

MEMORANDUM FOR THE FILES

5 June 1953

FROM: [ ]

SUBJECT: Biographical Debriefing of Janis Ozols

REFERENCE: Memorandum for the files entitled, "Meeting with Janis Ozols for the Purpose of Debriefing", dated 27 January 1953

I. Background

a. Father: Janis Ozols was born December 28, 1860. He was a teacher at Dzerbenes Primary School for fifteen years. He subsequently moved to Riga where, in 1934, he was pensioned. He died there in November, 1934. The subject recalls that his father as well as his mother were strictly apolitical, although the father did sympathize with principles of Arvid Berg's party and read the newspaper "Latvis." He was not a member of any political party, and very seldom were politics discussed in the home.

b. Mother: Marta Ozols was born November 1, 1885, in village of Jepji, Rankas county. She was the daughter of Peter Biruns, who later changed his name to Kurmins. At the present time she resides at 3334 West 43rd Street, Cleveland, Ohio.

c. Sisters and Brother: Subject's sister, Elza, has married Peter Krumins who is employed as a sweeper at the Ford Factory in Cleveland. They both live with subject's mother at the above-mentioned address.

Subject's other sister, Eliza Kalnins was born May 18, 1912, in Dzerbene.

Subject's brother, Artur, has completed the Kr. Valdemar Maritime training school in Riga, and is presently sailing as first mate aboard the Latvian steamship Ramova. He is uninformed about any resistance matters in Latvia, as the subject has not taken him into his confidence. He is merely a plain seaman without any other interests.

d. Relatives and Acquaintances: Cousins on father's side: Engineer Oscars Ozols, whose wife's name is Austra, daughters name, Dace. They are now living at Karsgatan 9B, Lund, Sweden. Engineer Arturs Ozols, whose wife's name is Alise, has a son, Arne, and a daughter, name unknown. They are now living at Bernstorpgatan 5III, Malmo, Sweden. Marhus Ozols, who was deported by the Communists October, 1940.

Cousins on mother's side: Mother's brother, Peters Krumins, was formerly the elder in Rankas county, his wife's name is Olga. He has four sons, Krisjanis, Peteris, Jackobs, Karlis.

The father and Krisjanis work in an English factory, Avenue House, South Dartford, Dartford, Kent, England. Mother's sister is Mara Strads and is about twenty-five years old. She is employed as a nurse, somewhere in England.

e. Childhood friends: Reinis Sinats and Pauls Sinats. Subject lived close by in the country at Dzerbene. They all engaged in sports and other recreational activities together. At the Teachers Institute, subject had following friends: Andrej Briedis, who, when last known of, was in Latvia; Ludvigs Gasts, who disappeared in Latvia; and Fricis Gailitis, who presently is a carpenter in Toronto.

Subject has many friends and acquaintances from the periods he spent in the Latvian Legion and in the "Talavya" student corporation.

f. Membership in Clubs and Organizations: During subject's school days (1924-1929), he belonged to several athletic associations. He was an active soccer player in the Dzerbenes Farmers Soccer Club, also participating in the Latvian Vanags Soccer Club.

In 1930 subject, as a school teacher, belonged to the Rigas Latvian Teachers Association, a trade union. Two such associations for teachers existed, and this particular one was the one most aligned with the right wing. Its chairman was Adolf Argalis, later Kaminskis.

In 1930 he also joined the student corporation "Talavya" where he was very active. He was also a member of a credit union, similar to a building and loan association. Subject was also a nominal member of the Dzerbene Home Guard Force.

g. "Perkonkurst" (Swastika League) (PK): Subject had never officially been a member of the PK, he was, however, a strong sympathizer. When subject was teaching school, one of his pupils had been Celmins son, Girts. He had, therefore, become acquainted with Gustav Celmins and his wife, since the latter had taken a very strong active interest in her son, Girts, school activities. Subject had occasional contact with Celmins when latter attended various affairs and functions sponsored by college students.

Subject had numerous friends who were members of the PK and was himself sympathetic to these ideas. However, he probably would not have attached much significance to this organization if the following events had not transpired: In December, 1933, services conducted by Pastor Eiche were held for the PK in the Maras Church. The worship was normal and was completely lacking in political significance. Upon leaving the church, subject was arrested by the police, who questioned him at length, accusing him of being a PK member. Subject believes that from this moment

on he was recorded as a PK member on police records.

As a result of this incident and due to subject's youthful spirits, he began to regard the PK as some sort of a revolutionary movement. Spitefully, he began to attend meetings at the Latvian Society and wherever else they occurred even more frequently. Subject, however, never became a member.

When the coup-d-etat took place in 1934, subject was arrested on the street, about two weeks after May 15. He was interrogated at the Riga Police Headquarters, and an administrative fine of about 500 "lots" (100 dollars) was levied against him. Lacking the required amount, he was sent to the Central Prison for ten days. Upon his release from prison, he was again taken to Riga Police Headquarters for three days of further questioning.

Upon his release, he found that he had already been dismissed from his position at the school. During the subsequent days, he happened to come into contact with Gustavas Celmins and Puksis several times and discussed the events with them. They attended several meetings and heard lectures by Professor Plakis and General Kalnins.

Subject states there was no active animosity or aggressiveness towards any minority group. He recalls only one instance of disorder, and this occurred when the pro-Communist SSS attempted to disrupt one of their meetings, and a small fight ensued. (SSS is the Stradnieku Sports un Sargs organization, an extremely radical socialist group, led by Bruno Kalnins).

## II. Political Attitude

Subject has never been a member of any political party. He holds no political party or group responsible for the mismanagement of Latvia, as he recognizes the Constitution was poorly drafted. He feels it would have been greatly preferable for Ulmanis to have proclaimed a national election on May 15, rather than executing his coup. Subject does not hold Ulmanis responsible for this either, but places the blame on his ministers and advisers.

As stated previously, subject's father was an adherent to the principles of the Berg's party, and as a natural consequence, subject was acquainted with and respected these principles. He has also supported and sympathized with principles of the PK, mainly due to his spiteful nature.

After working at the Tuberculosis Sanitarium for a considerable period, subject found himself still pining for the life in Riga. He went directly to the Political Ministry to determine whether he was still considered in a derogatory light. He was interviewed

by Aperans, who offered him a position with the provision, however, that subject must report to Aperans the names of people met and matters discussed once a week. Subject disliked the idea intensely and again felt a strong resentment against such methods.

Subject repeatedly emphasizes that he does not agree with many PK principles, but through fate, frequently found himself in such a position that he was inclined to turn towards people involved with the PK. Subject's remaining ties with the PK consist of only those people whom he had also associated with in the "Talavya."

Subject believes that revolutionarily inclined youth should be handled differently. They should be given controlled freedom until such time as they mature and become less restive. When they start their family life, they will be peaceful, contented citizens.

Subject considers Almins of honest character, but apt to be overly impetuous and abrupt toward other people. He does not believe the PK organization ever intended to renew its work, as there had never been any talk or plans to that effect. Apparently, in which actual PK members concur, this organization does not have significance of any sort remaining. Some of the old members feel bound together, but this is due to their work together and mutual trust in each other while in the German underground.

Subject had felt that during the German occupation, there was no logic or reason for an underground organization. He, therefore, chose the course he conscientiously considered best and joined the Legion to go to the front and fight the Russians.

During the German occupation, when the underground began to turn against the occupying authorities, PK was at a loss to determine what their course of action would be. Subject had cooled somewhat toward the PK and when he received his furlough, he brought back some anti-German propaganda leaflets for distribution among his friends at the front. He did not discover the true state of affairs until he came back from Volchov on furlough and met Sietinsons and Linis. They informed subject of the actions of the underground against the Germans, but were unable to determine the significance of it, since they had no knowledge of any assignment being undertaken in behalf of the British or American authorities. There were rumors that Celmins had established contacts with the British, but this did not prove to be true.

### III. Biography

a. Pre-War Life: Subject was born October 29, 1910, in Dzerbene, where he also spent his childhood, since his father was employed as a school teacher there. He attended Dzerbenes Primary

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School, completing it in the spring of 1924. He passed that summer in Dzerbene, playing soccer with various local teams.

Upon completion of the Public School, he wished to move to Riga, hence he enrolled in a teachers course at the Riga Teachers Institute in the fall of 1924. Subject graduated from this Institute in the spring of 1929. He visited his home in Dzerbene, returning to Riga in the fall and securing a position as a teacher at the City of Riga Primary School Number 1 in October. This school was located at Number 8 Raina Boulevard, the principal's name was Spudins.

He was very pleased with his position, as the Riga City School Number 1 was reputed to be the foremost primary school in Riga. Subject taught mathematics in all grade levels. He was forced to leave this position as a result of the May, 1934, coup d'etat, in the course of which he was accused of being a "Perkonkurst" sympathizer, and he therefore could not continue as a school teacher in Latvia. ("Perkonkurst" - translated Swastika League. It was the Fascist nucleus in Latvia and was outlawed by Karlis Ulmanis in May 15, 1934, upon his seizure of power by coup d'etat).

Consequently, he enlisted in the Latvian Army in 1934, serving in the 6th Riga Infantry Regiment. He completed his non-commissioned officers training course and was retained for an additional four months in order to participate in training newly inducted recruits. He was released from service August, 1935, and began seeking new work.

He secured employment in a tuberculosis sanitarium for children, directed by Mrs. Klaustins. His work here was satisfying and uneventful. Originally the sanitarium was located at Ogre, it was transferred to Lielplatone in September, 1935, where it remained till the spring of 1936, at which time it was transferred to the town of Spirgi, in Plavinas county. In 1938 it was moved to Riga, whereupon subject began privately tutoring students who were preparing to complete primary and high school. He tutored in mathematics and Latvian grammar, and studied Law and Economics at the Latvian University in his spare time. He had been enrolled in the University since the fall of 1930. He continued tutoring until 1940, when the Russians occupied Latvia.

b. First Russian Occupation (1940): In May, 1940, Latvia recalled her Reserves to active duty. The subject was among those recalled in this draft and was stationed in a camp at Carnikavas. The recalling of Reservists and their retention in active service lasted until the latter part of June, at which time subject was also discharged. While on active duty, he served with architecture student, Olgerts Steinbrick; student, Leonid Rezgals; architect, Celtnieks, Captain Zilvers, Lieutenant Biskaps. Upon subject's release from active duty, the Soviets had already occupied Latvia.

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He now sought to find work, but was unsuccessful.

Taking advantage of Hitler's "Heim ins Reich" program, a great many Latvians of German origin sought asylum in Germany. As a result, many firms belonging to Latvians of German origin could be purchased for comparatively small sums. Subject's friends, Freimanis, Andersons, and Grapmanis purchased an insurance agency from UTAG and subject began selling insurance on the black market. (Initially, Soviet authorities permitted those persons who already were in the insurance business to continue. However, no new licenses were issued to anyone not previously active in the insurance business). Through the aid of his friends, subject was nevertheless able to engage in selling insurance without a license and thereby made his living until the Soviets completed their nationalization in the fall of 1940. During this period subject lived at Number 1 Dzirnava Street, apt. 9.

He now obtained work as an assistant bookkeeper for Albert Strautins (now in Australia) at the "Latvias Raugs", a yeast and brewery plant. After about two months, this business was nationalized and became part of the "Yeast and Ale" trust. He continued at this position until April, 1941, when he was forced to take to the woods because of his underground activities.

Subject left Riga and traveled to Nicas county, to the farm of Smits. Smits situated him on an island in Lake Liepaja which was an ideal place to hide at, as it had a very difficult approach. Smit kept him supplied with provisions and with news regarding the Russo-German war. When the Germans had driven the Russians out of that particular area, subject aided local Latvians in rounding up remaining small remnants of Russians in the vicinity of Rucavas and Nicas. He participated in these activities until the end of July.

c. German Occupation (1941): He started for Riga, arriving there the end of July. Subject returned to his old apartment at Number 1 Dzirnava Street, and for an initial period did not work at all. Finally, through the assistance of some of his friends, he secured a position as a section chief in the Art and Culture Department in the former Interior Ministry Building on Sabu St. This Department was under the jurisdiction of the Latvian Civil Government (Self-Government). Subject's official capacity was head of the library and organization section, with the responsibility of filing books and publications confiscated from the Russians by the Germans. He was so situated that he was able to take the most valuable of these books whose circulation had been prohibited and distribute them among his friends and acquaintances.

Dissatisfied with his work and the present situation, subject joined the 19th Latvian Police Battalion, deciding his best possible

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course lay in actively combatting Communism. (The Latvian Police Battalions were originally organized by the Germans on the pretext that they would be required to maintain law and order in Latvia; such as mopping up remaining Communist Units, protecting borders, and so forth. The Battalions, however, differed from the normal concept of a police battalion, in that they were purely paramilitary organizations under Army discipline and training. By employing the ruse that there had been some disturbances on the Russo-Latvian border, these battalions were moved to the Russian front, which at that time was located in the vicinity of Volchova and were utilized as front line troops. This act was in direct contradiction to the German promises that no Latvians would be so utilized). Shortly thereafter, when he was a member of the police unit, he was located for a few weeks at an army barracks near the Riga railroad station; later, he was assigned to a German unit which was embarking for Leningrad to await the decisive attack and act as reserves. They left Riga in March, 1942. Arriving at the Leningrad front, they were quartered about 20 k.m. behind the lines in Tervolavo. While awaiting the attack, his unit was employed repairing roads in the area. Subject did not engage in actual combat until the Ladoga encirclement, when the fighting raged for four uninterrupted days before they broke through. In November, 1942, subject's German unit was ordered back to Germany and was stationed in the southern outskirts of Berlin near Krampeul. Upon reaching his new station, subject was granted an immediate furlough and arrived back in Riga before Christmas, 1942.

Having learned, while in Riga, the fact that the Latvian Legion had been created, subject, upon his return to his unit, jointly with Latvians Blakis and Kalnins requested their records be transferred and they be recorded as members of the Legion. Shortly thereafter, this request was approved, and all Latvians were sent to Riga. In April they were officially assigned to the Legion were soon sent to Volchov. Early in May they were assigned to the Second Latvian Brigade (later known as the 15th Latvian Division), Second Regiment, 12th Company. The regimental commander was Colonel Lobe, company commander was 1st Lieutenant Snukuts, who was subsequently killed in action and replaced by Captain Krasts. Also participating in the battle at Valchov was the Battalion Commander, Stipnieks.

In this engagement, subject who had risen to the rank of first Sergeant was wounded in the left hand by shrapnel. In Christmas, 1943, he was one of those chosen to attend non-commissioned officers school. They were sent to Gratz, Austria, for preliminary training. Arriving here, they were furloughed until the end of January and left for Riga. They received their preliminary training in Gratz, from January to March, 1944, and were then sent to Bad Talz for the main course, which they completed in September, 1944, and returned to their original unit.

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Arriving in Riga, subject found his unit was evacuating and that the city was expected to fall to the Russians momentarily. Subject, therefore, remained in Riga until the final days (October 11), having encountered Captain Ceveris of his unit, who extended subject's furlough ten days. Arriving in Tukums October 13, subject was assigned as commander of the first platoon, in the 3rd Company, Second Regiment. That very night his unit had a serious engagement with the Russian forces northeast of Dobeles. Three days later, subject was seriously wounded (concussion) near the village of Mickerli. At this point subject's memory is hazy, but he recalls being processed through several first aid stations and then being brought to the Irlavas Hospital. He was later transferred to Ventspils Hospital and then sent to Germany aboard the SS Bremerhaven. The ship reached the Gulf of Danzig, where it was bombed and sank with the loss of all but a quarter of its hands, among them subject. From Danzig, they were all sent to Bauzen, near Dresden, at which place many Russian soldiers were also quartered. Those Latvians who were located here, requested their transfer to a Latvian hospital. Shortly thereafter they were sent to Riesenberg near Danzig for treatment. In December, 1944, subject and approximately thirty other Latvians were sent to Rupolding, Austria, which is about 100 k.m. from Salzburg. While here, they read that the big Russian offensive on Germany had begun. They were discharged as fit for service about the middle of January, 1945, and returned to their units. In this chaotic period no one seemed to know for certain their unit locations. They arrived at a collection point in Frankfurt am Oder, where several Latvians were consolidated and dispatched for Pomerania, which, however, proved to have already fallen to the Russians. In this fashion they journeyed from one city to another, finally arriving in New Brandenburg, where a portion of the Headquarters Staff of the Latvian Legion still remained (Captain Meyer). About the middle of January, 1945, subject and ten other officers, volunteered to return to Kurzeme in order to rejoin their old unit.

They went to Gustravas where General Bangerskis' staff of the Latvian Legion was located in order to secure travel orders. The beginning of March, they began seeking a port out of which ships still sailed. They were able to secure passage in Swinemunde and arrived in Liepaja April 4.

d. Second Russian Occupation (1945) Post War: Subject was detailed to train new recruits and have them ready for service in the 19th Division by May 12. Subject had an enjoyable time here, as he knew many friends in Liepaja. At night there were numerous parties and affairs, and no one gave capitulation a thought. He was at a party the night of May 8, when word was received, disclosing plans for an intended capitulation. All those present

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accordingly decided to escape to Sweden, since they had a previously prepared Estonian boat available for just such an eventuality. They embarked that very night and the following afternoon (May 9) were intercepted by a Swedish trawler near Gotland. They were towed into the port of Kalmaras by a Latvian tug, and sent to the Soderokra quarantine camp. From here they were transported to the Kumeln refugee camp near Stockholm, where they remained until July, 1945. Subject obtained work as a woodcutter at Lindofsgarden in July, 1945. He also did farm work until August, when he left to seek work in Goteborg. He washed dishes in a restaurant until he obtained work operating a circular saw in a box factory, where he remained until Christmas, 1945. He then obtained work at the Molnlyke textile factory which lasted until June, 1946.

Noting the Swedish policy on repatriation of Legionnaires, subject decided to emigrate. This decision was also largely due to his observation of the actions of Russian spies who were very active here. The spies evidently maintained a close check on the emigres' movements, as they would be able to contact them, urging them to return, even in spite of frequent changes of residence. Recognizing the fact that the world considered Legionnaires as criminals, he decided his best course was to sail with his brother who already was a professional seaman. Subject, his brother and f.m.u. Tumsais began walking the waterfront, seeking a berth. July 21, 1946, they all signed on the Swedish SS Ludwig, calling several times at Lubeck, three times at Gdina and then to dry dock. From August 26, 1946 to May 21, 1948, they sailed aboard the Latvian SS Elizabete, Captain Miller commanding. From May 28, 1948, to September 18, 1950, aboard the SS Ramova with ports of call at Sweden, England, Germany, Spain, and South Africa. Subject went ashore in England for a varicose vein operation and remained ten days at the South Shields, London hospital. Upon his discharge he sailed on the coastwise trader Sherwood from October 14, 1950, to March 2, 1951. The ship was placed in dry dock and he began arrangements in London to secure papers enabling him to emigrate to Canada. He sailed aboard the SS Gaslight from March 10, 1951, to June 21, 1951, during which period his Canadian visa arrived. On July 7, 1951, he left Liverpool aboard the SS Royal Mailship New Foundland bound for Halifax, arriving July 13, 1951. By train to Toronto, where he stayed with Teodors Dreimanis, 58 Wembley Drive, Toronto.

He began seeking employment and from August 6, 1951, until November 28, 1951, sailed as able-bodied seaman aboard the Great Lakes steamer Blue River. During the winter, lake traffic stopped, due to ice and he lived at 9 Strathmore Boulevard, Toronto. Work was extremely scarce, but during February and March, 1952, through the assistance of Dreimanis and Blumbergs, he was able to work at the Pilkington Brothers Glassworks. Due to the flooding of the Canadian market with low priced Czechoslovak glassware imports, they were all three laid off.

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He was not able to secure any other work until May, 1952. During this period, subject's landlord had bought a new home at 17 Browning Avenue, Toronto, and subject went to live with him there.

From May, 1952 until December 1952, subject sailed again on the Blue River. Upon completion of the tour, he applied for a visa to enter the United States. Subject entered the United States December 16, 1952 and went to Cleveland, Ohio, to visit his relatives there. Subject went to Tennessee and visited his boyhood friend, Dr. Reinis Sinats. He next proceeded to Dr. Jakabsons and from him, arrived in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Jakabsons has very little knowledge concerning any underground activity, since he has been utilized merely for the sake of his ability in conducting negotiations. He has established contact with some Senator who was able to bring the matter to the recognizance of the proper bureau. Due to the fact that Dr. Jakabsons is uninformed in these matters, his replies to many questions are quite naive. His replies to questions put to him have been out of his personal beliefs and not from any consultation, therefore, his expressed opinions should not be regarded as bearing any weight or as expressing the position taken by the underground.

#### IV. Underground Activity

a. First Russian Occupation: Subject began his underground activity in October, 1940. It had been known that Evalds Andersons had disappeared from Latvia in the summer of 1940. His whereabouts were unknown until the day the subject was visited by a Fricis or Fridis Vzbarts. At that time, Vzbarts was working in the Kummel brewery at the intersection of Arzsarg and Valdemar Streets. Subject had often visited the brewery to drink beer and meet acquaintances and had encountered Vzbarts several times in this manner.

Vzbarts visited subject in October, 1940, and produced a letter without any envelope, asking subject to identify the handwriting. It was without a doubt the handwriting of Andersons, who had written that he had managed to reach freedom and was now working in the interests of Latvia to enable her to free herself from the Soviet yoke. He therein requested his friends to assist in transmitting information and in supplying certain materials with which to organize the underground. Andersons stated that further instructions would be forthcoming. Vzbarts was unable to personally determine whether this was Andersons handwriting, since he had received the letter by hand from a German speaking man who requested a further meeting.

Vzbarts and subject considered the matter and came to the conclusion that the Germans intended to attempt to establish an underground. Subject instructed Vzbart to return to the German messenger and let

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him know they agreed and would prepare to organize the net for information collecting purposes. This was done and as a result, a second letter containing more detailed instructions arrived about two weeks later.

It was self-evident from the information requested in the letter that its main objective was to lessen the casualties in the next war operation. Details were requested concerning Russian troop movements, and locations, the prisons, what rumors circulated in Latvia and so forth.

Subject felt great exuberance and began to organize a net with much enthusiasm. This net was organized on the three-man branch system which depended on each man being acquainted with only two other members of the system. In a short space of time, this organization was spread over the entire Latvian territory.

Vzbarts handled the arrangements for meeting the German and receiving instructions and money. Subject's responsibility was to collect all the information, review, and prepare it for further transmission. Subject was the actual leader and director of this underground. The operation continued in this manner until Christmas, 1940, during which time they had received about three letters.

Since Vzbarts was often sent on field trips by the brewery, he introduced subject to the German, and the two met several times during such an absence of Vzbarts. These were secret meetings where subject turned over his information and received money and a letter in return. These letters contained Andersons instructions for further assignments and designated the next meeting place.

As a rule, all information obtained was considered possibly pertinent and important and was transmitted. Subsequently, however, a good proportion of it proved to be unimportant.

Vzbarts possessed one major failing and that was his habit of imbibing too freely at which times he would become highly incensed and proceed to deliver a long harangue against the Russians. On December, 1940, Vzbarts was sent on a field trip to Ventspils by his brewery and failed to return. It was not possible to ascertain the true facts, but it was assumed that he must have begun his customary tirade while drunk and therefore gotten himself arrested and deported or killed.

In such fashion subject had now become the exclusive underground leader. The operation continued as usual until Christmas, 1940, when subject was directed to a meeting with Jakobsons. Jakobsons was accompanied by a large heavy-set man who spoke Latvian with a Baltic-German accent. The last letter from Andersons had informed subject he would be meeting a Mr. Werner. Subject got the impression he was some sort of seaman, as future meetings always occurred two or three weeks apart.

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Werner gave subject a thorough briefing on reporting and observation methods to be used in reporting Russian troop movements and locations, airfields, and so forth. The operations continued uneventfully until April, when subject received instructions to hide in the woods. As was subsequently determined, Andersons believed Uzbarts had been apprehended and that, therefore, subject would be compromised.

The preceding instructions subject had received had requested particularly detailed information such as exact location of wells near main roads, buildings which could be utilized for sheltering troops or armored vehicles. Great interest was shown particularly concerning the roads in the vicinity of Meitenes. Based on this request, it was fairly evident that war would soon begin.

Upon subject's departure for the woods, Janis Linis assumed subject's responsibilities in the organization. Linis was the only person kept informed of the complete details of the operation by the subject.

Sietinsons' function in the organization was the recruitment and formation of the three-man branches in the system. He collected the gathered information and passed on instructions and further information requirements from subject to the men in the field.

As was customary in those times, everyone was required to be gainfully employed, consequently, subject had secured a position in the Yeast and Liquor trust. Sietinsons was occupied as a student, and Linis worked in the Rimeika factory. Linis had access to an automobile and on one occasion successfully entered Estonia merely in order to test the frontier security. Dailonis Raudins who was attending the University faithfully attended Leninism lectures there as a means of gaining greater cover when he attempted to carry out his mission. His assignment was to contact and recruit other students and underground segments into the organization. By nature he was very aggressive and impetuous and was continually urging larger and more violent attacks on the Russian patrols.

On one occasion when a student had been arrested and incarcerated in the "Ceka", Raudins organized an armed band to secure his escape. He had determined that the student would be transferred to the Central Prison at a certain time and ambushed the prison van with his group. After a brief battle, the student was freed, the chauffeur shot, and the rest of the guard disarmed, and withdrawal was effected successfully.

Raudin had arranged for a meeting with Ruju who had his own independent students resistance group. Ruju was of the same persuasion as Raudins, namely, that they should constantly harass the Russians, with armed attack, demonstrations, diversions, and so forth. The majority

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of the members of both these organizations were armed with pistols and hand grenades. The meeting was held under conditions of great security, and as a result of this meeting, Ruju also began to transmit intelligence to the main organization.

Some short-wave radio transmitters were received from the Germans through Verner. Linis and Raudins immediately began to work out a cipher and started organizing wireless operators. They were able to recruit some professional W/T operators from the post office and commercial telegraph. They were kept unwitting of the operation, and were not told the code. Already in 1940 it was only possible to transmit from the outskirts of the city and then only after a careful survey of the surrounding area. Almost every transmission was the cause of great activity in the area by the Soviets. The technicians had devised a signal plan, whereby the maximum allowable time for transmissions was limited to 15-20 minutes. The operators, however, limited their transmissions to ten minutes, and even then, narrowly escaped the DF teams. There were many DF trucks cruising the area, directing squads of police to any suspect building. The DF equipment was reported to be so precise that the exact floor from which a transmission emanated could even be determined.

Raudin took over the transmissions himself in January or February. As a rule, the area used for the transmission was guarded by his armed lookouts. Transmissions were made twice weekly, at varying times, days and locations. Usually broadcasts were made from apartments in the suburbs of Vidzemes or Pardaugas. On one occasion, when Raudin had contacted O for the text and time of transmission, O decided there was no material of sufficient importance to justify a transmission at this time. Raudin was adamant and maintained that they should at least send a request to hasten the invasion. Evidently, Raudin did not heed O's advice and sent a message on his own responsibility, since he failed to return the following day.

As was determined later, at about the time of the transmission, there had been a violent gun battle in Pardaugava with several people killed and presumably Raudin among them. Evidently, the DF trucks had quickly picked up the signal and were able to pin point the location. Residents of the area reported the battle between the Cekists and some civilians, stating that the Cekists had removed all the bodies in trucks when the firing had ceased. Experience has shown that one of the most fatal errors in this business is too much haste and uncontrolled enthusiasm. It also indicated the need for greater compartmentation, with no more than two persons known to each other.

Upon O's return from the woods, Linis briefed him on how the Germans had dropped arms to be used in organizing armed groups. However, this step proved to have been taken too late, since the war had already started, and it was no longer possible to even show one's self

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on the street. It was thus not practicable to carry out the assigned mission.

In subsequent conversations, it became evident that Andersons' had been directing the operation from the Abwehrkommeko (Foreign Intelligence Station) in Konigsberg as had Verner whom O met on several occasions later on.

O is of the opinion that the Germans had been running several such underground operations into Latvia. They had received intelligence from all the various centers and were thus better able to confirm it. O had felt that several such groups were active, but was never able to definitely confirm this, agreeing with the rest, that these matters should remain secret, pending Latvia's independence. There was, therefore, very little discussing done of underground activities.

When the Germans in Riga had begun to Germanize the Latvian street names, Linis and others began to think of reviving the resistance movement. Their immediate objectives were not very clear, but they all had a strong feeling of resentment. O's feelings toward the subject were that it would be much more practical to go to the front to fight the Russians. There were rumors at the time that Celmins had contacted the U.S. or the British and was receiving their support, but O had considered this beyond belief and had not altered his decision to fight the Russians.

Therefore, O has no personal knowledge concerning underground activity during the German occupation, although he did meet Linis occasionally and was told that the movement was active again.

B. Recent Activities in Sweden: As mentioned previously, O had no intentions of emigrating to Sweden, he took this course, however, as a matter of expediency. Neither had Janis Linis wished to emigrate to Sweden, for he was of the opinion he should remain in Latvia and work in the underground pending a war between the Soviet and Allies.

Linis had been one of the persons engaged in securing boats and assisting refugees to escape.

Several underground workers had already escaped to Sweden earlier, when their positions had become untenable. Valdis Palma had gone to Sweden in 1942, after saving a woman from German imprisonment. Heinrichs Urkis, another underground member, had gone to Sweden in the fall of 1944.

The atmosphere in Latvia at that period (1945) was rife with rumors. One circulated to the effect that after the capitulation, the entire Legion would assemble in the Dundagas forest for incorporation with the "Kurielists." At that time there were no clear indications of what the "Kurielist" activities consisted of and most persons considered this to be an act of provocation by the Germans. The "Kurielists" had

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accepted many young men who had been in difficulty in the army and this was one of the factors which tended to impart an unsavory aspect to the group.

When O arrived in Sweden, he met Urkis and Palma and they began discussing the possibilities of renewing their underground activity. Palma was then employed at the U.S. Embassy or Consulate, and it was expected that by that time he should have succeeded in establishing contact with the appropriate American official. Due to the customary secrecy and compartmentation, the underground habitually observed, however, it could not be determined just what steps, if any, had been taken to revive the resistance movement.

Urkis and O worked abroad the same ship in 1946 and had mutually agreed that it would probably not be possible to secure any assistance from the U.S. for the underground, since that country, far from showing an interest in resistance movements, was even barring Latvian war veterans from immigration. It was also evident that the Third World War would not be breaking anytime in the near foreseeable future, wherefore they had both decided to leave Sweden, since the Communists and their agents were also very active there.

Not long after the capitulation, in November, 1945, a small boat with seventeen men arrived from Latvia, among them Eriks Rabezgruntnieks and Elmars Skobe. The Swedes looked with disfavor upon that type of "immigrant" and dispersed them as seamen aboard various ships.

In 1947 the feeling arose among various emigres that they should endeavor to dispatch a boat to Latvia in order to rescue other Latvians suffering under the hazards of the Soviet regime. A boat suitable for coastal use was obtained and stocked with medicines and necessary provisions. (One of the crew members was Eriks Rabezgruntnieks who now resides in Canada). Unfortunately, however, due to motor failure, they were forced to turn back and by so doing were apprehended by the Swedish authorities. The Swedes made a great to-do over the incident, impounding the boat and imprisoning her crew.

Subsequent boats have since arrived from Latvia, the latest being in the fall of 1951. Urkis presently lives in England and is still sailing aboard English ships as a seaman.

O knew Linis who had remained in Latvia and had been unable to establish contact with O until 1947, when the latter had received a card from Riga with the return address Valnu iela Number 39, Apartment 1. Linis had written between the lines that everything was in good order and he was anxious to renew his old contacts and revive the resistance activity. After deliberating over the matter for about a month, O replied that everything was peaceful and quite on this side of the curtain and it would be to no avail to create an uproar for nothin.

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In his reply, O advised him to utilize the former network and maintain it in a dormant state for reactivation at the appropriate moment, and above all to avoid creating any disturbances, since that was not necessary. It was evident that Linis had become impatient, since he also began to write to Alberts Sietinsons. An interesting aspect of this was that although Linis had written to O via the regular postal service, in his communications with Sietinsons, he utilized seamen who hand-carried his messages out.

In his letters Linis had mentioned the name of Verner and it was deduced that he must be referring to the same Verner who was working with the Spades group in 1940. This man was called Verners Kapps and was reputed to be an American agent. The German whom O had met in 1940 in Jekabsons apartment and who had issued instructions for the operation had been called Sigurd Buchard. O had met him again at Jekabsons later, when the Germans occupied Riga. Subsequently, he had been employed as an official of the Reichskammisauat. In contrast, Verners Kapps had immediately left Riga upon its occupation and had not been seen since. It seemed probable that Linis was referring to Verners Kapps, since the other Verner had been seen in the American zone of Germany at about that time.

Linis had sent increasingly impatient letters, mentioning several acquaintances by name and the fact they had died in a tuberculosis sanitarium, stating his own health was none too good and that in the unhealthy climate of Riga, one could comparatively easily fall ill. Linis had been writing to Sietinsons under the name of Hertas Albins. The letters abruptly ceased and no further word was received until Ilmars Rupness wrote and reported that Linis had been struck by a streetcar and been instantly killed. Rupners writes to Sietinsons with open code language as a former fiancée. I have read several of the letters and the remainder will be sent to me. Rupners has just recently sent another letter, but it is reported to contain nothing of any great significance. He enquires whether it is known that the contact between Sietinsons and Rupners is maintained through a German woman living in the American zone of Germany who serves as a two-way accommodation address. The exact address can be obtained from Sietinsons personally, since he carefully safeguards this information.

In the last letter before his death, Linis had stated that everything was in order, but he only lacked the code book "Ninas Pasacinas" which had been lost during the confusion of the war days and requested a copy be forwarded to him. In 1940 they had a comparatively simple code worked out, using this book as its basis. This request of Linis indicated his group was desirous of establishing radio contact and merely lacked the book of code.

c. Post War Life as a Seaman: In the course of seeking employment in the summer of 1946, O secured a berth as seaman aboard the Swedish ship "Ludvig." One of the crew was an interesting chap called Uptitis.

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He was a former Lieutenant of the Latvian Army 7th Regiment, serving with Captain Versitis during the war. After the capitulation, he had escaped through Lithuania, traveling on foot and half-starved he had reached Gdina, Poland. In 1945 the port was still in a state of great disorganization and turmoil. Uptis secured employment as a stevedore and in the course of his work noticed the captain of the "Ludvig" several times. As a result of the Russo-Swedish trade agreement, there were numerous Swedish ships trading at the port.

At that time in Gdina, oranges were most valuable in the black-market, and a Swedish seaman with a box of oranges could live very well for quite some time. As a result, many of the seaman had failed to return to their ships by sailing time. Taking advantage of such an opportunity, Uptis approached the captain of the "Ludvig" and after telling his life history was able to obtain work and sail aboard the "Ludvig." Arriving in Sweden, he was able to set his documentation in order and he continued sailing aboard the "Ludvig". Frequently, they were able to smuggle out Latvian refugees of whom there were a great number in the Danzig-Gdina area. Uptis was even able to rescue his wife who had been confined in a TB sanitarium.

O, his brother, and Tumsais were able to muster aboard the "Ludvig" in a similar fashion and on every one of the "Ludvig's" frequent calls at Gdina were able to bring a few Latvians to liberty. The port guards were bribed with oranges, and they thus managed to smuggle out a total of eight or nine persons. This procedure continued until 1947, when the Russians discovered the activity and began imprisoning all Latvian seamen arriving in Gdina.

Another interesting personality encountered by O was the Latvian, Treilibs, a pilot of the port of Gdina. On several occasions he had piloted the "Ludvig" through the harbor when he had told them that he had been appointed as harbor pilot during the German occupation. During the German occupation, he had been active in effecting the escape to Sweden of the higher ranking English prisoners of war. It seemed likely that he also had some connections with the U.S. as indicated by the circumstances of his escape with his family aboard the "Ludvig." A car flying the American flag had arrived at dockside with all his trunks during the day. That night Treilibs boarded the "Ludvig" to pilot her out of the harbor and remained on board, sailing to Sweden. In Sweden he was received with honors, and it seemed evident that the Swedish authorities had been aware of his activities. Treilibs also stated that he had a position reserved for him as harbor pilot at Copenhagen, which the Americans promised him.

On October, 1949, a young Latvian named Tirelis (now in Australia) had been sailing aboard an English ship bound for Finland. While in the Baltic Sea, orders were received from the home office diverting the ship to Riga. Upon discovering this change of course, Tirelis had pleaded with the captain, stating that he would be arrested if the

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Soviets discovered him. The captain, of course, was unable to modify his orders, and Tirelis was forced to enter Riga.

Tirelis destroyed all his incriminating documents, placing the most essential ones in the captain's safe. Entering Riga harbor, they anchored not far from the State Export Company. The ship was boarded by Chekists who photographed the entire crew, front and profile. They were later issued passes, containing their photographs and an extremely detailed description including scars. Luckily the Chekists had accepted Tirelis as an Englishman, but in spite of that, he didn't dare leave the ship the first day. The English seamen on their return from Riga stated that they had had a wonderful time in a coffee shop (probably in Luna), that they had not been detained by the authorities and had made dates for the following day with some girls. The next afternoon, Tirelis went ashore with the Englishmen. Their passes were carefully inspected the the gangway and again at the customs gate where they were also searched for weapons and contraband. They caught a taxi at the gate which transported them to Luna, paying the fare in cigarettes. The English went upstairs to get the girls who turned out to be Latvians, and they then all went to a saloon on Dzirnava iela on the right hand side from Brivibas iela which the girls had recommended. Tirelis was too frightened to do anything more than sit and drink, listening to the girls' conversation amongst themselves which consisted of ways and means of getting more money out of the seamen. The saloon displayed a very dubious aspect, and it seemed that these girls were engaged in decoying seamen to the International Seamen's Club, as there appeared to be spies all about them.

An English seaman who had been in Odessa in 1950 reported that the controls were still just as strict, the control aboard ship being even more severe, involving a thorough search of the ship, including the bilges. The seamen had all been assembled amidships and confined there while a search, lasting six hours, was conducted. The same procedures were employed on the passes and controls as previously. Going ashore, the seaman had to pass through six to eight control points. Leaving the pier gate, they were met by several extremely polite individuals who promised them all they desired and led them to an International Seamen's Club. There were several girls at the club, fluent in all languages and extremely inquisitive. When the seamen were ready to leave, the same polite individual had escorted them back to their ship.

Presently there are three men who concern themselves with the collection of information concerning these matters. The ABN reporter, Edgars Beltmanis at 45 Broadhurst Gardens, London, NWG. Urkis who also lives at the preceeding address and ships out to sea when the financial necessity arises. The third is Melkis in Zigurds Gotgatan 77 III Stockholm. Melkis had flown to London in 1951 and discussed the arrival of the latest refugee boat with Urkis and Beltmanis. The new arrivals had enquired about the possibility of resuming underground

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activity and whether any contacts had been established for support from the West. The reply of course had been that attempts were being made, however, no results were forthcoming as yet. They had all relied on the expectation that O would be able to accomplish some significant results in Washington in January.

O feels that now is the proper time for some responsible American and a Latvian from this side to visit London and Sweden and confer with Urkis and Melkis. He also feels that if some appropriate representative were to be exfiltrated from Latvia, the problems could be discussed and resolved on the spot. It is O's opinion that this is the only good method possible for establishing relations with Latvia. He does not feel this procedure would be overly expensive to the U.S., since it only requires the dispatch of a boat to Latvia for the exfiltration and the presence of a responsible American, empowered to make decisions regarding future activity.

Prior to leaving for Washington, O inquired about the situation in Latvia and was informed by Urkis that a small channel remained, whereby a boat would be able to escape from Latvia. O believes this could only be accomplished during one of two periods during the year - during the autumn storms when the sea is high and during February. He emphasizes that if this operation is not held this year, there can be no guarantee the channel will remain open the following fall.

O has decided that this will be his final attempt to negotiate assistance for the movement, and in the event it proves unsuccessful, he intends to forsake his disordered life as a seaman and settle down to the peaceful existence of a family man. O is at a loss to understand the U.S. position regarding the resistance movement, inasmuch as the English display great interest in it, particularly lately. He has evidence Beltmanis is working for the ABN collecting information on current events in Latvia. This information for the main part originates in Lithuania and the Ukraine and its main objective is to furnish biographical data on persons living in the West suspected of being possible Communist agents. The English also accept all former underground members on their ships, following their movements very closely (i.e., Urkis). Additionally, the English have also granted sanctuary to the recently escaped captain of the five-man fishing boat, Captain Tukleris.

Naturally, the underground would much prefer to establish working arrangements with the U.S. rather than the British, since it is well recognized among Latvians here and in Latvia that the U.S. has not only the greater influence on international diplomacy, but has also taken the most pronounced anti-Communist position as well.

England is at present continuing her timid policy of appeasement against Communism, a policy which is wholly unacceptable to all of us. The fact remains, however, that the English bureaus concerned have

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evidenced a noticeable activity along these lines.

O believes the appropriate men for this underground work can be found in Europe, particularly in England, since the English skimmed the cream from the lot when the refugees began emigrating. Undoubtedly good men willing to work in the resistance movement may be found right here in America; however, it is O's opinion that better quality and a greater amount could be obtained in England and Sweden.

In my judgement, O truly expressed his sentiments when he stated that this would be his final attempt to secure assistance for the movement. Until the present, Urkis and Melkis have been very reserved and reticent toward the British agents, but should it become apparent that the U.S. seems unwilling or uninterested in establishing contact and actively supporting the resistance movement, they will have no alternative but to align themselves with the British.

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