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DBA 8353

C O N F I D E N T I A L

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
New York, New York
May 7, 1962

Insuff Info

Re: Rabbi (First Name Unknown)
Bronstein
Miscellaneous - Information
Concerning

On April 24, 1962, a confidential source, who has furnished reliable information in the past, advised that Rabbi Bronstein, whose first name was unknown to this source, had conferred with Shlomo Argov, Assistant Consul General at the Consulate General of Israel, New York City.

According to this source, Rabbi Bronstein told Argov that he has information concerning Rumania which must be sent immediately to the Misrad Hachutz (Foreign Ministry).

This source advised further that Rabbi Bronstein and Argov were scheduled to meet on April 24, 1962, at which time the matter would be fully discussed.

This source related that he could furnish no further information concerning the above and further this source indicated that he was not aware of Rabbi Bronstein's full identity.

The New York Telephone Directory for the Borough of Brooklyn, 1961 - 1962 edition, lists Rabbi Harry Bronstein, address 329 A Crown Street, Brooklyn, New York, telephone number SL 6-5969.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

Re: Rabbi (First Name Unknown)
Bronstein

The "New York Herald Tribune", a New York daily newspaper, in the May 4, 1962-edition on page 8 revealed an article bearing the cateline Tel Aviv, captioned "Rabbi Brands Bishop a War Criminal".

This article states as follows:

"The chief rabbi of Romania, Dr. Mcshe Rosen, charged yesterday that the bishop of the Romanian Orthodox Church in the United States is an escaped war criminal.

"At a news conference called by the Israeli branch of the World Jewish Congress, Dr. Rosen said Bishop Valerian D. Trifa had been tried in absentia by a Romanian military court and sentenced in 1941 to life in prison.

"Prof. Aryeh Tartakower, Israeli chairman of the World Jewish Congress, said his organization has notified the U. S. government about Bishop Trifa and seeks to bring him to trial either in the U. S. or in Romania.

"Dr. Rosen charged that in World War II, Bishop Trifa was a leader in the Romanian Iron Guard and also was commander of the 'Legionnaire Hitler Movement' in Romania as well as president of the Fascist student organization there.

"Dr. Rosen also charged Bishop Trifa had a hand in organizing the pogrom in Bucharest in January, 1941, in which thousands of Jews were tortured and killed and a number of synagogues burned.

- 2 -

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

Re: Rabbi (First Name Unknown)
Bronstein

"Bishop Declares Charge is False

"Gnass Lake, Mich.

"The Rt. Rev. Valerian D. Trifa, who described himself as bishop of the Romanian orthodox episcopacy in the United States, Canada and the Western Hemisphere, said yesterday war crimes charges against him are 'absolutely false'.

"I am sorry that Jewish organizations in the United States are being misinformed in this way', he added, 'I am sorry to know that the Jewish organization is going to be made a mouthpiece for communism in Romania'.

"He said he came to this country in 1950 and the U. S. government has thorough knowledge of his background."

On June 26, 1961, the files of the Passport Office, United States Department of State, disclosed that Rabbi Harry Bronstein, address 329 A Crown Street, Brooklyn, New York, had been selected by the Agudath Israel of America, 5 Beekman Street, New York City, to spend five to six weeks in Poland for the purpose of training young men in the ritual of religious circumcision.

Further, according to the above files, on April 15, 1959, the American Legation at Budapest, Hungary, reported that Bronstein had just completed a two day visit to Hungary in connection with a program to assist and support the Jewish community in Budapest. It was reported that Bronstein had visited Jewish institutions and held talks and conferences with individuals as well. He left Hungary for Rumania, having visited

- 3 -

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Re: Rabbi (First Name Unknown)
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Czechoslovakia and Poland prior to coming to Hungary. He was reported to be travelling as a non-religious representative of the "Nu Tech Instruments, Incorporated", a business Bronstein had reported as a fictitious cover for his activities as a Rabbi in Hungary and elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Also, he had reported being on the staff of Columbia University, New York City.

On September 18, 1961, Mr. Doyle V. Martin, Rumanian Desk Officer, United States Department of State, Washington, D. C., advised that he had seen and talked with Rabbi Harry Bronstein on two occasions.

While stationed at the American Legation in Bucharest, Rumania, in approximately June, 1960, or possibly as early as late 1959, Martin talked with Bronstein, who was visiting Eastern European countries at that time. Bronstein told Mr. Martin that he was primarily interested in Rabbis and Rabbinical students and teachers and those Jews who were subject to discrimination in the Iron Curtain countries.

As an official of Vaad Hatzala, Bronstein was seeking the aid of the State Department abroad to assist him in getting these Rabbis and students out of Eastern European countries because of his claims of discrimination. The State Department had refused assistance to Bronstein in connection with any requests made, such as sending items by diplomatic pouch and directing letters to individuals in Eastern European countries. The State Department had in general denied Bronstein's requests to assist him in connection with the migration of Jews.

It may be noted that the confidential source mentioned above could not establish if Rabbi Bronstein

- 4 -

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Re: Rabbi (First Name Unknown)
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who conferred with Shlomo Argov of the Israeli Consulate, New York City, was identical with Rabbi Harry Bronstein of 329 A Crown Street, Brooklyn, New York.

It may be noted that a second confidential source, with whom insufficient contact has been had to fully determine his reliability, advised on April 22, 1960, that Bishop Valerian Trifa, Head of the Rumanian Orthodox Episcopate Church located in Jackson, Michigan, was accepted under the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Leonty, Head of the Russian Orthodox Greek Catholic Church of North America (ROGCCNA). According to this source, although Bishop Trifa and his church, the Rumanian Orthodox Episcopate Church, was accepted by the ROGCCNA, his church will be autonomous.

This source further related that Bishop Trifa's church consists of approximately fifty parishes throughout the United States but they are mainly concentrated in the midwest. Further, of the three branches of the Rumanian Orthodox Church in the United States, Bishop Trifa's church is the largest followed in size by the Rumanian Orthodox Church which comes within the jurisdiction of Patriarch Justinian in Bucharest, Rumania.

This second source also advised that Bishop Trifa applied to the Greek Orthodox Church and the Syrian Orthodox Church for acceptance in their churches. However, both turned him down because the Patriarchs of these churches are in communion with Patriarch Justinian.

This source further stated that the ROGCCNA would accept Trifa if they were certain that he was properly consecrated a bishop and in order to obtain

- 5 -

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Re: Rabbi (First Name Unknown)
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this assurance Trifa, during April, 1960, secretly went through a series of services which elevated him to the rank of Bishop which took place in New York City under the authority of the Bishops of the ROGCCNA.

- 6 -

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