

SECRET
SECURITY INFORMATION

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: KALNINS, Bruno

1. The following information, contained in the files of OSO-CIA, concerns Bruno KALNINS, a controversial personality among Latvian emigres, who, according to latest reports, resides in Sweden.

2. In its war of liberation (1914-1918) the Latvian Army fought two occupying powers, the Germans and the Russians. In the latter part of this war it was rumored that Bruno KALNINS acted as an agitator, attempting to sway Latvian soldiers to the Bolshevik Army.

3. Subject's father, Social Democratic Speaker of the Latvian Parliament, Paul KALNINS, was an esteemed and honored Latvian, not only in his own country but in Europe as a whole. It was assumed that because of the popularity of his father and because his father served as Speaker of the Latvian Parliament, Bruno KALNINS was elected as a Senator in the Latvian Parliament. However, probably because of the influence of his mother, Berta KALNINE, who was a member of the extreme left-wing of the Social Democratic Party in Latvia, Subject became such a radical Socialist that the Latvian people assumed that both Subject and his mother were, if not outright Communists, at least communist sympathizers. The animosity of the Latvian people toward Subject and his mother was evidenced by the fact that in the 1930's a parody on a popular song ridiculed as well as accused them of communist sympathies and connections.

4. In the late 20's (approximately 1928) Bruno KALNINS, still a member of the left-wing faction of the Social Democrats and still a Senator in the Latvian Parliament, organized the so-called SSS Organization (Stradnieku Sports un Sarga - Workers Sport and Protector). A great number of Latvians were, and still are, absolutely certain that while Chief of the SSS, KALNINS was either directly in the employ of the Soviet Union or acted in their behalf. Several indications which may be taken as evidence of this belief held by many Latvians, was the fact that members of the SSS were organized, and acted as a para-military organization; they wore blue shirts and trousers, with red ties as their uniform, and at all functions and demonstrations carried a red flag.

5. On 15 May 1934, Karlis UPMANIS with the aid of General Janis BALODIS and Alfreds BERZINS, executed a coup d'etat and gave as the reason for this coup the fact that between the pro-Communist SSS and the pro-Fascist PERKONIEKISTS, as well as the numerous grafters within

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the Latvian Democratic Government, the country was not only doomed to go into bankruptcy, but also on the verge of being sold to the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany whichever of these latter two would be able to out-smart the other.

6. Alfreds BERZINS, having been placed in charge of security, was instrumental in jailing KALNINS and at the same time raiding his headquarters which disclosed a great amount of pro-Communist literature, Russian manufactured weapons and great amounts of Latvian as well as Russian currency. In addition there were rumors to the effect that KALNINS was preparing to overthrow the Latvian Government by force with the support of the Soviet Union on some date later than the ULMANIS coup of 15 May 1934. Having served approximately two years in jail, KALNINS was believed to have been deported from Latvia and probably went through Finland and Sweden. It was rumored that Subject finally located in Norway where he supposedly joined the Norwegian Communist Party and as a representative of this party KALNINS was believed to have been sent to Spain where he became this party's representative to the Communist Government of Spain during the Spanish Civil War.

7. Subsequent to this until June 1940 there was no known information regarding KALNINS.

8. On 14 June 1940, when the Russians occupied Latvia, KALNINS suddenly appeared on the scene as the Political Commissar, or so-called POLITERUK, of the Latvian Army which was completely inactive under Soviet domination. In this position KALNINS was instrumental in the following:

- a. Executing orders from the Russian Army concerning the Latvian Army.
- b. The supervision of the political reliability of all members of the Latvian Army. It was rumored that KALNINS was instrumental in the arrest of Latvian Army officers who were believed by the Russians to be politically unreliable.
- c. Making numerous speeches extolling the greatness of the Soviet Union, all of which were readily published by the pro-Russian Latvian newspaper Cina.

9. Even though KALNINS claims that he accepted his role of Political Commissar of the Latvian Army as a possible means of aiding the Latvian people, especially since he had been requested to do this by General BALODIS, and even though he claims that his position as Political Commissar was only of a six weeks duration, such claims appear contrary to fact. The Latvian Army under Soviet domination existed for a period of three months during which time KALNINS was Political Commissar. Subsequently the Latvian Army as such was disbanded, however, a number of soldiers and officers were automatically transferred into the regular Russian Army. Having been relieved of his duties as Political Commissar - merely because of the lack of a Latvian Army - KALNINS became a lecturer at the University of Riga where he lectured on the subjects of Marxism,

Leninism and how these theories are applied in the Soviet Union.

10. KALNINS whereabouts during the German occupation of Latvia (1941 to 1945) cannot be established with accuracy. However, upon cessation of hostilities he began to rise in Sweden as a very influential Social Democrat and as a Latvian who was engaged in assisting his fellow-countrymen in Sweden, providing they support his pretensions of becoming one of the great Latvian emigre leaders. Subject's connection with various Latvian emigre organizations appears to stem from the fact that, upon his father's death, he inherited his father's position as leader of the Latvian Social Democrats. In this position he was expected to supply and approve the Social Democrat representatives in the Latvian emigre organizations, many of which are striving for a united emigre representation.

11. The majority of Latvians outside of their home country are both amazed and puzzled by the immensity of power and influence which KALNINS possesses in his relationship with the Swedish government. In part this is explained by the fact that the Swedish government is dominated by the Social Democrats. It is also rumored that some Latvians are certain KALNINS derives his power from Communist interests. The latter belief is substantiated in part by the fact that KALNINS has no visible means of support.

12. Past as well as present opponents of KALNINS are the victims of vicious slander heaped upon them by KALNINS through numerous letters to influential persons and through a Latvian newspaper published in Sweden which he controls. Of particular interest may be the feud in progress at present between KALNINS and BERZINS. Subject claimed that BERZINS was one of the triumvirate who participated in the coup in 1934 and had opposed and exterminated all principles of democracy in Latvia. The apparent truth of the matter is that BERZINS, at present a member of the Latvian consultative panel of the NCPE (National Committee for a Free Europe) and a person who is convinced that KALNINS is in the employ of the Communists, is attempting to discredit him by all possible legal means. It is noteworthy that KALNINS was successful in accomplishing the removal of a member of this panel, one ABOLS, thru, by means of discrediting letters sent to the head of NCPE. KALNINS has attempted to accomplish the same in regard to BERZINS but to date has been unable to do so.

13. Voldemars BASTJANIS, a Social Democrat of the center-wing, has been a life-long friend of KALNINS. Although a great deal of suspicion that BASTJANIS had collaborated with the Russians in 1940 had existed and had deterred his immigration to the U.S., he has recently been permitted to enter this country. During BASTJANIS's stay in Germany he frequently corresponded with KALNINS, and for a short period of time declared that he had broken his friendship with him. However, at present he has again indicated his support of KALNINS.

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Bruno KALNINS

Son of late Dr. Paul KALNINS, Speaker to the Latvian Parliament. Acknowledged leader, Central Council of Latvia. "According to his friends and foes alike, he has 'very much improved lately.' This remark undoubtedly has reference to Bruno KALNINS' earlier extreme political radicalism. By the Ulmanists he is reproached for having been in 1940 the chief political adviser of 'politruk' of the Latvian army during the popular-democratic period, 1939-1940, but according to reliable witnesses, KALNINS accepted the said post really at the request of the Commander in Chief, General BALODIS, and after a corresponding decision of the Latvian Social-Democratic Party Executive. In the face of obvious Soviet breach of promise and subsequent sovietisation of Latvia, he resigned." He is now chairman of this group in Sweden.

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SO-22616. Lat. Emigres-Personalities and organisations.

Was rescued from Stutthof concentration camp near Danzig, and reportedly works for the Swedish Aliens Commission and the Swedish foreign office on all matters concerning Baltic Refugees. ~~At one time he was called a~~ At one time he was called a Soviet agent in Stockholm.

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Editor of "Latvju Zinas," semi-weekly unofficial mouthpiece of the Central Council in Sweden, said to have a circulation of 2,000 throughout the world.

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