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U.S. Army deserter faces expulsion from Sweden

STOCKHOLM, Sweden

A U.S. Army sergeant who deserted to East Germany has been denied asylum in Sweden and faces expulsion to the United States, officials said Friday.

''This is a humanitarian country and I ought to be allowed a chance to stay,'' Sgt. 1st Class Antonio Glass, 36, said in an interview.

Glass said he deserted for political reasons, partly because he disapproved of the deployment of U.S. medium-range missiles in Western Europe.

He said he told the Swedish authorities he had handed over secrets to the East Germans, and faced severe punishment -- possibly the death penalty -- if he was forced to return to the United States.

But the Swedish Labor Ministry has upheld an immigration board ruling to expel Glass, who came to Sweden after he deserted from the U.S. Army in West Germany on April 23, 1983. Glass said that after twelve days of questioning, the East Germans put him on a ferry to Sweden on May 5.

''We have not found that he had enough reasons to get a residency permit for political or humanitarian reasons,'' said Labor Minister Anita Gradin in explaining the decision to expel Glass.

Glass, who was born in the Dominican Republic, said he had informed East German security police about details of NATO's General Defense Plan.

He said he also handed over pictures taken by the CIA of Soviet missiles in East Germany and described western surveillence of the Soviet military delegation at Frankfurt-am-Main, where he served as an officer of the 3rd U.S. Armored Division.

''That he has given out secret documents is not a reason (for staying in Sweden). That is punishable here, too,'' Gradin said.

Glass, who has an estranged wife and two children in Los Angeles, said Swedish officials were aware he may be sentenced to a five-year prison term by a U.S. military court for desertion.

But he said they told him that, despite his testimony to the contrary, they were unaware he had disclosed secrets to the East Bloc - for which he says he may face a civilian court punishment of a life sentence or the death penalty.

Swedish officials said Glass would be sent back to the United States -- although no extradition request has been received -- unless he could find some other country willing to accept him.

Glass said he asked East Germany for help in going to Cuba or Nicaragua, but ''things just didn't work out.''

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ESPIONAGE

The secret sharers and citizen rights

Freedoms imperiled by CIA's links with 'friends'

By Jeff McConnell
Special to the Globe

The recent arrest of Navy terrorism analyst Jonathan Jay Pollard for spying for Israel upon the United States, Israel's most important ally, has put a new spotlight on spying among friends. However, there is a related problem that is deeper and more troubling: the occasional collusion – sometimes deliberate, sometimes inadvertent – between American intelligence agencies and the intelligence and security services of "friendly" countries.

That collusion can take two forms. In the first, American intelligence agencies either directly assist or passively tolerate intelligence activities by agents of foreign governments operating in the United States. In the second, American agents exchange intelligence on residents of this country with foreign governments. In both instances, the practices often violate the constitutional rights of US residents.

Between 1981 and 1983, a federal grand jury secretly investigated the activities of US-based opponents of Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos. The probe was prompted by allegations by the Marcos government that the dissidents had links to a campaign of bombings that had rocked Manila in late 1980. According to a US government affidavit recently filed in Washington, the main target of this investigation was the Movement for a Free Philippines, an organization of moderate anti-Marcos activists. According to other accounts, another target was the late Benigno Aquino, who allegedly had ties to several MFP members. Aquino was the most prominent anti-Marcos activist and was assassinated in August 1983 on his return to Manila after three years of self-imposed exile in the United States. The grand jury investigation, the affidavit asserts, was suspended without indictments shortly after Aquino's murder. Yet even before a determination had been made over the sufficiency of evidence for indictments, the Justice Department reportedly shared FBI files on the MFP probe with Marcos' martial law regime. Among these files were said to be documents seized in an FBI raid on the San Francisco home of Steve Psinakis, a former MFP officer.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported that photocopies of some of those documents were forwarded to Gen. Fabian Ver, then chief of staff of the Philippine armed forces and formerly head of Marcos' personal intelligence unit, the Presidential Security Command.

Apparently among the information passed on to the Marcos regime was confidential, noncriminal information on anti-Marcos activists based in this country. Psinakis charged in a recent interview that a list of MFP activists inside the Philippines also found its way to Ver. He said that some on this list were subsequently arrested and that two have disappeared.

1978 Esmail case

Psinakis' charge cannot be verified. There are precedents, however. Between 1968 and 1974, the CIA and the FBI carried out Operation CHAOS, a spy operation against American political activists with international ties. Throughout the duration of CHAOS, the US government frequently exchanged data on targeted individuals with "friendly" intelligence services. It also requested clandestine operations against them. One CHAOS target, Abdeen Jabara, learned during a lawsuit settled in 1984, after a decade of litigation, that the FBI had supplied noncriminal material about him to three foreign governments. The Bureau promised, as part of the settlement, to attempt to retrieve that material.

In 1978, the FBI briefed the Senate Judiciary Committee in executive session on the case of Sami Esmail, a US citizen then attending Michigan State. Esmail had been seized and imprisoned shortly after arriving in Israel to visit his dying father. He was eventually charged with, and convicted of, membership in a Palestinian organization outlawed in Israel.

Jabara, who was Esmail's attorney, had suspicions resulting from his own case that, even though Esmail had done nothing illegal in the United States, the FBI had transmitted information about Esmail to Mossad, the Israeli intelligence service, some time prior to his departure for Israel. Jabara contacted James Abourezk, then senator from South Dakota, who arranged the executive session hearing.

The Justice Department confirmed Jabara's suspicions. When Abourezk questioned them on the FBI's authority "to transmit this kind of noncriminal information," department officials acknowledged the noncriminal nature of the information conveyed but held they had had the authority to do so based on department guidelines and a presidential executive order governing liaison relationships with foreign services.

"They sent up their top counterterrorism guy," Abourezk recalled recently. "They [the FBI] had information that [Esmail] was on his way and gave it to the Israelis. But they said the Israelis said they already knew." In this way, Abourezk contended, the FBI sought to deflect responsibility for Esmail's arrest. But he emphasized that the FBI "volunteered the information – Mossad did not ask."

Congressional investigations in the mid-1970s into Operation CHAOS and other cases in which the FBI and the CIA disregarded constitutional guarantees on freedom of speech and political activity went a long way toward ending purely domestic abuses. But collusion by American agencies with "friendly" services remained a piece of unfinished business.

The work by Congress led presidents

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