

CIA's John Paisley was double agent, Baltimore Sun reports

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BALTIMORE (AP)— Former CIA intelligence officer John A. Paisley regularly interrogated both dissident emigrants and political defectors from the Soviet Union, according to the Baltimore Sun.

The newspaper's six-month investigation of the case has revealed a Paisley who differs in some respects from the routine weapons analyst characterized by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Paisley disappeared last fall after going sailing on the Chesapeake Bay in his 34-foot sloop Brillig. A few days later, a body said to be his was found floating in the bay and the death was ruled as a probable suicide.

Among those questioned by Paisley before his disappearance was former KGB agent Yuri Nosenko and Capt. Nicholas Shadrin, a defector from the Soviet Navy, according to the newspaper's sources.

The sources also said Paisley was approached by agents for the KGB — the Soviet intelligence counterpart to the CIA — and was asked to become a double-agent. The offer, the sources said, took place during the early stages of the second round in the strategic

arms limitation talks, which took place in Helsinki.

The KGB, the sources said, wanted information on the subject of the U.S. negotiating position at the talks. The sources continued that Paisley reported the contact to his superiors and was advised to "take the pitch."

Paisley, the sources said, subsequently fed information to the KGB about the United States fallback position in the SALT negotiations and about how the U.S. intended to "cheat" on SALT.

The newspaper said it could not be determined whether Paisley fed the Russians accurate information or deliberate misinformation.

The discovery of a top-secret CIA telephone notebook among Paisley's effects also suggests the former high-ranking CIA intelligence officer may have been involved in covert operations at the time of his disappearance, the Sun said.

The "red-line" book — which contained top-secret numbers of American spies — bore a strip of red tape along its edge. That CIA marking indicates it must never leave agency headquarters, where it is kept in a safe.

The newspaper reported in its Sunday editions that the notebook was discovered in a briefcase full of papers recovered from Paisley's boat.

The notebook contained top-secret telephone numbers which connected with American intelligence-gathering operatives, said the Sun's CIA sources who have examined it and Senate Intelligence Committee investigators who also learned about the notebook.

State police said they looked at the book, but only after the briefcase in which it was found had been handled by several other persons. Therefore, said state police, the book may have been planted in the briefcase.

Herbert Hetu, a CIA spokesman, discarded the newspaper's suggestion as "ridiculous."

"Sure they found a notebook with a few phone numbers in it but nothing top-secret," he said. "It's unbelievable. That's irresponsible. I don't understand why they're trying to keep this thing alive."

Hetu also said Paisley "was totally overt, that means totally out in the open. He was an analyst."