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Defection of Soviet Spy Is Exploited in U.S.

PERSONENBESCHREIBUNG DESCRIPTION SIGNALEMENT	
Nachname	Kaufmann
Beruf	
Geburtsort	Dünnow / Stolp
Geburtsdatum	08. März 1928
Wohnort	Buchschlag
Haarfarbe	rot
Augenfarbe	blau
Statur	175 cm
sonstige Merkmale	keine
N.C. 0034822	

	
	
	
Unterschrift des Passinhabers Signature of bearer Signature du titulaire	
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A West German passport issued Jan. 24, 1967, to Lieut. Col. Yevgeny V. Runge under the name of Willi Gast

Intelligence Circles Use Case In Fight Against Soft Line

By BENJAMIN WELLES

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Nov. 9—The defection of Lieut. Col. Yevgeny Y. Runge, a 39-year-old Soviet intelligence officer, is regarded as a windfall by United States intelligence officials.

They are utilizing the case to pursue a threefold objective: to expose what they consider a new emphasis on the uses of "illegal" agents in Soviet espionage, to promote closer cooperation among Western security services and to counteract what they consider the tendency of some American officials, intent on "building bridges" to the Soviet Union, to minimize Soviet espionage practices.

Colonel Runge, an ethnic German from the Ukraine, defected last month. He took with him his wife, Walentina, and their 7-year-old son, Andrei, after having posed 11 years as a vending-machine dealer in West Germany as a cover for his espionage activities.

As a result of his defection, five of his subordinates have been apprehended in West Germany. The information he

supplied led to the apprehension or surveillance of at least 20 more agents, and the trail may eventually lead to the United States.

Intelligence officers here and in Western Europe regard the Runge case as unique because, they say, the spy's disclosures have so incriminated his subordinates that they are talking freely. In other cases it was the subordinates who first defected and then exposed senior officers such as Col. Rudolf I. Abel, who was arrested in New York in 1957, and Gordon A. Lonsdale, who spied in Britain.

These two maintained a tight-lipped silence during years of imprisonment until they were exchanged for Western agents held in the Soviet Union.

Equally significant is the intimate glimpse that Colonel Runge's defection provides into the warfare waged between the Soviet and American espionage establishments. Most defectors are kept hidden by the Central Intelligence Agency for months,

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even years, while they provide information. After all the information possible has been gleaned, the defector is allowed to resettle with a new name and identity.

But Colonel Runge, almost from the start, was involved in the incessant global rivalry between the Soviet and United States intelligence services, some of it covert, some open to view.

Fortunately for the C.I.A., his defection coincided with a desire of at least some United States intelligence officials to counter the international attention, much of it favorable, surrounding the Soviet Union's 50th anniversary. It also gave United States intelligence men a chance to focus public attention on what they consider a growing emphasis on the use of "illegal" Soviet agents around the world.

'Legal' Agents Balanced

Although there is no agreement, the C.I.A. and the Soviet intelligence apparatus attempt to keep the number of their respective "legal" agents—those attached to embassies or official missions—in rough balance. These agents are generally known. An American intelligence officer said recently on leaving a private home:

"I can get in my car and drive away safely. If anything happens to me, they know we'll do the same to them."

But agents who enter a foreign country illegally and operate secretly under the disguise are another problem. These agents, who assume fictitious identities and backgrounds, are what intelligence officials call "illegals."

In focusing on the Soviet Union's use of "illegals", United States intelligence officials insist that they do not use this type of agent and that, unlike the Soviet Union, they have no spies who are trained for years and then reside abroad under assumed names and nationalities. What the American intelligence apparatus does use, they say, is "indigenous" agents, who are citizens of another country working for the United States.

Undoubtedly, Colonel Runge's defection has been useful to Western intelligence in drawing attention to any expansion of the Soviet Union's "illegal" network. His importance as a purveyor of information is less clear. Some Western intelligence officers consider him on a par with Abel and Lonsdale. Others, knowledgeable about intelligence practices, openly wonder why Colonel Runge would have been surfaced so quickly and discussed so thoroughly if he were indeed of that caliber.

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Colonel Runge is reported to have told his interrogators that the "illegal" network is being expanded especially in areas with effective counterintelligence services such as the United States, Japan, the British Commonwealth and Western Europe.

Reasons for Publicity

In publicizing the Runge case, intelligence officials here disavow any desire of reviving the "cold war" mentality. But they are evidently concerned about some State Department officials who are so intent on steps to improve relations with the Soviet Union by stressing such "positive" steps as increased trade, space and nuclear control accords, and periodic consultations on such matters as the potential threat from China that they advocate minimizing news of such "negative" factors as espionage and defections.

Against this background, Colonel Runge's successful career as an "illegal" in West Germany is being presented by the intelligence community here as support for assertions that "hundreds" of such agents are at work in the United States and in other countries.

Elements in the intelligence community have long believed that some American political officials in their desire to "build bridges" have underestimated hostile aspects of Soviet policy, including espionage.

These sources also fear that the security agencies of other Western countries have not sufficiently recognized the threat posed by "illegal" agents.

"Illegals now form the bigger part of Soviet intelligence," a senior American official remarked. "Few governments realize how extensive and serious this apparatus has become."

Colonel Runge's own decision to defect began to take shape last July and August when, according to the account he is reported to have given American interrogators, he and his family returned from West Germany to the Soviet Union for a vacation at an intelligence officers' retreat at Gelendzhik, Black Sea resort in the Caucasus, and in preparation for a new assignment.

It was then that he and his strong-willed wife began debating the life they had led for 11 years in West Germany as Mr.

and Mrs. Willi Kurt Gast, "illegal" agents in charge of two espionage rings. Although they had been successful in stealing secret Western documents and had been decorated for their work, the Runoges began to question their future as spies. In Moscow they learned that their next assignment would involve learning English, the acquisition of a new legend — false names and personal backgrounds — and eventually separation from their son, who would have to be left behind in a Moscow boarding school. The Runoges have given other reasons for their defection: weariness with their clandestine life, the ever-present fear of detection, irritation with the bureaucracy of the Soviet intelligence apparatus, and the softening effect of long life in the West.

The interrogators believe that the thought of leaving their son was the principal reason for their defection.

With the decision made, Colonel Runge took advantage of an opportunity to photograph his personnel file to obtain proof of his identity to show Western intelligence agents.

During his Moscow visit he was awarded the Victory Medal of World War II at a ceremony in a hideaway house in Vostaniya Square, near the United States Embassy. The award certificate was signed by Maj. Gen. Vasily V. Mozzechkov, a deputy chief of the foreign intelligence directorate of the State Security Committee.

General Mozzechkov was in the news last spring when he traveled on a false diplomatic passport to the United Nations and came to Washington during the Cherry Blossom Festival. His identity was exposed in the American press and he returned soon thereafter to Moscow.

The Runoges faced a problem in fleeing. According to Western intelligence sources, the Soviet State Security Committee holds a family in hostage to help prevent defections when a change in assignments may strain the agent's loyalty.

Colonel Runge told his interrogators that he succeeded in avoiding this procedure through the personal intervention of Yuri V. Andropov, chairman of the Soviet intelligence agency. Colonel Runge is said to have told Mr. Andropov that failure of Mrs. Runge or their son to return from an ostensibly normal holiday and business trip might have puzzled neighbors and local shopkeepers in West Germany.

The fact that Colonel Runge had had many opportunities to defect during his 11 years in West Germany, but never did, may have been a factor in Mr. Andropov's decision to let the entire family return to wind up their personal affairs.

In appearance Colonel Runge is a perfect "illegal," able to blend into any West European or North American crowd. He has no distinguishing marks or scars. He stands 5 feet 8 inches tall, weighs 165 pounds, has dark brown, somewhat curly hair worn short, and has intelligent brown eyes.

According to his interrogators he gave the following account of his life:

Born in 1928 of German extraction in the Ukraine, he was sent to Germany by the invading German forces during World War II. After the war he became a Soviet army interpreter and, in 1949, joined the intelligence service in a similar capacity.

From 1952 to 1955 he trained for a career as an "illegal" agent. He was assigned the legend name of Willi Kurt Gast and, as a "birthplace," the Pomeranian village of Duninowo (the former German Dünnow), in an area that passed from Germany to Poland after World War II. There Soviet intelligence had found a record of a dead woman named Martha Gast, who was to be his late "mother."

Colonel Runge spent two weeks in Duninowo in 1954 to familiarize himself with the house in which he was supposedly raised, with the school, shops and townfolk. During this period he also practiced high-speed radio transmission.

Next followed training in Moscow in the use of microdots. These are photographs reduced to the size of a period on a typewriter that are virtually undetectable when concealed in an ordinary letter. Colonel Runge