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MAI 31 1962
December 1959

Translation

Contact and Conversation conducted by Ivan CHORNEY with Choristers in Munich

1. Contact and Conversations with Olesh DORICHENKO

(I. Chorney describes Olesh DORICHENKO as a 21 year old youth, cheerful disposition, a budding poet and collector of national folklore. He is married. He is a soloist with a dance group)

*Job. Co. 1939
Had contact with
UKRAINIAN emigrant
in Munich in
autumn 1959.
Soloist with
dance group
Secret: UKRAINIAN
Trust by*

I.C. What is your impression of the recent ruling regarding language instructions in the Ukraine. Isn't this further Russification? VERIOKA.

O.D. In my opinion this ruling does not imply Russification in the same sense as during the days of Stalin but it is a means to curtail Ukrainianization. There can't be any greater Russification than there was during Stalin's time. During that time everything Ukrainian was being destroyed; it was a noose around the neck and just a little bit more time was needed in order to tighten it completely. I believe that parents in Kiev and other larger cities will choose the Russian language (for their children to study in school) but the villagers will choose Ukrainian because in the past there were no schools in the villages where instructions were given in the Russian language.

I.C. Why will the parents in the cities choose Russian for the language in which instructions will be given?

O.D. It is difficult to answer in one word, because first the people haven't yet lost the fear which they had during the days of Stalin and secondly, others use the practical approach that it will prepare their children for better opportunities job-wise and on the surface this cannot create any suspicions. In addition, we are concerned with the true picture of what language is actually used in teaching. Let there be even more schools in the Ukraine using Russian as the language for instructions and less Ukrainian schools but let them actually instruct in Ukrainian in these Ukrainian schools, not as it has been in the past where the sign on the school stated that Ukrainian was being used but actually instructions were given in Russian. I personally attended a Russian school but outside the school I never spoke Russian, even though others called my attention to this fact.

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I.C. Why don't all the people think the way you do?

O.D. As you know there are all kinds of people. Don't think that I am alone. There are many like me and we are aware of our national differences. We also are aware that the Ukraine is one of the richest countries in Europe, that she is exploited by the Russians and we could live much better if we did not have this protection. We struggle with this evil but it is not easy to carry on this fight. In addition, we even find it necessary to fight with Ukrainians, even if only to try to convince them that they should use their own native tongue on the streets.

I.C. What language is used in Kiev and other cities?

O.D. On the streets in Kiev you will hear only the Russian language but in private homes these same Ukrainians talk among themselves in Ukrainian. At present we are conducting a campaign to get the people to talk on the streets in Ukrainian. As far as Lvov is concerned there you will hear mostly Ukrainian spoken on the streets. In the villages, as usual, they speak only Ukrainian.

I.C. What is the feeling, let us say, in Kiev between Ukrainians, Russians, Jews, and especially among the youth.

O.D. The present is not the past. Sometimes the following will happen. A Russian will call an Ukrainian on the street a Khakhol. In reply, the Ukrainian will "slap the Katsap in the face." If the militia learns about this then the person responsible will get two weeks in prison and they will shave off all his hair. It is now possible to call a Jewish man a Zhyd. If a Jewish man gets into a higher position of some kind then he brings all his friends into the bureau, that is why there are so many of them in the administrative capacity.

I.C. What have you got to say about the Ukrainian intelligentsia?

O.D. Unfortunately, we don't have many. Oh how we could use such people as you have in the immigration.

I.C. And what about Ryl'sky Tychyna and Bazhan?

O.D. Ryl'sky is the one cannon we use in our most difficult situations. If he cannot help us then it means that the matter is a lost cause. He has given himself completely to the service of his people. Tychyna, Bazhan, they are not the same. At present we are making plans to elect a monument to Iysenko, a leading figure in Ukrainian music. I have already talked with certain people in the Ministry of

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Culture. Ryl'sky has also made certain private contacts and we have hopes that the monument will be erected and now we are starting with folklore.

- I.C. As I can see from our conversation you frequently travel to the western oblasts. Are there also many Russians there?
- O.D. Every year with great pleasure I go for a rest to the Carpatho Ukraine and frequently I am in Lvov. I even want to brag a bit that I lived in the home in the same room where Mikhailo Hrushevsky once lived. I observed his wonderful library. It is true that it has been somewhat depleted. I am not going to tell you about him because you know more about him than I do but I also know a lot about this great man. As far as Lvov and cities in the western oblast are concerned then there are ~~much~~ less Russians there than in Kiev.
- I.C. And what can you tell me about the people in the eastern oblasts?
- O.D. Unfortunately we do not have such a strong national conscienceness there. I feel that the transfer of the Ukrainians from the western oblasts to the east, chiefly in ^{the} Donbas, was and is a positive factor. Now it is clear to you why I travel to the Carpathians ~~Ukraine~~ and not to the Crimea for a rest.
- I.C. Tell me, aren't you asking for trouble from your people for ~~the fact that you are~~ conversing so frequently with Ukrainians from the west? They must notice ^{this} in Vienna.
- O.D. They, "the protectors" look upon me with a jaundiced eye but they cannot accuse me of anything. I am a good dancer. I belong to the Komsomol and this helps me a lot. I want to add I am not a politico but a dancer, a lover of national art - this is my livelihood.
- I.C. Why did you insert a Russian song, "Moscow Evenings" and a Russian dance "Lyaplyas" into the program ~~of the choir?~~
- We had
- O.D. We had no other choice. /either to fit that into our program, which was proposed to us, or not to go at all. We chose the former. Believe me that I and my friends perform these Russian dances with great distaste but we have no other choice. In the ensemble there also are a couple of Russians but there is nothing you can do when they want to sing and dance with us.

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- I.C. Are there many like you in the ensemble?
- O.D. About 30 or 40 percent. Now here, this 19 year old girl from Lvov, she's worth something.
- I.C. And what can you say about ~~Veryovka~~ and ~~Virsiky~~, and the ballet master Orlov. Is he an Ukrainian?
- O.D. He is a man who lives on ballet. In case you have heard about the plans that are being made to create an orchestra of national instruments, and he personally is the instigator of all this. Virs'ky is an individual who fears nothing and he puts the whole Ukrainian soul into ballet. Veryovka unfortunately has lived through a lot and everything that Virs'ky puts into a ballet Veryovka suppresses within himself but they both are sincere Ukrainians. The repertoire that is, the songs, are all ordered from the top (i.e., they cannot select their own numbers but have to sing only those which have official approval).
- I.C. How do the members of the ensemble feel when an Ukrainian from the west approaches them?
- O.D. This brings us the greatest pleasure. Come as frequently as you can. Pay no attention to what the chiefs say. You mentioned in Vienna that there are many Ukrainians in Munich but we ~~only~~ ^{also} honestly expect that there are so many of you. Come to us. It honestly is a great pleasure for us and when I get home I am going to talk about the fact that I met my compatriotes and I will tell them everything.
- I.C. Are you allowed to go into the city and buy something for yourself?
- O.D. It is possible but in order to buy something one must have money and they pay us very meagerly. I have already been presented with a record of the Bandurist. I have hidden it beneath my clothing in a suitcase. It will be something to show my friends. It was really wonderful that the Bandurist ensemble travelled. We are very pleased with this and we are pleased with everything that you do here.
- I.C. Would it be all right to give you a gift?
- O.D. It is all right to take something little, but we are not permitted to take money. Because then it ~~will~~ be possible to leave the ballet and become infected with some unpleasantness.

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- I.C. How do you feel about what they write about the emigres, that they are bandits, paid spies, etc.
- O.D. Why, that's just nonsense.
- I.C. Would it be possible for us, say, before lunch or after lunch, to go out into the city and sightsee?
- O.D. It is not convenient for me to do so alone because even they already have called my attention to the fact that I have been holding too many conversations but maybe I can find myself a friend. If I come with him, then get into an argument with me about anything. You know how it is.

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