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Spy Tip Followed Tarot Cards

Ex-Wife Agonized for a Year Before Calling FBI

5 By Sharon LaFraniere and Ruth Marcus
 Washington Post Staff Writers

The month that her son reported for duty on the USS Nimitz, Barbara Joy Crowley Walker was agonizing over whether to tell authorities she suspected her ex-husband was a Soviet spy, according to a friend of the family who said Walker turned to her for advice.

Shael Way, 29, whose parents befriended Barbara Walker after she moved to Skowhegan, Maine, in 1976 following her divorce from John A. Walker Jr., said that in January 1984 Barbara Walker asked her for a tarot card reading to help her decide whether to go to the FBI.

"She said she suspected he was giving secrets to the Russians. She said he would get drunk and call her on the phone and brag about it," Way said in an interview at her apartment in Skowhegan, a tiny factory town in central Maine. She said Barbara Walker discussed whether she should contact authorities while sitting in Way's mother's kitchen on a wintry afternoon in January 1984.

As she considered whether to implicate her former husband, Way said, Barbara Walker was apparently unaware of the alleged involvement of her son, Navy Seaman Michael Walker. "She's just about destroyed," said Way, who stated that she overheard part of a telephone conversation between her mother and Barbara Walker after Michael Walker's arrest.

Way said that during that conversation,

Barbara Walker told her mother that she doesn't believe her son was really involved and thinks her ex-husband is somehow framing Michael to punish his ex-wife for tipping off the authorities. Barbara Walker's sister-in-law, Pat Crowley, also said Barbara Walker had no clue her actions would lead to her son's arrest.

Walker apparently deliberated for about a year before calling the Hyannis, Mass., office of the FBI about six months ago, providing the tip that triggered the arrests of her ex-husband, a retired chief warrant

officer; her son; her former brother-in-law, retired Navy lieutenant commander Arthur James Walker; and a friend and former Navy colleague of John Walker's, retired communications specialist Jerry Alfred Whitworth.

A fifth person, "F," also may be implicated in the alleged espionage ring, according to an FBI affidavit.

Barbara Walker told The Los Angeles Times yesterday that her former husband began spying for the Soviet Union in the late 1960s to get money for a failing South Carolina restaurant in which he had invested. She said he had received "well over \$100,000" for his alleged espionage activities.

She said she never would have gone to authorities if she had known it would lead to the arrest of her only son, 22.

"I love Michael so much," she said. "I love my country, but I never could have brought myself to do it if I had known he was part of this thing. I was devastated when I learned Michael was involved."

She said her daughter, Laura Mae Walker Snyder, had told her John Walker tried to enlist her as a spy in 1979 when the daughter was an Army communications specialist at Fort Polk, La.

As for why she finally went to the FBI, Barbara Walker said, "I wanted to protect my children. Was I seeking vengeance? Well, a part of me wanted to see him get what he deserved."

The interview took place in her apartment in West Dennis, Mass. Mrs. Walker, who had worked in a Skowhegan shoe factory after her divorce from Walker in 1976, moved to the Cape Cod community last summer to live with her daughter.

In other developments yesterday:
 ■ A source familiar with the investigation said the FBI plans today to interview a person at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Fla., in connection with the alleged espionage case.

■ Former CIA director Stansfield Turner blamed the lengthy delay in uncovering the alleged espionage ring in part on a reduced emphasis on CIA counterintelligence during the 1970s. The espionage may have begun as long as 20 years ago, according to a federal affidavit.

At a breakfast meeting with reporters, Turner, a retired admiral, said he is alarmed by the possibility that John Walker gave the Soviets "absolutely vital" intelligence about submarine deployment. "What really bothers me," he said, is that such information might accelerate the Soviets' research into methods of locating U.S. submarines below the surface.

■ The Pentagon said that Whitworth was twice reapproved for a "top secret" security clearance during the period in which he is accused of conspiring with John Walker to spy for the Soviet Union. John and Arthur Walker, who both held top secret clearances during their Navy careers, were never subjected to reviews of their security clear-

ances, which are supposed to be conducted every five years, according to a statement from the office of Michael I. Burch, chief Pentagon spokesman.

■ Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman David F. Durenberger (R-Minn.) called on the Reagan administration "to cut in half the amount of information we classify and cut by more than half the number of people who have access to it."

He said security checks for those cleared to see sensitive information were inadequate and that a tendency to classify too much information created a situation in which those with clearances feel "everything can't be that secret so people treat nothing as secret."

Durenberger said in an interview that he believed "we're getting better" at finding spies. At the same time, he said, there is "more spying going on and a lot more clever spying going on."

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■ A memorandum filed in federal court in Baltimore said that John Walker, despite a net worth of \$174,785 at the time of his arrest May 20, cannot now afford to pay for a lawyer.

Walker's court-appointed lawyers, federal public defenders Fred Warren Bennett and Thomas B. Mason, said in the memorandum that Walker cannot afford to pay the estimated \$20,000 to \$75,000 costs of his legal defense because the government has placed tax liens against some of Walker's property and seized other assets, including ten 100-ounce bars of silver bullion valued at \$6,100.

The Internal Revenue Service yesterday placed liens on Walker's land holdings in North Carolina and South Carolina. It had placed liens Tuesday against his assets in Norfolk. The IRS said he owed \$252,487 in back taxes, interest and penalties for the years since 1979.

The IRS often moves to recover back taxes, interest and penalties against those accused of a crime when agents believe a person may not have reported all of his income, legal or illegal.

In the interview yesterday, Way said that Barbara Walker hesitated before going to the FBI because she was uncertain whether John Walker's talk of his escapades as a Soviet spy were true or mere boasting from a man who, friends say, bragged about everything from his detective abilities to his many girlfriends.

"She would say, 'Are you just talking, Johnny, or is this the truth?'" Way said.

Way said Barbara Walker hoped the tarot cards would help illuminate

the matter. She said she advised Walker to "be very cautious and make sure you know the whole story, make sure it's not braggadocio."

In a black notebook, Way wrote this account of the afternoon: "Woman holds secret that is of military importance regarding ex-husband John. Will reveal eventually. Caution."

While Way said Barbara Walker was "not a bitter woman at all," friends in Skowhegan said she had little reason to feel kindly toward her ex-husband.

After 19 years of living with her husband in Norfolk on a comfortable income, she had to struggle to make ends meet after their divorce. She had to rent an apartment for \$35 a week in a rundown building, they said, before she could afford to move to a nicer two-story house.

She found a job doing piecework at a shoe factory and, according to her sister-in-law Pat Crowley, would work an extra hour in the morning and through her lunch hour to add to her paycheck.

Way, who lives in an apartment behind the house Barbara Walker rented, said she came home in jeans and a sweatshirt covered with soot and glue, too tired to change clothes. "She'd say, 'Johnny Walker did this to me,'" Way said.

Crowley remembered an occasion when Barbara Walker "passed out at work one time, she was so tired. "We kept after her. I said,

'You're working yourself to death and then where will your children be? She'd say, 'Yeah, but I have to pay the fuel bill.'"

Way said that while it appeared from talking to Barbara Walker that her ex-husband "was cruel to her," patriotism was a large part of the reason why Barbara Walker wanted to talk to the FBI.

She said Barbara Walker, who always hung a flag outside on Me-

morial Day, once told her, "Johnny Walker is a traitor to his country. I'm really going to get him for this. That's my country."

She said Barbara Walker decided to go to authorities once she had the facts, despite fear of reprisals by her ex-husband. "She is a very courageous woman."

Although Barbara Walker's oldest daughter Margaret and son Michael were close to their father and moved back to Norfolk where he lived, friends said her two middle daughters, Cynthia and Laura, seem to share her ill opinion of their father. They complained that he had "mistreated their mother" and favored Michael, Way said. "Michael got all the presents, the money and the trips, and they got nothing."

For his part, John Walker complained that his two middle daughters "only called when they wanted money," according to his business partner, Laurie Robinson.

Michael Walker held a special place in his mother's affections, Way said. Barbara Walker made a trip to attend Michael Walker's graduation from boot camp, according to Crowley.

In a note on one of her tarot reading sessions with Barbara Walker, Way wrote, "Michael, favorite."

Staff writers John Mintz, Joe Pichirallo and Molly Sinclair contributed to this report.

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Spy Ring Damage Called 'Serious,'

By George C. Wilson and John Mintz
Washington Post Staff Writers

The Navy, after sifting through piles of documents and studying interviews conducted with a wide range of present and former acquaintances of four members of the alleged Walker spy ring, has tentatively concluded that it has suffered a "serious" but "not disastrous" loss of its secrets to the Soviets, according to a top Pentagon official who has been briefed on the case.

Other high-ranking Pentagon officials said yesterday they shared that assessment.

Although the concern of Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger has increased as he learns from his frequent damage assessment briefings about what might have been lost, the worst fears of Navy leaders—that the Soviets would learn the Navy's innermost secrets about submarine warfare—have not yet been realized, officials said.

Near the top of this Navy list are the advanced techniques for monitoring and, in wartime, destroying Soviet submarines, and for making U.S. submarines invisible during the silent combat that could take place under the sea someday.

No evidence yet is in hand, officials said, to suggest that any of the accused in the Walker spy organization managed to break through the several rings of secrecy around such "black" programs.

A U.S. intelligence official said another prime area of concern is

what the Soviets may have learned about top secret communications equipment, encryption techniques and daily code cards from two of the accused who had access to that information while in the Navy.

Under the worst case scenario, the official said, the Soviets could have received manuals on the coding machines themselves, together

Not 'Disastrous'

with "key cards" used to transmit secret messages on cryptographic gear.

With this combination, the Soviets may have been able to detect patterns that could compromise U.S. military codes. There is no evidence to date, officials added, that this has happened.

The FBI and the Naval Investigative Service, officials said, have cast a broad net in hopes of learning what information the Soviets did receive. The FBI, as part of this intensive damage assessment effort, has been giving lie detector tests to present and former acquaintances of the suspects in the Walker spy ring.

"All we've got now are the papers the Russians didn't get," said one Pentagon official.

John A. Walker Jr., 47, a retired Navy chief warrant officer, was arrested May 20 on an espionage charge after allegedly leaving a bag of classified documents for a Soviet diplomat in a rural section of Montgomery County. Three other former and current Navy personnel also have been charged with espionage: Jerry Alfred Whitworth, 45, a retired communications specialist; Walker's son, Michael Lance Walker, 22, a Navy seaman; and John Walker's brother, retired lieutenant commander Arthur James Walker, 50.

The fears of civilian and military officials are offset somewhat because the United States has new ways to use sound waves to find Soviet submarines if the present-day listening systems have been irreparably compromised by secret papers sent to the Russians.

The Soviets have had years to gather information about the Sosus (sound surveillance system), the network of underwater submarine-detecting microphones strung along the Atlantic and Pacific coasts decades ago. Given that, some submarine specialists doubt that the spy ring could add much to the Soviets' knowledge.

Aides said Weinberger is worried about what the Soviets might have

learned about the whole range of U.S. military operations and capabilities that uniformed specialists might regard as close to routine.

Asked yesterday if Weinberger's concern has increased because of what he has learned in his most recent briefings, Pentagon spokesman Michael I. Burch said the defense secretary's concern has "gone up" since last week, when he termed the loss "serious. If you want to say even more serious, that's fair enough."

Burch added in an interview that it would be premature to characterize the loss of military secrets as the biggest the Navy has yet suffered.

Sen. David F. Durenberger (R-Minn.), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, downplayed the possible damage.

"I'm not that worried about the information the suspects had access to," Durenberger said. "It certainly wasn't helpful [for the information] to end up in Soviet hands, but it wasn't of such significance that there's any kind of alarm. I think a lot of information may corroborate stuff that is stolen outright" or intercepted electronically by the Soviets. "But it isn't damaging in the larger sense that, for example, the theft of some plans for some supersecret intelligence collector [like a spy satellite] might be."

Durenberger added, "I'm not minimizing this. I'm saying it is a good

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reason for the American public to pressure the bureaucracy of the government to change the way we handle national security information."

From the professional military viewpoint, the investigation to date points to John A. Walker Jr. as the biggest risk because of access to "top secret crypto" information, service on a nuclear powered missile submarine and work as a Navy radioman at the Navy's Atlantic Fleet submarine headquarters at Norfolk.

"Everything flows through that," retired vice admiral Bobby Ray Inman, formerly head of the National Security Agency and deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, said of the headquarters. "If you had to pick out a sensitive facility in the fleet that would rank in

one of the top 20 or so, that would be it." Walker served there from 1967 to 1969.

Copies of radio messages between the headquarters and the submarine fleet at sea, Inman said, would be extremely valuable to the Soviets because "there are no other regular sources of submarine information, no constant flow of information about what they do and how they do it."

Inman characterized John Walker's service from 1965 to 1967 as senior chief radioman on the nuclear missile submarine Simon Bolivar as his second most sensitive assignment.

Walker received his "top secret crypto" clearance, allowing access to highly sensitive material, in 1965 and held it until he retired from the Navy in 1976 with the rank of chief warrant officer. Federal court documents say the spy ring may have been in operation as early as 1965.

The communications Walker might have seen, if presented to the Soviets, might appear to have no value today. But submarine specialists said they might be damaging because of what they might reveal about the general pattern and area of missile submarine operations.

Missile submarines must know in advance the features on the bottom of the ocean so they know exactly where they are at every second of their slow patrol. Otherwise, they could not achieve accuracy with their missiles. Also, certain conditions are needed for maximum stealth and reliable communications.

Analysts said that even if John Walker provided the Soviets with sensitive information about the United States submarine force as early as the 1960s, the Soviets are unlikely to change their submarine tactics in a way that would reveal their knowledge to the United States.

Compared with the information John Walker had, the access enjoyed by his older brother Arthur originally seemed to be minor. But some officials recently have become more concerned about the risk he may have posed. Arthur Walker, who joined the Navy as a seaman in 1953, received submarine training

and served on a number of submarines in the 1950s and 1960s. He specialized during his career in anti-submarine warfare, and may have told the Soviets about U.S. tactics, Pentagon sources said.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Arthur Walker, then a lieutenant commander, was an instructor in anti-submarine warfare tactics at the Atlantic Fleet Tactical School.

Arthur Walker's work at VSE Corp., a Chesapeake, Va., defense contractor where he worked on maintenance schedules for ships, was "almost penny ante" compared to the intelligence potentially compromised by brother John, said former CIA director Stansfield Turner.

Military experts have varying views about the potential damage done by Whitworth, a 21-year Navy veteran who was a communications specialist assigned to duty in the Pacific Ocean. His most sensitive assignment was in 1982 and 1983, when he was communications watch officer aboard the USS Enterprise, an aircraft carrier.

During most of his career he held sensitive jobs handling communications and codes.

Whitworth had access to many manuals on building and operating communications gear. Military officials fear that Whitworth might have given away both the content of messages he read, as well as the detailed plans for the machinery. However, Whitworth's access to the most sensitive material would have been limited.

"A radioman is terribly helpful to you," said George A. Carver Jr., a former CIA deputy director. "It's not the compromise of any single message. It's the compromise of

techniques, signatures, call signs, frequencies . . . In the intelligence trade, there are no secrets more secret, none you want to protect more than those dealing with communications."

Military officials agree that the least informed of the four alleged spies is Michael Walker. Working in the operations department of the aircraft carrier Nimitz, he would have known about the daily workings of the carrier and nearby ships. He had access to materials bound for the "burn bag," a device used in destroying documents, but he saw nothing more sensitive than material available under his relatively lowly "secret" clearance.

Staff writers Ruth Marcus and Molly Sinclair contributed to this report.

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U.S. Analysts Offer an Account Of How Alleged Spy Ring Worked Vienna Seen as Center for Espionage — Walker Is Said to Have Received Soviet Military Rank

By PHILIP SHENON

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 8— Federal officials and intelligence analysts say that John A. Walker Jr. passed Navy secrets to the K.G.B. in an elaborate scheme that apparently involved espionage training in Austria and the use of Soviet couriers in Washington.

In their most extensive account of how they believe the espionage operation was carried out, officials said that Mr. Walker almost certainly dealt with several agents of the K.G.B., the Soviet intelligence agency, in what they say was a 20-year spying career.

Intelligence analysts speculated that Mr. Walker was awarded a high rank in the Soviet armed forces, probably the Soviet Navy, and received decorations for his information. "He might very well have tried on his Soviet uniform," said Robert T. Crowley, a retired senior official of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Mr. Walker has been indicted on espionage charges but has pleaded not guilty.

Frequent Trips to Vienna

While details remains sketchy, the authorities say the K.G.B. asked Mr. Walker, a retired Navy warrant officer, to make frequent trips to Vienna, where he would pass along secret information collected from other members of the purported Navy spy ring.

Vienna, they said, was also where Mr. Walker probably received training in the techniques of espionage. For security reasons, they said, there appeared to have been few, if any, recent face-to-face meetings in the United States between Mr. Walker and Soviet agents.

Intelligence analysts said they believe that a Soviet diplomat who was named a co-conspirator in the alleged spying operation was a relatively low-level K.G.B. agent who may never have met Mr. Walker. Instead, they said, the diplomat had been assigned to pick up documents that Mr. Walker left at secluded sites.

Mr. Walker, his brother, son and a California man described as his closest friend have been arrested in what the authorities describe as the most damaging spy case in 30 years. All have served in the Navy. All pleaded not guilty.

The K.G.B. scheme, officials said, was designed to offer maximum pro-

tection against surveillance by American law-enforcement agencies. The officials cautioned that many, and perhaps most details of the purported scheme will never be known unless Mr. Walker, who is accused of forming the spy ring, begins to cooperate with law-enforcement authorities.

What is known, officials said, has been determined largely from personal papers, travel receipts and telephone records that were found in searches of Mr. Walker's home and office in Norfolk, Va., as well as statements made to investigators by his son, Michael L. Walker and brother, Arthur J. Walker.

They said that Mr. Walker's case seems to follow what one investigative source described as a "common pattern" of Soviet intelligence agencies.

"We don't know nearly as much as we'd like," the source said. "But from what we do know about the K.G.B., it's not that difficult to come up with a reasonable understanding" of the operation of the purported spy ring. That understanding, he stressed, "is based, to a large extent, on well-informed speculation."

Any training that Mr. Walker may have received, most likely in the use of secret cameras and audio equipment, probably took place in Vienna, where the Soviet Union has a large embassy and controls numerous safe houses, officials said.

U.N. Agency in Austria

The International Atomic Energy Agency, a United Nations agency, is based in Austria. According to intelligence specialists, that has given the Soviet Union an excuse for posting a relatively large number of K.G.B. agents in Vienna posing as diplomats. The Austrian Government is thought to have relatively little surveillance of foreign intelligence agents, they said.

Andrew Daulton Lee, a California man who admitted in 1977 that he had sold secret documents to Soviet agents about American spy satellites, received espionage training in Vienna, officials said.

The F.B.I. has said that it knows of at least eight meetings in Vienna between Soviet agents and Mr. Walker since 1976.

"I'm sure Vienna was the standard debriefing site," said Ray S. Cline, former deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

Because of their neutrality, Mr. Cline said, "Austria and Switzerland have been the spy capitals since the end of World War II." He added that Soviets agents preferred Austria. "The Swiss are pretty tough on intelligence offi-

cers," Mr. Cline said.

Other meetings took place in the Philippines and Italy, according to documents released by the F.B.I.

Mr. Cline, now professor of international relations at Georgetown University, said those countries were probably chosen because Soviet agents felt that law-enforcement agencies there were relatively lax in their surveillance of foreigners. "It would be a safer environment," he said.

Because of tighter security by American law-enforcement agencies, officials say, it appeared that relatively few, if any, face-to-face meetings between Soviet agents and Mr. Walker took place in the United States in recent years.

Instead, they said, the Soviet agents used sites in suburban areas near Washington, D.C. Parcels of information were left by Mr. Walker and retrieved later by Soviet agents, they said.

In exchange, they said, the agents used the same sites to leave packages of money for Mr. Walker. The officials said large cash payments to Mr. Walker for his information were made in the United States, another effort to avoid detection.

Risk of Customs Detection

If Mr. Walker had received large amounts of money overseas, he would have risked being caught by customs officers when returning to the United States, said Mr. Crowley, the former C.I.A. official who recently wrote a book on the K.G.B.

"It might have been discovered with the money, and it might have tripped a flag," he said. "It makes more sense to pay him in the United States." Law-enforcement officials say they believe that Mr. Walker received hundreds of thousands of dollars from Soviet agents but have so far been unable to trace most of the money.

Mr. Walker was arrested after leaving a bag containing more than 100 secret Navy documents at a site in rural Maryland, the F.B.I. has said.

Clues about the espionage operation were provided in a secret note reportedly written last year by Jerry A. Whitworth, the California man arrested in the case. According to the F.B.I., the note said that American locations were "always" used by the Soviet agents when they passed money to Mr. Walker.

The note also said that Mr. Walker passed along the secret information overseas, "although U.S. locations are used sometimes," the bureau said.

Officials said they had little informa-

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tion about a Soviet diplomat, Aleksey G. Tkachenko, who was recalled to Moscow after prosecutors named him as a co-conspirator. The F.B.I. said its agents had seen him in the vicinity of the site in rural Maryland that Mr. Walker is charged with visiting on the night of his arrest.

The F.B.I. has identified Mr. Tkachenko as a vice consul in the consular division of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, a relatively low-ranking diplomat.

Officials said that he may have been one of a number of K.G.B. agents in the embassy who were periodically assigned to pick up material left by Mr. Walker at drop sites.

"Over the years, the case had become routine," said David A. Phillips, a former C.I.A. agent. "More and more over the years the yeomen got the job of going to these drop sites."

Some intelligence analysts say they believe that Mr. Walker's chief Soviet contact is a senior K.G.B. official working in Moscow.

Mr. Crowley, who was the C.I.A.'s assistant deputy director for operations, said he suspects Mr. Walker may have known the official for several years, and perhaps even have been recruited by him.

While moving up through the K.G.B. hierarchy, the official probably turned over the details of the case to other agents, Mr. Crowley said. But he suggested the official might have met with Mr. Walker on occasion.

"He would still find time to fly in and spend a few minutes with Walker," Mr. Crowley said. "He would build Walker's morale, tell him how much the work had meant to the Soviets."

They said that some spies who were caught in the United States in recent years had probably been given a uniform that he was allowed to wear at meetings with Soviet agents. This, they suggested, would have pleased Mr. Walker, who has been described by a former employee, R. K. Puma, as a self-deluded "James Bond."

"It's very possible that he is a commodore or an admiral by now," said Mr. Phillips, the former C.I.A. agent. "That might appeal to Walker, and an astute Soviet agent would know it."

Mr. Walker retired from the United States Navy in 1976 as a chief warrant officer. "Most warrant officers wonder why they didn't become at least a second lieutenant," Mr. Phillips said. "Here was a situation where the Soviets could make him not only a second lieutenant but an admiral."