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**Zambia Says
U.S. Knew of
Agent's Acts**

By Judy Nicol
Washington Post Staff Writer

A Zambian Embassy spokesman said yesterday that electronic and technical equipment bought by Zambian adviser Marshall Soghoian was exported to Zambia with the permission of the United States government.

Soghoian was charged last week by the Justice Department with acting as an unregistered foreign agent and with possession of an illegal electronic listening device.

Zambian Embassy counselor Joshua Siyolwe said all equipment procured through Mr. Soghoian's services was processed for export through the appropriate agencies and offices of the United States government, after the necessary export permits and other certifications had been obtained.

Siyolwe added that Soghoian, rather than being a secret agent, was an "adviser on electronic and other technical matters. . . and his activities were, to our knowledge, fully known by the appropriate United States government officials with whom he came into repeated contact."

Siyolwe said the equipment that Soghoian had purchased for Zambia was "bought on the open market through sources of supply available to any potential purchaser."

He said he had been told by the State Department Thursday that copies of two export permits issued to Soghoian

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had been located by Department of Commerce officials.

State Department spokesmen said they "had no reason to doubt Siyolwe's statement that two export permits had been found," but yesterday they could neither confirm nor deny it because the two officials who met with him could not be reached.

Commerce Department officials could not be reached for comment, either.

The FBI, which is in charge of investigating Soghoian's activities, refused to discuss the case, saying it was before the courts.

Siyolwe confirmed yesterday that Zambia had rented a warehouse in Hyattsville, for which Soghoian paid the rent in cash last July, to store "property that belongs to the Zambian government."

"This is not unusual," he said.

Included in the items stored in the warehouse, Siyolwe said, were electronic equipment and other technical equipment to be used in Zambia's "copper, radio and car industries as well as for schools and other governmental activities." He declined to be more specific about the type of equipment purchased.

He said the responsibility for purchasing such equipment had been "delegated" to Soghoian because of his technical experience in the electronics field.

According to Soghoian's mother, he holds a degree in chemistry and physics from the University of Richmond

and once ran an electronics shop in Richmond.

Following Soghoian's arrest, the FBI said he had described himself to American businessmen as a representative of both the Zambian government and its embassy here in procuring annually for Zambia about \$1 million worth of U.S. electronic and technical equipment.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Harold J. Sullivan said that investigators discovered in Soghoian's hotel room at the Embassy Row Hotel a canceled check he allegedly cashed this month for \$270,000 and later found a cashier's check for \$190,000 in a safe deposit box belonging to Soghoian.

The Zambian government has made an oral protest to the U.S. State Department, calling the arrest an "unjustified action calculated to embarrass the Zambian government and its people."

Siyolwe said Zambia had received no official reply to the protest. He also charged that the FBI had seized "documentation belonging to Zambia as well as trust funds, in the form of checks, which Mr. Soghoian was holding incidental to Zambian procurement activities."