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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2E
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2005

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SO 1 : AEMILO/2 from
Mrs. Pauls STRANDE in
Goteborg, Sweden

SUBJECT: Youth Festival in Helsinki, Summer of 1962.

I would like to make the following comments on this subject.

1. The selection of leaders of the Latvian delegation (from the West) was not too successful. Vilma TENESE, even though she is a very energetic young girl, was too disorganized [literally "chaotic"] for such a large undertaking, especially for acting as a leader of the whole Baltic delegation.
2. The selection of the Latvian delegation was not done early enough and carefully enough. The Latvian National Foundation [Fund ?] was not even sure one day before the departure as to who was going. All this hindered the necessary preparation, unity, and the joint work plan of the delegation. As I was informed, five candidates for the Latvian delegation were supposed to have been eliminated in Washington (?) and during the last few days the LNF had to find new persons to replace them (the Estonian delegation had 35 members and their lists were not submitted to Washington at all, so that none of the Estonians were removed from the list).
3. Members of the Latvian delegation came from different countries (Latvians from the US were included in the US delegation) and could not work together in Helsinki, i.e. they did not have a common work plan. For example, the Latvians from Riga were glad to talk to Latvians from Western countries, but the latter had no idea how to use such conversations in a favorable direction. As an example, the Latvians from the US praised the material well-being in the US, whereas the Latvians from Riga mentioned the better possibilities of education, and as a result more of an argument developed instead of a friendly talk.

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The US Latvians did not take into consideration the fact that the Riga Latvians were dissatisfied with the US position in the Hungarian and other matters. The Latvians from Sweden were lucky enough to hit upon a good topic of conversation (one of their conversation topics) about the development of Latvian literature (belles-lettres), and Latvian literature in general. In this field the Latvians from the West were on the winning side, but at the same time the fact that the young Latvians from Sweden had no copies of Latvian books published in the West was a major drawback. Just a few copies of unimportant publications were quite insufficient to establish the development of closer relations (at least on literary subjects) with representatives of the West. Such facts should be taken into consideration every time in the future: this time it had been a great mistake of the LNF, even though they were aware of the literary "relations" (or their development).

4. Some young Latvian members of the delegation made a bad mistake in starting to talk about questions of a political or propaganda nature. The Latvians from Riga were unpleasantly surprised by these questions and usually did not enter into conversations on these subjects.

5. All the above mentioned and other mistakes could have been avoided, in my opinion, if the following had been done:

(a) the members of the Latvian delegation should have been selected in one place (either at LNF or elsewhere), and if there had been a chance for all the delegation members going to Helsinki from the West to meet at least for a few days and work out a general plan of action, the contacts in Helsinki would have turned out quite

differently. For example, the Riga delegation was accompanied by two political "watchdogs" who watched the members of their group (or at least tried to watch them) in every detail. If they had been well organized, the members of the Western delegation would have had no trouble in "separating" the Cheka watchdogs (or at least keep them farther away from the persons they wanted to contact), since these Cheka men are also human with all human weaknesses ~~and~~ and their attention could have been distracted by keeping them busy (talking to them) in another direction.

(b) The Latvian delegation should have been supplied with all kinds of material, such as books (not of a political or propaganda nature), records, souvenirs, and maybe even money, for the purpose of producing a favorable effect on the sentiments of the Riga people and, in general, to create ^a better atmosphere for the development of contacts.

6. The contacts made (or attempted) in Helsinki show that it is not hard to establish friendship (or understanding) with the Latvians from Latvia, if matters are organized in the proper way. There has also been evidence (according to information known to me) that not all the Latvians permitted to go abroad are complete Communists or Communist stooges. For example, the Riga choir director Janis DUMINS turned out to be a very acceptable conversation partner.

7. In any event one should be thinking ahead of time about the possibilities (such as in Helsinki or similar ones) to meet with

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the people from Latvia, and one should think about and prepare people in the West who would be able to do so. There are some rumors at present about a group of young Latvians planning a trip to Riga for the next Latvian Song Festival (1965 ?). Vilma TENESE was mentioned as the organizer of this trip, and it would be very unfortunate if this trip should also be conducted in a disorganized and uncoordinated manner. It is also no secret that smaller Latvian youth groups (more individual persons) are planning to visit Latvia, who should also be given some attention before they start on their trips.

When things are not organized, "a lot of china is broken", while at the same time it would be possible to gain something interesting and necessary to us.

24 January 1963.

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