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EOL-A-15175

- 3 AUG 1955

Chief of Station, Germany

Chief of Base, Pullach

INFO: RE

Operational/CART

Conversation with ZIPPER's CE Chief, @ Dr. KLAUSNER, on 21 July 1955
Regarding the ALBERT/BURKHARDT Flap

REFS: (1) SPULL-1318, (2) SPULL-1342, (3) EOLA-15174, (4) EOLA-15176 *7/27/55*
16 AUG 55

1. After discussing ZIPPER's situation in Austria (see EOLA-15174), the conversation became really animated and I had the feeling that @ Dr. KLAUSNER was speaking in a fairly frank and straightforward manner. Therefore, I brought up the BURKHARDT/WEINMANN case. I said that I realized that his staff was extremely preoccupied with this case and that I brought up this matter merely in order to ask him how he and his colleagues had divided up the various obvious jobs to be done; that @ Dr. KLAUSNER should consider that we Americans had an obvious security interest in this case; and that particularly we at FOB were in a spot vis-a-vis our own service. I added that we were particularly worried that now of all times, just before legalization, there was a flap which could seriously upset this if it developed into a publicized scandal. One of the good aspects of this flap, was, in my opinion, the close cooperation between the Security Group and ZIPPER, and I hoped, I said, that the SG was able to keep this case from becoming public. KLAUSNER explained that just about everybody in ZIPPER Headquarters had a specific role in this flap and that a coordination meeting had been held in @ KUEHN's office 18 July. ZIPPER's "Qualenbat" (@ KURZ, Headquarters Agent Control Officer) was reviewing the security of the ZIPPER sources in the East Zone who might be affected together with @ WEINMANN's staff. @ ALBERTI and another officer (whose name I have forgotten, possibly @ BURKHARDT) had been up in Pforzheim and the British Zone carrying out interrogations. @ WILSON was up in Karlsruhe or Stuttgart sifting the material found in ALBERTI's basement. @ HERRBERG had a particularly important role in going over GH I with a fine-tooth comb since he knew this Field Agency well from the recent days of his work there. Similarly, the other CE officers who originally transferred from GV I to ZIPPER Headquarters, @ FRIESEN and @ HISCHE, were working on certain aspects of this flap. @ BAYERLE was also busy on this case. Other ZIPPER Headquarters officers (whose names slipped my mind since I never heard of them) were examining the Berlin Meldkopf and the entire courier structure as far as ALBERTI might have been knowledgeable. @ KUTZBACH and @ HISCHE were examining current CE cases, particularly UJ-DEOLLERY # 300 and # 302, @ POTERLE, @ SCHREIBER, and a Polish operation which was new to me. After the current cases had been reviewed, they

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would dig into the old cases. Similarly, @ EDINGER's staff were reviewing some of the old and unresolved flaps involving GV L.

2. About this time I said that naturally we stood ready at any time to assist ZIPPER in this obviously tremendously important and involved affair and that if there was anything Dr. KLAUSNER needed in the way of special funds or special evacuation from Berlin, we would do all we could. KLAUSNER acknowledged this with thanks and began to talk about BURKHARDT/WIKEMANN. He said that @ EDINGER had gone to Berlin and had managed to convince the legal authorities there to cancel or commute BURKHARDT's sentence, thereby getting BURKHARDT to talk. KLAUSNER explained that under existing German law, there was nothing like turning State's evidence and that hence the Security Group could not very well interrogate BURKHARDT since BURKHARDT would incriminate himself with every sentence, starting with his very first: "I worked as an SFS agent in the Federal Republic." ZIPPER, however, could well examine BURKHARDT's confessions without having BURKHARDT inextricably incriminate himself.

3. From the beginning of the interrogation, ZIPPER's @ ALBERTI, KLAUSNER said, was convinced that BURKHARDT was speaking essentially the truth--though holding back a great deal of information--while the BfV representative who got in on these interrogations took a consistently sceptical view, believing that BURKHARDT was merely trying to lie his way out of jail. When BURKHARDT showed his SFS pass, the BfV representative immediately stated that this was not the right SFS Ausweis. Later, KLAUSNER said, it was determined that this identity document was BURKHARDT's pass to enter the Bornmuendenstrasse Headquarters. I asked KLAUSNER why the BfV man had been that sceptical. KLAUSNER said that BURKHARDT was the man who guided Otto JOHN from West to East Berlin (sic). When I said that I had thought Dr. WOLFGANG MUTH had driven JOHN to East Berlin, KLAUSNER flinched, shook his head a little and said that @ ALBERTI had collapsed three times while conducting this interrogation because of his heart condition and that a physician had told him after examining him: "I can't understand why you haven't died." Consequently, his group insurance company had insisted that he take four weeks' leave in Bad Kissingen to which ZIPPER had added another two weeks. While there, @ ALBERTI was meaning to be kept up to date on the case, but KLAUSNER said this should only be done very sparingly. When I returned to Otto JOHN, KLAUSNER explained that the BfV representative had knocked off every weekend and that @ ALBERTI had doubled back into the jail afterwards and interrogated BURKHARDT throughout the Sundays. During one of these Sunday sessions, BURKHARDT had made this statement about his role in the Otto JOHN case. @ ALBERTI, KLAUSNER said, had immediately changed the subject, saying, "We will return to this point later" so as not to get the BfV interest in BURKHARDT increased. KLAUSNER thought that possibly the BfV was aware of the fact that BURKHARDT had a role in the JOHN case and was hence trying to discredit BURKHARDT's testimony. I replied that this didn't make much sense to me and that if that were the case, I would imagine the BfV grabbing hold of the case and trying to shut ZIPPER out of it.

4. KLAUSNER then said that this flap must also be considered as an opportunity for ZIPPER because BURKHARDT represented an excellent source for "some 20" positive CE leads. "If only three of these pan out," KLAUSNER said, "they will

advance us by two years". KLAMBER halted at this point to impress me with the sensitivity of the case and the information because of the Security Group/ZITZEL involvement. He said: "He had to sweat up and down to the Security Group that we wouldn't automatically give you people everything. Also, their own security is involved and they are understandably very touchy on this point." I said that I had gathered that the Security Group was concerned and that all their efforts were not joyfully prompted by brotherly love for ZITZEL. At this, KLAMBER grimaced a little and nodded assent. He then explained that when at first the personnel members of the Art BLANK and the Security Group were found in ALBERT's basement, contacts for "all the names down to the last Putschist," the Security Group suspected for a while that ZITZEL was spying on them.

5. KLAMBER then returned to BURKHARDT, whom he described as "quite a guy" ("ein toller Parvohä?"). He said that BURKHARDT had a brother in West Germany, "somewhere in Pfenberg," who was also an SIS agent, but whom they did not want them into custody at this time since this might lead BURKHARDT's lips. In addition, KLAMBER said, BURKHARDT had all kinds of interesting girls with whom he had slept at one time or another and who were working as secretaries for the SIS--one even worked for the NSD. One other girlfriend, an elderly type who took a sort of maternal interest in BURKHARDT, has been residing in West Berlin, and ZITZEL was now trying to bring her to West Germany. Further, KLAMBER said, BURKHARDT had a special, on his own, against his SIS case officer, but checked up on them, and surveilled some of their movements in West Germany. As he had carried out some SIS relations which his superiors had been assigned to do and that when BURKHARDT had admitted his reports either carrying out these relations, his superiors had signed their own names to them. As a reason for this, BURKHARDT claimed that his SIS superiors had just been too lazy to carry out these operations themselves. As a result, KLAMBER said, this entire case should also be interpreted as an SIS thing since the SIS could not very well have an accurate picture of what had happened in West Germany. This was particularly so because he felt that BURKHARDT's SIS superiors could not afford to admit the true facts in this case and therefore had to cover up for BURKHARDT to some extent.

6. KLAMBER added that one of these SIS superiors of BURKHARDT was an SIS colonel and that BURKHARDT had stated regarding this man: "You people can't learn this, he's doing much too well over there, but you can talk to him in West Germany" (sic). KLAMBER also mentioned that BURKHARDT had almost slipped over his active files earlier this year, but I have forgotten which one (except that it was 195..1). As an example of how entertaining and amusing BURKHARDT had been, KLAMBER cited the fact that he had successfully hidden outside the Pullach Compound behind a bush with an "electric" rifle and tried to ride up telephone conversations conducted inside barracks 107 which is ZITZEL's headquarters Evaluation Section. BURKHARDT had apparently been able to record a few names in this manner, KLAMBER said.

7. In conversation then returned to ALBERT. In ALBERT's basement the Security Group found 9,000 DM West and a suitcase containing intelligence reports, apparently in three separate bags. These reports included the name lists of Security Group and Art BLANK personnel. In addition, KLAMBER said, they found documents

which asked ALBERT to procure these lists typed on an American typewriter. KLAUSNER was not quite clear on this point, but I gathered that these documents were either straight KRI's, calling for information on Security Group and Amt BLANK personnel, or documents which in some similar fashion tied these name rosters to an AIS office. KLAUSNER said that apparently ALBERT had worked for an American intelligence office in addition to his work for ZIPPER and the SIS. However, quite possibly, ALBERT had reported to an agent or case officer who merely had obtained some sort of AIS backstopping, fraudulently or otherwise ("hat sich wohl irgendwie beim Amerikaner abgedeckt"). The Security Group had traced this AIS tie to one Colonel THOMAS and Mr. STEVENS in Wiesbaden or Frankfurt. Tentatively, KLAUSNER said the Security Group had identified Colonel THOMAS as a Mr. WHITE. I commented that I thought that "Colonel THOMAS" sounded like a cover name and that I doubted that ALBERT had been in touch with any genuine American Army colonel. KLAUSNER agreed, but said that colonel also referred to lieutenant colonels. I said this was so, but that even lieutenant colonel appeared to me to be too high a rank for a case officer. I then asked KLAUSNER why in God's name he thought ALBERT had kept copies of three sets of reports which he had sent to various intelligence services. KLAUSNER said they had been unable to figure this out so far. I speculated that I thought ALBERT had to keep these file copies because he would occasionally receive queries from his three services regarding his reports and he had naturally found it impossible to memorize what he had sent to each on any given topic.

8. In addition to the money and these documents, KLAUSNER said, the SG discovered in ALBERT's basement some film emulsions ("einige Film Emulsionen") which they were trying to develop and to read, and a device manufactured only in the Soviet Zone, to read Microfilm. The rest of ALBERT's house was found to be "filled with Persian rugs." When the SG asked Mrs. ALBERT about the 9,000 DM's, she supposedly made the dark statement: "You ask my husband about that money and if he can't give you an answer, he can hang himself!" ("Fragen Sie meinen Mann und wenn er keine Antwort weiss, kann er sich aufhaengen!") ZIPPER and the SG had also established that ALBERT had lied to ZIPPER regarding his home--not only did it have about double the value of that claimed by ALBERT, but also the fictitious aid which ALBERT's mother-in-law supposedly had contributed was found to have been fictitious. All in all, KLAUSNER estimated that between 20,000 and 30,000 DM's of ALBERT's estate were as yet unaccounted for, although it was too early in the investigation to arrive at a definite estimate.

9. KLAUSNER then explained that for some time he no longer had been on speaking terms with @ LEIDL (Chief of ZIPPER's Dienststelle 1A2, and, as such, ALBERT's superior). KLAUSNER said that "der Dicke," i.e., LEIDL, still believed in ALBERT's innocence. Fortunately, KLAUSNER added, LEIDL had asked to go to Bad Gastein on leave and this had been granted. LEIDL's absence, KLAUSNER explained, greatly facilitated their giving Dienststelle 1A2 the once-over with a really fine-tooth comb. The men to do this job were obviously @ HOBBERG, @ FRIMMER, etc., and others who knew the in's and out's of Dienststelle 1A2 intimately because they used to work there themselves. These men had run afoul of LEIDL one after the other, and consequently joined KLAUSNER's staff in Headquarters. Some time later, the large flaps, such as HOBBER and HAASE, rocked ZIPPER. As a result of some of these involving that particular field base, ZIPPER's operational security officer, @ EDINGER,

See also file 142

had told both LEIDL and ALBERT: "There is a hole in Menstetalle 1A2." Thereafter, KLAUSNER said, he began receiving denunciation reports from LEIDL regarding the men that had left Menstetalle 1A2 to join KLAUSNER's staff--G FRIENH was supposedly a notorious Gestapo official wanted by the French; G HIRSCHER was morally lax and had been drunk on his last trip to Triser; G ROHMBERG was suspect for a reason which I have forgotten; G ALBERTI was too pro-Slavic and hence insecure, etc. KLAUSNER said these denunciation reports gave him no end of trouble and that G FRIENH, the physical security officer for the Pollach Compound, actually and seriously interrogated ALBERTI on suspicions of being a British agent because ALBERTI had worked at one time with the ARHEDES Army in Italy. Now, KLAUSNER stated, they had reexamined all these reports and had analyzed them by their style and other characteristics as written by ALBERT for LEIDL's signature. KLAUSNER thought this to have been a diversion maneuver of ALBERT's who wanted to prove his counter-charge that "the hole was 't inside Menstetalle 1A2, but rather inside ZIPFEN Headquarters."

10. At this point, I brought up the 1A11 MARLENE case and said that I thought it might be useful to go over that case again since it might possibly shed some new light on all this. KLAUSNER agreed, generally speaking, but said that there were many other things to be checked first. I wondered whether any check of typewriters, etc., had been made, but KLAUSNER was obviously unable or unwilling to go into such details. He stressed, however, that the "Dr." mentioned in the 1A11 MARLENE document was undoubtedly meant to describe G SCHUBERT, former CS Chief of ZIPFEN's Hauptstadt Field Base (Menstetalle 1A1). The conversation then returned to ALBERT. The night before his suicide, KLAUSNER said, the interrogators had gotten the impression that ALBERT was about to break. Accordingly, they warned the jail authorities to watch ALBERT during the night. This they did, but at eight the next morning, during an unguarded moment, ALBERT managed to hang himself with his pajama cord. KLAUSNER added that among the documents found in ALBERT's basement there were some which indicated an American request for KLAUSNER's true name, cover name, addresses, etc., and the information which ALBERT had sent in reply.

11. One of the Menstetalle 1A2 cases that needed examination when personnel is available, KLAUSNER said, is US-BULLERY # 18 (Wall REVTEL). I said that we had been interested in the case from the time that the B/W had been analyzed as fairly medium-level, but that we had been frankly disappointed that KLAUSNER's man, G ROHMBERG, had failed to notify us when the REIS had reactivated this case. KLAUSNER loyally defended ROHMBERG by saying he didn't think that this had been omitted intentionally. I said I didn't think so either, but that nevertheless we would not have known of the reactivation of this interesting double agent operation if it had not been for a comparative study of REIS letters which was conducted by G RUTZBACH on US-BULLERY's # 15 and #18.

12. Then I asked about KASBYNER. KLAUSNER said that so far KASBYNER had admitted nothing. When I mentioned his large bank deposits, KLAUSNER said that undoubtedly KASBYNER had deposited money for his East German agents to his own account; however, since these payments were intended to have been banked in West Germany for those agents, the propriety of KASBYNER's actions had not yet been clarified.

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13. The remainder of the evening was taken up with conversations about ZEPFER's position in Austria and the possibilities of a CE-UJ-BRACO trip. These points will be the subjects of separate dispatches (RGLA's-15174 and 15176).

14. The conversation with @ Dr. KLAUSNER reported above is one of the few longer talks which I have so far had with him on anything very sensitive. I could not help feeling that he spoke fairly frankly and probably meant most of what he said. I doubt whether alcohol had anything to do with the substance of his conversation since we only drank one Kirchwasser apiece and, in addition, consumed a bottle of wine each during a period from 1800 until 2315. However, as can be seen from SPULL-1342, KLAUSNER may have regretted some of his disclosures the next day when he called me urgently and entreated me not to make any use of the Colonel THOMAS/Mr. STEVENS information since it "had definitely been established" that Colonel THOMAS was Mr. WHITE and that Dr. BRUECKNER of the Security Group was on his way to see Mr. WHITE. KLAUSNER pleaded with me not to warn Mr. WHITE, stressing that BRUECKNER wanted no scandal, but merely desired to enlist Mr. WHITE's cooperation to get at his agent who had worked with ALBERT. KLAUSNER added that it had become apparent that this agent also had defrauded Mr. WHITE ("hat ihn betrogen") and that the Security Group would naturally like to identify, investigate and interrogate this agent.

NOTE: Developments on 22 July and subsequent events showed that this portion of KLAUSNER's statement dealing with Mr. WHITE being identical with "Colonel THOMAS" was a garbled version of some initial conjectures made by BRUECKNER. Presumably, KLAUSNER has learned in the meantime from BRUECKNER some results of the BRUECKNER talks and consequently has revised his opinion as to the true identity of "Colonel THOMAS."

Approved by:

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