

SECRET

1 November 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE RECORD

SUBJECT : Contact With AECASSOWARY-2, AECASSOWARY-3, AECASSOWARY-4,  
and AECASSOWARY-15 on 22 October 1957

1. Contact with AECASSOWARY-2, AECASSOWARY-3, AECASSOWARY-4, and AECASSOWARY-15 by [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] was made at AECASSOWARY-15's house at 5143 Cathedral Avenue on 22 October 1957. The meeting lasted from 1400 hours until 1730 hours, and matters dealing with Project AERODYNAMIC were discussed.

2. Death of Lev REBET - AECASSOWARY-3 was queried as to a replacement for REBET, and he stated that it would be up to the political committee of the OUNZ to make the final decision. However, he stated that there was a possibility that Vasyl MARKUS from Paris, who now works with the Encyclopedia Ukraina, could be utilized as editor of Ukrainskyy Samostiynik since he travels to Munich about once a month. To the suggestion that both papers combine, AECASSOWARY-3 was firm in his opinion that this would be a mistake as it would leave the OUNZ without a voice. Due to the AERODYNAMIC budget cut, the paper had already been cut down to a monthly publication, and REBET had been trying to make it a monthly journal of scholarly studies on various aspects of current Soviet life. The emphasis had been less on OUNZ party matters though this was to be included. Now it may become necessary to change the paper primarily into a propaganda organ of the OUNZ, if no editor of REBET's stature can be found to continue REBET's scholarly work.

3. RYVAK, Vasyl - AECASSOWARY-3 stated that he has received information that a Ukrainian emigre, Vasyl RYVAK, living in New York, recently traveled to Vienna with his German wife and there decided to return to the Soviet Union. His wife, however, refused to accompany him. RYVAK sent a letter to his brother in New York and to the New York Times, announcing his intention to return to the Soviet Union. The FBI was informed by the New York Times and the brother was questioned. RYVAK was in some way connected with the URDP/left and was a friend of AECANDIOT and Ivan MAISTRENKO. (Case Officer's Comment: This is now being checked out at Headquarters.)

4. AECASSOWARY-2 brought up the fact that there is a great deal of disorientation among the Ukrainian emigres in response to the Soviet liberalization program (since 20th Party Congress). He cited the Orest MAKAR case as an example of an emigre who has gone back because he felt there was more opportunity for advancement there than in the United States. He is now professor at a Technological Institute in Lvov. This

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SECRET

SECRET

- 2 -

fact appears to verify the Soviet declaration that returnees would not be persecuted and would be given good jobs upon their return. From 1945 to 1956 the main orientation among the emigres was that their best bet was to stay abroad and fight for independence until the next war came along. Now with the idea that war between East and West is not possible and, in view of the many liberalizing features of Soviet Ukrainian life (e.g. new Ukrainian magazines and newspapers appearing, Ukrainian political offenders being released from prisons, and more freedom of travel), some emigres are wondering if it might not be wise to return to the Soviet Ukraine and have a part in the building of the country. AECASSOWARY-2 stated that it is especially important to have the emigre newspapers take a strong anti-Communist position and show why it would be harmful to return to the Soviet Ukraine at this time.

5. Voice of America Broadcasts - AECASSOWARY-2 stated that in monitoring several recent Ukrainian VOA broadcasts he found several examples of propaganda which proved to be almost pro-Soviet. He cited the VOA broadcasts of 9 October 1957 and 13 October 1957. (Case Officer's Comment: Copies of these broadcasts are now being obtained to verify his criticism.) He further stated that the VOA broadcasts merely confused the Ukrainian listener inside because they did not give a true picture of the emigration or of American life as a whole.

6. Prolog Magazine - AECASSOWARY-2 summarized the action that had been taken in regard to distribution of the magazine. He also stated that he believed that the main object of the magazine should be to reveal the truth about the nationality oppression in the USSR to other countries who could profit by the experience of the Ukrainians and other national groups who have suffered from Great Russian imperialism. It was agreed that initial plans should be made to publish Volume II as a winter issue in one part (and not in three parts as Volume I had been). The issue would have approximately 70 to 80 pages and should be finished by the end of the year. AECASSOWARY-2 inquired whether any monies could be obtained for payment to contributing authors. He was instructed to prepare an estimate of such costs, but was told that no monies besides those in the budget could be counted upon.

7. CARE Mission to Poland - AECASSOWARY-2 stated that Walter GALAN, President of UUARC may become Vice-President of CARE in the near future. It is through GALAN that AECASSOWARY-2 had learned of the CARE mission and had been asked by UUARC to find a suitable candidate. Mr. GOULD stated that we were very interested in the possibility of having a man travel to Poland with the CARE mission. AECASSOWARY-2 was instructed to keep us informed of any candidates that he might suggest. AECASSOWARY-2 stated that he has already given CARE 18 addressees in Poland to whom they can send packages from the United States.

8. BooksProject to Poland and Ukraine - In reference to the books  
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SECRET

project outlined in previous contact report with AECASSOWARY-2, Mr. GOULD asked whether any books were actually being sent into the Soviet Ukraine. AECASSOWARY-2 stated that the woman journalist who had traveled to Moscow Festival relayed five books to Ukrainian participants; several of the Poles who have been supplied with books have contacts with Soviet Ukrainians who travel to Poland and books are relayed by this means. He also stated that frequently Soviet scholars visit Poland for study and are able to read the books placed in Polish universities.

AECASSOWARY-2 stated that 13 packages of books have been sent into Poland. He also stated that some books have been sent directly to the Soviet Union and that he is now trying to learn whether these books were received and whether the recipients would care to receive more.

AECASSOWARY-2 was instructed to make an initial estimate of the monies he would need for continuing the program of sending books into Poland and the Soviet Ukraine, and the program of stocking his contacts in Western Europe with small collections of books which would be used for transmitting to Soviet and satellite delegates traveling in the West. He was also asked to get a list of books that he wishes to obtain for use in the books project.

9. UN Delegates - In reference to the AECASSOWARY contacts with members of the UN, it was suggested that they be very careful and report all meetings, especially with Soviet or satellite delegates. AECASSOWARY-2 stated that he knew the Canadian delegate, Ambrose HOLOVACH, personally, and that HOLOVACH was a member of the Canadian Parliament and had been invited to a dinner on 23 October given by the Ukrainian delegate, PALIMARCHUK, who was also the Ukrainian Minister of Foreign Affairs. AECASSOWARY-2 promised to give a detailed account of this meeting when he had a chance to talk to HOLOVACH.

10. Brussels Fair - AECASSOWARY-2 stated that his organization is interested in setting up an exhibit of Ukrainian books, arts, etc. Mr. GOULD stated the possibility of obtaining permission for this type of emigre exhibit from the Belgian Government was extremely slim, since the Soviet Ukraine would undoubtedly be represented. If the Belgian Government gave permission for this type of activity they would soon be deluged by requests from emigre organizations to set up other exhibits. However, AECASSOWARY-2 was told that we had no objection to his trying to get such permission just as long as it was done by his organization through their contacts in Belgium. The AECASSOWARIES suggested that another possibility of PP activity at the Fair would be to make Ukrainian scholarly books available in Brussels bookstores to attract those Soviet delegates and tourists who might wish to pick up some of this literature.

11. Because of the late hour, a discussion of AERODYNAMIC finances was postponed until the following day.

**SECRET**

ATTACHMENT TO CONTACT REPORT DATED 1 NOVEMBER 1957

Trip to Ukrainian SSR of a Canadian of Ukrainian Descent, October - December 1956

1. Source: The following information was furnished by Joe ELLEN (Ukrainian name Yosef ~~TELENIUK~~), a Canadian of Ukrainian descent from Toronto, Canada, who is a real estate broker by profession. In the 1930's Joe had been recruited for the Communist Party by his brother and had worked for some time in the editorial office of the Communist newspaper Nashe Zhyttia in Canada. After his brother was liquidated in the Ukraine in 1937 during the KRUSHELNYTSKY affair, Joe began to have doubts about Communism, but he has not severed his contacts with Canadian Communists to this day. His visit to the Ukrainian SSR was prompted by his doubts--he wanted to see what things really were like in the Ukraine. From the way he talked following his return, his doubts are even greater than before.

Because of his Communist background he was able to obtain a visa to travel to the Ukrainian SSR without any trouble. He visited his mother in the Western Ukraine, village of Trostianets, Zabolotiv Rayon, Stanislav Oblast' and also visited Lviv, Kiev, and Moscow.

2. Report: Joe's first impression after arrival in Lviv was Russification. Although the airport building had a sign in Ukrainian "Lviv" inside the building, all posted signs were in Russian. Service personnel, workers and waiters all addressed him in Russian although most of them seemed to have a very cursory command of that language. Only after Joe insistently talked Ukrainian (he does not speak Russian), he was answered in Ukrainian. In the city of Lviv Russification was noticeable externally, too. According to his estimate only about 40% of the signs were in Ukrainian while the percentage was 60 in Kiev.

It is noteworthy that no search or control of his baggage was made either on arrival in Lviv, or on departure from the USSR (at least he never personally witnessed any search or control).

Taking the bus from the airport to Lviv he met a Ukrainian laborer who spent several hours helping him check his baggage (in the trunk room of Hotel Ukraina), and to get a railroad ticket from Lviv to Kolomya-Zabolotiv. This man wanted to invite Joe to his home, but gave up when, in the meantime, higher officials began to take care of him.

There are shortcomings in transportation. Railroad tickets can be purchased only immediately before train departure. On his arrival in Zabolotiv (a county seat) he had to wait for hours with a lot of people by the roadside until a sort of jitney bus came and took him to his home village.

On the train he had friendly talks with conductors who were Ukrainians and talked sincerely one at a time behind closed doors of the crew compartment.

He spent over three weeks with his mother in the village of Trostianets.

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**SECRET**

SECRET

- 2 -

Villages are basically in ruins, the land has been taken over by collective farms, trees have been cut and villages make an impression of temporary shantytowns. Trees were cut on orders of the MVD-MGB between 1945 and 1950 to provide better visibility of the terrain in action against the Ukrainian Insurgent Army and underground.

Around 1945 the Bolsheviks deported all the people from entire sections of the villages of Trostianets, Ilintsi and Tuchapy for collaboration with the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. The deportees are now gradually coming back one by one.

The worst wave of terror was around 1950. People talk about it quite openly now. In 1950 the terror subsided, mass deportations ceased, but not of individuals. The cause of the terror was Ukrainian Insurgent Army activities. The Ukrainian people call the UPA "banderivtsi"; the name was widely used by the Bolsheviks in application to all Ukrainians.

The last stronghold of UPA in Trostianets fell in 1953 when the last holdouts would not surrender and were killed. There were seven of them, four men and three women, one of the latter being a physician. It is not certain whether they were killed by the attacking troops or committed suicide, so as to avoid falling into MVD hands. The commander of this stronghold was a local man by the name of Hryhory SIMVONIUK, alias BAYDA. BAYDA's father was not arrested but he died soon after this.

Collective farms in West Ukraine are a complete failure. People refuse to work on collective land and consider the system a modern form of old servitude. People make a livelihood by stealing from the collective farm openly. The guards look the other way, sometimes putting up an argument for the sake of appearances. Pilfering is widely practiced by party members, too, in spite of their higher standard of living.

In October and November children from grade schools were released from classes to help harvest the potato crop. Joe talked about this with the teacher and she was of the opinion that the government was right because potatoes had to be harvested before frost, and for their work the children were being given each a piece of bread and butter. The teacher was a Ukrainian from the Eastern region, member of the Komsomol. Joe called her attention to the fact that if such an affair of child labor occurred in America, it would be all over the Soviet newspapers for months.

The Carpathian mountains are being depleted of timber. This provides a slightly better living standard in this area because people make extra wages lumbering. The farther one goes into the black-soil belt (Podilla) the living conditions become worse. One of the reasons is that Podilla is flat and tractors are plowing the entire land and people have no opportunity to keep cows. In hilly regions a cow can graze on the slopes. Houses in Podilla are in poorer shape, too, because they are straw-thatched and, straw being unobtainable, most roofs leak. In the mountain section roofs are either shingled or clay-tiled.

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SECRET

SECRET

- 3 -

Near Kiev Joe visited two collective farms along with American newspapermen. The collective farms were in Lutezha and Demydiv. These farms appeared to be in good shape and it is hard to say whether they were specially set up for show purposes. He is inclined to believe that these farms look better because they have been in existence for long and there was enough time to develop them.

Joe was shocked to see girls at work repairing highways, doing such heavy work as crushing stone. He was also surprised that the MVD-MGB had posts in the rayons. Security troops visit the villages only in large detachments, the people see in them representatives of Russia as an occupying power. There is no open contact between them and the people whatsoever. People warned Joe to beware of the MGB, and it was only from them that he found out about its existence. MVD-MGB men are well dressed and by their appearance inspire fear in the people. The border zone starts only in Zhabie.

Basic food is available and one can live. Abundant food consists of: cabbage, potatoes, grits, milk, and lard. Collective farm workers wear padded jackets which are of standard appearance, but evidently easy to buy because patched clothing was not in evidence. Nobody wears hats, either in the villages or cities.

Joe E. met a repatriate from Argentina in his home village. He had come with his Spanish wife and two children. He complained and cried and asked that at least his wife should be permitted to go back, but the request was refused. Only after pleas of the chairman of the village council, the government transferred this Argentine returnee to the city of Kolomya, gave him a one-room apartment and a factory job.

There is no compulsion in recruiting people to go to the virgin lands of Asia, but posters calling for settlers are everywhere. Special appeals are made to young people who have completed 10-year school, girls are particularly prone to recruitment because there is a shortage of men and they expect to find husbands more easily in the areas of new settlement.

There are some people who were permitted to come back home from Siberia, who are now drifting back to Siberia saying that it's easier to make a living there.

In conversation, particularly with young people, Joe E. was frequently asked about oppression of Negroes in the United States. He was under the impression that this was the result of propaganda from above.

He was also asked about the military power of the United States. He answered that he did not know anything about that, but that he does know about the high level of economic and technical development.

Seven boys from his home village are serving as draftees in the Baltic fleet. There is a Komsomol (Young Communist League) in every village, but not

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SECRET

SECRET

- 4 -

active. Boys told him that the only reason why they enrolled in the Komsomol was to be left alone by the authorities.

He noticed that there is free medical care and hospitals are accessible to every one. Those who were accused of participating in or aiding the underground are not eligible for admission to sanitariums for TB. Pensions are denied to such people, too.

He was very much surprised to find out that the eight-hour day exists only on paper. A waiter in a Kiev restaurant informed him that he worked 12 hours a day for six days, the last day (sixth) 24 hours, so as to have the next 24 hours off.

In Kiev, he was given a pass to the October Revolution celebration on November 7. It was a surprise, that living on Lenin Street, a side street of Khreshchatyk where the parade was held, during the short walk his papers were checked 11 times. Every one was subject to this check and it was carried out very thoroughly by military patrols. Reviewing the parade was General CHUYKOV. He made the opening speech in Russian and a lengthy speech in Ukrainian followed only later.

There was no map of Kiev, nor of Ukraine obtainable in Kiev and he had to hire an Intourist guide. He could not get a catalogue of books in Kiev either; he found out later that no bookstore in Kiev was permitted to send books purchased by him to Canada. This could be done only through "Mezhdunarodnya Kniga" in Moscow. Catalogues were available in Moscow.

He wanted to send his hat from Kiev to his mother by mail. The search for wrapping paper took two days, Finally the post office informed him that hats can only be accepted for mailing either in wooden boxes or in a cloth sack. He finally solved the matter by sewing the hat in a bag made from his cotton under-drawers and the post office clerk was satisfied. Envelopes can be purchased only at post offices or by ordering them from the mailman (hotels in the big cities sell them, too).

Accompanied by the Intourist guide, Joe E. addressed a woman in the street in Kiev. She kept answering in Russian. Only after he asked the guide to intervene and the guide told the woman to speak Ukrainian did she change to Ukrainian.

In spite of many attempts, people, even his own brother, refused to talk politics. His brother warned him to destroy all notes because he would be searched when leaving the USSR, and both he and those who talked to him about wages, etc. would be punished. Joe could not offer any concrete reason why politics would not be discussed with him.

On the basis of talks with railroad conductors and a chauffeur, Joe E. came to the conclusion that people are aware of Ukraine's enslavement by Moscow (people

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SECRET

SECRET

- 5 -

invariably say "Russia") and, according to them, Russia is deliberately withholding goods from Ukraine and keeping the people in a status of social inequality.

The people on the other hand, having freed themselves from mass terror, are becoming more passive in their opposition. They treat the government as foreign and do only what they must.

On the county (rayon) administration level, there are local people, some are also in the provincial administration (Obvykonkom), but none in the Obkoms (party).

The chairman of the village council in his home village advised Joe E. against going to church because people will talk and he (the chairman) will be in trouble. In Kiev, however, people told him that he should certainly visit churches.

On his return trip Joe E. stopped in Prague, Czechoslovakia. He met with an unfortunate incident on a street in Prague. He was wearing a cap with earmuffs which he had purchased in Kiev when the weather got cold. The Czechs thought he was a Russian and wanted to beat him up, shouting "you Russ, you came here to teach us." He had a hard time explaining who he was, barely escaped and then threw away the cap and bought a hat.

The administration in western regions of Ukraine is nearly all Russified. The MVD is directed chiefly by Russians. During office hours everyone speaks Russian, whether they know the language or not. The Ukrainian spoken in Lviv is purer than in Kiev. It appears from conversation with people that officially there is no compulsion to use the Russian language, but there is an aversion to Ukrainian, particularly in government offices. Applications in Ukrainian are not considered and people making them are marked (this was noted by the visitor's brother).

Traveling by train from Lviv to Zabolotiv (via Stryj) the tourist talked with the conductor who switched to Ukrainian when he found out that the visitor was a Ukrainian from Canada. He also met some students on the train (this was the time of the October Revolution holidays; i.e. around November 7), who were returning home from the Denbas, Kherson and other places where they had been seasonally employed. A co-ed, a third-year student of education from Chernivtsi University mentioned the "banderivtsi" who were said to have been operating all over Ukraine (from the Polish border to the Dnieper and on the Left Bank, with their centre in Rivne, Volhynia). Concerning the underground and UPA, the MVD liquidated the last stronghold of the UPA in his native village of Trostianets, district Zabolotiv, province Stanislaviv, only in January 1953. It is said that partisans still exist in the Carpathians: they are suffering but not giving up; they don't fight the MVD unless cornered. "Partisans" are also said to be operating in the neighborhood of Mostyska (province of Drohobych): a friend of his who went to visit his family there had to go back to Lviv the same day he came, and then left for Canada. His family was afraid to shelter him fearing the underground.

Passing through Chortkiv (Ternopil province) he saw large troop concentrations  
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SECRET



**SECRET**

of all kinds of arms. The movement of troops was noticeable during the Hungarian revolt.

He found out about the Hungarian revolution from foreign broadcasts. He personally listened to a Voice of America broadcast for the first time in the home of a woman physician who had come back from exile. According to "Joe" the people get virtually all information from foreign broadcasts.

A majority of the people is dissatisfied and complaints are made quite openly; for example, about working days, lack of consumer goods, etc.

Goods are distributed chiefly in the large centers; the smaller the place (e.g. county seat) the less it is cared for. The people suffer and do the best they can under the circumstances. Very many have returned from exile. He did not hear about any deportations during his stay.

People whom he met did not believe that he only came for a visit and would be able to go back to Canada because nobody had heard of such a case.

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