

VAL AKSILENKO

Val Aksilenko is a retired Colonel of the foreign intelligence department of the KGB, the First Chief Directorate (FCD). He graduated from the International Economic Department of the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) in 1960 and from the KGB Foreign Intelligence Institute, now the Andropov Foreign Intelligence Academy, in 1967. Mr. Aksilenko has lived in the United States since 1993 and is a U.S. citizen.

Mr. Aksilenko retired from the KGB in 1991 after 24 years of service, mainly in the North American Department of the FCD. The peak of his career falls in the years 1982-86 when he headed the Washington branch in the North American Department. He did two tours in Washington of eleven years in total as an FCD officer under commercial and diplomatic cover and was a specialist in agent recruitment and active measures. Mr. Aksilenko knew personally many of the participants in the espionage drama that started to unfold after Aldrich Ames and Robert Hanssen began working for the KGB in 1985. Several of the CIA or FBI agents inside the KGB who were betrayed by Ames and Hanssen and later executed in the USSR, had been colleagues of Mr. Aksilenko's at the KGB station in Washington DC.

Val Aksilenko participated undercover in confidential negotiations with the Afghan mujahedeen. The negotiations were aimed at reaching a peaceful settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan and ensuring the safe withdrawal of Soviet military forces from that country in 1988-89. This was Mr. Aksilenko's last foreign intelligence mission.

Val Aksilenko has lectured to American audiences, ranging from academia to law enforcement, on a great variety of issues. Among those are: the global nature of the radical Islamist threat, developments in Afghanistan, the Chechen War and Jihadism, the tradecraft and modus operandi of the intelligence and counterintelligence services of the USSR and Russia, and many other topics.