

Miss Knight Given Rebuke for Action Sought by F. B. I.

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 22—

A State Department spokesman said today that Miss Frances G. Knight, director of the department's Passport Office, had been reprimanded by her superiors for cables asking two American embassies to keep an eye on an American professor when he goes to Europe this fall.

The rebuke was contained in a memorandum to Miss Knight from Philip B. Heymann, deputy administrator of the department's Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs. The memorandum was endorsed by William J. Crockett, Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration.

Dated March 14, it was prepared before bureau officials discovered that the information sought in the cables had been requested by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in a communication sent to the Passport Office Feb. 6.

Mr. Heymann's memorandum instructed Miss Knight not to seek information of the sort asked in the cables without clearance from the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs, of which the Passport Office is a division. No such information is to be sought, the memorandum said, unless it is requested by agencies charged by Congress with investigative responsibilities. The F.B.I. is such an agency.

No such information is to be sought, the memorandum said, unless it is requested by agencies charged by Congress with investigative responsibilities. The F.B.I. is such an agency.

Mr. Heymann said in the memorandum that it was of great importance that investigative responsibilities not be assumed without the request of an authorized agency. Otherwise, the memorandum said, a highly important tradition in a free society will be inadvertently disregarded—the tradition that the movements of American citizens are subject to Government investigation only by those agencies charged by Congress with such functions.

State Department officials had assumed that Miss Knight had sent the messages that prompted the memorandum. She denied that she had, asserting that the date, March 8, on which they were sent fell in a period when she was away from the office for five weeks.

Her Name on Messages

After a thorough check, a State Department spokesman said that, while the messages bore her name as authorizing officer, they had not been signed by her but by someone acting in her stead. The spokesman declined to identify the drafter of the messages.

The messages notified the American embassies in Paris



The New York Times

CHIDED: Miss Frances G. Knight, head of State Department passport office.

and Moscow that H. Stuart Hughes, a professor of history at Harvard University, intended to go to Europe on a sabbatical leave in the fall.

The messages said that Mr. Hughes had strong pro-Communist convictions. They asked the State Department be notified if pertinent information were received concerning his activities.

When Miss Knight's superiors learned of the cables, new messages were dispatched instructing the embassies to disregard the earlier messages. The State Department spokesman was unable to say whether, in light of the discovery of the request from the F.B.I., the original requests would be reinstated.

Mr. Hughes is a respected scholar who teaches, among others, a popular course at Harvard on European intellectual history. With Dr. Benjamin Spock, the pediatrician, he is co-chairman of the National Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy, which advocates disarmament by all nations.

Mr. Hughes ran as an independent candidate for the United States Senate for Massachusetts in 1962. Edward M. Kennedy won the election.

On occasion, right-wingers have accused Mr. Hughes of having Communist leanings. He takes the position that he prefers not to answer such charges because to do so would lend them credence and because they are beneath contempt.

On two occasions, in 1953 and 1955, he experienced delays in getting a passport. Both times, passports were issued to him without any charges being made against him.

He has not yet applied for a passport in connection with the trip he plans this fall. A report of his trip plans was published by The Harvard Crimson, the student newspaper.

Mr. Hughes plans to go to France in September to do research for a book and to teach at a suburban branch of the University of Paris at Nanterre. He plans to travel in France, Italy, England and perhaps Yugoslavia, but not in the Soviet Union.

Miss Knight, who became director of the Passport Office May 1, 1955, has long been a controversial figure in the State Department.

Feuded With Schwartz

She vigorously opposed the policy, initiated in 1962, of giving people who were denied passports because of derogatory security information the right to review the evidence and confront witnesses and informants. In testimony before the Senate Internal Security subcommittee several years ago, she asserted that the regulation "In effect forbids us to protect ourselves" and questioned "whether there actually exists the will" to defend the country from "the inroads of Communism."