
CP Turns Stool Pigeon to Get Zack:

Tries to Force Deportation of Former High Communist Official Who Split with Them: GPU Holds Wife and Child as Hostage in Russia

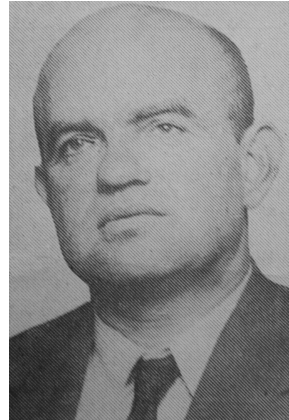
by Joseph Zack

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Joseph Zack,¹ former former Trade Union Unity League Chief, former Comintern delegate, and CP May Day Parade marshal, is on the spot.

Ever since he broke with the Communist Party in 1934, Mr. Browder and company have been under orders to get rid of him somehow. Recently they got the opening for which they have been waiting these four years. They turned stoolpigeon and tipped off the Department of Labor that Zack was in the country illegally.

Not only that. They have signed affidavits swearing that Mr. Zack is an undesirable alien and should be deported.



¹ Joseph “Joe” Zack Kornfeder (1893-1963) was a founding member of the Communist Party who came to prominence in 1921 as a member of the Central Executive Committee of the underground United Communist Party, using the pseudonyms “A.P. Griffith” and “J.P. Collins.” His mother’s maiden name was “Zack” and he used that as a “real” name for much of the period of his political activism, reverting to use of “Kornfeder” in the 1940s. Kornfeder followed the typical left-to-right trajectory of a number of his peers, including Ben Gitlow, Bert Wolfe, and Oliver Carlson.

Joseph Stalin is uneasy about Zack. He knows too much about the methods of the Comintern; he knows too much about the inner secrets of the Communist Party; and despite the fact that the GPU is holding Mrs. Zack and their child as hostages in some concentration camp, Mr. Zack's political conscience couldn't swallow the corkscrew changes in party lines.

Zack was once a member of the all-powerful CP Politburo. He was secretary of the CP-controlled TUUL, which tried to smash the American labor movement until the line changed. He was sent to Moscow in 1929 as a representative of the Foster faction inside the CP and there Foster personally introduced him to Stalin.

Later he was sent to South America as a Comintern organizer.

Today because they fear that Zack can reveal too much, the Communists want to get him out of the country and are willing to order their own people to turn squealer and stoolpigeon.

Mr. Zack's story appears below.

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In 1935 a tourist went through Russia and when he returned I learned that my wife Eva had disappeared from the Collective Farm in the Crimea where she had worked. No one knew where she had been taken.

My wife and son went to Russia in 1928 planning to return to the US after I had completed my work for the Comintern in South America.² But because of my break with the Communist Party they were forbidden to come back.

In the attempt to find their whereabouts I tried strategy and wrote to her old address hoping she would make the GPU react. I threatened appeal to the US government to act in behalf of her and my New York-born son. I received from her a reply obviously dictated by the secret police.

The letter was most interesting because of the marks left by the GPU. The stamps had been two-thirds torn off in the search for a concealed message. The postmark was half rubbed out to destroy evi-

² A CI Rep to South America, Zack was jailed in Venezuela and was only released at the behest of the US State Department. He returned to the United States in the Fall of 1931, working as the Eastern District Secretary of TUUL and actually living with future General Secretary Earl Browder for four months.

dence of the place from which it was mailed. The letter itself did not mention the location.

Soviet Censorship Conceals Prisoner's Location.

The Russian Censorship opens all outgoing mail, but also seals it again. This letter came cut open, as is customary from Russian prisons. For under the Soviets the location of imprisonment is always concealed in order to prevent outside aid from reaching the prisoner.

That was sufficient proof for me, so on October 8, 1936, I sent to the Secretary of State, enclosing the GPU letter and asking for aid on behalf of my son. I received no reply. Several months later I again wrote. Then a message came from the Special Agent of the State Department in New York asking to see me.³

From the first interview I had with that gentleman it became clear that the State Department was not at all interested in the fate of my family, but was deeply and exclusively interested in me.

From the start the Special Agent wanted to know my former status in the party, my relationships with the CP chiefs here and abroad. he asked me to identify by photograph or name certain individuals working here incognito. I refused.

At another interview I was confronted with the affidavits of two known party members against me. Also there were placed in front of me clippings of articles I had written which were critical of the New Deal. The clippings I believe were supplied by the Communist Party, the cooperation of which with the government was by this time obvious.⁴

Grilled by Special Agent to Prove Illegal Entry.

At all subsequent interviews I was grilled as to how, when, and where I had traveled. The agent asserted that he had a consular report from Vienna according to which my mother, who was living there, had repudiated her former statement as to my birth in the United

³ Far more likely a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which is part of the US Department of Justice. The State Department did not have "Special Agents," the FBI did and does.

⁴ Zack clearly underestimates here the ability of the FBI to maintain its own clip files dealing with leading Communist Party cadres.

States. The Labor Department was then put in charge and turned to outright persecution of myself.⁵

I communicated with my mother and reaffirmed her former statement as to my birth in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The Board of Health in Scranton which in 1930 had entered my birth on the basis of a partial record and a sworn affidavit from my mother sent me a certified copy of the birth record.

Armed with this I thought that the little frame-up hatched by the Communist Party in cooperation with the State Department would find its deserved ending.

I was mistaken. The Immigration Division noticed that my mother said my baptism had taken place in Slovakia. They looked up my baptismal record abroad and now claim that I was born there. If and when they obtain a passport from Czechoslovakia they intend to execute a deportation order.

I attempted without results to verify their claims by communicating with the parish in Slovakia. If the Labor Department's claim in this respect were correct, I think the priest would have given me a baptismal certificate.

Viewing the whole affair afterwards it is clear that the Special Agent's purpose was to bring against me a charge of illegal entry. He relied on the information supplied by the Communists to break down my claims to citizenship.

Labor Department Must Prove US Passport Invalid.

In this the Labor Department faces the following difficulties:

1) I left the US in 1930 with a US passport. It was issued on the basis of a Birth Certificate from Scranton, Pennsylvania. While traveling with this passport in Venezuela in May 1931, I was arrested by the [Juan Vincente] Gómez regime and jailed for six months.

The US government under Hoover got me out of that, their actions being prompted by Communist connections in Washington. I re-entered the US in 1931. Thus my birth record at the time was considered sufficiently valid for the State Department to give me a passport and to intervene in my behalf in Venezuela. How can the Labor Department sidestep this fact?

⁵ The Bureau of Immigration and Bureau of Naturalization were parts of the US Department of Labor. With his mother's affidavit as to her son's American birth apparently sworn off, Zack became an immigration case.

2) Furthermore, in connection with an old case pending against me under the Michigan Criminal Syndicalist Act,⁶ the Labor Department decided to drop (1933) the action because in view of my proofs of nativity, alienage could not be claimed.

This in spite of the fact that in 1923 I had claimed to be an Austrian, not knowing my national status. (From the ages of 2 till 17 I was in Austria, having re-entered the country [USA] in 1915.) For my mother had kept me in ignorance of my American birth.

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Now, however, the Immigration Service claims that births entered *ex-post facto* “have no probative value.” But if this is the case, then at least one-third of the native Americans of my generation (1893) are possible candidates for deportation.

Their births, if registered at all, were registered years after. For in most of the cities of the US regular or compulsory registration of births was not put into effect until after 1893.

Thus prompted by a political motive the Labor Department has put itself in a ridiculous position. I am charged with entering the US in 1931 “without an unexpired immigration visa,” while, in fact, I entered with a valid unexpired US passport.

Who am I to be the subject of all this? I don't belong to any party, and at best reach a few thousand people a year in my talks and writings. The government officials, were they not prompted by an organization with a definite motive, would not be at all interested in me as a political personality.

Stalin's Party, the practice and doctrine of which call for the absolute elimination of active opponents and especially of former party leaders, is particularly zealous in such matters. Earl Browder, Führer of the American Communists, pledged at a recent convention that the Communist Party would cooperate to suppress and “oppose with all its powers any clique, group, circle, faction, or party which subverts, undermines, weakens, or conspires to overthrow any or all of the institutions of American capitalism.” This is the broadest definition for the breeding of a party of political blacklegs thus far conceived.

⁶ To wit: arrest in connection with the underground convention of the Communist Party of America of August 1922 in Bridgman, Michigan.

As far as the State Department is concerned, they certainly do not feel it would be wise to annoy Stalin's government, a potential ally against Japan, with a case like mine.

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Stalin likes to dispose of his enemies and would resent interference in my case, especially since his rule has become a case of naked terror. His political soldiers here must show that they are capable of carrying out the party line against enemies as ruthlessly as has been done in Russia.

How could one find a better case than mine to demonstrate this capability? My view, that the Russian regime represents a particularly vicious form of state capitalism, is becoming increasingly resented by the bankrupt Soviet theologues.

My deportation would dispose for the State Department of the problem of pressing my case in Russia. It would serve the purposes of the CP, besides being a lesson to other would-be opponents still within the party.

The reader may ask what all this has to do with the State department protecting a citizen maltreated by a foreign government. But if any citizen reports to the Department such a case of maltreatment are not they obliged at least to make an inquiry and ascertain the facts?

How can the Administration allow an American child and his mother to be left at the mercy of a brutal regime for no reason except political revenge, while the complainant is framed up with illegal entry? Is such an attitude morally defensible?

I will conclude by returning to my wife's letter which I received through the GPU. It was returned to me by the State Department recently. But while it was in the hands of the government all evidences that it came from Russia had been eliminated. The stamps had been taken off and even that part of the postmark which remained had been chemically removed. Would it not be a good idea for the State Department to find out whom among its employees was the cause of this? Such an enquiry might have a good purpose.

Edited with footnotes by Tim Davenport

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