



In Reply, Please Refer to
File No.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Boston, Massachusetts

July 15, 1968

DESTAN BERISHA

On May 2, 1968, Mrs. Jean Myers, Credit Bureau, Inc., Northampton, Massachusetts, advised that Destan Berisha is listed in the files of that office as a resident of Rocky Hill Road, Northampton, since 1965. He lives at that address with his wife, Otilie. Additional information stated he had previously lived at 106 East 91st Street, New York City, New York, and was employed in that city as a cafeteria worker by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Mrs. Myers said there was some confusion in the file whether he or his wife was employed as assistant cook at Smith College, Northampton. She said he was recorded as forty-three years of age and his wife as fifty-four years. All available information concerning them was favorable.

On June 16, 1968, Miss Grace P. Asserson, Employment Manager, Smith College, stated that Tillie Berisha, wife of Destan Berisha, came to Smith College in August, 1953, and has been employed since as an assistant cook. She said Mrs. Berisha was then single and lived in New York City. She had come to Northampton on a visit and liking the area applied for employment at the college. She had worked for a restaurant as a salad woman and Miss Asserson found a notation in the file with the name Blakie Heinz Mueller, Madison Avenue, New York City, and recalled she called that employer and was given a very favorable recommendation.

Miss Asserson said Mrs. Tillie Berisha's maiden name was Otilie Seidl and that she was born March 27, 1910, in Germany. She had been in the United States six years before coming to Smith College in 1963 and was naturalized at New York City in 1964. Miss Asserson remembered she had seen both a birth certificate and passport.

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At the time of her hiring, Tillie told Miss Asserson that she had a boy friend in New York City and in March, 1965, they were married. He, Destan Berisha, applied for maintenance work at Smith College but spoke poor English and no work was available for him at the time. She knew, however, through conversations with Tillie, that her husband did find employment at the Northampton State Hospital where he remained until he was arrested by authorities in Yugoslavia during a visit to that country.

Miss Asserson said all she knew of the arrest was what she had heard from Tillie Berisha and this was that Destan had returned to Yugoslavia on a visit in August, 1967, and while in that country was arrested on charges that he was opposed to that government. She said there was confusion in her mind about the matter, but she knew that Representative Silvio Conte had concerned himself with it and had apparently interceded in Destan Berisha's behalf. Tillie Berisha's explanation seemed to be that her husband was an enemy of Yugoslavia before his departure from that country and that his return while a communist regime was in power was a mistake.

Miss Asserson said on contacts with Destan Berisha and his wife, Tillie always suggested to her that they were both completely loyal to the United States and opposed to communism although she thought Destan was too insignificant to be of concern to authorities unless as suggested there had been some past activity by him. Her most recent contacts with Mrs. Berisha suggested Destan would return by September, 1968.

On June 18, 1968, Miss Florence Eaton, Supervisor of Nursing, Northampton State Hospital, Northampton, said Destan Berisha was first employed there as a kitchen helper in August, 1965, and later became an attendant nurse and housekeeper. She said his duties were not professional, but that he was able to render physical help in the care and maintenance of mental patients committed there. She said he was a pleasant, willing worker, but an uneducated and simple person. In August, 1967, he applied for leave in order to visit Europe and last worked on August 14, 1967, although he was carried on the payroll until March, 1968.

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She said information concerning his arrest by authorities in Yugoslavia during his visit there came to the attention of the hospital and they have had some correspondence with Representative Silvio Conte concerning it. She believed there was no reason to question his loyalty to the United States and said she could not conceive of his being a spy for any country because he did not appear to have sufficient intelligence for that purpose and must have been a peasant before arriving in the United States. In correspondence with Representative Conte, she said it seemed Yugoslavian authorities considered him an enemy of that state in that he may have been a member of an Albanian organization whose suspected purpose was the transfer of Kossuth to Albania.

Miss Eaton said she did not know when Berisha might be released for return to the United States, but that his former employment was available to him.

On June 18, 1968, Jeremiah Lucey, Probation Department, Northampton District Court, advised that there was no arrest record in the files of that department which he could identify with Destan Berisha or Otilie Berisha, nee Seidl.

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