

SPECIAL ATTENTION: Mr. Griffith.

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RUSIA

ITALY

NONE OF BERIA'S MEN REMAIN AT THE ROME EMBASSY, THEIR PLACES
ARE ALL TAKEN BY KRUGLOV'S MEN.

SOURCE ROME : Regular RFE reporter who has contact
with USSR Embassy circles.

DATE OF OBSERVATION : Current Period.

EVALUATION COMMENT : None.

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From different sources it has been possible to learn that all BERIA's agent who were in relation with his ministry before his fall and outside the control of the Ambassador KOSTILEV, were recalled even before he himself. But only recently has it been possible to fix the activities of their successors who are, like their predecessors, attached to but not subordinate to the head of the Special Service, who is the First Secretary of the USSR Embassy, Pavel Alekandrovic MEDVEDOVSKI. He is a man of thirty-five, living with his wife Nina, aged thirty-two at the embassy villa in Via Nomentana 116.

The following were recalled to MOSCOW:

Dimitrij Nikolaevic KISSELEV, First Secretary, who sent his reports straight to the Minister of the Interior without typing them or passing them through the chancellory registration at Via Gaeta 5. He was feared by his colleagues who were always rather reserved both with him and his wife Nina.

Mikhail Ivanovic LAKHTUHOV, Second Secretary, aged thirty-six. In spite of his Russian name he seemed to be more of Caucasian origin (Armenian or Georgian.) He gave the impression of using a false name. He liked to tell about how he had been a partisan during the war in the German occupied area of SMOLENSK. They say that his wife says

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he served in the NKVD of SMOLENSK soon after the war when he was twenty-six.

He lived at Via Aurelia 8, where there is also the Embassy Public Security office, which he seemed to be in charge of, assisted by the Third Secretary Vladimir TROFIMOV, who lived with his wife Valentina in the same villa.

It is always presumed that among the Soviet Army officers attached to the USSR Embassy at ROME there was a BERIA man. The first one thinks of is the Military Attache, Major-General Serghev ZOTOV, who was recalled in January 1953. But his successor Staff Colonel Boris Vasilievic NIKITIN does not give the same impression. The lower personnel of the Embassy waited with curiosity to see if any of the army men would be recalled after the fall of BERIA. Exactly at the time when the Soviet press announced the trial of BERIA in December 1953, the Air Attache, Colonel of the Air Force Piotr Terentievic SOBIN, was recalled to MOSCOW urgently.

Colonel SOBIN, who appeared more than his forty-seven years, was a strict and reserved type of man.

He and his wife Vera Kondratievna left ROME in two days, after being here for three and a half years, during which he lived modestly and was little visited by his colleagues. He worked at his private residence in Via Rodolfo Lanciani 24, where he resided with his aide-de-campe, Lieutenant of the Air Force Pavel SVISTELNIKOV, a young fellow of thirty married to a darkhaired Jewish girl of twenty-eight.

Let us now examine those who took their places. KISSELEV was replaced by the Second Secretary Evghenij KOROSCKIN, who arrived with his wife and took up residence at Via Aurelia 8. He works a lot at home and very little at the embassy. His colleagues think he is a "KRUGLOV man." The Ambassador does not seem too interested in the activities of his secretary because although the latter is subordinate to him formally, he actually must observe the degree of loyalty of the Ambassador himself, who, in 1923-27 had the same role in LONDON when he was a young Secretary to the Embassy there. It is interesting to observe that the young attache Nikolaj BOLDIN and his wife have arrived with KOROSCKIN. Both couples live at Via Aurelia Antica 8, where among the older residents there still remain the attache Vladimir TROFIMOV and his wife

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Valentina, and the driver of the TASS agency car (No. CD 19320) Sergej TZIRULEF, aged 38, and his wife Maria, aged 41.

One observes that in spite of his service with the police, TROFIMOV has not been recalled, but this can point to the fact that his role is purely technical and he is indispensable for putting the two new arrivals in touch with work conditions here in Italy. Another person who is also still here is MEDVEDOVSKI.

Exactly at the moment of Colonel SOBIN's departure, his successor arrived. This is Lt. Colonel of the Air Force Boris KHRONIN. He and his wife have taken over his predecessor's flat. With them is the aide-de-campe Pavel SVISTEINICOV. But it is too soon to know if he is here to check the other army officers in ROME, who have always been very controlled by the Ministry of the Interior. What surprised the colleagues at the embassy was the arrival on the same day of the Second Secretary KOROSCKIN and the attache BOLDIN, and their joint presentation at the embassy and their communal life at Via Aurelia Antica 8. They have made the acquaintance of their families but at the same time have maintained a certain reserve.

Colonel Boris KHRONIN is, on the other hand very affable and tries to get into friendly contact with the diplomats at the embassy and the engineers at the commercial department in Via Clitunno 46, as well as with the military attache of the Satellite Countries including Major Nicola TAKANIAZOV of Bulgaria, the Czechoslovakian attache (officially a civilian) Miroslav JANSKJ, the Polish attache Stanislav NOWAC, the Rumanian attache Lt. Colonel Stefan J. STAU, and the Hungarian (civilian) attache Terenc MAIOR.

Lt. Colonel KHRONIN has shown a formal respect toward the ambassador but makes no attempt to approach him in any more cordial and friendly way.

End.