

SECURITY INFORMATION

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29 November 1951

To: Chief, FDS
Via: Chief, FDS/West
From: []
Subject: Second Conference with Mykola ABRAMCHIK.

*sent as dispatch
5 Dec 1951*

1. On 20 November 1951 the undersigned spoke with Mykola ABRAMCHIK at the latter's request in a conference room at [] New York City, N. Y. The case officer got down to business by simply asking ABRAMCHIK what he had been doing since the previous conference in Washington last October. He replied that he had been trying to persuade the members of the Byelorussian National Council residing in North America to sanction and support the participation of the BNR in the SONR. ABRAMCHIK said that he is still not confident of success in this undertaking, since opposition from his co-nationals here has proved greater than he originally expected. (Case Officer Comment: ABRAMCHIK'S comment that he is having difficulties within the BNR because of SONR was perhaps an understatement. According to [] the BNR is just about to split into two rival factions over the QACTIVE issue. Many BNR members allegedly feel that Major RAGULA had no mandate to represent the BNR and they are promoting unfavorable criticism of both ABRAMCHIK and RAGULA).

2. Without any obvious transition to any new topic of discussion, he went on to say that Major Boris RAGULA is scheduled to arrive in the United States prior to 26 November and would accompany him on his missionary work. ABRAMCHIK then reiterated his four point critique of SONR:

(a) threats and coercion should not be used to recruit members, for unless SONR practices the democratic principles it preaches, its present power tactics will boomerang later and result in rather noisy defections;

(b) the scope of what SONR represents is too limited: it should include representations of all the submerged Iron Curtain countries and not just the nationalities of the Soviet Union;

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(c) the present voting mechanism is undemocratic and will remain so until there is a SONE chamber similar to the United National General Assembly where each nation, regardless of size, has an equal vote;

(d) as far as the issue of postwar sovereignty of any non-Russian race of the Soviet Union is concerned, a gentleman's agreement must be reached and the issue shelved until after the war, otherwise SONE will not be able to concentrate on overthrowing the present regime.

(Case Officer Comment: ABRAMCHIK did not specify how this agreement could be reached or how the issue of national independence could stay shelved once SONE sits down in plenum to decide what, for example, should be broadcast to the non-Russian nationalities of the Soviet Union).

3. The case officer then went over in detail the thirteen proposals contained in Para 12 of the report on the October conversation. ABRAMCHIK agreed that all the proposals coincided with the mutual interests of the BNR and the United States government. He was told by the case officer to coordinate all his actions regarding these thirteen proposals with Major RAGULA and our Munich office. In fact, RAGULA should be in charge of fulfilling the requests for Byelorussian publications, clothes, etc.

4. ABRAMCHIK said that RAGULA wants very much to confer in Washington as soon as possible after his arrival. Provided that no injudicious remarks are made by the Washington case officers, the undersigned can see no harm in listening to what Major RAGULA has to say. Such a conference would supplement our meager knowledge of what has happened recently in this project. It is strongly recommended that [redacted], who was RAGULA's case officer from January 1951, when RAGULA was originally contacted, until mid-September 1951, preside at this meeting. In all events we must not give the BNR people the opportunity to play Washington off against Munich: logically, the case officers should listen but stifle the temptation to answer leading questions or make any semi-commitments beyond the promise to advise Munich of the conference subject matter. In the last memorandum from the field, [redacted] said that the next conference with RAGULA was scheduled for 22 October. We can learn from RAGULA what transpired on that date. In any event, RAGULA should be wined and dined and allowed to see a bit of life in the United States. He has often expressed the wish to see at firsthand the country with which the BNR is collaborating. The date of the Washington conference will be laid on by ABRAMCHIK through Contacts Division [redacted].

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5. At the end of the conversation with ABRAMCHIK the latter mentioned that to collect clothing, to write study reports and to fulfill the other requests made by the case officer, the BSR will require a bit of a subsidy. The Byelorussians in France in particular are poor as church mice, ABRAMCHIK said. With a subsidy of \$1,000.00 per month ABRAMCHIK feels that the BSR could contribute mightily along the lines indicated in Para 12 of the earlier Washington conference report. ABRAMCHIK said quite frankly that the BSR is financially strapped. The case officer closed the meeting by saying that he would refer the matter to his superiors in Washington.

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