

Ladejinsky Removal Sparks Security Furor

By RUSSELL BRINES
Of The Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP)—Thirty-four years ago, a farm family in the revolt-torn Ukraine reached a decision—and official Washington now is quarreling about it.

The family decided that the 21-year-old son of the house should flee Russia's Communist Revolution alone and build a new life elsewhere.

That, says Wolf Ladejinsky, is why he slipped across the icy Dniester River into old Roumania, in the winter of 1920, on a journey that led him into the top levels of American diplomacy.

Ladejinsky has been removed as U.S. agricultural attache in Tokyo, after holding the job four years, partly because three sisters he left behind are still living near Moscow.

THREATS ON FAMILY

The U.S. Agriculture Department reportedly fears Communists might try to influence him by threats on his family. The department also has raised questions about a visa he obtained in 1939 to visit his relatives in Russia.

Ladejinsky has won powerful support in his fight for clearance of any security taint mainly because he brought from the Ukraine impressions that led him to become an expert on land reform in Red-threatened Asia. He is known as the chief architect of the land program in occupied Japan.

Rep. Judd (R-Minn.) says Ladejinsky must remain in government service because his abilities are needed to help save Asia. Some Democrats have indicated the case may become part of a promised hot attack on President Eisenhower's whole security program in the next Congress.

BACHELOR

The State Department, which cleared Ladejinsky last spring presumably on the same security information, has taken no official stand. But officials showed private concern over Agriculture's ruling and said Ladejinsky could continue working for the State Department.

While others continue the unfinished controversy, Ladejinsky remains secluded in a small Washington apartment that, as a bachelor, he shares with two friends.

Now 55 and a naturalized American, he is a stocky, energetic

man who, fond of tennis, moves with quick lunges. A streak of white races through thick black hair framing the sharply etched face of a descendant of many farmers in Russia's Ukrainian bread basket.

RESTLESS SMOKER

One wall of his bachelor apartment is banked with books, many of them dealing with Japan and economics. A second wall is covered with bookcases crammed with Ladejinsky's collection of hundreds of classical music records. A few pieces of delicate Japanese carving, part of a larger art collection still in Tokyo, stand out in the stark masculine room.

Telling his story, Ladejinsky moves restlessly about the apartment, puffing on one of a dozen pipes scattered on convenient tables. He speaks English with a fluent vocabulary and a sometimes heavy accent.

He landed in New York with little money but the Russian equivalent of a college degree. He set out to learn English, supporting himself by dishwashing and the other odd jobs. For 10 years he was lost in New York's multitude, still remembering his adverse impressions of the widely-heard Russian land revolution.

ANTI-RED ARTICLES

Then, in the early '30s, he wrote his views in articles published by the Saturday Review of Literature and the Saturday Evening Post. Judd, who has studied them, calls the articles "devastatingly anti-Communist . . . at a time when many people were praising the Soviets."

In this period, Ladejinsky took graduate work in economics at Columbia University. To help support himself, he says, he became an interpreter with the forerunner of Amtorg, the Russian trading agency, in 1930-31.

The Agriculture Department reported that he was an assistant to the chief of the agency's transportation bureau and said it believed the job required Communist Party clearance. Ladejinsky says he knew nothing of any clearance.

BECAME SPECIALIST

With a farm heritage but no formal agricultural training, Ladejinsky joined the agriculture department in 1935 and remained on its payroll as a specialist in Asian problems until he was transferred to State in 1950 to open the Tokyo attache's office.

Ladejinsky went to Tokyo first in 1946 on an Agriculture Department assignment to help formulate a land reform program under Gen Douglas MacArthur.

"The farmers of Japan were very discontented," Ladejinsky said. They formed about half the nation's population, "and the Communists clearly were gunning to exploit them. What Gen. MacArthur was trying to do was to steal the Communists' thunder."

CRITICAL HUNGER

The Communists attacked the program and called Ladejinsky a "reactionary."

Ladejinsky is given major credit for a program that broke the power of landed estates and made landowners of about 90 per cent of Japanese farmers, formerly mostly tenants. The result was to prevent probable widespread rural unrest.

Now the same land hunger is becoming a critical factor elsewhere in free Asia, notably Southern Viet Nam and India.



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