

SECRET

8 July 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, SB

SUBJECT : Details Concerning LAUNAGS' Trip to Montreal and his Activities Upon Deportation from Canada to New York.

REFERENCE : Memorandum from C/CI/R&A to Chief, SB, dated 17 June 1966, subject, Freds LAUNAGS' Apparent Steps to Leave for Latvia.

1. In the reference memorandum we brought to your attention details concerning subject's trip to Montreal, as they were reported to us up to 17 June 1966. Since that time we have learned that subject was arrested in Montreal for non-payment of a hotel bill and was held by the Canadian immigration authorities for a deportation hearing. In order to learn the facts in the case, [] telephoned Vilis TOMSONS, the Latvian Consul* in Montreal. TOMSONS said that subject had telephoned him and asked him for money when he had been unable to pay his hotel bill. Subject had also visited TOMSONS before then (i. e. shortly after subject's arrival in Montreal) and had requested that TOMSONS reinstate his Latvian citizenship. Subject told him that he wants to renounce his U. S. citizenship and requested that TOMSONS issue him a Latvian passport so that he could travel to Riga. TOMSONS began to suspect that he was dealing with a mentally disturbed person or that he had become involved in a provocation operation. He tried to dissuade subject from rash acts and stalled by telling him that such requests take a great deal of time. TOMSONS also told [] that a Canadian immigration official, a Mr. PEPEN (phonetic) had been in touch with him concerning subject. According to PEPEN subject had been arrested for non-payment of bills and was held for a deportation hearing on 20 June 1966. PEPEN also confirmed TOMSONS' belief that subject appeared to be mentally unbalanced. [] advised TOMSONS that Dr [] a psychiatrist with the New York State Hospital in Brooklyn,

* Representing the last independent Latvian Government, i. e. 1940.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3020
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

SECRET

was aware of subject's illness and would be in a position to furnish appropriate information. TOMSONS promised to inform PEPEN about the psychiatrist.

2. On 20 June 1966 the hearing was held and in the evening of 21 June 1966 subject was deported from Canada. He arrived aboard a commercial airliner at Kennedy Airport in New York City, accompanied by Mr. FELL, a Canadian immigration official. On short notice [] attempted to arrange with Travelers' Aid for subject to be met at the plane and to be offered food and lodging for the night. [] believed that subject would welcome such aid in his destitute situation; at the same time it would enable [] to get to New York and locate him without difficulty. The arrangements proved useless, however, because the plane arrived ahead of schedule and, before the Travelers' Aid representative had come to the plane, the Canadian immigration official had released subject, who, being a U.S. citizen, was free to go wherever he pleased.

3. [] arrived in New York City on 22 June and began searching for subject by contacting 28 Latvian acquaintances of subject. He also checked with the Salvation Army and in its hotels in the Bowery as well as at police headquarters. He also spoke with Dr. [] who told him that the Canadian immigration authorities had telephoned him and that he had given them an explanation of subject's mental problem. The doctor again expressed willingness to speak with subject whenever he should feel the need to do so. He reminded [] however, that he would be on vacation in Europe during the month of September. He was not able, however, to locate subject until 24 June 1966.

4. At 6 a. m. on 24 June 1966 subject telephoned Lia SMITS, wife of the engineer, Bruno SMITS. He was calling, he said, to wish her a happy St. John's day and, according to Latvian custom, he began singing traditional songs which are sung in Latvia to celebrate the longest day of the year. She asked him whether he was calling from Europe and he replied that he was still in the New York area and had not left as yet. As usual he spoke in a generally evasive manner, but she managed to learn that he was rooming in Jamaica, in the home of a Latvian couple named DREZINS. Mrs. SMITS advised [] of this development and - having found one Martina DREZINS listed in the telephone book at 8528 164th Street - [] proceeded to Queens. He found subject asleep at the DREZINS' home. Mrs. DREZINS explained that her friend, Amanda LIBERTS, had called her on the previous day and had asked her to accept subject, although he could not pay a week's

24 June?

SECRET

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

SECRET

rent (\$12.00) in advance. Mrs. DREZINS was upset, thinking that subject was in some sort of difficulty; but, [] managed to allay her fears.

5. Having awakened subject, [] was able to obtain the following details concerning the circumstances surrounding subject's trip to Montreal, his deportation, and his current status:

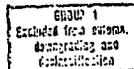
a. Sometime before subject left for Montreal, he wrote to the leading Latvian emigre newspaper in Germany, Latvija, and offering to submit articles about the U.N. on a pay-per-accepted-article basis, he obtained certification that he is that paper's correspondent.* He then approached an official in the press office of the U.N. and identified himself as Lins LAUKS, the U.N. correspondent for Latvija. The official apparently mistook the statement to mean that he was the U.N. correspondent for the country of Latvia, and issued him a temporary U.N. press card in that name. The card was valid until 6 June 1966, but subject altered it later by inserting the digit "1", making the entry read as valid until 16 June 1966. On the spur of the moment subject then decided to travel to Montreal where he hoped to obtain employment with the World's Exposition, which is being readied for next year's opening. Using the money he had saved by working as a bus boy at a restaurant at Grand Central Station, subject took a bus to Montreal on about 31 May 1966. He checked into the Queen Elizabeth Hotel as Lins LAUKS, U.N. journalist for Latvija. All the usual courtesies were shown to him and he was permitted to sign for all of his needs. He stayed there for about 10 days, running up a bill of over \$300.00. One problem he encountered at the hotel was his inability to give tips, because he had no cash, having spent all of his money on bus fare. An obliging hotel employee, helped him out of this predicament by explaining that he could add the tip to his bill and sign for the entire amount. From then on subject was a favorite with the hotel employees.

b. On about 10 June 1966 subject decided to eat at a restaurant near the hotel. But when he tried to sign for his bill, the owner demanded cash and called the police when subject was

* In the past subject had been capable of good writing and had had numerous articles published in various Latvian emigre newspapers.

-3-

SECRET



SECRET

unable to pay. As a result subject spent the night in jail and was released the next day. Feeling compromised in Montreal, subject decided to leave. Intending to travel to Riga, via Zurich, he went to the Swiss airline and tried to purchase passage to Zurich. The airline demanded cash and refused to charge the trip to the U. N. as subject requested. Subject left the airline counter and somehow managed to slip aboard the plane for Zurich. He was discovered, however, just before take-off and the airline called the Canadian immigration authorities. Subject was taken into custody and held for a deportation hearing. The League for Human Rights supplied him with counsel, a Mr. SHAPIRO, who advised subject that he had one of three choices open to him: he could be deported to the U.S.; he could remain in Canada; or he could be deported to the place of his birth. Subject selected the third category.

Truth or fantasy?

highly important??

c. After he had arrived in New York and had been let go by the Canadian immigration official, Mr. FELL, subject spoke to several PANAM airline hostesses and asked them if they knew where he could get a job. They called a PANAM official who offered him a job as bus boy on the night shift in the restaurant at the PANAM terminal. Subject accepted and began working on the spot.

d. The next morning, i. e. on 22 June 1966, after he had arranged for the lodging in Queens, he decided to go to the U.N.'s press office and get his permanent press card. The official who had issued the temporary card to him was very angry because subject had abused the card and the attending privileges in Montreal. He tore up the temporary card and threw subject out of his office, warning him never again to set foot in the U. N. building.

e. Subject then got in touch with RABACS, an editor with Laiks (Times) the Latvian emigre newspaper published in New York and offered to write articles on the U. N. RABACS accepted, offering to pay for each published article. Subject then proceeded to the offices of the Soviet U. N. Mission headquarters where he visited Janis KALNINS, a Latvian who is a member of the Soviet diplomatic contingent at the U. N. Subject asked him if he would grant him an interview for his paper, i. e. Laiks. KALNINS was very cordial and agreed to the interview on the condition that he be shown the draft before

Erpene

SECRET

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

SECRET

publication. Subject agreed. During the interview he asked a number of politically sensitive questions about Latvia including Soviet forceable seizure of Latvia and its incorporation into the Soviet Union by staging rigged elections in 1940. KALNINS parried them with time-honored, party-line replies, but subject argued that, as an eye-witness he knows that the incorporation was accomplished under pressure and did not represent the honest and free will of the people.

f. Subject went home, wrote his interview article, slept, went to work at the air terminal restaurant that night, and on the next day returned to KALNINS and presented the draft of his article to him. As KALNINS read the article, he became upset and accused subject of inaccuracies. Subject allowed that some of KALNINS' points were objective and he corrected his article accordingly. Eventually they reached agreement on all points and subject forwarded the original to RABACS and left a copy for KALNINS.

23 June

g. [] is not certain whether subject used his true name or the name Lins LAUKS with KALNINS. [] asked him about it several times and originally subject said that he had used the LAUKS name; later, however, [] felt that subject was hedging on that point. Subject did, however, say with certainty that he had not revealed his present address to KALNINS.

h. During the second meeting with KALNINS, subject proposed that he travel to Riga as a U.N. correspondent (sic) in order to interview Latvians there. KALNINS, however, disliked subject's idea of going to Latvia as a U.N. correspondent and he became particularly annoyed when subject suggested that the Soviet Government pay for such travel. KALNINS explained that Soviet Government funds cannot be spent for personal needs and that, as a Soviet official, it is his duty to save rather than squander official funds. He then suggested that subject pay for the trip himself, but subject replied that he had no money and that he thought the Soviet Government could pay his way. KALNINS deplored subject's begging and suggested that he could easily earn the required 600 to 700 dollars, so that he could see how well the Latvians live now-a-days in their native country. In an angered tone KALNINS chided subject for having left Latvia when life there was difficult; but now that conditions are good, he is prepared to return.

Khariy Yanovich

KALNINS

Identified KGB

(by FBI)

in Latvian Office

DPOB

1928, Riga

[]

SECRET

-5-

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

SECRET

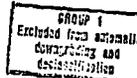
i. Then KALNINS began to inquire why subject is in a difficult financial situation. Subject told him about his family break-up and blamed U. S. politics for his divorce. He explained that his wife wanted to vote for one party but, he for another and thus their differences began and eventually resulted in his losing his family. Subject also told KALNINS that he wants to renounce his U. S. citizenship, whereupon KALNINS explained that an American passport would be the only valid document with which subject could travel to Latvia. At this point KALNINS mentioned the Latvian Legation and its Envoy SPEKKE, saying that such an institution is a nuisance and that SPEKKE ought to be ashamed to spend money which actually belonged to the Latvian people.* KALNINS also wanted to know how subject would subsist in Latvia and asked what about his profession. Subject replied that he is a journalist and believes that he could make a living at his profession in Latvia. KALNINS disagreed, however, and said that the example of journalism which subject had displayed in interviewing him was not satisfactory. In Latvia now-a-days, KALNINS explained, journalists are especially trained and educated, and he doubted that subject could measure up to their standards. Finally, KALNINS asked whether subject has relatives in Latvia and when he replied in the negative, KALNINS terminated the meeting by inviting subject to return when he had sufficient money to pay for the trip to Latvia.

6. [] told subject that he had committed a grave mistake by approaching the Soviets and that he had changed his colors. [] added that the anti-Communist Latvians could hardly continue viewing him as a patriot and that as a result subject had betrayed himself and everything for which he had ever stood. After some thought, subject agreed with [] Seizing on this point, [] explained that subject's acts were proof that something is wrong with his behavior and that he should avail himself of the rehabilitation program offered at Dr. [] hospital. [] reminded him that Bruno SMITS had told subject that he could provide him a decent job, after he had gone through the rehabilitation program. Moreover, [] also promised

* The last legal Latvian Government (1940) is represented in the U. S. by the Latvian Legation in Washington, D. C. and by its Envoy Arnolds SPEKKE. The Legation had been empowered to issue passports to Latvian citizens. The passports have been and still are accepted by a number of countries as valid travel documents. The last Latvian Government had deposited circa twenty-million dollars worth of gold for safe keeping at Fort Knox and the Latvian diplomatic missions around the world have been subsisting on these funds since 1940.

SECRET

-6-



SECRET

to help him find decent employment should subject take advantage of Dr. []' offer of help. Although subject did not disagree, he expressed an interest in a Dr. NAGOBADS, a Latvian psychiatrist in Minneapolis. Subject explained that Mrs. SMITS had told him that she and her husband had discussed subject's case with this doctor and that he had said that subject could be cured in less than six months by the use of new drugs. When [] assured him that Dr. [] is prepared to help him with the same new drugs--plus the rehabilitation program--subject replied that, although this is correct, he would ". . . not like to see Dr. [] win." It seems clear that subject has developed a mental clash with Dr. [], which is further evidenced by another remark. In this connection subject also said that when Dr. [] had first spoken with him, he had told him that sooner or later subject will have to return to him. And subject seems to resent this remark.

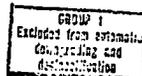
7. Before leaving subject, [] gave him \$5.00 to tide him over and got him to promise that he would write to him and keep him posted on his whereabouts and plans. He also encouraged him to keep in touch with the SMITS, particularly with Mrs. SMITS. Subject does not know, however, that [] left \$25.00 with Mrs. SMITS, with instructions that she dole it out to him as the need arises.

8. On 25 June 1966, [] arranged for a conference between Bruno SMITS, Mrs. SMITS, and Dr. SALTUPS. The SMITS agreed to keep monitoring subject's activities to the best of their ability and Dr. [] offered to do whatever was necessary to help subject. He even suggested that [] tell subject that he should come to his house for a drink and an informal talk whenever he wishes to talk things over with him.

9. On 1 July 1966 [] telephoned Mrs. DREZINS in order to check with her about subject's well-being. She told him that she had to ask subject to leave because she and her husband did not like his behavior. She had managed to obtain a room for him a few houses up the street from her home, in a house owned by a Latvian widow named PICS. She was unable to give the house number; she also mentioned that Mrs. PICS has no telephone in her house.

10. On 5 July 1966 [] received a letter from subject which he had mailed from Allentown, Pennsylvania. In the letter he wrote that he had attended his daughter's confirmation. (He had told

SECRET -7-



SECRET

[] during their talk in New York that he planned to attend that event in that city.) In the letter he also told him about moving to Mrs. PICS' house. The letter was very lucid, but contained no facts beyond those listed above.

[]

Chief, CI/R&A

SECRET - 8 -

GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification