

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS

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1. Fill in Sect. 2. on back. Detach back ^{Nov 21 1 24 PM '66} and forward to RID.
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FROM:

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COMMENTS

ICE FE
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Saturday Review
5 Nov 66
Supplies Library
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DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS
		RECEIVED	FORWARDED	
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17. RID/FI

FILE TITLE

TRACE REQUEST

ABSTRACT

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FILE NUMBER (PRIMARY CODE)

200-124-39/3

DATE MICROFILMED

DOCUMENT DATE

DOCUMENT NUMBER

9 Nov 1966

FAMA 05152

207

DISPATCH		CLASSIFICATION S E C R E T	PROCESSING ACTION	
TO	Chief, WOVIEW			MARKED FOR INDEXING
INFO.	Chief, FE; Chief, SB			NO INDEXING REQUIRED
FROM	[]			ONLY QUALIFIED DESK CAN JUDGE INDEXING
SUBJECT	[] SQUARE/REDTOP/PSYCH - Russian Translation of Morris West's The Ambassador			
ACTION REQUIRED - REFERENCES				
<p>1. The attached correspondence has been turned over [] by SQUARE, who in turn received it from the Department of External Affairs. SQUARE has provided the following additional comments regarding this material:</p> <p>a. " You will note that Morris West is incensed about the omissions in the Russian translation of his book and that this was apparently brought to his attention through the agency of Mr. James Critchlow of Radio Liberty Committee, New York. <i>✓ 10-201 200-4934</i></p> <p>b. " We do not know whether Mr. Critchlow has given any publicity to the defects in the Russian translation but consider that it would be a good thing if he did.</p> <p>c. " West himself has brought the matter to the attention of the United States Ambassador in Italy 'as a matter of official record' and your Headquarters may already have the situation under consideration.</p> <p>d. " Regarding Morris West himself, we have not approached him at any time. He is not adversely recorded but holds very liberal views which would very likely militate against the success of any contact with him by an organization such as ours."</p> <p>2. Headquarters may have greater fill-in regarding West's umbrage at the Russian translation of his book. [] would be most interested in Headquarters reaction to SQUARE suggestions regarding possible public airing of the defects in the Russian translation.</p> <p>Attachment: As Stated Para 1</p> <p>Distribution: 2-C/WOVIEW w/att 1-C/FE 1-C/SB</p>				
CROSS REFERENCE TO	DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NUMBER FAMA 5152		DATE 9 November 1966	
CLASSIFICATION S E C R E T			HQS FILE NUMBER	

AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY,
ROME.

Memorandum No. 714

18th August, 1966

The Secretary,
Department of External Affairs,
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

Mr. Morris West: "The Ambassador" Russian Translation.

I enclose a copy of correspondence, on the subject of the Russian translation of his book, "The Ambassador", which Mr. Morris West, who has been residing in Rome since the beginning of the year, sent to me this week.

ALFRED STEINBERG

A 77-1- FAMA-5152

300-12437/3

Villa Papa
Via Erede Attico, 1
Rome, Italy
16 August, 1966

His Excellency,
Mr. A. T. Stirling, C.B.E.
Australian Ambassador to Italy
Australian Embassy
Via Sallustiana 26
Rome, Italy

Dear Mr. Stirling,

I send you the attached correspondence for the record.
If you feel it is worthwhile passing it on to our Internal
Affairs in Australia, perhaps you will be kind enough to do so.

It would appear that our Russian friends have done a
neat confidence trick by converting THE AMBASSADOR into a
propaganda piece while assuming the mask of honest editors.
I have, as you see, written a note to the American Ambassador
just for the record and I send you the whole correspondence
for your own information.

Sincerely yours

(signed) MORRIS L. WEST

MLW:gh
Encls. (4)

Villa Papa
Via Erode Attico, 1
Rome, Italy
16 August, 1966

Mr. B. Ryrikov, Editor-in-Chief,
Foreign Literature Magazine
41 Piatnitskaja
Moscow E-17, USSR

Subject: Russian Translation - THE AMBASSADOR

Dear Sir,

The Russian translation of my book, THE AMBASSADOR, which was published in your magazine has now been examined word for word by an expert Russian reader. The following is an extract from his report:

"... there have been significant deletions by the censors, and even a partial rewrite job. For example, 'a pile of weapons from China and Prague and Russia' becomes merely 'a pile of weapons from various countries'. All references to Viet Cong atrocities have been excised. It is perhaps also of some interest that while unfavorable comments by Mr. West's characters about the Soviet Union and its system have been cut out, similarly unflattering mentions of China are as a rule left in".

This report troubles me a great deal. You will remember that when I gave permission for the book to be translated into Russian in condensed form, I requested (and you agreed) that the condensation would be submitted for my approval. You did, in fact, send me a list of cuts, but these did not reach me in Rome until the magazine was already in print. Since I do not read Russian, I had no opportunity of making an immediate check, nor did I envisage that in addition to the cuts, certain key phrases and key passages (which hold the whole theme in balance) would be deleted or changed.

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I cannot do otherwise than regard this whole situation as a breach of good faith and I find myself obliged to pass this information on to members of the Australian Society of Authors and to other persons who may find themselves the victims of a similar distortion.

I should be pleased to receive from you, at your earliest convenience, an explanation of this strong and disturbing breach of publishing practice and of the good faith with which I agreed to enter into this open transaction with you. I cannot, under the circumstances, accept the Roubles payment which you indicated would be available to me in the USSR.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) MORRIS L. WEST

MLW:gh

Villa Papa
Via Erode Attico, 1
Rome, Italy
16 August, 1966

Mr. James O'Connell, Director,
Information Division,
Radio Liberty Committee
20 East 92nd Street,
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Mr. O'Connell:

Mr. Paul Reynolds has passed on to me your kind letter of 11 August about the Russian translation of THE AMBASSADOR. I am very grateful for the information you have given me and I have written a strong letter to the Editors of the Foreign Literature magazine protesting against the distortions which are mentioned in your letter; a copy of my letter is enclosed. Of course, it will not do us much good, but at least it is on the record. You will be interested in the circumstances under which the story was published in its Russian version.

Until August of this year I was, for two years, the President of the Australian Society of Authors, a non-political body of which our former Prime Minister, Sir Robert Menzies, and the present leader of the opposition, the Honourable Arthur Calwell, are both members. Some eighteen months ago the Society was officially asked to entertain members of a Russian press delegation to Australia.

Since the press delegation had come to Australia under political auspices I, as the President of the Society, indicated that we could not give them an official reception. However, I offered, as a personal courtesy, to entertain two of the senior members of the delegation to dinner in my own home. During the dinner the question was raised of the translation of my own books into Russian. I also took the opportunity to raise the question which our Society had raised officially with the Union of Soviet Writers of the payment of royalties to Australian authors whose books were published in the Soviet Union.

This, as you know, has been a long-standing matter of contention between the Soviet Union and those countries that are signatories to the Geneva Convention on Copyright. We also discussed the fact that the Soviet Union did itself a disservice in terms of international courtesy by failing in most cases even to request permission for the publication of the works of foreign authors.

Some weeks later I received a formal request from the publishers of Foreign Literature Magazine for permission to publish the book in Russian. Since they could have published the book without my permission, I wrote that I was disposed to agree. I indicated, however, that as a condition of my agreement, the book should be published integrally.

Next, I received a letter asking permission for reasons of length to publish a condensation. Again, since the courtesies I had enjoyed, both privately and as the President of a professional society, were being observed, I said I was disposed to agree, provided that the proposed cuts were submitted for my approval before publication. No such thing, international practice was being observed, since all the Russian countries have been permitted to publish condensations of my works (e.g. in the Readers Digest) and, normally, one rests on the good faith of the editors since it is impossible to read every condensation.

However, in this case, I had asked for prior approval and the Russians agreed.

They did, in fact, send me a list of the cuts they had made - not a list of editings or corruptions of the text. However, this list did not reach me until the magazine had already been printed and was, in fact, in my hands. Once again I found myself in some dilemma because the Roman nails are very bad and letters are frequently delayed for long periods.

It appears, however, from all the circumstances, that we have been badly had and there's very little we can do about it. You may be able, however, to use the information I have given you as a caution to those who may find themselves from time to time in similar circumstances. As a matter of record, I am passing your letter, my reply to it and a copy of my letter to Foreign Literature Magazine to the United States Ambassador in Rome where I am presently living for awhile. I have been at times an outspoken critic of the policies of the United States and of my country in Vietnam and this is a democratic

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right to which I hold and shall continue to hold most strongly. That, to have my works distorted for propaganda purposes is another matter altogether. It's probably unavoidable, but it is certainly distressing.

Thank you again.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) MORRIS L. WEST

MW:gh
Encl.

Villa Papa
Via Erede Attico, 1
Rome, Italy

16 August, 1966

His Excellency,
The United States Ambassador
United States Embassy
Rome, Italy

Your Excellency:

I am passing to you herewith, for your information,
some basic correspondence affecting the Russian translation of my
book, THE AMBASSADOR.

I send it to you in order that you may make it a
matter of official record through whatever United States Government
channels you may deem advisable. It's common knowledge that I
have been a strong critic of the policy of the United States and
of my own country in South Vietnam, and this is a democratic right
to which I hold most strongly. However, I have never been and,
I hope, I shall never be, a propagandist for any government
or any political party - even my own. In the present unfortunate
circumstances, I would like the record kept straight.

I have sent a copy of this letter and the attached
correspondence to my own Ambassador in Rome.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) MORRIS L. WEST

MLW:ch
MLW:ch (4)