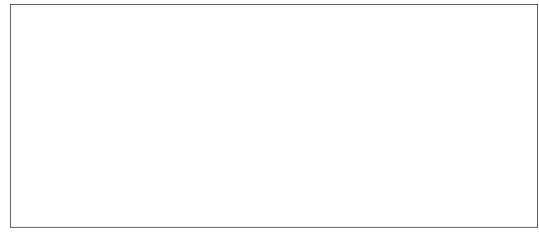


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REUTERS  
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BY ROBERT KEARNS  
WASHINGTON

A top FBI counter-intelligence agent accused of espionage fell for the classic trap of sex and money but apparently did not pass on information that will seriously damage U.S. interests, espionage experts said today.

In winning over Richard Miller, a 47-year-old veteran in the Los Angeles office of the FBI, the experts doubted whether Moscow got much more than it already knew. He was arrested late Tuesday night on charges of spying for the Soviet Union, along with a Soviet emigre couple, Nikolai and Svetlana Ogorodnikov, who are said to be officers in the KGB, the Soviet intelligence agency.

In the jargon of the intelligence community, Svetlana, 34, was the "honeypot" who seduced Miller, described as a studious, paunchy, graying father of eight with financial problems who lived on a small avocado farm near San Diego.

In San Diego today, Miller, wearing a crumpled shirt and trousers, made a brief appearance in a federal court and was held without bail to await a preliminary hearing in Los Angeles on October 15.

Magistrate Roger McKee rejected a plea by John Moot, a lawyer appointed by the court to defend Miller, to grant bail. The prosecutor had described Miller as "an acute flight risk."

Ogorodnikova, who appeared in court yesterday, is a pale, slight woman with short, straight blond hair and a sharp nose. She met Miller while he was interviewing Soviet emigres, mostly Jews, who had been allowed to leave and had settled in Los Angeles.

Miller, the first known high-level "mole" in the FBI's history, apparently found a sympathetic ear and disclosed "in numerous personal meetings" his private, professional and financial problems, according to FBI officials.

He also allegedly decided to supplement his \$50,000 a year salary by selling for \$50,000 in gold and \$15,000 in cash some secret FBI documents that he promised to deliver to a Soviet agent in Mexico City.

The Ogorodnikovs, who had jobs as a butcher and a day nurse, told him money was no problem, according to the FBI, which had trailed the trio and tapped their phones.

The arrest has tarnished the reputation of the spy agencies. The CIA and FBI have long prided themselves on being free from moles, unlike the British and West German intelligence agencies which have had numerous instances of infiltration. FBI Director William Webster called it "a very sad day for us."

But former top-ranking spies agreed with Attorney General William French Smith's assessment that damage to U.S. intelligence "had been significantly limited."

"It's a bad day for the FBI but it's not a drastic blow," said Ray Cline, former deputy director of the CIA.

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In Los Angeles, an FBI spokesman said a counter-intelligence unit was conducting an extensive inquiry to determine if any FBI investigations had been harmed by Miller's alleged disclosures.

The spokesman added Miller would not have been allowed to see secret documents from other intelligence organizations, such as the Central Intelligence Agency.

An affidavit submitted to the court said Miller had given Ogorodnikova a classified document entitled: "Reporting Guidance: Foreign Intelligence Information."

Cline said this would "give a clear indication of what we know and what we don't know and that's very helpful."

"It also helps the KGB ... hide their agents better because they know how to instruct them," he said.

"But this is technical espionage guidance. It isn't giving away big secrets about weapons or, as far as we know yet, the names of agents."

He said it was "a classic sad story of espionage" that a spy was trapped by a woman and an apparent need for money.

STAT  Ladislav Bittman, a former Czech intelligence agent who defected to the United States, said it fit the pattern of Soviet attempts to pry secrets from the West.

"Most are blackmailed," he said. "Very few of them ever work for ideological reasons."

Donald Jameson, a retired CIA official who specializes in KGB activities, said that there were "many hundreds of Soviet agents operating in the United States" while only 320 were listed as diplomats.

"The KGB look for those civil servants who feel that their careers have been frustrated," he said, suggesting that might have been a reason why Miller was singled out.

Cline wondered if morale in the spy community was a problem. "Is it possible that the bashing they both (the FBI and CIA) took in the late 1970s damaged morale so much that there a few vulnerabilities like this that we don't know about?" he asked. But he said of the sexual aspect of the Miller case, "it's what they call the old honeypot and apparently it still works."