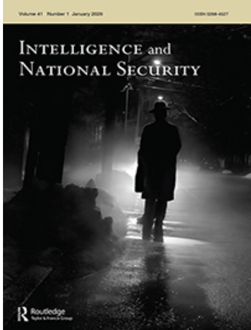

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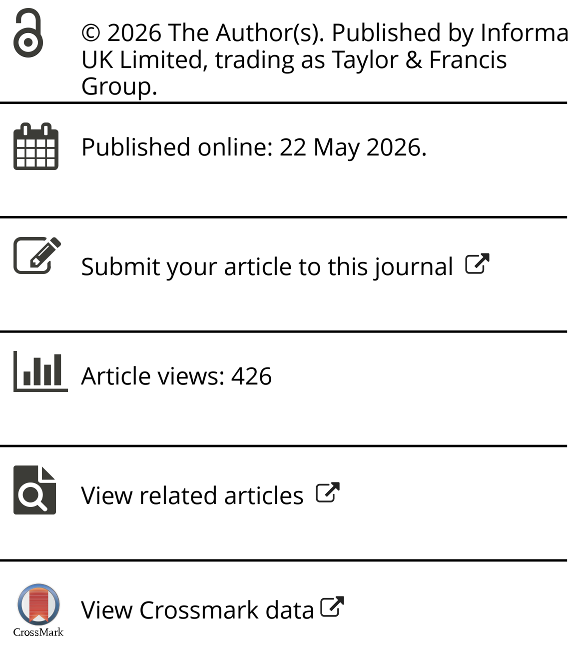

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Unveiling state secrets to occupying forces: interwar intelligence activities in the Baltic Sea region through the lens of the NKVD/NKGB interrogations, 1940–1942

Mika Suonpää and Zoé Allen-Mercier

ABSTRACT
This article examines interwar intelligence activities in the Baltic Sea region through the NKVD/NKGB interrogations of high-ranking Estonian political police officers in 1940–1942. The study reflects critically on Soviet interrogation reports as historical sources, concurrently arguing that they are instrumental since the material of the Estonian political police was destroyed in 1939–40. New insights are provided into the use of agents, Estonian military intelligence targeting the Soviet Union, the role of Russian émigrés in MI6's operations, Estonian, Finnish, and Latvian intelligence cooperation, and the use of a notable Baltic German agent in countering Nazi-German influence operations and Estonian far-right subversion.

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In September 1939, shortly after the signing of the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact and the Soviet invasion of Poland, the Soviet Union pressured Estonia into ratifying a mutual assistance agreement and allowing the establishment of Soviet military bases on its territory. On 17 June 1940, the Red Army swept into Estonia. Roughly a month later, a new socialist government was formed. Shortly thereafter, the government approved Estonia's entry into the Soviet Union and the country's proclamation as the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (ESSR). Estonia's national elite was immediately detained through a wave of arrests by the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*Narodnyy komissariat vnutrennikh del* or the NKVD). The NKVD's duties included political surveillance, internal security, supervision of political trials, administration of prison and forced labour camps (Gulag), and border security. This first wave of arrests targeted former political leaders, members of the political police, police officers, senior military personnel, judges, and leaders of the right-wing organisation Eesti Kaitseliit. Between June and December 1940, a total of 1034 arrests were made, followed by thousands more in 1941, when anyone suspected of anti-Soviet activities was apprehended.[1] Several prominent political police officers were arrested during the first wave. They included the former director Johan Sooman (1889–1942), his successor Konstantin Kirsimägi as well as other high-ranking officers Julius Edesalu, Rein Täht, Villem Tamm, and Tanel Võhma. The NKVD arrested Sooman on 28 August 1940 for leading an 'active struggle' against the Estonian

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revolutionary movement. The charges of cooperating with the intelligence services of the United Kingdom, Germany, and other countries were later added to the indictment.[2]

This article examines what the NKVD files on Sooman and his associates reveal about intelligence activities in the Baltic Sea region during the interwar period. When analysing the interrogations of Sooman, Kirsimägi, Edesalu, Täht, Tamm, and Võhma, attention will be paid to corroboration, inconsistencies and contradictions in their testimonies. Information in these files will be studied alongside previous research on the topic and other archival sources. These include the material of the Finnish political police (Etsivä keskuspoliisi or EK) held at National Archives of Finland as well as the declassified Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) historical files. Finnish archival sources consist, for example, of memoranda of the inaugural conference of the Estonian, Finnish, and Latvian political police directors held in Helsinki in 1925. The CIA material is used to track Russian émigrés involved in anticommunist espionage. Six Russian émigré agents featured in the files but only one of them, Boris Chetverukhin, yielded results in the CIA archive.[3]

The information collected by the NKVD in the interrogations is significant because the material of the Estonian political police was destroyed. In November 1940, Kirismägi stated during his interrogation that the Minister of the Interior, August Tenson, ordered in September 1939 – amidst the negotiations for the mutual assistance pact – to burn the political police's investigative case files dealing with anticommunist operations, secret correspondence, and reports on the revolutionary movement. The remaining archival material – including documents related to agent handling – were destroyed in mid-July 1940.[4]

Estonian historians have written abundantly about interwar diplomacy and security policies but Sooman's role and his testimonies to the NKVD have not been examined in detail. This is somewhat surprising because he was the central figure in Estonian intelligence history for nearly twenty years. The most significant book in this field is Magnus Ilmjärv's *Silent Submission* (2004), which explores the political and diplomatic history of all three Baltic states from the mid-1920s to 1940. Ilmjärv uses the NKVD material extensively and cites the interrogation reports of all senior Estonian political and military figures. However, he does not treat Sooman and his associates' interrogations as primary sources for investigating Baltic intelligence history but rather uses them as testimonies detailing Estonian diplomacy in the difficult situation which began in the autumn of 1939.[5] Latvian historiography has focused on Latvian political police's surveillance of Baltic German groups in Latvia and anti-Semitic organisations as well as on Soviet intelligence activities in the country.[6] Several non-Baltic historians have also previously studied similar topics, most notably Keith Jeffery in his official history of the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS/MI6), and a number of Finnish historians.[7] The article continues the recent historiographical 'turn' where the KGB's archival materials located in different countries have been used as sources for analysing the evolution of intelligence practices during the Cold War.[8] This article discusses, through the lens of the NKVD interrogations, interwar intelligence activities in Estonia, Estonian military intelligence operations in the Soviet-Estonian border region and in the Soviet Union, MI6's role in the intelligence history of the Baltic Sea area, and Estonian anti-German counterintelligence operations. At the end of

the article, a short analysis of successes and failures of the different agencies involved will be offered.

NKVD interrogation reports as historical source material

Historians have long debated the value of the NKVD's interrogation material as historical sources. Their reliability has been questioned due to the use of coercive interrogation methods and the possibility that the NKVD officers falsified their content.[9] Thus, the NKVD's interrogation reports have often been entirely discarded. At times, their use has provoked public outcry, which illustrates their political sensitivity.[10] Investigative methods of Soviet security agencies under Stalin are infamous for their ruthlessness and extra-judicial character. Although physical coercion was officially banned until the first half of the 1930s, and again in 1939, these practices nevertheless endured – especially among regional and lower-ranked NKVD officers weary of securing their professional position and promotions – and were particularly used against prisoners of the annexed territories during the Second World War. Psychological coercion, including humiliation, black-mail, and exhaustion, was another common tool for extracting confessions. Moreover, inhumane conditions of detention contributed to the forceful extraction of confessions. In Estonia, most investigations were conducted locally by the NKVD of the ESSR, which was established on 29 August 1940 with headquarters in Tallinn, and four regional units operating across the country.[11] The Estonian NKVD's personnel was appointed directly by the NKVD of the Soviet Union and mostly staffed with officers with work experience from the time of the Great Terror.[12] After being arrested, the detainees were first held in county prisons and then sent to Tallinn to the NKVD's main security office on Pagari street, a facility known for its harsh conditions. Towards the end of the interrogation phase, they were transferred to Patarei prison for sentencing. After this, the prisoners were transported to labour camps in the remote regions of the Soviet Union.[13]

However, the NKVD interrogation files have proven to be valuable for research, if used with critical discernment and in combination with other sources. Through corroboration of supplementary sources, the interrogation reports of Baltic political leaders, for example, have at times proven quite reliable.[14] When assessing the reliability of such material, it is important to consider the nature of the investigative cases. While most cases were handled with the aim of expediently preparing an unequivocally incriminating file for judicial authorities, others were intended for detailed information gathering on the adversaries' operations and methods. In such cases, investigators sought to obtain truthful and thorough information that was not always directly related to the charges. As coercive methods were notorious for producing false confessions, which was one the motives for their ban, investigators were less likely to resort to such tactics. This was particularly clear in the Sooman case.

The cases examined in this article were not handled by local NKVD authorities but transferred immediately to Moscow, where the interrogations were carried out by the Main Directorate of State Security (*Glavnoe upravlenie gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti* or GUGB), the highest intelligence gathering body of the Soviet NKVD. From February 1941 onwards, the interrogations were conducted by the newly established People's Commissariat for State Security (*Narodny komissariat gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti* or the NKGB), following the transformation of the GUGB into a unit separate

from the NKVD. Information collected in the context of the war was particularly significant as it served the purpose of uncovering the activities and connections of anti-Soviet organisations and individuals throughout the Baltics, and the operations of the German forces. The Sooman investigation began on his arrest in August 1940 and stretched to February 1942, leading to an investigative file comprising of eleven volumes. The investigation was extended several times, with requests for additional time addressed to the Soviet state prosecutor. The requests for extensions were based on the claim that Sooman's counterrevolutionary 'criminal activities' had not yet been 'fully revealed'.[15] In the summer of 1941, Sooman was transferred to Usollag prison camp in the Perm oblast, where the interrogations continued under the NKVD's Usol camp's operational counterrevolution department, the UNKVD.[16]

Although it is impossible to rule out the use of coercive methods – especially after Sooman's transfer to the Usollag camp – he apparently responded openly and extensively to the interrogators' questions and urged his fellow detainees to do the same. In October 1940, when interrogated together with Kirsimägi, Sooman stated that as 'Estonia came under Soviet rule and joined the Soviet Union' it was 'necessary to tell the truth to Soviet power' and strongly advised Kirsimägi 'to tell openly and without hiding' everything he knew.[17] Sooman's alleged motives were also detailed in a January 1941 report by an NKVD agent codenamed 'Zamjatin'. According to the report, Sooman described his own activities as follows:

> the political police have carried out espionage against the Soviet Union . . . I do not consider my past activities to be criminal, for I fulfilled my duty in the same way as they [NKVD] fulfil their own duty in their own work . . . the investigation claims that I hid something, even though I did not actually do so.[18]

One important non-coercive investigation method was to accuse the detainee of lying with the support of the interrogator's claimed prior knowledge of the case in question – whether real or not. In the case of Sooman, the files clearly indicate much prior knowledge of the Baltic states' intelligence agencies, which was probably obtained through the Soviet Union's own intelligence channels or in other interrogations. In such cases, NKVD interrogators were more likely to detect false information.

Domestic and military intelligence

Estonian political police began its operations in May 1920 with the opening of the Internal Security Service Headquarters in Tallinn. The agency was in effect built from scratch and the staff was mainly composed of former military officers. After several short-term appointments, Sooman started as chief at the beginning of 1923 and held the position until his promotion to police commissioner in 1938 when he was replaced by Kirsimägi. Since Estonia did not have a separate foreign intelligence service, the internal security service's agenda in the interwar period included several different tasks and targets: to combat the subversive and unconstitutional activities of leftwing and right-wing extremist individuals and organisations; counter espionage by foreign states; investigate desertion and smuggling; and prevent terrorism and other serious crime. Domestic communism as well as Soviet espionage and subversion were the main targets. To counter these perceived threats more efficiently, Sooman sought to modernise the

agency's working methods.[19] The ultimate strategic aim of Estonian intelligence was to find ways of uncovering and foiling schemes seeking to undermine the country's independence.

The communist party was banned in Estonia but the communists had several members of parliament representing various other political parties.[20] For Sooman, the 1923 parliamentary elections and the failed communist coup attempt in December 1924 demonstrated that communism continued to have significant appeal among the Estonian people.[21] Thus, in his view, the political police had to take 'radical action'.[22] Whether deliberate or not, this was a misrepresentation of the situation. The communists attracted some support in Estonia following the wars of independence (1918–1920) but after the failed coup attempt, their popularity fell. In the Riigikogu elections of 1926 and 1929, communists secured only six seats.[23] Moreover, the attempted uprising was limited to Tallinn, lacked support from both the Estonian army and the working population, and was defeated in just a few hours. 155 of those who participated were sentenced to death.[24]

The broad outlines of Estonian political policing have been discussed in previous research.[25] However, a thorough examination of the interrogation reports will add important details and new interpretations on how the operations were ran in practice. The intelligence activities targeting domestic communists and the Soviet Union included the use of agents and covert information gathering on Estonian workers organisations, Estonian communists and Comintern officials, and the Red Army. Military intelligence at the Estonia-Soviet Union border region was collected in cooperation with the Second Department of the general staff of the Estonian army. The agents were mainly recruited from within the workers' organisations, and some of them in the prisons. They were instructed to behave discreetly to thwart 'accusations of provocation' directed at the political police. The agents ran their own networks of sub-agents who conducted surveillance and analysed compromising material found on suspected revolutionaries. The political police also intercepted correspondence and infiltrated provocateurs within the workers' movement and the trade unions to spread anticommunist propaganda and 'sow suspicion'. In addition to agents, Sooman stressed the importance of the paramilitary organisation Eesti Kaitseliit in the surveillance of communists.[26]

Kaitseliit's role strengthened concurrently with the dwindling of communism's appeal after 1924. Kaitseliit was founded in 1918 and was responsible for maintaining internal security. At its highest, its membership numbered nearly 43,000.[27] Kaitseliit's members were nationalistic and militaristic, and the organisation only accepted 'trustworthy individuals' who had been vetted by the political police.[28] During the German occupation of Estonia in 1941–1944, many former members of the Kaitseliit joined the Omakaitse force, a Nazi-German controlled unit consisting at its peak of over 40,000 members. Omakaitse's purpose was to 'cleanse' Estonia of communists and other 'undesirable' elements, including Jews and Roma.[29]

Agent recruitment and handling followed a similar pattern in military intelligence and in intelligence operations planned inside the Soviet Union. The political police recruited train conductors and Soviet citizens at the border region and transferred agents from Estonia across the border. The agents sent to the Soviet Union attempted to infiltrate party organs, establish relations with Estonian émigrés, and subvert the Comintern. Defectors and exposed Soviet agents were also important

sources of information.[30] The agents also collected information on the conditions in the border region, the weaponry and personnel of the Border Guard agency, defectors, maps of the border villages, movements and weaponry of the military units stationed near the border, activities of White Russians still living in the Soviet Union, construction work and troop movements on the border, and the activities of suspected Soviet spies.[31]

These activities possibly occurred over a period ranging from 1921 to the mid-1930s, a period of particularly high rate of border crossings and arrests. In February 1920, under the terms of the Tartu Peace Treaty, Estonian émigrés living in Soviet Russia were granted the permission to resettle in Estonia. Between 1921 and 1923, some 40,000 people were successfully repatriated, among them several agitators and Soviet spies.[32] The period from 1919 to 1924 was also notable for cross-border contraband traffic. Smuggling had been largely tolerated by both countries for the immense profits it generated. However, smuggling also facilitated the mutual flow of spies and subversive agents. Although Estonian authorities clamped down on contraband following the attempted coup in 1924, total prevention of smuggling proved unachievable.[33]

Kirsimägi claimed that the agents' work turned out to be an 'excellent success'.[34] This may or may not have been the case. The year 1921 marked the beginning of the first wide-ranging and long-term Soviet disinformation and conspiratorial campaign organised by the 'mysterious' and 'spectacularly successful' clandestine organisation, the Trust. This organisation had two aims: to deceive monarchist Russian émigré groups and to mislead foreign intelligence services by feeding them false information that exaggerated Soviet military capabilities, with the larger strategic objective of deterring western intervention in the Soviet Union. These activities were conducted through a fake organisation, the Monarchist Organisation of Central Russia (MOTsR), which allegedly had four hundred members. In reality, they did not exist. The Estonian political police was one of the first agencies the Trust targeted. MOTsR sent letters to the Supreme Monarchist Council in Berlin through the Estonian mission in Moscow. The Soviet secret police (GPU) suspected that Estonians intercepted and read these letters which were delivered in Estonian diplomatic pouches. The GPU included in these letters carefully crafted disinformation on the Red Army, which the Estonians apparently trusted. By the mid-1924, the Trust had established a connection with the Finnish EK and a relationship with the Polish intelligence service. The Trust targeted smaller but well-connected agencies first because they were seen as useful proxies for contacts with the more influential services, including MI6. The Trust's activities began to dwindle in 1927 after its finance officer, Edward Opperput, defected to Finland. However, it is not clear if he genuinely 'broke cover' or was sent by the Soviet secret police. Apparently, Opperput continued to work for Soviet intelligence until 1943, when he was shot by the Germans.[35]

In 1921, another Soviet subversive group, Sanitarya, was established in all major Estonian towns and along the border. Sanitarya was headed by a former Russian naval intelligence officer, Sergius Kalakutsky, who coordinated the infiltration of Soviet spies into the Estonian military and White émigré groups. Soviet organisations such as the Trade Delegation, the 'Dobroflot' shipping company, the Petroleum Syndicate, and the Soviet delegation also served as covers for clandestine operations. The period between 1930 and 1933 saw a significant increase of arrests for espionage. In 1933 alone, the police uncovered twenty-three cases of espionage and arrested fifty-one alleged spies.[36]

On 28 September 1939, as a direct consequence of the secret protocol in the non-aggression pact between the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, Estonia and the Soviet Union signed a treaty of mutual assistance. This resulted in the establishment of Soviet military bases in Hiiumaa, Saaremaa, and Paldiski. At the same time, the port of Tallinn was surrendered to the Soviet navy, initially for two years. The first Soviet ships arrived in Tallinn on 11 October 1939, and Soviet land forces began to reach the country about a week later. Composed of land troops, the navy, and the air force, Soviet military presence in Estonia at this stage numbered approximately 30,000.[37]

The NKVD interrogation reports suggest that in this situation the general staff of the army issued a new order stipulating that intelligence collection on the movements and numbers of Soviet troops stationed in Estonia must be intensified. More resources were granted for this, resulting in an increase of the political police personnel by 270 new posts. The reasoning behind this increase was not so much the Soviet presence itself but the fear – expressed, for example, by Kirsimägi – that the Red Army would 'activate the Estonian revolutionary movement'. As a result, new resources were allocated to the political police instead of the army. According to Võhma, consequently, the Second Department and the political police managed to monitor all telephone traffic between Soviet military bases, intercepted Soviet diplomatic cables, and read correspondence between Estonia and the Soviet Union. This work was undertaken by the political police officers of the Tallinn district branch.[38]

In November 1939, a new method for political police/Second Department interagency intelligence-gathering was adopted. Agents positioned near the Soviet military bases collected intelligence using detailed questionnaires to record information on the movement, equipment, and personnel of Soviet troops. The NKVD interrogator urged Kirsimägi to disclose the names of these agents, which he declined to do claiming lack of knowledge since the agents had been run by local police commissioners, not the political police. Sooman also refused to name the agents. Instead, Kirsimägi identified several Estonian officials who had participated in the surveillance activities. Some of them were also involved in smuggling agents into the Soviet Union.[39] Sooman insisted that intelligence gathered on Soviet troops in Estonia was not shared with other agencies. The interrogator, Benderski, refuted Sooman's claim arguing that 'the investigation has revealed that the political police and the 2nd Division . . . provided espionage material on Soviet troops to foreign intelligence services'.[40]

This was one of the clearest examples of a Soviet interrogator using prior knowledge of the case as a discursive interrogation method to discredit the interrogee's claims. In the context of the Sooman case, Zhitkov (24 July), Kirsimägi (30 July), Edesalu (12 August), and Efremov (2 September) had been interrogated before the first major interrogation of Sooman on 13 September 1940. Thus, Benderski's detailed information must have come from them. In addition, his familiarity with the case undoubtedly rested on the Soviet intelligence efforts in the Baltics during the 1920s and the 1930s.

MI6 in interwar Estonia and Latvia

One of the NKVD's main objectives was to expose the Estonian and Latvian political police organisations' connections to MI6. During the interrogations, Sooman, Kirsimägi, and Edesalu, Russian émigrés Arsenyi Zhitkov and Aleksandr Efremov,

and the director of the Latvian political police Jan Friedrichson-Skrauj disclosed information about these connections. MI6 arrived in the Baltics during the Russian Civil War. In 1920, Ronald Meiklejohn was appointed as chief of the Baltic Group which included MI6's stations in Finland, Estonia, and Latvia. Before moving to Tallinn in 1921, Meiklejohn had worked for the British army in Murmansk. The task of the Baltic Group was to collect intelligence on the Soviet Union. Helsinki was responsible for naval intelligence, Tallinn for military intelligence, and Riga for economic and political intelligence.[41] The Baltic area was immensely important for Britain's larger strategic aims. Immediately after the end of the First World War, British security agencies, including MI6, reconfigured their security threat scenarios from the old foe, Germany, towards Bolshevism, which dominated British strategic thinking for much of the twentieth century. The geographical proximity to the Soviet Union meant that the Baltic Sea area was one of the most important settings for transnational anticommunist activities. Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland were perceived in Western Europe as a bulwark against communism and Soviet expansionism. The Baltic states were therefore central in intelligence-gathering operations targeting the Soviet Union.[42] Thus, it is essential to understand the details of how these operations were run, who ran them, and what types of alliances MI6 formed in the region in efforts to contribute to the larger geostrategic aim of countering Soviet influence globally.

MI6's station in Riga was headed by a British-Italian intelligence officer, Rafael Farina, who operated under the cover of the British passport control officer from 1921 to 1931. According to Jeffery, 'of all the SIS stations in the Baltic, Riga was the most effective'. Before joining MI6, Farina had overseen the Security Service's (MI5) Russia section. The Riga station's personnel consisted, in addition to Farina, of his assistant and two secretaries. Farina's codename was FR/1. Jeffery argues that Farina managed to build 'an impressive-looking organisation' against the Soviet target, mainly due to the work of his Russian émigré agents, FR/3 and FR/4, both of whom ran their own sub-networks of a dozen or so agents. Their names remain unknown to this day. We know that FR/3 was a Russian journalist based in Riga but not his real name.[43] MI6's interwar presence in Estonia can be divided into three periods, those of Ronald Meiklejohn (1920–25); captain Ross (1926–29); and Brian Giffey (1929-at least to 1940). As the Sooman files only contain a comparatively modest number of references to Latvia, the following examines mainly MI6's role in Estonia during these three periods. Previous research has focused only on the Meiklejohn era.[44]

The cooperation between MI6 and the Estonian political police began in March 1923 after a meeting between Sooman and Meiklejohn. According to Rosenthal and Tamming, Meiklejohn sought information about the activities of Estonian communists and suggested coordination in anti-Soviet intelligence work.[45] Conversely, Sooman told the NKVD that Meiklejohn had been interested mainly in the Comintern. From the start, the Estonian political police and MI6 maintained 'regular contact'.[46] In addition to Meiklejohn, his assistant – an experienced 'Russia hand', Ernest Boyce, referred to in the NKVD files as 'Ernst Bois'– and Zhitkov, a former tsarist army officer, worked at the British passport office in Tallinn. The interrogation reports indicate that only Sooman and Tenson maintained contacts with MI6. Kirsimägi disclosed that he had 'no connections to foreign intelligence services' although he knew that the British 'passport office' was an intelligence-gathering

organisation. Edesalu suspected that Sooman and Tenson were in contact with MI6 but did not have 'concrete material' in his possession to confirm this.[47] These statements suggest that details of MI6-Estonian political police cooperation were only given to a very limited number of officers within the political police's organisational structure.

The Estonian political police forwarded intelligence to MI6 about people travelling to Britain from Estonia, the activities of the Comintern (propaganda and subversion), and information regarding the Soviet Union. Intelligence was also shared on foreigners linked to communism in Estonia.[48] Information also flowed in the other direction. At the beginning of 1924, MI6 informed Sooman that the Comintern had provided the Estonian Communist Party with large financial contributions for planning an armed uprising in Estonia.[49] The Estonian political police also helped British intelligence officers in infiltrating agents across the Soviet border.[50] In practice, this activity was handled by Boyce and Tenson with the assistance of the Narva police district chief inspector, Artur Tamm. 'We came across cases', Sooman explained,

> where the border guards arrested British agents who were returning from the Soviet Union to Estonia. When it became apparent that the detainees had connections with the 'passport department' of the British legation, they were immediately released. The police chiefs of the Estonian border regions were instructed to assist representatives and agents of the British intelligence service who were sent to the Soviet territory.[51]

During the Meiklejohn era, Russian émigré officers – such as Zhitkov, whose activities have not been considered in detail before in English-language research[52] – were important but at the same time unreliable sources of information for MI6 in the Baltic states. MI6 tended to trust White émigré agents because they were fiercely anti-Bolshevik and shared a similar worldview, for example, with MI6 officers. This trust had its disadvantages. Already during the early 1920s, MI6 discovered that émigré agents tended to fabricate information and that their information could not be verified from other sources.[53] Undoubtedly, the Trust's clandestine operations negatively impacted the quality of information MI6 received from its émigré agents.

There existed some exceptions to the rule. Zhitkov appeared to be one such exception. The NKVD files suggest that he had maintained contact with Sooman and Tenson, as well as with Edesalu, an assistant in the Tallinn subdivision of the political police.[54] Zhitkov also said that he had worked for British intelligence and revealed the names of eleven MI6 agents with whom he had been in contact.[55] Another former tsarist officer, Alexander Efremov, stated that Sooman maintained 'very close' contact with an émigré officer named Radivinovich who was a member of the All-Russian Military Union (ROVS).[56] ROVS had been founded in 1924 on the ruins of the Russian White Armies. At its largest, ROVS consisted of more than 35,000 members, making it the largest Russian émigré organisation.[57]

The situation in Tallinn resembled that of Riga.[58] Like his counterparts in Riga, Zhitkov ran his own network of sub-agents recruited among white Russian émigrés. Zhitkov's agents gathered information on the military readiness and manpower of the Soviet Baltic Fleet, the Red Army, the Kronstadt fortress, and the locations of the troops of the Leningrad Military District. Sooman listed nine MI6 agents by name who had operated in Estonia. Six of them were former tsarist officers.[59] Zhitkov contended that he received information from Sooman and Tenson 'once a month' on the communist movement in

Estonia, the work of the Comintern, and the activities of the International Red Aid (MOPR). In addition, Zhitkov obtained 'daily lists' of people travelling from the Soviet Union via Estonia to third countries and back by sea and rail. Zhitkov received intelligence reports from his agents, which he then forwarded to Meiklejohn.[60]

The actual reporting practices were also revealed in the interrogations. Before Zhitkov delivered the reports to MI6, they were translated into English and typed according to special instructions. In the upper corner of the report, a code BP for 'Baltic Province' was inserted alongside a number indicating the codename for the source of information. Meiklejohn, for example, marked his personal reports with the code BP/1.[61] This information contradicts details given in Jeffery's book. He contends that BP/1 was Ernest Boyce.[62] Information received from the Estonian political police was marked with the identifier BP/27. According to Zhitkov, MI6 also adopted the BP code in Latvia and Lithuania when reporting intelligence on the Soviet Union.[63] This seems to be another contradiction. Jeffery argues that the Riga station under Farina used the identifier FR.[64] The interrogation reports suggest that Russian émigré agents, the Second Department, and MI6 had separate relationships that did not involve the Estonian political police.[65]

Tallinn, Helsinki, and Riga were in regular and close contact outside of their relationship with MI6. These contacts must be viewed against the backdrop of alliance-building in the Baltic Sea area. In 1919–1927, the Baltic states, Finland, and Poland engaged in conference diplomacy with the intention of establishing a formal border states' alliance. These plans were scrapped in 1934 when Finland attended for the first time the conference of Scandinavian foreign ministers. In the following year, Finland announced that the country's new foreign policy orientation was Nordic neutrality.[66] Estonian and Finnish political police agencies had exchanged intelligence already in 1919–1921 through Yrjö Kares, a representative of the EK who resided in Tallinn. This early contact was followed in 1921 by a much wider endeavour when the directors of Estonian, Latvian, Finnish, and Lithuanian political police signed a cooperation agreement for exchanging intelligence on communist subversion.[67] From 1925 onwards, the representatives of Estonian, Finnish, and Latvian (and on some occasions Polish) political police met annually to discuss security issues concerning the Soviet Union and communism.[68] These meetings were held at least until 1931. The inaugural conference in November 1925 in Helsinki, which coincided with the meeting of the foreign ministers of the above-mentioned states, shows how the Baltic Sea region intelligence cooperation worked in practice, illustrates the secrecy that surrounded these meetings, and displays the somewhat undemocratic ideas expressed by some intelligence officers. The chief of the Finnish EK, Esko Riekki, wrote in Russian to Sooman after the conference that 'our decisions should not be made known to the ministers in an official way', and continued that 'it is enough if [the ministers] just familiarise themselves with the contents of the decisions'. Riekki justified his request arguing that 'if the representatives of left-wing parties become ministers, which is entirely possible, the presence of the minutes of our meetings in the government archives might arouse adverse noise among the unpractical and narrow-minded "Don Quijotes"'. He explained further that this might be the case although 'our decisions are not directed against the workers' movement in any way'.[69]

Using a well-known literary metaphor, Riekki characterised the future left-wing ministers as idealistic 'Don Quijotes' unable to see the dangers of communism and the Soviet Union. Conversely, he portrayed the Baltic Sea region state-police organisations as

pragmatic 'Sancho Panzas' ready to face the threat head-on. His comment also shows in practice that intelligence organisations sometimes wished to operate independently of the decision-makers even though political police agencies were – according to law – meant to be supporting the legislative process instead of hindering it.

The decisions Riekki referred to were listed in a top-secret additional protocol. They included the requirement for Estonian, Finnish, and Latvian state police agencies to increase the volume and speed of intelligence sharing; strengthen the assessments of the quality of information and information sources; distribute monthly reports on communism, political trials, and the press to partners; rectify false rumours circulating in the press; and report by the end of 1925 on the leading figures, their political and social attitudes, and different factions of Russian émigrés in each country. Significantly, the additional protocol stipulated that all partners should also engage in the surveillance of Russian émigrés 'outside the national borders' of Estonia, Finland, and Latvia.[70]

The Finnish political police had conducted surveillance on Russian émigrés and communists in Finland for some years before this decision was made. Thus, they had acquired experience in the field. One example from 1921 illustrates how these activities were carried out in practice. In September 1921, a Finnish officer, Kaarlo Kurko, who had served in both Pyotor Wrangel's and Nikolai Yudenich's armies during the Russian civil war, was recruited for intelligence, surveillance, and provocation duties. He infiltrated a group of Russian workers at the Helsinki dock yard and reported directly to Riekki. Kurko gathered information on the rumours circulating in the Russian émigré circles, many of whom were former tsarist officers. He stated that it was relatively easy to sow discontent between the different factions of the emigration. Kurko also uncovered that Russian officers had established a 'white guard' in Helsinki, due to be activated when the 'white armies' operations against Soviet-Russia begin'. He befriended captain Pasternak who encouraged Kurko to join general Simon's battalion in Estonia because Finland did not have a proper Russian army unit at the time. Pasternak complained that tsarist officers were treated in Finland like 'lowly hooligans' and criticised the Estonians for expressing overt 'nationalistic sentiments', such as refusing to speak Russian. According to Pasternak, Simon was 'completely trustworthy' because he 'takes his orders directly from Berlin'.[71] This perhaps referred to the conspiratorial association Aufbau: Wirtschafts-politische Vereinigung für den Osten, which brought together right-wing extremist Germans and white émigré Russians.[72] This was the only significant Berlin-based émigré organisation that was active in 1921. Thus, Pasternak's reference to a 'Berlin organisation' could not have been to ROVS or the Supreme Monarchist Council of Berlin because both were established several years later, in 1924 and 1925 respectively.

At the end of 1925, a new era dawned on the MI6-Estonian relations when Meiklejohn retired and was replaced by captain Ross. Immediately after being appointed, Ross dismissed Zhitkov 'as a result of some kind of intrigue'. A person known in the source material only as 'Panteleev' was appointed to replace Zhitkov.[73] Neither of these developments were discussed in detail in the interrogations. Ross's time at the helm of the passport office lasted until 1929. This period did not appear to provoke interest in the NKVD as much as the Meiklejohn's era. The reason for this is possibly that the NKVD perceived the activities of the first chief of the Tallinn station as more consequential than those of his successors. This was understandable because the files show that intelligence sharing, for example, continued under Ross's leadership in much the same way as before.

In 1927, Ross sent reports on the Kronstadt fortress and asked the Estonian political police for 'estimates of the accuracy of the information'.[74]

One case that did attract the attention of the NKVD involved an agent named Apollon Kolong. According to Zhitkov, who was no longer employed by MI6 in 1927 when this case was unfolding, Kolong had once worked as the Russian consul in Newcastle. Kolong arrived in Tallinn in 1927 as a representative of a transnational émigré organisations and was tasked with establishing a Russian 'consulate' for defending white-émigrés interests. Estonia did not grant the permission. Kolong subsequently set up an anti-Soviet intelligence-gathering office. He had approached Ross asking for funds to run this office, but, according to Zhitkov, 'London said no'. In 1929, the Estonian political police uncovered Kolong's activities and announced that his presence in Tallinn was 'undesirable'. He was then deported to France.[75]

Information on Brian Giffey's period, which began in 1929 and continued into the war years, is also rather scarce. Sooman introduced Giffey to Kirsimägi in February 1938, possibly in connection with Kirsimägi's new role as chief of the political police. Tenson had a particularly close relationship with Giffey, and he remained the main liaison officer with MI6 until 1935 when Tenson was appointed as deputy minister of the interior. After this, his duties were transferred to Sooman.[76] Until 1935, the Estonian political police provided MI6 with intelligence on the political attitudes of the inhabitants of the Soviet-Estonian border region and on the personnel, equipment, and numbers of the Soviet Border Guard Agency. They also monitored and reported to MI6 details on foreigners living in Estonia.[77]

Furthermore, Giffey was in direct contact with the Second Department's chief Richard Maasing. Sooman argued that after the signing of the Soviet-Estonian treaty in September 1939, Maasing 'suddenly left for Germany with his family'. Sooman was certain, without detailing reasons for his view, that Maasing stayed in contact with Giffey even after he left Estonia.[78] Maasing was indeed in Germany in late September 1939 apparently to determine German attitudes to Soviet acquisition of the Baltic states. According to Ilmjärv, Maasing was one of those in the Estonian elite who 'manoeuvred' the country 'towards Nazi Germany'.[79] Ilmjärv includes neither Sooman nor Kirsimägi in this list. Previous research is silent on Maasing's connections to MI6. The NKVD files suggest that Giffey's meetings with Maasing concerned espionage questions and took place in Finland just before the outbreak of the Winter War on 30 November 1939.[80] When the Soviet Union annexed Estonia, Giffey fled to Finland with his Estonian wife.[81]

A 'Giffey era' agent, Boris Chetverukhin, attracted attention from NKVD interrogators. The files imply that Chetverukhin, a former commodore in the tsarist navy, led MI6's anti-Soviet intelligence operations in Finland. He often travelled from Finland to Estonia and was tracked by the Estonian political police on several occasions. The Estonians suspected that Chetverukhin had established contact with Soviet intelligence through Alex Rogge, the Soviet commercial representative in Tallinn. Sooman had heard from both Giffey and Harry Carr, who had served as MI6's chief in Finland, that Chetvrukhin was MI6's agent in Finland.[82] Existing Finnish secondary literature and the CIA's declassified archival records from the 1950s confirm that Chetverukhin belonged to numerous intelligence and espionage networks in Finland and elsewhere. He had been drawn into the world of espionage during the Russian Civil War and began to build a large network of contacts with British, French, Japanese, Finnish, Estonian, and Latvian secret services. The Finnish

army's General Staff's statistics department recruited Chetverukhin in the 1920s. His information was valued especially during the 1930s' tense international atmosphere. Chetverukhin was apprehended by the Finnish state police (Valpo) in August 1941. He fled to Sweden from Finland in the summer of 1944 before the Allied Control Commission or the Soviets could get their hands on him.[83] Chetverukhin's position illustrates well how Russian émigrés and their organisations aroused much suspicion among the political police agencies although, at the same time, the emigres with the word they were integral to the different agencies' intelligence networks.

MI6's activities in Latvia during the 1930s also came up in the interrogations. Jan Friedrichson-Skrauj, who worked as head of Latvian state security, disclosed to the NKVD that the Latvian political police had cooperated with British intelligence.[84] However, Friedrichson-Skrauj asserted that after his appointment in 1934, 'not a single agent was sent from Latvia to the Soviet Union'. He described an incident in 1939 when an assistant working at the Soviet legation in Riga known as 'Glinski' tried to recruit one of Friedrichson-Skrauj's agents, codenamed 'Kasparson'. Friedrichson-Skrauj reported the recruitment attempt to the Latvian army's agent operations unit, after which 'Kasparson' started working for the information department of the Latvian armed forces.[85]

Agent 'Maria' and German clandestine activities in Estonia and Latvia

Soviet intelligence also sought to expose the extent of German clandestine undertakings in the Baltic states. One man, a Baltic German, Andreas von Üexkull, was identified by Sooman, Kirsimägi, Edesalu, Võhma, and Friedrichson-Skrauj as the central figure in these activities. The following explores what the NKVD files reveal about von Üexkull's personal details, connections, and activities in the context of Estonian and Latvian security dilemmas during the 1920s and the 1930s.[86] The Baltic States were important for German geostrategic thinking and security policies during the interwar period. The Weimar policy focused on developing economic relations, was still to some extend influenced by Wilhelmine imperial attitudes, and perceived the Baltics as a bulwark against Soviet expansionism. Under the Nazis, the Baltic countries were seen as a natural area for German expansion. This policy was importantly connected to the position of Baltic Germans who were perceived in Berlin as arbiters of German rule in the region.[87] The von Üexkull case shows how a notable Baltic German – who apparently ended up working for the Gestapo – was earlier in the 1930s used by the Estonian political police as an agent in countering Nazi-German influence operations and Estonian far-right subversion.

Two separate interrogation reports denote that von Üexkull operated under the codename 'Maria'.[88] He lived in Tallinn, served on the board of directors of the Lainovbank, and belonged to numerous Baltic German organisations.[89] The files also indicate that he was connected to several different intelligence and diplomatic establishments. Before 1939, von Üexkull worked as an agent for Sooman and Tenson carrying out their 'assignments' and maintaining contacts with two former representatives of the Soviet trade delegation in Tallinn. Von Üexkull also acted as a provocateur within the Estonian underground revolutionary movement. In 1934, owing to his German heritage, the Ministry of the Interior assigned von Üexkull to conduct surveillance and gather intelligence on German national socialists living in or passing through Estonia.[90] His appointment coincided with the advent of right-wing authoritarianism in Estonia after

Konstantin Päts, with the assistance of general Johan Laidoner, overthrew parliamentary democracy. Under Päts's leadership all political parties were dissolved and replaced by the corporatism-inspired Isamaaliit (Fatherland Union).[91]

Sooman spoke extensively about the threat posed by the Baltic German and Estonian right-wing organisations during the interwar period, namely Baltische Brüderschaft (Baltic Brotherhood) and Vaps.[92] The Brotherhood was formally established in 1929 but had its roots in the underground association Der Verband der Ordensgründer – simply known as 'Organisation X' – which was founded in 1919 in Berlin. Organisation X evolved in 1929 into Brüderschaft and aimed to unite Germans in Estonia and Latvia into a German nation in the Baltic states.[93] Sooman depicted the Brüderschaft as a German subversive group with 'dreams of conquering the Baltics'. He argued that the Estonian political police had had some success in suppressing the group's activities but, with the rise of the Nazis in Germany, the organisation became more powerful, as it was incorporated into the structures of the Nazi state. In Sooman's view, a good indication of the might of the Brotherhood was that Alfred Rosenberg, Hitler's chief ideologue, was its member.[94]

Vaps was also founded in 1929 as an umbrella organisation for veterans of the wars of liberation. In 1932, Vaps was transformed into a wider political force when it began to accept non-veterans as members. Following Roger Griffin's conceptualisations of fascism, Andres Kasekamp defines the ideology of the Vaps movement as 'a revolutionary form of ultra-nationalism' that attempted 'to realize the myth of the regenerated nation'. Vaps sought to transform the entire Estonian political system and was especially critical towards the political establishment, existing political parties, and public officials. They supported extreme patriotism and categorically rejected Marxism. In the spring of 1934, prime minister Päts declared a state of emergency in Estonia owing to street fighting between Vaps' security units and Young Socialists in the run up to the presidential elections. Vaps was banned in March 1934 and thirty-nine of its leaders were convicted in the military tribunal in June 1935. Meanwhile, a military coup organised on 12 March 1934 by Laidoner, Päts, and August Rei successfully dismantled the Riigikogu and established an authoritarian leadership. Vaps' members received only short sentences. In December 1935, Vaps sympathisers from the Finnish People's Patriotic Movement (Isänmaallinen Kansanliike, IKL) plotted a coup in Estonia, but the Estonian political police were able to arrest the conspirators. A mass trial followed in 1936 leading to harsh sentences. However, all of those convicted were released in May 1938.[95]

The files suggest that von Üexkull had been instrumental in exposing Vaps' activities and the movement's financial connections to Nazi Germany. Sooman revealed that in 1933 the Estonian political police discovered that the movement had received funding from the German Nazi Party, and that Baltic Germans living in Estonia keenly participated in its activities. Sooman argued that after the Vaps movement was banned in 1935, the German legation in Tallinn continued to use Vaps' structures and the youth movement for spreading national-socialist propaganda in Estonia.[96]

Von Üexkull's three trips to Germany during 1939 proved instrumental in determining his future. Ilmjärv has expressed doubts concerning Sooman's testimonies about these journeys. According to Ilmjärv, the Estonian border crossing register 'does not show von Üexkull leaving the country after August 23'. He indeed questions Sooman's claim that von Üexkull was sent by the Estonian Interior Ministry to negotiate with German

authorities by arguing that 'the dates of Üexkull's border crossings seem to invalidate Sooman's claims entirely'.[97] The present study will not attempt to contest Ilmjärv nor to augment these details with new evidence. However, Sooman's testimonies concerning von Üexkull's trips to Germany are interesting in the general framework of this article and will thus be briefly summarised here.

When in Berlin, von Üexkull allegedly met with high-ranking officers German army officers as well as the Abwehr's Wilhelm Canaris and Valter Klee. Sooman believed that German military intelligence recruited von Üexkull in Berlin and assigned him for an influence operation seeking to insert pro-German views among the Estonian political elite. According to von Üexkull, German officials had offered asylum to all Estonian police personnel or jobs in the occupied territories of Poland if they migrated to Germany and brought the political police's archival material with them. In October 1939, von Uexküll moved permanently to Germany and worked for the Gestapo's political intelligence. Sooman stated that von Uexküll visited Estonia in January 1940 and expressed his dissatisfaction with German occupation of Poland and 'Hitler's policies' in general.[98]

Von Uexküll also apparently attempted to arrange contacts between the Latvian political police and the Abwehr. Friedrichson-Skrauj stated during infront interrogation in September 1940 that 'I make no secret of the fact that … the German intelligence service tried to lure me into anti-Soviet work'. In January 1940, von Uexküll appeared in Friedrichson-Skrauj's office, showed Sooman's business card, and told him that he was acting on behalf of Dr. Klee and other representatives of the Abwehr's Königsberg unit. Von Uexküll had also stressed that the Germans were ready to offer Friedrichson-Skrauj German citizenship, the opportunity to move to Germany with his family, and a job in anti-Soviet intelligence at the Abwehr in Köningsberg. Friedrichson-Skrauj hesitated to continue the conversation with von Uexküll and wanted to meet the Abwehr agents face to face. The Germans met Friedrichson-Skrauj in Riga a few days later but did not repeat von Uexküll's earlier promises.[99]

Conclusion

The Sooman investigation concluded on 17 February 1942. Alongside the earlier charges, Sooman was also indicted with the creation of a pro-German fascist organisation during his incarceration at the Usollag prison camp. Sooman allegedly used his authority as a former high-ranking state official to spread anti-Soviet sentiments and provocative rumours among the Estonian prisoners on the advancement of German troops during the German invasion of the Soviet Union, which had begun in June 1941. In Sooman's words, the aim was to instil faith in the overthrow of Soviet rule and the victory of German fascism in the near future.[100] The organisation consisted of sixty people, mainly individuals with military experience, and it sought to initiate a rebellion at the camp, join Hitler's troops, and return home when the 'time was right'.[101] On 31 March 1942, Sooman was sentenced to be executed by firing squad for participating in anti-Soviet rebellion.[102] The sentence was not carried out because, on 17 June 1942, Sooman died at the age of 53 from a heart attack caused by general exhaustion.[103] Sooman suffered from emphysema, arterial disease, and chronic rheumatoid arthritis.[104]

With a critical reflection on the NKVD interrogation reports as sources for historical research as well as using comparative primary and secondary sources from different

countries, this article has shed new light on several key areas of interwar Baltic Sea region intelligence history. These include the practical conduct of intelligence operations by the Estonian political police (namely regarding the use of agents), the recruitment of agents, instructions given to them, the cooperation between the Second Department and the political police, and grassroot intelligence-collection practices. Moreover, MI6's activities in the Baltics was analysed for the entire interwar era which demonstrated steady continuity in British intelligence activities in the region. The article has also shed new light into the Estonian political police's use of Russian émigré and Baltic German agents. How might we account for successes and failures of the different agencies involved? If viewed from the perspectives of these agencies, Estonia succeeded in building an internal security service from scratch, constructing a network of agents, and cooperating with other services in and outside the region. The political police also managed to prevent another communist coup from happening after 1924, in foiling a far-right coup attempt in 1935, and exposing the extent of Nazi German influence in the country. However, Estonia failed in the main strategic aim of preserving its independence, in part owing to the political police's inability to stop Soviet covert activities and intelligence gathering during the interwar period. Moreover, the inability to preserve the constitutional order in the mid-1930s was also a failure because maintaining democracy was one of the main tasks the political police had set for itself. MI6 succeeded in recruiting several significant Russian émigré agents in Estonia and Latvia as well as building close relationships with all major intelligence agencies in the region. However, MI6's main aim after the First World War was to stop Soviet expansionism and the spread of communism. As all Baltic states were incorporated into the Soviet Union after the war, this must be seen as a significant failure not only for MI6 but for British security and foreign policies more widely. In part this was due to the inability to stop Soviet disinformation operations such as the Trust, which was unfolding for several years before being detected. Nazi Germany managed briefly to fulfil its strategic aim of bringing the Baltic states into its orbit during the war but ultimately failed in this when the entire Nazi state crumbled after the war.

Notes

1. Hiio, Maripuu, Paavle, *Estonia 1940–1945*, 328; and Barenberg, *The Gulag A Very Short Introduction*, 1–2, 8–9, 21, 84.
2. Jegorov and Kingisepp (GUGB), "Protocol of the Search on the Person. Search," August 28, 1940. Rahvus Arhiiv, Tartu (henceforth RA), ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
3. The other agents are Arseni Zhitkov, Aleksander Efremov, "Radivinovich," Apollon Kolong, and Alex Rogge.
4. Balakirev (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi," November 28–29, 1940. RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
5. Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission: Formation of Foreign Policy of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania*. See also Rosenthal and Tamming, *Sõda pärast Rahu*; Kasekamp, *The Radical Right Interwar Estonia*; and Salo, "NKVD Materjalid," 22–24.
6. Bergmanis and Zālīte, "PSRS Specdienestu Darbība Latvijā (1919–1940)," 37–115; Feldmanis, "Latvijas Interesēm Kaitigās Vācbaltiešu Organizāciju Darbības Novērošana un Apkarošana," 169–89; and Falkov, "Nothing Anti-State Was Said," 50–73.

7. Jeffery, *MI6: The History of the Secret*; Mainio, *Terroristien Pesä;* Kotakallio, *Hänen Majesteettinsa Agentit*; and Suonpää, *Infosoturit Antikommunistiset Verkostot Itämeren Piirissä*.
8. See, Zhuk, *KGB Operations Against the USA*; and Zhuk, *The KGB Russian Academic Imperialism*.
9. Dyukov, "K Voprosu o Dopustimosti Ispolzovanija Sledstvennyh Pokazanij", 74–89; Rahi-Tamm and Saueauk, "Nõukogude Julgeolekuasutuste Stalini-aegseist ülekuulamisprotokollidest," 218–43.
10. Litvin, "Sledstvennye Dela Kak Istoricheskij Istochnik," 170–76. See for instance the media outcry following the publication of the 1929 investigative case of academician E. V. Tarle in 1998. Likhacheva, *Nevskoe Vremya*.
11. Resolution no. 001067 of the NKVD of the USSR, 46–47.
12. Saueauk, "'Erikaader'," 407–40.
13. Rahi-Tamm and Saueauk, "Nõukogude Julgeolekuasutuste."
14. Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission*; Bubnys, Jegelevičius, Knezys, Rukšėnas, *Lietuvių Tautos Sukilimas* and; Bubnys, *Pasipriešinimo Judėjimai Lietuvoje Antrojo Pasaulinio karo Metais*.
15. Benderski to Bochkov, Tallinn, September 1940; Volovshikov to Vlodzimirsk, Tallinn, November 14, 1940; Volovshikov to Merkulov, Tallinn, November 22, 1940; Raitses to Rodos, Tallinn, December 19, 1940; Voloshnikov to Merkulov, Tallinn, December 20, 1940; Raitses to Merkulov, Tallinn, January 7, 1941; Raitses to Merkulov, Tallinn, February 1941; and Raitses to Kobulov, Tallinn, April 16, 1941, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
16. Kulikovski to the Soviet (NKVD) Correctional Labor Camp Prosecutor's Office, Solikamsk, November 21, 1941, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
17. Rodos, Liebson and Balakirev (GUGB), "Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman and Konstantin Kirsimägi," October 4, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
18. "Zamjatin" to Filipov (GUGB), "Intelligence Report," January 1941. Top Secret. RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
19. Security Police of the Republic of Estonia, "Annual Review 1998," 5–6; Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation report of Johan Sooman," September 13, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
20. Kasekamp, *Baltian Historia*, 152.
21. Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman." In these elections, left-wing (15 social democrats, 10 communists and 5 independent socialists) and centrist parties both secured thirty seats in parliament while the parties in the right received forty-one seats. See, for example, Zetterberg, *Uusi Viron Historia*, 223.
22. Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman," September 13, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
23. Kasekamp, *Baltian Historia*,152; and Zetterberg, *Uusi Viron Historia*, 223.
24. Zetterberg, *Uusi Viron Historia*, 224–5.
25. Rosenthal and Tamming, *Sõda Pärast Rahu*, 174–75.
26. Benderski (GEU),"Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman" September 13, 1940; Balakirev (GUGB), "Interrogation Report of Konstantin Kirsimägi," November 31, 1940; and Raitses (GUGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman," February 12, 1941. RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
27. Kasekamp, *Radical Right Interwar Estonia*, 95.
28. See note 22 above.
29. Ruth Bettina Birn, "Collaboration with Nazi Germany in Eastern Europe," 181–98.
30. See note 22 above.
31. Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission* 230; Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman," September 13, 1940; and Balakirev (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi."
32. Rohtmets "Repatriation of Estonians," 169–187.
33. See, Shlyakhter, *Smuggler States*.
34. Balakirev (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi," November 28-29, 1940. RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
35. Rid, *Active*, 18–31; and Mainio, *Terroristien Pesä*, 114–32.
36. Forgus, "Soviet Subversive Activities in Independent Estonia," 38.
37. Kubi, "Entry of Soviet Troops into Estonia," October 1939.

38. Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman"; Pavlov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Rein Täht," October 15, 1940; and Raitses (GUGB), "Interrogation of Tanel Võhma," November 27, 1940. RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
39. Balakirev (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi"; "Zamyatin" to Filipov (GUGB), "Intelligence Report," January 1941. Top Secret; Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation Report of Johan Sooman." The political police and Second Department officers were named as Riis, Lundberg, Kalvik, Pahka, Puusepp, and Kristian.
40. See note 22 above.
41. Jeffery, *MI6*, 184; and Kotakallio, *Hänen Majesteettinsa Agentit*, 74–87.
42. Jeffery, *MI6*, 172; and Suonpää, *Infosoturit Antikommunistiset Verkostot Itämeren Piirissä*, 13.
43. Jeffery, *MI6*, 188–90.
44. Rosenthal and Tamming, *Sõda pärast Rahu*, 176–77.
45. Ibid.,176.
46. Liebenson (GUGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman," September 23, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
47. Liebenson (GUGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman"; Tishkov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi," July 30, 1940; and Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation of Julius Edesalu," August 12, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
48. See note 45 above.
49. See note 46 above.
50. See note 45 above.
51. See note 46 above.
52. Suonpää, *Infosoturit*, 101–03.
53. Jeffery, *MI6*, 185.
54. "Extract from the Protocol of Interrogation of the Defendant Arsenyi Fedorovich Zhitkov," July 24, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
55. Ibid.
56. Butenko (UNKVD LO), "Interrogation of Aleksandr Efremov," September 2, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
57. Robinson, *White Russian Army*.
58. Jeffery, *MI6*, 190.
59. See note 46 above.
60. See note 54 above.
61. Ibid.
62. Jeffery, *MI6*, 189.
63. See note 54 above.
64. See note 62 above.
65. See note 46 above.
66. Suonpää, *Infosoturit*, 13.
67. Rosenthal and Tamming, *Sõda pärast Rahu*, 175–77.
68. Lehti, *Baltic League*; and Lackman, *Esko Riekki*.
69. Riekki to Sooman, Helsinki, November 30, 1925, EK-Valpo, amp. XXIID 1a, the National Archives of Finland, Helsinki.
70. Esko Riekki, Johan Sooman and Voldemārs Ozoliņš, "Additional Protocol," Top Secret, Helsinki, November 17, 1925, EK-Valpo, amp. XXIID 1a, the National Archives of Finland, Helsinki.
71. Kurko to Riekki, Helsinki, July 30, August 2, August 6, August 8, August 16, August 20, August 27, and September 6, 1921, EK-Valpo I 2824, the National Archives of Finland, Helsinki.
72. See, Kellogg, *Russian Roots of Nazism*, 1–3, 6–7, 11, 13–17.
73. See note 46 above.
74. Ibid.
75. See note 54 above.

76. Tishkov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi"; and Liebenson, "Interrogation of Johan Sooman2," September 23, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
77. Liebenson (GUGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman"; and Tishkov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi."
78. Raitses (NKGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman," March 24, 1941, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
79. Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission*, 270–6, 544.
80. See note 78 above.
81. Tamman, *Portrait of a Secret Agent*.
82. Raitses (GUGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman," February 1, 1941. RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
83. Mainio, *Terroristien Pesä*, 245, 266–67; Kotakallio, *Hänen Majesteettinsa Agentit*, 110–17; and Central Intelligence Agency, "Paper Mills and Fabrication," February 1952, HS/CSG-2375 7, 30–34. CIA FOIA Electronic Reading Room.
84. Vlodzimirski and Chaikovski (GUGB), "Interrogation of Jan Friedrichson-Skrauj," September 12, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
85. Vlodzimirski and Kozhevnikov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Jan Friedrichson-Skrauj," July 24–26, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
86. See, Suonpää, *Infosoturit*.
87. Cepinskyte, "Baltic Dream," 153–75.
88. Tishkov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi," July 29, 1940; and Raitses (GUGB), "Interrogation of Tanel Võhma," November 27,. 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
89. Tishkov (GUGB), "Interrogation of Konstantin Kirsimägi," July 29, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
90. Benderski (GEU), "Interrogation of Julius Edesalu," August 12, 1940; Raitses (GUGB), "Interrogation of Tanel Võhma"; Raistes (NKGB), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman," 24 March 1941; and Mironovich (GUGB), "Interrogation of Villem Tamm," October 31, 1940, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
91. Alenius, *Viron, Latvian ja Liettuan Historia*, 66.
92. See note 46 above.
93. See, Filaretow, "Die Baltische Brüderschaft," 11–50.
94. See note 46 above.
95. Kasekamp, "Fascism by Popular Initiative," 155–68. See also, Griffin, "Studying Fascism in a Postfascist Age," 1.
96. See note 46 above.
97. Ilmjärv, *Silent Submission*, 345, 372–73.
98. See note 46 above.
99. See note 84 above.
100. Sadetov (NKVD Usol), "Interrogation of Johan Sooman," November 25, 1941, RA ERAF.130SM.1.9861.
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