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SOI: ANNAKNE/1, 14 July 1962

Colonel JANINS -- as an exile leader.

Col. JANINS clearly belongs to the few who are still respected and even admired as to the natural leaders of the Latvian exiles. In my opinion, he would be among the top six personalities if a free-world wide popularity contest would take place among the Latvian post-WW II emigrants. This popularity is probably best evidenced by the frequent abuses heaped upon him by the Soviets (in their propaganda publications as I knew these until 1960).

In exile I heard about Col. J. first while in Sweden. Latvian ex-soldiers there praised him as one of the top officers who skillfully spared the lives of Latvian legionnaires even during the most dire period of retreat from Russia proper. Now I couldn't recall all the names of these soldiers who told me about Col. JANINS; my best guess would be to mention the following junior officers: Elmars SKOBE (now in Toronto, Canada), Leonids MICHURIS (was in Sweden), Peteris JANELINS (in Stockholm, Sweden), and FILJIS (in Sweden, arrived there from W. Germany about 1948; had served directly under Col. JANINS).

Another source of info about Col. JANINS in exile was the Latvian press 1946-1951 (Latvija Ziņas, Latvija Vards--published in Sweden, Latvija--in West Germany). According to these newspapers, Col. JANINS seemed to be not only a very prudent war-time officer and strategist, but also a talented leader of the emigres during the unruly post-war years in West Germany. My friends and I were impressed by his upright attitude during this period as well as his obvious dislike for the rather low-level political debates among the Latvian politicians in West Germany. At least I got the impression that these politicians were more interested to secure their positions with the American or British officials there than in the fate of Latvia and its people. Later the events showed that my impression has not been unfounded--almost all these politicians left Germany and Col. JANINS thus became the undisputed leader among the 10,000 or so Latvians who chose Germany as their permanent exile (or had no other opportunity).

Articles in newspapers about him indicated that he is still more a soldier at heart than a people's tribune or smart political boss--and precisely because of his soldierlike attitude he was so much liked and respected, even when he got involved in some foolishness or had made an unguarded, politically unwise statement. Just one example would show here what I mean:

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Around 1968 much effort was spent in W. Germany to organize a central Latvian organization (Latvian National Council). Latvian newspapers reported how Long, Crutkins and other politicians debates went on and on among the politicians, producing no results. The main obstacle to reach the goal seemed to be the selfish ambitions of Latvian politicians who could reach no settlement as to the comparative numerical strength of their parties in such a representative body. It was a standing spectacle of democracy at its worst--especially because it came right after all the immense sufferings of the refugees and the heavy sacrifices by the Latvian soldiers during the last part of WW II. In this deplorable situation Col. JAMNIS made this remark which became widely quoted and, possibly, brought even the politicians back to senses: "If I had the power I would lock all these quarrels into a room and would not let them out before an agreement would have been reached as to the composition of the Latvian National Council (Latvian National Council -- in Latvian)." Of course, it sounded as a dictator's voice, but at the given moment it made much sense and certainly influenced the future happenings. It would seem that this remark by Col. JAMNIS still makes him a "bad boy" among the Latvian politicians.

Later on I heard from BRENN (?) that Col. JAMNIS has frequently visited Great Britain and that the Brits are trying to get him under their control but without much success, since Col. J. still sticks to his own, the Latvian views, and does not want to become a mercenary or puppet. It seems to me that even "George" (allegedly working with the British Counterintelligence) (not him in 1969) mentioned the fact that Col. JAMNIS had been approached by the Brits--though I'm not sure anymore about that.

In 1951/52, while in W. Germany, I heard quite diverse statements as to the personality and activities of Col. JAMNIS. The most glowing praise came from Robert AMMAN who at that time was closely attached to Col. JAMNIS--both played a leading role in the Latvian Central Council in Germany and the Latvian welfare organization "Baugruva Vainagi". My acquaintance Leonidas BACHMANN at that time did even meet Col. JAMNIS--and he, too, was very favorably impressed by "Lady Jamnis" (Jamnis here--in Latvian). It seemed to be a very good device to have Col. J. as one of the leaders in West Germany when everybody tried to leave this country for America or Australia and the remaining ones felt formation and depressed. At this painful time of great changes in the Latvian community in W. Germany, Col. J. made extensive trips by air throughout this country in order to bolster the sagging morale of his countrymen, especially the former soldiers and families. Neither unfavorable comments regarding Col. JAMNIS came from his colleague, Col. Arvirs GALTINOVIS. It would do no good to repeat here Col. G's criticism since--as I see it--it was caused mainly by envy as to Col. JAMNIS' popularity. Though Col. GALTINOVIS cannot complain being without popularity now, around 1990/91 in Germany he could not hope to compete in this respect with Col. JAMNIS. It is interesting to note that both soldiers of both World Wars have such in common: their genuine care for the welfare and personal problems of their subordinates, their strong common sense and realistic appraisal.

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of the situation, but most important--their genuine love for their country which has been shown so unmistakably by their deeds.

If I recall correctly, around 1951/52 Col. JANUSIS was already supported by the Americans as their man, i.e., their choice among the leading Latvian personalities in W. Germany. At least it was my impression that Col. JANUSIS together with [] and George CRINE constituted a very energetic trio which could cope with the multitude of problems among Latvian displaced persons and war veterans there.

Around 1954 Col. GALINDONIS now in Boston had been visited by Col. JANUSIS, and the latter had made a very unfavorable impression on Col. GALINDONIS--at least so I was told by Col. G. On this occasion Col. JANUSIS had been accompanied by (ANMARSH/1) (now in W. Germany)--when Col. G. called Col. JANUSIS' "politruki", i.e., political advisor. As I heard later (in 1999) from ANMARSH/1 himself, such label was entirely correct since--according to ANMARSH/1--Col. JANUSIS was politically naive and inexperienced, therefore in constant need to get advice from a politically more versed person. In any case, ANMARSH/1 boasted that he had helped Col. JANUSIS to avoid many political pitfalls and blunders; knowing ANMARSH/1 personally, I would agree with his claims. As his main achievement in this respect, ANMARSH/1 mentioned (in 1999) the fact that he had convinced Col. JANUSIS in 1951 (?) not to be taken in by Alfreds VALEMANIS' political schemes. (I can imagine that Col. JANUSIS was attracted by VALEMANIS since the latter shared with Col. J. dislike for the politicians and claimed to be the self-appointed leader of the younger generation of the Latvians, especially the former soldiers.)

While in the States, i.e., in Washington, D.C., and working for the Government, I got the impression that Col. JANUSIS is being treated as a kind of unavoidable evil, i.e., his popularity had to be taken into account--expediency asked to make use of it--but on the other hand he was considered among the "chosen few" as a nuisance who now and then disturbs the scheming done in Washington, D.C. Whether this had its roots in the age-old antagonism between the politicians and soldiers or such attitude was caused by the discrepancies of the policy of Bonn versus Washington, I don't know.

During my last "mission" in 1958/59 in W. Germany, I met Col. JANUSIS four times--always in the presence of ANMARSH/1. My impression was that Col. JANUSIS knew much about my past and tried to do his best to keep up my morale, to get me in fighting spirit again though this time using our culture as our best weapon.

The first time we met at a restaurant in Frankfurt/Main; [] and ANMARSH/1 were present, also. Nothing particular could be said about that meeting which seemed to be arranged just in order to get me acquainted with Col. JANUSIS. Next time we four met at ANMARSH/1's flat in Frankfurt. There

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I had some business talk with Col. J., but it was held separately and I didn't try to find out what it was. A more thorough insight about Col. JANUS' home life and family I got during the days of Baltic (or Latvian) Culture, sponsored by the Baltic-German Society, in Muenster/Westf. in the spring of 1959. I was pleasantly surprised by his home life, his wife and daughter, since it showed that he is not only a good and devoted soldier but an exemplary pater familias as well. Besides I had to admire the excellent taste shown in the furnishing of their apartment in the otherwise rather drab and depressing environment of these former barracks, now housing Latvian highschool and the central organization of Latvians in Germany. Last time I saw Col. JANUS in Frankfurt in July, 1959, when AMBASSH/1 brought him to my apartment on Friedrichstrasse. At that time I was rather depressed because of the refusal of my wife to join me in Germany (at least that was the impression I got from her) and Col. JANUS did his best to show me that all has not been lost yet. (I recall that he advised me to collect paintings as an excellent hobby and presumably a good way how to invest money more sensibly than in drinks.)

At no time did I have any serious discussions with Col. JANUS as to the Latvian cause and what should and could be done in order to improve our chance to regain our independence. It was a deplorable neglect on my part, but at this time I was so confused by some happenings and coincidences that it seemed to me the wrong time to touch this subject.

I have also no idea what was Col. JANUS' position in regard to our organization (and I have to confess that I even don't know what kind of organization it is--since so many of its activities, as I saw them--do not make any sense to me) and whether he got paid by us. But I assume that he was in a close contact with us in the matter of psychological warfare as well as in keeping up the morale of the Latvian refugees in W. Germany, mainly in order to prevent them from repatriation to Soviet occupied Latvia. That Col. JANUS participated also in matters of more secret nature was only my guess.

Although it is beside the point, I would like to make an evaluation of Col. JANUS as a future leader. He still enjoys considerable popularity but among the generation which has to give now place to a younger one (if not now then certainly in 5-10 years). It is very doubtful whether he could impress this younger generation by his fame as a soldier--not because there was something wrong with this fame but simply because Latvian youngsters (in the age group of 20-30) in the West have acquired the same antagonistic attitude against the militarists, heroes and patriots which can be observed in West Germany and here. He is in the same position--on a much smaller scale, of course--as are (or were) the great, strong men in post-war West: Eisenhower, Adenauer, DeGaulle. Their personal influence and stature overshadowed all around them in such a degree that it was (in Ike's case) and is (in Adenauer's and DeGaulle's case) almost impossible to transfer this authority and popularity to a younger successor. It would be a very prudent step if Col. JANUS would

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earnestly start to prepare one of his younger aides to take over not only his burden but also his popularity (which has to be built up). This change of generations should not be rushed but it should be carefully planned and with the full collaboration of Col. JAMES himself, since he has shown, despite his blunt statements and rough actions in the field of politics, that he has a deep respect for democracy even at times when it has been very tempting to grab the power and become a minor military dictator. And the younger generation may learn from his example that the patriotism is neither difficult nor despicable--it is plainly servicing one's country in peace and war.

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