

Security Agents Are in Moscow

Say U.S. Spy Policy Leads World to War

Moscow, Sept. 6 (AP)

Two young code clerks from the super-secret U. S. National Security Agency turned up in Moscow today with tales that the United States is spying even on its allies under a policy they feel will lead to World War III.

Bernon F. Mitchell, 31, Eureka, Calif., and William H. Martin, 29, Ellensburg, Wash., announced they have defected to the Soviet Union and intend to become Soviet citizens.

"We would attempt to crawl to the moon if we thought it would lessen the threat of an atomic war," they said in a statement.

(Martin received a master's degree in mathematics at the University of Illinois in June while on nine months' leave from his job with NSA. He lived at 9 Bungalow Ct., Champaign, while studying at the U. of I.)

The Russians put the two on display under television lights in the gilt-ornamented Journalists Club. From a platform, the two detailed the two complaints against the United States and spilled to newsmen what they said were NSA communications-intelligence secrets. They said the United States had broken the codes of friendly nations and even planted a spy in a friendly embassy.

Mitchell and Martin, bachelor friends since service in the U.S. Navy, refused to tell how they got to Moscow from NSA headquarters at Ft. Meade, Md. They are known to have come by way of Mexico City.

"That might prevent others from taking the same route," they said.

Left in June

The two left Ft. Meade late in June on vacation, ostensibly to visit relatives on the West Coast. They never reached the coast.

Mitchell and Martin professed to believe that U. S. policy may lead to World War III. They complained chiefly of American reconnaissance flights over Soviet territory and the arm of Red China, but said nothing about the May Day U2 flight for which the Russians gave Francis Gary Powers a 10-year sentence.

They said one of the reasons they left the United States was persecution there of persons who do not believe in God. They attacked what they called harassment of those with unpopular political views.

"Talents of women are encouraged and utilized to a much greater extent in the Soviet Union than in the United States," they said in a statement. "We feel that this enriches Soviet society and makes Soviet women more desirable as mates."

"It is a difficult and painful experience to leave our native country, families and friends. Yet we felt that the United States government, in carrying out policies dangerous to world peace, should not be allowed to rely on these emotional attachments to guarantee the loyalty of its citizens."

Discussing U.S. hostility to Communism, their statement said:

"Perhaps U. S. hostility toward Communism arises out of a feeling of insecurity engendered by Communist achievements in science, culture and industry. If this is so, such feelings of insecurity are a poor excuse for endangering world peace."

Rep. John W. McCormack, D-Mass., said recently that the pair, who were bachelors and close friends, had taken with them "valuable cryptographic information" concerning secret codes.

The top secret agency with which they worked was a defense unit engaged in intercepting radio signals and in communications intelligence.

They said the United States had

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planted a code-cipher spy in the Turkish Embassy (presumably in Washington) and was deciphering secret messages of more than 50 countries at a cost of half a billion dollars a year.

They said Britain and Canada cooperated in the program and were closely involved.

Martin, a heavy-set blond, appeared pale but confident. The bespectacled Mitchell was somewhat nervous. Both read their statements rapidly but sometimes stumbled over a word or sentence.

Their sharpest tussle with American reporters came when one asked them where they were living now and what they were doing.

"Why do you wish to know?" replied Martin to the applause of Soviet journalists.

They declined to reveal their place of residence and said that if anyone, especially relatives or friends, wanted to visit them, such a visit would have to be arranged through the Soviet government.

They parried questions as to their feelings about alleged Soviet spy operations. Nor would they make a direct reply when asked whether secret Soviet messages were among those which the United States had been successfully deciphering.

List Codes Broken

Although they declined to say whether the United States had broken Soviet ciphers and codes, they were more cooperative when a correspondent for the Soviet government paper Izvestia asked them to specify other countries whose secret messages have been deciphered by the NSA.

"Italy, Turkey, France, the United Arab Republic, Yugoslavia, Indonesia and Uruguay," Mitchell said, adding: "That is enough to give a general picture."

In response to a question from a correspondent for the Soviet Communist party organ Pravda, they said all their allegations that the United States is using money and military aid to manipulate and overthrow other governments was based on an information lecture which they and about 100 other personnel of the NSA were given shortly after being employed. They said they had heard the Peron regime in Argentina mentioned as an example. Mitchell said he could not give any more examples "because we have very little information on this."

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At one point the two said they had had a long talk with a congressman who shared their doubts concerning American policy and was distressed that the executive branch did not take the Congress into his confidence.

Asked to identify the congressman, Mitchell replied: "I prefer not to mention his name. . . . He can name himself if he wants to."

The two were chiefly critical of spy flights over territories of the Soviet Union and Communist China.

They said they had known of such flights since 1952 when they were stationed as communications technicians at the Kanasea base near Yokohama in Japan.

They said that in advance of each reconnaissance flight near the Chinese or Soviet border, secret messages were sent to stations like Kanasea so that at designated times they could tune in on Chinese and Soviet radar facilities.

Cite 1958 Flight

They cited one flight in particular. They said that in September, 1958, a C130 flew over the border from Turkey into Soviet Armenia and never returned. The United States claimed it was shot down while on a scientific mission during which it accidentally crossed the border. The Soviet Union merely said that the plane had crashed.

Mitchell said that in February, 1959, the State Department released a recording in the Russian language which it said supported its charges.

Mitchell said that on the late afternoon of Feb. 19, 1959, Lt. Gen. John Sanford, NSA commander, suggested that his personnel refrain from comment. The two said it was clear that if the C130 had been on a scientific flight the NSA would have had nothing to conceal. Mitchell said that nevertheless NSA employees did discuss among themselves the possibility of far-reaching consequences from this flight.

Martin said that a high official, otherwise unidentified, told him the plane carried instruments and electronic experts for close-range tracking of Soviet radar stations.

He said this official told him that the plane had deliberately crossed the Soviet-Turkish frontier. He said it should be clear even to the layman that such a flight had no bearing on finding out if the Soviet Union was planning a surprise attack but only to shift out its defense installations.

He said that a speech by Sen. Hubert Humphrey, D-Minn., supporting the State Department version was what got them worried and caused them to seek the appointment with the unnamed congressman in order to set the Congress right.

Martin said they discussed Humphrey's statement with this congressman, explained the real mission of the C130 to him and told him how dangerous such flights were to world peace.

Martin said they were interrupted when William McComber, assistant secretary of state for congressional affairs, phoned and asked the congressman to refrain from further discussion.

He quoted a high but unidentified official of the NSA as telling Mitchell that the United States continuously violated the borders of Red China on intelligence missions.

Mitchell told newsmen "We hope the American public will bring pressure on the United States government to end these flights, since a single incident or misunderstanding could be the cause of war."

Soviets Show 'Forebearance'

The two said they believed the Soviet Union has shown great forbearance toward these reconnaissance flights.

Mitchell then started to give details of the work of the NSA, most of it contained in a book published by the Harvard University press in 1958 called "The CIA and National Security."

He told of headquarters at Ft. Meade in a building second in size only to the Pentagon. He said it cost 100 million dollars a year to maintain.

He said NSA had a network of 2,000 radio interception stations scattered around the world, staffed by 8,000 operators. He said it cost 380 million dollars a year to maintain these stations and forward their information, bringing the cost of NSA to about half billion dollars a year.

He said these stations intercepted both plain texts and enciphered messages, including those of the countries on whose territory they were situated.

The two said: "Britain and the United States exchange information and their respective stations supplement one another. . . . There are also close relations with Canada."

The two said one of the reasons they left the United States was because there was persecution there of persons who did not believe in God.

The statement said that in the state of Maryland one must take an oath one is a believer before getting a job with the state government. The two said the United States confiscated about 50 million pieces of mail every year, frequently without notifying the addressee.

They also attacked what they called the harassment of those with unpopular political views.

Martin and Mitchell said that before leaving the United States at the end of June they left the first of two statements, which they read from the blue velvet-draped stage today, in safety deposit box No. 174 in the State Bank of Laurel, Md., rented in the name of Bernon F. Mitchell.

They said that the envelope containing this statement had written on it a request that its contents be made public "because we wish to explain to the American people why we decided to ask the Soviet Union to grant us political asylum."

Secret Policies

They charged the U. S. government had gotten its hands on the statement and kept it secret because "the Eisenhower-Nixon administration does not wish certain aspects of its policies to become known to the American people."

Asked to describe their specific job at the NSA, the reply was: "We were mathematicians in the field of cryptography, using electronic digital computers as aids." Mitchell said he had a bachelor's degree in statistics from Stanford University. Martin said he had a similar degree from the University of Washington.

Both said they did post graduate work at the George Washington University and served together in the U. S. Navy in communications work.