

Report: Russian Spy Reached Czech Generals' Offices

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The  **Moscow Times**

PRAGUE, Czech Republic — Three Czech generals, including a presidential staff member and a NATO representative, were forced to leave the army in 2009 after a Russian spy made contact with their offices, a Czech newspaper reported Tuesday.

Czech military and counterintelligence agents have increasingly highlighted Russian agents' presence in the Czech Republic, and this is the biggest reported case of infiltration into the military.

Citing an unidentified source, the Mlada Fronta Dnes daily said the Russian agent, a Czech state-employed psychologist known as Robert R., befriended a female army major who had also studied psychology and worked successively as head of staff for the three army generals.

The generals worked as head of President Vaclav Klaus' Military Office, the Czechs' NATO representative in Europe, and a deputy for the chief of staff.

The newspaper said it was not clear whether the army major worked for the Russian agent

knowingly, what information was passed on, and whether the relationship posed a security threat. Military intelligence agents followed the two for at least five years.

The agent fled to Russia, and the major finished in the army.

Josef Sedlak, the general who lost his position as NATO representative, said he felt that he had been unfairly treated.

"If some information existed showing one of my colleagues was connected to a spy, then the agency should have told me to protect me and not follow me like some villain," he told Mlada Fronta Dnes.

The newspaper said another of the generals quit over a disagreement about changes being made in the military, while the third general could not be reached for comment.

The Defense Ministry and counterintelligence agency BIS declined to comment.

BIS reported last month that Russian spies were increasingly active in the Czech Republic and were turning their attention to the energy sector.

BIS said the presence of Russian intelligence operatives among academics and students posed a potential problem for the country.

Last year, the Czech Republic expelled two Russian diplomats, including a deputy to the military attache, on suspicion of spying.

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