

Hi Club Member

Last month's newsletter ended with the nuclear test that was supposed to take place at Vastrap in the Kalahari Desert in 1977.

Then the Russians turned up.

Well, not literally. That would have been awkward.

Instead, Soviet spy satellites Cosmos 922 and Cosmos 932 began taking a very close interest in a particularly uninteresting-looking patch of the Kalahari Desert.

But it raises an intriguing question: How did the Russians know where to look?

The Earth's surface covers almost 197 million square miles. Yet Soviet satellites were manoeuvred specifically to pass over this remote corner of the Kalahari, where their cameras picked up what appeared to be preparations for an underground nuclear test.

The Soviets then alerted the Americans and suddenly everyone was interested in a rather desolate bit of South African real estate.

I don't want to give too much away about ***Beneath A Bloodied Sun***, but there's an obvious question here: Who tipped off the Russians?

Enter Dieter Gerhardt.

As a senior South African naval officer and commander of Simon's Town naval dockyard, he had access to some of the South African Defence Force's most closely guarded secrets – and a few NATO ones too.

Oh, and one other small detail.

He was also a Soviet spy.

Did Gerhardt tell the Russians where to look?

I'll leave you to decide how much of this remarkable episode belongs to history – and how much belongs to the imagination of a historical thriller.

A paperback for South African readers

I'm aware that many South African readers prefer a book they can actually hold in their hands and Amazon South Africa doesn't make that particularly easy. So I've made arrangements for ***Beneath A Bloodied Sun*** to be available as a paperback through Burble.

Order your paperback copy here

The printer distributes within South Africa **only**. If you live elsewhere and would like a paperback copy, please order through your Amazon store.

Next month is the 84th anniversary of Wolfpack *Eisbär*, so we'll be looking into some of the stories behind ***Darkness Shall Cover You***.

And if you're new to the Club and missed earlier editions of my Reader's Club Newsletters, they're all available on my website. Click **News and Newsletters**. You can also see images of Cosmos 922 and 932 in the '**Behind the Scenes**' tab.

til next time.

Colin Grieve

colin@colingrieve.com, Joahnnesburg
South Africa

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