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WSSA-39

TO: Chief, Foreign Branch W

FROM: []

SUBJECT: Leonids Silins

REF : TX-832 of 17 May 1946 b. LXS-22 of 7 November 1946

1. Subject has recently approached this office through [] in an effort to establish a contact between a group of Latvians locally who are representatives of the Latvian Central Council and the Americans. The group, he reports, is that listed in reference (a) above, and has been commonly referred to in its early stages as the "Tepfer Group". For additional background information concerning this group, the following information furnished by [] is being set forth.

"In the summer of 1943 there was formed in Latvia an underground resistance movement with the purpose of opposing both German and Russian occupations of Latvia and of striving to regain Latvia's independence. The initiators of this movement belonged to different Latvian political parties; practically all parties, with the exception of the extreme left and right wing groups, were represented in it. Of the Social-Democrats, Mrs. Bruno Kalnins, V. Bastjanis, P. Mielens, Dr. Pauls Kalnins, of the Democratic Center - Professor Konstantins Cakste, J. Breikss, General V. Tepfers, and of the Farmer's Union - A. Klive participated in it, to mention only the largest parties. The organization was headed by Prof. Cakste and, after his arrestation by the Germans, by General V. Tepfers. Already before the formal establishment of the organization, the movement which was known under the name of the Latvian National Council sent one of its adherents, Mr. Leonids Silins, to Sweden in order to establish contacts with the Latvian Legations abroad and in general with Latvians residing outside the reach of both the Germans and the Russians.

"In 1944 when the entire territory of Latvia was under the menace of the second Russian occupation, the aforementioned Council decided that arrangements should be made for the transfer to Sweden of persons with their families who had particularly actively participated in the underground movement and account there of were most certainly liable to be persecuted by the Soviet authorities after the country's second occupation by the Russians. Since the Latvians in Sweden and other foreign countries practically lacked any means for the financing of the transfers, Mr. Silins contacted Swedish Intelligence Service officials who, against compensation in the form of information about conditions in German-occupied Latvia, gave some assistance in organizing boat trips to Latvia, the purpose of which was to make more detailed arrangements for the planned transfers.

B. KALNINS, **SECRET**

KARLIS ARINS
NY #2

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"In the spring or early summer of 1944 the transfer movement received the unexpected but welcome aid from an American official who was charged with organizing the rescue of persons whose life was threatened primarily in the German occupied countries. Through the services of a prominent Latvian in Sweden, the American official placed some funds at the disposal of the Latvian group which was preparing the aforesaid transfers. This money permitted to buy a few boats and to pay the crews of the boats. Mr. Silins took a most active part in the refugee transfer traffic which in Latvia was supervised - as far as this could be done in the chaotic conditions prevailing in Latvia, specifically Courland, in the summer and fall of 1944 - by General V. Tefers.

"At present, the Latvian National Council, is unofficially functioning in Sweden, its chairman being now Mr. Bruno Kalnins.

"During the period of refugee transfers from Courland, the Council was at times also referred to as the group of General Tefers and for brevity's sake it will be called so hereinafter. It may be mentioned that the interest of the competent Swedish authorities in maintaining contact with this group gradually diminished since no direct and reliable news could be obtained from Latvia after the country's occupation by the Russians. Contact with Latvia had, namely, been cut off.

"In order to resume such contact, individual members of this group, headed by Assistant Professor Dr. V. Ginters and financed by Pastor J. Svikis, organized a trip to Latvia. The men who went to Latvia in a boat were Karlis Smits, Edwards Andersons and 1st Lieutenant Smits. The trip was made with the tacit consent of the Swedish authorities. The money was supplied by Swedish church circles. Contacts with Latvia were established. The wireless operators in Sweden were Karlis Arins and Bruno Lesins. Karlis Smits and E. Andersons are missing since their arrival in Latvia, but 1st. Smits was maintaining the contact. The group lacks financial means and therefore the contact is maintained as a matter of fact, only irregularly nor can the group furnish their men in Latvia material aid."

2. The Latvian Central Council at present consists of practically the same members as those listed in reference (a). However, the honorary president has been changed from Bruno Kalnins to Archbishop Rancans. This change has been made due to the fact that Kalnins in 1940 and 41 was an organizer of the Latvian army and cooperated to a limited extent with the Germans. According to subject, Kalnins later changed his sentiments and was in direct opposition. He is, therefore, considered to have compromised himself and this fact might be detrimental to any effort on behalf of the Latvian Central Council to unify local Latvian elements.

3. Concerning the subject personally, the following information was obtained from a personal interview with Subject. Subject is a Latvian citizen, born 12 May 1916. He was formerly an employee of the Latvian telegraph agency in Riga and is a graduate of the Latvian University. He has also attended schools in England and has travelled extensively. He speaks fluent English, Swedish, Russian and Latvian. On 22 July 1943, he came to Sweden with a group of Latvian Refugees. Upon arrival, he

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organised the Latvian relief committee and acted as its secretary until 1945. From 1943 to April 1945, he made ten clandestine trips by boat to Latvia to evacuate refugees, and since that time has also taken an active role in the activities of the Latvian Central Council, serving mainly as a liaison officer between members of positive section of the Swedish General Staff and the Council. As a result of this liaison, he has in the past received tacit approval of Swedish to undertake the evacuation of refugees as well as the set up of a radio contact with Latvia for intelligence purposes. On the radio contact he has dealt chiefly with the Swedish Staff representatives Rosenthal and Hepling, who are believed to be members of the Swedish cryptanalysis unit, FRA. According to subject, the Swedes have in the past been very cooperative, but have recently cooled on condoning clandestine Latvian operations due to the fact that the Lukins Group set up radio operations with Latvia without Swedish approval.

4. Subjects present interest in contacting us is to secure our moral and financial support in carrying on operations of a clandestine nature, with or without the knowledge of the Swedes. The Swedes have apparently controlled quite strictly the Latvian operations in the past and have copies of all the codes utilized for clandestine transmission. Subject was informed that the Americans were not interested in conducting such operations and, therefore, could not give him an encouragement at the present time. It was agreed, however, that should he or his group possess or come in possession of any information which they deemed might be of interest to the Americans, it could be given to Cracker to be passed onward, and if at some future time the Americans were interested in such operations, that he (the subject) would be contacted.

5. Subject is residing at Siegfriedsvagen 25, 2nd floor, Aspudden, near Stockholm, and is employed with the Swedish Post Office in Stockholm. It is not believed the subject or his group could be of any operational interest to us at the present time due to the fact that they have largely compromised themselves through unsuccessfully attempted operations in the past resulting in very close control and supervision by the Swedish authorities. For the present, at least, any contact with subject will be conducted through Cracker for security reasons, and after departure subject will have no knowledge as to the identity of any of our other representative in Stockholm.

6. On 15 September 1947 [] reported that Fimanoguy and a group of cohorts were to leave this week on an expedition to the Baltics. This expedition is reputedly self-financed by the Group and is not well equipped. They are said to have the passive acquiescence of the local authorities. We, of course, are not involved in any way in the expedition, but will keep in contact with the group to see if they have any success. While this group is not identical with the Silins group, the information is being included in this dispatch because it concerns Baltic nationals and, if true, indicates the attitude of the local authorities as regards such expeditions. This is a little unusual because of the quite severe criticism that they have received for allowing so-called "anti-Soviet" actions on the part of Baltic refugees to continue in Sweden.

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The Latvian Central Committee also operates the Latvian relief organization. Among the members of the Latvian Central Committee in Sweden are - Leonide Silins. Silins and K. Calvete are the two members of the LCC who maintain contacts with the Latvian Intelligence Service headed by Alexander Osoline.

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