

SECRET

2 NOV 1958

Debriefing of Vitolds BENKIS, former British REDBOX Agent.

Vitolds BENKIS, Leo ROSENBAUM

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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1. The undersigned, as [redacted], met with Vitolds BENKIS on 31 October 1958 at the Hotel Manger in Rochester, New York. The purpose of the meeting was to debrief him regarding his experiences as a REDBOX agent for the SIS. BENKIS examined my documentation ( US Army Element, Composite Operations Group) very carefully reading each word and checking out the data in the physical description. I explained that I had been briefed by [redacted], and that my Operations Group wanted to learn about BENKIS's experiences. BENKIS agreed to a debriefing session, and we began immediately.

2. After several hours of debriefing, a break was taken. During the break, BENKIS remarked, "This is being done for the British isn't it?". I informed him that he was being debriefed for the U.S. Government. He appeared doubtful, so I showed him the letter he had mailed to the accommodation address. He said that the letter was not a valid bona fide because it could also be in the hands of the British, since it was the British who had notified him that he would receive an accommodation address in the first place. I reminded him of my U.S. documentation, but BENKIS replied that the British were perfectly capable of producing forgeries. After a few minutes BENKIS said, "The FBI knows you are here.", in a way which made his words serve as either a question or statement. I replied, "If the FBI knows I am here, it's only because my unit has told them." He replied, "I'm only making a joke."

3. BENKIS's final comment regarding the British was that it made no difference whether I was debriefing him on behalf of the British or not, because he had told them the truth before and he was telling me the truth now.

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4. The next debriefing of HENKIS took place Saturday morning, 1 November. Before the session began, I explained that I wanted to show him certain photographs which the U.S. Government considers to be classified information, and therefore, I would request him to sign a secrecy agreement. He read the agreement carefully, had me fill in the date, and then signed it. He was apparently reassured to see a secrecy agreement with the U.S. Government seal on it, because from this point on, the debriefing went along very smoothly.

5. The following day, 2 November, the third and final debriefing session was concluded. I asked HENKIS for an address where he might be reached since he said he might go to California. HENKIS gave the name and address of his brother:

Alexander HENKIS  
821 Circle Drive  
Highpoint, North Carolina.

His brother is a professor at High Point College, supporting his wife, children and mother. HENKIS requested that we be discrete in using the above address because his mother was living there, and knew very little about his contact with the British and American Governments.

6. Vitold HENKIS's present address is, 1008 Serril Drive  
Rochester, New York.  
Tel. Hamilton 6-0873

7. Assessment:

a. HENKIS was neat and well dressed and presented a pleasing appearance. He claimed to be unemployed and stated that he had found only sporadic employment as a house painter since arriving in the U.S.

b. He is apparently unhappy and disillusioned with the British, and feels that they still do not believe his story, as evidenced by his initial suspicions toward me as a possible British agent. He apparently believes that he was able to come to the U.S. only after high-pressureing the British.

c. Rapport was established with HENKIS only after acceptance of bona fides. He is not the type of individual that one can approach quickly. He gives the impression of a man used to the better things in life. For example, he ordered martinis at the bar. He dressed tastefully, and his manner displayed a social awareness.

d. In Riga, his family had enjoyed a fairly large house and a full time housekeeper. His adult life, however, has dealt harshly with him. Born in 1918 into a family of means, he successively became a pilot in the Latvian Air Force, a POW, a refugee, a coal miner, a trusted British agent, a suspect of British Intelligence, a drill press operator, and now an unemployed house painter in the U.S.

e. He was more than willing to discuss his activities in Latvia and his dealings with British Intelligence, but he displayed great reticence in discussing his personal life and contacts. His memory was better than average, and he was able to reconstruct many events from notes he had made.

f. It is impossible to judge the truthfulness of his story at this time, but I find it difficult to reconcile the fact that HENKIS was perceptive enough (perhaps unconsciously) to be alarmed by single events with the fact that he apparently never realized that he was under KIS control. It is therefore, my opinion that he is either evading admission of KIS control or is extremely naive. His naivete remains to be determined.

g. A chronological account of HENKIS's activities in Latvia and England on behalf of British Intelligence is appended hereto:

BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Prior to the Soviet invasion of Latvia in 1940, BERKIS was a member of the Latvian Air Force. The Soviets grounded him in 1940. When the Germans occupied Latvia in 1941, BERKIS and others formed a resistance group to aid the Germans. Under the German occupation BERKIS was with the Latvian Political Police investigating Communist activity. In 1943 BERKIS joined the Latvian Legion of the German Luftwaffe and in 1944 was sent to Germany to continue his training. Towards the end of the war he crossed over into Denmark. In 1945 he was taken POW by the British and was sent to Schleswig-Holstein.

RECRUITMENT

In 1947 BERKIS got his papers and went to England as a refugee. In 1949, BERKIS went to work in the coal mines in Coventry. During the summer of that year, BERKIS was contacted by a man he had flown with in the Latvian Legion whose name was Rudolf's SILARIS. SILARIS spoke to BERKIS of a resistance group which was possibly still operating inside Latvia. He further indicated to BERKIS that he had some unspecified connections with the British government and that the British were looking for candidates to fly supplies into this partisan group. SILARIS further indicated that BERKIS was under consideration for this job and that the British were checking on his political affiliations. He also told BERKIS that the operation had been approved and that if BERKIS were approved he would be sent to flying school.

Several weeks later SILARIS visited BERKIS and told BERKIS that the British had changed their plans. He went on to say that before they dropped supplies in, they must know what is going on inside Latvia, and that BERKIS had been selected to do this. BERKIS agreed and SILARIS went outside to bring in a British intelligence contact. This contact turned out to be a man called VICTORS who said that he (VICTORS) was a Latvian who had come to England before the last war and was now a British subject.

VICTORS said it would be BERKIS's job to go to Latvia for three to six months and then return to England. VICTORS also told him that he would go to school for six to eighteen months. BERKIS was told to quit his job when he received a letter and to come to the address given in the letter. At this time VICTORS gave BERKIS enough money to come to London. A week later, he received the letter.

TRAINING

BERKIS was met in Huston Station in London, and taken to a hotel where he was told to wait for one week while they were fixing up documents for him to go to Germany for training. He met with VICTORS several times

in London and told VICTORS he was worried about going to Riga since he (BERKIS) had served in the Latvian Political Police, had been a sportsman and a flyer there. He was told by VICTORS not to worry since his activities in Riga had been several years ago. Up to this point BERKIS had not signed any papers and as the operation turned out BERKIS never did sign any papers except one receipt for supplies received before going into Latvia and that was signed in alias.

BERKIS was assigned an alias and arrangements were made for him to fly to Germany in an RAF plane. In mid July 1949, he landed near Hanover. He was trained in Senne (near Bielefeld) by a German instructor whose name was SHAFFER. He lived in a house occupied by SHAFFER, his wife and three children. SHAFFER, who was his W/T instructor did not know BERKIS' true name, nationality, or job. BERKIS had a British instructor who taught him code work, S/W and map reading. He remained in Senne for three and one half months.

VICTORS briefed BERKIS that he would go alone into Latvia and said that others were already there. Three weeks before BERKIS was to leave Senne, ULDIS, who was another trainee, showed up. SILARIS had apparently told ULDIS BERKIS' real name since when ULDIS met BERKIS, he spoke to him using BERKIS' true name. BERKIS still does not know ULDIS' real name. Since ULDIS previously had been a W/T operator, he was only trained in W/T for three weeks. ULDIS had previously served with the Latvian Legion.

A British case officer, JAMES had been assigned to BERKIS and ULDIS. About three weeks after ULDIS had joined BERKIS in Senne, JAMES told them that the resistance group had asked for money and other supplies.

#### DISPATCH

The British vacillated in their decision to send the two men into Latvia and finally in October 1949 they went from Hamburg to Flensburg to Ekefôrde. At Ekefôrde they boarded a German V boat which was staffed entirely with Germans. After three or four false starts, they left Ekefôrde and went as far as Bornholm, Denmark. From Bornholm they went to the island of Gotland. Their equipment consisted of W/T sets, code books, food, hand generators, money and ammunition. They landed in Latvia near Jurkalne, slightly north of the Rive River. The two men were exhausted from the experience of the landing and slept most of the following day and started traveling at night.

#### FIRST CONTACT

Three or four nights later, while going through the woods, they saw they were near the town of Piltene. ULDIS remained behind with the gear and BERKIS went into town. JAMES had told BERKIS that his first contact was to be a priest, AMOLS, who lived in Piltene. After walking fifteen

kilometers from the woods BERKIS found himself three kilometers east of Piltene near a small farm house. He approached a woman in the field and asked her where he could find the local priest. This woman claimed not to know. BERKIS walked into town and asked a woman street cleaner where he might find Father AMOLS. She instructed him to go a few kilometers out of the west side of the town. He followed her directions and found Father AMOLS. BERKIS used the following passwords when he found AMOLS, "I am looking for my relative SIETINSONS." BERKIS thinks there was more to his passwords, but he has since forgotten. AMOLS did not reply as JAMES had briefed BERKIS he would. AMOLS looked through his papers and said that he could not find the right answer to his question. BERKIS felt that since both description and the name given by JAMES were right he could trust AMOLS. BERKIS later remembered that the password to be used with AMOLS had originally come from JANSONS to the British while JANSONS was in Sweden. AMOLS appeared to be quite nervous and appeared not to trust BERKIS so BERKIS decided to tell him the truth. BERKIS felt that the British would not send him into a trap. He told AMOLS of their landing and requested aid. AMOLS answered the request by asking how he had crossed the Venta River. BERKIS said he had crossed on a ferry boat. When BERKIS had been in Germany, JAMES had briefed BERKIS that they would cross the Venta River by bridge. Apparently the answer satisfied AMOLS because he then told BERKIS to get some sleep. After a short nap, AMOLS asked BERKIS why he had come to Latvia illegally. BERKIS gave him a short run down of the reasons why he was there. Since they did not trust each other fully, BERKIS decided to make his way back to ULDIS. JAMES had said back in Germany that one of the leaders of the resistance organization would provide them with documents and lead them to the Partisan group. BERKIS started walking back to the ferry boat and shortly before he came to the Venta River he saw AMOLS coming after him on a bicycle. AMOLS said that he was really happy to see that BERKIS was going to cross the river on the ferry and that he was just checking on BERKIS' story. AMOLS asked BERKIS where he and ULDIS would go from there and BERKIS said they would go to Ventspils. AMOLS told him not to go to Ventspils because of the number of Russian check points along the way. He told them to go to Riga and see a Dr. BERGMANIS and ask BERGMANIS to introduce him to RIEKSTINS. BERGMANIS's address was given as Riga, Stabo Iela. AMOLS pointed out to BERKIS that he (AMOLS) was just a contact man for the Partisans and explained that he was in a bad position since he was a priest, but he did agree to give the address since he had been recruited by JANSONS. JAMES had also told BERKIS to spend six months with the Partisan group before going on to Riga, and AMOLS had told him at this point to go straight to Riga. The meeting seemed to upset AMOLS.

#### TRIP TO RIGA

BERKIS joined ULDIS and told what had happened. They were both frightened and decided to bury their material where they were. They spent the night in the woods, and the following morning they started for Riga. AMOLS had said it was all right to hitch rides with lorries and to give tips

to the drivers. The next morning they started walking toward Kuldiga. After walking about ten kilometers they met a lorry and got a ride as far as Kuldiga. They left the lorry in town and asked the driver how much they owed him. The driver said, "Since you are traveling by lorry you must know." They gave him ten rubles and he drove off. In Kuldiga they went to a coffee shop where they had a meal, a glass of beer and bought some cigarettes. From there they walked south to Saldus. Traffic was coming in the opposite direction and approximately ten kilometers before Saldus they got a ride on a lorry carrying vegetables. They left this lorry near the Saldus railroad station. They had planned to take a train from Saldus to Riga. They inquired at the station about the scheduling and were told that the next train would not leave until the next day. They decided not to wait and walked on down the road towards Riga. After a while they met up with a fourteen year old boy driving a horse and buggy who offered them a ride. The boy told them that the busses ran early in the morning from Saldus to Jelgava. They could not sleep in any of the parks or other places in town because of the dogs. After thirty kilometers with the boy and the buggy, they found themselves a place to lie down and go to sleep. It was really too cold to sleep so very early the next morning they started walking again hoping to see the bus. Finally the bus came and they got on board. They asked the girl selling the tickets on the bus if the bus went to Jelgava and she told them it did. ULDIS paid at that time. More passengers entered the bus along the road. They noticed that other passengers were buying tickets to Riga. When the tickets were collected, ULDIS and BERKIS asked for tickets to Riga. The conductress said that they had requested tickets for Jelgava and they replied that they did not know that the bus went to Riga. The bus remained in Jelgava for one half hour and they saw that Jelgava was completely destroyed. There were a large number of passengers in Jelgava who wanted to go to Riga and only those passengers who had special papers (travel permits) could go.

#### ARRIVAL IN RIGA

On the 4th or 5th of November they arrived Riga. Since it was the Russian Revolutionary Day they found the streets full of soldiers and militia men. They were afraid of a document check point but did not come across any. JAMES had given BERKIS and ULDIS a total of four contacts. The two contacts in Ventspils BERKIS no longer remembers; the contact AMOLS, he had already met; and the fourth contact which was in Riga was APSITIS, located on Riga Valdemara Iela #37 or #39.

The name on the door was to be Dr. Guna APSITIS who was supposed to be the son of the Latvian Minister of Justice. Once in Riga, BERKIS left ULDIS on the street and went to the APSITIS address. Since he did not find the name on the door, he left and went back to ULDIS. BERKIS did not want to chance meeting someone other than APSITIS.

They now had left only the name of the contact supplied by AMOLS. They went to the address and found the name BERGMANIS listed without the Dr. There was no answer to the bell. They felt that BERGMANIS must be away at work so they decided to wait until after 5 p.m. On their way out of the building they met a woman on the stairway and when questioned she said there was no Dr. BERGMANIS living in the house. In order to kill time they went to get a shave. While they were in a bar having a beer, SUDRABS, a man who BERKIS knew came in. SUDRABS was a former pilot in the Latvian Legion. He was rugged and drunk and approached BERKIS. SUDRABS said, "You're coming home from work, huh?" He asked BERKIS for money enough to buy 100 grams of vodka. BERKIS said he did not have enough except for one beer. BERKIS and ULDIS went to another bar, had a meal and some more beer. After 5 p.m. BERKIS returned to BERGMANIS's flat and found him at home.

#### CONTACT WITH JANSONS

BERKIS asked him for RIEKSTINS and BERGMANIS asked him if it was urgent. BERKIS said it was and that he had a friend waiting for him. BERGMANIS went to fetch RIEKSTINS and BERKIS went to fetch ULDIS. Approximately three quarters of an hour later BERGMANIS returned with RIEKSTINS. RIEKSTINS turned out to be Vidovods SVEIKS also know as JANSONS, also known as RIEKSTINS. He came in with BERGMANIS and then BERGMANIS left. They started to talk and BERKIS told JANSONS that this address was given by AMOLS but that something was wrong with the passwords since AMOLS had not remembered his passwords.

Before departing for Latvia, JAMES had given BERKIS a package containing crystals to bury for JANSONS. It was not necessary for BERKIS to meet with JANSONS for the turnover. They told JANSONS of the speedboat landing and JANSONS said he had previously used the same speedboat. During the journey from Germany, the Captain of the speedboat had told BERKIS that they had previously landed four people in Latvia, two Estonians, one Lithuanian, and one Latvian. The Captain told BERKIS that the Estonian who was handling a Sten gun had accidentally shot a bullet through the fuel tank. JANSONS told of the same incident which he claimed happened when he was landed. JANSONS also said at this time that he was sent in from Sweden. During BERKIS's discussion with the boat Captain (HELMUTS), HELMUTS told him that he (HELMUTS) had landed agents during the war for the British. Since BERKIS was now satisfied with JANSONS's story he told JANSONS of the parcel which was buried.

From one of his acquaintances, BERKIS had heard the story of APSITIS attending class one day in high school wearing evening clothes. When BERKIS asked JANSONS concerning APSITIS, JANSONS said that APSITIS lived at the



address given him by JAMES and that it would have been perfectly all right for BERKIS to have knocked on the door and contacted AFSITIS. JANSONS also said that he and AFSITIS had attended high school together and told BERKIS of the incident of attending class in evening clothes. This was one of the things that convinced BERKIS of JANSONS's bona fides.

In his discussions with JANSONS, JANSONS told BERKIS that he was working for the British. He later said that he was dispatched from Sweden and actually was working for the Swedes. After BERKIS gave the crystals to JANSONS, JANSONS told BERKIS he had sent a message to the Brits asking what JANSONS himself should do about BERKIS and ULDIS. The British answered JANSONS with a description of the two and it was at this point that JANSONS finally was satisfied that BERKIS and ULDIS were bona fide. JANSONS also requested money from the British. JANSONS claimed not to have received the money or instructions.

That night they stayed in the BERGMANIS flat. They had a bottle of vodka and went to bed. JANSONS said that the following day he would arrange for another place for them to stay.

#### FIRST RIGA SAFEHOUSE

The following evening JANSONS came and took them to another place on Moscow Street in Riga, at the apartment of one PURMALIS. This apartment had only one room and a kitchen, and PURMALIS was worried that his wife might discover BERKIS and ULDIS. PURMALIS's wife was not at home since she was staying at the beach. JANSONS said that although the place was not good they would stay there until they found a new place. They remained there one week to ten days. PURMALIS did not work, but engaged in black-market dealings. BERKIS was worried since the police might catch up with PURMALIS and so discover him.

JAMES had told BERKIS as soon as it was possible for him to do so he should write an S/W message back to England. From PURMALIS's home he wrote his first S/W letter concerning his journey, AMOLS, and their difficult situation. He carried S/W carbon paper with him. He had two addresses to send to, one in Germany and one in Sweden. ULDIS also had several addresses. Later BERKIS found out that his first letter took only ten days to get to Germany, whereas the future letters he wrote took two or three weeks and sometimes longer. In all he wrote about twenty letters, only about half of these being received by the British.

PURMALIS usually was not at home, and JANSONS came every day. After ten days JANSONS took them to another place and JANSONS said they would make arrangements for the buried gear to be picked up.

#### SECOND RIGA SAFEHOUSE

Ten days later JANSONS took them to BERZAJIS house on Zaubes Iela. JANSONS took them to the BERZAJIS house and introduced them to BERZAJIS's brother who was living in this apartment. JANSONS told BERZAJIS's brother

that ULDIS and BERKIS were patriots and convinced him to hide the two of them. JANSONS told ULDIS and BERKIS not to tell BERZAJ'S brother anything. It was here that BERKIS met TALIS who turned out to be JANSONS brother. JANSONS told TALIS the story of BERKIS and ULDIS and TALIS in turn who knew BERZAJ'S very well, got BERZAJ'S to agree to having the two stay in his apartment. (This is exactly as told the undersigned by BERKIS.) JANSONS said that TALIS was the only man who would come to the apartment. JANSONS left and BERZAJ'S came home. TALIS introduced BERZAJ'S to BERKIS and ULDIS and told BERKIS and ULDIS how to behave in the flat. BERZAJ'S said that he was the assistant director of the National Theater of Riga. The apartment had three rooms, bath and kitchen. BERZAJ'S gave them one of the rooms and they remained there.

JANSONS came back the following day and asked what instruction the two had received from the British as to what they were to do. JAMES had given them a list of intelligence instructions. Since BERKIS's instructions from JAMES regarding the partisan work had not panned out, BERKIS wanted to get contacts from JANSONS and go to work. A week after moving into this apartment JANSONS arranged to have the equipment picked up. After this was done it was discovered that ULDIS's pistol was missing. When asked about this JANSONS said that they went after the gear with a lorry and they gave the pistol to the driver. He said they would get it back later, but they never did.

They still had to get passports. JAMES had told them they could get documents for about a thousand rubles. When asked about this, JANSONS said that he could get documents for them, but it would cost seven thousand rubles each. Since they had only about 15 thousand rubles, they decided not to get the passports. Instead, they gave JANSONS their pictures and he was to get them workers' certificates for which they paid 500 rubles each. These are changed every six months and JANSONS obtained one for each of them.

#### W/T CONTACT FROM RIGA

BERKIS was anxious to start work but JANSONS was afraid and said he could not give BERKIS any contacts or work since BERKIS had no proper documents, it was dangerous, and there was a possibility they could get caught. JANSONS looked for a spot to place the W/T set and operate it properly. Three months later JANSONS found a place to operate the W/T set from. This was on Tomsons Iela and it was from here that BERKIS first operated his W/T set. JANSONS had made arrangements with the owner of the flat and had gotten the key. The first six or seven times BERKIS tried to establish contact he failed. He had given JANSONS and TALIS the call sign and JANSONS arranged for TALIS to pick up the broadcast. TALIS did pick these broadcasts up. About the eighth time BERKIS established contact. Every week he had a contact from Riga and this lasted roughly ten or fifteen times. BERKIS told the British that he was short of money, that he did not have any passport and that JANSONS was not giving them any contacts and that JANSONS only gave him useless information.

BERKIS was later given another place to operate his W/T set from on Red Army Street, which was about 200 yards from the police station. JANSONS said that it was very dangerous to get information, and it was dangerous to ask his friends to get information.

After four months in BERZAJIS' flat, BERZAJIS said that he had to go to Leningrad for about six months. They told TALIS and got TALIS to get BERZAJIS to agree to let them stay on. BERKIS told JANSONS that it was not safe to keep all the equipment in the same place. JANSONS replied that it was very difficult to get safehouses and apartments. JANSONS claimed that BERZAJIS' flat was a good one and he requested BERKIS not to worry. He said that many Red Army officers lived on this street and that there are no night patrols.

#### BERKIS ATTEMPTS TO GET HIS OWN SAFEHOUSE

BERKIS was worried because JANSONS had wide contacts. BERKIS wanted a safehouse in case of emergency and since JANSONS would not help him with it he decided to contact his mother's sister - an aunt of his in Riga. His aunt's name was Emilija JAUNALKSNIS, her address is Dairnavu Iela. JAMES had not told BERKIS that he could not contact any friends or relatives so that he felt that he could do this. He knew the shop where his aunt worked, so he went to the address and found that it was no longer there.

Christmas Eve of 1950 he went to visit his father's grave in hopes of finding one of his relatives. No one came so he made the decision to go to the house where he and his family had lived and contact the housekeeper. The housekeeper's name was Pauline KLAVINS address: 44 Kalnciema Iela, Riga; the old phone number there is, 44447. As he approached the house he saw the housekeeper sweeping the street in front of his house. BERKIS approached her and started to talk and she recognized him at once. They went to her room in the house and she told him where his aunt presently lived and worked. The housekeeper was living in the same place where she had always lived. The housekeeper offered him money. While visiting with her, he heard his old grandmother walking around in the next room but did not see her or talk to her.

After he left the house, BERKIS went to the shop where his aunt worked. This was near closing time. He followed her on the street and on to the bus and made contact there. He later visited her three or four times in her apartment. He did not talk much with the aunt. She was very interested in her sons in the West and he passed her information concerning them. Both the aunt and the housekeeper could well imagine that he was in Latvia on secret work. His aunt's flat was quite crowded and she was able to offer him no help. He later gave his aunt's address to LEONS and when he went to Latvia at a later date LEONS promised to give her a thousand rubles. BERKIS heard later that LEONS had given his aunt the money.

BERKIS decided to make one more contact to attempt to get a safehouse on his own. He contacted the sister of a good friend of his who at one time belonged to the same aero club that BERKIS did. The friend's name was Martins KALVE and his sister's name was Elvira KALVE. She lived on Valmieras Iela. While BERKIS was in England, he had seen Martins and Martins had said that he had received news of his mother's death but that his sister was still living in the same apartment. BERKIS went to this apartment to see Elvira and rang the bell. Much to BERKIS' surprise Martins' mother opened the door. She was past eighty and did not recognize him. He told the old woman that he wanted to see Elvira and that he was a friend of Martins. She was quite frightened and said that she knew nothing of Martins' friends. The woman told him to come back when Elvira was home. He never went back because of the old woman. When he returned to England, he did not tell Martins about his mother but BERKIS did tell his own brother in High Point.

#### TALIS AND JANSONS

Once JANSONS bought some vodka and stayed longer than usual. BERZAJIS came home before JANSONS left and came into the room and started talking with them. He opened the drawer in the dresser and saw the two boxes containing the W/T set. Although he could not see what was inside the boxes he did see the W/T key. When JANSONS left BERZAJIS said, "I thought only TALIS would come here. I don't know what you are doing but don't get me into trouble." TALIS had told BERZAJIS later that he himself could not come so he had given the key to JANSONS. BERZAJIS did not say that TALIS was the brother of JANSONS, as a matter of fact, BERZAJIS acted as if he had never seen JANSONS before. During their discussions with TALIS, TALIS said he had been deported together with his parents to Siberia and he had escaped and returned to Riga. There he met his brother again and worked in the resistance. TALIS said further that nothing bad could happen to him, only that he could be sent back to Siberia. He said that he had buried his mother in Siberia after she had died of typhus. He said that people were afraid to help him so he had to dig the grave himself, and that he was very weak. He had to pull her to the grave and bury her without a coffin. He was ill himself and still has scars on his legs to show for his experiences in Siberia.

A short time later BERKIS received a message from British that they would send more money and asked BERKIS for an address to send it to. JANSONS arranged with BERKIS to send the address of the place where he had his W/T set on Tomsona Iela. JANSONS wrote on a piece of paper a list of vegetables and fruits. He tore this piece of paper in half giving one part to BERKIS and the other part to the man in Tomsona Iela. After a while the contact at Tomsona Iela said that something had gone wrong with the courier and that he did not know whether the courier had gotten caught or what had happened to him. This turned out to be the courier with the package. Quite a while later after BERKIS had joined

the Partisans in the woods the British asked him via W/T for a new address to deliver a package to, but JANSONS never gave him another address.

Located as they were in Riga, BERKIS and ULDIS ran out of money and found that they could not operate. JANSONS said that he would try to contact the Partisan leader and arrange for BERKIS and ULDIS to join the Partisans in the forest.

Shortly after JANSONS met with a man known as MAK SIS and arranged for BERKIS to meet MAK SIS in a public park in Riga. ULDIS did not want to come to this meeting since he was afraid to travel without documents. BERKIS met MAK SIS in the park and JANSONS introduced them and left. MAK SIS seemed to be very happy to see BERKIS and to have established contact with the West. He said that he would have BERKIS join one of his best Partisan groups. He emphasized that the main thing was that the Partisan groups are the only armed power in the resistance and that they must look after these people to help them survive until the right moment arrives. MAK SIS said that they must be extremely careful with BERKIS' W/T sets since it might be dangerous for the group. He told BERKIS about the discipline and that BERKIS and ULDIS must do as the leader of the group commands. He further instructed BERKIS that he must use his W/T set as little as possible. MAK SIS said that he would arrange for the journey to join the Partisan and that he would accompany them. Before he left he said that JANSONS would inform BERKIS and ULDIS later of their instructions. Ten to fifteen minutes later BERKIS met JANSONS once again. They returned to BERZAJ'S place and told ULDIS the news.

#### JOINING THE PARTISANS

After a week or two, JANSONS came back and said that everything was set and that a lorry was waiting. TALIS would help them carry the equipment. JANSONS followed them in the street. They met the lorry and found that MAK SIS was not there but another man was in his place. This turned out to be MAZ AIS who was from the Partisan group. MAZ AIS asked about pistols and was told that they did not have any. MAZ AIS said that he had a passport in case of a document check. If BERKIS was asked to show his passport, he was to fumble and then MAZ AIS would fire and then BERKIS would fire with a gun that he would be given. ULDIS had no pistol. They got on board the lorry and hid under the tarpaulin. No checks were made during the trip. At one place the lorry stopped and the driver got out and bought a bottle of vodka. They went from Riga to a spot near Tukums, for a rendezvous. They traveled on a new road going from Riga to Tukums. The lorry stopped on a road in the woods. The driver got out, walked about twenty yards into the woods with MAZ AIS and both whistled a melody. A short time later there was an answering melody and after a few minutes the Partisans came out. The entire Partisan group came to meet the lorry except for KOHS. The

group helped carry their gear and they finally arrived at the camp and drank vodka. The following day they unpacked. While they were unpacking the W/T set, one of the Partisans group who had the cable that went from the battery to the set noticed that the clip on it still had a tag marked "Made in England". When BERKIS was in Germany, JAMES and BERKIS had gone over the equipment and tried to remove all the labels. Once again the Partisans became very much afraid of BERKIS using this set and the Partisan group made BERKIS and ULDIS walk several miles from the camp every time they had to use it.

The following is a list of names of the Partisan group:

GARAIS, the leader, BARDA, PUIKA, MAZALS, FIRSTS, KOHS, JURKA, ULDIS, VILIS (BERKIS)

#### W/T COMMO FROM PARTISAN GROUP

The first W/T contact that BERKIS had from the woods he told the British of joining the Partisan group and requested instructions. The British replied that they were satisfied they had joined the Partisans. The group stayed in the Tukums area. As BERKIS remembers it, one area they stayed in was in the woods near Seme. Everytime they made a W/T broadcast they made many tracks in the ground transporting the set back and forth and BERKIS told the group that moving four or five miles would make no difference since he could change his frequencies. BERKIS also told them that even if the RIS were to use direction finding equipment they could not pinpoint the spot he was transmitting from that close. The Partisan group later agreed that BERKIS did not have to leave the camp in order to send.

PUIKA had an old German Army receiver which was not working since the tubes had gone bad. He said that before he had joined the Partisan group, his parents were deported to Siberia. He had worked in Riga in the VFI factory. After his family was deported, he joined the Partisan group. During his stay in Riga he joined a Russian Radio Amateur Club and learned W/T. He claimed that he had forgotten W/T and he thought it would be a good idea if BERKIS were to teach him so that in case anything happened to BERKIS contact would not be interrupted. Since BERKIS had a pair of spare head phones he trained PUIKA and PUIKA listened in on the spare phone on each contact that BERKIS had. He very rapidly picked up W/T and turned out to be a good operator. BERKIS told the British of this and asked British permission for PUIKA to do the next contact. The British agreed and he worked the next contact. The British said that he was a good operator and after that they asked details of where PUIKA had learned W/T. They appeared quite pleased with PUIKA. After this, the British sent BERKIS a security check to give to PUIKA. Afterwards, PUIKA and BERKIS took turns sending messages.

PARTISAN SUSPICIONS OF BERKIS AND ULDIS

When they first joined the Partisan group, the group was very suspicious of BERKIS and ULDIS. The leader of the group, GARAIŠ, said that "Although you both claim to come from the West we almost don't believe it." He said that at one time in Lithuania the Russians dropped parachuters to join the Partisans and gave them equipment made in England. BERKIS and ULDIS at this point became somewhat apprehensive. The group that they were with never let their guns out of their hands and BERKIS felt that they might be shot at any time. Once, returning from a contact, ULDIS (who was about 40 in 1949) was very tired and fell a little behind. The group had to wait for him. BERKIS told GARAIŠ he should not mind waiting since ULDIS was an older man. After returning to camp, they had some pure alcohol to drink. GARAIŠ said he had gotten the alcohol from a doctor friend of his. GARAIŠ took BERKIS aside and said "You (BERKIS) said that ULDIS was older than you, but ULDIS says that you are older than he, someone is lying. What is the truth?" GARAIŠ requested BERKIS to tell him how old he was. BERKIS said that ULDIS had told him (BERKIS) that he was forty years old. GARAIŠ had the two confront each other and asked ULDIS what his age was and ULDIS said forty. Finally GARAIŠ appeared to be satisfied. MAKSIŠ took BERKIS aside and told BERKIS not to mind GARAIŠ after a few drinks. Later on GARAIŠ became more friendly.

BERKIS and ULDIS volunteered for guard duty but GARAIŠ did not permit this. Men from the group often went to get food and said that they had a hiding place where they kept the food. Purpose was to save the cache. They never let ULDIS or BERKIS see where this cache was. They claimed that it was guarded all the time. BERKIS asked for an address in case of an emergency where they could have a rendezvous, and MAKSIŠ refused to give him one, saying that they would look after his safety.

A message was received from the base station in England requesting a place where they might deliver money or other materials. Instead of an address, BERKIS and GARAIŠ went into the woods to find a place. GARAIŠ suggested that the British send gold or watches and after BERKIS and GARAIŠ found the place for a cache they transmitted this to the base station. After some time a message was received from the British which said that they had put the package down in some other place near IRLAVA. The British gave a poor description of the place. Included in the British description was a bridge and when it was requested that they pinpoint the bridge, the British said that they could not give any better description. They (the Partisan group) went to IRLAVA and checked several bridges but claimed never to have found the cache.

It was April 1950 when BERKIS joined the Partisans. In August 1950 (during the Korean War) MAKSIŠ suggested that BERKIS return to England since World War III might be in the making and that BERKIS should go

back for purposes of planning partisan and guerrilla action. BERKIS sent a message to the British about this and they said it was not possible for BERKIS to return to England at this time.

#### NEW PARTISAN GROUP

In September 1950 BERKIS met another Partisan group. In this camp he fixed an aerial and prepared a place to fix in a hand generator to charge the batteries. Everyone took turns cranking the generator a half hour each day. One day they heard a noise near the camp while they were charging the battery. While investigating the noise, they saw some people approaching them. The Partisans claimed that these were MGB people. Peter, the leader of this Partisan group, immediately put up his hands. Partisans who were under cover held guns on the MGB group. The MGB personnel from the other side covered the Partisan group. Discussion between the leaders proved that they were not MGB but another Partisan group that was on the run and who had strayed away from their territory.

ULDIS, MAZAIS and BERKIS left the camp on GARAI'S orders. They went through the woods five to six miles away, stayed overnight and MAZAIS made arrangements to meet the following day.

#### STAY IN THE GAMEKEEPERS HOUSE

In 1950 between Christmas and New Years, the group went to live in the gamekeeper's house in Zemite. The house was occupied by VALDIS (the gamekeeper) who was a friend of GARAI'S. The four people from the Partisan group who went to live there were BERKIS, ULDIS, PUIKA and GARAI'S. The others in the Partisan group went to live in a place unknown to BERKIS.

About three months after they moved in there, the gamekeeper brought back a rumor to them that in the District where the British claimed to have put down a package that the road was being repaired and that some watches and gold were found. The workers who found the package argued among themselves whether or not to sell them. The MGB heard about this and arrests followed.

From VALDIS' house PUIKA operated the W/T set and BERKIS wrote S/W letters as well concerning plans that they were now in a position to arrange and organize a sea operation. In VALDIS' house, the group met several times with MAKSIS. It was there that MAKSIS made arrangements for a doctor (who BERKIS says he thought at the time was not a doctor at all) to see BERKIS. Later BERKIS told MAKSIS that it was a waste of time and it was then that MAKSIS confessed that he had not really been a doctor but had some medical knowledge. MAKSIS said that since he could get no real doctor he arranged for this man to come.



It was in VALDIS' house that the previous gamekeeper had been shot. VALDIS said that the shooting had occurred over an affair concerning a woman. Some of the belongings of the former gamekeeper were still left in the house. Whenever VALDIS left the house, which was quite often, it was necessary for the occupants to remain completely quiet so that they would not be discovered there. Sometimes people came and knocked on the door and HERKIS and the other Partisans who were there became perturbed. They discussed this with MAKSIS who suggested that PUIKA be given MAZAIS' passport and that VALDIS go to the local Communist Party Committee with the passport and say that PUIKA is a student from Riga whose nerves are shot and that he would live with VALDIS for a while. This meant that PUIKA could answer the door when people came and knocked on the door. Many of the people who knocked on the door of the gamekeepers home, were persons who were interested in obtaining the old gamekeepers belongings. One time someone came and knocked on the door. PUIKA did not open the door, he said to come back later when VALDIS was home. The people outside said that they were from the Communist Party Committee and that he must let them in. He did not do this and the group did not like the situation so they decided to leave and return to the woods. This episode was Easter time 1951.

The group ran out of money. At this time GARAIS got some news that a near by fisherman's kolkhoze would have a salary delivery. HERKIS said that he would help in the hold-up but GARAIS said that he could not let him do this without permission from MAKSIS. GARAIS asked MAKSIS concerning this and received permission. HERKIS assisted in the hold-up which consisted of disarming a guard and stealing the 10,000 rubles. This took place on a road near Klapakalna which is on the coastline near Tukums. Their camp was located seven kilometers from that point. A short time later they got the news that the MGB was doing a house search nearby and that they had arrested the Militia men involved and they were investigating the incident. The MGB at that time did not go searching through the woods.

In April 1950 MAKSIS said that he could make arrangements for HERKIS to return to England. He said it was possible to use a fishing vessel near Ventspils. During April and May of this year HERKIS had many W/T contacts with the British regarding this operation and the British finally agreed to meet the fishing vessel with a speedboat. Before this operation took place, (in 1951), some time at the end of April, MAKSIS gave HERKIS the address of some safehouses near the coastline. One of these safehouses which they were later to use was occupied by a woman whose Christian name was Silvija. HERKIS sent the exact location, the passwords and the names to the British.

When the British requested safehouses, the Partisans figured that the British were finally laying preparations for the operation to take place sometime during spring or autumn. This operation was at the suggestion of MAK SIS who wanted money, arms, etc., for the impending war. After the British agreed to the operation, they asked BERKIS to take with him another friend from the resistance--one of the leaders preferably. He told this to MAK SIS and suggested that he himself come. MAK SIS said that this was impossible and he suggested that GAR AIS go. BERKIS was not pleased with this because GAR AIS was only a leader of one of the Partisan groups. BERKIS wanted one of the higher ups from Riga to go. MAK SIS said it was very difficult to arrange anything like that and said that GAR AIS was the one man that could go.

#### ARRIVAL OF PETERS

In April 1951, PETERS arrived. BERKIS was sleeping in a bunker when PETERS arrived and he recognized him at once. PETERS and BERKIS were good friends from England. PETERS said that his landing operation was not a good one and that he had lost a man in the operation. The others who came in were TOMS, a Latvian; AUGUSTS, also a Latvian; and GUSTAVS, who was an Estonian. GUSTAVS was the man they had lost.

They were issued instructions by the British to part immediately after the landing. PETERS and GUSTAVS were to go to the safehouse provided by MAK SIS. GUSTAVS could not speak any Latvian. The area was flooded after they buried their gear. They landed on the coast just to the left of Kuldiga, not too far from the place where BERKIS himself had landed. Before crossing the main road along the coastline they buried their gear near the shore. They had to cross the Uzava river and found that the entire district was flooded. They crossed the river after burying their gear and by this time it was nearly light. After crossing the woods, they found that there was apparently some activity going on there because they saw a flashlight. They crossed in a hurry and went through the woods to try to make the safehouse.

PETERS and AUGUSTS were tired, cold and wet and found that they could hardly walk. Finally they found a house and they were in such bad condition they thought they would use their guns, stickup the occupants, take dry clothes, and perhaps get some help. PETERS was as confused and frightened as was GUSTAVS. The two started walking in the direction of the house. Before reaching the house GUSTAVS turned around and ran in the opposite direction and PETERS waved for him to come back. Against instructions GUSTAVS did not listen and continued running away. This was the last that PETERS saw of GUSTAVS. As PETERS was walking toward the house a man came out and PETERS asked him for help and dry clothes. The house was occupied by the man who

had come out and Russian Militia man who was not at home at that time. The man helped him in return for which PETERS gave him 800 rubles. The man also helped him cross over the river. From there PETERS went to the safehouse where he met MAKSIS. MAKSIS told him at that time that GUSTAVS' body had been found and that he had drowned in the river. PETERS told BERKIS that he had come to Latvia the same way that BERKIS had, that is from Ekeforde in the same speedboat. Three to five days after his landing PETERS arrived at the bunker where BERKIS was. BERKIS sent back a message to the British that GUSTAVS had died and that PETERS had joined him. MAKSIS told BERKIS that some of his people in the district had said that no documents had been found on GUSTAVS' body. This was also told to the British. Later MAKSIS made arrangements to get PETERS' and GUSTAVS' gear. GUSTAVS' radio and money were found in his knapsack when he drowned.

Before PETERS went to Latvia he did not know that another resistance group was operating in Riga.

AUGUSTS who accompanied PETERS and was one of the four men who landed with him was a representative of the resistance group operating in Riga, who had been sent to Sweden in a fishing vessel. He landed in Sweden in a rubber dinghy which left from the fishing vessel. The British contacted AUGUSTS in Sweden and took him to England. AUGUSTS was accepted as a representative of the Riga resistance group and the British were quite satisfied with him, gave him training and then re-dispatched him.

TOMS was sent out with GUSTAVS as his W/T operator. People said that because GUSTAVS was sent out the British recognized that there was a resistance group operating in Riga and that because GUSTAVS agreed to recognize SILARIS in London as the resistance movement representative further recognition by the British was given.

PETERS gave instructions to BERKIS that he was to finish his relationship with JANSONS and have no further contact with him since JANSONS was working with the Swedes. After PETERS met with BERKIS, BERKIS met with MAKSIS in the gamekeeper's house. Present at that meeting were PETERS, GARAIS, MAKSIS and BERKIS. PETERS gave MAKSIS his instructions. PETERS also gave a letter from ZARANIS (the counsel in London) to MAKSIS and everyone was quite pleased. PETERS also said that he had instructions for MAKSIS to go to Riga and operate. PETERS brought 70,000 rubles with him for their needs and also brought radio type beacons for guiding shore landing parties. He had no instructions how to use this equipment. He brought BERKIS new W/T plans, codes, broadcast plans, and S/W carbon sheets.

FIRST ATTEMPT AT REVELATION

May 1951 was a busy time since the speedboat operation which was supposed to carry GARAIS and HENKIS was about to take place. PERNS had carried some plans with him concerning this operation and a great deal of W/T traffic was being sent back and forth in order to complete the plans in time. Agreement was finally reached with the British via W/T and HENKIS and his group went to a spot somewhere near Ventpils. Arrangements were made for HENKIS and GARAIS to board a fishing vessel in the river below Ventpils.

Just before HENKIS came out with GARAIS the British asked HENKIS to obtain some passport samples. MAKIS managed to get 3 Russian passports. These were passed on to the British and the British later forged false passports on the basis of these. MAKIS also sent out work certificates and blanks.

Before the operation took place, they all met in a house near the river bank. MAKIS arranged for a lorry and PUKA came along as the W/T operator and together with MAKIS they all met at the house. This house was occupied by one Ella MARCINOVICS, Ventas Padomes Rukisi. The house was also occupied by Ella's husband who worked on a Russian kolhose. The group hid in a barn and fixed their antenna since they had to use the W/T set for final arrangements. GARAIS, who was supposed to return, did not come. PUKA accompanied HENKIS in the lorry. GARAIS showed up a few days later. Much later the British said that at this time GARAIS was in Ventpils getting his final instructions from the MEB. Final arrangements concerning the sailing were made and instructions were given by the British how to use the radio beacon.

Before they boarded they saw MAKIS and he said that GARAIS knows exactly what to do and to say and what to request from the British. This was the first time that MAKIS made mention of the fact that GARAIS knew of the seven Partisan groups. HENKIS figured that there were approximately 10 people in each. HENKIS did not know that he would have to hide in the boat; he thought that he would be one of the crew members. MAKIS had told them that the fisherman had to go to Ventpils and from there to Pavilosta where he would fetch some fishing nets. The fisherman arranged things so that the second fisherman he normally carried with him would not go with him. The plan was to go straight west from Ventpils fifteen miles out to meet the speedboat. Arrangements had been made that if the speedboat were not met the first night, they would not return to the harbor but would spend the time at sea, and try to rendezvous the next night at the same time.

The fisherman mentioned to BERKIS that MAKIS had recruited him through a retired Latvian sea captain. The captain said that he got 10,000 rubles for each trip. MAKIS said that he had already given him 5,000 rubles and the fisherman mentioned that he wanted his other 5,000 rubles.

BERKIS and GARAIIS got on board after MAKIS took them to the Venta river and rowed them to the fishing boat. While MAKIS rowed them out to the boat, he told them that they must hide while on the fishing boat and remain silent until they passed the Russian check point in Ventapils harbor. They were to hide between the deck and the bottom of the boat on a platform near the engine. The boat stopped at the Soviet control point and passed through without any difficulty. Later, a few miles out to sea, they left the hiding place and the fisherman said that the Soviet at the check point was drunk and checked the sailing permit only. BERKIS checked the course which turned out to be a true course and they reached the rendezvous point. BERKIS switched on the beacon. They waited and nothing happened. They went north from the meeting point, anchored the boat, and waited until the next night. They sailed south towards the Ventapils lights and then went back to the rendezvous point. Again they turned on the beacon and again no speedboat showed up. BERKIS suggested to GARAIIS that it was dangerous to return to Ventapils and perhaps they should point the gun at the fisherman and sail on to Gotland. GARAIIS said he didn't want to do that because they wanted to use the fisherman again and, since the fisherman was a good man, there was no reason to put him in danger. Therefore BERKIS agreed to return to Latvia. BERKIS checked the course again, and again it was correct.

BERKIS could not figure out why there had been no contact since the speedboat had on board the latest radar. This he had been told by JAMES. When he later returned to England he spoke to the speedboat captain who said that SILARIS had arranged for a Latvian air force captain to go along with the speedboat and his job was to row to the fishing vessel and back to the speedboat. The reason for no meeting could not be figured out except that the small correction magnets might have thrown off the radar. The German captain of the speedboat said that he went very close to Ventapils harbor and could even see the lights. He could not explain the failure for the meeting.

MAKIS had made emergency arrangements that if no contact had been made they could return to Ella's house. Passwords had been arranged with MAKIS to get in touch with him. Returning to Ventapils harbor they had to pass the check point again. This time several people came on board to check the boat but they did not lift the cover under which GARAIIS and BERKIS were hidden. The boat went into the river to the

same place they had boarded it. NAKHIS was walking near by and came on board. He was angry that the expedition was not set. POTKA meanwhile had received a message that no working had taken place and the situation was now dangerous. They all went back to Kala's house and stayed there about one week until NAKHIS arranged for them to travel back to join the Partisan group. NIKHIS and his group discovered that the original group had left the camp and had gone to another district. The winter bunker was located near the Slocowas River. They moved to the woods between Bama and Dairelawa (near Pichawa).

ATTACK BY THE NEM

In July 1951 the NEM attacked the camp. They had had news that the NEM troops were staying near the district in an unoccupied house and GABALIS said that he had news that they were searching the woods north of their camp. He also said it was not a good idea to move because they might accidentally run into this NEM unit. NIKHIS is not sure if GABALIS spoke with these troops before or after the attack. About three hours before sunset one day in July, the cook was preparing a hot meal and JIRKA was on guard. Suddenly JIRKA came running from the opposite direction of the point that he was supposed to be guarding and said that NEM troops were already in the district. Everybody took his gear and since NIKHIS' legs were bad, he took a sub-machine gun and took cover. GABALIS gave orders to the Partisan group to stay with NIKHIS. NIKHIS had only one case made from a stick and a few days previous JIRKA had made an extra one. GABALIS ordered the men to shoot at the dog if the doglets had a dog with them. GABALIS also arranged a rendezvous point. They retreated and crossed the main road and found everything clear. The group that was left behind covering the retreat started coming to join the group that had retreated and at that moment many shots were heard. Then FINEKH joined the group he said that he had retreated to a clearing and stayed and waited there for the troops. Then the troops came he fired at them and some fell. He did not know whether he had killed or wounded them. It soon became dark and they established a new camp near Bama.

PENZINS was still with them at this time and still had his V/P set with him. They waited four or five weeks until GABALIS felt it was safe enough to get NIKHIS' buried V/P set.

In August 1951, PENZINS and POTKA were transferred to another Partisan group and later went to Riga. When PENZINS and POTKA went to Riga they left their V/P set behind. NAKHIS had given them 2 safe houses to be used, one was SILVIUS' and the other one was on JALA tella. Later on when NIKHIS met PENZINS in England, PENZINS said that he had stayed in the JALA street safehouse.

MEETING OF PARTISAN LEADERS

During August a meeting of the Partisan group leaders occurred. This meeting was MAKISIS' idea and he felt it was a good idea for BUKKIS and ULDIS to meet with the Partisan leaders and discuss the things that they needed. ULDIS, GARAIS and BUKKIS were supposed to return to England shortly on a new exfiltration operation. MAKISIS organized the meeting place. ULDIS, GARAIS and BUKKIS went to meet MAKISIS at the meeting place and after a short time the others arrived. They met in a forest district some miles from their camp. Present at the meeting were supposed to be the following people:

ARTONS, VIESTURS (LEONS), KRIMS, CEOLS, KIRKIS, PIERSIS (who did not show up (MAKISIS thought that PIERSIS' group might have been wiped out), MAKISIS, BUKKIS, GARAIS, and ULDIS. When they all arrived BUKKIS made a speech telling about Ambassador EARNE and the English recognition of the resistance movement, and that one of the former Latvian Air Force officers was the national representative to England (SILANAVS). When PIERSIS had come in April, he had bought in a diamond ring which was to be given as a symbol of the resistance movement. This ring was to be passed among the leaders. GARAIS was the first one to receive it and during the meeting BUKKIS presented this ring to VIESTURS (LEONS), who was sitting nearest to him. Then BUKKIS suggested that each one of the leaders should tell of their needs. They all made practically the same suggestions. They requested ammunition, arms, money and documentation. During the meeting MAKISIS said that CEOLS, when he was on his way to the meeting, had robbed someone and had gotten some Russian cognac and cigarettes. They drank the cognac and they smoked. They told BUKKIS how they were making out in the woods. It seemed that they were barely existing through the robberies they were committing. Only one said that the group was not very active and that was VIESTURS (LEONS). However he said that he had some good contact men. VIESTURS said that he managed to get food and clothing without too much action.

VIESTURS looked different than the others. He looked like a man who was a school teacher rather than a Partisan type. GARAIS later said that VIESTURS was a school teacher. VIESTURS also asked more questions than the others.

During the meeting BUKKIS said that the situation allows us to try to return to the west, therefore, he wanted their opinion of their needs but he explained that he could not promise them anything. However, he did say he would bring their problems to the proper authorities, i.e., the British and the Latvians when he returned to England. They then repeated the previously mentioned requests.

EXFILTRATION FROM LAOSIA

Once again they started to prepare for the new exfiltration. Many messages were sent and received via V/F. **HERKIS** remembers that more than 40 messages alone were received. He once received five or more messages in one broadcast which took nearly four hours. They were slow speed of about 10 groups a minute and they repeated each message twice. **HERKIS** sent over 90 messages to the base station. **DAVIS** had agreed if they reached message number 100 that he was to re-start his numbering system. When **HERKIS** reached approximately 90 messages, the base station told them to start numbering his messages over again beginning with number 1. The operation took place sometime near the end of September 1971. It was agreed that **EDDIS**, **GABRIS** and **HERKIS** would return. One night they had a meeting with **MARKIS**. **MARKIS** asked for **HERKIS** and **GABRIS** to come and **EDDIS** to remain behind. They went and then **GABRIS** left **HERKIS** with **MARKIS** alone. **MARKIS** said that the resistance leaders decided that **EDDIS** must remain behind because this was the first operation utilizing the reception committee. **MARKIS** asked if **EDDIS** would shoot himself if the Russians attacked. **HERKIS** of course said he did not know. But he told **MARKIS** that if the operation was to be dangerous that he (**HERKIS**) could hardly walk and maybe **EDDIS** should go instead of him. **MARKIS** did not agree and said that the resistance leaders had decided that **EDDIS** must remain and **HERKIS** must go. **MARKIS** said if this operation were successful, then **EDDIS** could follow. Since the speedboat was not met in the last operation and they did not know why, they thought that maybe the speedboat had met another vessel and they were afraid to use the same meeting place. **EDDIS** was very disturbed by the news that he could not go back to England at this time and wanted to send a message back to the base station saying that **MARKIS** does not agree to let him go. **GABRIS** did not allow this message to be sent. **EDDIS** suggested that he and **HERKIS** go back to England alone. **HERKIS** did not agree since he felt that the British would not agree to come in then.

This operation took place approximately 6 kilometers from **BEAVA** Lighthouse, near **KANGRAB**. **MARKIS** found the shore for the reception and gave it to **HERKIS** to send via V/F. The British agreed to use it. **MARKIS** arranged for a lorry once again and went to stay in **WILLA**'s house near **Ventephlis** and left **HERKIS** and **POTKA** there. The other participants went to stay in the woods. **HERKIS** and **POTKA** were to make arrangements for sending messages back to the British. **MARKIS** took the participants, **HERKIS** and **POTKA** to the woods the following day to a point south of **BEAVA**. One day before the operation took place they crossed the main road and stayed in the woods between the road and the beach. They set up their V/F set and sent messages from that point. The weather was good. The operation took place the same time as previously planned,



one and a half hours before sundown they went to the shore. They there arranged the beacons and guards. GABALIS, PINKIS, and NIKKIS stayed at the beason. They had guards on the right and the left. JUKKA was on the right and MAINA was on the left. Before they went to the beach PINKIS had to contact some people since they would need two more far guards. Two Russian guards passed the spot near the beason not more than 10 yards away. After 20 minutes the same Soviet guards returned from the other direction. PINKIS was operating the red light and the rowboat came in as planned on time. PINKIS and GABALIS wanted to run down to the beach when they saw the boat. NIKKIS, however, said that only one should go and PINKIS went down and made the first contact with the passwords. When they reached the boat they were told to walk ten yards aside and turn away until the people who were coming off the boat were passed them. They were not supposed to see these people. They boarded the rowboat and went to the speedboat some 300 yards off shore. From there they went to Sherfords. Three people landed at this operation and NIKKIS went back to England. Of the three who landed, one was Latvian whose name was KERNANIS, and two Estonians, one whose name was OTTO and the other one was HARTIS. When GABALIS got on board the boat, he was assigned the name of EDWARDS and NIKKIS was assigned the name ALEX.

#### CONTACT WITH THE BRITISH

They arrived in Sherfords in the same boat and with the same crew that had taken them in. The rowboat crew consisted of two Latvians, NIRO and KIRNIS, who were rowing and one Lithuanian whose name was KONRADS who acted as the coxswain.

NIRO, who was one of the rowers, said that PAIRLIS was waiting for NIKKIS in Sherfords. When they landed however he was met by JOHN, the English case officer. While on the boat they had champagne. They dismounted the boat at Sherfords and went to Hamburg. In Hamburg he met with PAIRLIS who turned out to be SILMAIS. SILMAIS did not stay in the same house with NIKKIS. While in Hamburg NIKKIS met an Estonian whose name was Roberts KERNANIS and a Lithuanian whose name was SAIDIS. These two men had held the same position that SILMAIS did. KERNANIS spoke fluent Latvian and asked NIKKIS many questions. Since SILMAIS had not introduced them, NIKKIS did not want to answer his questions. When NIKKIS later found out who he was, NIKKIS apologized to KERNANIS. The British Case Officer, JOHN and NIKKIS stayed in the same house and they all had much to drink. SILMAIS said that he should not tell JOHN the British case officer anything until SILMAIS and the others had a chance to talk things over. After KERNANIS and SILMAIS left the house that night the British case officer JOHN tried to get NIKKIS to open up

and tell him the story. As it turned out, GABAYS, BENKIS and JOHN drank all night. JOHN finally had to go to the bathroom several times and throw up in order to sober up. JOHN kept saying, "I can be trusted, please tell me everything, after all, I am a good friend of SILKHAIS." In order to prove that everything was alright, JOHN wrote on two slips of paper real names. JOHN did not know that GABAYS was coming out, he thought that ULKIS was coming out. So instead of GABAYS' real name he wrote ULKIS' real name. BENKIS' name of course was right. They all got quite drunk. After a few days JOHN organized the return trip to England. They went to the airport in Hamburg and used a RAF transport to take them back to London. When GABAYS saw SILKHAIS it turned out that they knew each other since the war, during which they had served together. GABAYS broke down and started to cry. In England GABAYS mentally broke down and was sent to an institution. BENKIS first noticed something wrong with GABAYS when they were in the safehouse at the Hamburg Airport. GABAYS said, "I know what's going on, someone's trying to kill me." When BENKIS told GABAYS that everything was alright and that they were going to England, GABAYS replied that this was all a lot of nonsense and that he (GABAYS) knew what was going to happen now. He talked all through that night, and did not sleep at all. He was suspicious of everything and everyone. When they arrived in London the rowing team went back to their own house and GABAYS and BENKIS went to stay in an apartment near Earls Court Station. BENKIS does not remember the address exactly but he could recognize the house. They were both given a set of false papers. BENKIS was documented as ALEX KROCHENKOS. They had two rooms in a flat that was occupied by a Polish major who was working for British Intelligence. During the night BENKIS took GABAYS out to eat and GABAYS said that people were trying to poison him. After a few days the British put him in a sanatorium about 30 miles outside of London. When GABAYS was put in the sanatorium BENKIS was sent to a hospital for ten days to have his leg treated. Although it was never discovered what caused the paralysis in his legs and his arms, he apparently recovered the use of the affected parts. He received electric treatment for these and went back twice a week for further treatment as an out patient.

BENKIS now feels that GABAYS was pressured into working for the Soviets, and that SILKHAIS was "the straw that broke the camels back" and caused him to break down. GABAYS spent three months in the hospital and was put under narcotic sedation for two or three weeks and fed artificially. He received shock treatments and finally recovered although not completely. A short time later the British sent him back to Latvia. SILKHAIS said that GABAYS had to be sent back because he was the first one to be sent out from the resistance group and the resistance group wanted him to come back. The British also insisted that he return and BENKIS felt that this was a crime and he would not have anything to do with sending GABAYS back. GABAYS was sent back to Latvia in April 1952.

BERNICKS remained in this flat until after April and at a later date went to stay in a house where the other school trainees stayed. At the same apartment house was the rowing team and other Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians. GARAYS, after he got out of the hospital and before he was sent back, also stayed in the same apartment house. Before he went back, GARAYS helped with W/T training. He still appeared ill and others were not pleased with him and the Estonians, who were supposed to go back to Latvia with him, complained. They asked BERNICKS for advice and BERNICKS said that GARAYS was still not in his right mind; however, the decision was not up to him but up to SILBERAIS and the British. BERNICKS helped in the field training for this group and subsequent NEEDSON groups. His job at this time consisted of training in W/T, weapons, etc.

The next group that was sent in consisted of HUKO, KURIS, KOMRADS (the rowing team), NAKER, a Lithuanian, DEGENES, and ALBERTS, Estonians, and the Lithuanian was ALBERTS who went to an American parachute training school in southern Germany before being sent in with LEGONE. LEGONE had come out of Latvia in October 1952 and was sent back in on 11 September 1953. He attended the school probably during the month of July or August in Southern Germany. He flew to England from Germany and made a night jump into England. This operation took place in April 1952, when EDGARS (GARAYS) went back to Latvia. PETERS returned from Latvia on this operation. He was accompanied by a Colonel REMURS, a Lithuanian. BERNICKS was not allowed to take part in this operation since the British said that his legs were not yet well healed.

Before BERNICKS returned to England, PETERS had said that PAUL (SILBERAIS) wanted BERNICKS to return to England. When the rowing team returned from this operation, SILBERAIS and BERNICKS had a party in the Latvian Embassy in London, which was attended by ZAKINS, the SIS Chief whom they called "Boss," and several others. The English Boss was there with his wife and with his secretary "BOBA." In addition, the case officer JOHN was there and ZAKINS had his wife with him. BERNICKS had carried some books out of Latvia with him, which were supposed to be given to ZAKINS from the underground. Since GARAYS was in the hospital BERNICKS made the presentation together with a speech. The present was given from the resistance movement to ZAKINS. In his speech he said that the movement believed that ZAKINS was doing the best he could to help. BERNICKS thought he would later meet with ZAKINS, but SILBERAIS was the only one to go see him personally. BERNICKS saw ZAKINS only twice after that.

BERNICKS met with VICTORS again and VICTORS asked a great many questions. SILBERAIS had told BERNICKS not to tell the British anything about how the resistance movement worked and how they were to contact various people. BERNICKS never did tell the British of the various contacts inside Latvia. Before BERNICKS had gone into Latvia, VICTORS had promised him the same payment that he was getting in the coal mines, this was the pay he was supposed to receive while he was in training. VICTORS promised him that while he was in Latvia he would be paid more money and this would all be deposited in the

bank for him when he returned. At one point BERKIS talked to SILERAIS about this money and he said he thought it would be a good idea to send it to the resistance movement since the resistance movement inside did not get paid and was short of money. SILERAIS agreed that BERKIS would not get the money and that it would be used to aid the resistance movement. BERKIS feels that they had not put any money away for him. His pay while he was in England was 10 to 12 pounds a week. Although he never received any of the money coming to him, the British did arrange and pay for his trip to the United States and included expenses.

His training of other people who were to be sent into Latvia went on. The next operation was to take place October 1952. This one also went to Latvia. KURTS, Col. EDMUNDS, and KONRADS, who was a former coxswain on the rowing team, were all sent in. BERKIS rode in this operation together with ALBERTS and ALBINAS. This trip LEONS came out. BERKIS made the beach contact at the same place that he was originally picked up. It was the same ride from Ekeforde. LEONS was very happy on the boat when he came out. LEONS was sent out as a representative of Latvian resistance movement by MAKIS.

It was right after LEONS had come out this time that BERKIS learned that LEONS was not a Partisan group leader at all, but rather had been living legally in Riga as a school teacher. When BERKIS was in Latvia, the other Partisans evidently kept from him the fact LEONS was living legally in Riga. When LEONS arrived in England he joined BERKIS at the school which was located at 111 Old Church Street in Chelsea, London. They had a whole house to themselves.

During LEONS stay in England, they received a message that the Estonian DEORDES was caught by the Russians in January 1953 and they did not know whether he died or not. This BERKIS learned from SILERAIS. After this, JOHN came to BERKIS and said that something was wrong and he did not want BERKIS going to the corner pub or leaving the house. However, the house was not changed. SILERAIS finally got JOHN to put LEONS in the Royal Hotel in London. The others remained in the house. After a week they found a different apartment for LEONS and BERKIS. This apartment was located at 126 Slean Street in Chelsea, London. Every day LEONS went to learn English in the morning. BERKIS' duties were to teach LEONS W/T. Others taught LEONS S/W, weapons, etc. His training was considered very good and he also was given field problems.

LEONS said that he knew MAKIS very well. IMANTA was one of the signers of a letter which MAKIS had also signed and had been sent out to the British. IMANTA was one of the brains of the resistance movement and SILERAIS said he knew IMANTA well and said that he had been a high ranking Latvian Army officer. SILERAIS and LEONS had meetings with ZARINS in London. LEONS, SILERAIS and ZARINS worked out hot war plans in London. These were instructions that the resistance and Partisan

groups would follow in case of war. It included the pick up of pilots who had been shot down, the arrangement of agent networks, and plans on the politics of Latvia after Latvia was liberated. The British were included in these discussions. They reached agreements in principal that all the power would be in the hands of the Partisan groups until the refugees returned from other countries and it became possible to elect another government. They all agreed that ZARINS would be the assistant president until election. They signed an agreement with the British, to this effect, with ZARINS, LEONS, SILERAIS, and "UNCLE," who was the BIS Chief, also signing. These plans were sent in with LEONS when he went back in. BERKIS assisted in writing this document.

A short time after LEONS discussion with ZARINS and the others, he was sent to the American jump school (sic). It was also about this same time that SILERAIS told BERKIS that the British wanted to reach an agreement with the Americans and that ALBANIS was sent to the American training center in London (sic) together with an unknown Lithuanian. ALBANIS, LEONS and the Lithuanian were supposed to be dropped into Latvia via air. In order to account for his year in England, LEONS' cover story was to be that he was away to Moscow for studies for the year. LEONS' wife was still in Latvia. Originally LEONS had only wanted to stay for six months. SILERAIS said that the Americans were not in a position to drop supplies utilizing the beacon, but were only able to fly into a certain district and drop supplies in their own fashion. SILERAIS felt that this was not a good idea since they could get caught doing it. He felt that the safest operation was a sea operation. A message was sent to MAKHIS asking his opinion. His answer was that the air operations were not good since they might be quite dangerous. LEONS was still very anxious to get back in. "UNCLE" had told him that there were other ways to get back.

SILERAIS told BERKIS that they could not reach agreement for working for the Americans. However, SILERAIS sent RUMBA, fmu (a dentist) to the American Consulate to ask for aid since he felt that the British might not be telling the truth and that they were not getting enough money and support from the English. Finally, SILERAIS told BERKIS that the English said that the Americans wanted only to give money and to do no work leaving all the support mechanism to the English and that the Americans wanted to receive the entire take.

BERKIS advised LEONS not to return to Latvia via an air operation or overland through Finland or Germany, but only to utilize the sea operation. On 11 September 1953 LEONS went back to Latvia with ALBANIS the Lithuanian, and ALBERTS the Estonian. Out of Latvia came HUGO, the Latvian. BERKIS was again on the rowing team acting as coxswain. They utilized the same landing place they had previously. When BERKIS went in on the shore to get HUGO out, he met with FIRSTS who told BERKIS that HUGO was mentally sick and to be very careful. As a matter of fact, HUGO did become mentally sick and was sent to a mental institution. He was there for two or three months. HUGO had spent all his time in Latvia with the Partisan group. Although HUGO did not appear

to be extremely ill, he had the same symptoms that GARAIS had previously. For example, he tried to get a gun on the boat. After HUGO came out of the mental institution in England, the British sent him to a veterans training school in order to learn a trade. Following this training he got a job and did not engage in intelligence work any longer. PETERS was also sent to training at the veterans school and he got a job later as a draftsman.

GRAUDINS, a former Latvian air force captain and former squadron leader during the war, arranged for SILERAIIS to recruit ANSIS and VALTERS who were working in a Latvian military transport guard unit in Germany. GRAUDINS was also the man who was on the speedboat on the first unsuccessful attempted pick up of BERKIS.

ANSIS came from Germany on 12 February 1953 and was proceeded by VALTERS. BERKIS trained them both. During one of these operations BERKIS met GRAUDINS in Hamburg. This meeting was arranged through JOHN. BERKIS thanked GRAUDINS for making the attempted pick up.

Some time in February BERKIS heard from SILERAIIS and JOHN that something had gone wrong with DEORDEE.

When PETERS had previously come to Latvia with TOMS, AUGUSTS and GUSTAVS, BERKIS heard that AUGUSTS was a representative from the second resistance group in Riga and that this group lived mostly legally in Riga and that ROBERTS was their leader. TOMS and AUGUSTS went to Riga when they landed and TOMS acted as W/T operator. This group had no connections whatsoever with the MAKSIIS or IMANTA organisation. They had their own equipment, radios, etc. On 25 November 1952 a message was received that a W/T operator named TOMS and his assistant had been shot by the Soviets. They operated the W/T set in an empty house which was guarded on the outside by two guards. These two guards were evidently not able to warn TOMS and his assistant in time. VALDIS during some of the discussions he had with BERKIS said that the Partisans had liquidated the two guards who were guarding the house where TOMS and his assistant were shot, that the guards were derelict in their duty. This was part of the operation that TOMS and his assistant were operating the W/T set in the empty house.

In February 1952, SILERAIIS got a message that ULDIS had died. ULDIS was at that time living with the gamekeeper VALDIS. ULDIS had previously complained that something was wrong with his appendix. MAKSIIS sent the message that ULDIS died of acute appendicitis. SILERAIIS also told BERKIS that the ROBERTS group in Riga was asked to go to Russia and get some water samples from some of the rivers where it was suspected the Russian atomic tests were being held. This river was supposedly located in the middle of Russia. ROBERTS agreed that AUGUSTS would go and get these water samples. October 1952, when LEONS came out, an agreement was reached via W/T where the ROBERTS group would deliver the water. MAKSIIS himself was supposed to deliver it or when LEONS went back into Latvia the group would deliver it to the group that was delivering LEONS. In any event, the water was delivered. Much later SILERAIIS told BERKIS that something was wrong or something was funny with the water and that the English

laboratory tests had shown that the water contained some peculiar type of chemicals that ordinary people could not purchase (sic). The British and the Latvian group that knew about it were very puzzled regarding the water sampling.

#### OPERATION ZODIACA

The next operation took place on 29 September 1954 and was named Operation ZODIACA. This was the first operation that was to use an out-board motor to get from the speedboat to the shore. Everyone was worried regarding the Soviet Radar station and the British did not want the speedboat to get too close to the shore. HENKIS spent some time in Portsmouth with Senior Lt. RICHARDS in conjunction with the British Navy testing the equipment with out-board motors. Senior Lt. RICHARDS and HENKIS were accompanied by the Estonian ROBERTS for this operation. Later the Portsmouth yards produced for them miniature receivers for homing beacons and Yagi aerials for homing on the target shore. Also developed for them was a radio telephone for purposes of keeping in touch with the speedboat. They had trouble with the compass on the boats at the Portsmouth Navy yard and found that the compasses didn't work because of the magnetic field from the motor and the fuel tanks. They tried different ways to silence the engine. The British insisted that the speedboat stay 15 miles off shore in legal waters.

No one went in on this operation but they did take out VALDIS (not the gamekeeper). He was the representative from the second resistance movement in Riga, the ROBERTS group. The same pick up place was used as previously. VALDIS went back inside 20 November 1954. When VALDIS came out the British showed some suspicions concerning the entire situation. They felt that things were not running right. VALDIS was taken to London to a safehouse and interrogated. The British did not let SILERABIS, HENKIS or any other Latvian, Lithuanian, or Estonian, see him. SILERABIS was very annoyed at this and came to the school and told HENKIS, VALTERS, and ROBERTS that he was about to finish everything with the British. SILERABIS at that time intimated that the British threatened him with cutting him out of the operations or even liquidating him. All the Balts were annoyed at this point since they felt that the BRS should not be treating them as children. When VALDIS was released by the British he was put into a hotel near Victoria station in London, and SILERABIS went to see him with HENKIS. Later he was put in another safehouse. Regarding his interrogation VALDIS said that everything was alright. That the British agreed that he was alright and he was wondering why SILERABIS was so annoyed and worried. SILERABIS insisted that he be present when VALDIS was going to speak with the Boss. VALDIS spoke fluent Russian as did LEBENS. VALDIS insisted that he was a representative of the resistance movement and he told SILERABIS that he could not tell him to whom and where he should speak. HENKIS as well argued with SILERABIS. HENKIS never told the British about his arguments with SILERABIS. There were

times that BENKIS felt that SILERAIIS would pass on wrong messages to him regarding W/T. Sometimes he even changed what he had previously said. BENKIS told SILERAIIS he couldn't tell VALDIS what to do, and BENKIS met frequently with VALDIS against SILERAIIS' orders. They held many discussions as to how the things should be run in time of war and after the war. VALDIS was a Social Democrat and didn't get along with SILERAIIS. After VALDIS had come out there was a lot of drinking being done in Hanburg, and SILERAIIS was annoyed, especially at BENKIS since he got drunk and forbade BENKIS to take part in the operation of RICHARDS and VALDIS going back. VALDIS did not get along with ROBERTS in Riga. VALDIS never mentioned places or names since BENKIS was from the MAKHIS group and that was different from his own group. VALDIS went to see EARINE.

Ambassador SPECA (Latvian Ambassador to Washington) flew over from Washington specifically to see VALDIS. At the time that VALDIS was supposed to meet with Ambassador SPECA he was quite drunk since he and BENKIS had consumed 3 bottles of cognac. SILERAIIS was quite annoyed at this and the meeting had to be postponed until VALDIS was sobered up. During the meeting VALDIS told Professor SPECA that Professor SPECA's son had been sent to Siberia. He also said that it might be possible to arrange for SPECA's son (who was not in a concentration camp, but in a special district) to travel to Riga. It appears that the son one time did come to Riga but had to return. VALDIS was suggesting that when the son takes his next trip to Riga they mount an operation to return the son to England. Although VALDIS didn't promise it he said it would be possible. VALDIS returned to Latvia November 1954.

In the Spring of 1955, the Estonian group had one more ZODIACA operation. This one landed on one of the two largest Estonian Islands and brought back ALBERTS from Estonia. He was the only Estonian returned on this operation.

When KUKIS was sent to Latvia in October 1952 he was transferred as a W/T operator to the ROBERTS resistance group in Riga. AUGUSTS was also trained in W/T and was such a poor operator that he only sent a very few messages. SILERAIIS said that he had received messages from KUKIS that he was not satisfied with the security of the group and SILERAIIS had sent some messages to improve this security.

Before VALDIS returned to Latvia the British separated the three nationalities, the Estonians from the Lithuanians and the Lithuanians from the Latvians. They also separated the safehouses.

ANIS who rode in one operation was terminated when he didn't work out as a W/T operator. Of the two, VALTERS was the better operator.

#### BENKIS' INTERROGATION

In the summer of 1955 BENKIS returned to the United States. While



he was in Madison, Wisconsin, he got a letter from SILBRAIS saying that something was wrong and arrangements were being made to get LEWIS back to England. SILBRAIS said that they had no news from HENKIS and that something was wrong there also and they also had no news from NORMENTS. SILBRAIS wrote again later that everything was finished. Conditions he said were such that one can no longer continue to work. VALERIS and RICHARDS were to return to civilian life and SILBRAIS said he had orders for HENKIS to return to England to be civilianized. He also said that he could not renew his travel document and must return to England immediately. When HENKIS returned to England the British started to interrogate him. Instead of JOHN (who was no longer with the group) there was a "FRENCH". When HENKIS arrived he found VALERIS working in private industry for (the Boss) who was the former HIS head who worked with SILBRAIS. VALERIS was now working for him as a salesman. When HENKIS arrived only RICHARDS was in the apartment, which was located on Cheeswick Road. RICHARDS left this apartment leaving HENKIS entirely alone. SILBRAIS, FRENCH and another senior officer arranged the interrogation for "Onsle". "Onsle" was now the new HIS boss. During this interrogation they went through all the details. HENKIS had to tell everything he knew regarding VALERIS and LEWIS. They did not tell HENKIS exactly that they suspected LEWIS but FRENCH said that they suspected VALERIS. They suspected, FRENCH said, were that VALERIS was HIS and FRENCH also mentioned JAMMONS and of his suspicions concerning him. HENKIS had the feeling they were sure regarding VALERIS but he felt that they were also convinced he himself was HIS. When VALERIS returned they received a message that something was wrong with HENKIS and that they had been overrun by the Russians. The message didn't say exactly that HENKIS died but that he was missing and that they thought that he might be dead. HENKIS was interrogated in October 1955. When that was finished FRENCH said to HENKIS that he was to be civilianized. HENKIS requested he be sent to school and FRENCH said that this was not possible. HENKIS' friend in Coventry (whom he had told of his secret work) attempted to get HENKIS a job as a driller in a factory in Coventry. He had no success in doing it. In November 1957, HENKIS got a letter from SILBRAIS that HENKIS must come to London, that the British wanted to talk to him once again. HENKIS went to London and met with SILBRAIS and he was taken to a flat where NORMENTS (the Russian) was waiting. The flat was occupied by an English couple working for the British. Soon after he arrived there the British officer who previously interrogated him in 1955 arrived. HENKIS had to promise not to leave the house or get in touch with VALERIS, FRENCH, or anyone else. He was interrogated again from 11 through 15 November 1957 in that apartment. They told HENKIS at that time that VALERIS, LEWIS, and JAMMONS were all HIS and that everything was finished. The British also said that they had interrogated FRENCH, HUGO and the others and that they had all confessed to being HIS.

HEINICH could not understand the comment that STEINHAUS made concerning the fact that this was the same apartment where LERNER had stayed. LERNER had moved the thing out and got in a fishing boat in Scotland in the summer of 1956. HEINICH asked if LERNER were still in England and was told that he was not, that he had returned to Latvia. They told HEINICH that it had taken six weeks for LERNER to confess that he was working for the KGB. LERNER evidently did not want to confess and the British gave him the guarantee that if he did confess they would let him stay in England or go anywhere he wanted to. LERNER promised that he would confess to them the following day. The following day he changed his mind and refused to cooperate. The British then told LERNER they they removed all the guarantees and he would now talk without any guarantees. Six weeks later LERNER confessed that HEINICH was an NKVD major and there was no BERNHEIM organization in Riga. PRINGS confessed to the same thing. The British then wanted HEINICH to confess. PRINGS was captured by the KGB the same night that he landed. He was pressed by the Russians to meet HEINICH. Since PRINGS and HEINICH had been old friends from the time that they both served on the Latvian Political Police, HEINICH could not understand since PRINGS had had an opportunity to tell him what was what. HEINICH was told that PRINGS did not know about HEINICH and that PRINGS was told by the KGB that HEINICH had also been pressed into this service. HEINICH still does not think PRINGS was working for the KGB, because PRINGS' actions were completely natural when they were attacked by the NKVD. HEINICH argued with British Intelligence regarding PRINGS. HEINICH said that they might press him into service when he was in Latvia but he could not understand how the KGB could arrange for him to return, that is, be himself. HEINICH had no wife or children inside Latvia. The British said that the KGB knew his real name, his background, and HEINICH agreed to this. HEINICH also agreed that JAMNUNG had his photograph and HEINICH himself said that his headquarters had told of KGB searches of his house after the war. HEINICH still cannot figure out why the KGB permitted him to return to England. He feels perhaps that the purpose was that the KGB attempted to make HEINICH believe that the resistance movement was bona-fide. HEINICH in turn was to prove the existence of the resistance movement to the British. HEINICH felt that he didn't deserve this sort of treatment from the British. HEINICH tried to think how he could prove his innocence. The strongest argument the British had was that the Russians had allowed ~~HEINICH~~ to operate his V/T set freely. The British felt that they could not afford the risk of having HEINICH send only one warning message. The Russians did not know HEINICH's security checks. His checks were Vilkovolt and he could place this anywhere in any message except in the 5th group. He could not forget this. His other security check was in one group he had to use the middle letter following the next letter of the alphabet. His challenge would be to be asked what he ate at a certain time, and his answer was to be illegal. That was the same check he was to use in his S/V message. The British asked HEINICH to explain how the Soviets could run the risk of having him operate his V/T set.

BERKIS's explanation was that JANSONS had picked up the W/T set, the W/T plans, the code books, the radio, and had probably photographed all the equipment before he delivered it to BERKIS when BERKIS was in Riga. The RIS could, therefore, know when the transmissions were to take place as well as what was in each transmission. The British said that the RIS could spoil the transmission by jamming. BERKIS said that he could see no further explanation. Although the RIS could check every message sent out they could not avoid the risk of BERKIS sending out a warning. The British said that LEONS had confessed that PETERS, HUGO, KERTS, and all the others who had gone to Latvia had been recruited by the RIS. The British said that BERKIS knew that ULDIS was dead and that they also told BERKIS at this time that they would call him again because they were still not satisfied with the story. BERKIS went back to Coventry and from there he went to Darby. This all took place at approximately the time of the Suez crisis. While in Darby, BERKIS worked as a driller. He had no contacts. SILERAIIS and REBAHN told BERKIS that everything was finished and done for. They also told him that they might try to come to the United States.

BERKIS was not satisfied with his status. He knew that SILERAIIS's

address was no good since SILERAIIS had sold his house. However, he wrote to SILERAIIS at the old address that he was not happy with his status and that he was not guilty and would do anything to prove his innocence. Shortly thereafter, SILERAIIS told BERKIS that he gave the letter he had been sent by BERKIS to the British. Soon after that BERKIS received a letter from the British requesting him to come to the War office. This letter was shown to the undersigned. There BERKIS was interrogated by two English officers whom he had never seen before. In 1955 BERKIS had told his brother, while in the United States, about his work. During the 3 months with his brother, his brother had suggested that BERKIS write his memoirs. This he did and his brother still has them. He communicated with his brother via mail and told his brother to write openly since he did not care if the British read his mail or not.

BERKIS pointed out to the two British officers the following:

1. In 1954, SILERAIIS had come with a suggestion that BERKIS's mother, brother, and brother's wife come to London and get a job in the Latvian Embassy, perhaps with the ZARINS resistance organization. He did write his brother and his brother replied and agreed in principal. Time passed and BERKIS had asked SILERAIIS if he had spoken with ZARINS and SILERAIIS had said that he had avoided these talks and nothing had happened. BERKIS feels that the reason SILERAIIS did not is because his brother would have become friendly with ZARINS who in turn would have become friendly with BERKIS. This is supposition on BERKIS' part and he admits that he does not know what went on. BERKIS said that if he was pressed by the RIS he would never have asked his brother to come to England from the United States, from a normal life to come

into resistance work. BERKIS feels that this is his strongest point showing his innocence.

2. In 1955 BERKIS received a letter from SILERAKIS to return to England, that everything was finished. He told the British that he had told his brother everything and that his brother was a lawyer and that if he was guilty his brother would have advised him not to return but to live illegally in the United States, or perhaps go to Mexico since many other people have done the same thing.

3. He mentioned only his old Aunt and his grandmother in Latvia, therefore the KIS had no control over him.

4. He told the British he had written his memoirs and said that if something happened to him, his brother would go to the American authorities and the Latvian Press and have his memoirs published. The British said "Don't threaten us," and BERKIS said that he had no other choice. They then left the room. They came back a short time later and told BERKIS that his immigration had been stopped because he had not told these points before in his interrogations and that this was his own fault. They said that the points that he just brought out changed their attitude entirely and BERKIS should write his brother not to publish his memoirs or his book and that BERKIS could go to Darty and wait there for his visa from the American consul. Now everything was alright. Some time passed and he heard nothing. He wrote again and shortly thereafter he received a letter from the American Consul to come to the Embassy for medical tests.

BERKIS never signed any agreements with the British, secrecy or otherwise. The only paper he signed was one receipt in pseudo for money. He used the pseudo ALEX. He had to sign for his equipment before going into Latvia.

BERKIS never gave any promises to the British that he would not publish his memoirs. The British told him to forget the whole thing. Although BERKIS is still thinking of publishing his memoirs, he has not firmly decided to do so. The Undersigned discussed with BERKIS the various pros and cons of having his memoirs published. These included the fact that (1) his book would make much political propaganda for the Soviets; (2) There might still be people working inside that could be hurt by his memoirs; and (3) If he published his memoirs using the facts as he had told them to the undersigned this would make complete fools of the refugees who were outside.

The following is a list of the 14 men who were lost in the various operations BERKIS knew about:

**LATVIANS: ULDIS, TOMS, KIRTS, BERNAKIS.**

**LITHUANIANS: MAIKS, ALBINAS, ANTONS, KONRADE.**

**ESTONIANS: GUSTAVS, OTTO, HANES, HARY (went in on the last ZODIACA operation), PETER, DEORDEK.**

**POINTS INDICATING RIS CONTROL OF THE OPERATION:**

1. JANSONS had too many contacts. This is the reason that BERKIS attempted to see his aunt so that he could find a safehouse for himself, so no one in the organization would know where he was hidden.

2. JANSONS knew too many names. These included (a) ANGLS - a Priest in Piltene; (b) APRIJIS - son of the Latvian Minister of Justice; (c) Dr. BERGMANIS - whose address was given by ANGLS to BERKIS; (d) PURMALIS - the man at the Moscow street address where BERKIS stayed for 10 days; (e) BERLAIS - the owner of the flat where he stayed; (f) CELMS - the Latvian Pilot who came back from Siberia and discussed ways of getting tickets on the Soviet airlines and overpowering the pilot and then forcing the plane to fly to Sweden; (g) TOMSONA Iela - W/T safehouse; (h) Red Army Street - W/T safehouse; (i) JANSONS own W/T place; (j) the drivers who fetched the buried equipment; (k) MAIKIS -; (l) the girls in Riga, whom JANSONS had taken ULDIS and BERKIS to see; (m) the bartender - girl who had bought the liquor for them; (n) TALIS - his brother; (o) JANSONS said that he could get passports for 7,000 rubles apiece (that JANSONS was after their money).

3. MAIKIS issued BERKIS the Shmeiser (sten-gun). BERKIS took this gun apart piece by piece and found that the firing pin was broken. When requested JURKA finally fixed it.

4. Opposite the flat where BERKIS had stayed in BERLAIS's house there lived a popular Latvian actor, BRIEDITIS. This man starred in many shows.

5. BERLAIS had changed his name. His name was WINTER. When he left for Leningrad, BERKIS checked the apartment over, unlocked his drawers and found papers showing that he had changed his name. During the German occupation he had evidently been playing around with the Soviets and the papers proved that he had been denounced. BERKIS found a Russian medal in his drawer which had been awarded to BERLAIS. BERKIS's suspicions were not completely aroused at that time since BERLAIS was an assistant director.

6. During his stay in the Winter camp, before PETERS arrived in Latvia, MAKIS mentioned to BERKIS that they were just wasting time and that BERKIS must send a message to the British that they sh:

and supplies in by plane.

BERKIS feels that this shows that they were anxious to get things moving.

7. When BERKIS first met MAKIS in the park there was a Russian policeman hanging around. BERKIS told MAKIS that he didn't like it and MAKIS said he's only looking after disorderly people and that BERKIS shouldn't worry so. BERKIS says that this is typical of MGB since the Latvian Political police would have acted the same. The MGB knows that uniform police are nothing to worry about, but a normal Partisan certainly would worry.

8. When the first expedition to return BERKIS to England failed and they did not meet the speedboat they returned to the river Venta in the fishing boat. MAKIS then came on board and said they couldn't depart before sun-set. They stayed all day in the Venta river when the boat should have gone back to its station. The Captain of the boat was worried that they would take his license away so he continually fiddled with the motor as if he were fixing it.

9. FUIKA stayed behind in the safehouse and changed BERKIS's new automatic for an old one. On his return, BERKIS tried out his new weapon which was a pistol and found out that it wouldn't fire. Although the gun was good, he found the ammunition was practically worthless.

10. After they held up the Russians when they were in the woods, they obtained a Russian carbine. YURKA had this carbine and went to shoot rabbit with it. Although he fired several shots with it, he found the gun to be a bad one. BERKIS noticed that the weapon made a great deal of noise. It was obvious to BERKIS and everyone else that the gun was not a carbine at all.

The following list of descriptions was provided by BERKIS:

The fisherman - About 60 years old, 5'5", thin frame, weather beaten face, 180 to 190 lbs.

MAKIS - 181-183 cm., 30 to 35 years old at the time, dark blond hair, military bearing, spoke with an air of authority, was always strong and straight forward, 180 lbs. BERKIS's comment about MAKIS was that he was sorry that MAKIS was on the wrong side.

FUIKA - 170 cm. 26 years old, brown hair, brown eyes, strong athletic build, 160-170 pounds.

The cook - KOBE - 174 cm., 45 to 50 years old, bald with a fringe, light brown hair and oval face, pounce, over 200 to 220 pounds.

FIRSTS - 178 cm., 28 to 30 years old, dark brown hair, long face, brown

eyes, quick movements, eyes always moving, happy disposition, always good in a tough situation., 160 pounds.

MAZAIS - 167 cm., 26 to 30 years old, 150 pounds, light brown hair, broad shoulders, spoke good German.

JURKA - 180 cm., 175 to 180 pounds, 27 years old, dark brown hair, brown eyes, little fat oval face.

BARDA - also known as DOTKA (Joe), member of the first Partisan group, spoke good German, 169-170 cm., 27 to 29 years old, blond hair, blue-gray eyes, 160 pounds, heavy build, starting to bald in the back.

FURTHER NOTES ON THE INTERROGATION:

During his interrogation, BERKIS was told that LEONS confessed that ULDIS did not die from appendicitis but he was liquidated while he was sleeping.

BERKIS asked the British how come they let him return and the British said that this was the best way to dispose of him. They let him go to Sweden where he went to the Soviet Embassy and took a boat back to Latvia. LEONS had commented to the British when he was there that he would only get Siberia, for what he had done. LEONS said he did not want to go to Sweden with the fishing boat originally but that MAKIS had made him go there, in order to convince the English. LEONS said that when he landed in Latvia the first time, he walked up to his contacts and found that guns were set up and trained on him. He was immediately captured. He was taken to the MEB headquarters in Ventpils and there he met MAKIS. MAKIS made him take all his clothes off. LEONS thought that MAKIS was kidding, and when he didn't immediately follow instructions, MAKIS hit him in the face and told him to follow orders. MAKIS took away the plans that LEONS had brought back with him concerning how the Partisans were to react in time of war and what they were to do after the war. All these papers including the agreement with ZARINS were in a water tight cylinder which MAKIS got. Only after MAKIS was satisfied that LEONS had performed his mission, he was promoted and given a better job and a car.

When VALDIS was in contact with BERKIS in London he gave BERKIS the following address and telephone number for BERKIS to use in order to get in touch with VALDIS if he should go back to Latvia: 26 Agenskalna iela, telephone number 21442.

The following is a list of dates:

MAIS - Transferred 27 May 1952.  
DEGBELE - Transferred 12 August 1952.  
KUNRADE - Transferred 15 November 1952.

KONRAES - Transferred to the ROBERTS group 25 November 1952.  
FIRST W/T CONTACT - 10 December 1952.  
NEWS that DEORDEE was caught - 15 January 1953.  
Message that AFFONS was caught in October - 19 January 1953.  
ANIS joined the school in London - 12 February 1953.  
PEKERS, the Estonian, joined the school - 12 November 1953.  
ANIS left the school since he was found to be incompetent - 15 Feb. 1954.

The following is a list of names that has been used by VITOLS BERKIS:  
BERGMANIS, MACKVIC, GLOSTER, GRAVA, KRONBERGS, VILIS, ALEX.

The following is a list of names used by members of the Partisan group:  
GARAS - leader, BANDA, FUIKA, MAZAIS, FIRSTS, KOES, JURKA, ULDIS, VILIS, - v.b.

#### COMMENTS CONCERNING BERKIS

1. During lunch with the undersigned, BERKIS mentioned that he had passed through Washington and stayed in Washington several days visiting a friend of his. When questioned concerning this friend, BERKIS said it was a woman who was a dentist whom he had dated while he was in Latvia. This woman's name was Nina. The undersigned asked the woman's last name, since the undersigned lived in the Washington area and perhaps might know this person. Although BERKIS started to give the first part of the name, which sounded like MAR or MIN, he refused to give it under the pretext that it had nothing to do with the present interrogation. For purposes of rapport the undersigned did not press the point.

2. JANIS ANSBERGS whom BERKIS had identified on one of the photographs, is now located in South America according to BERKIS.

3. LEGNS lived with BERKIS for a year in London. LEGNS came out of Latvia in October 1952 and returned to Latvia on 11 September 1953. He went to parachute training school in South Germany together with ALBINAS. ALBINAS was a Lithuanian who was working with the British. The British sent him to the Americans for the parachute training. He himself was a trainer in W/T. Both ALBINAS and LEGNS were sent into Latvia together by boat.

4. When shown a group of pictures, BERKIS immediately identified the picture of LEGNS which was provided us by the British under ONLA-17111. He met LEGNS in Latvia and knew him as a Partisan group leader. His name



**S-E-C-R-E-T**

**ATTACHMENT A**

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in Latvia was VIRSTURS. He first met him in August 1951. BERKIS identified a picture of JANSONS which was taken when JANSONS was a young man still in high school, possibly a senior. BERKIS also felt that on the same group photograph that there was one man that very strongly resembled KAMBERGS. BERKIS was shown pictures of the following people which he failed to identify.

**LIDJA ANERALS, ANOCS/10, ANDIAS/2, GANUSO/3, CAMERO/2, GAMESO/1, CAMBARO/2, ANCHWOLE, NAIGRA JANSONS.**

**BERKIS described his code books as follows:**

His code books consisted of a number of pages, five letters to a group; five groups to a line. The message was written under the numbers and then the alphabet transposition was accomplished. He had a number of spare books. There were approximately 25 lines to a page and each book was approximately 1 inch thick.

**Concerning the BROMBERGS case.**

BERKIS's brother in Highpoint, North Carolina, read the articles on the surfacing of the agents in the Latvian newspaper. His brother's friend KAKTINS was a former sergeant in the Latvian Legion who is now located in Boston. This same KAKTINS had worked during the German occupation for the Latvian Political Police. KAKTINS told BERKIS's brother that the article in CINAS was regarding BROMBERGS and that it had mentioned KAKTINS' name. KAKTINS told BERKIS's brother that the article claimed that KAKTINS himself had recruited BROMBERGS in the United States and KAKTINS said that he had never met BROMBERGS in the United States. KAKTINS claims that he knew BROMBERGS before the war in Latvia.

During the course of luncheon on 1 November BERKIS was discussing the friends he has in the United States. He mentioned two Latvian acquaintances of his who were at present running a fishing boat out of Boston Harbor (no names given) and mentioned a man that he had stayed with in Rochester whose name is Bruno JAUNELVEJS, whose address is 202 Saratoga Avenue, Rochester, New York, phone Glenwood 3-8798w. JAUNELVEJS is a former pilot in the Latvian Legion, when was known to the source from that time.

**S-E-C-R-E-T**

S-E-C-R-E-T

NAMES

PLACES

BERNIS

KALVE (Martina)

PILZEN

SILARAJE

SILVIJA

JELGAVA

VICTORS

MARCINAVICS (Ella)

SALDUS

ULDIS

TOMI

TRUKS

ANGUS

JUNKA

EMITE

APRITIS (

ARTURS

IKLAVA

BERNDANIS (

VINSTRIS

KLAPKALNA

SERNAN

KRIBS

VENTPILS

HELMUTS

OSOLS

PAVILOSTA

PULJALIS

KITERS

GOTLAND

TALIS

ZARINC

SLOCENE

BERLAJE

DEWTA

KEKUPORNE

JANSONS (

DEORDEE

CHERNICK ROAD

MARIS (Small one)

ALBENIS

DARBY

MAKHS

KIBRA

COVERERY

GARIS (Tall one)

GRABINS

VALDIS

ANSIS

PUIKA (Boy)

VALTERS

KELKESKE

"UNCLE"

KARANIS

ROBERTS

PETERS

RICHARDS

GUSTAVS

EPICA

AUGUSTS

REBANE

KLAVINS (Pauline)

FIRSTS

JANVALDENIS (Emilija)