

'Agent' Had Zambian Job

Engineer Hired to Set Up Communications

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Marshall Soghoian, an electronics engineer charged last week with acting as an unregistered foreign agent, was hired in 1969 to help set up internal and external communications systems for the African country of Zambia.

Soghoian, then president of Research Instruments Corp. of Richmond, went to work for Michael Doud Gill, a Washington public relations man who had a \$336,225 contract to build a communications link among Washington, New York, London, Bonn and Lusaka, capital of Zambia.

Gill, nephew of the late President Dwight D. Eisenhower, also had received from Zambia a letter of intent and a \$75,000 cash advance on a \$1.6 million project to link 46 points within Zambia, a landlocked country slightly larger than Texas.

The external system, equipped with six scrambling devices, was to be a direct link between President Kenneth Kaunda and major Zambian embassies, Gill said, while the internal network was to enable Kaunda to bypass the country's antiquated telephone system.

Gill said that he hired Soghoian to help with the contract and that Soghoian later stole the contract from him. It is unclear whether Soghoian ever completed construction of the two communications networks.

"I don't know anything about communications systems," Gill said yesterday in an interview at his Northwest Washington town house. "I hired Soghoian to bid on it."

Gill said he first was introduced to Soghoian on Gill's houseboat in Miami Beach just prior to the 1968 Republican National Convention. Gill, then assistant national chair-



MARSHALL SOGHOIAN
... communications expert

man of United Citizens for Nixon, said Soghoian volunteered to help in Mr. Nixon's campaign.

Gill said Soghoian coordinated a conference call that October between between candidate Richard M. Nixon and UCN chairmen in 50 states and 13 foreign countries. Soghoian was not paid for that job, Gill said.

Dewey Arnold, senior partner in the accounting firm of Price Waterhouse & Co. and then treasurer of UCN, said Soghoian also "helped set up the phones at the Willard (Hotel, UCN headquarters)." After the election, Soghoian may have been paid up to \$1,500 as technical director of an inaugural gala at the D.C. Armory, Gill said.

Soghoian was indicted by a federal grand jury here yesterday on one count of possessing an illegal electronic listening device.

U.S. Attorney Harold H. Titus Jr. said yesterday that the grand jury investigation of the charge that Soghoian acted as an unregistered foreign agent is continuing while Soghoian is free on \$100,000 bond.

Gill said he first met Zambian officials in 1968 while trying to sell his R Street townhouse, which had been the embassy of Ghana until 1964. The Zambians finally purchased a mansion on Massachusetts Avenue's embassy row and converted it into a chancery in 1970.

After the 1968 election, Gill was invited to visit Lusaka by Rupiah Banda, then the Zambian ambassador to the United States. Banda, who Gill said had met Soghoian after the election, also asked Gill to bring Soghoian to Zambia.

Gill said he spent about 50 hours with Kaunda, a native of Malawi raised in Zambia. "He said he was convinced that although his political philosophy of humanism was correct for Zambia, he needed assistance from abroad," Gill said of the Zambian leader.

Kaunda listed importation of meat and oil, liquefaction of coal, and construction of offices, roads and hospitals as areas where foreign capital and expertise were required, Gill said. Gill's visit was cut short by the death of President Eisenhower on March 28, 1969.

On his second trip to Zambia six weeks later, Gill said that Kaunda, citing internal political problems, suggested that Gill first undertake to secure equipment and build the external communications system. Gill then hired Soghoian for \$25,000 for one year's work and expenses.

Soghoian was hired, Gill said, to deal with American electronics manufacturers and to ship equipment to Zambia. Documents show that Gill's company dealt with at least 11 American electronics firms.

Soghoian had impressed the Zambians with his knowledge of electronic surveillance devices, Gill said. On their second visit to Lusaka, he added, Soghoian brought three large footlockers "filled with small components and some complete pieces. There were also some American phones, including speaker phones. This stuff was stored at the government guest house, and Soghoian set up a speaker phone in the President's office.

"The President thought it was absolutely incredible. Kaunda is an intelligent guy but not terribly wordy or sophisticated," Gill said.

Gill said that Soghoian told him that he, at Kaunda's request, was buying equipment to intercept telephone conversations in a Lusaka government building. "They were bugging their own officials," Gill said.

"He (Soghoian) got to know those people (the Zambians) and stole the contract," Gill said.

Gill said Soghoian misrepresented to the Zambians the company's profit margin, claiming Gill was making more than the 10 per cent called for in the contract. Gill also said that Ambassador Banda and Soghoian then began visiting American suppliers and telling them Gill no longer held the contract.

Gill also said that he agreed to Soghoian's request for \$125,000 for deposits with suppliers before being informed by two associates of Soghoian of the alleged plan to assume the contract. Gill said the money was never returned to him.

Gill, who left Zambia in late August, 1969, added:

"I don't know what Soghoian's done since, and I don't want to know."

Activities In Congress

Senate

Meets at noon on Treas.-Post Office appropriation.
Committees: none.

House

Meets at noon on State Dept. auth., national flood insurance expansion, HUD loan insurance and lead-base poisoning prevention.

Committees:
Appropriations—10 a.m. Exec. defense subcom. Army procurement, H-143 Cap. Education & Labor—10 a.m. Open. Sel. labor subcom. HR 9119-amend Fed. Empl. Compensation Act. MC & pub. witns. 2261 ROB.
Education & Labor—12:30 p.m. Open. Genl. edu. subcom. To mark up HR 9639-amend Natl. School & Child Nutrition Act. Rayburn Reception Rm., Cap.
Commerce—10 a.m. Open. Comm. & power subcom. HR 9535-prohibit blackouts of professional sports events which are sold out. MC; Bowie Kuhn, comm. of baseball & Tom Kauper, Justice Dept. 2123 ROB.
Commerce—11 a.m. Open. Comm. & Finance subcom. To markup consumer product warranty legis. 2322 ROB.
Ways & Means—10 a.m. Exec. Cont. markup of HR 6767-Trade Reform Act. Comte. Rm. LOB.