

BELGIAN WRITER HELD AT NEWARK AIRPORT AS A SUSPECTED COMMUNIST

The New York Times

September 27, 1986, Saturday, Late City Final Edition

Copyright 1986 The New York Times Company

Section: Section 1; Page 34, Column 1; Metropolitan Desk

Length: 562 words

Byline: By DENNIS HEVESI

Body

A correspondent for a Socialist newspaper in Belgium was detained overnight Thursday after immigration officials found **Communist** documents in his baggage when he arrived at **Newark** on a flight from Brussels.

The reporter, Tom Ronse, was placed in the custody of officials from People Express, the airline on which he had flown. Airline officials were ordered to return Mr. Ronse to the Federal Immigration and Naturalization Service yesterday morning. He was then released pending an investigation.

An official at the **Belgian** Embassy in Washington said the case seemed "a bit curious," but has not caused "any tension" between Belgium and the United States.

A spokesman for the immigration service, Duane Austin, said Mr. Ronse, who has worked in the United States for six years, "had a journalist's visa," but when officials "asked him for press credentials he could not produce them."

Carried a Booklet

"So they sent him to secondary," Mr. Austin said. "That's where, when they don't want to hold up the line and they're not sure something is kosher, they take him for a more in-depth look. They called for his baggage and they found materials that indicate he may be affiliated with a **Communist** organization."

The deputy director of the immigration service in **Newark**, James Puleo, said Mr. Ronse was carrying a booklet entitled, "Revolutionary Perspective Journal of the C.W.O." - the **Communist** Workers Organization. And, he said, "There was some typewritten stuff in English which espoused **Communist** doctrine."

Mr. Ronse, a correspondent for the newspaper De Morgen, said last night, "It was a bunch of material that was passed to me by a colleague in the context of a project I am working on about what they call, in Dutch, 'the small left' -that is all left groups that are outside of the traditional Social Democratic and **Communist** parties."

Mr. Ronse said immigration service officials "were kind of harsh on me on the day that I was detained." He added, "However, I was able to telephone my newspaper and they immediately contacted the U.S. Embassy, so that by the time I was brought back to the immigration office any doubts about my status as a bona fide journalist were removed and I was treated in a polite way."

Mr. Austin, the immigration service spokesman, said, "We told him to return on Oct. 3. By that time we will have looked at the material to determine whether there are grounds for denying him admission to the United States."

'A Bit Curious'

BELGIAN WRITER HELD AT NEWARK AIRPORT AS A SUSPECTED COMMUNIST

Immigration law, Mr. Austin said, "stipulates that if you are or ever have been a member of the **Communist** Party you may be denied admission to this country." But, he said: "About 33,000 times a year someone is questioned on these grounds. Almost always they receive a waiver."

The Soviet news agency, Tass, apparently viewing the situation in light of the international dispute over Moscow's detention of Nicholas Daniloff, a U.S. News & World Report correspondent, issued a statement on the Ronse case, saying: "This incident demonstrates anew the real worth of 'freedoms' in the United States and the readiness of Washington to attack even a citizen of an allied country if he professes views not to the Administration's liking."

But the political minister at the **Belgian** Embassy, Alex Reyn, said, "It's probably some kind of misunderstanding."

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Subject: IMMIGRATION (92%); JOURNALISM (89%); **WRITERS** (89%); IMMIGRATION LAW (89%); CITIZENSHIP (78%); US FEDERAL GOVERNMENT (78%); EMBASSIES & CONSULATES (75%); EDITORIALS & OPINIONS (50%)

Company: IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (US); PEOPLE EXPRESS AIRLINES IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%); PEOPLE EXPRESS AIRLINES IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%)

Organization: IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%); IMMIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION SERVICE (US); PEOPLE EXPRESS AIRLINES IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%); PEOPLE EXPRESS AIRLINES IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%); IMMIGRATION & NATURALIZATION SERVICE (83%)

Industry: **WRITERS** (89%); AIRLINES (77%)

Geographic: BRUSSELS, BELGIUM (78%); UNITED STATES (94%); BELGIUM (90%)