

Clues Are Offered Shevchenko Riddle

By KATHLEEN TELTSCHEK
Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., April 19—On the day that Arkady N. Shevchenko signed a two-year contract to remain as Under Secretary General, another United Nations official remembers that the Soviet citizen brushed aside congratulations, saying he would be happier returning to Moscow.

"There's why don't you do some terrible thing and get your Government to recall you?" the official—an American—suggested as a joke. The two laughed, then went their separate ways.

But less than two months later, Mr. Shevchenko was summoned home and refused to go, explaining only that he had "differences" with his Government. He hired an American lawyer, and on April 9 dropped out of sight temporarily.

Responsible intelligence sources said that both the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation had been in contact with Mr. Shevchenko over a two-year period. The relationship apparently developed during this period to the point where Mr. Shevchenko offered to trade information for \$100,000.

Agency Competition Suggested

A few knowledgeable diplomats here are suggesting that there was a competition between the F.B.I. and the C.I.A. to get him, and that in the process his secret activities became known to Soviet authorities, leading to his recall and his subsequent decision. Officials in Washington said, however, that they had no confirmation that Mr. Shevchenko may have been exposed because of the rivalry.

Although spokesmen for the F.B.I., the C.I.A. and the State Department would not comment on Mr. Shevchenko's reported intelligence contacts, others familiar with the case offer the following speculations:

The 47-year-old native of the Ukraine was known as an intensely ambitious man, who had attained prominence early and been a protégé of Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko. In that role, he had intimate knowledge of the sensitive arms-control negotiations, which resulted in the so-called SALT I accord of 1972. He has been able during Mr. Gromyko's visits here each fall to keep abreast of developments.

However, he was said to be increasingly disturbed that his position here was a backwater. This frustration may have prompted him to try to obtain information that would be prized in Moscow and led him into a deepening involvement in the intelligence community. Another view is that he may just have decided his talents were not being appreciated at home and he could do better elsewhere.

Mr. Shevchenko was a member of the Soviet delegation in New York from 1963 to 1970. Immediately before he was posted to the Foreign Ministry in Moscow. It is assumed that his access to information on Soviet policy would be useful to the C.I.A. He also could have been expected to have information about any intelligence-gathering activity by Russians in this country that would be valuable to the F.B.I.

A Meeting in Lawyer's Office

According to one well-placed source, the C.I.A. probably favored his returning home while the F.B.I. was reluctant to let him slip away. But there is no confirmation that this led one or the other agency to try to influence Mr. Shevchenko's decision.

What seems to be well-supported is that he at least went through the motions of getting ready to go to Moscow for a short trip, reportedly because of the illness of his mother-in-law. He was to leave on Sunday, April 9, accompanied by his wife, Leninga. On Wednesday and Thursday he was at work, issuing precise instructions to subordinates in the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs.

He seemed untroubled, according to one official, who noted that he had discussed such matters as the need for larger office space before leaving. However, late Thursday he called the security office to ask for new locks on his office and also to request that the door be sealed until his return. Then he disappeared.

His wife left Sunday, as planned. Oleg A. Troyanovsky, the Soviet delegate, and Anatoly F. Dobrynin, the Ambassador, to Washington, both saw her off.

Ernest A. Gross, Mr. Shevchenko's lawyer, arranged for both ranking Russians to meet that evening with Mr. Shevchenko at Mr. Gross's Wall Street office to dispel any idea that his client was being held against his will. The two Russians spent an hour trying to persuade Mr.

Shevchenko to change his mind. Then on Tuesday the Soviet delegation issued a statement charging that Mr. Shevchenko was being held by intelligence agents "under duress." The coercion charges were denied in Washington.

Meanwhile, stories of Mr. Shevchenko's having had a "drinking problem" were spread, with Russian members saying they knew he drank to excess, even during working hours. One Russian said he drank gin beginning in the early morning. Another said he was a Scotch drinker. A third said he preferred rum Cokes. There also were rumors of quarrels with his wife and one report was passed to reporters by American officials that he appeared with bruises after she beat him. There also was gossip about involvement with another woman.

Close associates disputed the accounts of excessive drinking, saying that they had never seen him intoxicated during the day. One well-placed source said he drank but had tapered off in the last year.

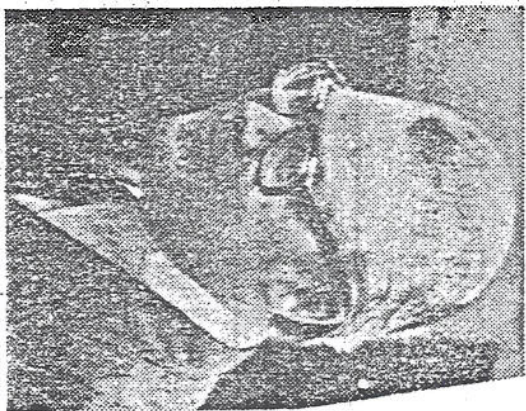
Another American here who knew Mr. Shevchenko during the five years he had been here as Under Secretary General, said they seemed compatible and that they obviously had enjoyed the "perks" that came with his prestigious job and \$87,000-a-year salary. "He seemed very proud of her, and pleased when I complimented her and remarked on the diamond jewelry she wore at a reception at the Chinese Mission," the American said.

However, another official here said there was substance to reports that Mr. Shevchenko had a woman companion and that this factor should not be ruled out as an influence on his decision to remain here.

Visited Mission Frequently

A number of diplomats here said privately that they took it for granted that the Under Secretary General maintained close links with Soviet authorities and went frequently to the Soviet Mission at 136 East 67th Street, only a few blocks from his own residence.

All staff members are supposed to be bound by their loyalty oath not to take instructions from any government. More candid than some, Mr. Shevchenko on occasion would concede in private that he was mindful how his decisions would be scrutinized at home and also used phrases such as "my mission would not like" this or that. Other East Europeans



Arkady N. Shevchenko

have said that the conflict extends even to their salaries and that they are expected to turn over a part on the ground that they should not earn more than the foreign service employees of their home governments.

One of Mr. Shevchenko's major preoccupations was said to be the book he was writing under a contract signed three years ago with Alfred A. Knopf, the American publishing house, and which was tentatively titled: "Disarmament—a Soviet View."

Asbel Green, a vice president at Knopf who worked with Mr. Shevchenko, said he assumed that authorities in Moscow had approved his writing the book and doubted it could have caused him any difficulties at home. His predecessor as Under Secretary General—the post traditionally goes to a Soviet citizen—also had written a book.

Mr. Shevchenko is technically on leave and is receiving his salary and has not resigned, although Soviet authorities are pressing for his removal. Since he has a new two-year contract, presumably he could be able to negotiate terms for his resignation and leave with as much as \$100,000, officials here said.