

1948

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NAME: KEDIA, Michael
 KOENLER, Michael
ALIAS: BERNHET, Michael
 MICHAL, M.

ADDRESS: (last known) 1948
Rue des Oranges 1,
Geneva, Switzerland

DESCRIPTION:
Weight:
Height: 6'
Eyes: dominating
Hair: sparse reddish, cropped short
Complexion: ruddy
Spec. features: large nose, long face, regular features

MGKA-16888
4-4-50

Date of Birth: 23-2-02
Place of Birth: Tiflis
Documentation & Citizenship:

INCOME SOURCES:
Before 1940:
"Comfortable income" from
small yoghurt factory
which subject founded with
his father-in-law, Paris

Nationality: Georgian
FAMILY BACKGROUND: Father: Meki KEDIA, director of the Surete
Georgienne
Uncle: Spiridon KEDIA, well-known nationalist leader, at one time
Chief of the Security Police of the Georgian Government.
Cousin: KOBAKHIDZE, Konstantine

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND: Speaks Russian, French, German

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2006

PREVIOUS CAREER Became active politically in 1916 when he joined
a nationalist Georgian youth organization. 1921 left Georgia with
family; stayed 15 months in Istanbul, then went to Heidelberg where
studied national economy. 1924 went to Paris where his in-laws lived.
He and father-in-law founded a small yoghurt factory.
1927 joined the youth organization of the "Nationalist Party (under
Uncle Spiridon); 1937 became a member of a group of Caucasian na-
tionalists and was co-editor in Paris of a Caucasian journal issued
in Berlin (BAMMAT, Head).

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INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY: Just after the German occupation of Paris in 1940, was contacted by GIS on recommendation of ACHMETELI. The Germans considered subject the most active of the Georgians and thus he became for them the leading figure in Caucasian affairs and Georgian intelligence activities for the most part centered about him. The sole basis of his cooperation with the Germans is reported to have been a promise to help regain independence for the various Caucasian nations; used his influence later to save the JORDANIA govt. which had, on behalf of Georgians declared war on Germany, Lithuania, and Russia; also allegedly saved Georgian Jewish community in Paris. In March 1941 began recruiting personeel for the TAMARA project. KEDIA's HQ remained in Paris (Ave. Sully-Proudhomme) until the outbreak of Russo-German hostilities, when he moved to Berlin. In summer of 1941, succeeded in dissolving Prince Irakly BAGRATION's Committee for the Liberation of Georgia which was more or less supported by RIBBENTROP. Established a Caucasian General Staff in 1942 and from then on cooperated with both Abwehr and Amt. VI

CONTACTS: Good friend of JORDANIA, though is both anti-Socialist and anti-Marxist and considers Mensheviks responsible for downfall of Georgian independence.

Through Caucasian journal: ALIBEKOFF (azerbaijani), DJAMALIAN (Armenian), Ali KAPTEMIR (daghestan), BANAT, ACHMETELI
Major MAXART, Major RAUBACH, Captain RADEMACHER, Col. HENGELHAUPT, Lt. Col. von BRANDENSTEIN, CAFARIS, LAHOUSEN, LORINGHOVEN, Lt. HAUFFE, Lt. Col. GRAEFE

MISCELLANEOUS:

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INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITY: Summer of 1942 flew to Istanbul where contacted BERESHVILI @ BERIK (Charged'affaires JORDANIA Party) and DJAKELI who was in direct contact with ZAENRINGER of German Naval Attache's office, and sent BERESHVILI to Georgia for info on the timeliness of a possible insurrection by the Georgians against Russia. In Sept. he flew to Stavropol to contact Caucasians in German PW camps. 1942 became head of the ZEPPELIN project called Unternehmen Mainz, in which he directed all the political penetration work. through small groups of agents crossing the Turko-Georgian frontier, KEDIA passed weapons, propaganda material and sabotage into Russia and in return obtained quantities of material for use by research depts of the ZEPPELIN project. Used old Menshevik contacts such as DSAKELI, MENAGARI (allegedly a double agent for the British and Germans) and ERKOMAICHVILI, an old leader of partisan warfare. This group, numbering about 25 were members of JORDANIA's Party and were set up mostly at the Turkish frontier with both Turkish and Russian identity cards. The Turkish police were informed of their identity and tolerated them under an agreement with KEDIA. In August 1944 when the break came

CONTACTS: in Turko-German relations, KEDIA's was the only German or German sponsored group allowed to operate in Turkey. KEDIA's Turkish group was put under the control of Abwehr II field units when the ZEPPELIN project disintegrated in 1944.

In addition to the Turkish group, KEDIA was also connected with the ZEPPELIN project for Georgian agents in Berlin. The organizational set-up was as follows: Three main groups operated in Georgia, each maintaining contact with the different base-stations through courier or short-wave. Group leaders were:

- a. KRAUCHVILI in Kartli province. Had radio contact with a station in Brachov, Rumania directed by BARAKIDZE
- b. ERKOMAICHVILI in Guria province. Had contact with a station on the Turko-Russian border conducted by MENAGARI
- c. NEBERIDZE, near Tiflis. Conducted a station in Krakow under OSTROVSKI and later also under GUAMARDZE. This station also served teams operating in the Ukraine.

MISCELLANEOUS
The cipher work was centralized in Berlin under TSOBAYA. When the Turkish station received a message, which was seldom, KEDIA went personally to get it. This was done partly because these messages were considered important and partly because they provided KEDIA with an excuse to go to Turkey where he was developing contacts with the Allies. In 1943 in Istanbul, KEDIA was in frequent contact with MURI PASHA, representative of a very influential Turanian group: they agreed that the Hitler policy towards the Eastern peoples was obviously imperialistic and upon his return to Berlin KEDIA decided to disentangle his political activities from German policy, but playing along with them as long as Abwehr friends would stand up for him. Sending MENAGARI to Ist. as liaison officer with the Turks was a step toward making himself independent of German support. After subject's attempt to persuade Hitler to change his Eastern policy and acknowledge the Caucasian covts as leaders of their people had failed, subject asked to be allowed to resign but JIORDANI dissuaded him.

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FAMILY BACKGROUND:

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:

PREVIOUS CAREER

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KEDIA obtained permission to establish the Kaukasischer Verbindungsstab and from this time on, after ZEPPELIN disintegrated, concentrated primarily on saving PWs, helping peasant emigres and aiding Cauc workers. Directly subsidized by the Germans, the group was divided into four sections: the Georgian, the Armenian, the Azerbaidjan; and the North Caucasus. Not primarily an espionage or sabotage group, it served as a recruitment pool for subject's other projects.

In the fall of 1943, subject planned and attempted the "Georgian Cloister Plan" to exploit the immunity of the Vatican to the advantage of the GIS. Because of personal disagreements, mutual suspicion of members, the plan failed.

In June 1944, subject again flew to Ist to confer with NAGY BEY, DJELAL BEY, and NURI PASHA as to how the Cauc Comm could open negotiations with Western Allies. At the same time he refused to sanction the integration of the Vlassov Army and Cauc Legions and formed the "Committee for Peoples Subjugated by Russia" which included representatives of the Cauc, Idel-Ural, Krimtatars, Turkestan, Ukrainians, and Byelo-Russian peoples.

In April 1945 subject with three of the Cauc. Stab went to Switzerland through the aid of SKARZHINSKI, a young Geo emigre working for the Amer. OSS Switzerland contacted him there. He talked eagerly about his work and three days later appeared at the Consulate requesting that the Amer intervene with the Swiss who were planning to intern him. In exchange, he offered the use of his intelligence network. This offer was not accepted for lack of information on subject's activities. His internment was postponed until mid-1946, but he was released in October, faking illness. He was being supported by BERIDZE, whom he had saved from the Germans at one time. This relationship is one which led to suspected connection with the RIS, for BERIDZE and another PODOBCHKO were reported assistants to BAKHTINE who, as Commercial Attache of the SovEmb, Paris, saw to transfer of funds to the French Comm Party. It is not impossible that subject is being financed by the Soviets through BERIDZE.

It was alleged at this time that subject was in contact with Soviet IS through Lt. MDIVANI and TCHARTISHVILI who had worked with the Verbindungsstab during the war, and appointed by the Amer to work as Soviet Repatriation Commission Officers after the war. When the Soviets arrived, the two lieutenants were kept on, but eventually were returned to Soviet controlled territory and reportedly were executed. The possibility exists that they were RIS agents and that the execution story was faked.

Further information has claimed that subject was accepted by the Soviet I.S. as their principal agent in Switzerland, through intervention of GUECHETCHKORI and KOBAKHIDZE.

In 1946 and 1947 there are further reports of KEDIA's possible connection with the RIS. ALCHIBAYA in Oct 1947 said the Geo felt subject was working for Soviets because of wife's influence. She in turn was reported influenced by KOBAKHIDZE, KEDIA's cousin and editor of pro-Sov newspaper in Paris. ALCHIBAYA retracted statement in 1948.

Subject is listed as informant dropped without prejudice on 1 Dec 48 ENCOM list.

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