

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

FROM: Peter Kapusta *PK* NO: DATE: 16 July 1959

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building) DATE RECEIVED FORWARDED OFFICER'S INITIALS COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1. C/HR/3/PP [Redacted] This is a really first-rate paper, well-argued, clear, persuasive. It goes a long way toward convincing me that we should continue the project at least on a trial-run basis. However, if this is in fact agreed by the management in the field and at Hqs, my previous opinion through

3. C/HR/3 [Redacted]

5. HR/COP/Fraser [Redacted]

7. SR/COP/PP [Redacted]

8. SR/COP [Redacted]

10. ~~HR~~ *HR/3* [Redacted] 7 to 8 and 10: Excellent paper. Good thinking. I recommend, as does [Redacted] who has recently completed a thorough study of this project from its

12. DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
13. SOURCE METHODSEXEMPTION 3020  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2007  
14. *inception, that AEGVOR be renewed and that Hqs and field case officers be appointed for Munich. I would like to discuss budget and handling with SR/3 before renewal request is prepared. Rapid action may be necessary.*

15. [Redacted]

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16 July 1959

MEMORANDUM TO: Chief of Operations, SR

SUBJECT : Renewal of AEQUOR PP Project

1. AEQUOR, like AEGIDEON, AERODYNAMIC and various Baltic projects, was initially begun (in 1950) purely as a REDSOX FI program; however, some AEQUOR PP activities were also begun almost simultaneously, partly as a sop to the BNR and as a direct and pertinent adjunct of the FI project. The entrance of these PP activities through the back door of decreasingly fruitful FI operations also occurred in most other emigre group projects whether Soviet or Satellite. The REDSOX activities under AEQUOR FI ended in 1953 after which the AEQUOR PP project has continued to date producing occasional FI and CE leads. Because virtually all AEQUOR activities have been conducted from Western Europe in the unsensational fields of propaganda writing and dissemination AEQUOR has not had much opportunity to produce dramatic operational results. Thus it has not aroused much notice at Headquarters except at DOB. Since this paper is intended to put AEQUOR PP back into what the undersigned considers proper perspective, the following factors, all of which affect this project, have also contributed to keeping the AEQUOR project in the shade:

*Incorrect*  
*Other PP projects were started in OPC as strictly PP affairs, with FI as a by-product development.*

a. Despite the fact that Byelorussia has been recognized as a separate national and nationalistic entity by the Soviet government and by the United Nations, there is still some unexamined doubt lingering in SR concerning the identity of the Byelorussians as an ethnic national group. This doubt would not be significant if there were persons in SR, other than the case officers working on the AEQUOR project, at all familiar with historical developments in Byelorussia -- a subject which is not taught at any U. S. establishment.

b. Doubt has been expressed in SR as to what extent the Byelorussians have been Russified or the extent to which they feel themselves to be a distinct entity. The existence of a nationalist sentiment in Byelorussia is mentioned daily by the Soviet Byelorussian press, a press which is not reviewed by any known element of CIA Headquarters or the Department of State. Noteworthy the Soviet government prints some 80 daily, weekly and monthly periodicals in Byelorussian plus various books and classics which are distributed in the tens of

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thousands in order to satisfy the requirements of and to placate the third largest language group in the USSR.

c. Even among case officers who are willing to admit that a modicum of nationalist feeling probably exists, doubt persists as to the significance of Byelorussian nationalism. The question of nationalism in Byelorussia is no less important, and possibly considerably more important because of the strategic location of the BSSR, than is the same question in each of the other nationality areas in the USSR including, of course, the RSFSR. Considering that 8 to 10 million inhabitants in a relatively rural area speak the same language and have had a long and close association with freedom-loving Poles and Lithuanians, it would be abnormal indeed if no nationalism existed in Byelorussia. It must be remembered when evaluating the future significance of this project that twice during this century Byelorussian nationalist uprisings have unexpectedly played an important role during armed conflicts: during the first World War, the Byelorussians dissociated themselves from Russia, formed an independent republic which was then recognized internationally and became a force which had to be coped with by Soviet armed forces; during the second World War the Byelorussians organized sixty armed anti-Soviet battalions which offered armed resistance to the Soviet Red Army. After World War II open partisan warfare and opposition to the regime continued in Byelorussia through the late forties and into the early fifties. The importance Moscow attaches to Byelorussian nationalism can be gauged by the time and space devoted by press and radio to that topic.

d. Finally, doubt has been expressed about the role played by the Byelorussian emigre group, the BNR organization, in influencing Soviet policies in the Byelorussian SSR or in exerting a real influence upon the Byelorussians in the USSR. Re other emigre groups, official acknowledgements or attacks in the Soviet government press are usually taken as valid indications of an emigre groups effectiveness inside. Although BNR PP efforts under AEQUOR have been modest (primarily because of the small FY 1959 budget of [redacted]), the Soviets have been unable to avoid all mention of a group because it has successfully publicized its existence to the Byelorussian population in the BSSR. Thus, similar to the NTS and the ZPUHVR, the BNR has become a subject for more or less constant attack in both the Soviet press and radio. This is clear admission by the Soviets that the BNR has had sufficient importance within the BSSR to risk further publicizing the existence of the BNR by attacking it. The specifics of the Soviet blasts and attacks against the BNR have been documented in the AEQUOR dispatches.

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2. The renewal or cancellation of the AEQUOR PP project is presently under consideration. In the last and preceding years the PP program under Project AEQUOR involved a subsidy of approximately [ ] which was paid to the BNR. With this subsidy the BNR printed a weekly newspaper in circa 3,000 copies and various Byelorussian classics in the Byelorussian language. This newspaper is the only Byelorussian language newspaper published by any anti-Soviet political entity. This fact should be borne in mind when considering whether to halt the subsidy. The demise of one anti-Soviet Ukrainian or Great Russian newspaper would still leave many others in existence, but this is not true in the Byelorussian field. Both newspapers and classics are distributed in limited numbers (from 200 to 300) in both Poland and the BSSR via mail. Distribution into the BSSR is carried out primarily by individuals living in Poland, although recently there has been a concerted effort to increase this distribution into the BSSR directly by mail. Letter responses from both Poland and the BSSR have been favorable. As a matter of fact, the readers within both Poland and the BSSR have expressed an avid interest both for Byelorussian classics which are unavailable locally and for articles in the newspaper on specific topics suggested by the writers of the letters. Various Byelorussian readers behind the Iron Curtain have even mailed anti-Soviet articles themselves for publication in the BNR newspaper. Note that the small distribution of only two to three hundred copies to Poland and the BSSR is the result of only one thing: inadequate budget. Despite the modest distribution to date, the response has been overwhelmingly favorable. It is the undersigned's frank opinion that the effectiveness of this PP activity should be increased by intensifying and extending the publication and distribution activities already begun by the BNR on a shoestring.

3. If a subsidy for FY 1960 is not approved, this would most probably spell the end of virtually all BNR PP activities which require any capital outlay. As far as we know, the BNR has no other sources of income (except for inconsequential amounts collected from its gainfully employed members used to keep the Madrid radio program going). It should be underscored that the small subsidy is used entirely to pay for the costs of the PP publications, i.e. no member of the Byelorussian emigre group receives payment for services from this sum. All BNR members who engage in the PP activities are gainfully employed elsewhere and donate their time and effort to the PP activities gratis. Certainly, the Soviet government would not be averse to our furling the sails of the BNR PP program since after all this is what the Soviets have been trying to do, recognizing as we apparently do not that the Byelorussians occupy a very strategic area from the military point of view, are Western oriented to a dangerous degree and, not unimportant, are the third largest area and language group in the USSR. As far as we know, there is no clandestine vehicle, aside from the BNR, which CIA can use to get at the population of that area with any reasonable hope of success.

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4. A further indication that the Byelorussian emigre group continues to remain a target of the Soviets is the fact that the Soviets have continuously mounted various highly trained agents against the BNR itself and against influential members of this emigre group. For example, AEVOCAL, AESKATE, AETINFOIL, AEFAUCET, AEHICKORY, CAPITALIZE 2, possibly AEERMINE and others are all Soviet agents who, it has come to our attention, have been targeted against the BNR and its members. This certainly costs the Soviets more than [ ] annually and requires more man hours than CIA would conceivably spend on AEQUOR.

5. In December 1958 the BNR succeeded on its own hook in initiating daily Byelorussian language broadcasts over Radio Madrid. These broadcasts are directed to the BSSR and to the Byelorussian colonies in Poland. Technical reception of these broadcasts in Poland is known to be good. Various letters have been received from Poland proving that these Byelorussian broadcasts are listened to assiduously. The BNR has been able to continue these broadcasts to the present day only by levying a tax on each gainfully employed member of the BNR in Europe with the hope that CIA would see fit to continue this going and effective PP effort. CIA funds requested by the BNR for this effort have been in the modest sum of \$4000 per year in order to pay the salaries of two BNR employees who devote their full time on these broadcasts and to cover all other costs of broadcasting. It should be noted that there are no other Byelorussian nationalist broadcasts in the Byelorussian language in existence. (NOTE: The Byelorussian broadcasts over Radio Liberation are not nationalist in content and are strictly controlled to accord with a non-offensive policy toward the nationality issue.) These broadcasts over Radio Madrid are not currently being censored by the Spanish government. Unless the PP section of the AEQUOR project is renewed, the BNR will in the immediate future be obliged to discontinue this successful and popular PP effort in a last ditch effort to keep the BNR newspaper alive a little longer. It should also be reiterated that our BNR contacts, quite unlike most other emigre contacts engaged in PP activities, have repeatedly offered to publish and broadcast anything and everything CIA wants. We have made little or no use of this offer.

6. The effective Byelorussian intelligentsia for CIA purposes consists of circa twenty BNR emigres. All of the BNR members with whom KUBARK has been in contact have proven in many ways to be more fully cooperative than some of their opposite numbers in other emigre groups. This has been the case particularly since the BNR has no significant rival emigre groups to accuse them (jealously) of being American lackeys. They have no qualms about turning over promising FI or CE leads to our exclusive management nor do they feel that their political mission precludes levying high priority FI requirements on any of their sympathizers in the BSSR or Poland.

7. Because the AETRELIS operation did not work out well, a certain amount of blame for uncooperativeness has been levelled at AECAMBISTA 11 on the hypothesis that if we had had more contact with AETRELIS the operation

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would have been successful. Since this has really been the first and only contact operation which we have mounted using the BNR, it would perhaps be precipitous to make a final judgment re the BNR's cooperation on the basis of one complex and rather doubtful case. In retrospect, it would be easier to argue that AETRELIS was RIS-sponsored than the contrary.

8. Under present circumstances, contact operations, using the BNR, can be expected to yield only modest results because the BNR does not have the means to send its people to the cities where the few Byelorussians who do travel abroad are most likely to appear. The fact that the head of the BNR lives in Paris does not negate this statement since he is too occupied with other activities and is too well known to be useful in making clandestine cold approaches. There are, in reiteration, relatively few individuals from Byelorussia who travel abroad; there are also some Byelorussians who appear in Europe from the Byelorussian colonies in Poland. The brother of AETRELIS a resident of the USA, anticipates traveling to Poland in the fall of 1959; it is believed that he can be expected to undertake a follow-up of the initial AETRELIS operation, if this should be deemed desirable. The lack of funds available to the BNR has been the main obstacle in undertaking any concerted program of contact operations. The BNR does have young men who are qualified to carry out cold approaches, but who is going to pay the tab for their train fare and hotel bill? As has been also documented in the AEQUOR dispatches, the BNR appears to have some definite assets in the Byelorussian colony in Poland, but to date CIA has undertaken no coherent or energetic program to exploit them for operations into the BSSR.

*As one is recommending  
this approach*

9. One of the reasons that other emigre group PP projects seem to be more effective than the BNR stems from the fact that project progress reports, containing the necessary statistics, regularly reach the attention of the pertinent persons inside and outside the SR Division. Apparently the AEQUOR reports containing some of the same facts do not. The same type of statistics on the AEQUOR project can be extracted from the files of DOB. Our own effectiveness in calling attention at the proper level to the BNR's activities seems to be the real crux of the issue rather than an imputed PP ineffectiveness of the BNR which has managed to do a lot with a very small subsidy. It might be added here that the U. S. government program of supporting the PP efforts of the Latvian and Estonian emigre groups undoubtedly costs many times more than the AEQUOR subsidy of [ ] -- only because there are more Americans (and CIA employees) who are familiar with the issue of nationalism in these Baltic areas although the population represented by these Baltic emigre groups (4,500,000) is less than half the size of the BSSR's population. The problem of nationalistic aspirations is substantially no different in Byelorussia than it is in the Baltic lands. Similarly, the potential usefulness of the Byelorussians in peacetime and in war is no less important than that of the Baltic nationalities.

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10. RECOMMENDATIONS: If it is in the interest of CIA to run PP or FI operations into the third largest republic of the USSR, the BSSR, there is only one organization which shows any capability in this direction, i.e. the BNR. It is submitted that the proofs of the BNR effectiveness are neither greater nor lesser than those of the other three emigre groups (which together get about a million dollars of CIA money). Furthermore, since these other PP projects have not stood or fallen by their FI production or their FI operational results, it would seem unreasonable to use a different rule of thumb to adjudge the BNR PP case. In view of the above, the undersigned recommends:

a. That the AEQUOR PP subsidy be continued and that it be increased to the sum of not more than [ ] and not less than [ ] in order to permit the continuation of extension of the PP activities which are currently proving effective and in order to permit mounting some contact operations directed at Byelorussians traveling in Europe.

b. That favorable consideration be given to subsidizing the Byelorussian language broadcasts over Radio Madrid in the sum of \$4,000.

c. That the lack of success in one contact operation (the failure of which may or may not be fully attributable to AETRELLIS himself) should not be considered an adequate reason to cancel the entire AEQUOR PP project or be considered an adequate gauge for predicting the results of future contact operations.

d. That, since the nature of the past AEQUOR activities and the future outlook for this project are similar to those being handled by SR/3, future handling of Project AEQUOR be transferred from DOB to SR/3. (It has never been clear to the undersigned why Project AEQUOR was not transferred into a PP project under SR/3 at the same time and for the same reasons that AERODYNAMIC was.)

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