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# France Expels 4 Russians and Moscow Retaliates

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PARIS, Feb. 3 — The Foreign Ministry announced today that four Soviet diplomats had been expelled from France following unspecified investigations into their activities. Within hours, officials here said the Soviet Union had retaliated by ordering four French envoys to leave Moscow by the end of the week.

The moves came 10 days after the arrest of a retired French Air Force mechanic on charges of spying for Moscow.

The Foreign Ministry provided no details on the identities or functions of the Russians at the Soviet Embassy here, saying only that they had been asked to leave French territory after "judicial investigations."

The French news agency however, citing "reliable sources," said all were listed either as military or commercial attachés at the embassy; they were all known to be working for the G.R.U., the intelligence arm of the Soviet Army, the news agency said.

## 4 Leave for Moscow

The four Soviet diplomats were said to have left Paris by plane for Moscow over the weekend.

Both Governments immediately denounced each other's actions. The Soviet Embassy in Paris condemned the expulsions of its officials as "obviously inimical and provocative" and said the charges were unfounded.

The French Foreign Ministry said the Government "deplores" the Kremlin countermove, which it called totally unjustified.

A French official, who asked not to be identified, said the four Russians were involved in the case of the retired air force mechanic, Bernard Sourisseau, who has been accused by the French counterintelligence service of

passing information to the Russians about the movement of French naval vessels near the port of Brest, a major nuclear submarine base.

The expulsions this weekend were described here as the most serious taken against Soviet personnel by France since 1983, when 47 Soviet diplomats and citizens at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization were asked to leave the country.

## Relations Have Improved

In the past, the Soviet Union has responded to expulsions from Western countries by demanding the departure from Moscow of an equal number of those countries' diplomats. In the 1983 Unesco case, however, the Soviet Union did not retaliate against France.

Since 1983, France has expelled a total of 53 Soviet diplomats, including the Consul General of Marseilles at the end of last year and a member of a commercial mission in Paris in 1984.

The four expulsions this weekend came amid an improved atmosphere in French-Soviet relations following the visit here last summer of the Soviet leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev. President François Mitterrand is expected to return the visit later this year.

An official here said that he did not think the latest expulsions would affect the improved French-Soviet climate.

"At the same time," the official said, "it is sometimes necessary to let the Soviets know that they have gone too far and then to be firm. This is what was done in this case."

## Soviet Spying Said to Rise

The latest spy case broke when the Interior Ministry announced the arrest of Mr. Sourisseau, 44 years old, a former helicopter repairman, in the village of Le Croisic near the coast of Brittany.

Mr. Sourisseau is accused of making

regular trips to the Atlantic ports of Lorient and Brest to observe French naval movements, particularly the missile-carrying nuclear submarines based in those ports.

Mr. Sourisseau's reported activities were part of what the French have seen as an increase in Soviet espionage activities here.