

SECRET

Re _____ : A Trip to the Soviet Union, Oct/Nov 1969

Date _____ : 15 Dec 1969

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

1. Subject is a Ukrainian Australian, aged 50, of average intelligence quite inquisitive and observant, with high school education, interested in cinematography, familiar with Ukrainian affairs both, in the Ukraine and abroad.

He entered Soviet Union from Japan in late Oct 1969 by plane and landed first in Moscow. The customs control was rather thorough, in any case more strict than the one to which a German couple, his companions, were subjected. Subject's suitcases were inspected inside but he had no body search. On the way out from Moscow to Rome, early Nov 1969, the custom control was even stricter but again no body search. Subject was taken to a separate room where his suitcases, vallet, pockets, records and envelopes were thoroughly inspected. Inside the Soviet Union Subject travelled by train visiting Kiev, Lvov, and Ternopil

2. In Moscow Subject stayed for two days. One day he spent with a group of Jewish American students who were a real pain in the neck for the Inturist. Most of them were with long curly sideburns and yarmulkas, and Subject joined their bus on Inturist's suggestion for a sightseeing tour. The students asked all the time provocative questions, also about sovereignty and freedom of nationalities and individual Soviet republics, freedom of religion, etc. In the beginning the Inturist guide tried to ignore them but then he could not stand them and told the students to shut up because he "was here not to discuss politics but to explain sightseeing spots." Out of their window in the hotel the students hung American flag. Two of these students Subject saw later on in Kiev.

3. In Kiev Subject was told by his relatives that in Karaganda area there are still 3 large concentration camps, two male and one female. They told him also about protests and uprisings in the concentration camps, in the past.

4. In Kiev Subject heard so much open criticism of Soviet regime by the people, in the streets, in taxis, and in shops that he was simply amazed. Also his relatives (from Siberia) told him that never in their life they had ~~heard~~ ^{heard} so much criticism of Soviet authorities as now in Kiev in two days. Most outspoken are particularly women and youth.

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There is a strong perception and expression of existing stratification of Soviet society and in Kiev Subject was told more than once that " there live only bourgeois", or " there are more bourgeois now than they were before the Revolution, all those with party cards and stars.."

5. Subject met also with several "dissidents". One of them in Kiev told him, " We are in disfavor,. I belong to the group who signed the protest addressed to Brezhnev and we are preparing a new one.. After the protest sent to Brezhnev ~~were~~ were sacked from our jobs, but I don't mind it. Tell other people abroad about it. Of course, we were ~~only~~ only 142. I wish there were not 142 but 14,000 ^{SIGNATURES} then they would listen to. If 14,000 people would ^{sign} something like that the entire Ukraine would feel it..2

6. Following is the list of this year's arrests in the Ukraine:

BEDRYLO, Stepan , economist, Aspirant, Lvov

SOKULSKY, Ivan, poet, sentenced to 2½ years for alleged authorship of, and collection of signatures for, the protest of the youth of Dnipropetrovsk

BAKHTIYAROV , Oleg, student, Kiev

RYVAK, Vasil, linguist, Lvov

BRESLAVSKY, Mykola, of Kiev, sentenced to 2½ years for an attempt ~~at~~ of self-immolation.

KULCHYTSKY, Mykola , poet, of Dnipropetrovsk.

KARAVANSKY, Swiatoslav - now in Kiev, in prison, under new investigation.

7. It was confirmed to Subject that Suchasnist and Information Bulletin are known in the Ukraine among dissidents.

8. On the train between Kiev and Lvov all the service personell was from West Ukraine. According to Subject in both cities, Lvov and Kiev, 90% ^{of} people in the streets spoke Ukrainian.

Before the St. George Cathedral in Lvov Subject saw many beggars, also children, some of them victims of the last year flood in West Ukraine. During the Mass the Cathedral was full up.

9. Subject was told by two orthodox Ukrainian priests (former catholic) that Lvov and Ternopol oblasts have about 700 priests and Kharkov oblast only 60. Lately some attempts have been made to transfer some priests from Lvov and Ternopil area to Kahrkov oblast.

Recently 2,000 prayer books in Ukrainian were published and bought out at once. Also latest "Pravoslavny Visnyk" was published in Ukrainian.

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According to the two priests, it is somewhat easier now for the Orthodox church because authorities concentrate their primary attention ~~xxx~~ on sects. The latter are being considered ~~to be~~ a real menace ~~to~~ the regime at the present. Both also knew about and were in contact with Bishop VELYCHKOVSKY, Vasil. According to them, VELYCHKOVSKY made a trip to Yugoslavia under the pretext of visiting his relatives there, and after his return, behaved very ~~camelessly~~ ^{He} conducted his activities quite openly. ~~No~~ wonder he was arrested. In Yugoslavia he was consecrated to bishop.

10. A Ukrainian from Lvov area who in recent years visited Australia is being now forced to read public lectures to village dwellers about how bad is life in capitalist Australia. He himself complained about it to the Subject.

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