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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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REPORT

COUNTRY	USSR	REPORT NO.	00A-3, 203, 015
SUBJECT	Alex E. Pirogov, Soviet Exchange Student, Suspended Return to the USSR/ Possible Susceptibility to Conversion/ Incident with American Agent, Soviet	DATE DISTR.	4 December 1961
DATE OF INFO.	20 Nov 61 and earlier	NO. PAGES	3
PLACE & DATE ACQ.	27 Sep 61 - SA 600 A	REFERENCES	File 20 36,110 (NY-52511) C/S Morgan 5 Source: [redacted]

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE: US citizens, head of the chemistry department of a large US technical institute.

During the period 17 Sep to 23 Oct 61, Alex E. Pirogov, Soviet Exchange Student under Post-Exchange Agreement, was under the supervision of [redacted] member of his staff.

1. Alex E. Pirogov came to do post-graduate research work in the Department of Chemistry under the supervision of [redacted] and [redacted] on 27 Sep 61. He was pursuant to the Post-Exchange Agreement and it was intended that he would work here for a period of three or four months. He had been here less than a month when his sudden and unexpected departure occurred on 23 Oct 61. Prior to coming here, he had been a Scientific Associate of the Institute of Chemical Physics, at the USSR Academy of Sciences, Moscow.
2. We were very much disturbed by Pirogov's sudden departure because we feared that the whole exchange program might have been jeopardized. So, on 27 Oct 61, we sent a cable to Professor Nikolay Alekseyevich Pirogov, a member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, who is the head of the Institute of Chemical Physics, Moscow, where Pirogov had worked. Summary replied to this cable with a cable which we received 11 Oct 61. It was very conciliatory. It stated that Pirogov even had for family reasons. "We are extremely sorry," it said, "and will write a letter with details later." However, no such letter has arrived to date, 20 Nov 61.
3. Another cable was sent by the National Academy of Sciences, 6 Nov 61 to the Russian Ambassador in [redacted], President of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and this cable, as we reply has been received, on 10 or 11 Nov.
4. As far as I am concerned, I am even that this [redacted] Alex Pirogov's wife and family will return to the USSR to get the person for his departure.
5. I think his departure [redacted], there is a gap that is being examined. Or it may have been a combination of two or three things that brought about his death.
6. Pirogov fitted in very well here. He is a very pleasant fellow. He gave him the title of [redacted] Scientist. He seemed to work with post-graduate [redacted]

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students about four or five years after receiving their Ph.D. When he arrived, he spoke very little English but was learning fast. He had a room in a dormitory over at the Long Island College, where we conducted our classes. He made many friends. He is married and has a wife and two children who resided in Moscow. One of his parents came from the Ukraine, I believe. The U.S.S.R. has all the details. "They are paying the freight."

7. He was favorably impressed with Pirogov's ability and regarded him as a capable research worker. He is well informed in the kind of work in which he has been working. He stood well with the other students. He was not pretentious. He did not seem to hide anything. On the subject of hunting, for example, he did not pretend that the USSR is up to date in the U.S. He was not justifying for the Soviet system. It seemed to me that he was the sort of man who might have been converted to the U.S. way of doing things, if he was not careful. It may be that the people to whom he reported in the Council of the Soviet Delegation to the U.S. at Park Avenue and 68th Street, New York City, may have sensed the man's confusion. Or his departure may have been brought about for other reasons, for example, by his brush with Joseph B. Condon, physicist and president of the International Astronomical Society and Chairman of the Soviet Interplanetary Commission.
8. Dr. Sefor was visiting our institution and one of us thought it would be a good idea for Pirogov to meet Sefor. This was brought about as a reception when he was introduced as "Pirogov of Moscow." They shook hands and Pirogov said something in English like, "pleased to meet you." Sefor said something to him in a very sharp tone in Russian and later, in the elevator, gave him advice and lectured him in a very stern voice. I was present and observed that Pirogov grew pale. Later, he became very nervous and went to the U.S. Delegation Headquarters on Park Avenue and 68th Street. I understood that they laughed at his apprehensions and told him not to worry. However, from then on he became more nervous. Sometime, he said, had indicated that he was talking too much. He was afraid he had given away some important information.
9. This was a lot of bother because we already knew what they are doing. He certainly had no reason to feel he was disclosing more than he should. He only disclosed what was necessary to do the work planned for him in the program assigned under the exchange agreement. It would have been impossible for him to carry out his assignment without making the disclosures that he made. You just cannot work on such a project without being communicative. Just the same Pirogov became very apprehensive and said he might be recalled. "They will regret me anyway. They think I have talked too much about what we are doing in the Institute of Chemical Physics." Pirogov had taken the position that it was not wrong for him to talk about his work at this Institute in the USSR, which is the one headed by Sefor, incidentally. Pirogov understood that an exchange project cannot be all take and no give. There is supposed to be an exchange of information.
10. Another thing that contributed to Pirogov's apprehensions was the fact that he had not heard from his wife or family for several weeks. He was greatly concerned about this. However, I believe he did have a letter from his wife just before he left.
11. My own feeling is that his popularity worked against him. The sympathetic people in the U.S. Delegation office did not like the idea of his becoming a part of the community here. The students liked him and he went to dinner with them. Then some of my students were celebrating receiving their degrees, Pirogov joined the party and after dinner he came along with the rest of them to have a drink at my house. He obviously acted like a human being.
12. In my opinion, Pirogov's exposure into a curious attitude is not appreciating what a good propaganda agent he was for their system, even though he was not afraid to admit that the Soviet system is not perfect and that there

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is a bonding shortage, for example. They thought he talked too much and was too friendly. He did not keep his mouth shut and he did not act like a bear. I am sure they concluded that he was susceptible to coercion. I thought as myself.

13. As I suspect that Fingers dug his own hole. He had to report to the Council of the EC Delegation every week and, in the process, his general attitude got across to them. He talked too much. His conversation with Sadow was an example.
14. Again, what he was working on here was very close to what he had been working on under Sadow and the Council may have judged to the conclusion that he was telling us all that he knew.
15. The problem on which he worked here was the capitalization of dimes and alpha-chlorine using a transition metal catalyst system. For example, one of the capitalizations on which he worked involved the dimes, beta-dimes, and the alpha-chlorine, pyrolysis.
16. He was known to many of the staff and was intimate with ten or fifteen students here but was probably most intimate with the man with whom he shared a laboratory. This was an Italian, named Dr. Emilio Ferrari. They appeared to be good friends.
17. I do not think that Fingers was the victim of an informer. I have ventured about this a lot but I do not think this is what happened. I think, as I said before, that he dug his own hole. Instinctively, we were most anxious to keep this incident out of the papers and there was no leak. Had there been an informer, this might not have been the case.

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