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17 March 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, SR

SUBJECT : A Review of the Byelorussian National Council (BNR)

1. The review of the Byelorussian National Council (BNR) requested by [] DC/SR, and [] SR/COP, is herewith attached.

2. This review was prepared by [] C/Ukrainian and Byelorussian Section/DOB.

3. It is requested that consideration be given to this study as several Byelorussian operations are contingent upon its acceptance.

[]
Chief, SR/DOB

Att. - review

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THE BYELORUSSIAN NATIONAL COUNCIL (BNR)

SECTION I: Purpose

The purpose of the following discussion is to re-evaluate the FI and PP potential of the Byelorussian National Council, the Government-in-Exile of Byelorussia, and to recommend such action for the expansion or curtailment of further CIA support in view of present Agency needs and policy. The study was requested by SR/COP and DC/SR prior to the approval of any further operational activities with the Byelorussian National Council (BNR).

SECTION II: Background

1. Creation of the BNR -- The Byelorussian National Council of today, commonly known as the "BNR," is a vestige of the governing body of Byelorussia popularly elected in 1918 after the withdrawal of German troops. The electorate consisted of 80 members, who in joint declaration established an independent Byelorussia on 25 March 1918 in the capital city of Minsk. The newly-seated government, however, was jeopardized immediately with the announcement in Smolensk on 1 January 1919 by the Bolshevik government of Moscow that an "independent" BSSR was created. In 1921, after a two-year struggle against both the Poles and Russians, the conquered territories of Byelorussia were divided under the Pact of Riga. The BSSR was constituted on a part of the Byelorussian territory annexed by Russia.

The task of regaining the short-lived independence was continued in exile under the leadership of the deposed President, Piotr Kreceuski. Upon his death on 8 March 1928, the Vice President, Vasil Zacharka, became the head of the BNR in exile. Zacharka died in Byelorussia on 14 March 1943 transferring the leadership to its present head, Mykola Abramchik.

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At the present time, the approximately 140 members of the Council scattered throughout the Western World continue to preserve the democratic form of government established during the post World War I era. These members are, in effect, representatives to the Council and should not be confused with a membership, per se, of a political party. Therefore, any attempts to determine the exact number of adherents to the Byelorussian National Council would be akin to determining the exact number of exponents of the Polish Government-in-Exile now in London.

Followers of the BNR are found wherever the Byelorussian emigration exists. Many of these followers are active politically and give voice to the cause of Byelorussian independence. There are many more, however, who merely associate themselves with the movement in tacit allegiance to the last legally elected democratic form of government in Byelorussia.

2. Opposition to the BNR -- The only opposition to the Byelorussian National Council is the Byelorussian Central Council under the leadership of a former college professor, Radislav Astrowski. The BCR was formed in 1941 in Minsk under the auspices of the German occupation forces in an effort to create the illusion of political non-interference and allay Byelorussian resistance to the German occupation. It became a "rubber-stamp" government for the German command, doing little to relieve the tension between the occupier and the occupied.

After World War II, Astrowski continued to maintain claims to his privileged post. He created a military arm to his political unit under the command of fnu Zarechny, whom he promoted to the exalted rank of Colonel under the authority vested in him as President of the BCR. The whereabouts of Zarechny today is unknown.

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Noting that his movement was not gaining in momentum and popularity, unable to obtain financial support from foreign governments, Astrowski "retired" to South America where he lived with his daughter. Within the past five years, Astrowski has returned to England and has resuscitated the BCR. In a recent trip to the United States, according to Mykola Abramchik, Astrowski attempted to create the impression that his trip was sponsored by the United States Government. His newspaper gave glowing accounts of the receptions given for him, including a cortege and honor guards usually reserved for visiting dignitaries. A check of all interested government agencies revealed no such sponsorship.

Although Astrowski himself must be considered a Byelorussian patriot, his association with the Germans has branded him as a collaborator forcing him to draw his organizational strength from opportunists and disgruntled former BNR members.

Abramchik and Astrowski met several times in Germany in an effort to unite but were unsuccessful, the primary reason being that Astrowski refused to relinquish his title as "President" in favor of a joint leadership.

3. CIA/ENR FI Operations -- The position of the BNR vis-a-vis the BCR in the Byelorussian emigration left little choice for the Agency in the selection of an operational partner. The Agency obviously chose the Byelorussian National Council and in 1949 began to prepare for FI and PP operations into the BSSR. Reports of that period reflected the cooperative attitude of the BNR leadership. A summary report of the AEQUOR Project dated July 1951 noted "negotiations are underway in Europe between representatives of the CIA and the chief organ of the Byelorussian emigration, the BNR. A representative of the BNR recruited both

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CAMPOSANTO agents and has been given minimum financial support in a program of interviewing and cataloguing the names and biographies of up to 200 young Byelorussians now in Europe and America who are considered suitable for partisan warfare training. It is anticipated that future agent personnel will be selected from this pool."

A joint OSO/OPC project¹ was initiated in 1951 to:

- "a. Contact and support any existing resistance movement within the Byelorussian SSR, or develop such a movement for the purpose of carrying out OPC-type activities.
- b. Utilize all facilities established in the Byelorussian SSR for the purpose of supporting intelligence procurement operations in the USSR."

The newly formed operational union produced its first operation in August 1951 with the dispatch of CAMPOSANTO 1 into the Byelorussian SSR.

The project summary stated: "CAMPOSANTO 1, a young Byelorussian with extremely strong nationalist motivation is scheduled for air dispatch to Byelorussia during the first two weeks of August, 1951. He will remain there for one month or less and then exfiltrate overland via Poland to Germany. His primary task will be an attempt to contact Byelorussian partisan groups and with their aid to organize a reception committee, ground-to-air signals, and support bases for his re-dispatch by air in late September 1951. Depending upon CAMPOSANTO 1's debriefing and polygraph test following return from this mission, he and CAMPOSANTO II, another nationally-minded young Byelorussian soon to begin w/t training in Germany, will be dropped with communication equipment into Byelorussia in September..... In addition to his primary task of establishing liaison with the resistance organization, CAMPOSANTO 1 will be briefed before his August dispatch to make periodic

¹Page 1 Joint OSO/OPC Project Outline - Cryptonym AEQUOR, dated 10 August 1951; FDS; TS 64562 Page 1 para 2 Objectives.

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visits to such cities as Minsk, Molodechne, Vilna and Vileka to gather specific intelligence requirements and to collect general background material. If possible, he will photograph important targets. An important sub-task will be the collection of document intelligence and if possible examples of identity documents."² The somewhat over-burdened CAMPOSANTO 1 was presumed to have sent one S/W communication and then all trace of him was lost. He was declared dead after a two-year waiting period.

In May 1957 a series of articles entitled: "Along the Wolve's Path," appeared in the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA. The narrative revealed, for the first time, that the Soviets had apprehended CAMPOSANTO 1. The articles, written with the usual anti-capitalistic tirades, employing vehement references to Fascist attempts to disrupt the unparalleled harmony of the Soviet Union through subterfuge, ended with the thought that the eternal vigilance of the Soviet citizen in his quest for the Socialist State will prevail. The tenor of the articles was more fiction than fact. It was almost impossible to determine the time CAMPOSANTO 1 was apprehended. The extensive use of poetic bromides as copy fillers indicated that the Soviets were unsure about the details of the CAMPOSANTO 1 dispatch, how long he had operated, or whom he had contacted. To cloud the authenticity of any intelligence the Agency may have received from CAMPOSANTO 1, the articles created the image that CAMPOSANTO 1 had been apprehended almost immediately after dispatch.

In August 1952 the second AEQUOR dispatch was effected. The objectives were the same as in the case of CAMPOSANTO 1. The group of four,

² AEQUOR Project Summary dated 30 July 1951, para. 2 TIMETABLE and para. 3 INTELLIGENCE TARGETS.

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referred to in Agency correspondence as AEQUOR TEAM II, arrived safely in Byelorussia. The initial message from AEQUOR TEAM II indicated all was well. Within one month, however, the primary W/T operator died as a result of gunshot wounds and the task of maintaining communication fell upon the secondary operator.

The first message sent by the alternate W/T operator revealed a deviation from the pre-dispatch instructions in transmitting. The team became suspect. In an effort to clarify the cleanliness of the traffic received, the field CO, who had been instrumental in the dispatch, was requested to forward his list of individual agent challenges. He replied that he could not supply such a list since none existed. He added that his instructions were verbal and that he could not recall which signal had been given to which agent. Headquarters undertook to establish the cleanliness of the team by posing control questions and requesting information on intelligence known to the Agency. Ensuing traffic provided much information and SR/RQM/OIS stated that the intelligence was of some value. This, however, was not conclusive enough to establish the cleanliness of the team and the contact became a CE/FI football.

The communication continued until January 1955.

As in the case of CAMPOSANTO 1, the first positive information regarding the fate of AEQUOR TEAM II came through the Soviet press. A series of articles, replete with photographs of equipment and documents appeared in the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in December 1956. Under the somewhat dramatic title "Quadrant B-52," the Soviets unfolded a tale of spying and counterspying. Following the format of the CAMPOSANTO 1 surfacing, the Soviets attempted to create an illusion of immediate apprehension.

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Unlike CAMPOSANTO 1, however, Soviet forbearance and compassion "saved" one of the team members from himself and he was now leading a new life as a model citizen. References to the remaining two members of the team were nebulous and their fate was not stated. A consensus within the Agency and later discussions with the BNR gave rise to theory that the two men were dead.

4. CIA/BNR PP Operations -- PP operations with the Byelorussian National Council began formally in 1951. Item 4 entitled "Tasks," paragraph b. OPC Operations; sub-paragraphs 4 and 5 stated:

"To provide assistance to the BNR for publication leaflets and other propaganda media aimed at the population of Byelorussia.

"To provide financial assistance to the BNR to permit publication of an emigre newspaper in order to stimulate development of Byelorussian nationalism among the emigre society." ³

The publication of the Byelorussian National the FATHERLAND was introduced to the Byelorussian emigration in about 1946. The lack of continual funds forced the FATHERLAND to appear at irregular intervals. In 1951 the Agency insured regular publication by granting financial aid. It was noted at that time: "As the most powerful Byelorussian political emigre organization, the BNR wields great influence over emigre opinion. Continued controls over the Byelorussian emigration would make a direct contribution toward achieving SR Division objectives. It is hoped that these objectives with regard to the Byelorussian emigration will be achieved through the dissemination of the FATHERLAND and the HORNET."⁴

³Joint OSO/OPC Project Outline - Cryptonym AEQUOR op cit.

⁴Project AEQUOR/PP Portion, FY 1953; TS 87545 Copy 1 of 5 copies, dated 24 March 1953; paragraph 3, "Proposal."

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The support of these two publications was intended to mold the scattered Byelorussian emigration into an effective anti-Soviet force and to provide the means for motivating Byelorussian youth into accepting REDSOX-type missions. The initial impact of the publications on the Byelorussian emigration could not be ascertained at that time. However, continued publication has given it a certain amount of prestige. The format of the FATHERLAND is imaginative and well-laid out. The articles were thought-provoking and were designed to fit a more intelligent audience. The usual political diatribe vis-a-vis the Russian emigration, per se, was not featured although ethnic and cultural differences were voiced. Copies of the newspaper were included among the items carried in by AERQUOR TEAM II for internal dissemination.

The HORNET, conversely, was written to appeal to the other segment of the Byelorussian emigration--that non-sophisticated audience which wanted the message from a media without the trouble of culling through reams of dialectics. Its style was light and satirical. In 1954 the future of the HORNET dimmed. It soon became apparent that the publication would be curtailed as a budgetary measure. To save the more salient features of the HORNET, Headquarters suggested a merger between the FATHERLAND and the HORNET. The field replied:

"The PP material received from Headquarters was turned over to AECAMBISTA 2 and 5. Both agents were delighted with the prospect of receiving such concrete material for guidance in preparing the BNR publication. The introduction of such guidance, offered as suggestion material only, undoubtedly has been a shot in the arm to BNR/CIA relations. By this act the BNR feels that we still regard its group as having a potential in the common struggle against Bolshevism. The suggestion offered by Headquarters in EGQW-11068 that the two publications subsidized by us be merged into one was discussed with Boris Ragula. The latter in turn discussed it with the

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editor of the newspaper. Both the editor and Ragula consider it infeasible to make such a merger. They argue that the cost will be approximately the same. This point seems to be valid since the majority of the cost of the satirical publication comes from the reproduction of cartoons. Both men consider the newspaper to be a conservative comparable to the NEW YORK TIMES and feel that putting items in it previously published exclusively in the satirical paper would be like putting comics in the TIMES." ⁵

Despite favorable comments from the field, the HORNET fell before the budgetary axe in 1954.

Meanwhile, the Byelorussian emigration was leaving Germany. To maintain contact with the groups, the circulation was expanded to include Belgium, France, Holland, England, Australia, the United States, Canada and South America. During the reporting period 15 September-15 October 1956, the monthly report of the field case officer stated:

"Publication of the newspaper the FATHERLAND and its distribution throughout the Byelorussian emigre circles in Germany and the Free World is continuing. This newspaper is considered to be of considerable importance for the purpose of maintaining the national aspiration of the emigre. It serves as a rallying point of national interest and it is, in point of fact, the only newspaper in the Byelorussian language which is distributed throughout the world and published regularly." ⁶

The field reported during November 1956:

"The newspaper published in the field responded to the current events in Hungary and Poland and for this reason it is apparent that the influence on the Byelorussian emigration is enhanced. A discussion concerning the evaluation of the newspaper from the point of view of Agency objectives is underway, and one of the phases of this evaluation was a report on the newspapers submitted by the case officer on TDY at headquarters. This report, given orally, indicated the desirability of continuing this publication indefinitely because of its prestige and importance in emigre circles in general." ⁷

⁵EGMA-8983 to Chief, EE (Att: Chief, SR) From: Chief of Base, Munich; Subject: Transmittal of Progress report, Paragraph 3D.

⁶Project Status Report 15 September/15 October 1956; Project AEQUOR/PP.

⁷Project Status Report 15 November/15 December 1956; Project AEQUOR/PP.

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Behind the "Iron Curtain" the FATHERLAND was receiving some distribution, strangely enough through a former oppressor, Poland. After the death of Stalin, the satellites began to exercise a limited degree of autonomy. The Byelorussian population in Poland which had been repatriated from Russia as Polish citizens, now began to stir. The gradual awakening was exacerbated by the events in Poznan. Polish/Byelorussian friendship groups made their appearance; cultural societies were formed and study groups encouraged. A Byelorussian language newspaper NIVA (Soil) appeared in Bialystok as a publication of the Byelorussian Social Cultural Association. The press organ reproduced complete articles appearing in the FATHERLAND and quoted excerpts from others.

The publication NIVA came under Communist Party attack for its apparent liberal policy. To placate the attack, NIVA criticized the Byelorussian emigration, but proceeded to print rebuttals received from the West in their entirety.⁸

SECTION III: Present Status

1. Assets

a. The value of the BNR to the Agency must be viewed as one would a business relationship, i.e., tangible and intangible assets. The obvious tangible asset is the FATHERLAND used for the dissemination of pro-Western ideologies and anti-communist material. The newspaper at one time received Agency PP material and guidance from the field Case Officer affording the Agency a direct entre into the Byelorussian emigration. The files received from SR/PP on AEQUOR do not reflect whether or not the "feeding" of Agency material to the FATHERLAND had been continued after 1955.

⁸ Attachment A to EGFA-20216, dated 30 January 1958, to Chief, SR from Chief of Base Frankfurt; Subject: KUCAGEP Activities undertaken by AECAMBISTA-1.

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b. The BNR represents a source of "Hot-War" agent personnel available for training during the "cold-war" phase of United States/Soviet Union relations. At the present time, names of individuals are being submitted by the Byelorussian National Council for recruitment and enrollment into the DOB "Hot-War" cadre training program. Since February 1957 the organization has given the names and background data on nine potential candidates. It should be added that the BNR is one of the few organizations that does not insist on control of the candidates during training or becoming an operational partner during a "Hot-War" situation.

c. The Byelorussian National Council has made available to the Agency letters and other correspondence which can form the basis for REDSOX, REDSKIN, REDCAP and Counter-Espionage operations.

(1) In Germany, Piotr SYCZ, a RIS target in the Byelorussian emigration, has been working in conjunction with the Munich Station on a CE project. Although no information regarding the specific points of the operation were available for this report, it can be noted that SYCZ has been severed from the AEQUOR program and has become a CE case exclusively.

(2) Letters received by the New York BNR contact from Argentina have noted that it would be possible to run an operation into the Byelorussian community in Bialystok, Poland, from Argentina with individuals having direct access to the Byelorussian SSR. See Project AECULTIVATE under "2. Programs."

d. The position of the BNR in the Byelorussian emigration presents the Agency with a spotting mechanism among Byelorussian communities throughout the world.

e. Finally, the asset which falls into the "intangible" category is the goodwill which the Byelorussian National Council maintains toward the United States Government.

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2. Programs

a. AEPRIMER -- an FI REDSOX program which terminated officially on 28 February 1958. The renewal of the program was placed in abeyance pending the receipt of this survey. Its purpose is to spot, assess, recruit, train, brief and dispatch REDSOX agents into Byelorussia. These agents would attempt to develop an intelligence collection net. In the event they are successful, they would provide the initial communication for the net and provide for its assistance.

b. AECULTIVATE -- a third-country operation into Poland and Byelorussia. The Basic Plan was prepared and submitted on 17 January 1958. It was approved in principle by Chief, SR/DOB and C/SR/7. DC/SR noted a reservation on the implementation of the program and requested further discussions. The project, which would cost [] was to sponsor the travel of AECULTIVATE 1 to Argentina from Poland. After ascertaining the validity of AECULTIVATE 1 contacts and establishing his bona fides, the project would provide for the training of AECULTIVATE 1 and return him to Poland. Upon his return he would engage in the unification of anti-communist elements known to him personally into intelligence nets within the BSSR. Contact would be maintained through Argentina.

c. AEQUOR FI -- The project is no longer being implemented and will terminate with the payment of \$20,000.00 to a nonprofit organization established by the Byelorussian National Council in the United States. The \$20,000.00 is the sum total of insurance being paid on the lives of AECAMPOSANTO 6 and 8, per their willed instructions prior to dispatch as members of AEQUOR TEAM II.

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The officials of the nonprofit organization are now being selected and the legal action will be initiated upon the completion of the board. A check for the \$20,000.00 will be a "gift" from a foundation or private fund to the organization.

d. AEFULFILL -- a support-type operation designed to uncover and/or verify the existence of covert contacts through the mailing of packages into the BSSR. To date, only 2 parcels have been mailed, along with an exchange of correspondence. Additional packages will be mailed as soon as desirable contacts have been located in other areas of the BSSR. Follow-up parcels have not been mailed to the 2 contacts already established, to preclude drawing too much attention to the addressees by deluging them with packages until their value in terms of specific operational needs can be determined. It is planned to mail second parcels to the 2 addressees this spring.

SECTION IV: Recommendations

1. The following operational recommendations are based on evidence gathered through discussions with persons involved with the BNR operations, from field communications, status reports, project outlines, and personal observations.

a. Political and Psychological -- In view of the indications regarding the future potential of the Byelorussian National Council, it is recommended that the subsidy to the FATHERLAND be maintained, or if possible, increased to insure a wider distribution of the publication.

Letters received from Poland state:

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- Letter #1 "Be so kind as to forward the FATHERLAND to my personal address. You should have no reason to fear for my political reliability. I am forwarding to you an article which you might wish to publish. It is impossible to have truthful articles printed in the NIVA. In the event you are interested in anything, you simply need ask. I will try to answer all your queries. I have no fear"
- Letter #2 "Please forward the FATHERLAND to me; I wait impatiently to receive it each time. The magister of the Society (Byelorussian Social Cultural Society) is of the same opinion I am concerning your newspaper. In discussions with our compatriots we take pride that your newspaper exists....."
- Letter #3 "Write to us. We are very anxious to work with the emigration...."
- Letter #4 "I saw your newspaper accidentally. Heretofore I never had occasion to see any emigre newspaper. Mail to me at least several editions. I am very interested in receiving it."
- Letter #5 "It is now more than ten years since I last saw and read the genuine Byelorussian language and since I last heard honest Byelorussian thoughts expressed. Only with great difficulty did I acquire your newspaper which I read with great joy. Please send it at any cost to me"⁹

b. Foreign Intelligence

(1) REDSOX -- The dispatch of intelligence agents into the Byelorussian SSR should not be implemented as in the past. The techniques must be modified to take advantage of new circumstances now existing in the neighboring country of Poland. The apparent ease of travel in Poland, as verified by the AELARDER operation, presents an opportunity for a REDSOX agent, destined for a target area in Byelorussia, to travel up to the Polish/BSSR border area near Bialystok and effect a "black crossing."

⁹ Attachment A to EGFA-20216, paragraph D-13, op cit.

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However, before any operations are undertaken, it is further recommended that representatives of the SR Division meet with their EE Division counterparts and prepare a memorandum of agreement re Operations into the USSR via Poland. Poland offers the REDSOX agent the "safe" area, re- 7 supply base and "jump-off" point lacking in past operations.

(2) REDSKIN -- The following possibilities exist:

- (a) Exchange students recommended by the BNR could travel for study into the BSSR. This topic has been discussed with representatives of the BNR and they are in favor of such operations.
- (b) Travel between Poland the BSSR, since restrictions for crossing the border are practically nonexistent.
- (c) Tourist travel from the United States to the Byelorussian USSR. The spotter in New York has been alerted to note any persons going to the BSSR.

(3) REDCAP -- Officials from the BSSR in Soviet legations and business establishments.

c. Counter-espionage

The Soviet IS has mounted several operations against members of the BNR. The interest shown by the RIS in the BNR affords the Agency an opportunity to study Soviet techniques and targets. Continued contacts with the BNR should reveal further leads to RIS interests in the anti-Soviet emigration.

d. Hot-War Program -- See Section III: Present Status; paragraph 1(b).

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SECTION V: Reviewer's Comments:

1. Discussions with the principal participants representing the Byelorussian National Council in the CIA-sponsored AEQUOR operations has revealed them to be extremely realistic in their approach to operational and political matters. Mr. Mykola Abramchik, listed officially in emigre publications as the President of the Byelorussian-Government-in-Exile looks upon himself as the President pro-tem. When asked about his aspirations for the presidency of an independent Byelorussian Republic, which he fervently believes will evolve, Abramchik has said that the people living in Byelorussia will decide for themselves. He illustrated his point by noting that no official leaders existed in Hungary prior to the revolt of 1956, but the spontaneity of the situation gave rise to popular leaders. He further added that it would be sheer folly for him to assume that he could return to Byelorussia after an official absence of approximately 25 years in exile and expect to be welcomed as a President--a President almost entirely unaware of actual conditions.

He feels that the raison d'etre of the Byelorussian National Council is to provide for the spiritual and moral sustenance of the freedom-starved peoples of the Byelorussian SSR and to show them that they have not been forgotten.

The electorate of the Byelorussian National Council, which often has been referred to as "a membership," is in reality a fiction. It is true that the "electorate" is composed of persons bearing allegiance to the Byelorussian National Council, but their power is virtually nonexistent since this "electorate" is world-wide and has never met as a congregate group.

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Consequently, any political, social, and cultural activities endorsed by Mr. Abramchik is an endorsement by the group. Communication among the members of the "electorate" is maintained by mail and by the periodic travel of Mr. Abramchik. The opinions expressed by the outstanding membership of the "electorate" are compiled by Mr. Abramchik and form the basis for many of his decisions.

Although, as Mr. Abramchik has stated, the "electorate" is a fiction, it is a necessary fiction since it provides a national unity which could not be achieved otherwise. It creates a feeling of "belongingness" to which all peoples aspire. Therefore, any criticisms of the Byelorussian National Council and its President, Mr. M. Abramchik, as "opportunists" and "usurpers" awaiting an opportunity to return to Byelorussia and foist their will upon the citizens of Byelorussia now living there is a complete misnomer.

2. It has been stated that the Byelorussian National Council is the last vestige of government elected under the democratic process. Although many of the present day adherents of the Byelorussian National Council were not participants in the 1918 elections, the ideology has been transmitted to them by their elders. Articles appearing in the FATHERLAND have constantly reminded them of their national heritage. Books and pamphlets recanted the glories of medieval Byelorussian heroes. The contemporary patriotic poems of "Arseneva!" Maxim Boghdanovich, and Janka Kupala have stirred the imagination of the youth. The subsidized publication FATHERLAND insured the continuous flow of anti-Soviet pro-Western information needed to maintain a high degree of political and cultural awareness. In short, it is the official Byelorussian voice in the anti-Bolshevik struggle.

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Anti-Soviet articles aided in the creation of an atmosphere which nurtured a pool of potential REDSOX agents among persons not in direct contact with Mr. Abramchik. The denial of a voice for the development of nationalism would jeopardize the development and recruitment of REDSOX-type agents-- further, it would eliminate the only pro-United States voice directed at the Byelorussian emigration. It cannot be said that the only effective anti-Soviet propaganda is that which is directly introduced into the USSR. The strength of the anti-Bolshevik struggle lies in the West where ideas can be expressed.

3. The FI program under the AEQUOR Project has been often misinterpreted in terms of its positive intelligence value. If the AEQUOR FI effort is to be evaluated on the strength of intelligence reports received, as it often has, then the program must be considered a failure. However, if the program is viewed in terms of the stipulated project objectives as they appear in the early project outlines, i.e., to develop and maintain contact with remnants of the Byelorussian underground, then the project must be considered partially successful. Further, it was anticipated that the teams dispatched would generate assets for the eventual development of intelligence gathering nets. The FI program has shown that any reference to expansive groups of partisan nationalists, roaming the woods of Byelorussia awaiting contact with the Western World, was pure myth. Project AEQUOR aided in the realization that the modus operandi of early OPC thinking was erroneous and that intelligence operations against the Soviet Union must assume more refined approaches.

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4. There is little doubt that the Byelorussian National Council represents a valuable asset to the Agency. However, to insure the greatest return from this potential asset, the operating procedure must be altered. The asset must be accepted for what it is--the only Byelorussian nationality group in the Western emigration which has the respect of other emigres. This fact was attested when Mr. M. Abramchik was elected, unanimously, President of the Paris Bloc and has since been reelected twice. The Byelorussian National Council must further be viewed as an "Organization" which has, without reservation, noted that the salvation of the Byelorussian people lies with the United States and accordingly has allied itself with the United States Government in the realization of that salvation.

Under no conditions, should the Byelorussian National Council be regarded as an organization maintaining extensive internal contacts within the BSSR, preparing stock piles of equipment for open revolt against superior odds or having complex distribution nets, as claimed by other emigre groups. The fact that the BNR realizes its limitations and role in the emigration is certainly indicative of a leadership capable of discernment and not given to fantasy.

The leading political elements within the structure of the Byelorussian National Council have always been willing to accept the suggestions of the Agency, providing such suggestions were presented in a manner which reflected mature operational thinking and not a hasty conclusion forced upon them on a "take it or leave it" basis.

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