 1, 1978, efforts were set to establish local surveillance over most individuals in mixed marriages, unless such surveillance would harm dual operational combinations. Local surveillance was to provide data on all changes in movements, visits from abroad, and similar activities. Additionally, local surveillance was to be intensified during significant domestic and international political events.
- Every new instance of a mixed marriage with an Eastern European citizen was to be verified and examined from the three previously mentioned perspectives.
- Special attention was to be paid to citizens of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (SRS) who spent extended periods in Eastern European countries (e.g., students, trade representatives, interns, and other professionals who were in these countries for training, education, etc.).
- Another activity that was prioritized was verifying mixed marriages among Slovenian emigrants in Austria who married citizens of the Czechoslovak Republic, Hungary, and the German Democratic Republic. This group was considered particularly sensitive, as their frequent crossings from the West into Eastern European countries placed them under the influence of intelligence services from both blocs.⁷⁸

Thus, SDV centers across Slovenia (CSDV Ljubljana, Murska Sobota, Postojna, Celje, Koper, Gornja Radgonam Lendava in Maribor) were required to send verifications, assessments, and monthly reports on marriages to the central headquarters. The headquarters primarily received data on mixed marriages from the following Eastern European countries: Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the German Democratic Republic (GDR, ger. DDR), the Soviet Union, and Hungary. The Archives of the Republic of Slovenia hold extensive lists of the names of foreign citizens married to Slovenians, information about their daily and professional activities, their testimonies if they were summoned for interrogation, as well as data on their families and social activities both in their home countries and within the SRS.

⁷⁸ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2595, RTZ 509, Zadeva: Program dela v operativni akciji Venček, 1977.

Operational investigation "Prstan"

At the end of the year, in December 1987, the head of Sector IV of the SDV, Niko Lukman, proposed the implementation of a new operation called *Operational Investigation "Prstan"* because *Operational Action "Venček"* had proven insufficiently effective in identifying individuals suspected of hostile activities. The objective of the newly established operational investigation was to encompass the entire population of Eastern mixed marriages and based on established criteria, isolate individuals suspected of hostile activities and initiate Preventive Operational Processing and Operational Processing for them.⁷⁹

The investigation aimed to process mixed marriages according to the following criteria:

- place of residence,
- level of education,
- employment of the spouses,
- security-relevant connections of the spouses, family circumstances,
- connections to the homeland, military assignment of the spouse,
- and integration into the environment and social life.

These criteria were elaborated based on a specific questionnaire, which allowed the SDV to assess the level of interest in each mixed marriage. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. The first focused on information about the spouse who was a citizen of the SFRY. In addition to basic data, the SDV was particularly interested in: detailed information about employment (for instance, whether the individual might also be cooperating with companies abroad, the specific content of their work and tasks, and even their military assignment), as well as information about other family and relevant connections of interest to the SDV in the SFRY and abroad.⁸⁰ The second part contained questions aimed at gathering data on the spouse who was a foreign citizen. In this case, the SDV was particularly interested in the following: the countries in which the individual had resided prior to arriving in the SFRY; the locations and specific positions they held during employment abroad; the year of arrival in the SFRY; employment within the SFRY; information regarding contacts with the diplomatic representatives of their home country, including frequency and reasons for such interactions; contacts with temporarily residing foreign nationals (from their home country, other Eastern European states, as well as Western European and other countries globally); security-relevant associations with SFRY citizens (especially individu-

⁷⁹ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 853, Predlog za uvedbo operativne raziskave, Ljubljana 14. 12. 1987, p. 1.

⁸⁰ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 853, Podatki o zakoncu, ki je državljan SFRJ, Ljubljana, 20. 1. 1988, p. 1.

I. PODATKI O ZAKONCU, KI JE DRŽAVLJAN SFRJ

1. Priimek in ime (dekliški priimek);
2. Kraj in datum rojstva;
3. Narodnost in republiško državljanstvo;
4. Članstvo v ZK;
5. naslov bivališča (začasno in stalno);
6. Podatki o starših:
 - a.) priimek in ime (dekliški priimek matere);
 - b.) kraj in datum rojstva;
 - c.) poklic in zaposlitev;
7. Poklic in stopnja izobrazbe;
8. Zaposlitev:
 - a.) ime OZD in osnovni podatki o eventualnem gospodarskem sodelovanju s podjetji iz tujine (Vzhodne in Zahodne države);
 - b.) naziv delovnega mesta, ki ga oseba zaseda in vsebina konkretnih del in nalog, ki jih opravlja;
 - c.) vojaški razpored;
9. Podatki o drugih za SDV pomembnih sorodstvenih in ostalih zvezah v SFRJ in tujini.

Questionnaire on data regarding a spouse who is a foreign citizen (SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 853, Vprašalnik za zbiranje podatkov o mešanih zakonih. Zveza: OR "Prstan", Ljubljana, 20. 1. 1988, p. 1–3).

als already under SDV surveillance); potential contacts with military personnel; membership in clubs, associations, or institutions; data concerning integration into the Yugoslav socio-political community; attitudes towards their home country; various family circumstances; and the material status of the family.⁸¹

The task was for the operational investigation to be carried out until 31 December 1989. After this, mixed marriages were to be monitored under Operational Investigation "*Dub*" (Ghost). The primary goal of the investigation was, therefore, to identify concrete suspicions regarding the involvement of individuals from mixed marriages with Eastern intelligence services. In their work, they used the following methods: informative interviews with citizens, operational interviews, the use of records and findings, operational assessment, and analysis.

The proposal was again sent to all SDV centers, which were required to open new primary files within their Sector IV departments. Sector V was responsible for documentation and technical tasks, while Sector X managed analytics. The SDV centers were obligated to regularly inform the SDV administration of the results of the operational processing at least once per month.

⁸¹ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 853, Podatki o zakoncu, ki je tuj državljan, Ljubljana, 20. 1. 1988, pp. 2–3.

TABELA 5: OSNOVNE ZNAČILNOSTI TUJCEV IZ VED V MEŠANIH ZADEVAH

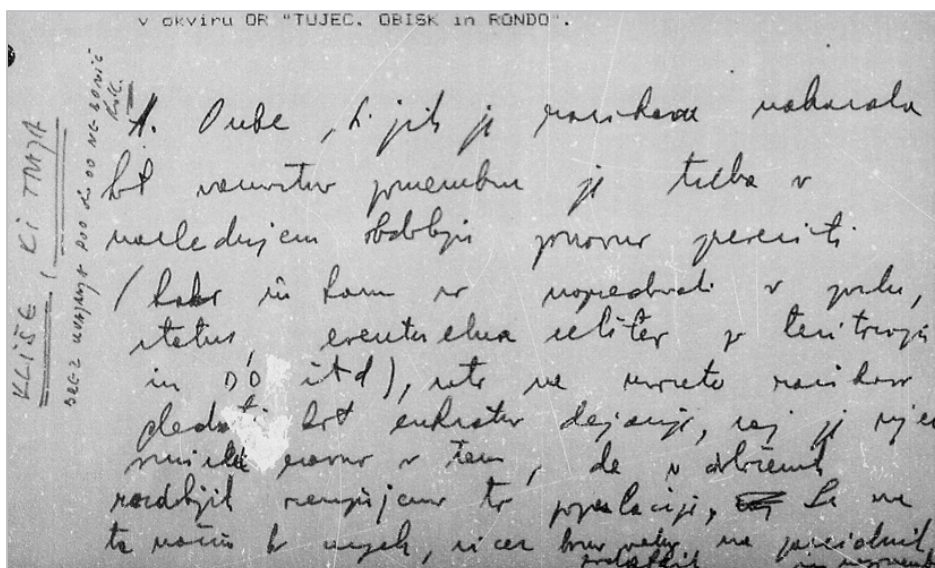
DOMOVINA TUJCA	SKUPAJ OCENJENO S STRANI SDV	SPOL TUJCA		IZOBRAZBA TUJCA			STAROST TUJCA			BIVALIŠČE ZAKONCEV		
		M	Ž	NIŽ.	SRE.	VS.	DO 30	30-50	NAD 50	OBA V SRS	OBA V TUJINI	ŽIVITA LOČENO
ZSSR	40	3	37	4	11	25	6	28	6	28	3	9
ČSSR	97	12	85	13	43	41	7	68	22	63	10	24
POLJSKA	42	9	31	5	19	18	1	40	1	36	4	2
BOLGARIJA	12	6	6	2	5	5	0	11	1	11	0	1
ROMUNIJA	5	2	3	4	0	1	0	3	2	5	0	0
NDR	13	1	12	3	8	2	0	13	0	8	4	1
MADŽARSKA	41	6	35	16	13	12	4	33	4	28	8	3
BIVŠI	106	23	83	* 58	31	17	0	52	54	95	11	0
SKUPAJ	356	62	294	105	130	121	18	248	90	276	40	40
SKU. %	13,15	17,41	82,59	29,49	36,51	34,00	5,05	69,66	25,28	77,53	11,23	11,23

* SKUPAJ Z UPOKOJENCI

Basic characteristics of foreigners from Eastern European countries in mixed marriages residing in the SRS (SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 509, OR "Prstan" (zaključno poročilo), Tabela 5: Osnovne značilnosti tujcev iz VED v mešanih zadevah, SRS, Ljubljana 1990, p. 11)

The operational plan for the investigation was as follows, divided into the following stages:

1. Prepare a list of all mixed marriages, including information about the place of residence and the citizenship of foreign spouses. This task was assigned to Sector V and Sector X.
2. Develop a questionnaire with detailed criteria used to assess the SDV's level of interest in individual mixed marriages. This was the responsibility of Sector IV and Sector X of the SDV Administration.
3. Sectors IV and X were required to conduct a working meeting with operational personnel who organized work at the respective centers.
4. The most crucial step: Collecting data on mixed marriages based on the questionnaire and isolating security-relevant information about mixed marriages involving Soviet, Hungarian, and Czechoslovakian citizens. In the second phase of this step, the focus extended to other Eastern European citizens involved in mixed marriages in Slovenia. In the third phase, they conducted security assessments of mixed marriages where former Eastern citizens had already acquired citizenship of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (SRS) and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY).
5. Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire, operational assessments of individual mixed marriages were prepared, along with proposals for actions by the SDV.



"A cliché that remains." A handwritten correction to the final report of Operation "Prstan", in which the reviewer disagrees with the conclusions of the report and demands a revision. The reviewer states that the operation should not have been concluded, as additional positions for operational processing should have been established in certain areas (SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 509, OR "Prstan" (zaključno poročilo), Ljubljana, 10. 2. 1990, p. 14)

By Way of Conclusion: Findings of Operations "Venček" and "Prstan"

The SDV administration provided all centers with a list of already documented mixed marriages in their respective areas and organized lectures for them on the methods used by Eastern European intelligence services to pressure their citizens following a marriage to a foreigner. SDV centers across the SRS regularly submitted lists of Eastern European citizens in mixed marriages to the SDV administration. If suspicious indicators were identified, a more detailed investigation was conducted, and an analysis was submitted to the administration.

The primary findings of the SDV regarding Eastern European citizens and mixed marriages with them primarily highlighted that Soviet intelligence activities were disseminated within the Socialist Republic of Slovenia (SRS) through such unions. Concerning the execution and implementation of SDV's tasks in these operations, the results were deemed highly unsatisfactory. An analysis of their performance revealed that the SDV's engagement in task implementation did not align with the established objectives, as operational centers focused excessively on the quantity rather than the quality of the collected data. Furthermore, it was determined that SDV centers lacked sufficient familiarity with their own operational areas and failed to produce accurate security assess-

ments that could serve as a basis for comprehensive operational evaluations. Consequently, for future tasks, the SDV resolved to prioritize increased attention to mixed marriages involving Eastern European citizens and to elevate these operations to a position of strategic priority.⁸²

Although the SDV aimed to evaluate a total of 2,706 old and new mixed marriages involving Eastern European citizens between 1988 and 1989, they managed to achieve only 13% of this target during the period. Data were obtained for only 356 marriages, with the highest number recorded in Murska Sobota, as shown in Picture 6 (where they completed 61 assessments out of 288 documented mixed marriages).⁸³

According to the final report on *Operation "Prstan"* in February 1990, the data collected by the SDV indicated that many mixed marriages between citizens of the SRS and Eastern European citizens were fictitious. These marriages were allegedly a means for Eastern European citizens to secure a better standard of living, obtain permanent residence, and acquire Yugoslav citizenship with the intention of later emigrating to Western European countries. The findings revealed that:

- The vast majority of Eastern European citizens involved in these marriages were women (82%).
- Foreign spouses often had a significantly higher level of education compared to their Yugoslav counterparts, with 36% holding the highest level of education.
- Most of the foreign spouses were in their most active years, between 30 and 50 (70%).
- A significant number came from families of armed forces members, security agencies, or employees of their home country's state administrative apparatus.⁸⁴

It was also found that some individuals had been employed in their home countries' security organs before marriage or had completed intelligence training courses. During their stay, they frequently maintained contact with their diplomatic missions and worked to build a broad network of acquaintances in Slovenia, particularly among scientists, cultural figures, and professionals in various fields.

Despite these findings, *Operation "Prstan"* did not uncover anything beyond mere indicators or possible signs of the presence of foreign intelligence ser-

⁸² SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 509, Pregled realizacije nalog – operativne raziskave po liniji SO VED, Ljubljana, 29. 7. 1988, 35–36.

⁸³ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 509, OR "Prstan" (zaključno poročilo), Tabela 2: Pregled realizacije nalog po centrih, Ljubljana, 10. 2. 1990, p. 5.

⁸⁴ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 509, OR "Prstan" (zaključno poročilo), Tabela 5: Osnovne značilnosti tujcev iz VED v mešanih zadevah, Ljubljana, 10. 2. 1990, p. 11.

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TABELA 2: PREGLED REALIZACIJE NALOG PO CENTRIH SDV

CSDV	ŠT. MEŠANIH ZAKONOV IN BIVŠIH VED	OCENJENO	RELIZACIJA NALOG V %
LJ-MESTO	1011	55	5,44
LJ-OKOLICA	100	54	54,00
KRANJ	256	29	11,32
CELJE	158	41	25,94
TRBOVLJE	16	16	100
SL. GRADEC	18	12	66,66
NOVO MESTO	82	14	17,07
KRŠKO	44	11	25,00
POSTOJNA	24	11	45,83
KOPER	354	15	4,23
N. GORICA	76	19	25,00
M. SOBOTA	288	61	21,18
MARIBOR	255	15	5,88
SKUPAJ	2706	356	13,15

Overview of the SDV task implementation by centers (CSDVs) (SI AS 1931, t. e. 2668, RTZ 509, OR "Prstan" (zaključno poročilo), Tabela 2: Pregled realizacije nalog po centrih, Ljubljana, 10. 2. 1990, p. 5)

vices within mixed marriages involving Eastern European citizens in Slovenia. For instance, findings suggested that foreign spouses often came from families connected to the military, security agencies, or administrative organs of their home countries, or that they themselves had been members of such organizations. However, the operation confirmed the presence of intelligence services – such as the Czechoslovak State Security (*Státní bezpečnost* – StB) – in mixed marriages involving Eastern European spouses and Slovenes living in Austria or the Federal Republic of Germany. In two cases, the SDV confirmed the presence of so-called "dual combinations" or double agents.⁸⁵

⁸⁵ SI AS 1931, t. e. 2595, RTZ 509, OR "Prstan" (zaključno poročilo), Ljubljana 1990, p. 13.

Since no concrete findings regarding the presence of intelligence services in the territory of the Socialist Republic of Slovenia were established, *Operational Investigation "Prstan"* was concluded in 1990. Individual cases where certain indicators had been identified were set to be investigated further under operational investigations with the codenames "*Tujec*" (Foreigner), "*Obisk*" (Visit), and "*Rondo*" (Roundabout) on the 30 August 1989.⁸⁶

Operations "*Venček*" and "*Prstan*" reflect the Cold War-era anxieties of Yugoslav state security apparatus regarding Soviet influence. Mixed marriages, as personal and social unions, were recast as potential security vulnerabilities, subject to systematic scrutiny and surveillance. The operations exemplify the intersection of private relationships and geopolitical concerns, demonstrating the SDV's efforts to balance domestic stability with external counterintelligence imperatives. While the document stops short of identifying conclusive Soviet infiltration, it highlights the perceived strategic value of mixed marriages as a tool for long-term intelligence exploitation.

Ana Šela

OPERACIJI "PRSTAN" IN "VENČEK": SPREMLJANJE MEŠANIH ZAKONOV Z VZHODNOEVROPSKIMI DRŽAVLJANI NA SLOVENSKEM S STRANI SLUŽBE DRŽAVNE VARNOSTI V OSEMDESETIH LETIH

POVZETEK

Članek obravnava protiobveščevalne operacije slovenske Službe državne varnosti (SDV), "*Venček*" (1977) in "*Prstan*" (1987), ki so bile usmerjene proti mešanim zakonom med jugoslovanskimi državljani in državljani vzhodnoevropskih držav, zlasti Sovjetske zveze, v času hladne vojne. Operacije so nastale

⁸⁶ Ibid, pp. 14–15.

v obdobju povečanih ideoloških napetosti, pri čemer je nevtralna geopolitična pozicija Jugoslavije povečala njeno ranljivost za vplive tako vzhodnega kot zahodnega bloka. Jugoslovanska obveščevalna služba (zvezna SDB) mešane zakone obravnavala kot možne kanale za vohunjenje, ideološko infiltracijo in subverzijo, predvsem zaradi sovjetskih obveščevalnih strategij, ki so pogosto izkoriščale osebne odnose za prikrito delovanje. SDB je spremljala vzorce zaposlovanja vzhodnoevropskih državljanov, pri čemer je bila posebej pozorna na ženske, ki so prihajale iz držav sovjetskega bloka, zlasti njihovo bližino ključnim institucijam, in pozorno nadzorovala otroke iz mešanih zakonov, ki so se pogosto izobraževali v sovjetskih ustanovah. Ženske so namreč predstavljale večino priseljencev, ki so se poročili z jugoslovanskimi državljani ter ostali na področju Jugoslavije. Tehnični nadzor je bil uporabljen za spremljanje komunikacije med morebitnimi sovjetskimi agenti in posamezniki znotraj teh družin z namenom odkrivanja in prekinjanja prikritih tokov informacij. SDV je prav tako ugotovila, da so vzhodnoevropski državljani z aktivnim sodelovanjem v kulturnih programih in pogostimi stiki s sovjetskimi veleposlaništvu služili kot kanali za ideološki vpliv in poskuse novačenja v sovjetsko obveščevalno službo. Skrb SDB je še okrepila sovjetska politika dodeljevanja dvojnega državljanstva, ki je družinam omogočala ohranjanje močnih transnacionalnih vezi ter pogosto potovanje med Jugoslavijo in Sovjetsko zvezo. Ta mobilnost, v kombinaciji z možnostjo izobraževanja otrok iz mešanih zakonov v sovjetskih ustanovah, je okrepila strahove pred ideološko indoktrinacijo in dolgoročnimi obveščevalnimi tveganji.

Tako kot zvezna je tudi slovenska SDV vse od konca druge svetovne vojne, še posebej pa po sporu z informbirojem pozorno spremljala aktivnost vzhodnoevropskih državljanov na slovenskih tleh. V tem kontekstu je SDV leta 1977 začela operativno akcijo "Venček", sistematičen poskus identifikacije in motenja sovjetskih obveščevalnih aktivnosti v Sloveniji. Posebno pozornost so namenili zaposlitvam sovjetskih žena v kulturnih ustanovah, medijih in trgovinskih podjetjih, kjer je bil dostop do pomembnih informacij resna varnostna skrb. Nadzorni ukrepi so vključevali informantska omrežja, operativne preglede, prikrito spremljanje komunikacij in intervjuje med birokratskimi postopki, kot so prošnje za bivanje in zaposlitev. Operacija je razkrila, da so sovjetski kulturni centri in diplomatske misije pogosto delovali kot žarišča za izmenjavo informacij in ideološki vpliv. Desetletje kasneje je operacija "Prstan" poskušala te protiobveščevalne aktivnosti še izboljšati in razširiti, saj so se gospodarske razmere in geopolitične razmere v Jugoslaviji v 80. letih zaostrovale. Mešani zakoni so bili vse bolj obravnavani ne-le kot osebne zveze, temveč kot strateške prilagoditve za sovjetsko obveščevalno infiltracijo.

Čeprav nedvoumni dokazi o množični sovjetski infiltraciji prek mešanih zakonov niso bili pridobljeni, sta operaciji pokazali vzorce strateškega interesa

Sovjetske zveze za jugoslovanske državljane in njihove družine. SDV je sklenila, da so sovjetske obveščevalne službe sistematično izkoriščale te odnose za zbiranje informacij, ustvarjanje vplivnih omrežij in nadzor nad političnimi, vojaškimi in gospodarskimi razmerami v Jugoslaviji. Ugotovitve so poudarile zanašanje SDV na celovite protiobveščevalne metodologije, vključno s človeškim virom, tehničnim nadzorom in mrežami obveščevalcev, ter izpostavile potrebo po stalnem spremljanju in preventivnih ukrepih za ublažitev varnostnih tveganj, povezanih z mešanimi zakoni.

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Naslov: **OPERACIJI "PRSTAN" IN "VENČEK": SPREMLJANJE MEŠANIH ZAKONOV
Z VZHODNOEVROPSKIMI DRŽAVLJANI NA SLOVENSKEM
S STRANI SLUŽBE DRŽAVNE VARNOSTI V OSEMDESETIH LETIH**

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Ključne besede: mešani zakoni, Služba državne varnosti, osemdeseta leta, Socialistična federativna republika Jugoslavija (SFRJ), vzhodnoevropski državljani

Izvleček: Članek obravnava nadzor nad mešanimi zakonskimi zvezami v osemdesetih letih prejšnjega stoletja s strani slovenske obveščevalno-varnostne službe, Službe državne varnosti (SDV), in zvezne Službe državne varnosti (SDB), ki sta delovali kot tajna politična policija. Študija temelji na doslej neobdelanem arhivskem gradivu, shranjenem v Arhivu Republike Slovenije, in dveh tajnih analizah delovanja sovjetske obveščevalne službe na jugoslovanskih tleh v sedemdesetih in osemdesetih letih, ki so jih pripravili uslužbenci zvezne Službe državne varnosti (SDB) leta 1982. Mešane zakonske zveze, zlasti tiste, v katere so bili vključeni državljani vzhodnoevropskih držav, so bile za SDV posebnega pomena zaradi zaznanih protiobveščevalnih tveganj, ki so veljala za potencialne grožnje sistemu, predvsem v povezavi z delovanjem vzhodnoevropskih obveščevalnih služb. Kot odgovor na to je SDV sprožila vsaj eno operativno akcijo s kodnim imenom "Venček" in izvedla operativno preiskavo z imenom "Prstan". Na podlagi ohranjenega dokumentarnega gradiva avtor predstavi celovito statistično in vsebinsko analizo poročil, analiz in informacij, ki jih je SDV pridobila v osemdesetih letih.