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SUBJECT: General situation in Ukrainian countryside in summer 1963

SOURCE : WOVK, Olga

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

1. Source - aged 63, Ukrainian, female, former teacher of primary school, widow from 1922 - arrived in the States on 17 Aug 1963 from HOLUBYTSIA, r-n BRODY, obl. LVIV. She joined for good her married son VOVK, Anatoli, aged 42, engineer of chemistry, residing at 557 West Lake Ave, RAHWAY, N.J. Source was interviewed by Dr P and HB on 29 Sept 1963 at her son's house in RAHWAY, N.J. She was quite willing to talk but seemed to be of rather limited knowledgeability. All her life she spent in the countryside: from 1922 to 1949 as a teacher in HOLUBYTSIA, from 1949 to 1952 as Director of the primary school in nearby CHEPEL, and from 1952 to 1957 again as ordinary teacher in HOLUBYTSIA. 1957 Source "was retired" by rayon-authorities after she was accused at the teachers' conference of exercising "negative" religious influence on school-children.

The efforts of Source's son to get her to the States lasted for over 18 months. At the very beginning when submitting her application for emigration to rayon militia Source put NR 50.- into her papers and NR 20.- gave directly to the secretary. The latter remarked that this was too much but took all the money.

Prior to her final departure from the Soviet Union Source stayed for 2 weeks in MOSCOW where she obtained back her money for state-bonds.

2. The late PIDHIRIANKA, Maria - Ukrainian writer - was a relative of the Source. DOMBROVSKYI, Ostap - son of PIDHIRIANKA - is docent of French language at the Ivan-Franko-University in LVOV. After WW II he spent some time in Siberia on someone's denunciation. He was, however, never involved in politics.

Source herself was never persecuted. After arrival of Soviet Army in 1944

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her house was searched like all the others in the village and some books and portrait of Bandera and other nationalist leaders found on the roof. Source explained to Soviet soldiers that those were probably left by Germans who stayed in her house, and thus she came out of this affair with impunity.

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General Situation in the Countryside

1. HOLUBYTSIA, r-n BRODY, obl.LVOV - has about 300 families, and belongs to PENIAKY-kolhosp. In recent years they increased acreage of maize and sugar beets. Because of bad communication with nearby towns HOLUBYTSIA was always a rather backward village and remained so also under the present regime. The people are poorer than usual and thus whereas peasants in YASENYTSIA-kolhosp earn per average 50 kopeck for 1 working day, those in HOLUBYTSIA get only 25-30 kopeck. This is often also due to bad husbandry of the kolhosp-management. At the time of Source's departure from HOLUBYTSIA, the whole management - chairman, secretary, and bookkeeper of the collective farm - were jailed for pilfering. Virtually, everyone has to steal and everybody knows it.

Peasants are reluctant to go to work because of low remuneration. Brigada-leader has a really hard job to get people out to work in early mornings. In winter, there is not much to do and all play chess, sit in the village club, or drink "samogon".

The household plot for kolhospnyk is 1/4 ha large, teachers get only 0.15 ha. In recent years people had enough to eat. Particularly there was sufficient supply of bread. Peasants bought it in rayon-town - all white - and therefore nobody cared to bake bread at home. It was less trouble to buy it and it was of much better quality than the home-made. There was, however, always a shortage of fat and meat. Textiles were of poor quality but in sufficient quantities.

Anyway, people are better dressed than during Polish administration.

Many new houses have been built in recent years, some of them for parcels sent from the States.

Nevertheless, collective farmers are dissatisfied more than ever. They complain about collective farm management and the system in general.

Particularly severe and open in their "critique" are women. Very often when they want to "prick" "nachalstvo" they simply start shouting "Send us away from this paradise to the States, to America, because there is misery" ~~also~~. So far, no one was persecuted for such "slogans".

2. Bribery is being applied all over and on a much larger scale than it is generally thought of abroad. Thus, a fine for "samogon" is R 300.- but one can bribe militia for much less. Militiamen use openly to say that all the denunciations come from neighbors and usually name them by implication.

3. A small garrison was stationed in the village till 1954 because of operations of the rest of Ukrainian partizans. Since underground activities stopped only militia was left in nearby PIDKAMEN.

Arrests by militia are quite frequent but only for larceny, pilfering etc. Nowadays there are no political arrests.

4. All administrative posts in the village are occupied by local Ukrainians. Some of them belong to the party; some married Russian women they brought with them after their military service.

As a rule, all young people belong to Komsomol. There is no other way out if one wants to study after graduation from 8-grades school at 11-years school at PERIANY or at Technicum. To get to the University or Institute one has to work for 2 years in a kolhosp and pay a good bribe. An admission-bribe to the Medical Institute in LVOV begins with NR 200.-. That's a minimum.

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There is a clear tendency on the part of authorities to keep youth in kolhosps and prevent it from moving to cities. Therefore ~~the~~ youth is very dissatisfied and openly complains about it. Young people are ~~very much~~ mainly interested in higher education, good jobs, and good living.

All teachers in the village are Ukrainian. Russian is being taught from the first grade.

5. There is a strong pressure of local authorities to ~~subscribers for~~ ^{Ukrainian} increase subscription to such ~~newspapers~~ and magazines as "Radianska Ukraina", "Vilna Ukraina", "Zhovten", and "Literaturna Ukraina". In Source's opinion at least 50 % of villagers receive Ukrainian press.

6. Villagers know little about emigration and politics in general. ~~There~~ was only one private radio-set in the village.

7. Source heard about strikes in cities in 1962 and 1963 and that many people were arrested and shot. She could not, however, say where and who.

8. In the village lives Father RYKHLITSKYI, fmu, who did not "convert" to Orthodoxy. He spent 5 years on "administrative deportation" in CHERNIGOV obl. after WW II. ~~There~~ he worked as foreman and then in a storage office. After his return from Chernigov-obl. Msgr RYKHLITSKYI lived for some time in his Parish House, and after he was ousted from there, he stayed with a peasant family sleeping on the floor. Msgr R's wife did some speculation and thus ^{were} manage to educate their two sons. Both ~~married~~ to Russian girls and Father R was very unhappy about it.

Father R. continues to read Mass secretly in private houses, baptize children, and exercise other religious practices. He does so despite threats of militia who warned him that in case he won't stop it they will arrest him again.

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