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UNITED STATES FORCES EUROPEAN THEATRE
SCI/CIB G-2 DIVISION
APO 757

18 August 1945

TO : Chief CIB, G-2, USFET

SUBJECT : Information on Hauptmann PRAGER as Supplied
by Hildegard BEETZ.

1) The attached report, subject "Frau Hildegard BEETZ", contains information on PRAGER, alleged German agent and SS Captain.

2) The interrogation, upon which this report is based, was conducted according to a Special Interrogation Brief submitted by SCI Unit Munich to Third Army IC.

ANDREW H. BERDING
Lt. Colonel, A.C.
Commanding.

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HEADQUARTERS
THIRD UNITED STATES ARMY
INTELLIGENCE CENTER
INTERROGATION SECTION
APO 403

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2 August 1945

SUBJECT: Frau Hildegard BEETZ

TO : SCI Det., Munich, 12th Army Group

Frau BEETZ was questioned in accordance with Special Brief of SCI Det., Munich, 12th Army Group, dated 21 July 1945, and the following information obtained:

1. PRAGER, alleged German agent and Captain of the SS.

Frau BEETZ met PRAGER for the first time in January 1944 at CERNOBBIO vic COMO. She went to CERNOBBIO in the company of SS Sturmbannführer Dr HÜTTL in order to arrange for permission to enter Switzerland. Her ostensible mission in SWITZERLAND was to work for the German Consul General at LUGANO. Actually she was to continue her original mission, viz to secure CIANO's diary and other important papers supposed to be in the hands of CIANO's widow who was detained by the Swiss. During her stay in Switzerland Frau BEETZ received frequent visits by PRAGER who brought her the official mail from the RSHA and who picked up her reports which he took back to Italy whence they were mailed to the RSHA. Frau BEETZ met PRAGER the second time in May 1944. At that time she again enlisted PRAGER's help to get her a permit of entry into Switzerland. She stayed at CERNOBBIO until and

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of June 1944 at which time her application was definitely turned down. During this period of time she had frequent personal contacts with PRAGER. Although he showed a great deal of reticence in talking about personal matters, Frau BEETZ was able to gain a fairly reliable picture of the position he held. She is less sure about his personal and professional background.

a. Grenzbefehlsstelle West

PRAGER is neither a member of the SS (information to the contrary notwithstanding) nor does he belong to the SD. He worked directly for the 'Grenzbefehlsstelle West' (GBW), the executive arm of the Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei in Italy and as such embodying elements of Stapo, Kripo and SD. The GBW, as the name indicates, was charged with the security of the border districts separating Italy from Switzerland and from France. Commander of the GBW was SS Hauptsturmführer VOETTERL who received his orders directly from the Befehlshaber der Sicherheitspolizei HASTER.

b. Position

PRAGER served the GBW in the capacity both of a confidential agent (V-mann) and liaison functionary (Verbindungsmann). Frau BEETZ believes that PRAGER, who is an affluent businessman, was not on the payroll of the SD but acted in an honorary capacity.

c. Private Business

PRAGER owned some commercial enterprise in the town of CHIASSO on the Swiss side of the Italo-Swiss border. Frau

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BEETZ does not know what branch of business PRAGER engaged in. The name of his firm was GIUSVOR. At the occasion of her first trip to Switzerland Frau BEETZ got Swiss currency through PRAGER and she believes that he engaged in currency transactions on a big scale. PRAGER told Frau BEETZ that he was frequently consulted by the German Chamber of Commerce in MILANO in respect to complications arising out of Allied pressure brought to bear on Switzerland with the aim to curtail transit of German resp Italian goods through that country.

d. Work for the GBW

PRAGER whose residence was in the vic of CHIASSO, however on the Italian side of the border, could cross into Switzerland and back into Italy as often as he wanted. This freedom of movement across the border aided him of course considerable in discharging the missions assigned him by GBW. As an example he could visit with the German Consul General at LUGANO or the Chamber of Commerce at ZURICH just any day without arousing any undue suspicion inasmuch as he was known to be a prominent businessman and presumably acting in pursuance of legitimate interests. Under this cloak he was able to aid in the maintenance of liaison between the SD and its representatives in Switzerland. About the latter he should be exceptionally well informed.

e. Special Qualifications

PRAGER's activities in behalf of the GBW were apparently closely linked with his economic interests. He was considered an authority on the Swiss border district called TESSIN. His knowledge ^{of} personalities playing an economic or

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political role in Switzerland was considered both prolific and reliable. By virtue of his knowledge and experience PRAGER wielded considerable influence in the GBW and even SS Hauptsturmführer VOETTERL found himself reduced to a second string position. According to Frau BEETZ, PRAGER was the will and the brains of GBW.

f. Agent Net

Frau BEETZ has not heard anything indicating that PRAGER had an information net in Switzerland. At any rate he never mentioned the use of confidential agents. From all indications PRAGER confined himself to rendering opinions and occasionally to running errands into Switzerland.

g. Personal Data

PRAGER is married to a Swiss who is a native of the French speaking part of Switzerland. His father-in-law is a prominent physician in Lausanne and is rumored to have furnished his son-in-law with some valuable connections. There is an unsubstantiated rumor that PRAGER, an Austrian by birth, served as an Intelligence officer in the old Austro-Hungarian Army.

PRAGER is 60 years of age. He suffers from a severe case of diabetes.

2. MUSSOLINI on Germany

a. Circumstances of find

The original of MUSSOLINI's exposé on Germany (often referred to as his diary) was found by sheer accident contained in a small notebook among his personal effects during the

GRAN SASSO raid. An alert SD man had a photostatic copy made, whereupon the original was returned to MUSSOLINI.

b. Translation

Where other translators in the RSHA failed, viz to decipher MUSSOLINI's all but illegible handwriting from an inferior photostatic copy, Frau BEETZ succeeded. Great precautions were taken to preclude any leakage. Frau BEETZ was sworn to secrecy and expressly forbidden to make any carbon copies. Despite very elaborate precautions Frau BEETZ managed to copy the main points in their original Italian version. As to the whereabouts of the photostatic copy SS Hauptsturmführer KRALLERT should be questioned (group VI G, RSHA).

c. PUCCI

Frau BEETZ mentioned the existence of the exposé and the fact of her having copied it in part to PUCCI in January 1944 when she looked him up in a Swiss hospital. PUCCI told Father PANCINO about it who in turn broached the matter to Frau BEETZ. She denied everything and passed it off as a product of PUCCI's febrile imagination. Frau BEETZ does not believe that Father PANCINO notified the SD.

d. Whereabouts of digest

The digest was among the other papers turned over by Frau BEETZ to Lt FRENCH, SCI, in WEIMAR. She claims that, at the request of Lt FRENCH, she translated it into English and retained her own handwritten Italian copy which should be with her personal effects in WIESBADEN.

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Major, Inf
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