

Foreign spies outnumber FBI agents

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Last year alone, 82,000 people from the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact countries and 130,000 Cubans entered the United States. Among scientists, diplomats, tourists, seamen, students and others, came spies.

They joined resident communist diplomats, "news correspondents" and agents under deep cover.

"We know some of them seek to collect sensitive information," says FBI Director William Webster.

The FBI is responsible for counterintelligence — catching spies within the United States. The FBI's big problem, officials concede, is its impossible task of keeping track of all the spies and potential spies in a free society with liberal immigration and visa policies and almost no travel restrictions.

Moreover, they say, foreign agents now outnumber FBI agents and the gap is widening.

Robert Kinsey, former deputy chief of the FBI's Soviet desk, said recently the number of Soviet KGB agents in the United States "doubled in the last 10 years from 1970 until I left in 1980."

"There was a time when I first was in the work where we could almost go one agent on one identified, suspected Soviet intelligence officer," he said. "When I left, quite the contrary was true. We were vastly outnumbered."

Webster said, "Our special agent ranks are down almost 10 percent from where we were five or six years ago. Our budget isn't keeping pace with inflation."

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Yet, our foreign counter intelligence assignment continues to grow both in scope and importance.

Still, the FBI is catching the most sophisticated Soviet spies and their American dupes, including former CIA agents and executives and workers in sensitive defense industries. But, even when caught, many get away because of legal technicalities or diplomatic immunity, or because of U.S. fears of exposing secret information or revealing to Moscow how much the FBI and CIA know about Soviet spy operations.

Webster told the story of William Bell, 61, a project manager in the radar systems group of Hughes Aircraft Co. in Los Angeles, who was recruited by Polish-Soviet intelligence to steal documents.

"Bell testified to having been paid almost \$170,000," Webster said. "For that sum, Bell sold out his company and his country." He was sentenced last December to eight years in prison and fined \$10,000.

Marian Zacharski, 29, a Pole who came to the United States in 1977 as a commercial representative and recruited Bell, was sentenced to life imprisonment.

One American who admitted passing secrets to the Russians was U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Christopher Cooke, deputy commander of a Titan II intercontinental nuclear missile silo at McDonnell Air Force Base, who was arrested after he was seen visiting the Soviet embassy in Washington.

Cooke confessed and was court-martialed. But because of an ambiguous promise he would be granted immunity, and because he had not been advised of his legal rights when arrested, he was discharged from the service Feb. 22 and set free.

What Cooke told the Soviets has never been disclosed. But the Air Force was reported to

have changed all the codes and targeting for every one of its Titan II ICBM missiles.

Major Soviet KGB spies who work under diplomatic cover and have immunity are simply expelled after being caught red-handed. Some of them defect. Or they are quietly exchanged for U.S. and Western spies caught by the Soviets.

Arkady Shevchenko, the U.N. undersecretary general who defected in 1978, has talked freely to reporters and to congressional committees about Soviet espionage "in a nest of spies" — the United Nations.

Some 500 Soviets work at the U.N. headquarters along with hundreds of Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Romanians, Bulgarians and Cubans, whose intelligence services are under Moscow's control.

Unlike Soviet and communist diplomats in Washington and outlying consulates, whose travel is regulated, U.N. diplomats are free to travel without restrictions.

Diplomats from communist countries based in Washington must get permission from the State Department for travel outside the capital. Certain areas near military bases and defense-related industries are off limits to them — but not to the U.N. people.

Shevchenko told Independent Network News that he had 13 Soviets in his U.N. secretariat.

"At least seven of them were professional KGB officers because they didn't do anything (for the U.N.)," he said. "They didn't receive orders from me as a head of the department. They received orders from their bosses in the mission, from the KGB area resident."

Communist defectors have reported that more than half of the 100 Cubans working at the United Nations are members of the KGB-trained and supervised Cuban DGI (Directorate of Intelligence). There is also a Cuban Interests Section in Washington, half of whose members are said to be DGI agents.

The State Department announced July 6 that two members of the Cuban U.N. mission had been expelled for trying to buy "large quantities" of high technology electronics equipment, which is barred for export to communist countries.

Diplomatic status prevented both from being prosecuted, a State Department spokesman said.

In February of last year, Ricardo Escartin, first secretary of the Cuban Interests Section in Washington, was expelled. Described as a top DGI officer, he was charged with conducting intelligence activities and trying to get American businessmen to engage in illegal trade.

Hardly a month passes without a published espionage report from somewhere in the nation.

On July 1, Otto Attila Gilbert, a 50-year-old Hungarian, pleaded guilty in federal court in Augusta, Ga., to charges of conspiring to pass classified military documents to Hungarian intelligence. He was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

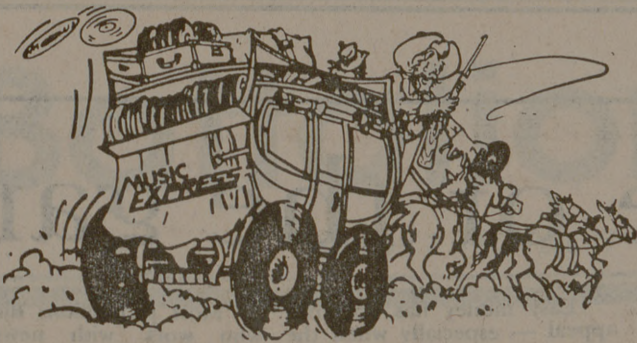
He had conspired with the wrong man, Hungarian-born U.S. Army Warrant Officer Janos Szmolka, who was working with the FBI, posing as a Hungarian agent. Gilbert was caught passing \$3,000 to Szmolka in exchange for bogus secrets.

Szmolka, with the knowledge of the FBI and CIA, was recruited by Hungarian intelligence while visiting Budapest in 1977.

But double-agency works two ways. A number of former CIA agents have been caught working for the Soviets.

David Barnett, a former CIA agent, was sentenced in federal court in Baltimore to 18 years imprisonment Jan. 8, 1981, after pleading guilty to charges that for \$92,000 he passed to the Soviet KGB information about U.S. intelligence operations and identified 30 American agents.

Barnett had worked at the CIA for 12 years before resigning in 1970. In January, 1979, he returned to conduct training programs until March, 1980. His espionage activities, according to his confession, began in 1976 while he was living in Indonesia.



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