

7

From: PHILIP E. LAUNAIS

January 7, 1959

To: CASE OFFICER

Subject: 1. Mr. KOSTIUK Page 1 - 3
2. Broadcastings from the West " 4 - 5
3. General feeling and political cognisance of Byelorussian people " 6 - 7
4. About City of Novogrodek " 8 - 9
5. Re. activity of Byelorussians in the U.S. " 10
6. Miscellaneous " 10

SOURCE:

Mrs. MATRONA MAZURO, 68 years old, high school education (Horodskoye Uchilishche) speaks: Byelorussian, Polish, Russian and Lithuanian. Mrs. MAZURO is mother-in-law of Dr. Joseph Szyszko of Detroit, 1307 Colton St. Tel: TO 6-5924.

Mrs. MAZURO arrived to Detroit on 24 November 1958 from Poland. She lived in Novogrodek Byelorussia and left Novogrodek for Poland in February 1957.

Mrs. MAZURO was arrested by MVD in 1947 and deported to Kazakhstan, but after six months was ~~released~~ released. She came back to Novogrodek and the house was given her back by Soviet Authority. (When she was arrested the house was taken away). Her release was due to the help of a colonel who lived in her house for about two months in 1945 in the Fall. The wife of the colonel leaving Novogrodek left the Moscow address and Mrs. MAZURO wrote her from Kazakhstan about her fate.

Mr. VINCENT MAZURO husband of Mrs. MAZURO was arrested on 5 August 1946 and released from prison in October 1954, he died on 21 November 1956.

In the time from 1944 to February 1957 Mrs. MAZURO lived in Novogrodek (except when she was in Kazakhstan), her principal income was from speculation and boarding of the Soviet Army Officers till 1955. Mrs. MAZURO travelled a lot all over Byelorussia, first to find her husband and then to help him with food, which she tried always to deliver personally. I interviewed her on 2-3 January 1959.

1. Mr. KOSTIUK

On (between) 20 and 26 of August 1954 (the date is controversial, see note below) in the afternoon arrived at Mrs. MAZURO house on Sienna Street in Novogrodek, on motorcycle (MK -72) with side-car an officer of the Soviet Army with the rank of Major and asked her about a room for him.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

Mrs. MAZURO answered that at present there is no room available, but he may come back after few days, because one of the officers will leave the City. At that time Mrs. MAZURO had three officers on board (two regular lieutenants and one surgeon-officer).

The face of the Major seemed to Mrs. MAZURO familiar one, however, she did not remember to know him. The Major asked her about the husband and her children. From the way of putting questions and his posture she deduced that he must be not a common Soviet Officer, to her it seemed that he knows a lot about her family. (This, she may have revoked after having learned later who he was). The Major left her house promising to come later, but he never came again.

At that time, August-September 1954, in the province of Novogrodek there were manoeuvres staged by Soviet Army. Mrs. MAZURO said that there passed through Novogrodek many military units (more than in the war) with heavy equipment. This is her personal opinion.

The Soviet Officers who lived in Mrs. MAZURO's house talked, as well as everybody in the city, that the American parachutists have wounded Commander in Chief of the manoeuvres Marshal TIMOSHENKO, killed some high ranking officers and many wounded. These occurred as Mrs. MAZURO said two days after the visit of the Major. There were in Novogrodek and all province a real panic among Soviet Officers, because some of them noticed that the principal shooter was a Major and the Soviet Authority (Military) put under arrest all majors and thoroughly investigated. All officers of the Army were suspicious.

Mrs. MAZURO saw Marshal TIMOSHENKO when he was brought to Novogrodek, he was heavily guarded as well the all city was strongly patrolled.

In the Fall of 1954 Mrs. MAZURO called a carpenter to repair windows in her house, and it happened that the carpenter was an uncle of Mr. KOSTIUK from Zdanovichy village. The carpenter told her that it was his nephew KOSTIUK who visited her. Here Mrs. MAZURO recalled the visit and learned who it was, upto now she only suspected that the Major may be one of the parachutists.

The carpenter confirmed the story she heard before or knew, and told her that Mr. KOSTIUK was arrested in Baranovichy at the end of September 1954 and executed. Later on the lady-teacher from Zdanovichy visited her (The teacher was in love with Mr. KOSTIUK) and told that KOSTIUK lived some time in the village.

The wife of dr. Komarowsky (friend of Mrs. MAZURO) who was in Baranovichy at the time of process and execution of Mr. KOSTIUK, told Mrs. MAZURO that the Soviets staged showy process in which KOSTIUK comported himself heroically. Mr. KOSTIUK told in the court: you will kill me, but the people will rise up and liberate himself from communist slavery. I die but in my place come thousands, etc.etc. When he was conducted, according to Mrs. KOMAROWSKY through city of Baranovichy to execution KOSTIUK shouted "Long live free Byelorussia" "Dead to Bolshevism" etc. etc. The show-process and execution was a complete failure, because people was in sympathy with him and many cried.

The officers who lived in the house of Mrs. MAZURO often talked about KOSTIUK and the other man who surrendered himself to the MVD, that he is pardoned and studied in the University of Minsk.

My question: If you remember the name of the man who surrendered himself to the MVD? Mrs. MAZURO could not remember it, however, when I suggested that it may be Mr. ARCIUSHEWSKY, she said yes now I remember. About others Mrs. MAZURO heard absolutely nothing.

Question: Did you read about the American parachutists in some newspaper, for instance in "Komsomolskaya Pravda"?

Answer: I did not read, but my friends who read it told me that in 1956 there was another parachuted group who partly was captured.

I (LAUNAIS) tried to connect Mr. KOSTIUK with this group, but Mrs. MAZURO insisted and is convinced that it was another group parachuted.

In Mrs. MAZURO opinion: The feeling in small circle of her friends was negative (angry) at the Americans for sending men for sure dead, because they could not do much. The same feeling was in general after people had read the "Komsomolskaya Pravda", but that kind of feeling, in first and in second case, was only at the beginning, after some reflection the feeling was friendly towards Americans and understanding, with proud that there are men who fight for freedom and liberation, and later the feeling become hate toward the communists and Russians.

Observation: Mrs. MAZURO was difficult to remember names and dates and while narrating she often jumped from one subject to another. I had difficulty to establish the date of Mr. KOSTIUK's visit to her House. According to her family life, I established that it was 1954. (Her husband come home soon after). However she insists that there were no manoeuvres at all at this time, but the Soviets pushed the Army to Poland and East Germany, because there was an uprising in Berlin. (the uprising occurred in East Berlin in June 1953).

One more act, may be connected to the activity of Mr. KOSTIUK, about which Mrs. MAZURO told. She heard the conversation in late Spring 1954 of the Officers who were boarding in her house, that the food was poisoned in one of the canteens and that many soldiers died in the Military barracks 3 km. from Novogrodek near the Skrydlevo village. And that after investigation and analysis of the food it was established that the poison must be American, because such kind is not produced in the USSR.

2. BROADCASTINGS FROM THE WEST

Mrs. MAZURO told that in general people in Novogrodek and province listen to broadcastings from the West. Not many of Byelorussians own good radio-receivers, but some of them have special made receivers with the anthenas set deep in the wells. Those who hear programs from the West tell the news to their friends, thus almost mayority of population know the contents of the broadcastings.

Listening to the West broadcasts is an political offence and if the man who listens, is discovered, will be arrested and persecuted, therefore the people who wants to hear Western programs usually owns two radio-receivers, one is officially known to everybody and the other one is clandestine. There is at least one radio-receiver, clandestine in every village. In the cities there are much more.

The Soviet jamming of the broadcastings is effective, may be only in 50 o/o, because some times they hear very clear and another time they can not understand a word due to the noise caused by the jamming.

Mrs. MAZURO could indentify only the broadcastings of the "Voice of America", any other program they hear, they authomatically think it is "Voice of America" or in general they say " the American radio said this and that".

Question: In what languages did you hear the programs or you know that some your friends heard?

Answer: I have listened several times, at my friends, because I ~~don't~~ not owned the receiver, to the program in Russian language, and one I liked particularly it was a religious program on Eastern Holyday, but I know that my friends have listened in Polish, Byelorussian and Czech. Mrs. MAZURO continued: the best we would like and could much better understand the programs in our own language, the Byelorussian, but the programs in Byelorussian people could catch very seldom, and "Voice of America" did not broadcast in Byelorussian at all, for that reason many were angry at the Americans, because they like Poles before, and like Russians now, still consider us Byelorussians unimportant (her word "nievashnymi").

Opinion: Deducing from the above the people in Novogrodek could hear besides the "Voice of America", broadcastings of "Radio Liberation" and "Free Europe", and that the Byelorussian language is an important factor which should be not neglected.

The listening to Western broadcasts was very popular and common after the dead of Stalin, because of political relaxation till the Uprising in Hungary. In this time and later there were, agitation, expectation and excitement that something have to happen, because the American would help the Hungarians and other nations to liberate themselves, what it would mean the destruction of communism. But nothing happened - people remained disappointed and angry at the Americans for their easy giving up. Generally people said that the Americans do not want to fight the communism, and naturally they will never help us Byelorussians to reestablish our independence. Therefore many destroyed clandestine receivers and do not want to run the risk to be discovered and punished.

7 page 5

Regarding the listening of Western broadcasts, Mrs. MAZURO told: that the Post Office clerk in Wsielub (12 km from Novogrodek) who was in charge of the "Radiofonichnaya tochka" that is of the central receiver, which is connected to all loudspeakers of private homes. The clerk, at one night wanted to listen to the "Voice of America" program, but somehow he forgot to disconnect the loudspeakers, thus everybody who owned the loudspeaker heard with him the "Voice of America" broadcast. Few days later the MVD arrested the Post Office clerk, and convicted him for 25 years of concentration camp.

--- o ---

A JOKE

Mr. Khrushchev was expecting the American visitors at his Office. The orderly come in and said: "Comrad Khrushchev your pants are not ironed well" - Khrushchev asked - how do you know? "The Voice of America said so" the orderly answered.

Information from G. and J. ...

The ... that in general the ... people is ... of national ... by the ... and they are ... of ... there, because all the " ... " sources in nation ... level ... are on all ... posts in the ... beginning from the ...

... of ... industrial establishments, ... of ... rich, of militia, etc., not ... are ... (except the ...). ... that he is under ... that the propaganda said otherwise.

... that there will be uprising ... especially the ... that there will be plenty of ... Army officers are against ...

... to gain their independence, ... after the ... which ... to the United Nations, but no ...

... for the move for liberation, ... but the retreat in the "cold ... the liberation come soon.

of ... the pilots have to complete a preliminary ... after the war were ... some secret ... which was used for ... Unfortunately they were ... for 10 years. ... the arrested ...

of ... in ... the pilots were ... willing to the ... the pilots were ... They seeing ... the ... and ... to the ...

of ... to go in to the Army service, ... some even prefer to become deserters. ... by written notice, but the police ... the military barracks. The same

7 page 7

rule is applied to the reservists when they are called for retraining.

d/ When Mrs. MAZURO was leaving Novogrodek, she visited many friends to say good-bye. The friends knew that she intends later to go to America, so they told her: "You go to the President Eisenhower and tell him about everything - and that he shall not deal with the Communists, but destroy them as soon as possible, because waiting long may be too late and the America might be destroyed instead". These are literally her own words.

4. ABOUT CITY OF NOVORODEK

Information: The city of Novogrodek had the population before the war in 1939 about 12,000. During first Soviet occupation 1939 - 1941 there were about 16,000 population. During German occupation 1941-1944 about 7,000 to 8,000. Present population is not known, but my estimate is about 10,000.

After Germans, Byelorussian local administration and Byelorussian Units left Novogrodek, among them I was almost the last one, on 7 July 1944, the Soviet Army came to Novogrodek on 8 July 1944 in the afternoon. The Army kept a strict order, no shootings, no plunderings. At the same time came in the partisans. The unit called "Kickau strad" took the charge of the City. Micka kept strict order and was anti-semitic. Later on moved in the MVD and administration, always keeping order, and at the same time they started to gather the information about German "collaborators". Occasionally they made some detentions, but only in 1946 they started to deport everybody who had had some business with Germans or Byelorussian National administration. All arrested and deported received 10 years sentence.

After serving the term many come back, but many of them could not survive the hardship and hunger in camps and died. Of course some were processed and executed in Novogrodek. Among executed Mrs. MAZURO named Mr. Malucevich and Dziakovich. Many deported come back after the death of Stalin due to the amnesty.

Economically the worst years were to survive 1944-1947, only in 1946 the Soviets started to organize economical life, e.i. to open stores and bring manufactured goods.

Now Novogrodek is quite rebuild. The electricity is supplied by power station at Baranovichy (60 km from Novogrodek) without restriction. In 1946 the Soviet started to put the cover in the city. There is rebuild the Malicevich house museum and build new big hotel, for tourists, who come mostly from Poland. In the center the Soviets erected a "Memorial Board". Novogrodek has 2 restaurants, various stores, and four factories and brewery, among them: factory of furnitures, pullovers, canned products. Several public schools, two high schools, one Ukrainian and one Byelorussian. (Peduchishone) School to train teachers, mechanical school for tractorists and tankists.

Two Orthodox churches are open, even the military men are visiting churches. One Catholic church is open and one is closed and is used for stores. Generally the people supports very well the priests, so, thus they do not have what to do with money. In some places the good priests in some bad.

The transport in the city is good, the trolleybuses are introduced, and there are regular bus services between other localities.

In the Yelovetsky building now there are all offices of rajon administration. In the jail in passport office. The convicted are taken to Krasnovishnyy jail in Novogrodek. remained only detention house on Krasnovishnyy street. In the Justice Palace now are Mechanical School. The MVD and militia are on Shchegolev street, between Yelovetsky building and the closed Catholic Church. There are some cars in the city, but they belong to the MVD, militia, Army

and administration.

In Novogrodek there is one Movie picture theater and ~~houses~~ ^{houses} were are dances and meetings.

The Military barracks are 3 km from city near Skrydlevo village, they are enlarged, and there are plenty of units with some Generals at the command. Till 1956 the officers (married) were allowed to live in the city (Mrs. MAZURC had always them on board) but since 1956 nobody is allowed to have rooms in the city. At present they all live in houses near barracks, specially build for them in total 28 houses.

The prices: The average worker earning in 1956 was 700.00 rubles ^{monthly}
Veal meat 7.00 rubles a kg., lard 13.00 rubles a kg., Sugar 9 rubles a kg., Flour 5.00 rubles a kg., Shoes pair from 250 to 300 rubles, Suit 1.200.00 rubles to 2.500.00 rubles, Gasoline 40 kopeek a litre, freely sold.

5. RE ACTIVITY OF BYELORUSSIANS IN THE US

Mrs. MAZURO was often called to the MVD to give some information about her children (George Mazuro, Vara Mazuro at present Mrs. Sazyc, Tatjana Mazuro at present Mrs. Zylik all living in Detroit).

The MVD mostly asked why they (her Children) do not come home. Mrs. MAZURO always said that her children were always disobedient so she also now can not help. The MVD asked Mrs. MAZURO several times about Mr. BORIS RAGULA and ZINA RAGULA (Cousin of B. RAGULA).

Once the MVD asked Mrs. MAZURO to go to Poland and find ZINA RAGULA, giving her an escort and plenty of money. Mrs. MAZURO refused to do, motivating that she is too old and too stupid to do such delicate job, instead of, went to Poland Mr. JOSEPH HUKO, who however could not find ZINA RAGULA.

Mr. JOSEPH HUKO was a sergeant in the Battalion 65 stationed in Novogrodek. He was lost in an ambush between Novogrodek and Wsielub early in 1944 and everybody believed he was dead, but now according to Mrs. MAZURO he works with the MVD.

In the Fall in 1957 the MVD in Novogrodek called in Mrs. Kathryn MAZURO, wife of DANIEL MAZURO the eldest son of Mrs. MAZURO, who are living at present in Poland, and the MVD again inquired about Mr. George MAZURO, but KATHRYNA MAZURO could tell practically nothing, so the MVD in turn told her that they know about GEORGE MAZURO and his activity in the United States: that he took part in the Congress of Byelorussian-American Association in New York and was a candidate for the president.

Really Mr. George MAZURO was a delegate to the Congress of Byelorussian-American Association and was a candidate for the president in 1955 on Decoration Day - end of May.

6. MISCELLANEOUS

1. The Beria Case: Few months before Lavrenti Beria was arrested, there came an order to all landlords and superintendents of state houses to register all tenants who come from other Soviet Republics, specially from Russian, because they will go where they come from, and their posts will be filled up by Byelorussians. The Russians who had good administrative posts become panicky, and wondered what it will be, and what they will do returning home. But nothing happened more, Beria was soon arrested and executed, and everything became quite.

2. The Jewish Plot Case: Mrs. MAZURO asserts that there were a real Jewish Doctors Plot, because after the arrest of eleven Doctors mostly Jewish, all drugstores remained closed for two weeks. In Novogrodek there are two drugstores which remained closed for two weeks, during which time all medicine was checked and analyzed, then the drugstores were reopened.

Philip S. Lanning