

WORLD OF ESPIONAGE

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Current technologies are rapidly progressing. Powerful computers, robots, space researches and cameras smaller than a mote, perfect ciphering devices, unbelievable code-machines that constitute an integral part of miscellaneous espionage world!

Different scientific fields serve to develop spy equipment. The microelectronics and radio engineering achievements are especially widely used. The challenges to design spy equipment are to combine the tiny size and complicated technological architecture. The modern systems employ sophisticated code combinations which need advanced information technologies.

It is science that has created unique spy devices causing interest, excitement and even fear among civilians. Annually military authorities spend millions of dollars on new developments.

People are known to have spied for a long time. Neither war nor peace is possible without espionage. Sometimes fates of whole countries depend on it. In Washington D.C. there was founded the International Spy Museum that houses more than 600 exhibits such as a lighter-installed camera, an ancient ciphering machine and many other unique spy devices. The most impressive exhibits of the International Spy Museum are considered the following:

«Eared shoes»: in 1960-1970s American diplomats were not recommended to buy shoes in East European shops because small eavesdropping device was often hidden in heels. So shoes were specially mailed to diplomats from their native countries. However, it didn't stop the European spies. The Romanian specialists hid «bugs» in boots right in post offices!

«A shooting lipstick»: a classic spy device is a pistol disguised as a lipstick. It often contained a mortal poison. In 1960s similar devices were widely used by secret agents in different countries.

«A button-integrated camera»: nowadays everyone can buy a «spy» camera disguised as a pen, a lighter or a cigarette. Forty years ago secret agents faced much more drawbacks. A camera objective was hidden in the button and a control device was placed in a pocket.

«Enigma»: «Enigma» is known to be the first «processor» for an automatic enciphering created by German military engineers. The cipher didn't have to deal with coded tables. It just taped a text that was automatically coded with help of a key being daily changed. Germans believed the Enigma code to be impossible to solve. Nevertheless in the beginning of the World War II Soviet soldiers got a few devices and managed to read their enemies letters. The fact is a reason why the U.S. Army has been using rare languages to code mail.

«A pigeon espionage»: photo or video camera attached to post pigeons was a highly effective way of military espionage. Before 1950s, those flying spies were widely exploited. But later satellites replaced them.

«A «bug» in a stub»: one of such «stubs» was found in a Moscow forest being charged by sunlight energy. It spied the closest airbase. Data were sent to a satellite and then to CIA.

«A Bulgarian umbrella»: in 1978 a Bulgarian secret agent used the device to kill a Soviet dissident in London. The umbrella was modified to perform a mortal injection right in the city center. The fact that the device was extremely popular among special agents was proved by a French comedy «The Umbrella's Prick».

The history of the espionage dates from a lot of centuries but a spy profession appeared only 100 years ago. An agent life is covered with secrets and riddles. So, besides different spy items the museum provides a lot of interesting biography information of some legendary spies.

Among them **Mata Hari** is believed to be the most famous spy and the most popular character in the International Spy Museum. Born in the Netherlands in 1876, Mata Hari was a double secret agent during the World War I. She worked simultaneously for France and Germany. Eventually Mata was accused of double spying and executed in 1917. Some historical materials presented in the Spy Museum prove that Mata Hari was not a spy but only an intermediary in information transfers. It is still interesting and mysterious that her head kept in the Paris Museum of Anatomy disappeared and nobody knows when and how it happened.

Richard Zorge was more important and probably more enigmatic person than Mata Hari. Zorge was born in a German family. When he was three his family left Russia for Germany. Richard took part in the World War I. Zorge was a communist. In 1924 he returned to the Soviet Union. Later he studied at the spy school in Moscow. During the World War II Richard Zorge worked as a spy in Japan. He is considered to have played a big role in the war and got a lot of secret information. Richard Zorge was executed in Japan in 1944. The facts collected in the Spy Museum prove that he loved beautiful women and his weakness became eventually fatal for him.

Karl Gustav Mannerheim was a Finland regent, marshal and even President (1944-1946). But before the 1917 Revolution he was... a special agent of the Russian imperial army.

However, if strange spy biographies are of little interest for someone and he is ready to create one of his own, the next room welcomes. Cameras, cameras, cameras everywhere around. More than 30 big and small cameras continuously follow each movement and transmit these data to a huge display. Would you like to feel like a spy in an enemy country?

The International Spy Museum in Washington is not a unique one. There is a small similar museum in Tampere, Finland. There one is given chance to become a special agent for a while, for example, to try to eavesdrop someone's talking or to break a code of a ciphering machine.

To visit such museums, to see these unique machines and know amazing facts of famous spies is certainly very interesting. Nevertheless it is just a history. Nowadays spy devices are not utilized only for military purposes. Businessmen, police and even jealous spouses are able to buy and use them! If one wants to eavesdrop to a husband or wife conversations, he can get a little «bug» or a simple ciphering device. Wish to know future plans of your competitors? Well, buy a few small cameras and cipher them continuously. Still remember that to break someone's privacy is illegal!

In addition to practical needs, people are interested in the world of spies and special agents because of its mystery. Everyone sometimes dreams to feel like James Bond, agent 007. Possibilities to join the adventure land of secret information and mortal dangers attract a lot of people.

Businessmen do benefit from human desires! Big cities offer numerous «spy shops» where one can buy different «special agent devices». A popular example is a «spy belt» consisting of:

- a special agent pen – it allows writing with an invisible ink; the pen has also a record-machine, a lighter and a compartment to keep secret information;

- a moving detector - it guarantees that you never fail your spy mission, it informs if an enemy agent is nearby;
- a compact ciphering device - a classical «bug» permits to eavesdrop sounds and speaking from short distances;
- a spy lighter - it is a necessary part of night missions; ear - attached it can light everything around.

Spy theme is popular in literature and cinema. Who didn't watch films of the famous James Bond? Human interest in mysterious world of espionage is understandable. However, never forget how dangerous it is. Almost every great special agent will be eventually revealed.