

SECURITY

EAC
EASA-1267

AIR

Chief, EE
Attn: [] and []
Chief of Base, Salzburg

27 April 1953

Operational/GROOVY/REDCAP

Grossbahn - ZZ-1 (Security Infraction)

Ref- EASA-1197

Phase I

1. On Friday, 10 April 1953, Grossbahn switched suitcases with another person, later identified herein, while enroute from Salzburg to Attnang-Puchheim on the Arlberg Express. The following are the details in his own words:

a. On Friday, 10 April 1953, I left Salzburg by the Arlberg in the direction of Attnang at 1805 hours. I travelled in the last second class compartment of the first second class carriage (in the direction of the locomotive) next to the third class carriages. Because of a broken water pipe the compartment was flooded and I changed after probably five minutes into the adjacent compartment. There were two other men, occupying the window seats, in this compartment. I left my two suitcases on the rack and after possibly ten minutes went into the third class, where I had seen SLAA. I passed his compartment and he stepped out. After making sure that I did not know anybody and after asking him whether he knew anybody, which he didn't, I conversed with him. I suddenly noticed that the train had already passed Voecklabruck station and therefore parted in a hurry and rushed to my compartment. There was no other stop by the train until Attnang. When I reached my compartment I found the two other men still sitting in their seats but there was no light in the compartment - it had become almost dark by then. I put on my coat, grabbed (what I believed to be) my two bags, rushed for the door and left the train then went to the exit where my wife waited for me with the car. Arriving at home I left the two suitcases in the hall and went to meet our guests.

b. On Saturday, 11 April, at about ten in the morning I went to "my suitcases" to take out my black briefcase which contained one yellow envelope in which I had placed

- (1) The enlarged photos made by ZZ-1.
- (2) The contact letter dated 10 March (ZZ-1).
- (3) Two empty film covers for ZZ-1's Robot.

Declassified and Approved for Release
by the Central Intelligence Agency
Date: 2005

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)

- (2)(A) Privacy
(2)(B) Methods/Sources
(2)(G) Foreign Relations

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I found to my utter dismay that I had either grabbed a wrong suitcase or that somebody in my absence had exchanged mine for another one. This other suitcase, also brown but slightly smaller, contained two shirts, one with an Innsbruck textile mark, a small toilet set with razor, brush (also with an Innsbruck mark) one used night shirt (flannel), and one Tiroler Zeitung dated 31 Jan. 1953.

c. I thereupon called the Linz railroad lost property office and asked whether somebody had given notice to have exchanged a suitcase. Linz immediately contacted the stations where a stop of the Arlberg was scheduled: Attnang, Wels, St. Valentin and Vienna (Westbahnhof), I was then informed that no notice had arrived so far. The official wanted my name, I informed him that I was going to take the wrong suitcase to Wels, where I was going in any case, he in turn was going to inform Wels. (I did this as not to disclose my identity). I drove to Wels with my wife, she parked some distance from the station and I rushed there on foot. I arrived shortly before noon, the official in charge of lost property had already left but a man from the ticket office was already informed. He in my presence once more called Linz, where no further news had arrived, and from where he was informed that before Monday morning no further news could come because the offices were closed until then. I filled out a form where I described the suitcase, the compartment and the time and requested that in case of it being found it should be forwarded to the Wels lost property railroad office. I had to give a name and address and gave: Albert A. EISNER, APO 403, U.S. Army.

d. We then went to Salzburg where I had hoped to find notes in my office regarding the contents of the contact letter--which could have been a damaging document--but I found none. I did not get an answer when calling the office (yours). I then returned to my home. I intentionally did not call Wels again from my home on Monday morning as not to give traces that could have been followed but called you requesting to see you this morning. Providing that time allows I will call Wels from Voecklabruck, where I am not known at the post office.

e. My suitcase did not contain any other indicative information regarding my person but a number of letters from my family in Germany without addresses, dirty laundry without initial marking, a number of German and American journals.

f. As far as I can recollect the contact letter with ZZ-1 does not blow him except his so far used Vienna address on Malerstrasse of Vienna's first district.

2. The contact report which he mentions under paragraph b was forwarded to Headquarters as Attachment B to reference. Attached at B is a set of photos which are copies of the photos also mentioned under paragraph b. These photos had not as yet been forwarded as we felt they were of insufficient importance to distribute. They represent ZZ-1's efforts during a spell of extremely bad weather and many are fairly unclear. The set of photos which were in the suitcase were unmarked, unlike those attached. We have coded the pictures according to the Grossbahn report (P/34015) attached at A merely as a guide to the coverage entailed.

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3. Grossbahn held an extremely brief meeting with ZZ-1 in Liezen, Steiermark on 14 April 1953--taking all security precautions possible under existing circumstances--and warned ZZ-1 to stay out of the Soviet Zone and at home, until further notice. He was not told the reason why. Explanation was that there had been an indication of increased security measures on the part of the Soviets and it was felt prudent to keep him out of the area until things returned to normal.

4. In spite of Grossbahn's optimistic paragraph f, a thorough examination of the contact report indicates clear leads to ZZ-1's true identity--leads which an aggressive and unfriendly service would have little trouble picking out and following down, if they were so inclined. (See contact report, para. IV.a(7).)

5. We try to excuse Grossbahn on the grounds that this sort of accident or incident could happen to any of us. We have not as yet given him the brutal tongue lashing he deserves for he is in such a depressed mood over the affair that we are afraid of pushing him too far. We cannot answer why he had sensitive information in his suitcase--why he walked off and left it to chat with SLAA of all people on the Arlberg Express of all places. These answers we will furnish at a later date.

Phase II

6. Attached at C is Grossbahn's report covering the receipt of a letter from one M. MAHLER, Anichstrasse 24, Innsbruck, and the circumstances attendant thereto. As part of this attachment, are photocopies of the postcard from XX-1 to Grossbahn which, fortunately, furnished the only clue by which MAHLER was enabled to ultimately track down the owner. XX-1 had mailed the postcard to Grossbahn in a covering envelope, hence the appearance that the postcard was ready for mailing but had never been dispatched. This offered a ready made cover story--Grossbahn could explain (and he did) that Dr. KINACH, a friend from Germany, actually XX-1, had asked him to mail the card to some friends in Austria, but that he had forgotten to do so and had left the card in his suitcase.

7. PP-1 did not go to Innsbruck immediately to check on MAHLER. Rather we are having the check performed through routine channels.

Phase III

8. Grossbahn traveled to Innsbruck the night of 22 April--after stopping by Wels to pick up MAHLER's suitcase--and effected the exchange. His report covering the trip is attached at D. It would appear as though the suitcase fell into the hands of a completely trustworthy and exceptionally intelligent person. MAHLER appears to be decided pro-West--note his compliments to Grossbahn on the fine job he is doing. We wish there were some way in which we could express our thanks to MAHLER--possibly even offer him some type of remuneration for his fine handling of the episode--but we feel it is best to let the matter close out without attaching further significance to it.

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9. As soon as PF-i's traces are in on MAHLER--and we see no reason now why his report should be unfavorable--we will reactivate ZZ-1, but will insist that he change boarding houses in Vienna and avoid contact with his former acquaintances from Frau PFALZ's house.

10. We are convinced, after this affair, that there is a Goddess of Good Luck, who must look over our left shoulder and does favor us with an occasional smile.

11. We will develop the answers to questions posed in paragraph four and do plan on following up with a stern lecture to Grossbahn on the sheer foolhardiness of his initial steps which culminated in his near compromise of a promising new source. He will also be reminded that this security breach is being entered in his record, and just so with the rest of us, no one can afford to set up a string of such incidents without expecting to eventually suffer the consequences.

Attachments:

- A. P/34015, 21 April 1953
- B. Photos (Nos. A-L)
- C. Grossbahn memo dtd. 21 April 53 & atts.
- D. Grossbahn memo dtd. 23 April 53

Distribution:

- 3 - EE (w/1 set of atts. A,B,C,D)
- 3 - Vien (w/1 set of atts. A,B,C,D)
- 1 - Salz chrono (w/e atts.)
- 1 - Salz subj #101 (w/1 set of atts. A,B,C,D)
- 1 - RCM notebook (w/1 set of atts. A,B,C,D)

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