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no 0-9820

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20 April 1950

Major General C. P. Cabell
Director of Intelligence
Headquarters, U. S. Air Force
Room 4A928 Pentagon
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Pearre:

Attached hereto is a report of the meetings with ex-German General Gottlob Berger. As I said before, we are still working on the case to see what can be developed both with General Berger's information and Mr. McCloy.

Will you please deliver the enclosed letter to General Spivey?

Sincerely,

*Signed - disp by hand
RAR 4/21/50*

R. H. Hillenkoetter
Rear Admiral, USN
Director of Central Intelligence

Encls.
(Ltr to Gen Spivey &
2 cys report)

D:RHH: lec
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Nazi/Japanese War Crimes Task Force review completed

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SUBJECT: Interview with Ex-General Gottlob Berger.

1. The Subject was interviewed in the War Criminal Prison No. 1 in Landsberg an Lech/Bavaria. Permission to interview the prisoner was obtained from Colonel Walter R. Graham, the Prison Director, who gave his complete cooperation in arranging for this interview. He turned over the custody of General Berger, within the limits of the Administrative Building, and set aside a private conference room for the interview. No time limit for the duration of the interview was set.

2. Neither a guard nor an interpreter was present at any time during the course of the interview with Berger. The entire conversation was in German because Berger said he did not know English or his knowledge of it was too fragmentary. He was given the letter from General Vanaman and General Spivey and its contents were translated for him. He was allowed to keep it. Berger was overjoyed to hear that it was from General Spivey; he did not react to the name of General Vanaman. The original of Berger's reply to General Vanaman's and General Spivey's letter is attached.

3. Berger was told that we would like to hear details about the secret information which he was supposed to have. Berger stated that he had received information from sources outside the prison that a Russian intelligence network operating out of Berlin against the Western Powers is run by two men known to Berger. These two men are former

25X1 [redacted] These two presently operate this network for the Russians from the Russian Sector of Berlin. Berger could not pinpoint the place but claimed the headquarters was a group of remote houses somewhere in the general area of Weissensee or Fuerstenwalde. He said the over-all direction of this network came from Moscow. All communication between Moscow and Berlin is by short wave. This network has agents which gather intelligence information in Western Germany through the following means: (a) having agents within the VVN and other Communist front organizations located in Western Germany; (b) using members of the KPD as agents in Western Germany; (c) using agents whose specialty is to report on the military OR of the Western Occupation forces; and (d) using Displaced Persons (particularly Balts) to spy on other Displaced Persons. They are pressed into such work by threat of reprisals by the Russians in the event that Russia (or the Communists) seize all of Germany. In short, Berger said that intelligence information is gathered using the above four methods and is sent to [redacted] in Berlin who, in turn, transmit it to Moscow via short wave.

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4. Berger stated that [redacted] His information on [redacted] was sketchy and amounts to no more than that [redacted] was a German general in Norway during the last war, had contacts with Admiral Canaris, and was later assigned to the Eastern Front, where he was captured by the Russians. For seven years prior to the war, [redacted] was an Abwehr agent in Brazil and Argentina and had agent contacts in Uruguay and Spain. He returned to Germany before the war and eventually attained the rank of Obergruppenfuhrer in the SS. Berger stated that Himmler dismissed [redacted] from the SS for looting silverware and silk clothing. He was sent to the Eastern Front and was captured by the Russians. It is Berger's theory that [redacted] was captured first by the Russians and agreed to work for them. [redacted] saw to it that his brother-in-law was freed from a Russian POW camp and [redacted] persuaded [redacted] to work for the Russians.

5. Berger stated that he has not been in contact with [redacted] and [redacted] since 1943. He claims that it is possible to contact them through a woman (no description obtained) who frequents a bar in the Pankow section of Berlin (name and location of bar was not given). This woman is a personal friend of the two sisters who married [redacted]. Berger says he knows this woman and has information that she has been a steady customer of the bar in Pankow for the past six months. He said that he was the only one who could contact her, but he did not ask that he be taken out of prison in order to make the contact. The inference that this was what he wanted was, of course, perfectly clear. It was not suggested that we were interested in getting him out of prison for this purpose, because it seemed obvious that the information he had was of no real interest to us. In the course of the three-hour conversation with Berger, he did not use a vocabulary which indicated a professional knowledge of the intelligence game. Except for the promise to attempt to have his letter delivered to Generals Vanaman and Spivey, nothing was stated to give Berger hopes that he might be released from prison in return for the information he had just given.

6. During the evening of 22 March, Mr. A. P. Stone, Office of Special Investigation, who is attached to the Air Force Base at Landsberg, stated that he had interrogated a "fascinating person" in the Landsberg Prison, General Berger. The latter had offered to supply the Americans with intelligence information but was turned down because he wanted as his price immediate release from incarceration. Mr. Stone could not be debriefed about details, but enough information was given in the course of the conversation to demonstrate that we had not obtained an exclusive interview with Berger. It is a matter of conjecture whom else Berger may have approached with his story.

7. Berger is about 6' 1" tall, dark brown hair, looks about 55 years of age, brown eyes, several gold teeth with one of his front lower teeth missing, and weighs about 200 lbs. He said he did not suffer from any bodily disorders. He looked physically fit and would at this date cut

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quite an imposing figure if his prison garb were replaced by a Waffen SS General's uniform. Although not obliged to listen, it was pleasant to hear some of his declamations and perorations. There is no point in going into details, but the following conclusions can be safely drawn: (a) he is anti-French; (b) he is violently anti-Communist; (c) he claims no interest in politics but said he joined the NSDAP by a sort of drag-net recruitment in 1931; and (d) he feels that his treatment of partisans was only a defensive measure when he had to undertake because they did not comply with the rules of warfare. After about three hours, it was signified that the interview should end. It was then that Berger made one direct request: namely, that a message be conveyed to General Spivey. He was given paper and pen and requested to put the message in writing and was informed that an attempt would be made to deliver it, although delivery could not be guaranteed. Attached is the original of this letter with accompanying translation.

8. Colonel Graham stated that Berger was not one of "his bad actors" or "malingerers" and his prison record, being negative, must be presumed good. He said that his prisoners eat good and ample amounts of food supplied by the Bavarian Government. Graham has a rehabilitation program consisting of seventeen different trades (watch, radio, furniture, carpentry, etc.) which all prisoners except those exempt on account of age and physical disability must participate in to enable them to adjust to their community after their release. The prisoners can meet relatives two hours per month. There is no limit on their meetings with counsel. Their personal mail is limited and censored. However, there is no limit on the amount of mail dealing with administrative matters or letters from counsel. The exact limit on the packages the prisoners may receive is not recalled but it is quite generous as to weight and quantity. The Bavarian Government supplies 20 doctors to take care of the nearly 500 inmates. These observations are merely added to show that: (a) Berger is not confined to a solitary dungeon on bread and water; and (b) he has ample opportunity to know what is going on in the outside world.

9. Berger can be conveniently re-interviewed any time within the next 20 years in Landsberg jail.

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