

Scientist in Spy Swap Fears New Arrest

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Igor Sutyagin, an arms researcher convicted of espionage and freed in last month's spy swap, said he faces arrest if he returns to Russia because he has not received any papers confirming his release.

He signed a document confirming his pardon but was not allowed to keep a copy of it, and Russian authorities have failed to respond to inquiries, Sutyagin said in his first interview after his release, published by the Russian liberal weekly The New Times on Monday.

"I'm still unsure that I won't find out upon coming to Russia that there's a ticket to Arkhangelsk already prepared for me," he said, referring to the northern region where he served his sentence.

Sutyagin, who was deported to Britain, said he had been told that he would be allowed to return to Russia to reunite with his family, but he did not elaborate on when that might happen.

He also said he had been pressured into reversing his earlier claim of innocence by Russian authorities who demanded a guilty plea because the 10 Russian spies involved in the spy swap

intended to plead guilty in a U.S. court.

Sutyagin's lawyer has said her client changed his plea because he was told that President Dmitry Medvedev could not pardon him unless he admitted his guilt and he did not want to ruin the chances of the other three Russians who were to be deported with him.

Sutyagin said he was provided with a set of clothes by the U.S. side because he had nothing to wear except for his prison robe, but a Russian colonel overseeing the swap prohibited him from changing into them.

Sutyagin, 45, was sentenced to 15 years in prison in 2004 for providing a British company that Russian investigators said was linked to the CIA with information that they deemed classified. He denied wrongdoing in court, saying he only used publicly available data.

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