

Ex-Aide Says He Was Double Agent

By Margaret Gentry
Associated Press

A former aide to Sen. James O. Eastland acknowledged yesterday that he supplied information to Soviet agents for about seven years, but he said he was a double agent following instructions from the FBI for the entire period.

"I never supplied any information without the FBI's knowledge and approval," said Kenneth R. Tollivar, who worked for the influential Mississippi Democrat in the late 1960s.

Tollivar, 42, who is now in the advertising business in Greenville, Miss., discussed the matter in a telephone interview.

The FBI declined comment, Eastland,

chairman of the Judiciary Committee, which handles most Justice Department legislation, said he dismissed Tollivar at FBI insistence but had no knowledge of his alleged spying activities.

The disclosure came against the background of reports last fall that several congressional office staffs had been infiltrated by Soviet agents. The FBI said then that there was no evidence that Soviet KGB officers had infiltrated any congressional staff.

A former FBI intelligence official and another source familiar with the case said Tollivar did not become a double agent until after the FBI had launched an espionage investigation against him in the spring of 1968.

"I wasn't fired from Eastland's staff," Tollivar asserted. He said he voluntarily quit in the summer of 1968. He had been a legislative and press aide in Eastland's Washington office since May, 1966.

"The Soviets made a very long and involved recruitment effort against me," Tollivar said, beginning when he met a Soviet diplomat at a social function in 1967 and the diplomat later invited him to lunch.

Tollivar said he immediately informed the FBI about the lunch invitation and "they told me to go ahead and report to them about what happened if I wanted to."

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The source familiar with the case said Tollivar did not contact the FBI about his initial dealings with the Soviet agents. This source and the former official could not say exactly how the FBI first learned of his activities.

Tollivar said he "never supplied the Soviets any secret or confidential or restricted information" without FBI approval.

Asked whether he considered himself under investigation by the FBI during that period, he replied, "Only to the extent I am prudent enough to realize that anyone in this kind of sensitive position's under investigation."

He said he thought the FBI might have investigated him to make sure he wasn't a triple agent with primary allegiance to the Soviets.

Tollivar said he worked as a double agent through 1974.

The source familiar with the case said FBI investigators questioned Tollivar in June, 1968.

(Eastland, reached at his home in Doddsville, Miss., initially refused to comment. Last night, however, he said through a spokes-

man here that he had brought Tollivar to Washington after the 1966 Senate race, in which Tollivar had served as press aide.

(The senator did not say in what capacity Tollivar served on his Washington staff, though the unofficial Congressional Staff Directory lists him as legislative assistant in 1967 and 1968.

(Eastland said that because "Mr. Tollivar was not a Mississippian, there was some resentment among the people that I had placed him on my staff."

"also became involved in business activities outside the office that kept him from his official duties."

(Eastland added: "About this time, the FBI came to me with Tollivar's record indicated some past activities and photograph. The record ties involving the unauthorized use of a boat in California during Mr. Tollivar's younger years.

("The bureau suggested that I discharge him and I did so."

(The senator said he later learned from "other sources" that Tollivar "had had contact with the Soviet secret service.")