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15 May 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, EE/A

SUBJECT: Otto Albrecht Alfred von BOLSCHWING

1. On the evening of 11 May 1961 ^{EE/H,} and I met von BOLSCHWING in New York City to point out to him the prudence of withdrawing his pending application for ICA-sponsored employment in India. The entire meeting, which lasted from shortly before eight in the evening to three in the morning, was in an amicable atmosphere and interspersed with mutual reassurances of continued friendship.

2. The point was gotten to with dispatch, and was introduced by calling to his attention derogatory references to him in recent books by Quentin Reynolds and Tuvia Friedman. He said that he was unfamiliar with the books. When he dismissed the references as ridiculous he was told that the books were in fact supported by a comparatively cursory review of captured German documents dealing with Adolf EICHMANN's activities. It was clearly pointed out that the documents on EICHMANN, as well as a detailed review of his own NSDAP records, established the fact that he had told Agency representatives far less than the truth about his Nazi activities. It was explained that although the Agency had been to an extent had no one was mad at him, and the purpose of our meeting was in no sense punitive. The purpose of the meeting, it was explained, was to draw to his attention the scandal that might result if he pressed his desire for employment and his congressional sponsors were caught out in the publicity that might break at any moment.

3. BOLSCHWING was quick to appreciate the fact that, without regard to the merits of the charges, the damage was done as far as his government-sponsored employment was concerned. He vigorously expressed his intention, however, after getting his sponsors off the limb, to clear his record. It was pointed out to him that it was our regretfully considered opinion that it would be impossible for him to clear his record, and I explained that I had personally

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)
(2)(A) Privacy
(2)(B) Methods/Sources
(2)(G) Foreign Relations

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reviewed the record and that, favorably disposed toward him as I was, it would be impossible for him to convince me. Furthermore, even if he were able to dispose of the charges he insisted were mendacious the record which he acknowledged would still show NSDAP and SS membership and activities which would make him a pariah in the circles for which he was striving. As for disproving any of the charges, he was reminded, even a court of law could not undo the publicity damage, and in any event it was doubtful that he would want the anguish and expense of legal trial before a West German or Israeli court. With this he heartily agreed. He wanted to know if this were a likelihood, and was told that although the documents were available to friendly governments we thought it unlikely that Germany or Israel would take any action against him. But, he was reminded, there was not even faint assurance that his name would not come up in the trials of others. He also wanted to know if ICA was aware of this derogatory information and was told that it was our impression that only the small section of ICA dealing in security matters knew of them, and that if he moved quickly in withdrawing his application the operating officials would probably not learn them.

4. To me, at least, BOLSCHWING's protestations of innocence seemed essentially pro forma and put forward in order to maintain his self respect with us. It is of some significance, suggesting at least that the reason for the discussion was not a complete surprise to him, that he had made a point of bringing with him his Austrian denazification certificate--really rather a pathetic paper under the circumstances. Although initial efforts at a chronological review of his relations with the party were cut off as pointless, he was for the most part pretty much permitted to talk himself out on the subject of his innocence. Of his own accord he came fairly early in the discussion to the position that in deference to the things he loved best--primarily his wife and secondarily the United States and the people here who had befriended him--he could not fight the situation or attempt to clear himself. At this point he volunteered the fact that he understood that he now could never work for the government, and he went on to wonder aloud if he could best spare his present employer, ex-Governor Driscoll, any future embarrassment by quickly finding other civil employment. He mentioned suicide twice. The first time it was received and treated lightly; the second time he was told that that idea did not fit in remotely with his avowed primary interest of sparing his wife and others disgrace and pain.

5. BOLSCHWING realized that apart from the present possibilities of scandal his status as a United States citizen might well be endangered by an expose of the facts. On this he was told that, there being more to the record than the Agency had bargained for,

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we could do very little to protect him; the most we could do was not to surface the affair ourselves and to endeavor to confine any knowledge of it to security type channels. It would be a public outcry which would damage him, he was told.

6. Early on in the discussion BOLSCHWING's main worries centered around his wife and how he could use her health as an excuse for withdrawing his application without making her aware of the true situation. The health question itself presents almost no problem, because both he and his wife some months ago suffered serious automobile accidents from which she, at least, has not fully recovered. However, what and how to tell his wife revolves, he says, around the fact that she is by nature emotional and fearful, has already been quite depressed lately, and in no event is the sort of person who could live out her life with a guilty secret. After hours of discussion he settled finally on telling her that as a Devisenberater prior to World War II he had extensive dealings with emigrating Jews which now are subject to adverse misinterpretation.

7. Depressed as BOLSCHWING unquestionably was, and groping as he was for solutions in what must have seemed an insoluble situation, he showed surprising resilience and apparent courage. From the beginning there was no question at all that his first and critical step was to withdraw immediately his application for employment and to inform his sponsors that he had done so. He asked us to draft a telegram for him for this purpose to be sent to Mr. Slaght of ICA and a letter to be sent to the congressmen who had interceded for him. He had, incidentally, shown us copies of the letters written on his behalf by the individual congressmen, and in each case they had plugged for him unequivocally and aggressively. The telegram to Slaght was to be sent that night or first thing the next morning, and the letters were to go to the congressmen as soon as possible. He was also to send a similar letter to Mr. Bourdres, the ICA field man in India who was in communication with him, and he was to follow up his telegram to Slaght with a telephone call and a letter. The question came up of whether or not he should send any sort of a letter to [] in India who had expressed an interest in his ICA employment, and it was decided that he should not. There might be something to be said for having him write [] a straight faced version of his withdrawal for health reasons in order to make matters easier for [], but the question was complicated by the fact that, according to BOLSCHWING, Bourdres is aware of []'s Agency affiliation. This decision can, of course, be changed if it seems more desirable to have him write to [] but I would tend to favor not writing, and informing [] by RYBAT communication of what has happened.

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8. BOLSCHWING is tough and resurceful; I don't expect him not to go through with the withdrawal of his application, but over the long haul he is not apt to let sleeping dogs lie. Given enough time for rationalization it is likely that at some time in the future he will come up with ideas for clearing his record and reinstating himself as a first class citizen.

[]
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