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PHOENIX. ARIZ.
BIGAMY TRIAL

An alleged bigamist took the stand at his trial Tuesday, portraying himself as a worldwide rover who traded wives almost as often as he traded the goods by which he made his living.

Asked how many women he had married between 1949, when he first was wed in Korea, and 1955, Giovanni Vigliotto replied: "I don't keep score."

Vigliotto, who has said he married more than 100 women in 18 states and nine foreign countries, is charged with one count each of bigamy and fraud stemming from his Nov. 16, 1981, marriage to Patricia Ann Gardiner of suburban Mesa.

Gardiner and another woman who said she married Vigliotto have testified that Vigliotto bilked them out of cash and property.

On the stand, Vigliotto, 53, identified himself as Nikolai Peruskov, saying he was born in Sicily on April 3, 1929, and began his travels with his uncle at age 8 1/2 after his parents died.

As the years wore on, he said he went to Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, Mexico, Korea, Hawaii and scores of other places, making his living by trading as he roamed - "sometimes a very good living, sometimes an adequate living."

By trading, he said he meant "buying something, selling something, making a living ... .

"I just don't stay anywhere that long," he said, adding that typically he moved on within six months to a year.

He first entered the United States in 1943 when he was about 14 or 15, he testified. He said he couldn't remember what name he used at the time but that it wasn't his real name.

He said he worked for the Central Intelligence Agency "on a contractual basis" from 1953 through 1954, and the CIA supplied him with three names - Frederick Jipp, John Mendoza and John Briccione. Authorities said earlier he is known to have used at least 50 aliases.

He testified that his trading took him to Korea during the war years, and he lost part of his stomach and gall bladder when he was wounded there. He said he also suffers from diabetes.

He first came to the Phoenix area in 1958, when he married Colleen Davis, he testified. He said he spent the 1960s in the Midwest and the 1970s in California and Hawaii.

One of his marriages came in Florida in 1980, when he wed a Korean woman who "had a manufacturing business for original oil paintings," he said.

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