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## South Africa, Soviet Union Swap Spies

CAPE TOWN, South Africa, May 11 (AP)—South Africa has exchanged a Soviet spy for eight high-ranking Western intelligence agents and a South African soldier, Prime Minister Pieter Botha told Parliament on Tuesday.

Botha said his country's National Intelligence Service deserved the gratitude of Western nations for arranging the exchange, which he called proof of Pretoria's "good will" toward Western countries. The South African Broadcasting Corp. quoted the prime minister as saying the service negotiated directly with the Soviet KGB secret police.

South Africa was involved in a major deal in 1969, when 11 Westerners held in the Soviet Union for several years were released in exchange for a senior member of the KGB, Yuri Loginov, who had been detained by security police in 1967 and held for about two years.

Informed sources in Washington said today's swap may have been an outgrowth of negotiations that led to an exchange between East and West Germany last fall in which master spy Guenther Guillaume was returned to the East for the release of about 30 political prisoners and for permission to emigrate to the West for 3,000 East Germans.

[At the time, it was widely reported that the Soviet agent freed today would be released, but a snag apparently developed in those negotiations.]

Botha said today's swap took place in Europe, but he refused to say where.

The prime minister said South African sapper Johan van der Mescht, held in Marxist-ruled Angola, was included in the exchange for an agent of the Soviet KGB secret police, identified as Maj. Alexei Mikhailovich Koslov.

Botha did not identify the eight Western agents nor give their nationalities.

Botha's press release quoted without comment a claim by an Israeli rabbi that South Africa had offered to free Koslov in exchange for permission for Soviet dissident Anatoly Shcharansky to emigrate to Israel.

Koslov's arrest was announced in Parliament on Jan. 28, 1981. At the time, Botha described Koslov as a senior Soviet agent who had visited southern Africa on at least four occasions since 1976.

The prime minister did not say how long Koslov had been held before his arrest was reported, but it was believed that he had been detained several months earlier. Botha said Koslov's assignment was to assess the effectiveness of the banned African National Congress.

The congress, which seeks the overthrow of white-minority rule, receives support from the Soviet Bloc, although the guerrilla organization has denied that it takes orders from Moscow.

Van der Mescht—an explosives expert—was captured by guerrillas of the Southwest Africa People's Organization, which has been fighting 16 years to dislodge South Africa from Namibia, also known as Southwest Africa.

SWAPO operates from bases in neighboring Angola, and South African soldiers have often crossed into Angola to strike the group's bases.

When Botha announced Koslov's capture, he said the KGB agent had been persuaded to cooperate and had provided "three volumes of valuable information."