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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

**INFORMATION REPORT**

CD NO.

COUNTRY Yugoslavia

DATE DISTR. 15 SEP 50 50X1-HUM

SUBJECT Status of White Russians in Yugoslavia

NO. OF PAGES 3

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

DATE OF INFO.

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. 50X1-HUM

[Redacted area]

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1. In 1941, there were about 30,000 White Russians in Yugoslavia who had been given refuge by the Royal Yugoslav Government and who had, in turn, participated fully in Yugoslav national life.
2. The German invasion of the Balkans and the subsequent participation of the Soviet Union in World War II placed Russian emigrants in Yugoslavia in a difficult position and they divided into three main groups:
  - a. Conscious and active collaborators with the Germans, either as volunteers or as members of the German military administration, who were motivated by extreme anti-Communist feelings;
  - b. Those who wished to remain neutral;
  - c. The fewest in number, those who supported the Soviet Union and fought against the German invaders.

Subsequently, a fourth group also evolved comprising those who were forced by the Germans to participate in "Organization Todt" work or who were deported as factory workers to Germany.

3. After the capitulation of Germany, there remained in Yugoslav territory about 10,000 Russians who, despite the advent to power of Yugoslav Communists, stayed on either because they were deeply influenced by Communist propaganda or because they believed they had done nothing to antagonize the Communist authorities. This number included those Russians who were forced to return to Yugoslavia from Soviet-occupied zone of Germany to which they had been deported by the Germans.
4. All those who were compromised in the eyes of the Yugoslav Communist authorities, as well as those who did not believe Communist propaganda, left Yugoslavia when it was possible for them to do so. Russians who had been deported from Yugoslavia to the Western Zones of Germany were not made to return.
5. Toward the end of October 1944, the Yugoslav Communist regime began its first terroristic campaign against the White Russians who had remained in the country. A great number of these were arrested and sent to concentration camps, while about 1,000 disappeared completely. Few Russian families in

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Document No. 3

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Yugoslavia remained intact after this first wave of persecution during which the Soviet NKVD aided the Yugoslav police authorities. The method utilized, similar to the one employed in the Soviet-occupied zone of Germany, was to invite the persons concerned to register at designated offices from which they vanished. They were not permitted to return to their families in any case, but were sent directly to the concentration camp in Novi Sad. About 2,000 Russians remained in prisons and concentration camps for more than two years.

6. The identity cards issued to Russians in Yugoslavia, which made no distinction as to whether they were Yugoslav citizens or stateless persons, bore the notation "of Russian nationality." The only people free from fear of arrest were those who had fought actively against the Nazis.
7. At a later date, the Soviet Government issued a decree whereby all Russians, excepting those who had committed serious crimes, could obtain Soviet citizenship. In June 1946, the Yugoslav Government invited those Russians who had become Yugoslav citizens as well as all other Russians to apply for new Yugoslav citizenship. On this occasion, the Russians once again divided into three groups:
  - a. Those who requested Soviet citizenship;
  - b. Those who requested Yugoslav citizenship;
  - c. Those who wished to remain without citizenship.
8. The first group was the largest and included almost all those who were in prison or concentration camps. They hoped that Soviet citizenship would be sufficient guarantee against further molestation by the Yugoslav police. Others in this first group were motivated by patriotism and believed they would be permitted to return to the Soviet Union. It is said that the number of new Soviet citizens in Yugoslavia reached 6,500.
9. Those who requested Yugoslav citizenship did so for practical, family reasons, or to preserve and protect their belongings, pensions, employment, et cetera. They attained the figure of 2,500; however, only a small number of these actually were granted citizenship.
10. The fewest of all in number were those who desired neither Soviet nor Yugoslav citizenship, but hoped instead for an imminent change in the situation.
11. Thus, in mid-1947, the position of the Russians in Yugoslavia was to a certain degree stabilized, and many were released from camps and prisons and were given work. This was not true, however, of those who, having chosen to remain stateless, were imprisoned for being "under the influence of spies of the Anglo-American imperialists."
12. This situation lasted until the publication of the Cominform Resolution on 28 June 1948. With the Yugoslav-Cominform rift, the position of White Russians resident in Yugoslavia underwent still another change. The first effect was the arrest of Soviet citizens who had actually compromised themselves, either politically or militarily, with Soviet authorities in Yugoslavia.\* Later, however, the Yugoslav police arrested all Soviet citizens and, subsequently, Russians who were either Yugoslav citizens or had requested Yugoslav citizenship without receiving it.
13. Soviet notes to Yugoslavia, intended to insure the protection of new Soviet citizens in Yugoslavia, did not meet with any favor but, on the contrary, rendered their position even less enviable. Following the Cominform Resolution, they were forbidden to travel more than 15 kilometers from the place of their established residence without a special permit issued by the police.
14. The Yugoslav authorities invited them to make a declaration, stating whether they favored or opposed the Cominform Resolution. The majority abstained from voicing an opinion, but a small group condemned the action of the Bolshevik Party and supported the stand of the Yugoslav Communists. These persons were exempted from any further persecution.

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15. The Yugoslav Government then ordered the expulsion of all Russians except those who had arrayed themselves clearly on the side of the new Yugoslav policy vis-a-vis the Soviet Union. It was first planned to expel them from the Republics of Serbia, Macedonia and Vojvodina, and actual expulsions were begun toward the end of 1949. The police assembled groups of from 15 to 20 persons and allowed them a minimum of time, usually 24 hours, to prepare themselves. The majority were taken to the Bulgarian border and sent across into Cominform territory. Many were taken to the frontier directly from prison, as their relatives later learned from letters. The fear among White Russians at the prospect of deportation to the Cominform countries was very great.
16. For reasons unknown, toward the end of February 1950, the Yugoslav Government granted the remaining Russians the privilege of opting for the East or the West. At first, there were only single cases of persons being given permission to proceed to Trieste but later, when all were asked where they preferred to go, the majority chose Trieste, causing a great exodus. In recent months, only two or three cases have been reported in which the Yugoslav authorities forced a White Russian to cross into Hungary.
17. At the outset, the Yugoslav Government did not permit departing Russians to be accompanied by their wives if they were of Yugoslav origin. This measure has since been abrogated and the wives have joined their husbands and children in Trieste.
18. There have been only a few cases of Russian expellees who had received Yugoslav citizenship.
19. Up to the present time, between 3,500 and 4,000 Russians have been expelled from Yugoslavia. Of these, more than 2,000 were sent to Bulgaria and Hungary, and a small number to Albania. The approximate number of White Russians who have arrived in Trieste from Yugoslavia is 1,500.

Comment: The arrests and expulsions apply only to White Russians in the Republics of Serbia and Macedonia. Russians residing in other sections of Yugoslavia, fewer in number, have not been affected by these measures to date.

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