

Translation of intelligence file's chance meeting with a suspected RIB agent.
24 February 1953.

1730 hours: Visit to the real estate office of Stadler, Kaigasse 4. The owner is an elderly, passive man. Office room appears somewhat rundown. He has no opportunities to find an apartment. "It is hopeless," he said. Then I called up two other real estate offices and the first question they asked, "How much will you pay?" When I answered 1500 schillings both said to drop by. I immediately thought they were real business people. We agreed that I would come around the next morning, 25 February 1953. I am a salesman from Berlin. I will need a residence for about 3 - 5 months. The real estate offices are: (1) H. Stadler, Rainerstrasse 2, Tel. 4054, and (2) Witsch, Klampfergasse 1/II, Tel. 1367.

1727 hours: When I was on my way home and stopped to look in a photo shop window for a little while, a certain Mr. Nikolai Vassiljevitch Vassiljev came up to me (born about 1907, cameraman, about 156 cms tall, slender, small mustache, gray coat, yellow-gray hat, carrying a brown leather briefcase in each hand, a camera under the coat in a leather case, brown-red-brown jacket, gray trousers, brown pullover with a zipper in front). I last saw him in April-May 1952 in Munich, where he intended to be employed as an editorial member of the newspaper "Vrenja" (or some such similar name) with the Institut für Erforschen der Geschichte und Kultur der UdSSR in Augustinerstrasse in Munich. He maintained at that time he knew me in Berlin in the years 1944-1945, where he was employed as a press photographer. It is possible but I can't remember it. He also told me at that time that he lived in Salzburg and his wife was still there, but that she would come to Munich soon when he found a place to live. Since then I haven't seen him and I was very surprised when he spoke to me.

"It is really a surprise that I see you here," I said. "Aren't you in Munich." (As an "old friend of all who were in Berlin then," he used "Du.")

"Oh, not for a long time," he said. And he told that Jakovleff (director of the Institute) was a SOB, that he (presumed Vassiljev) had been deceived, promised a position and given none, that he hadn't been paid for three weeks, but that he had gotten around that in a different way: had a typewriter which he bought for the Institute, sold it again, and kept the money for himself; that things weren't going too badly, and that he was now and then earning money through photography...on birthdays, weddings, etc., mostly from Americans.... that he sometimes sells Vlassof's pictures in Russian colony in Salzburg and sometimes does photo coverages for the "Salzburger Nachrichten" (the last being the visit of the High Commissioner for Refugee Commission) and others, among which the "D-utsche Illustrierte".

"And when did you come here? What are you doing here?"

"I just came today. On business."

"Where are you staying?"

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"Where yet," I said.

He said something about his apartment, which was too small and he could only offer a small side room, which however would be very cold. I told him that if I were to stay longer I would soon find a place to stay overnight.

He asked what's new in Munich and I told him everything I had heard from my wife. I felt he was satisfied with the news and didn't create any suspicion that I wasn't in Munich. The fact that I didn't know that he had returned to Salzburg I revealed indirectly by saying I wasn't on good terms with Jakovleff and didn't visit the Institute.

Our conversation lasted about ten minutes, when I noticed a man about 40 years old, 175-78 cms tall, large build, grey with a small beard, round full smooth face, in a good light brown coat, grey hat, standing next to us and listening. Vassiljev noticed it too and said, "Don't pay any attention to him."

"Why not?" I asked. "Who is he?"

"A spy, a thief and former concentration camp inmate, now works as a small-time informer for CIC. He is German but understands Russian."

"Do you know him?"

"Yes, we're enemies. I had a fight with him at CIC."

"How so?"

"Aa, he made some false accusations against me."

"Then we'd better leave here," I said. "I have no desire that anyone bothers my business. Besides my papers aren't completely in order."

We went a little further in an easterly direction along Judengasse. He continued to tell me that he was to collect 200 ANS from an Austrian and that he wanted to stop by at his place. In the meantime we came through a passageway to a newspaper stand on Residenplatz. He wants to talk with me some more and will be back in about 15 minutes.

1745 hours: "Now good," I said. "I'll come back at 1800. If you're not there I am not waiting. I want to get a girl for myself...you're at home here." In the meantime I telephoned the real estate office and came back to Residenplatz at 1800.

1800 hours: He was already waiting for me. "What plans do you have for today?" he asked. "Actually none at all," I said. "I am a little superstitious. If I don't succeed in something the first day, then it won't work on the next day either and it is better to go back."

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"That is quite right," he answered. "But what do you want? Money from Austrians? Do you want to sell something? It won't pay to wait; Austrians are very greedy for money."

I suggested we drink beer somewhere and we went to the Mozart Cafe.

"Did you come with your car?" he asked.

"No, I didn't get any papers for my car and left it at home."

"But you could drive as far as Freilassing with the car and leave it there at the customs office. It costs 50 pfz a day and then come the rest of the way by train."

"I didn't know that," I said, "and besides I don't have an International Driver's License."

"That isn't hard either," he said. "Three months ago you could get an International Driver's License here easily, it cost 2000 A'S."

"That's completely out of the question," I said, "I can't pay that."

He continued to say that he knew a Pole who was employed in the "KFZ" (sic) office and could procure such papers, that a person still had to pay for two other offices 500 A'S each and that's why it is so expensive.

He again asked me why I had come and I answered that at the moment I was interested in "JOB" papers (they are actually scarce in Germany and a person can earn quite well from them if he wants to smuggle them). At first he said he had connections with the blackmarket and could get everything. He has a friend who is a Jew who has something to do with paper. When I asked him about the price and transportation possibilities he told me an unbelievable story that three or four months ago someone smuggled narcotics to Austria from Germany with the aid of a dog that swam the Salzach River and in this way smuggled the goods across the boundary. When I told him I didn't have such a dog and needed something simpler to get paper to Germany he finally said it wasn't his field and that he couldn't help me in this business. But he would talk with his friend who works the blackmarket and would meet me at 1050 hours the next day at Bus Stop A (I selected the meeting place....he suggested Residenzplatz, but I said I didn't know my way around and this point, since it was near the bridge, I would remember). We agreed to that when he said he wanted to go to Camp Truscott to photograph a wedding.

In the cafe he told me a somewhat believable story that in the Institute in Albstinerstrasse they are all Moscow agents, that all the emigre-politicians are still communistically inclined, that he didn't want to work under such circumstances, and came back to Salzburg, but already he had been in Germany

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In the meantime with an American Major, that he sells photographs material (which he buys en gros) to an American Major in Camp Truscott, who is the chief of a photo laboratory and whom he addressed as "Dn." He again told me the many accusations had been made against him at CIC, that he finally went to CIC himself and told them who he really was and is (which I really don't know), and asked whether he could emigrate to the USA; then a couple of days later he was invited to a "CIC court" which lasted from 0830 to 0930 hours and he was permitted to emigrate. But he wanted to wait a little while and write to Schrotff (who as I told him came to Munich) and then permit emigrate.

That is about all that we discussed.

He hasn't a very good name in Munich.

This fellow is very talkative and often lies. In April or May 1952 I was in Munich and stayed overnight in the Institute in a transient room. Vassiljev was also staying there waiting for his being "named" as an editorial member. That time I was looking for someone who knew Austria and Vienna well and would be ready to go there. I indirectly asked Vassiljev about it... what he thought about Austrians and how the life there was in general. He knew that in the fall 1951 I and some of our friends made a trip along the east zone border in Germany and it was an open secret that we were preparing air balloon operations. Naturally he suspected that this operation was supported by the American element. And then when I asked him about conditions in Austria he supposed we wanted to carry on similar operations in Austria. And he said immediately that Austrians are unreliable people and it is very difficult to work there and suggested that we do a similar job for him in Berlin. That was impossible and secondly I have learned in the meantime that he is not exactly the reticent type and so we broke off all relations with him. On this basis it is now possible that he suspects that I work for the Americans. I have at any rate attempted to give him the impression that I am here on business.

About 1900 hours we took leave of each other at the bus stop A.

25 February 1953.

1030 I came to meeting place but he wasn't there. At 1130 hours I observed the meeting place from my hotel window and still didn't see him.

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1. CIC file Soviet Agents 623 dated 4 June 1952 reports that Nikolai VASSILIEV is known to Nikolai VITLIS, alleged RIS agent operating in the Salzburg area; however, the extent or background of this acquaintanceship is unknown.

2. CIC file Soviet Resistance Groups 405 dated 11 January 1952 reports that one Nikolai VASSILIEV, aka KOROLOV, was a former close friend of Michael MARTENS, known RIS agent in Salzburg area. However it is reported that the friendship broke up after a quarrel between the two over their wives. At the time of the quarrel VASSILIEV reportedly threatened MARTENS with exposure of the latter's RIS connections.

3. CIC file Soviet Resistance Groups 398 dated 29 August 1950 reports the following information concerning one Nikolai VASSILIEV, aka DOOOLOV: Subject was born Kharkov, USSR, 22 May 1907. In 1924 subject worked in a photo laboratory in USSR, where he was engaged in photographing and detecting false documents. Subject worked in various jobs as photographer until 1930, when he was called up for military service. After his discharge in 1931 subject continued working in various companies and also independently as a photographer. During war subject remained in Odessa until 1943 when the Rumanians accused him of pro-Soviet propaganda work. He fled to Berlin, where he obtained employment as a cameraman, filming documents for Vlassov's army. He traveled to Salzburg, Austria, where he was at war's end. He remained in Salzburg where he came in contact with many Russian emigrants and also where he reportedly worked for a Captain Johnson of Salzburg CIC. Former Soviet citizens in Salzburg were puzzled by subject's CIC activities and considered him pro-Soviet. Reports to this effect were submitted about him.

4. Soviet Agents 476 dated 25 August 1948 reports that Nikolai VASSILIEV has been denounced on numerous occasions as a Soviet agent and provocateur. Although there is no definite information to support this, subject is considered a security threat.

5. CIC file Soviet Agents 429 dated 1 June 1948 reports that Nikolai VASSILIEV has been denounced as a Soviet agent constantly from 1946-1948. Subject is definitely considered engaged in political or intelligence activities.

6. CIC file Soviet Agents 623 dated 27 March 1952 reports that Nikolai VASSILIEV and Anton KOLOMUTZEV are closely watched by agents of this office (CIC Salzburg).

7. CIC file Soviet Agents 633, dated 8 February 1952, reports that Nikolai VASSILIEV travels frequently to Munich to attend meetings of SOHR. It also states that subject was invited to these meetings by Michail SOLOVIEV, well-known Russian DP in Salzburg area and who goes to Munich to photograph all personalities at the meetings. Report goes on to say that in 1945-46 subject was very friendly with Leonid ZELENEV, who later turned out to be a Soviet army captain who worked for Sov Repatriation Mission in Salzburg.

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