

## **‘Code Name SEKRETÁŘ’: Amílcar Cabral, Czechoslovakia and the Role of Human**

### **Intelligence during the Cold War \***

#### **Abstract**

*Since 1961, Czechoslovakia had been a key supporter of the liberation struggle in Guinea-Bissau, providing the PAIGC with arms, monthly financial assistance and scholarships for military training. The extraordinary extent of this assistance can be partly explained through the ‘special relationship’ developed between Amílcar Cabral and Czechoslovakia’s Ministry of the Interior. Based on newly released records from the Czechoslovak security archives, this paper examines this clandestine relationship, addressing Prague’s motivation for recruiting Cabral as a ‘clandestine contact’ under the code name of SEKRETÁŘ (‘Secretary’ in Czech), as well as ways in which the intelligence services sought Cabral’s help in making sense of African politics and engaging with leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah. Analysing the ‘give and take’ relationship between Cabral and Czechoslovak officials, the paper argues that in many ways it was Cabral who shaped the relationship with Czechoslovakia to benefit the PAIGC. By demystifying the relationship between Cabral and Czechoslovak Intelligence, the paper provides insight into the agency of so-called peripheral actors and of human intelligence in the Cold War.*

**Keywords: Cold War in Africa, Amílcar Cabral, Guinea-Bissau, Czechoslovakia, secret intelligence**

#### **1. Introduction**

On 21 June 1961, the Czechoslovak minister of the interior, Rudolf Barák, received a top-secret letter from an intelligence officer stationed in Conakry, the capital of the Republic of Guinea. The author of the letter, ‘Lieutenant ALTER Miroslav’, proposed to recruit one of his regular contacts in Conakry, ‘SEKRETÁŘ’, as a ‘clandestine contact’ (*důvěrný styk* or ‘D.S.’) of Czechoslovak Intelligence. In his pitch to Barák, ALTER argued that SEKRETÁŘ had good potential to provide useful information to Czechoslovak Intelligence and was likely to gain a position of leadership in the movement for the independence of Guinea-Bissau, a small Portuguese colony in West Africa.<sup>1</sup> ‘SEKRETÁŘ’ (Secretary) was the Czechoslovak code name for Amílcar Lopes Cabral (1924-73), the leader of the Party for Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC; *Partido Africano da*

*Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde*). This paper analyses Cabral's relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence in order to build a more nuanced understanding of what clandestine contacts between members of the security services and their contacts in the Global South often entailed, and to show the complex power dynamics on both sides.

While the Soviet Union and Cuba would come to occupy the central role as the PAIGC's international donors, Czechoslovakia was a crucial ally in the early 1960s, providing significant assistance in weapons, training, and cash for the movement. Although the Czechoslovak role as a major supporter of the PAIGC has started to come to light, a major clandestine element of Czechoslovakia's relationship with Cabral has been hidden from view.<sup>2</sup> Demystifying the nature of Cabral's relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence reveals the complexity of what 'human intelligence' (HUMINT, in intelligence jargon) entailed in practice. Far from taking orders from Prague, Cabral managed to direct his relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence to the advantage of the PAIGC.

Amílcar Cabral was one of Africa's most prominent revolutionary leaders in the twentieth century. Cabral was born on 12 September 1924, in Bafata, 'Portuguese Guinea' (hereafter Guinea-Bissau), to Cape Verdean parents. In 1948, he moved to Portugal to study agronomy at the University of Lisbon, where Cabral formed friendships with other students from Portuguese colonies. Cabral, like many urbanized youths of his generation, was repulsed by the neglect and racial injustice of Portugal's colonial policy and started to envision an independent future for Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Like many of his peers, he was also inspired by Marxist ideas and envisioned a future free from capitalist exploitation.<sup>3</sup> By the late 1950s, it had become evident that Portugal's president of the Council of Ministers, António de Oliveira Salazar, was determined to retain control over the country's various colonies, including the African territories of Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau. The Portuguese secret police intensified repression of nationalist agitation, pushing activists like Cabral into exile.

On 3 August 1959, Portuguese police fired on a group of peaceful protesters at the Pidjiguiti docks in Bissau, the capital of Guinea-Bissau. It was partly in response to events in

Pidjiguiti that during his last visit to Bissau in 1959, Cabral established an organisation dedicated to independence and unity of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde—the PAIGC.<sup>4</sup> The following year, Cabral moved to Conakry, Guinea, where he began to mobilise support for a guerrilla campaign across the border in Guinea-Bissau. Under Cabral’s leadership, the PAIGC would become a formidable opponent to Portuguese forces. By 1974, Portugal’s heavy losses in Guinea-Bissau would contribute significantly to discontent among the military—a key factor in the military coup that overthrew the Portuguese dictatorship on 25 April 1974.

Cabral’s life and ideas have been subject to considerable interest from historians. Since Cabral’s assassination in January 1973, a substantial literature has emerged that attempts to analyse the content and legacies of his ideas.<sup>5</sup> Cabral has also been celebrated as a shrewd politician and a talented diplomat. Commentators such as Patrick Chabal, Pierro Gleijeses, Mustafa Dhada and Julião Soares Sousa highlight the crucial role of Cabral’s personal diplomacy in securing the necessary international support for the PAIGC.<sup>6</sup> Cabral was clearly a talented diplomat. However, with the exception of Gleijeses’s reconstruction of Cuba’s support for the PAIGC, we know little about Cabral’s relations with major donors in other socialist countries.

At the same time, the field of Cold War studies has expanded since the 1990s. Tony Smith calls attention to studying the role (as he puts it) of ‘junior members in the international system’ in blocking, moderating, expanding or intensifying the conflict.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, Odd Arne Westad’s *Global Cold War* shifts attention to the importance of the Third World.<sup>8</sup> Africanist literature adds a further perspective. Following Frederick Cooper’s plea to shift attention to the ‘struggle within the colonised population’, several scholars have developed frameworks of analysis that go beyond national or Cold War narratives to explain histories of the liberation movement in Africa.<sup>9</sup> We now know much more about the role of so-called peripheral actors, such as Czechoslovakia or the anticolonial movements in Africa.

However, the subfield of intelligence history has failed to fully adapt to this shift. We know a greater deal about the roles and strategies of Western secret intelligence services in

the Cold War, including in the Third World.<sup>10</sup> The role of ‘Soviet bloc’ secret intelligence has emerged more slowly, mainly as a consequence of restricted access to files. Scholars primarily rely on memoirs of former intelligence officers and high-level defectors, such as Vasiliy Mitrokhin.<sup>11</sup> However, with a few exceptions, these works overwhelmingly concern Europe and the United States.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, they rarely engage at any length with the ‘other side’—the subjects of Western intelligence services in Africa, Asia or Latin America. In particular, relations between Western and Eastern intelligence services and actors in the Third World remain badly understood, occasionally giving rise to sensationalised reports when information about prominent personalities’ **contacts** with the KGB or the CIA surface from the archives.<sup>13</sup> Although we know these contacts existed, we are often still in the dark about the nature of the interaction, who wielded power and whether it made any difference in the context of the Cold War.

This paper analyses the evolution of Amílcar Cabral’s relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence from 1960 until 1973. ALTER first forged contact with Cabral in 1960, in Conakry. He established what he believed was a close personal relationship with Cabral, facilitating his trip to Prague in 1961. In June of that year, ALTER proceeded with a proposal to ‘recruit’ Cabral as a ‘clandestine contact’ of Czechoslovak Intelligence. After receiving approval from Prague, ALTER developed the relationship with the aim of getting Cabral to share information about events and participate in so-called ‘active measures’ of the Czechoslovak *rezidentura* (jargon for ‘intelligence station’) in Conakry. After the first president of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah, was toppled in 1966 and exiled to Conakry, Czechoslovak Intelligence used the relationship with Cabral to better understand Nkrumah’s plans in order to influence his decision-making process. In the late 1960s, as Cabral became an increasingly recognisable figure on the international stage, contact with Prague dwindled. This paper thus provides insight into the strategies that Amílcar Cabral used for his cause, the liberation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde. Inasmuch as Cabral developed a close relationship with Prague for the benefits of the PAIGC, Czechoslovakia pursued an active policy in Africa for its own internal goals. As such, this paper highlights the agency of

‘peripheral actors’, the strategy they used for their own goals, and the limitations of their projects in the context of the Cold War.

The paper is mainly based on the records of the Czechoslovak Security Services Archive (ABS, *Archiv bezpečnostních složek*) in Prague.<sup>14</sup> Although the Mário Soares Foundation (*Fundação Mário Soares*) in Lisbon contains a large collection of Cabral’s personal files and correspondence, only a small number of documents relate to communication with sponsors in the socialist countries.<sup>15</sup> The files of the Czechoslovak State Security Service (StB; *Státní bezpečnost*) at ABS thus provide an invaluable insight into the dynamics of Cabral’s relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence, as seen from Prague. There are obvious dangers of writing a narrative from the perspective of the Global North. The limitations of the source base means that this paper focuses mainly on the aims, goals and biases of the Czechoslovak Intelligence, as they attempted to exploit what they believed was a special, clandestine connection to the African revolutionary. Still, by reading between the lines and triangulating with other sources, we can start to explore the strategies used by both sides, thus allowing an examination of the power dynamics in the relationship.

## **2. Creating ‘D.S. SEKRETÁŘ’, 1961**

In the 1950s, tremendous changes in the Soviet Union enabled the expansion of the Czechoslovak presence in Africa. In March 1953, Joseph Stalin died, with the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CC CPSU), Nikita Khrushchev, succeeding him. While Stalin had not been particularly interested in the Third World, Khrushchev believed that it offered opportunities for the USSR to find new allies—an objective that coincided with his belief in the Soviet Union’s duty to spearhead peaceful competition between socialism and capitalism.<sup>16</sup> Khrushchev also believed that the USSR and its allies in Eastern Europe should enhance the power of the Soviet bloc by pursuing active policy in the Third World.<sup>17</sup>

Czechoslovakia eagerly answered Khrushchev’s call for action. One of the most industrialised states in Eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia developed an advanced arms-

manufacturing industry during the interwar period, as well as commercial relations with many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. New activist policy in the Third World thus opened up possibilities for taking advantage of new markets. Besides commercial considerations, Prague's new role in the Third World was underpinned by the ambitions of its top leadership. One of them was the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (*Ústředný Výbor Komunistická strana Československa*, ÚV KSČ), Antonín Novotný. An unpopular figure at home, Novotný staked his claim to leadership on support from Moscow. Another was the Minister of the Interior, Rudolf Barák. A rising star in the party, Barák was known for his pleasant, outgoing manner. He also established good contacts with Soviet security advisors and was believed to one of Novotný's main internal rivals. In his role as Minister of the Interior, Barák also oversaw the activities of its First Directorate, the foreign intelligence branch, and thus often met with foreign dignitaries who came to Prague with requests for assistance. To both men, new activist policy in the Third World offered opportunities to advance the role of Czechoslovakia in the Warsaw Pact and increase personal prestige.<sup>18</sup> After the Egyptian-Czechoslovak arms deal of 1955, Prague became a frequent stop on the itinerary of Third World leaders, looking for cash and guns.<sup>19</sup>

As Prague's role in the Third World expanded, so did the presence of Czechoslovak Intelligence, in parallel with similar developments in the USSR. The Soviet KGB and the Czechoslovak State Security Service (StB) first developed close ties with each other after the Soviet-sponsored coup that brought the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia (KSČ) into power in February 1948. Under direct control of Soviet advisors, institutional models, including that of the security organs, were transported directly from the USSR to Czechoslovakia in a process of 'Sovietization'. After Stalin died in March 1953, Khrushchev decided to supplant direct forms of control with bilateral and multilateral cooperation. At the same time, he wanted to reduce the powers of the KGB and redirected its activities abroad—a goal that aligned with the expansion of Soviet presence in the Third World. Thus, the 1950s saw an expansion of the KGB's foreign-intelligence network in the Third World.<sup>20</sup> Similar

developments took place in Czechoslovakia, where the foreign intelligence service expanded under Rudolf Barák.<sup>21</sup> As different forms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the Soviet Union and its Eastern European allies expanded after the foundation of the Warsaw Pact in May 1955, intelligence services also began to collaborate on joint operations in the Third World.

Soviet-Czechoslovak intelligence collaboration in sub-Saharan Africa began in 1960. In July, Rudolf Barák and KGB Chairman Alexander Shelepin presided over the first meeting coordinating Soviet and Czechoslovak Intelligence activities abroad, including in the Third World.<sup>22</sup> In August, Soviet and Czechoslovak intelligence agencies launched their first joint operation to support the government of Patrice Lumumba, the first democratically elected prime minister of the Congo.<sup>23</sup> While their operation in the Congo failed as Lumumba was toppled in September 1960, Czechoslovak Intelligence still expanded its operations in sub-Saharan Africa. It was in this context of an expanding Czechoslovak interest in Africa that a young intelligence officer, code-named ALTER, was posted to the Czechoslovak *rezidentura* in Conakry. Working under diplomatic cover, ALTER's aim was to forge contacts with representatives of African liberation movements that had found refuge in Guinea.

ALTER's real name was Miroslav Adámek.<sup>24</sup> Born on 12 January 1927 into a worker's family, Adámek had previously been a locksmith. In 1947, he volunteered for military service, joining KSČ a year later at a factory in Kunčičky. Another three years later, he was recruited for the StB. Internal StB reports describe him as a 'calm-tempered man' who was a 'passionate chess player' with a clear 'class consciousness', and followed the party line. After undergoing basic training in Opava, he was transferred to the First Directorate of the Ministry of the Interior, its foreign intelligence branch. When Adámek arrived in Conakry in 1960, he was only 33 years old and not a particularly experienced officer. However, he was part of a small *rezidentura* in Conakry that allowed greater room for personal initiative and, potentially career progression.<sup>25</sup> It is perhaps unsurprising that Adámek was quick to take an interest in a charismatic African revolutionary who had recently moved to Conakry—Amílcar Cabral.

From the beginning, Cabral was an active partner in the relationship. Cabral and Adámek first met in Conakry on 22 November 1960. As Adámek reported back to Prague, their first meeting took place over lunch in a ‘friendly atmosphere’, with Cabral arguing that his movement had the support of the people in Guinea-Bissau and that his land could be free within two-to-three years.<sup>26</sup> From then onwards, their meetings became fairly frequent, with both of them meeting in the open, often in Adámek’s flat in Conakry. When the pair met on 13 January 1961, Cabral requested Adámek facilitate his trip to Prague. Cabral informed Adámek that he had already been invited to visit the Soviet Union, but that he also wanted to stop in Prague together with his right-hand man, Aristides Pereira. Cabral made no secret that his goal was to seek assistance from the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia for the PAIGC. Cabral stressed that he did not want support from the capitalist countries, but wanted Czechoslovak aid because there were no strings attached. He also underlined that the PAIGC had good prospects for armed struggle because it was based in Guinea, which allowed easy infiltration across the border into Guinea-Bissau. The launching of armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau, argued Cabral, could serve as a catalyst for rebellion in other Portuguese colonies, particularly Angola. Cabral’s pitch impressed Adámek, who supported his request in a letter to Prague.<sup>27</sup> Only a few months later, Cabral left Conakry for a trip to Moscow and Prague.

Cabral’s trip to Czechoslovakia in March 1961 was a broad success. Aristides Pereira recalled that in Prague, they met with Rudolf Barák, who was apparently impressed by Cabral and promised to help with the provision of war materiel if the Guinean agreed for the weapons to be delivered to the port in Conakry. Upon their return to Guinea, recalls Pereira, the Guinean President Sékou Touré indeed granted such permission.<sup>28</sup> There is no archival trace to confirm Pereira’s recollection of them meeting Barák in Prague in person. However, evidence shows both met Barák’s deputy Karel Klima, whom they asked for weapons, financial assistance, experts who could provide training in security, and instructors in ‘subversive activities’.<sup>29</sup>

Although we do not know if Cabral indeed made such a personal impression on Barák, Czechoslovak Intelligence immediately supported the request for assistance. In a note

to Barák on 27 March 1961, the head of the First (intelligence) Directorate, Jaroslav Miller, argued that Cabral's requests should be satisfied because the PAIGC had acquired support among the people of Guinea-Bissau. Miller also argued that the PAIGC was an 'anti-imperialist and an anti-capitalist organisation', led by Cabral, a 'Marxist-orientated' politician.<sup>30</sup> It was perhaps unsurprising that on 21 June 1961, Adámek proposed to recruit Cabral for collaboration with Czechoslovak Intelligence.

In his pitch to Rudolf Barák, Adámek emphasised that Cabral's 'recruitment' would be easy to achieve. First, Adámek highlighted his good relations with Cabral, arguing the latter had already willingly shared information on a range of topics. In fact, he argued, his 'recruitment' would be a mere 'formality'. Second, Adámek argued that Cabral would be willing to collaborate once Prague approved an assistance package to the PAIGC. He would feel that Adámek had 'arranged the whole thing' and feel indebted to him. Besides the practicalities, Adámek proposed to emphasise to Cabral that they shared common goals. 'I will emphasise that, as he himself could see, the politics of Czechoslovakia in Africa is conducted for the benefit of independent African people and supports their efforts for political and economic independence, which means that our interests are alike'. Still, Adámek proposed keeping hidden his real identity as an officer of the Ministry of the Interior, even though Cabral probably suspected the real nature of his job.<sup>31</sup> Adámek would have to wait less than two months to fulfil his plan.

The timing of Cabral's request and Adámek's pitch was opportune. Starting in February 1961, a series of popular uprisings broke out in Angola, Portugal's largest African colony. Lisbon responded with a brutal crackdown that quickly became an international scandal, also condemned by the United Nations (UN). Responding to these events, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia approved their first assistance package to the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Meanwhile, Washington started to apply pressure on Salazar to agree to self-determination for the colonies, with the CIA clandestinely providing cash for the Union of Peoples of Angola (UPA), MPLA's main rival in Angola.<sup>32</sup> In June 1961, Khrushchev and the newly elected US President John F. Kennedy clashed over the

status of West Berlin, leading to the construction of the Berlin Wall in August. The timing of Cabral's request thus coincided with the heating up of Cold War tensions and a heightened salience of Portuguese colonialism on the international agenda.

Soviet and Czechoslovak intelligence intensified their activities in response to these developments. On 26 June 1961, the Soviet and Czechoslovak intelligence services met in Prague to discuss joint operations in the Third World. Among a lengthy list of agreements, the KGB and StB agreed that they would aim to establish contacts and recruit agents from among the leadership of the liberation movements in the Third World.<sup>33</sup> Some evidence suggests that the plans for expansion of operations in the Third World were at least partly informed by the developing crisis over West Berlin. On 29 July 1961, a month after meeting his Czechoslovak counterparts, KGB chairman Alexander Shelepin sent Khrushchev a 'mind-boggling array of proposals' that, amongst other things, suggested sponsoring anticolonial mass uprisings in British Kenya, Rhodesia and Guinea-Bissau, by arming rebels and training military cadres. The ultimate aim was to tie down Western powers during the settlement of the Berlin crisis.<sup>34</sup>

On 20 July 1961, in a draft resolution for ÚV KSČ, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Václav David, proposed to satisfy Cabral's request for assistance. Similar to the chief of Czechoslovak intelligence Miller, David explained that Cabral had made a very good impression during his visit to Prague: he was a modest man with 'deep knowledge of Marxism Leninism'. David argued there was a strong chance that Czechoslovak support would be used effectively, since the PAIGC had already developed its organisational structure inside Guinea-Bissau.<sup>35</sup> David also emphasised that Cabral had been critical of the Guinean authorities' promotion of the concept of 'African socialism'. It is not surprising that this pleased Czechoslovak officials. The Soviets and their allies in Eastern Europe believed that 'African socialism', supported by many African leaders, was a flawed concept. In their opinion, there could only be one 'scientific socialism', and they insisted that Africa was not unique in undergoing a process of bitter class struggle.<sup>36</sup>

Only two weeks later, on 1 August, ÚV KSČ approved the first assistance package to

the PAIGC. Prague pledged to provide a monthly cash allowance of 2,500 Czech crowns for the requirements of the PAIGC headquarters in Conakry, and to arrange for a shipment of light weapons for 500 guerrillas. Prague also pledged to organise a six-month military training course for a dozen recruits.<sup>37</sup> Although the draft resolution mainly emphasised Cabral's views and prospects, the wider context of heightened Cold War competition and events in Angola is highly likely to have played a part in the decision. Around the same time, Barák approved Adámek's proposal to recruit Cabral.

With the assistance package approved, Adámek could break the news to Cabral and proceed with his 'recruitment'. Adámek's official report on him 'recruiting' Cabral is fairly brief. On 13 August 1961, Cabral arrived at Adámek's house at 10am upon previous agreement. Adámek greeted him with good news: Prague had approved his request for assistance. He then proceeded to tell Cabral that their interests in Africa were similar and both sides would thus benefit from closer cooperation. To do so, Czechoslovakia would require precise information about the situation in Africa in general and liberation movements in particular. According to Adámek, Cabral 'reacted well' to the news, emphasising that Czechoslovakia was the first country to provide him with effective assistance. As for providing information, Cabral expressed that his options in Guinea were limited as he often disagreed with the authorities, but would do whatever was in his power. According to Adámek's report, Cabral also promised to share information he would obtain at conferences. Adámek concluded: 'The cooperation with Secretary looks very promising and in my opinion we will be able to influence and guide him quite well given his function in PAI [African Independence Party]'.<sup>38</sup> From then on, Cabral was classified as a 'clandestine contact' (*'důvěrný styk'* or 'D.S.') by Czechoslovak Intelligence. Most likely, Adámek and his superiors realised that recruiting Cabral as an agent or giving him more direction could harm the relationship.

Although Adámek presented the meeting as a big 'win', Cabral could have interpreted what transpired quite differently. It is not fully clear whether Cabral knew exactly that he was being 'recruited'. There is no evidence to suggest that Adámek broke his

diplomatic cover. No papers were signed. In fact, the category of ‘clandestine contact’ was flexible enough to allow for a casual relationship without formal commitments from either side, as opposed to ‘agent’, which required a formal commitment and a formalised relationship. Cabral was not and would never become an ‘agent’. While Adámek tried to play up the significance of the meeting on 13 August, the document shows Cabral was fairly noncommittal, albeit courteous. Cabral likely did not know he was being recruited, nor that Prague classified him as a ‘clandestine contact’. At the same time, it is likely Cabral knew Adámek’s real identity, as the latter speculated in his letter to Prague. One way or another, the Ministry of the Interior rewarded Adámek for his efforts. In late 1961, he was recalled to Prague with a promotion.<sup>39</sup> In the following years, Czechoslovakia would ramp up its assistance to the PAIGC, while trying to capitalise on its relationship with Cabral.

## **2. Information Gathering and ‘Active Measures’**

Once the Politburo approved the assistance package to Cabral, the Ministry of the Interior went into high gear. In August 1961, the ministry arranged for eleven members of the PAIGC to receive military training in Prague.<sup>40</sup> Czechoslovak Intelligence also devised ‘active measures’ (*aktivni opatřeni*) for Guinea-Bissau. In intelligence jargon, ‘active measures’ were operations directed at exerting influence on the foreign policy of target countries. This could range from staging disinformation campaigns, aiding anti-government opposition or even engaging in targeted assassinations (i.e. the equivalent of ‘covert action’ in the West).<sup>41</sup> In the case of Guinea-Bissau, such ‘active measures’ mainly included propaganda. One operation, code-named ‘Hanibal’, involved spreading anti-government propaganda leaflets among the Portuguese army aimed at demoralising them and thus strengthening the PAIGC. The operation was to be discussed with Cabral, who was supposed to help with the contents of the leaflets.<sup>42</sup> Although Czechoslovak support was substantial, it was Cabral who had the last word in case of any disagreements.

One area of disagreement between Cabral and Prague was the starting date for military action in Guinea-Bissau. In December 1961, Guinean authorities in Conakry seized

a shipment of weapons that had arrived from Czechoslovakia for the PAIGC. They continuously refused to release the shipment, creating an ongoing logistical problem that delayed Cabral from launching armed struggle. By end of 1962, Prague became increasingly worried that a lack of military action would expose the PAIGC to competition from local rivals. The Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior thus advised Cabral to launch 'acts of sabotage' in the countryside. These would allow guerrillas to obtain weapons from the Portuguese army thus convincing the Guinean authorities that blocking the delivery of weapons was futile, ultimately asserting the PAIGC's status as the only representative of the nationalist movement in Guinea-Bissau.<sup>43</sup>

Cabral disagreed. He argued that sabotage could only alarm the Portuguese, pushing them to reinforce their military presence, and making it harder to launch guerrilla action in Guinea-Bissau. His strategy was to use diplomatic avenues to smuggle arms in via Morocco and Algeria. Although Prague lamented the cost of Cabral's trips to Morocco and Algeria, the Czechoslovaks had to concede to Cabral's strategy and thereafter smuggled additional arms via Morocco.<sup>44</sup> We already know that Cabral was vigorously independent in his relations with Cuban advisors who arrived in large numbers after 1966 and with whom he often disagreed over military strategy.<sup>45</sup> The same held true for Cabral's relations with Prague.<sup>46</sup> In early 1963, the Guinean authorities agreed to the free delivery of arms to the PAIGC in Conakry, and on 23 January 1963, the PAIGC launched its first armed action in Guinea-Bissau.

Once the PAIGC launched military action, Czechoslovak assistance expanded. On a yearly basis, Prague would approve new shipments of weapons and humanitarian goods to the PAIGC. In 1965, Prague authorised a weapons shipment worth 1.85 million crowns. In 1966, military assistance amounted to 400,000 crowns.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile, the Ministry of the Interior continued to train around a dozen men a year, mainly in security and counter-intelligence. In September 1964, the Czechoslovak Ministry of the Interior dispatched an arms expert and intelligence officer, František Polda (code name PETÁK). Polda had a dual role in Conakry, acting as a point of contact with Cabral and providing advice and intelligence

training for PAIGC cadres.<sup>48</sup> Although the overall Soviet contribution to the PAIGC was significant (21.7 million rubles in military and 4.4 million rubles in humanitarian aid between 1963 and 1973), Czechoslovakia was an important early sponsor of the PAIGC, providing the organisation with regular cash installments and arms, whilst almost exclusively training its security and counterintelligence personnel.<sup>49</sup>

What did Czechoslovak Intelligence obtain in return? Above all, Prague was interested in Cabral as a source of information. In September 1961, Joseph Bros Tito of Yugoslavia, Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser and Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, all opposed to the creation of military blocs, sponsored the first Non-Aligned Conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, with the goal of establishing a movement. Meanwhile, both the USA and the Soviet Union hoped to rally the delegates of the Belgrade conference to attract nonaligned countries to their interpretation of the German question.<sup>50</sup> Since Cabral was among the attendees, Czechoslovak Intelligence requested of him information on a wide range of issues, such as divisions among the delegates, and their views on nonalignment, the German question and Soviet Bloc policy in Africa. Czechoslovak Intelligence also asked Cabral to specifically observe the Nigerian delegation, to determine whether they would prove 'divisive' at the conference. Moreover, Prague wanted Cabral to find out about the contents of a special letter from Tito to Nehru.<sup>51</sup> Although we do not know exactly how the Ministry of the Interior presented its request to Cabral, the request went beyond a general enquiry.

Cabral's analysis of the conference was fairly comprehensive analytically, but lacked any detail. In his overview for Prague, Cabral lamented that the conference was mainly dominated by declaratory statements; with the exception of Cuba's address, which targeted the USA, delegates failed to criticise 'neocolonialism'. Cabral described the delegations as divided into three main groups. The organisers—India, Egypt and Yugoslavia—represented a 'reactionary' stance at the conference. The second group, comprised of Ghana and Indonesia, were more 'progressive', with Sukarno and Nkrumah proposing several measures to deal with neocolonialism and providing a solution to the Berlin Crisis. Finally, Cuba

represented the ‘most progressive’ position. Cabral also underlined divisions among African and Arab states. However, Cabral did not share any details of his conversations with the delegates and knew nothing about Tito’s letter to Nehru. Intentionally or not, Cabral’s evaluation of the Belgrade conference did not contain any sensitive information or anything one could not obtain from open sources.<sup>52</sup> Besides Belgrade, Cabral rarely presented detailed information of this nature. The vast majority of interactions between Cabral and Czechoslovak Intelligence concerned the progress of armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau. Cabral also regularly shared his views on the military progress and leadership of other liberation movements, such as Angola’s MPLA, Mozambique’s Frelimo, and their local rivals.<sup>53</sup>

Czechoslovak Intelligence also wanted to use Cabral’s resources for ‘active measures’ in Africa. In a letter from 19 August 1963, Prague instructed their *rezidentura* in Conakry to approach Cabral with the task of finding two ‘reliable’ members of the PAIGC to fulfil intelligence tasks. If such persons were found, they would undergo training in secret intelligence in Czechoslovakia, before being deployed for special tasks.<sup>54</sup> The issue came up in talks with Cabral in Prague on 23 October 1963, with Czechoslovak Intelligence reiterating its request to find two persons who could collaborate with the *rezidentura* on a variety of tasks. The candidates for such a role had to be reliable, discreet, dedicated to the party, fluent in French and be able to easily forge contacts with people. The suitable candidate could not be well known as a member of the PAIGC; thus, Czechoslovak Intelligence suggested that the recruit come either from Guinea-Bissau or Senegal. Cabral’s response was noncommittal, asserting that the process of finding men with appropriate characteristics had proven much more difficult than he had anticipated. Cabral never found appropriate candidates, meaning the Czechoslovak proposal was never enacted.<sup>55</sup>

Prague also wanted to make use of Cabral’s resources to help tackle problems back home. In 1956, Czechoslovakia started issuing increasing numbers of placements for African students. In May 1961, KSČ established the University of 17th of November—a special university for students from the Third World. By 1965, the university hosted 4,000 students,

half of them from the African continent.<sup>56</sup> Although the aim of such educational assistance was to capture the 'hearts and minds' of Third World elites, these efforts were often undermined when students complained about incidents of racism, surveillance and poor living conditions. As some of these reports hit the pages of the Western press, the experience of African students in the Soviet Bloc became a Cold War issue.<sup>57</sup> Czechoslovak counterintelligence was naturally interested in preventing any students from complaining about problems, perhaps even suspecting that Western intelligence services could be employing some of them to discredit the socialist countries.

Czechoslovak counterintelligence tried to use Cabral's help to deal with potentially troublesome African students. In a meeting with Cabral on 21 April 1965 in Prague, Czechoslovak Intelligence asserted that the 'imperialist countries' intelligence services could have placed their people among Africans studying in Czechoslovakia. Cabral, they continued, could help in weeding them out by suggesting a suitable individual who was not a known member of the PAIGC and who could be enrolled as a student in Czechoslovakia with the task of developing friendships with other African students and reporting back to Czechoslovak counterintelligence. As with other proposals, Cabral did not reject the request outright. However, he did point out that it would be very difficult to find someone from Guinea-Bissau who did not belong to the PAIGC and who could command respect among the students. The best option, he continued, was to find a person who did belong to the PAIGC, but who could pose as someone seemingly disillusioned with the organisation. Cabral also mentioned that he would have to share this information with his inner circle—his brother Luis Cabral and right-hand man Aristides Pereira.<sup>58</sup> We do not know if this plan was ever put into action. However, it illustrates Cabral's evasive tactics, showing his unwillingness to use his people for the benefit of Czechoslovak counterintelligence.

One exception was the case of RIGOLETO (code-name). A member of the PAIGC, RIGOLETO was among the first cohort of eleven men who went for military training in Prague in August 1961. Czechoslovak Intelligence first approached RIGOLETO at a hospital in Prague, where he was undergoing medical care. While his coursemates returned to

Conakry, RIGOLETO stayed on in Prague, undergoing special training in security and counterintelligence, with Cabral's approval. Czechoslovak Intelligence warmed to RIGOLETO, whom they described as 'decisive, organised and disciplined'. In a dispatch to the *rezidentura* in Conakry, Czechoslovak Intelligence noted it had already obtained useful information from RIGOLETO, especially regarding rival nationalist movements based in Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. The Czechoslovak Intelligence and RIGOLETO also agreed that he would help in 'active measures' against Western intelligence services in Guinea. They also agreed on a special parole for clandestine communications:

'Do you know Mr. Abel from Bafata?'

'I do know him and his whole family.'<sup>59</sup>

One such active operation was code-named GOLD—a rescue mission for Antoine Gizenga in the Congo. Gizenga was a minister in the government of Patrice Lumumba, the first democratically elected prime minister of the Congo. After a coup in the Congo's capital, Leopoldville, in September 1960, Gizenga left to organise armed resistance in support of Lumumba from a stronghold in Stanleyville, eastern Congo. However, Gizenga was unable to obtain supplies to sustain his armed efforts. In July 1961, supporters of Gizenga and representatives of the government in Leopoldville brokered a power-sharing agreement at the University of Lovanium. Cyrille Adoula became the new prime minister and Gizenga his deputy in absentia. However, members of the so-called Binza Group, who coalesced around Joseph Mobutu, the chief of the Congolese army, still occupied key posts. In early 1962, Gizenga was placed under house arrest in Leopoldville. There were fears that Gizenga could meet the same fate as Patrice Lumumba, who was murdered in 1961 in the breakaway province of Katanga. To enact the plan, Czechoslovak officials asked for RIGOLETO's help.

It is not clear exactly what role RIGOLETO was to play in Gizenga's escape. Most likely he was to collect intelligence on the ground in Leopoldville and serve as a go-between with local contacts. The Czechoslovak *rezidentura* in Conakry was to deliver RIGOLETO to Leopoldville, where he was supposed to meet another contact, 'our man in Leopoldville', who would explain what was required of him. Prague had high hopes for RIGOLETO, 'a

confidential contact who had been previously tested in our American surveillance operation in Conakry'. We do not know how much Cabral knew about the Czechoslovak plan to rescue Gizenga, but he put RIGOLETO at Prague's disposal for the mission.<sup>60</sup>

While the rescue mission never went ahead, Czechoslovak Intelligence continued contact with RIGOLETO. In 1966, he was transferred to work at the Secretariat of the Conference of Nationalist Organizations of the Portuguese Colonies (CONCP), an umbrella organisation for lusophone anti-colonial movements, based in Rabat, Morocco. Cabral apparently 'fully agreed' that RIGOLETO should work with Prague. To avoid any suspicion, he asked that Czechoslovakia pay RIGOLETO's salary in Conakry, which the PAIGC would then transfer to Rabat to ensure an official source of income. Cabral described RIGOLETO as a 'capable comrade' who was reliable and dedicated. His only 'weak spot' was women.<sup>61</sup>

We will never know how Cabral himself envisioned his relationship with the First Directorate, whether he knew that he was classified as 'D.S SEKRETÁŘ', a 'clandestine contact'. However, the nature of the Czechoslovak requests—to gather information at conferences and employ PAIGC members for 'active measures' in Guinea and Czechoslovakia—leaves little room for doubt that Cabral knew his interlocutors were not simply diplomats. In fact, Cabral's willingness for the Czechoslovaks to employ RIGOLETO for intelligence purposes, such as for operation GOLD, shows that clandestine cooperation was undeniable. Czechoslovak Intelligence tried hard to use Cabral for intelligence purposes, although he gave them little in this respect, while managing to maintain independence over the strategy in Guinea-Bissau.

How much did the Soviets know about the nature of the Czechoslovak relationship with Cabral? There is no doubt that assistance was discussed and to some extent coordinated between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. In fact, David's draft resolution from 20 July 1961, suggesting an assistance package for the PAIGC explicitly states that the offer had been discussed with the Soviets.<sup>62</sup> However, only few shreds of evidence suggest that the Soviets knew about the clandestine relationship with Cabral. One comes from a 1966 report on the consultation between the Czechoslovaks and the Soviets about the progress of the PAIGC in

Guinea-Bissau, including the tactics of their armed struggle. Among the conclusions from these consultations was a suggestion to try to use Cabral for intelligence purposes, acting against the interests of Western intelligence organisations while enacting the ‘politics of influence’.<sup>63</sup>

Another piece of evidence comes from a Czechoslovak note drafted in preparation for a meeting with the intelligence service of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). Similarly, the note stated that the Czechoslovak Intelligence used Cabral to obtain first-hand information about African countries and to implement ad-hoc ‘active measures’.<sup>64</sup> This implies that the nature of Cabral’s relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence was unlikely a secret to Soviet or even East German intelligence, even if it is not exactly clear what information was shared between the agencies. By the early 1960s, a number of KGB ‘advisors’ still worked alongside Czechoslovak intelligence officers in Prague, to exchange information and coordinate joint actions. Consequently, they would often sit at meetings or be informed about developments in person. A lack of written record thus does not exclude the possibility that Moscow was informed every step of the way.<sup>65</sup>

### **3. Contacts with Kwame Nkrumah**

On 24 February 1966, Ghana’s first president, Kwame Nkrumah, was overthrown in a coup d’état. The coup was a loss for the Soviet Union and other socialist countries that had forged close relations with Nkrumah in previous years. After the coup, Nkrumah settled in Conakry upon the personal invitation of Guinean president Sékou Touré. While the coup was bloodless, Nkrumah was determined to return to Ghana as the legitimately elected president. It is well known that Amílcar Cabral was among those who visited Nkrumah in Conakry during his years in exile. The two men had known each other since the early 1960s when Nkrumah provided some assistance to the PAIGC. However, it is not widely known that Czechoslovak Intelligence wanted to influence Nkrumah’s actions after the coup, using Cabral as a kind of liaison. The main goal was to convince Nkrumah to launch a resistance movement in Ghana.

Between 1966 and 1968, Czechoslovak Intelligence had a series of conversations with Cabral about Nkrumah and the situation in Ghana. In a conversation with František Polda on 13 May 1966 in Conakry, Cabral shared his opinion that Nkrumah should have established an underground resistance movement right after the coup. Otherwise, he risked losing any support he had left in Ghana.<sup>66</sup> During a trip to Prague in November 1966, Cabral discussed Nkrumah with the head of the fourth (African) department of the First (intelligence) Directorate, Josef Janouš. This time, Cabral was more optimistic on Nkrumah's prospects, saying that still enjoyed some support in Ghana, and that he deserved help. He still did not know of Nkrumah's plans first-hand, but he had learnt that at least one group was undergoing training in Guinea for the purposes of infiltrating Ghana. Upon his return to Conakry, continued Cabral, he would again speak to Nkrumah, enquire about his plans, and offer help. Cabral and his interlocutors in Prague believed that Nkrumah should focus his energies on organising a resistance movement in Ghana.<sup>67</sup>

However, in the following years Cabral became increasingly sceptical of Nkrumah's capacity for decisive action. When Cabral next met Janouš in Prague, on 6 February 1967, he spelled out his frustration with Nkrumah, whom he eventually managed to meet in person in Conakry. Describing the meeting with Nkrumah to Janouš, Cabral said that he did not think it was a wise idea for Nkrumah to publish his book, *Handbook on Revolutionary Warfare*, in which he proposed the creation of an all-African working-class vanguard party and the all-African people's army and militia. The book was unrealistic and risked exposing Nkrumah's strategy to the imperialists. He also said that Nkrumah was unresponsive to criticism and had asked Cabral to allocate a group of guerrilla fighters from among PAIGC militants who could organise resistance in Ghana. Janouš agreed that Nkrumah had to put aside his Pan-Africanist theories and focus on organising the resistance in Ghana. Yet again, Janouš asked Cabral to use his influence with Nkrumah for this purpose, but without revealing Czechoslovakia's involvement.<sup>68</sup> Cabral's meetings with Nkrumah in Conakry continued. At a 25 February 1968 meeting with František Polda in Conakry, Cabral shared that Nkrumah knew very little about the internal situation in Ghana, having become more of a philosopher than a politician.

Cabral believed Nkrumah's plan to liberate the African continent was unrealistic.<sup>69</sup>

Czechoslovak interest in Nkrumah's plans was part of operation 'ALEX'—an attempt to sponsor a left-wing counter coup in Ghana after 1966. It is not clear what role Nkrumah was supposed to play in any such coup attempt via their *rezidentura* in Accra, Ghana. In the case of success, Nkrumah could perhaps return to Ghana as head of state or enter some other official capacity. Cabral's role here seemed limited to passing messages to Nkrumah about preparations for a coup in Conakry. Anyhow, Czechoslovak efforts to support a counter coup proved unsuccessful.<sup>70</sup> Nonetheless, Czechoslovak Intelligence seemed pleased with Cabral playing the unofficial go-between with Nkrumah. In an overview of relations with Cabral in 1967-68, Czechoslovak Intelligence emphasised Cabral's positive impact, acting as a contact with Nkrumah during his years in exile and thus facilitating 'active and influential measures' (*aktivních a vlivových opatření*).<sup>71</sup>

Contacts between Czechoslovak Intelligence and Cabral subsided in the late 1960s. By 1968, Czechoslovak Intelligence had started to complain about the difficulty of obtaining information from Cabral about African issues. They explained this by citing Cabral's busy schedule. The man had acquired the status of an internationally-recognised African leader, who was travelling frequently and meeting with high-level officials. Czechoslovak Intelligence found that their relationship with Cabral had been useful in helping to organise certain 'active measures' and participating in 'influence measures' with regard to Kwame Nkrumah. However, given Cabral's status as a 'clandestine contact' and the current nature of armed struggle in Guinea-Bissau, Czechoslovak Intelligence explicitly recognised that Cabral could no longer be asked to participate in tasks of a 'local nature'. However, the relationship could still be usefully employed at a 'high level', especially in the future.<sup>72</sup>

The Warsaw Pact intervention in Czechoslovakia in August 1968 was a moment of profound crisis for that country, including for its intelligence service. Many intelligence agents were sympathetic to Alexander Dubček's reformist agenda and welcomed the 'Prague Spring'. The intervention thus saw a series of defections of Czechoslovak Intelligence personnel in the field. Those who spoke against the intervention underwent internal reviews,

demotion, dismissal or worse. As the new post-1968 Czechoslovak government turned inward, Prague scaled down its activist policy in the Third World. This was another reason for the decline in the intensity of Czechoslovak contacts with Cabral after 1968. Although the Czechoslovak *rezidentura* in Conakry tried to maintain contact with Cabral, the meetings became quite irregular. The *rezidentura* explained that the reason was Cabral's frequent absences from Conakry, but the aftermath of 1968 must have played a role.<sup>73</sup>

Only in 1973 did Czechoslovak Intelligence try to revamp its relationship with Cabral. The man chosen for the mission was no less than František Polda. Unlike many of his colleagues, Polda's career was not affected by events in 1968 since, according to an internal evaluation, he assisted in the 'consolidation process' at the StB.<sup>74</sup> Polda arrived in Conakry in mid-January 1973, and proceeded to reconnect with his contacts in the city. His main goal was to reconnect with Cabral, whom he found working at PAIGC headquarters. Polda reported to Prague that Cabral looked 'somewhat on edge', but thought this stemmed from his role as party leader rather than unease about Polda's arrival. Polda proceeded to explain the situation in Czechoslovakia to Cabral, 'according to instructions', answering why he had not paid much attention to the PAIGC in previous years. According to Polda, PAIGC attitudes toward Czechoslovakia had not changed, with party members having received him very positively. On 16 January, Polda met Cabral and the two decided to meet later for a proper conversation. However, the conversation never took place. On 20 January 1973 Cabral was murdered in Conakry, victim of a coup attempt engineered by the Portuguese authorities in collaboration with a group of disgruntled members of the PAIGC.<sup>75</sup> Cabral's murder naturally ended Czechoslovak attempts to revive the relationship, with the file for 'D.S. SEKRETÁŘ' being closed and stored away.

In an overview of relations with Cabral since 1961, Czechoslovak Intelligence admitted that his usefulness was more 'political' than 'informational'. Above all, Cabral was a leading African politician who had significant influence on the leadership of the PAIGC, as well as other regional forums. In Czechoslovak opinion, Cabral's positive influence meant that he had conveyed opinions that coincided with those of Prague. The report also stated that

Czechoslovak Intelligence had utilised Cabral to influence Kwame Nkrumah in exile. Regular contact lasted only until 1970, and declined because Cabral was rarely in Conakry.<sup>76</sup>

Overall, by the late 1960s Czechoslovak Intelligence had given up on the idea of using Cabral for intelligence tasks. Still, they were keen to present their relationship as ‘special’ and reported on its successes. As Czechoslovakia emerged out of self-imposed isolation in the early 1970s, it is perhaps unsurprising that Prague decided to ‘revamp’ this special relationship. It is impossible to predict how the relationship would have developed if Cabral had not been murdered in January 1973. However, Czechoslovakia maintained a close relationship with the PAIGC. Once Guinea-Bissau became an independent country in 1974, KSČ and the PAIGC signed a number of agreements on trade and technical cooperation between Czechoslovakia and Guinea-Bissau. Czechoslovakia internal security continued to dominate cooperation between both countries, as Prague to provide training in security and intelligence for cadres from Guinea-Bissau.<sup>77</sup>

### **Conclusion**

The story of ‘D.S. SEKRETÁŘ’ illuminates the aims and tactics of Czechoslovak policy in Africa during the Cold War. Czechoslovak Intelligence developed contacts with Cabral at a time of rapidly expanding competition in Africa. Their aim was to build up a network of clandestine contacts, often in cooperation with the Soviets, during a period when socialist countries still lacked expertise about the continent. Cold War considerations chimed with ideological concerns as Cabral’s Marxist views and personal charisma made him a trustworthy partner for Czechoslovak Intelligence. Prague’s close relationship with Cabral and the PAIGC thus cannot be fully understood without taking full account of the clandestine connection. By offering aid to the PAIGC in 1961, Prague aimed to solidify what they believed was a special intelligence relationship with Cabral. To junior and medium-level intelligence officers, Cabral’s ‘recruitment’ as a ‘clandestine contact’ also offered opportunities for self-advancement and promotions. In this particular occasion, Cabral’s first case officer, Miroslav Adámek, played an early important role of mediator between Cabral

and the Czechoslovak leadership.

The dynamics of the relationship also highlights the previously unknown side of Cabral's diplomacy. Cabral began a relationship with Czechoslovak Intelligence for pragmatic reasons—to obtain support for the PAIGC. In 1960 the PAIGC was an unknown movement with limited international support, forced to struggle against rival organisations based in Conakry and Dakar, Senegal. To solidify leadership status, the PAIGC required external support to launch an armed struggle, only obtainable from the socialist countries. Benefits to the PAIGC proved to be significant. Although it is impossible to estimate the full extent of Czechoslovak assistance in monetary terms, Prague became one of the first regular suppliers of arms and cash to the PAIGC in the early 1960s. Czechoslovakia also became the main provider of training for security and intelligence cadres for the PAIGC—in Conakry and Prague. Meanwhile, Cabral retained the last word over matters of military and political strategy in Guinea-Bissau. Maintaining clandestine contacts with Czechoslovak Intelligence thus did not preclude Cabral from being an independent African leader who managed to shape the relationship to his advantage.

This story also sheds light on the role of 'human intelligence' during the Cold War in Africa. Like their Western counterparts, the socialist countries were keen to deploy secret intelligence to fight the Cold War in Africa, often complementing their diplomatic efforts. As European empires withdrew from Africa, they did not leave behind strong institutions able to deal with the influx of rival Western and Eastern intelligence agencies. Without systems of control firmly in place, it was often easier for rival intelligence services to clandestine contacts in postcolonial Africa. As the case of 'D.S. SEKRETÁŘ' shows, Czechoslovak Intelligence attempted to use 'clandestine contacts' like Cabral for a multitude of purposes: to gather information; help arrange covert action operations; and establish contacts with African leaders. In the context of the Global Cold War, human intelligence was a potentially powerful tool for a 'peripheral actor' like Czechoslovakia, offering opportunities to exert influence with limited costs.

However, we should not overestimate the significance of 'human intelligence'.

Although Czechoslovak Intelligence made a big deal of their contacts with 'D.S. SEKRETÁŘ', these clandestine contacts gave Prague little power over the PAIGC, and few advantages. In terms of information sharing, Cabral rarely went beyond relaying his own personal opinions about people and events. The same held true for Cabral's role in relation to Kwame Nkrumah after 1966. Although the Czechoslovaks attempted to employ Cabral to find men for 'special operations', he managed to consistently avoid these requests without any adverse consequences for himself. By 1969, even Czechoslovak Intelligence themselves acknowledged that the relationship with 'D.S. SEKRETÁŘ' was mainly based on Cabral's status and that it was neither practical nor advisable to use Cabral for day-to-day operations. While Czechoslovak Intelligence ran 'D.S. SEKRETÁŘ' on paper, in reality Cabral obtained substantial support from Prague without giving much in return. And although the intelligence services often believed that human intelligence would wield significant benefits in the Cold War struggle, these were often complex and multi-sided relationships with shifting power dynamics. In this case, Cabral was a man who skilfully used international diplomacy for the advantage of his movement, thus securing the support that would allow the PAIGC to succeed in their independence struggle.

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Notes

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<sup>1</sup> M. ALTR to Barák (Ministry of the Interior), 21 June 1961, 'Věc: návrh na verbovku SEKRETÁŘE z Portugalské Guineje', A[rchiv] B[ezpečnostních] S[ložek v Prahe]-43197/000.

<sup>2</sup> On the role of Czechoslovakia in Africa, see: Philip E. Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa, 1945-1968* (Baringstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Petr Zidek and Karel Sieber, *Československo a subsaharská Afrika v letech 1948-1989* (Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2007). Zidek and Seiber were the first to discuss Cabral's involvement with the Czechoslovak Intelligence.

<sup>3</sup> Patrick Chabal, *Amílcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership and People's War*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 29-31.

<sup>4</sup> Although conventional narratives date the foundation of the PAIGC to 19 September 1956, Julião Soares Sousa argues that Cabral established the organisation in 1959. See: Julião Soares Sousa, *Amílcar Cabral (1924-1973): Vida e morta de um revolucionario africano* (Coimbra: Edicao de Autor, 2016), 185-89.

<sup>5</sup> Patrick Chabal, *Amílcar Cabral: Revolutionary Leadership and People's War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Ronald H. Chilcote, *Amílcar Cabral's Revolutionary Theory and Practice: A Critical Guide* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991); Reiland Rabaka, *Concepts of Cabralism: Amílcar Cabral and Africana Critical Theory* (London: Lexington Books, 2015); Firoze Manji and Bill Fletcher Jr (eds), *Claim No Easy Victories: The Legacy of Amílcar Cabral* (CODESRIA, 2013); P. Khalil Saucier, *A Luta Continua: (Re)Introducing Amílcar Cabral to a New Generation of Thinkers* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2016).

<sup>6</sup> Piero Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Mustafah Dhada, *Warriors at Work: How Guinea was Really Set Free* (Niwtot: University Press of Colorado, 1993); Sousa, *Amílcar Cabral*.

<sup>7</sup> T. Smith, 'New Bottles for New Wine: A Pericentric Framework for the Study of the Cold War', *Diplomatic History*, xxiv (2000), 567-91.

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<sup>8</sup> Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> F. Cooper, 'Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History', *The American Historical Review*, xcix (1994), 1533. For examples of new literature on liberation movements and their transnational connections, see: J. Alexander, J. McGregor & B. Tendi, 'The Transnational Histories of Southern African Liberation Movements: An Introduction', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, xliii (2017), 1-12; H. Sapire, 'Liberation Movements, Exile and International Solidarity: An Introduction', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, iiiiv (2009), 271-86; Lena Dallywater, Chris Saunders, Helder Adegar Fonseca (eds), *Southern African Liberation Movements and the Global Cold War 'East' Transnational Activism 1960-1990* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Frances Stonor Saunders, *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Grant Books, 2000); Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Richard James Aldrich, *The Hidden Hand: Britain, America, and Cold War Secret Intelligence* (John Murray, 2006); For a useful if somewhat outdated review of the field, see: R. Gartoff, 'Foreign Intelligence and the Historiography of the Cold War', *Journal of Cold War Studies*, vi (2004), 21-56.

<sup>11</sup> For memoirs of Soviet officers, see: Oleg Gordievsky, *Next Stop Execution: The Autobiography of Oleg Gordievsky* (London: Macmillan, 1995); Vadim Kirpichenko, *Razvedka: Litsa i Lichnosti* (Moscow: Geya, 1998); Viktor Cherkashin and Gregory Feifer, *Spy Handler: Memoir of a KGB Officer—The True Story of the Man Who Recruited Robert Hanssen and Aldrich Ames* (New York: Basic Books, 2005). On East German Intelligence in the Third World, see: Markus Wolf and Anne McElvoy, *The Man Without a Face* (New York: PublicAffairs, 1997); Jeffrey Herf, *Udeclared Wars with Israel: East Germany and the West German Far Left, 1967-1989* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 2016); Hennie van Vuuren, *Apartheid Guns and Money: A Tale of Profit* (Hurst & Company: London, 2018). For books, based on Vasilii Mitrokhin's archive, see: Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The World Was Going Our Way: The KGB and the Battle for the Third World:*

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*Newly Revealed Secrets from the Mitrokhin Archive* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive II: The KGB in the World* (London: Allen Lane, 2005); Jonathan Haslam, *Near and Distant Neighbours: A New History of Soviet Intelligence* (OUP: Oxford, 2015).

<sup>12</sup> S. Shpiro, 'KGB Human Intelligence Operations in Israel 1948-73', *Intelligence and National Security*, xxvi (2011), 864-85; D. Richterova, 'The anxious host: Czechoslovakia and Carlos the Jackal 1978-1986', *The International History Review*, xl (2018), 108-32; Natalia Telepneva, 'Cold War on the Cheap: Soviet and Czechoslovak Intelligence in the Congo, 1960-1963' in Philip Muehlenbeck and Natalia Telepneva (eds), *Warsaw Pact Intervention in the 'Third World': Aid and Influence in the Cold War* (London: IB Tauris, 2018), 125-142; Calder Walton, *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War, and the Twilight of Empire* (London: William Collins, 2014); Rory Cormac, *Confronting the Colonies: British Intelligence and Counterinsurgency* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>13</sup> See, for example: Rui Duarte Silva, 'Chissano confirma colaboração com o KGB', *Expresso*, 8 April 2016, available at <https://expresso.pt/internacional/2016-04-08-Chissano-confirma-colaboracao-com-o-KGB>.

<sup>14</sup> A[rchiv] B[ezpečnostních] S[ložek v Prahe]-[Archivní protokol agenturně operativních svazků 'Amilcar Cabral 'Sekretář'] 43197.

<sup>15</sup> 'Arquivo Amilcar Cabral' at 'Casa Comum: Desenvolvido Fundação Mario Soares', at [http://casacomum.org/cc/arquivos?set=e\\_2617#!e\\_2652](http://casacomum.org/cc/arquivos?set=e_2617#!e_2652)

<sup>16</sup> Alexander Fursenko and Timothy Naftali, *Khrushchev's Cold War: The Inside Story of an American Adversary* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2006), 57; Sergey Khrushchev, *Nikita Khrushchev: Creation of a Superpower* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000).

<sup>17</sup> Csaba Békés, 'The Warsaw Pact and the Helsinki Process, 1965-1970', in Wilfried Loth and Georges-Henri Soutou (eds), *The Making of Détente: Eastern and Western Europe in the Cold War, 1965-75*, (London: Routledge, 2010), 201-210.

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<sup>18</sup> Peter Blazek and Pavel Žáček, 'Czechoslovakia', in Krzysztof Persak and Lukasz Kaminski (eds), *A Handbook of the Communist Security Apparatus in East Central Europe, 1944-1989*, (Warsaw: Institute of National Remembrance, 2005), 154-56.

<sup>19</sup> Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa*, 91-95.

<sup>20</sup> Leonid Mlechin, *Zheleznyi Shurik* (Moscow: Eksmo, 2004).

<sup>21</sup> Blazek and Žáček, 'Czechoslovakia', 105. Czechoslovak Intelligence employed only one hundred men in 1950, but the number rose to 520 in 1957, 930 four years later and 1,236 in January 1968, of whom 352 were stationed abroad.

<sup>22</sup> Pavel Žáček, 'Czechoslovak and Soviet State Security Against the West Before 1968', unpublished paper presented at the *Contours of Legitimacy in Central Europe: New Approaches in Graduate Studies* conference (European Studies Centre, St. Antony's College Oxford, 2002).

<sup>23</sup> On the details of the operation, see Telepneva, 'Cold War on the Cheap', 125-48.

<sup>24</sup> There are two version of this code name in the documents: ALTER and ALTR. Both refer to the same person.

<sup>25</sup> Personal File of Miroslav Adámek, ABS-4143 (Miroslav Adámek)

<sup>26</sup> ALTR, 23 Nov. 1960, 'Amilcar CABRAL/Abdel Djassi/-navázání styku', ABS-43197/000.

<sup>27</sup> ALTER (Conakry), 14 Jan. 1961, 'Záznam ze schůzky', ABS 43197/000.

<sup>28</sup> José Vicente Lopes, *Aristides Pereira: Minha Vida, Nossa História* (Lisboa: Spleen, 2012), 96.

<sup>29</sup> Vaclav David (Minister of Foreign Affairs) to Antonín Novotný, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, Archiv ÚV KSČ, f[ond] 1261/0/44, Kancelář 1. tajemníka ÚV KSČ Antonína Novotného-II. část (KSČ/ÚV/ANII), inv[entární číslo] 394, k[arton] 166.

<sup>30</sup> Miller (head of the First Directorate, I. Správa MV [I.S. MV]) to Barák (Minister of the Interior), 27 March 1961, ABS, 43197/000. In the original document, he still used the earlier name for the organisation—PAI.

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<sup>31</sup> ALTER to Barák, 21 June 1961, 'Věc: návrh na verbovku SEKRETÁŘE z Portugalské Guineje', ABS-43197/000.

<sup>32</sup> On US policy, see: Witney Schneidman, *Engaging Africa: Washington and the Fall of Portugal's Colonial Empire* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2004), 22-28; José Freire Antunes, 'Kennedy, Portugal, and the Azores Base, 1961', in Douglas Brinkley and Richard Griffiths (eds), *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Nonaligned World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999), 148-68. On the Soviet Union, see: Vladimir Shubin, *The Hot 'Cold War': The U.S.S.R in Southern Africa* (London: Pluto Press, 2008).

<sup>33</sup> 'Record of proceedings between the Soviet KGB and the Interior Ministry of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic on the expansion of intelligence cooperation', June 1961, *History and Public Policy Program Digital Archive*, ABS, <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/113217>

<sup>34</sup> V. Zubok, 'Spy vs. Spy: The KGB vs. the CIA, 1960-1962', *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 4, (1994). 29.

<sup>35</sup> David to Novotný, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, f. 1261/0/44, KSČ/ÚV/ANII, inv. 394, k.166.

<sup>36</sup> A.J. Klinghoffer, 'The Soviet View of African Socialism', *African Affairs*, lxvii (1968), 197-208.

<sup>37</sup> Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa*, 105; David to Novotný, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, f. 1261/0/44, KSČ/ÚV/ANII, inv. 394, k.166, 4.

<sup>38</sup> Alter (Conakry), 14 Aug. 1961, 'Záznam ze verbovky Sekretáře', ABS-43197/000, 16. 'PAI' or *Partido Africana da Independenza* was an early name for the PAIGC.

<sup>39</sup> Major Rivet (chief of the 8th department) to First Directorate of the Ministry of Interior, Regarding the proposal of the promotion in the rank of captain from 1961 until 30.3.1963, ABS, 'ALTER' 119.

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<sup>40</sup> A. Janovec (Náčelník Ústřední školy MV F.E. Dzeržinského Praha [ÚŠ MV]) – I.správa MV [I.S. MV], 22.12.1961, ‘Závěrečná zpráva o kursu PG’, ABS-*Národ.osvob.hnutí tzv.Portugalské Guinee* 11853/102 [11853].

<sup>41</sup> Vasiliy Mitrokhin (ed), *KGB Lexicon: The Soviet Intelligence Officers Handbook* (London: Frank Cass, 2002), 13.

<sup>42</sup> ‘PLÁN PRÁCE: PORTUGALSKÁ GUINEA’, 8 Jan. 1962, ABS-11853/000, 40.

<sup>43</sup> Václavík (Conakry), 10 Nov. 1962, ‘Současná politicko-vojen. situace Port. Guinei’, ABS-43197/020.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid; J. Houska (head of I.S. MV) to L. Štrougal (Minister of the Interior), 29 Dec. 1962, ABS-11853/103.

<sup>45</sup> Gleijeses, *Conflicting Missions*, 196-99.

<sup>46</sup> Peták (Conakry), 10 Feb. 1968, ‘Věc: SEKRETAR: schůzka po návratu z Dakaru’. ABS-43197/020.

<sup>47</sup> UV KSČ, 1 June 1965, ‘Usnesení: 112 schůzě předsednictva UV KSČ ze dne června 1965’, Národní Archiv, f. 1261/0/44, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, inv. 394, ka.166; UV KSČ, 9 Dec. 1966, ‘Pomoc Straně africké nezávislosti tzv. Portugalské Guineje’, Národní Archiv, f. 1261/0/44, KSČ-ÚV-ANII, inv. 394, ka.166.

<sup>48</sup> On Polda’s file, see: ABS-6125-*František Polda* (13.6.1925).

<sup>49</sup> The figures come from Russian archival sources. See: Kulikov to CC CPSU, July 18 1973, ‘O VNEZHNEI DEYATELNOSTI AFRIKANSKOI PARTII NEZAVISIMOSTI GVINEI I OSTROVOV ZELENOGO MYSA’, R[ossiiskii G[osudarstvennyi] A[rkhiv] N[oveishei] I[storii], f[ond]. 5, op[is]. 66, d[elo]. 1190, 133.

<sup>50</sup> Robert B. Rakove, *Kennedy, Johnson, and the Nonaligned World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 77-88; Roy Allison, *The Soviet Union and the Strategy of Non-Alignment in the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 81.

<sup>51</sup> Šuster (deputy head of I.S. MV) to Miller (head of I.S. MV), 29 Aug. 1961, ‘Věc: agent SEKRETÁŘ – vyslání na bělehradskou konferenci, ABS, 43197/000.

<sup>52</sup> Václavík, 20 Sept. 1961, ‘Záznam’, ABS-43197/000, 73-76.

<sup>53</sup> ‘PLÁN PRÁCE: PORTUGALSKÁ GUINEA’, 8 Jan. 1962, ABS-11853/000; J. Houska to Koudrna (Minister of the Interior), 24 May 1965, ‘Záznam o jednání ministra nitra soudruha

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Kudrny s Amilcarem CABRALEM, generálním tajemníkem PAIGC', ABS-43197/000, 207-211; Peták (Conakry), 8 Sept. 1966, 'Věc: Názory SEKRETÁŘe na FRELIMO', ABS-43197/020, 101.

<sup>54</sup> I.S. MV, 8th department, 19 Aug. 1963, 'PLÁN PRÁCE: Portugalská Guinea na rok 1963-1964', ABS, 11853/000, 82-83.

<sup>55</sup> J. Houska (head of I.S. MV) to L. Štrougal (Miniter of the Interior), 23 Oct. 1963, 'Věc: zpráva o jednání se SEKRETÁŘem v ČSSR ve dnech 8.-14.10.1963', ABS, 43197/000, 155-162.

<sup>56</sup> Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa*, 168.

<sup>57</sup> On African students in Czechoslovakia, see: Muehlenbeck, *Czechoslovakia in Africa*, 168-76. On African students in the USSR, see M. Matusevich, 'Testing the Limits of Soviet Internationalism: African Students in the Soviet Union', in Philip Muehlenbeck (ed), *Race, Ethnicity, and the Cold War: A Global Perspective* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012), 155-159; J. Hessler, 'Death of an African Student in Moscow: Race, Politics, and the Cold War', *Cahiers du Monde russe*, xlvii (2006), 33-63; S. Guillory, 'Culture Clash in the Socialist Paradise: Soviet Patronage and African Students' Urbanity in the Soviet Union, 1960-1965', *Diplomatic History*, xxxviii (2014), 271-81.

<sup>58</sup> Rivet (Prague), 21 May 1965, 'K požadavku II. správý MV', ABS-43197/020, 81.

<sup>59</sup> Prague, 4 May 1962, 'SEKRETÁŘ', ABS-11853/000, 179.

<sup>60</sup> I.S. MV, 4th department-L. Štrougal (Minister of the Interior), 8 Dec. 1964, 'Věc: scučasná situace v akci GOLD-návrhy na opatření', ABS-11566/102, 62-68.

<sup>61</sup> Mařík (Prague), 'Záznam ze schůzky se SEKRETÁŘem dne 2.2.1966', 23 February 1966', ABS-43197/020, 110.

<sup>62</sup> David to Novotný, 20 July 1961, Národní Archiv, f. 1261/0/44, KSČ/ÚV/ANII, inv. 394, k.166.

<sup>63</sup> J. Janouš (I.S. MV, 4th department), 1966, 'PAIGC – stručné shrnutí konsultací', ABS-11853/011, 62.

<sup>64</sup> 'PAIGC-podklady pro jednání s rozvědkou NDR', 30 May 1967, ABS-11853/011, 166.

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<sup>65</sup> Blazek and Žázek, 'Czechoslovakia', 105. I thank Daniela Richterova for drawing my attention to this point.

<sup>66</sup> Peták (Conakry) to Prague, 14 May 1966, ABS-43197/020.

<sup>67</sup> J. Janouš (I.S. MV, 4th department), 25 Nov. 1966, 'Do svodky pro soudruha ministra', ABS, 43197/020, 118, 121.

<sup>68</sup> J. Janouš (I.S. MV, 4th department), 13 Feb. 1967, 'Zpráva o jednání s Amilcarem CABRALEM', ABS-43197/020.

<sup>69</sup> Peták (Conakry), 26 Feb. 1968, 'Sekretář – schůzka s Nkrumahem', ABS-43197/020.

<sup>70</sup> On operation ALEX, see N. Telepneva, 'Saving Ghana's Revolution: The Demise of Kwame Nkrumah and the Evolution of Soviet policy in Africa, 1966-1972', *The Journal of Cold War Studies*, xx (2018), 4-25.

<sup>71</sup> Vašata (I.S. MV, 4th department), 1 February 1968, 'Vyhodnocení spolupráce od 1.3.1967-1.2.1968', ABS, 43197/000, 22.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Pechacek (Conakry), 28 January 1969, ABS-11853.

<sup>74</sup> Dokonal, 'Kádrová charakteristika', ABS-6125.

<sup>75</sup> For the first written account of Cabral's murder, see: Oleg Ignat'ev, "Kto ubil Amilkar Kabrala: Reportazh iz Gvinei [Bisau] [Who Killed Amilcar Cabral: A Report from Guinea (Bissau)]," *Pravda*, March 6, 1973, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Z. Lensky (I. Sprava FMV adbor 47), 24 Aug. 1973, 'Vyhodnocení spolupráce s důvěrným stykem SEKRETÁŘ', ABS-43197/000, 25-26.

<sup>77</sup> Petr Zídek and Karel Sieber, *Československo a subsaharská Afrika v letech 1948-1989* (Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, 2007), 97-99.