

~~TOP SECRET~~

PROJECT OUTLINE

CRYPTONYM : AEROOT (formerly AEBASIN FI)

HEADQUARTERS CASE OFFICER:

AREA DIVISION: SR

Room No. 2508 "J"
Extension 3264 3582
Date 5 January 1954

STATION : Washington, D. C.

The attached Project Outline is presented for approval.

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

JAN 15 1954
Chief, SR/2

SR/COP

Chief, SR

28 January 1954
Date

*Approved to
Office -
January 1990*

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PROJECT OUTLINE

CRYPTONYM: AEROOT

PART I

1. Area of Operations

Estonian SSR and vicinity.

2. Purpose

- a. Procurement of operational and positive intelligence in the Estonian SSR.
- b. Establishment of support facilities in the Estonian SSR for the attainment of long-range intelligence objectives as defined in reference 4.a. below.

3. Background

a. Our original efforts at recruitment of suitable Estonian agent candidates for infiltration into the target area were conducted under LCHOMELY, which was the predecessor to Basic Plan AEBASIN, under which the current Project AEROOT is being presented for approval.

b. In May 1952, LCHOMELY recruitment efforts in Sweden were cancelled due to the unfavorable character of persons involved in recruiting, including controversial Estonian politicians. The agent candidates who had been spotted prior to May under LCHOMELY declined to undertake the mission in October 1952. It was then considered necessary to concentrate all efforts for AEROOT agent recruitment in the U.S. The restrictions imposed upon the recruitment of FI agents in the U.S. for AEBASIN area necessitated the search for suitable assets in other areas. Since the Estonian emigre pool in Sweden was still considerable, a new approach to recruitment, well compartmented from political activity, was initiated in December 1952. A recruitment plan for AEROOT candidates, which eliminated the LCHOMELY mistakes, was submitted to the [] [] The plan was activated by the Principal Estonian REDSOX Agent in Stockholm, who proceeded with the recruitment task in his area in an efficient and secure manner. So far, the results produced by this Principal Agent through the [] have provided sufficient agents for the AEROOT Project's Spring Mission of 1954.

4. References

a. USSR Country Strategic Plan (Top Secret document Reg. #59961 of 1 May 1952).

b. AEBASIN Basic Plan (Top Secret document, Reg. #86981).

c. AEROOT ~~APP.~~ (Top Secret document, Reg # 89955)

5. Objectives

Present →

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- Ins. 2* *a* To establish in the Estonian SSR covert resident agent personnel who can assist agents in the procurement of operational and strategic intelligence, and provide assistance in agent infiltration and exfiltration.

6. du mls made
6. Targets

- a. Specific intelligence targets in the Estonian SSR are outlined in (1) Top Secret SR Memorandum, Control #73433, 21 March 1952, "Intelligence Targets for 1952," and (2) Top Secret SR Memorandum, Control #84795, 24 November 1952, "Priority Targets in the Baltic Republics, East Prussia, Karelo-Finnish SSR, Murmansk and Leningrad Area."
- b. Other targets will be included according to requirements commensurate with the capabilities of the operating agents.

7. Tasks

- a. Recruitment, training and infiltration into the target area of suitable agent personnel.
- b. Establishment of lines of communication with such agents in the Estonian SSR, including the use of S/W and W/T.
- c. Development of informants for the procurement of operational and strategic intelligence.
- d. Establishment of support points to assist in the further development of intelligence gathering activities in the Baltic States.

Insert 3
Insert 4
8. Personnel

a. Cryptonyms

(1) AELUNG (agent trainer)

(2) AENOTE (agent trainer)

(3) AEPALM (disposed)

(4) AESKIP (disposed)

(5) AESTEM

(6) AEROOT/1

(7) AEROOT/2

b. Personal Data

- (1) AELUNG: Agent Trainer. AELUNG is a former Estonian General Staff officer with a rank of captain up to 1940. He had

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Ins. 2

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Insert
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8. Personnel

a. Cryptonyms

- (1) AELUNG (agent trainer) *MARIO K. GIORDANO* } UNDER
- (2) AENOTE (agent trainer) *PATRICK B. NEWENS* } DOB
- (3) AEPALM (disposed)
- (4) AESKIP (disposed)
- (5) AESTEM *MORTIMER F. DIGDAN* ^E
- (6) AEROOT/1 *RNCHANGE (ALDEN K. NEIGHBARGER)*
- (7) AEROOT/2 *AETAXI (JEROME N. GAVESTONE)*

Insert

b. Personal Data

(1) AELUNG: Agent Trainer. AELUNG is a former Estonian General Staff officer with a rank of captain up to 1940. He had

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extensive experience in training agents for behind the Soviet line missions with Finnish and German intelligence during 1940-1945. He was recruited by CIA in 1951 as a principal LCHOMELY agent instructor in Germany. He was brought to the U.S. in February 1953 in the same capacity for the AEROOT Project and was transferred for administrative and handling purposes to SR/DOB as of 1 November 1953.

- (2) AENOTE: Native-born Estonian employed as AEROOT instructor; transferred to SR/DOB as of 1 October 1953.
- (3) AEPALM: AEPALM was in training from June until October. He was removed from the Project because he did not fit in with the other two men and was disposed of on 24 November 1953.
- (4) AESKIP: AESKIP was found unacceptable for agent work and returned to his place of origin.
- (5) AESTEM: Principal ^{FI} Agent. AETSEM is a former Estonian Air Force colonel who, while still a high school student, began his fight against the Communists in 1918 as a volunteer in the Estonian Army. He is 34 years old, a graduate of the Estonian Military Staff College, and speaks, reads, and writes Estonian, English, German, and Russian. He acquired some intelligence experience as Chief of the Estonian Voluntary Self Defense Corps and Estonian Traffic Police during the German occupation of Estonia in 1941-1944. From February 1945 to April 1945, subject worked with the German Abwehr on the Eastern front. During the years of 1929, 1932, and 1939, subject was assigned by the Estonian Government to the British Royal Air Force for the purpose of taking various courses and for the purchase of airplanes and equipment. Subject holds an important post in the Estonian Veterans Union in New York City, is a member of the Estonian National Committee in the U.S., is a member of the Anglo-Estonian Culture Society, and a member of the Executive Board of the Estonian Relief Committee, Inc. in New York City. His contacts and connections with the Estonian ⁶²⁷⁵⁴⁸ émigré organizations provide him good access to the potential agent pool for future AEROOT agent recruitment. AESTEM was given training in spotting, recruiting, CE operations and SI.
- (6) AEROOT/1: (formerly RNCHANGE). Is an action agent currently being trained for infiltration into the Estonian SSR. He has many relatives and friends in the target area who may provide some support to him. Subject is 30 years old and a seasoned frontline veteran of the Estonian front during World War II, and has had experience with the Estonian partisan forces. He was recommended by the AEROOT recruiter as a man with a well-developed character, an old soldier and a bitter enemy of the Communists and Russians; he is undertaking the

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~~assignment as an opportunity to work against the Russians in Estonia--an opportunity for which he waited for a long time.~~

Insert 6

(7) AEROOT/2: (formerly AETAXI). A native-born Estonian, 30 years of age, is currently being trained with AEROOT/1 for a joint infiltration into the Estonian SSR. He has relatives and friends whom he hopes to be able to contact for operational support. AEROOT/2 has front-line experience fighting the USSR with Germany during the war. He and AEROOT/1 are friends of long standing and appear to have confidence in each other.

Insert 7

9. Operational and Security Clearances

AEROOT personnel have covert security clearances granted on the following dates:

AELJUNG	12 January 1952	JG-3721 #50562
AENOTE	29 July 1952	PZ-3265 #28635
AEPALM	10 April 1953	C-19257 #84788
AESKIP	10 April 1953	C-19256 #84779
AESTEM	7 April 1953	C-17638 #82620
AEROOT/1	30 April 1953	JG-5420 #52774

AEROOT/2	18 June 1953	CSC-91537
AEROOT/3	22 December 1954	C-32592 # 114300
AEROOT/4	5 January 1954	C-14069 # 79661

10. Cover

- a. The cover used by the case officers in the U.S. in contact with ~~the principal agents, instructor-agents, and with agent trainees~~ is that of an unidentified U.S. Government agency.
- b. Agent cover legends will be prepared to fit the specific agent requirements and will be based on available documentation.

Indigenous

as well as with indigenous instructors and that they have dealings with the AEROOT personnel.

11. Contact and Communications

- a. Direct contact exists between the agents and the case officer during the training period. ~~Personal contact is maintained with the Principal Agent and AEROOT instructors.~~ *as well as with*
- b. S/W communication is planned as the primary channel of communication with the agents in the target area. An alternate channel of contact ~~can be established~~ via W/T.

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12. Control and Motivation

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- a. AEROOT 1 and 2; are dependent on CIA for help in rehabilitation after completion of their missions; their salaries and bonuses remain under Agency control. They are apparently not subordinated to any other government or emigre political organizations. Their motivation is based on ideological opposition to Communism and the Bolshevik occupation of their native land. *AEROOT/1 is reported killed. AEROOT/2 sentenced by the Soviets has not made*
- b. AESSEM is physically under U.S. control due to the fact that he has established permanent residence in the U.S. As a former Estonian officer, he had exhibited a strong will to continue the fight against the Communist regime in Estonia and for the liberation of his native land for some time prior to his association with the Agency. *up to this date.* *His FAMILY OF BIRSON AND ONE DAUGHTER AND WIFE, ARE IN THE U.S. HE HAS HIS FIRST U.S. PAPERS TOWARDS CITIZENSHIP.*
13. Equipment and Other Support

Insert 3

See Logistical Annex will be prepared by SR Logistics in consultation with Headquarters Project case officers

14. Coordination

a. Coordination of this Project has been effected with the Office of Communication, TSS, Procurement and Supply, SR Logistics, SR/DOB, and consultations are in progress with Air and Maritime Support Offices.

b. All activities under this Project which affect the areas of WE and/or WH Divisions' responsibilities are and will continue to be coordinated with these Divisions.

aut c. Training of alien instructors and agents has been and will continue to be coordinated with the Office of Training and DOB.

e.a. The problems of the entry of aliens has been and will continue to be coordinated with the Alien Affairs Branch, Inspection and Security Office.

d.e. Procurement of supplies and equipment has been and will continue to be coordinated with the Procurement and Supply Office.

Insert 9

15. Timetable

Training of the agent AEROOT/1 was begun on 15 June 1953, and of AEROOT/2 on 25 September 1953, and will continue through 20 April 1954. The estimated time of agent departure from the U.S., and the beginning of the target mission will be in early spring 1954. Infiltration, in order of preference, will be by (1) sea, (2) balloon, or (3) aircraft. The date of termination of mission is estimated to be summer 1956.

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PROJECT OUTLINE

CRYPTONYM: AEROOT

PART II

16. Estimated Cost

a. Estimated AEROOT Budgetary Requirements for 12-month Period (from date of approval of this changed project):

Compensation:

Salary for AEROOT/1	\$ 4,200.00
Salary for AEROOT/2	4,200.00
Salary for one covert associate	5,000.00

Travel

Operational Expenses:

Purchase of information	[]
Entertainment and other operational support	
Purchase of currency	

Death Benefits*

~~20,000.00~~

see commitments for project/cont. 23 Feb 54

Supplies and equipment

[]

TOTAL:

[]

b. Project allotment will be charged to the budget of 4-3420-53-013.

17. Special Problems and Commitments

AEROOT/1 and /2

a. The Agency is committed to provide assistance for the agents' rehabilitation in Sweden or in the Western Hemisphere after the completion of a two-year mission in the denied area.

b. Agents who go on missions into the denied area have been promised \$10,000.00 death benefits and \$5,000.00 bonus each after the completion of a two-year mission in the target area.

c. Escrow accounts are authorized for AEROOT/1 and AEROOT/2. During each month of the training period, each agent will be paid \$100.00 in cash, and \$250.00 will be deposited in an escrow account. If the agent refuses to go on his mission, the amount in escrow will be forfeited. During the period that the agent is on his mission, his entire salary will be placed in escrow.

\$20,000

Authorized, but not anticipated to become payable in the course of the next 12 months.

Handwritten notes and signatures in the bottom left corner, including 'AEROOT/1 and /2' and other illegible text.



Per conversation with Case Officer, it is our understanding that Project AEROOT replaces AEBASIN



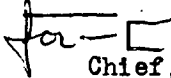
SECRET

18 January 1954

LOGISTICAL ANNEX


The Logistical Annex for Project AERQOT-FI is on file in SR/Logistics. See the financial section of the Project for the estimated materiel cost.

 
SR/2 Logistics Liaison Officer

 

Chief, SR/Logistics

S E C R E T

TO : Chief, SR Division

ATTN : 

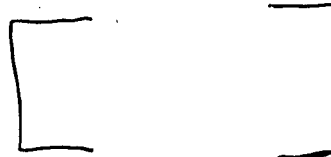
FROM : Assistant Director for Communications

SUBJECT: Project AEROOT

1. Subject project has been reviewed by this Office. No Communications facilities beyond those already existing will be required in support of this project.

2. It is intended that this memorandum shall accompany subject project when presented for approval in lieu of a Communications Annex for the project.

FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNICATIONS:



Chief, OC-O&T

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

TO : Chief, SR Division

JAN 21 1954

ATTN : []

FROM : Assistant Director for Communications

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FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNICATIONS:

[]

Chief, CC-0&T

S E C R E T

S E C R E T

TO : Chief, SR Division

ATTN : []

FROM : Assistant Director for Communications

SUBJECT: Project ~~AEROOT~~

JAN 23 1954

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2. It is intended that this memorandum shall accompany subject project when presented for approval in lieu of a Communications Annex for the project.

FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNICATIONS:

[]
Chief, CC-OUT []

S E C R E T

9 March 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Project AEROOT - FI SR/ 2

Case Officer []

SUBJECT: Obligations of Funds for Materiel and Supplies

1. Project AEROOT - FI as approved for the period 3-1-54 thru 2-28-55 provides \$ [] for materiel and supplies; \$ [] is for ZI support thru the Logistics Office and \$ 0 is for materiel support from sources other than the Logistics Office. Expenditures and unliquidated obligations for support thru the Logistics Office for the current project approval period totals \$ [].

2. Where funds have been spent in excess of the amount authorized for ZI materiel support, funds available for other project support, i.e., salaries, ops expenses, offshore materiel support, etc., will be reduced by the excess amount.

Note: This does not include subsidy funds.

[]
Chief, SR/Logistics

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SECURITY INFORMATION

ATTACHMENT NO. 1

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete this form in triplicate at the time approval or other action on a project is requested, or when an increase or decrease in the fiscal year allocation of funds is necessary. (After processing, one copy will be sent to Finance Division, one returned to the appropriate division or staff, and the original retained in FI/Admin.) For detailed instruction, see CSI 236-1, Annex D.

FI OPERATIONAL ALLOCATION

TO : FI/Admin/Budget
THROUGH: FI/Plans/Projects Branch

SUBJECT: Allotment of funds to AEROOT 4-3420-53- Headquarters
PROJECT NAME OR ALLOCATION NUMBER STATION OR MISSION

1. AUTHORIZATION - AMOUNT FOR WHICH APPROVAL OR OTHER ACTION IS REQUESTED:

Compensation ----- 13,400
Allowances -----
Travel -----
Operational Expense -----
Other: Material -----
Death benefits ----- 20,000
Total -----

Project approved from 1 March 1954
to 28 Feb. 1955 in the amount of
FI/PLANS/PROJECTS BRANCH DATE

2. ALLOCATION - ON THE BASIS OF THE ABOVE AUTHORIZATION (PLUS PREVIOUS APPLICABLE AUTHORIZATIONS) THE FOLLOWING AMOUNTS ARE ALLOCATED FROM _____ TO 30 June 1954. (ALLOCATIONS MUST BE ISSUED ON FISCAL YEAR BASIS, 1 JUL-30 JUN, AND WILL INCLUDE FUNDS EXPENDED UNDER PRIOR AUTHORIZATIONS.)

Compensation ----- 5,600
Allowances -----
Travel -----
Operational Expense -----
Other: Material -----
Total -----

Funds to be withdrawn from allocation to AEBASIN/FI.
Allocation issued in the amount of
for fiscal year 1954.
FI/ADMIN/BUDGET DATE 3-24-54

3. ADMINISTRATIVE - INDICATE BELOW ANY DETAILS THAT WILL ASSIST FINANCE DIVISION IN MAKING ADVANCES, DISBURSEMENTS AND ACCOUNTINGS:

- A. Type of project? (Subsidy, proprietary, etc.) Other
B. By what method are payments to be made? Through Hdq case officer
C. Funds will be accounted for by:

- (1) Receipts only (CFR 9.4) Administrative Plan in process
(2) Regular financial accountings (AFR 30-10)
(3) Other (Explain):

4. OTHER APPROVALS - FINANCE DIVISION MUST HAVE, IN ADDITION TO FI PROJECT APPROVAL, SPECIFIC WRITTEN APPROVAL ON CERTAIN TYPES OF EXPENDITURES BEFORE FUNDS CAN BE ADVANCED. INDICATE BELOW ANY APPROVALS IN THIS CATEGORY THAT HAVE BEEN SECURED:

- Purchase of automobile Approval of administrative plan when required
 Purchase of major items of equipment Other (Explain):
 Rentals in excess of that permitted by regulation

5. ADDITIONAL CRYPTONYMS, PSEUDONYMS, ETC.

AEROOT/1,2 AESTEM

 CASE OFFICER 3264 EXTENSION 1/20/54 DATE DIVISION CHIEF OR DESIGNEE