The Hungarian secret services are the guarantee of our future – Growing into prime national value since 1990

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Modern, flexible minded governments – having realised the revaluation and paradigm change in security activities at the beginning of the 21st century – review and reframe (with a new political and strategic approach) their complex security systems. The bipolar world order has dissolved and become multi-polar; new, more unpredictable, ambiguous and incalculable political and security challenges popped up instead of the old ones. In addition, they need other kind of defensive capabilities, different from those applied over the previous historical periods. The common foreign, security and defence policies of international alliance systems, like UN, OSCE and EU, provide significant guarantee for collective defence, which however, is far from ensuring complete national security. An ever greater part of the security challenges (that changed in their structured and importance) falls within the competency of national security and secret services. Certain democratic countries and their governments have realised this and have revaluated – with good sense – their security and secret service activities. This is almost exclusively the only way to gain time and advantage in the unpredictable international and domestic security environment. The prevention-based defensive and interest – enforcing role of intelligence and counter intelligence is a decisive factor in ensuring the nation's security.

Introduction

By means of this short essay I wish to point out and confirm, in a comprehensive and multi-faceted way, that since the beginning of the human race's history, and especially in the light of the 21st century, the role of intelligence,/reconnaissance (along with the other secret service branch, the counter intelligence) as well as the significance of the system-oriented information collection and complex information management (gathering–systematization–storing–processing–utilising), have been continuously and progressively increasing.

I wish to lay down the fundamentals and convince everybody of the role and importance of intelligence/reconnaissance and information collection, since this is one of the most important resources for the viability, efficiency and the future of nation-

states and international alliances. This can be proved in particular by the assessment of Donald H. Rumsfeld, former US Defence Secretary, on the present and the future of the world security, according to which: we live ***"In an uncertain world, where we have to defend ourselves against the unknown, elusive, invisible and unexpected"***.

One of the most important guarantees of our nation's future is to ensure our complex security. For achieving this, a comprehensive national security oriented approach is required together with the extensive application of the defence and interest enforcement functions of the Hungarian secret services. Therefore the Hungarian secret services are indirectly the guarantors of our future!

The term "secret service" in the title of my essay is unofficial, inasmuch as we refer to the Hungarian secret services as national security services since the 1989 political changes, or rather since the issue of the 1995 Act on National Security (125/1995 Act). I use the term "secret services" first of all for the sake of clarity, although this term can be also misinterpreted, since the services are not secret, just their individual affairs and daily work. Nevertheless, I hope that in spite of all these, everybody will understand (by reading my essay) that the Hungarian services are of **national security and secret** nature.

The notion and transformation of intelligence-reconnaissance

Secret service activities, and within this spying, look back to a long history. With a little exaggeration we can say that it is even-aged with mankind. Our innate human nature is that we are curious to know others' what-about. At the same time, in the earliest period of mankind, the survival of individuals and small communities depended upon the extent of being aware of the 'things' surrounding them. This need for being informed meant the primitive form of "intelligence".

The intelligence/reconnaissance as a state or governmental activity is generally pursued within the administration systems, inside the defence sector, providing some kind of security service and conducting secret service operations, along with the other secret service branch, the counter intelligence. However, this organizational pattern and division of labour may differ country by country.

Of the intelligence and counter-intelligence branches I want to analyze the former in more details, because in this way I can better illustrate – within the available space and time – the role of the secret services in meeting the country's defence requirements and enforcing its interests.

Intelligence is one of the fundamental branches of secret service activity, carrying out methodical collection, acquisition, analysis and processing of foreign, confidential political, economic, technical, scientific, military news, data and pieces of information

by using open and secret service forces, means and methods.[1] Intelligence is traditionally divided into civil and military fields, of which the military one is generally called and identified as military intelligence/reconnaissance.

(Counter intelligence is responsible for revealing – by using secret service forces, means and methods – covert intelligent efforts threatening the state's sovereignty, economy and defence forces, as well as its constitutional order. Counter intelligence is even-aged with intelligence and the two were not separated from each other until the modern times, but constituted a single, uniform organization. The history of counter intelligence is identical with that of intelligence; wherever spies appeared, the counter intelligence turned up as well.[2])

Since the 90s, especially from the beginning of the 21st century, it is the system-oriented approach to **information** (**data**) **gathering** and **processing** that expresses more correctly – instead of the terms **intelligence** and **reconnaissance** – the relevant operations, given the fact that the terms and principles of the information revolution, information societies, network-centric information warfare, and in general the **information=power** terms, principles and facts have become real and determinative factors of today's life and competitions.

Information is one of the power resources for human organizations, and in general terms, it is the reflection of objective reality in the human mind. **Information** plays the same primary role in the world as **material** and **energy**. The numerous systems in the world are amalgamated into a uniform whole through information connections. Nevertheless, it is a fundamental difference that the theorems of material and energy conservation do not hold for the information, i.e. it can be created and destroyed.

The secret service activity, and in particular the intelligence/reconnaissance, can be pursued with the help of two resources: human (**HUMINT** = HUMan INTelligence) and/or technical means (**SIGINT**, **MASINT, RINT, AC/OUS/INT, MDCI** etc). The ratio between technical and human means has changed significantly over the history. At the beginning of written history, the emphasis was placed on the human factor. However, in the present era the emphasis has shifted to technical means. This tendency is expected to become ever more determinant in the future, which is a natural phenomenon and has major effects on efficiency. The reason for this on the one hand is that the SIGINT (MASINT, RINT, AC/OUS/INT, MDCI etc) covers such an extraordinary wide range of capabilities (detection, interception, accuracy, speed, processing, analysis, evaluation, decision support etc.), for which direct human solutions are unsuitable. On the other hand, human risks can be significantly reduced by means of technical solutions. However, the upsurge and predominance of technical methods can be misleading and may provoke dangerous self-satisfaction. For example,

terrorism and suicide bombings have proven that technology cannot read in the minds and information communications are unsuitable for detecting the behaviour and profiles of certain human groups and individuals. This can be predominantly made by human intelligence. Therefore, the role of direct human intelligence, agent work, infiltration and network building, i.e. HUMINT, must not be disregarded; instead, it should be elevated to its real rank by those who wish to remain successful also in the 21st century.

Open source intelligence (**OSINT**) gathering and analysis fundamentally do not belong to the mission of intelligence/reconnaissance, though their use is an essential need.

Change in the notion of security and its more complex interpretation[3]

By the 21st century the security, became a complex and comprehensive notion or factor, by means of a much wider interpretation and content than centuries ago, when it was confined merely to military and military political security. Today it encompasses military, political, economic, social and environmental security etc.

Under the wider, more comprehensive interpretation of the components of security, we understand the military social (juridical), political (diplomatic), economic, environmental (ecological), information technical, financial, health and internal security. Priorities of the various elements are basically determined by the objectives of a given state, and its historical situation. While military security was the first priority during the cold war, by today, the primary goal is to achieve political, economic and environmental security.

Parallel with the comprehensive interpretation of security, the circle of risks has also expanded. In addition, besides the traditional nation-state players, also the so called non-state actors have got ever greater roles (international organizations, multi-national companies, non-governmental organizations as well as international criminal and terrorist groups).

The realigning international security system is markedly characterized by the simultaneous presence of traditional security risks and the new, often global, trans national threats. The new kinds of threats and challenges are diversified, less visible and forecast able. A characteristic trend is the fading border line between the internal and external risks.[4]

Global information society; information = power

According to the theory of information society, the process of generating, distributing, propagating, using and managing information constitutes a considerable economic,

political and cultural activity. Its associated economic term is the knowledge-economy, according to which the economic utilization of the intellect can produce new values. The particular feature of this kind of society is the central role of information technology in production, economy, security and in the society as a whole.[5]

In the information age the power of central governments and elites, together with the power of urban intellectual centres, may significantly decrease as opposed to the globalization of the media.

Any kind of state control is nearly ineffective over the communications that have evolved into networks. Therefore, the modern information science tries to comprehend it by modelling a quasi-chaotic society as a system. The worldwide presence of unprincipled rivalry, the legal but immoral speculation and the ever-present worldwide crime are the major dangers posed to the paradigm embodied by the Internet.[6]

Having analysed the Net, an international conference gave an account of 750 billion dollar deriving from illegal traffic in the global monetary system, while estimating the kind of crimes like the illegal trade of arms, technology, human organ, children, as well as the contract killings and, robbery (art treasures, gold, ivory etc.), the drug smuggling and prostitution, and last but not least, the deposition of hazardous wastes.

Within this group of Net and economy-related challenges the most important effects of these illegal activities, from the nation-state's point of view can be divided into three large fields. For one, the crimes (like malversation, illegal political financing, corrupt practices) appear even at the highest echelons of state power. On the other hand, many states have fallen into dependency due to the global, intertwining shadow economies (e.g. the US, due to the activity of the South American drug cartels, or to illegal arms trade, or the Europeans under the expansions of Italian and Russian mafia).Third, but not least, the free flow of money originating in shadow economy manipulates international policies, destabilizes individual nation-states and national economies (e.g. the influence of Japan Yakuza in South-East Asia). Therefore, all responsible international entities agree today that the control over electronic monetary processes is indispensable. They are also in agreement that the participants of the various international conferences on criminal investigation have been practically talking about the effects of the globalization process for a long time.

Another set of challenges for nations-states, coming along with mutual dependence constitutes the second group of the current challenges: the collapse of military blocks, the rise of two – then one – superpowers and their relation to the states gathered around them, the effects of new military technologies, and the perception and awareness of the effects bearing on humanity in the fields of risk and information management.

Further issues to be considered are the impacts posed on national security, originated from the fact that the states are getting more and more dependent on the suppliers of defence equipment and technology, as well as on the necessary skilled workforce. The amazingly fast development of defence technology undermines the security of certain states.[7]

Defensive and interests-enforcement goals of intelligence in the prevention

In the system principled world, the majority of processes and events in the lives of individuals, families, companies, nation-states, international alliances and co-operations are (in general) predictable, foreseeable and can be projected. However, there is a smaller but decidedly not negligible part of these processes and events, the outcome of which is multi-variable or totally uncertain. We know it well that **stability**, **equilibrium** and **predictability** are very important for the various systems, since these provide **viability**, **operability** and **efficiency**. The only means in our hands to forecast processes, activities and events is to pursue proper **prevention**, preparation and control. Prevention, preparation and control are based on appropriate information and their proper processing. It is but natural that information can be obtained through detection-collection-acquisition, i.e. with the help of intelligence/reconnaissance.

The role, objectives and end results of secret service activity (including intelligence and reconnaissance) are dual: **defence** on the one hand and **interest enforcement** on the other.

This dual objective is well exemplified by a paragraph of the Hungarian National Security Act on the operations and activities of the Information Office: "*It shall acquire, analyse, evaluate and transmit foreign origin or foreign related information needed to government decisions and useful for the security interests of the nation, and carries out **activities serving for the assertion of interests of the Republic of Hungary**.*"[8] The first part of the definition talks about protection, while the second is about enforcement of interests.

Secret services are the ever-more revaluated hubs of defence structures

Secret services belong to the innermost and most sensitive areas of nation-states. However, besides the dominance of national services, there are also international organizations (NATO, EU, OSCE) with various bilateral and multi-lateral activities – which have some kind of intelligent role.

Nevertheless, security challenges, which have changed in their structure and significance since 1990, are increasingly falling within the competency of security services.

In order to meet the few old and the numerous new challenges, there is a need for utilizing the capabilities, possibilities and methods of national security services, partly due to their unpredictable nature of these challenges, partly to the international collaboration of partner secret services. Since the place of traditional threats has been taken over by security risks belonging to the competency of national security services, the role of national security services is ever-more determinant, taking into account the following special features of the changed and restructured challenges.

They are today:
- unpredictable and incalculable,
- mostly attached to normal, every day, civil internal and external procedures and interests, at the same time, they are overlapping each other many times. Direct interests and motivations behind them cannot be seen directly and they are mostly latent;
- connected with international affairs covering continents and countries;
- well elaborated, prepared and organized at a very high level of intelligence and knowledge;
- generally encompassing quite wide social strata; political, public, governmental, defence and economic groups; banks and companies; research, education, cultural, religious, ethnic, criminal as well as and professional groups;
- enjoying significant capital and financial background, therefore they can work with the most sophisticated and efficient planning, organizational, technical, executive and control methods, with the necessary means and professionals, including secret service devices and methods, too. They are very dangerous from political, social and economic standpoints;
- difficult to counter by the security services (both in short, medium and long-term) because their management requires experts with special, high experiences and (a number of) diplomas; fluent knowledge in many languages as well as substantial funds;
- difficult to be properly processed by the competent authorities, since the investigation of certain affairs may take months, even years;
- require international collaborations.

With regard to the cooperation – both between the Hungarian services and with our foreign partners – I would like to underline that it needs to be genuine, efficient, well-planned, dynamic, flexible and prompt, i.e. capable to meet the foreseeable and less predictable challenges as well.

For the new challenges to be successfully faced, I find it important that instead of a follow-up management, the emphasis should be laid on **prediction** and **prevention**, which can be achieved most expediently through the secret services.

NATO and EU intelligence in short

The basis for NATO and member states' intelligence and security cooperation is the NATO Strategic Concept, which is complemented with a number of intelligence and security decisions, agreements and executive guides. In every operation where NATO takes part with weapons, the intelligence/reconnaissance and counter intelligence measures are organic part of the mission. The tasks of intelligence operations in peacetime, in crisis or armed conflict situations are to provide information to the political and military authorities as well as to support military operations, their planning and execution. The NATO fundamentally relies on member states in acquiring intelligence and reconnaissance information.

Practically, it is the NATO member states that are responsible for providing information to the alliance's intelligent system, partly through their National Intelligence Cells (NIC) assigned to the joint coalition stuffs, but mostly, through appropriate communication channels established between NATO and its member states.

In crisis management and peacekeeping operations, the NATO counts on the Intelligence Surveillance Target Acquisition Reconnaissance – ISTAR (an integrated combined data source intelligence-reconnaissance system) for obtaining intelligence support.

During peacekeeping missions, the comprehensive reconnaissance support cannot miss counter intelligence (CI) operations either.

The most important pillars of intelligence and counter intelligence cooperation of **EU** member states are the common foreign and security policy as well as the EU Security Strategy and its relevant decisions and organizations. In the field of intelligence, the EU – similarly to NATO – does not have its own independent intelligence means, therefore it counts basically on the information provided by its member states as well as by the NATO and the OSCE. The joint situation centre (SITCEN) collects reconnaissance data. The EU secretary can issue orders to the EU satellite centre (SATCEN) for data acquisition, or the political committee can decide on sending fact finding missions to the crisis sites, which is a particular method for information gathering.[9] The intelligence department subordinated to the EU military stuff (EUMS) analyses the crisis regions.

Conclusions

- The international environment has became more insecure, risky and unpredictable by the 21st century.
- The structure and the weight of security risks have largely changed.
- Prevention and management of security challenges, risks and threats as well as the enforcement of relevant interests fall within the competency and knowledge fields, means and methods of the security services.
- National security or secret service activities have been significantly upvalued due to the changes in the international security environment.
- The open-minded governments – having realised the above mentioned guiding marks -have reviewed their security activities and secret services in order to adjust them (dynamically, flexibly and quickly) to the changed missions.
- The essence of system-oriented security is composed of: *flexible paradigm, realistic risk-definition, clear perspective and concept, well-considered strategy, project-like tasks, labour sharing, appropriate legal environment, good management and organizational structure, sufficient budget, well-prepared stuff, favourable material conditions, effective collaborations, flexible operations, strict control, continuous adjustment=fast reaction, adaptability, dynamism, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, gaining upper-hand and development.*
- Secret services that are capable of asserting interests successfully might become the engines of development, too.
- One of the most relevant guarantees for our future is the national security-oriented and controlled defence activity.

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