

Soviet U.N. Official Is Reported To Have Met U.S. Agents in Past

By ARTHUR MANN
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 17.—Arkhady N. Shevchenko, the high-ranking Soviet United Nations official who refused to return home last week, had been in contact with intelligence officers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency for several years, according to a former intelligence officer familiar with the matter.

The officer would not elaborate on the precise nature of the contact, but said that it had involved "some degree of cooperation on the part of Mr. Shevchenko and had been more than a series of informal, casual contacts.

In addition, it was learned from a knowledgeable Government source that,

as reported in the current issue of Time magazine, Mr. Shevchenko has offered to provide for a reported \$100,000 a year, information about whether a man who has cooperated with the F.B.I. in the past is a source of legitimate information or "disinformation" planted by Soviet intelligence agents.

Not Sought Political Asylum

Mr. Shevchenko, the Under Secretary General for the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs and the highest ranking Soviet citizen at the United Nations Secretariat, refused a request from Moscow to return home, but has not formally sought political asylum in the United States nor has he resigned his post at the United Nations.

Spokesmen for the F.B.I., the C.I.A. and the State Department all refused today to comment on the report in Time, which said that Mr. Shevchenko had been talking secretly with United States intelligence officers for two years before his defection.

One source familiar with the situation, however, said that there was no question that contacts had taken place in the past, and also that Mr. Shevchenko had suggested recently that he could provide important information about a person the F.B.I. believes has been a reliable source of information in the past.

This person, who is known by the code name "Fedora," has been regarded by the F.B.I. as a "deep plant" who has provided "valuable information in the past."

Others in the intelligence community, however, have in the past voiced skepticism about "Fedora," and have suggested that he in fact might be a double agent, intentionally planting false information with the F.B.I. at behalf of the Soviet intelligence agency, the K.G.B.

Although Government sources would not officially comment on this today, a person familiar with the situation agreed that Mr. Shevchenko had suggested that he could provide information about

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whether "Fedora" was a valuable asset to the F.B.I. or, in fact, a K.G.B. plant.

Ernest A. Gross, a lawyer who represents Mr. Shevchenko, said tonight that he was in no position to comment on the allegations because "they are completely outside of the scope of my knowledge and responsibility."

He said that any comment on the matter would have to come from the State Department.

Tom Reston, a State Department spokesman, said, "We do not comment on intelligence matters." Herbert Hell, a spokesman for the C.I.A., said, "I just don't have anything to say about that."

One source familiar with the matter said that there was some question in the minds of persons in the intelligence community whether Mr. Shevchenko in fact could provide accurate information about "Fedora."

By KATHLEEN TELTSCH
Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., April 17.—The Soviet official here who refused a week ago to return to Moscow did so again last night.

The official, Under Secretary General Arkhady N. Shevchenko, rejected a renewed request made by a high-ranking Soviet official at a meeting requested by Ernest A. Gross, the American attorney retained by Mr. Shevchenko.

Mr. Gross said the face-to-face talk was held in his Wall Street law office, the same meeting place used a week earlier when Soviet officials first tried and failed to induce Mr. Shevchenko to return home.

Mr. Shevchenko, who has again dropped from sight, has said only that he had "differences" with his Government and has not resigned his position as the highest-ranking Soviet citizen on the United Nations staff. Mr. Gross has insisted Mr. Shevchenko is not "in hiding" but only wants to avoid the clamor for interviews until he can talk to Secretary General Kurt Waldheim about his future.

Family Not in Jeopardy

Mr. Gross said that Mr. Shevchenko was assured last night that his family, which is in the Soviet Union, was not in jeopardy.

Meanwhile, he remains on leave from the United Nations. Mr. Shevchenko signed a new two-year contract Feb. 3. The Soviet Union wrote to Mr. Waldheim approving the extension of the appointment, which is normally held by a Soviet citizen. There is still no clear explanation of why Moscow decided to call him home and why he refused to go. A letter touching on his reasons was sent to Mr. Waldheim but only one or two of the Secretary General's aides have seen the it.

Mr. Gross would not identify the high-ranking Soviet official who attended the meeting, but it was believed that Oleg A. Troyanovsky, the chief Soviet delegate here, had requested the session as he had the first one. Mr. Gross said an observer from the State Department was at both meetings.

Appeared for Reconsideration

In the course of the talk, Mr. Gross said the Soviet official appealed to Mr. Shevchenko to reconsider his decision. According to Mr. Gross, the Soviet official "tried to find out what it was that bothered him."

Mr. Shevchenko, Mr. Gross said, "made it clear that he was acting freely and entirely on his own without external restraints or coercion of any kind," adding that his client had reaffirmed his decision against going back.

Although these points were also made at the first meeting with Mr. Troyanovsky, the Soviet delegation here issued a statement asserting Mr. Shevchenko had been freed and was being held by American intelligence agents. The State Department issued a prompt but low-keyed denial of the accusation.

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