

KRM:EP:DC

May 16, 1939

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. E. A. TAMM

Reference is made to your request of even date for a memorandum concerning one Ginsberg. This matter arose out of a series of articles written by a party using the name of W. G. Krivitsky beginning in the Saturday Evening Post with the April 15, 1939, issue, the first article being styled "STALIN'S HAND IN SPAIN". A review of that article showed that Krivitsky claimed to have been one of the principal espionage agents of the Soviet Government in central European countries and engaged in such activities in Spain after it was determined by Stalin that the U.S.S.R. should assist the Loyalist Government of Spain in a clandestine manner.

It will be recalled that in the first article of Krivitsky referred to above, he made mention of the fact that passports used by American volunteers for the Loyalist Army were taken from such Americans upon their arrival in Spain and have been secreted by Soviet officials for use in sending to this country persons interested in propagating Communist ideology in the future.

I should like to point out that the cases involving the enlistment of Americans for service in the Loyalist Army of Spain which have come to the attention of the Bureau have disclosed to a large extent that passports issued to such individuals for travel in Europe were stamped with the words "Not good for travel in Spain". It would appear therefore that if such passports were taken from American volunteers upon their arrival in Spain with the intention of using them in the future in an illegal manner, the stamp referred to placed thereon by the State Department would have to be removed.

There appeared in the magazine entitled the New Masses for May 9, 1939, Page 3, what purports to be an expose of Krivitsky and which is quoted herewith as follows, indicating that Krivitsky is identical with one Shmalko Ginsberg:

- Mr. Tolson
- Mr. Nathan
- Mr. E. A. Tamm
- Mr. Clegg
- Mr. Coffey
- Mr. Glavin
- Mr. Ladd
- Mr. Nichols
- Mr. Rosen
- Mr. Tracy
- Mr. Egan
- Mr. Gurnea
- Mr. Hendon
- Mr. Pennington
- Mr. Quinn
- Mr. Nease
- Miss Gandy

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FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

JUN 1 1939 A. M.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

FILE

Memorandum for  
Mr. E. A. Tamm

- 2 -

May 18, 1939

"GENERAL KRIVITSKY"

"General Krivitsky," you are Shmelka Ginsberg. You were never a general. You cannot even use a rifle. You never set eyes on Stalin or Voroshilov. You are an Austrian, hailing from old Franz-Josef's Podvoletchiska. Your middle initial G. stands for Ginsberg. You first turned up in Paris where you are a notorious bon vivant, denizen of the night clubs, and always in the dough. You invented your title and name for Paris journalism when you promised to "tell all."

"Those who know you well will snicker at the idea that your mind can absorb an iota of politics — the nights in Paris are said to be too long. You are just the kind of adventurer that the infamous Yagoda would pick for his anti-Soviet dirty work.

You cannot even write. Isaac Don Levine, a Lily in his own right, ghosted the articles. They made a fine product — Krivitsky, out of Levine, for the Saturday Evening Post. It is an open secret that Suzanne La Follette, Trotskyist stalwart, is lending Levine a hand in preparing the material for a book. Curtis Brown, Inc., are the agents of Isaac Don Levine, Suzanne La Follette, and/or "General Krivitsky." If anybody still wants the book he can get it for \$500.

~~New Masses~~ has the facts.  
That's about all."

A review of the Bureau's files fails to disclose any information concerning the identity of the Ginsberg, who is referred to in the New Masses. The only references to a Ginsberg in the Bureau's files are contained in old subversive files. One reference is contained in file #61-167-1674, which shows that one S. Ginsberg in 1923 was a member of the City Central Committee of the Workers' Party in Philadelphia. Another reference is contained in old file #61-825-139, which shows that an inquiry was made concerning one S. Ginsberg, who was then living at 1233 41st Street, Brooklyn, New York, but the file fails to disclose that any information was obtained. Another reference is contained in old file #61-23-216 on Page 9, which refers to one S. Ginsberg, who is a publicity director of the Labor Forum of New York City. It appears that the Labor Forum was at that time a part of the Workers Party of America.

Memorandum for  
Mr. E. A. Tamm

May 18, 1939

A search of the files of the Identification unit failed to disclose any criminal record which would appear to pertain to the Shmelka Ginsberg mentioned in the New Masses. An examination of the several reference books maintained in this office likewise failed to disclose any information concerning Ginsberg.

The magazine New Masses for May 16, 1939, page 20, shows that that magazine assigned one of its representatives, Ernest Pendrell to ascertain the true facts from the Saturday Evening Post concerning the alleged "General Krivitsky". The magazine states -

"We learned the following -- that William Jonas and Stuart Rose, an associate editor, (Saturday Evening Post), did admit that Isaac Don Levine ghosted the articles. More, Kathleen Taylor, secretary to Wesley Stout, editor-in-chief of the Post, admits that Levine wrote the stories. A. H. Jackson, associate editor, (Saturday Evening Post), admits it too. It is generally known upstairs that "General Krivitsky" did enter the country bearing a passport under the name of Ginsberg."

The item further points out that Walter Winchell mentioned in one of his broadcasts that the Krivitsky articles were ghosted by Isaac Don Levine.

Time Magazine for May 22, 1939, page 51, states -

"As for Krivitsky's name being Ginsberg, the Post said: 'That's quite true, but Trotsky's name is Bronstein. It's just an old Bolshevik custom.' The Post added that it had checked through the U. S. Embassy in Paris and the State Department in Washington and was satisfied that its author was the real Krivitsky.

This week the State Department refused either to confirm or deny the authenticity of General Krivitsky. The Soviet Embassy said it had never heard of any such person. The Dies Committee invited the general to Washington."

Respectfully,

K. R. McIntire