In the preceding column, I opened the newsletter to a counter-intelligence (COINTEL) specialist who prefers to remain anonymous. At the end of the preceding article, he commented that the French intelligence (INTEL) services were pretty bold. Here’s the rest of his article.

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Here’s an example of brazen: Back in 1992 at the Paris Airshow the Russians for the very first time brought out for show their frontline Mig-29’s and Su-28 fighter jets along with advanced air-to-air missiles (AA-10 Archer and Alamo). Both Russian aircraft manufacturers were there for foreign sales opportunities. The AA-10 (also known as the Russian AAMRAMski) had unique forward swept, trapezoidal, waffle patterned maneuvering fins. US military groups were extremely interested in these missiles and their capabilities. The DoD (five different groups) and other civilian agency teams (all with technical Russian language speakers) were all there with expensive still and video cameras.

We asked the Russians to give us a show and tell; and they did. Wow! Up-close and even in the cockpits. We were ecstatic and content.

Just after we had left the secured Russian area (the roped-off area to keep the crowds 100 feet away from the aircraft for security), we videotaped three dispersed French INTEL groups approaching the Russian rope line through the crowd. One was composed of scantily clad and well endowed French ladies who proceeded to provocatively distract the young lonely armed Russian guards and older male flight officers. The other two groups jumped the rope line, and proceeded to physically tear one of the fins off the AA-10 missile still attached to the SU-28 wing pylon. Before the Russians could stop them they scattered and ran off through the crowd with their prize, one AA-10 missile fin.

We (USA) would never have done this. Too rude, crude and gauche. Besides we had gotten enough photographs with scales in the view to go build our own fins and wind tunnel test them.

The Russians protested and the French authorities denied all involvement.

Today several French missiles for sale have similar waffle patterned fins.

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Additional reading:


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