

Soviet U.N. Official Had Contact With FBI, CIA?

By Anthony Marro

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Arkady N. Shevchenko, the high-ranking Soviet U.N. official who has refused to return home, had been in contact during the last several years with intelligence officers of both the FBI and the CIA, 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 Shevchenko, 47, 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, Shevchenko has offered to provide, for a reported \$100,000 a year, information about whether a man who has cooperated with the FBI in the past is a source of legitimate information or "disinformation" planted by Soviet intelligence agents.

Shevchenko, the undersecretary-general for the department of political and Security Council affairs and the highest ranking Soviet citizen at the U.N. 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 FBI, the CIA and the State Department all refused yesterday to comment on the report in Time, which said that Shevchenko had been talking secretly with U.S. 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 that Shevchenko had suggested recently that he could provide important information about a person the FBI 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 FBI as a "deep plant" who has provided valuable information in the past.

Others in the intelligence community, however, have voiced skepticism about "Fedora," and have suggested that he might be a double agent, intentionally planting false information with the FBI at behalf of the Soviet intelligence agency, the KGB.

Although government sources would not officially comment on this yesterday, a person familiar with the situation agreed that Shevchenko had suggested that he could provide information about whether "Fedora" was a valuable asset to the FBI or, in fact, a KGB plant.

Ernest A. Gross, a lawyer who represents Shevchenko, said last night 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 Hetu, a spokesman for the CIA, said, "I just don't have anything to say about that."