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WASHINGTON POST
23 DECEMBER 1975

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Denies 'KGB Agent' Allegation

Since November 20, I've been somewhat surprised that I've not been arrested and prosecuted on a charge of espionage. Why? On that date, your presumably responsible newspaper published a piece by Jack Anderson alleging that I am a "dedicated KGB agent." Anderson suggests his motive for this slanderous allegation in these words: "Our journalistic ethics were lambasted by Iona Andronov, a writer for the Soviet's worldwide 'New Times' magazine."

Your readers may be interested in knowing just why Anderson directed his poisonous barb against me and why he considers that I "lambasted" his journalistic ethics. Last summer, I wrote a lengthy article for my publication "New Times" about the illegal activities of the CIA, citing facts which were well publicized by the American press, including The Washington Post. In the article I said that the CIA, in an attempt to justify itself in the eyes of the American public, was supplying Mr. Anderson with anonymous anti-Soviet fables and that Mr. Anderson "shamelessly cites forgeries provided by the CIA." Furthermore, I quoted a letter which Mr. Anderson reported receiving from Mr. Colby, then CIA director, saying: "please let me express my appreciation and that of the Agency for your recent cooperation."

Perhaps by citing these facts I was indeed lambasting Mr. Anderson's journalistic ethics. Perhaps you do not agree with my assessment of Mr. Anderson's journalistic practices. But do you consider it "journalistic ethics" for Mr. Anderson to reply to my criticisms by resorting to the cheap slander that I am a "dedicated KGB agent?"

Would you consider it decent practice for a Soviet journalist to label The Washington Post correspondent in Moscow a "dedicated agent of the CIA" simply for writing critical reports about life in the U.S.S.R.?

Slander and libel are not legitimate weapons in the arsenal of honest journalists, no matter how great their political differences. Yet your columns have depicted me as a KGB agent posing as a bona fide journalist without even pretending to present a single shred of evidence in support of this calumny.

Your newspaper speaks often about violations of civil and human rights in other countries. Is not the slanderous allegation so damaging to my journalistic reputation which appeared in your columns a serious violation of my human rights? Or do you maintain a double-standard in such matters—one for the The Washington Post and Mr. Anderson and another for people like me?

Incidentally, I would like to cite one other example of Mr. Anderson's credibility in reporting on the status and activities of Soviet journalists in the United States. In The Washington Post of July 1, Mr. Anderson writes that "in this country Soviet reporters travel virtually where they wish." Mr. Anderson should know that many areas in the United States, including entire states, are closed to me and other Soviet correspondents. Furthermore, before embarking on a trip outside of New York, I must—and do—inform the American authorities two days in advance about the details of my itinerary, the dates of my arrivals in and departures from all the towns and villages which I propose to visit, the highways and roads by which I travel, etcetera.

IONA ANDRONOV,
Correspondent, New Times magazine,
Moscow, U.S.S.R.

New York

Jack Anderson replies:

Andronov charges that I depicted him as a KGB agent without a "single shred of evidence." A KGB agent who defected to the West, Yuri Krotkov, has testified before the Senate that the KGB uses Andronov's New Times as a forum for attacking the U.S. A second defector, who has been interviewed only recently by intelligence officials, has stated that even Communists outside the Soviet Union are aware that New Times is an instrumentality of the KGB. A KGB defector has also said that Andronov, because of his key posiition with the magazine, is "undoubtedly" a KGB operative. Then, our own U.S. intelligence sources identified him as an outright KGB agent, who has been under scrutiny in the U.S. since 1966.

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