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SUBJECT Arkady Shevchenko *INTERVIEW*

ARKADY SHEVCHENKO: ...First of all, in my memoirs, there's a lot of things which Reagan Administration won't like.

PHIL DONAHUE: Won't like.

SHEVCHENKO: Definitely. You know that you, yourself, just mentioned that there is a rather favorable portrait of Gromyko. And the State Department and this Administration consider him as a real formidable initiator of hard line toward the United States.

DONAHUE: And you're saying no, he wants detente.

SHEVCHENKO: No, not that he wants detente. Of course, come back to detente of the '70s.

So I would say that, you know -- did you read the whole book, or just pages in which you mentioned? Because there is other pages...

[Laughter]

SHEVCHENKO: There are other pages where there's a lot of other things about the Soviets and about the leadership which are a different portrait. I think it's a quite pretty balanced assessment of...

DONAHUE: But I can't get over the fact that you're a free man here and you're not frightened, with all of the intrigue in this book. You suspect that your wife, whom you left a note, put money in the envelope in the middle of the night, took one last look at her as she lie sleeping, and left, never to see her

again. Two months later she's dead.

SHEVCHENKO: I'm not afraid, for one reason, is that --first of all, I don't think, I don't think that the Soviets will try to get me or to do something against me here.

DONAHUE: Why?

SHEVCHENKO: Because of my high visibility. Because the Soviets understand that if they will try to assassinate me, or something, it would be some outcry in this country. The reaction of the population would be very strong. And whether my life is worthwhile to have another episode -- not, of course, like the shooting down of the Korean airplanes, but at least showing to the Americans, to the whole world that they're really engaged in a terroristic activities on the United States territory.

DONAHUE: They don't want that, you're saying.

SHEVCHENKO: They're careful. It doesn't mean that eventually they will not get me. You know that the KGB has a long hand and a long memory.

DONAHUE: But if they can talk about, as you tell us --and incidentally, this is an unnamed person -- about eliminating Anwar Sadat, if they can talk about using the big bomb against China -- you quote a high Russian official as discussing that possibility.

SHEVCHENKO: First of all, they don't talk with us here.

DONAHUE: Of course not.

SHEVCHENKO: They don't talk about that publicly. More than that, they involved in efforts to eliminated Sadat. They even didn't like to do it by their own hands. It's been done because they knew that in Egypt there is a lot of Sadat's enemies. Actually, he was assassinated even by the Egyptians themself. So they wanted to do that, and their hand would be like, you know, this famous Bulgarian connection, or something. They would be very much behind the scene.

But if something will happen to me, the Soviets can only do that. [Unintelligible] the American people.

DONAHUE: And so they won't miss that. Okay. So you're safe because the Soviets would be embarrassed if something happened to you.

Incidentally, the Bulgarian -- did -- was the KGB behind the shooting of the Pope?

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SHEVCHENKO: I should be proved because they...

DONAHUE: You think it's possible?

SHEVCHENKO: Of course it would be interesting, politically, to assassinate the Pope. There's no question about that. But they kept a big distance from that, through Bulgarian and through Agca, and so on and so forth.

DONAHUE: But you're saying it's possible.

SHEVCHENKO: It's possible.

DONAHUE: So it's possible they're going to knock off the Pope. It's possible they were behind the assassination of Anwar Sadat. It's possible they had something to do with the plane crash of Dag Hammarskjold. And you say you're safe? Come on.

SHEVCHENKO: I didn't say that. Wait a minute. Wait a minute. I never say that I am safe. You asked me whether I have a fear. And one thing is to feel whether you're safe, another thing whether do I have a fear.

I went through such a thing that, you know, I lost quite a lot of...

DONAHUE: Right.

SHEVCHENKO: I don't fear. And I prefer to live here and to have this fear and to have this risk, as to live in the Soviet Union and to continue like a slave. It's better to do that way. I would rather live here one or two or three years than to live another 20 years in the Soviet Union.

DONAHUE: We understand that.

[Applause]

DONAHUE: He saw the evil of the Soviet Union and he came to America, the land of promise and freedom. Now, who's to blame him for that? You admire him.

Now, who else can come here? How about those people interested in freedom in El Salvador and Nicaragua? And how many other Russian defectors you want to come over here? What -- I don't understand. This is good, or what?

WOMAN: I don't know if it's good that we ought to allow everyone in the world to come here. But I'd like to know whether or not Mr. Shevchenko thinks that it was worth the United

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States's trouble to have him come here.

DONAHUE: What was the trouble, in your view?

WOMAN: Well, all the potential problems with relations with the Soviet Union and all the logistical problems. Has he made it worth the United States's while?

SHEVCHENKO: Yes, I did. And I never regretted my decision, regardless of what happened, a tragedy with my family, which I didn't anticipate; going through what is called spying, which I also never intended to do.

You know, it's always been, for every people now, [unintelligible] I don't consider that I was. And it was a very difficult period of adjustment to a new society. I left behind my country, my people. I hated the regime, but not my people. The people, Russians, are good.

And so that all would be a pain in my heart. But I never regret it because this year which I'm here, I really felt free for the first time in all my life. It works well.

I have to tell you because sometimes in the United States people don't really appreciate what they have. And if they would go and live in the Soviet Union, not as a tourist -- you don't not see anything there. You would see only what the Soviets wanted to show to you. But if you will live there, then you will know what is what. Then one appreciate what we have here.

DONAHUE: True. Let me -- the Kremlin would not choose me as a spokesperson for it, but let me try and showcase what might be a response to that.

Have you been to Harlem? Have you been to the slums of this country?

SHEVCHENKO: Yeah, sure.

DONAHUE: Have you been to 42nd Street?

SHEVCHENKO: Yes.

DONAHUE: Have you seen the decadence, what imperialist, Western capitalism does? That's what they would say to you.

So there's enough sin to go around. Why forsake your own country? We call that treason here, for what you perceive to be the better -- why condemn the government when you love the people so much? Why would it not be possible for you to bring

your considerable gifts to the statesmanlike business of calling attention to the excesses?

SHEVCHENKO: In the Soviet Union, I couldn't do anything. Like [unintelligible], you cannot influence the system. You cannot influence the new class which emerged in the Soviet Union and who rule the Soviet Union. They don't care about the people.

And you're right, of course. There are bright sides about the American life. There are, of course, dark things. You're right. There are street people, there are Harlem, and so on.

But let me tell you, let me tell you that most of the American, they are living much better than the Soviet people. There is no comparison, even. There can be no comparison whatsoever.

DONAHUE: Really? Life in the Soviet Union is pretty gray, huh?

SHEVCHENKO: It's pretty gray, yes. That's -- you know, it's understatement, I would say.

DONAHUE: Also, you're drinking too much, your people.

SHEVCHENKO: All Russians are -- not all, of course. There are some exceptions, like Gromyko.

DONAHUE: Gromyko does not drink. You make that clear. Chernenko does.

SHEVCHENKO: Yes. He did. I don't know whether he can drink now. [Laughter]

DONAHUE: The point is, though, you have a drinking problem in Russia.

SHEVCHENKO: Oh, yes. It's a big problem.

DONAHUE: But so do we.

SHEVCHENKO: Not to such an extent, I don't think. I watch many Americans coming to work. I don't think that so many American workers come, you know, to construction sites or somewhere drunk early in the morning. There are some. But I think that most Americans don't do that. They can get their double Scotch after work or something, but not like a lot of the Soviets. A big proportion come to the factory and they're already drunk.

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DONAHUE: Loaded.

SHEVCHENKO: There's a lot of accidents because of that. It's a national problem which is more serious. And American consume more beer, I mean, or wines. But Russian drink hard liquor, and not, you know, the small portion, not one ounce or something. Half a bottle to begin with, and then to finish it.

DONAHUE: Is the caller there?

WOMAN: I have a question for Mr. Shevchenko. He still hasn't answered the question why he's here. Is it a political statement that he is trying to make? Or is it, as, Phil, you have suggested, the West has all these -- what's the word I want?

DONAHUE: Occasions of sin.

WOMAN: Yes, exactly. He hasn't answered why he's here.

DONAHUE: Yeah. Well, let's...

SHEVCHENKO: I think because they invited me. I had no intention to appear there [unintelligible] come or not. They convinced me to come.

DONAHUE: Well, if we sell a few books, that's legal too. But that's all right. It's the American way. This is not suggesting that -- this does not make you a dishonorable man. All of us, sooner or later, write a book, and it's legal to sell it.

But you will not be upset for wondering aloud, as this woman is apparently expressing some confusion about you're being -- he says he's here because it was awful there and he didn't want to live the lie. And here he is.

What's so unbelievable about that?

WOMAN: Well, his political -- what is his political basis for being here? Has he turned completely away from the communist point of view?

DONAHUE: How do you feel about Soviet-style socialism? Have you rejected the ideology?

SHEVCHENKO: Of course I reject the ideology. I rejected the society. The society pushed me out of the country, like they pushed, I mean, hundreds of thousands of the people. There is Jewish emigration in which a quarter of million of people left the Soviet Union in a few years. There are most prominent Soviet writers, beginning with Solzhenitsyn, and dancer

or musician, famous musicians, Rostropovitch or Baryshnikov. They all left the country. If the doors at the Soviet borders would be open, let me assure you that it would be many more who would leave.

DONAHUE: They're into control. There's no doubt about that. Nobody's arguing with that.

This is -- Andy, I think, was your nickname. Andy?

SHEVCHENKO: Yes, it was during this time of spying.

DONAHUE: That's you, second from the right. You can see Brezhnev on the left. Is that Gromyko next to Brezhnev?

SHEVCHENKO: Yes. Next to Brezhnev is Gromyko.

DONAHUE: Boy, I'll bet you they're just -- they must really be so mad, they can't spit, watching you over here talking about them like this.

So, we have to ask ourselves, what's in it for us? And can you save the world? 'Cause it sure looks like we got a lot of very, very rigid males with all kinds of goodies, toys to play with, militarily speaking. And we appear to be headed for something.

How many airlines do you think you're going to be able to shoot down, and what are we going to do, business as usual?

SHEVCHENKO: You know, I don't think that we do business as usual with the Soviets, in general. We have to be strong to talk with them, but we have to have normal relations with the Soviet Union, because Soviet Union is the other superpower. They exist. They're a reality. We have to negotiate with them, but we have to use certain rules.

And first of all, we have to understand with whom we negotiate. We negotiate with the communists, who eventually think that they will be victorious in the historical process. And not this century, even. They think about the next century. That we have to understand.

But at the same time, we have to realize that there is a risk of nuclear war, there is an arms race which can lead to a situation where we all be destroyed, both Soviets and Americans and everybody.

So we have to negotiate, knowing with whom we're negotiating, and to deal with the Soviet Union properly.

DONAHUE: But if enough Russians defect, they're not

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going to want to talk to us at all. They won't trust anybody. I'm not sure we'll trust anybody. Do you see what I mean? This whole drama appears to undermine any kind of common-sense approach to this.

SHEVCHENKO: No, no. They will still negotiate. It doesn't matter how many Russians will leave the Soviet Union.

Of course, if, I mean, 270 [million] will leave, then no one be left. There is one anecdote about that. Kosygin and Brezhnev been talking when they be left alone in the whole country and what to do. And all the rest of the country left, emigrated to the West. Then, of course, we will have no one to negotiate with.

WOMAN: Is our country giving you any protection now while you are here?

SHEVCHENKO: Appropriate measures have been taken. So I would say so. It's not a -- I don't like, really, to talk about that in public.

DONAHUE: Here, this may be the next leader of Russia, 52 years old.

SHEVCHENKO: Fifty-three.

DONAHUE: Fifty-three. Excuse me. This is Mikhail Gorbachev. Mr. Gorbachev was looked over pretty closely by the British press on his recent visit to Margaret Thatcher. He is a...

SHEVCHENKO: Nice-looking man.

DONAHUE: He's a dashing dandy, certainly compared to the aging leaders that we've seen recently.

Is your money on him?

SHEVCHENKO: No. First of all, I don't yet used to think in terms of money about everything.

DONAHUE: Well, no, no, no.

SHEVCHENKO: Like all other Americans are thinking.
[Laughter]

He, of course, impress everyone because you see how he looks. It's a man who is full of energy, and he is polished and he can talk, I mean, nicely, and so on. And seeing all these, you know, dying, I mean, Soviets, very old men who cannot even walk, I mean, it's impressive, of course. And he's a well-

educated person. No question about that.

But if you ask me whether there is a really drastic basic difference between him and old, there are some elements in common, definitely, because he is also communist. He also believe in the Soviet ideology. But a difference is he understand better the economic problems of the Soviet Union. He can be more inclined to do something with the Soviet economy, to try to fulfill some of the promises which have never been fulfilled by...

DONAHUE: That's right.

SHEVCHENKO: ...predecessor to improve the standard of living of the Soviet population.

DONAHUE: But you can't do that if you continue that kind of percentage of arms investments.

SHEVCHENKO: That's exactly so. And it is my impression that that's why we have to negotiate with the Soviets, because they might be willing to...

DONAHUE: To cut back and save their own nation.

SHEVCHENKO: To cut back the money.

DONAHUE: Yeah. We don't have Gorbachev yet, you know. And Khrushchev tried to do that. Khrushchev dismantled cruisers, huge naval ships, you talk about.

SHEVCHENKO: Oh, yes.

DONAHUE: While the people stood there and wept. He dismissed over a million people from the army.

SHEVCHENKO: That's right.

DONAHUE: That was his attempt to say, "Hold it. We're getting so powerful militarily that we're crumbling from within." And they -- you know what happened to Khrushchev.

SHEVCHENKO: Khrushchev really disregarded, I mean, conventional might of the Soviet Union, tanks, [unintelligible], and cruisers and so on. But he considered that Soviet Union can rely only on strategical missiles and nuclear weapons.

But you're right, he failed, because he went against all these old powerful forces in the Soviet Union. Military, KGB, party apparatus were holding him. He tried. He failed.

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He was also not only good buy, but bad guy. Don't forget he said, "We will bury you," also. The same Khrushchev said that.

DONAHUE: And that's the continued -- does that remain the anthem of...

SHEVCHENKO: Essentially, yes. But...

DONAHUE: Bury us.

SHEVCHENKO: Essentially, yes. Next century, sometime.

DONAHUE: It's going to take that long, huh?

SHEVCHENKO: That long.

And Gorbachev might try again to do something similar to Khrushchev. And whether he succeed or not, it remains to be seen. But you know, there is a growin discontent among the Soviet population because, you know, they cannot -- they tell them, "All right. We was devastate in war, with 20 millions people been killed." And it was a destruction which was absolutely incredible in the country. They could wait. We could wait 10 years or 15 years after that, reconstruct and so on. But the more time -- it's 40 years after the Second World War, already. Japan recovered. Germany entirely recovered. But what is going on in the Soviet Union? The standard of living are lower than in Japan and in Germany.

DONAHUE: But what's going on in the United States? We have farmers in agony.

SHEVCHENKO: Come on. In the United States the benefits for unemployment much higher than the salary of the best-paid Soviet worker. And food is not available in three-quarter of the country.

DONAHUE: That's true.

SHEVCHENKO: Half of the Soviet Union live on the ration, like in the wartime. A pound of meat per family for a month.

DONAHUE: Yes.

SHEVCHENKO: There is no eggs in the store. There's no butter. Even with a salary, you cannot buy it. Moscow is good, but the rest of the country is not so good.

DONAHUE: No one is suggesting that life in Russia is

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somehow better than in the United States. The question is whether we're heading for that kind of existence. We are building billions on the armaments that you would appear to claim we need if we're going to handle these rascals.

SHEVCHENKO: I am not for all the military. There is a lot of waste in the Pentagon. It's absolutely impermissible. Something should be seriously done to -- and I also don't support all military programs of United States. We have to select most important ones, but not to spend on the military so much, like this Administration is doing. I do not support that.

DONAHUE: Is the caller there?

MAN: I'm a resident alien in this country. I come from England. I've been here for 20 years now. And I'm still amazed at the paranoid hatred that most Americans seem to hold for the Russians. They're only human beings, the same way that we are. I think extreme capitalism is probably equally as bad as extreme communism.

In the 20 years that I've been here, I've suffered a lot of barbs about it: If this country is not good enough, go back to England. It's the reverse of what happened during the war.

I hope that you'll make your guest welcomed, because he seems to be a most intelligent man. I think he's the kind of man that could do the country good.

DONAHUE: Yeah. Yeah. But you seem to paralyze yourself in your ability to criticize America. Do you know what I mean?

MAN: I think that wherever anyone lives, they should be able to criticize what is wrong.

DONAHUE: Except that we have an America, a beleaguered taxpaying community, that will not tolerate foreign dissi --foreign aliens coming to this country, enjoying the benefits that many Americans think they built, and then criticizing it at the same time. That's why we have to at least...

MAN: I pay my taxes, sir. I am one of the few people that has taxation without representation.

DONAHUE: I've got to break. We're really too long in this segment. I'm glad you called. We're glad you're here. You're glad you did this, huh?

MAN: Oh, yeah, yeah. I wouldn't change it.

DONAHUE: Hey, sure. Why not?

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And you think we should, what, respect Mr. Shevchenko's observations and benefit from them?

MAN: Yeah. And I don't think that we should bear this hatred toward a fellow man. I think that in the end we will triumph over the Russians because at least we have a God. And apparently they want to not have a God.

DONAHUE: All right.

And we'll be back in just a moment.

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WOMAN: Now will you become a U.S. citizen? And if you do, when you vote, who will you vote for?

SHEVCHENKO: I'm not yet a citizen, because my communist background is -- there is a law in the United States that anyone who was a member of the Communist Party, he has to wait. But I will be eligible next October to become a citizen of United States.

WOMAN: What did you think about Svetlana Stalin's return to Russia?

SHEVCHENKO: I think that she is evidently a person who is so much disturbed that she doesn't know what to do. And there are persons who could not adjust to any society. She had trouble before, living in the Soviet Union, and trouble here, in the United Kingdom. Now back to the Soviet Union. She will have trouble there, also, I'm sure.

DONAHUE: But that's what they're saying about you, Mr. Shevchenko.

SHEVCHENKO: No, I don't have troubles now. [Laughter]

WOMAN: What I'd like to know is do you have a job? And if you do, what are you doing?

SHEVCHENKO: I don't work for the government, but I am teaching in the Foreign Service Institute of the State Department. My students are diplomats, American diplomats.

I've been working quite a lot on this book. I'm writing another one, much more serious, which is a scholarly book. And I'm lecturing. It keeps me quite occupied.

MAN: What do you think about the United States selling high technology to the Soviet Union?

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SHEVCHENKO: We cannot do anything in preventing the Soviet Union to get high technology from the West. But we have to be very careful what we are selling. There is a special list which should be a guide for what we can sell and which could directly use by the mil -- for the military purposes in the Soviet Union.

And otherwise, the problem, the real problem is that if the Soviets will not get from the United States, they will get from the other countries.

DONAHUE: But, see, that sounds like a capitalist line. That's "Don't talk to 'em. They're coming." Unless you can make money, "Boy, then we're going to do business with them."

SHEVCHENKO: Yeah. Lenin said that capitalist are ready to sell the rope on which capitalists will hang themselves.

DONAHUE: Right, right. But it looks like, you know, so you're not a hard-liner, then. I assume -- how about grain embargo? You're probably against that too.

SHEVCHENKO: I don't like to call me hard-liner or left-wing, or whatever it is. I just -- I have my views, which I don't like to describe hard-line or whatever line. This is -- I want to be objective in my assessment of the Soviet Union, and life here, also.

DONAHUE: Could you have a drink with Dobrynin?

SHEVCHENKO: I will not, and I will tell you my. He was my friend for a long period of time. But when my wife died in Moscow, I called him and talked with him over the phone. And he told me, "I don't know anything more than was printed in American newspaper." He knew, of course.

DONAHUE: But what did he know?

SHEVCHENKO: And he told me, "I never talk with you."

Well, of course, I will not have a drink with him.

DONAHUE: Well, but can you blame him for not wanting to talk to you? He sees you as a traitor. You certainly understand that.

SHEVCHENKO: Okay. Whatever he sees me, it's up to him. But there are some, at least -- I mean something which he has to understand, as a human being, at least, he have to say something.

DONAHUE: And we'll be back in just a moment.

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DONAHUE: You should know that there is some question in Mr. Shevchenko's mind about what happened to his wife.

The report is that she committed suicide, and you wonder about that. Do you suspect murder? Do you think it's more likely that she was murdered?

SHEVCHENKO: I'm almost convinced of it, because she was a very strong woman, and we lived 26 years. And I think that she realized -- actually, Soviets, I mean, send her to Moscow...

DONAHUE: Excuse me. Let me say that...

SHEVCHENKO: ..when she realized that being fooled.

DONAHUE: Pardon me. Let me say on the left is the wife, now dead. And that's Mrs. Gromyko with her.

And your son and daughter continue to reside in Russia. And you're saying it's probable you will never see them again.

SHEVCHENKO: Probably. Also, I still have some hope, as far as the daughter is concerned. Because, of course, the Soviets prevent any kind of a communication between two of us. But maybe in the future, with the change of the leadership in the Soviet Union, and with the support of the public opinion, I would be able to do something.

As far as the son, he's a very grown-up man. He's very well established there, and I have to accept and respect his views.

WOMAN: How could you have possibly left your wife, knowing that something could have happened to her?

DONAHUE: What's the matter, you like the question? Just what you wanted to ask.

WOMAN: I wanted to say, how could he run and leave his wife and children? He was only thinking of himself.

SHEVCHENKO: I didn't leave my wife just like that, as some people are thinking. First of all, I talked with here several times. And when in the night when I left, I left her all instructions what to do. And how it happened that she disappeared from the apartment, which even the bolt was there --either she, herself, opened the door -- because next morning I called her and wanted her to be here, with the idea to get our daughter back to United States.

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WOMAN: Is defecting something that you contemplated for years, or is it something that just out of the blue came to you? I mean we've all seen the movie "Moscow on the Hudson," where Robin Williams just like that defects. Is this in your heart for so long?

SHEVCHENKO: Even in this movie, "Moscow on the Hudson," this man who tried to defect thought for a long time, for sure. And it was a decision to which I arrive after years and years of thinking. Because of the family, because I understand that, it would be very hard to leave your own country.

MAN: We have a certain perception of the Soviet Union as a great threat to us. What is the Soviet Union's perception, both their government and the people, how do they perceive us as a threat and Ronald Reagan as a threat, the United States as a threat?

SHEVCHENKO: the Soviet leadership definitely considers that United States is a threat. But at the same time, they consider the United States is a main obstacle to their goals, which I mentioned, which is eventual victory of the socialism.

The there is a view -- feeling of the Soviet population are mixed. They're subject to such a propaganda that United States, you know, is all the time preparing to attack the Soviet Union, daily propaganda. On the other hand, they still know a lot of things about Americans. Some believe, some don't believe. So it's quite a mix of feelings among the population.

WOMAN: We know how the Russian leaders feel about us, but how do the Russian people themselves feel about us?

SHEVCHENKO: Yes. I just mentioned that there is a difference between leaders and the population. Leaders see the United States as the obstacle on what they want to achieve in the world. They see -- they of course understand military, economic might.

But the people, a lot of Soviets, they like Americans. They remember the wars, of cooperation during the Second World War. But a lot of them also fooled by the propaganda, about the aggressive designs of Americans against them, and so on and so forth.

WOMAN: Was there any talk of an underground revolution in Russia?

SHEVCHENKO: I don't think that the underground revolution can happen in Russia, unfortunately, because there are KGB informers everywhere. And even if two or three people would like to talk about something, a revolution, they would be

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detected, I mean, tomorrow or the day after tomorrow and sent either to concentration camp or to the mental institution. I don't know which is worse.

DONAHUE: But how long will that work? How long can you do this? I mean doesn't history show us that you can rough the people up, but only for a little while? You know, sooner or later, somebody -- you got to get tired standing on that border with China. I mean those guys in the Russian-issue coats. That must be an awful existence for these people.

How many figure you got on the Sino-Soviet border? I mean how many thousands of...

SHEVCHENKO: There is almost a million army there.

DONAHUE: A million. Now, how long are they going to say, "Sure. Here we go for Ivan. We're going off to war and stand in this weather for" -- do you know what I mean? Isn't there a limit to the control that they can exercise?

SHEVCHENKO: There are some limits. You mention, of course, historically, such a totalitarian society, I mean, lasted a short period of time. But what is short period of time? They exist less than 70 years. And they can exist because there are a lot of people who are interested in maintaining the regime in the Soviet Union. There are 18 millions of members of Communist Party. There is a lot of the young men who is a member of the Young Communist League, Komsomol, in the Soviet Union who benefit from the system. They live very well. They stay in line for bread or something like that.

So there is a -- there is Army officer, chief generals, and so on.

DONAHUE: So the best way to insure against an overthrow is to make everybody in -- put everybody in the government.

SHEVCHENKO: That's true, but...

DONAHUE: Except.

SHEVCHENKO: Except it would be not enough to do what they're doing now for a group of several million.

DONAHUE: You have a country with eleven time zones.

SHEVCHENKO: Yes, that's right.

DONAHUE: Eleven. And what, 18 million Communist Party members? That's what? That's certainly less than ten percent of

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the population.

SHEVCHENKO: Oh, yes. But it's substantial, I would say. But they keep power. They keep power.

WOMAN: I just wanted to know how many other people in high places, perhaps, that you have worked with that you think might be in the same position as you are to defect?

DONAHUE: Who else is working for...

SHEVCHENKO: There are a number of people, you know, who, like myself, are political. Not only artists and the people in the arts, I mean, defected from the Soviet Union. There are others from the government. There has just been -- I happened to be at the highest level. It's no my fault. I hope that the others will come. And I know that at my level there are people who think like myself. But for a number of reasons -- first of all, they fear what can happen to them here. They don't know whether they will be able to adjust. They don't know what happened with my family.

Because, you know, my example, from that point of view, is bad. You know what happened. I would wish to have my wife and my children here, but it happened that it was not possible.

DONAHUE: And we'll be back in a moment.

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DONAHUE: Mr. Shevchenko has been joined by his wife, Elaine, American-born, married in 1978. You both reside in the Washington, D.C. area.

I think you helped him write this book. This is some odyssey for you, a personal one, to be sure.

How do you -- have you been surprised at all by the nature of what's transpired so far?

ELAINE SHEVCHENKO: No. Most of the questions that have been asked are the same. People are curious about the same things, wherever Arkady goes.

WOMAN: I'm interested to know what kind of future you expect to get here in the United States now.

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: I expect a good one because this is my country.

DONAHUE: But, you know, the two of you. I mean, you

know, it's not everybody who lives next door to a guy of this high rank who busted from the Soviet Union, you know.

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: And I'm certainly next door. I know that. But I expect that we'll go on and Arkady will work and I will work. And maybe we'll meet nice people like you and just do what we've been doing.

WOMAN: I'm curious as to what kind of friends you have, what kinds of neighbors do you have. How do they feel about you?

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: That's hard to tell, because our neighborhood where people aren't very friendly. There isn't much talking, chatting over the back fence.

But when people pass you on the street or when the kids come around at Halloween and stuff, the people are friendly. But I mean our friends are our old friends, as well as some new ones.

WOMAN: Mr. Shevchenko, since there [is] no religious freedom in Russia, do you feel the need now to look for a religion here in the United States?

SHEVCHENKO: I was never a believer. I was not against the religion, ever. I was what is called agnostic, you know. And I have very, very great respect for religious people, and I like churches very much. And I have quite a lot of Russian icons which are really beautiful, which I lost them in the Soviet Union. And they're too expensive here to get.

MAN: I want to know how hard it was for you to defect and how hard was it for you to get out.

SHEVCHENKO: Oh, it was very hard. It was years of thinking. And, you know, it was real danger to my life. I don't know whether I will survive or not, whether the Soviets at the last moment can get me. They would not hesitate to shoot me at this moment. Now is easy because they know I already told everything to the American Government. But at that moment, definitely they would wish to kill me.

DONAHUE: Mr. Shevchenko, you are honest to tell us that during your lonely days, following the departure of your wife, a man of your power living covertly in New York City, we can only speculate that those were lonely nights for you. And you tell us that, with the help of the CIA, you engaged an escort service.

SHEVCHENKO: No, no. Not in New York.

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: Through the Yellow Pages.

DONAHUE: Through the Yellow Pages?

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SHEVCHENKO: No, no, no. It was not in New York.

DONAHUE: It wasn't in New York.

SHEVCHENKO: No, no.

DONAHUE: Was it in Washington?

SHEVCHENKO: Yeah, it was in Washington, after my defection, after death of my wife. So it's...

DONAHUE: But was there any American -- did any American agency help you with this liaison?

SHEVCHENKO: Yeah. I told, I answered this question, that, yes, it's not me, but it was a FBI idea to do that. And...

DONAHUE: You...

SHEVCHENKO: ...speaking, I was in such a state of mind at that time that I would not envy anyone to be that, because the first six months was a nightmare, entirely. And I relied on advice for some of the...

DONAHUE: Well, you were honest enough to tell us about it.

SHEVCHENKO: I have to write the truth.

DONAHUE: But please know, here we've got the FBI pimping for a guy who'd bailed out on his own country. Do you know what I mean? I mean the intrigue -- when's the movie?

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: It makes a good story, doesn't it?

DONAHUE: It does.

Not only that, if you still...

SHEVCHENKO: I don't want the movie on this subject.

DONAHUE: You don't want a movie on this subject.

The woman writes a book about it. She got her part of the deal. So what's the point of that? Don't trust a woman -- don't trust a blind date if the FBI fixed you up?

SHEVCHENKO: [Laughter]

DONAHUE: It does appear, though, that we have counter- and double-counter-intrigue and espionage, which makes us wonder

how safe we really are.

Do you see what I'm saying? I don't understand...

SHEVCHENKO: I see what you are saying, but I don't think that, really, Americans should worry about that. Really, the FBI, better they would focus attention on the Soviet spies here.

WOMAN: Would the Soviets have been happier if Mondale were in power now, in office now?

SHEVCHENKO: You know, it's hard to tell whether they would be happier or not happier. But definitely what I can say, that the position of Mondale on a number of subjects was closer, on the foreign issue, closer to the Soviet position than the position of the present Administration.

DONAHUE: The position of the Democrats?

SHEVCHENKO: The position of Mondale on a number of issues.

DONAHUE: Was closer to that of the Soviets.

SHEVCHENKO: Closer to the Soviet position.

DONAHUE: Now, is that good or bad for America?

SHEVCHENKO: That I don't know, because it might be --in some respect it's bad, because I think what Mondale wanted to do, to make a unilateral concession to the Soviets, even before negotiating with the Soviets. This is not really a proper behavior, I would say.

DONAHUE: Yes, but you've just entered partisan politics. You've just made it clear that your man is Ronald Reagan.

SHEVCHENKO: No, I didn't say that. I didn't say that.

DONAHUE: You certainly didn't want a man who concedes everything before the negotiations. That's hardly a positive endorsement of his...

SHEVCHENKO: That's true. But I never said and I don't like to have that somebody is my man or not my man. Because some of the thing which the President is doing, I agree with. Some of the thing, I disagree.

DONAHUE: And we'll be back in a moment.

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MAN: What is the Russian government, the present one, going to do about the Jewish population?

SHEVCHENKO: They're doing a bad thing to the Jewish population. The Soviet Union, you know, they don't allow them to leave the Soviet Union. Some left, but in exchange for some trade benefits for the Soviet Union. It's like, you know, selling people for money, or something like that.

WOMAN: On a trip to Russia, where would be the best place to go to get a dish of perogi (?) or pudaha (?).

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: The Ukraine.

SHEVCHENKO: The Ukraine, Ukraine.

WOMAN: I just want to say that I think you're a very brave man, and it took a lot of guts to do what you did.

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: I think he is, too.

WOMAN: I also think it took a lot of courage for you to do what you did. And I wondered why the Soviet government --what prevents your children from being harmed at this time.

SHEVCHENKO: You know, it is something because --because of my high visibility. You will know if they will do something against my children. Don't think that the Soviets are entirely insensitive to the public opinion in the world. They would like to portray themselves as a peaceful, you know, they're observing human rights, and so on. And when they see something which can hurt them from the public opinion, they're careful. Sometimes they are not, but sometimes they're careful.

WOMAN: I'd just like to know, do you think that we, as Americans, should go to the Soviet Union to visit?

SHEVCHENKO: Yes, I think so. I think so. Definitely so. Because it's a great country, there is a lot of things to see, there are traditions. Soviet people -- Russia existed much before the Soviets seized power there. We should not forget that.

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: Except you're not going to see reality. You're going to see tourist business.

SHEVCHENKO: No. Tourist, but a lot of historical, interesting things.

WOMAN: Mr. Shevchenko, I wish that you could have spoken to some of our young people before they hijacked some

planes and took them to Cuba.

WOMAN: I'd like to know how you feel about American politicians.

SHEVCHENKO: You know my feelings are mixed up. And I don't like....

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DONAHUE: Breaking with Moscow. This is Arkady Shevchenko's account of his defection.

WOMAN: In regards to your book, would it be hard to get published in Russia?

[Laughter]

MRS. SHEVCHENKO: Impossible.

SHEVCHENKO: Of course, the book would be published also....

[End of program]