

C O N F I D E N T I A L

COPY: 307th CIC Det, Hq 7 A, dd 26 Jan 45.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE:

SUBJECT: [REDACTED] (B)(1)
[REDACTED] (B)(3) c
Germany

RE : Interrogation of Subject.

On 24 and 25 January 1945, in compliance with request of Commanding Officer, this Detachment, this agent interrogated [REDACTED] and was apprehended by American soldiers in Remich, Lorraine, on 17 Jan 45, in civilian clothes. Subject stated that he was born [REDACTED] Germany, and attended [REDACTED] (B)(1) (public school) at [REDACTED] (B)(3) Subject stated further substan- tially as follows:

Subject's father was a communist. While at school Subject was a member of Rotsport, a communist sport organization. It was here that Subject first became acquainted with Friedrich RITZ who was a leader in the political activities of Rotsport,

In 1929, shortly after Subject's completion of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

In Nov 39 the [REDACTED] was called in because of the war. Subject worked as [REDACTED] in Ludwigshaven until March 1940 when he was called into the Wehrmacht to assist in the "defense" of the Reich. He received his basic training with the [REDACTED] and was sent to the Balkans and eventually to the Russian front. While in Mannheim Subject was in contact with comrade RITZ who was conducting communist meetings in secret. (B)(1) (B)(3)

Subject was wounded on the Russian front in October 42. He was first sent to a hospital [REDACTED] and eventually to a convalescent center [REDACTED] in Belgium, in Feb 43. Seeking an opportunity to desert the Wehrmacht, Subject volunteered to join a group to fight Belgian partisans. In Aug 43 his group met the Partisans near Bastogne. During the skirmish Subject hid until the fighting had stopped. While wandering about in uniform he was accosted by a German customs officer on the German-Luxembourg border who demanded identification papers. Not desiring to return to Germany as a deserter, Subject shot the official and escaped into the woods. About two hours later he was found by the partisans and confessed that he had shot the German and that he was a deserter from the Wehrmacht. The partisans took him in. He lived with them and worked with them, principally as a guard or out post for the group which consisted of 80 to 90 Belgians led by a former Luxembourg policeman. The group harrassed the Germans and did minor acts of sabotage. (B)(1) (B)(3)

Towards the end of Nov 43 Subject decided to return to Mannheim to work with RITZ and the communists there since he was being sought for in Belgium, and controls in Belgium were

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strioter than in Germany. Carefully avoiding police controls, Subject went to Karlsruhe by foot and train where he lived with a former female acquaintance who gave him a set of her brother's civilian clothes, the brother being in the Wehrmacht. Towards the end of Dec 43 Subject made his way to Mannheim as a civilian where he immediately contacted comrade RITZ who informed him that the old group had been broken up by the police but that a new one called EDELWEISS had formed and was active. RITZ was an employee of public utilities and apparently exempt from the draft.

RITZ obtained for Subject a false pass identifying him as a Czechoslovakian worker by name of [REDACTED] and also a false "Arbeitsbuch". While in Mannheim Subject slept in the air-raid shelter at RITZ's residence and ate his meals with RITZ and various members of the organization. His chief work consisted in carrying messages between RITZ and others in Mannheim and surrounding towns. Subject does not know from whom RITZ received instructions.

(S)(1)

(S)(3)

One of Subject's first jobs was to carry a letter to Speyer and receive another in exchange from a girl at the railway station there (see attached Annexe of Subject's statement). At another time he carried a letter to Darmstadt and exchanged it for another with a Hitler Jugend waiting beside a monument in the Lange Ludwig Platz. A password and the special Edelweiss insignia of the Mannheim group were also used on this occasion. Subject, at one period of time, worked directly under Anna RITZ (see attached Annexe), sister of Friedrich RITZ, who also appears to be a leader in the Organization. Other missions of Subject included the shadowing and observation of certain individuals designated by RITZ or his sister, and carrying of verbal notices of secret meetings to foreign workers and others.

The membership of the organization consists of Hitler Jugend, girls of the BdM and foreign workers in plants and industry. The former attempt minor acts of sabotage at dumps and on engines of Wehrmacht and Nazi vehicles. They distribute leaflets, paint slogans on buildings, etc. The older members attempt sabotage within plants and seek to obtain weapons through black market. Subject believes that the Mannheim group has one weapon for every three or four members, the total membership being about 300 to 350 persons. The foreign workers commit sabotage by creating "accidents" and by making themselves sick. One method is to smoke cigarettes which have been soaked in hair oil, to produce a fever. Another is to apply a preparation on parts of the body to cause the applied part to swell up with symptoms similar to rheumatism of the joints, which baffles the doctors. Subject himself has purchased the ingredients of mustard flour and vinegar, mixed the preparation and delivered it to RITZ for distribution.

In Nov 44 Subject wearied of being simply an undercover messenger for the Mannheim group, and told RITZ that he was going on a trip of his own. He came to Speyer where he was kept for a month by a woman friend. It was here that he decided he would attempt to bring the Americans into contact with RITZ and his group in order to further the movement and to increase his prestige with the group so that he could participate more directly in its activities. On 16-17 Dec 44 he destroyed his false pass and Arbeitsbuch, but retained a picture from his Soldbuch which he hoped to use to get into American PW channels. Avoiding areas which appeared to be active, he crossed the lines somewhere between Remich and Mondorf, in Lorraine.

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He remained in the area for about thirty days living with farmers, and representing himself as an Alsatian worker escaped from Germany. On the strength of his story, and stating that he wanted to visit his wife near Colmar, the Gendarmerie of Rodemeck issued him a Lasser Passer to travel to Metz. On 17 Jan 45 he approached two American soldiers and informed them that he was a deserter from the German Army. The soldiers took him to Morsbach where he was interrogated and relieved of his photo, his pass and papers bearing addresses of friends in Germany. He was then taken to Sarrebourg as a PW.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION:

Assuming that Subject's story regarding his communist and EDELWEISS activities are true, and there is no evidence to believe otherwise, it is not likely that Subject is an agent of GIS. Had the Germans captured him, they probably would have used him to ruthlessly exterminate RITZ and his group, and then executed him. Further, as an enemy agent Subject probably would have come as a foreign worker rather than as a PW, and would not have related his EDELWEISS and communist experiences. Subject does not appear to be intelligent enough to give a false background with the detail and consistency he has thus far shown.

It is recommended that Subject be referred to SCI for further information and possible exploitation.

AGENT'S NOTES:

During several interrogations, Subject has remained consistent with his original statement, attached hereto as Annexe "A". Subject displays a poor memory which seems to be genuine rather than affected, and his rate of intelligence is not high. It is easy to believe that he was used by RITZ and his group as a messenger and under cover man.

The picture of EDELWEISS differs here from information regarding EDELWEISS PIRATEN as previously known, in that the Mannheim group appears to be entirely communistic and dominated by mature leadership, with the younger Hitler boys and girls playing a minor role. Subject states that the group contains no Catholics because Catholics and Communists do not tolerate each other, their ideologies being opposed. If our information is correct, then the Mannheim group, with its special Edelweiss insignia and close security controls represents a tightly knit organization not similar to or even allied to the EDELWEISS PIRATEN previously reported. This easily leads to the conclusion that the Mannheim communists, and possibly others, have taken over the name and partial membership of EDELWEISS PIRATEN in order to dominate it and use it as cover for communist and underground activities.

APPROVED:

G. KENNETH CROWELL
Lt Col, Infantry
Commanding

WILLIAM C. KANDT
Sp. Agent. CIC

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ANNEX A

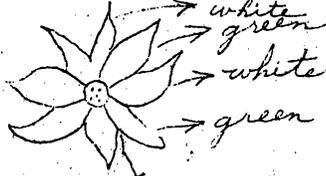
WRITTEN STATEMENT OF [REDACTED] (Translated):

In the year 1940 about January 1 was a member of a communist movement in the city of Mannheim until I was inducted into the army on the 15 March 40. After that I could not be concerned with anything anymore. In August 1940 I received a furlough and was told that the largest part of the Organization had been arrested, but despite that, the work was still being carried on. Nothing more was told to me at that time. Early in February 1943 I was wounded in Russia and was therefore sent to a military hospital in Germany. From there I was discharged and sent to [REDACTED] Belgium. At the end of Aug 1943 I got one opportunity to desert from the Army and so I disappeared. I wandered around Belgium till the end of October or beginning of November and then made my way towards Germany. I made my way towards Alsace through Luxembourg by way of Didenhoffen till I arrived at Sellestat. From there I headed towards Mannheim. When I arrived there I made an effort to contact the people of the Organization that I still knew from the old days. I found somebody and he told me that a new group had formed which would carry on the work. He confided to me the name of this group which was called "Edelweiss". Upon my questions he went on to explain the purpose of this group and the people in it. I recognized some of the names he mentioned from 1940. He told me these things because he knew I was one of the faithful and would remain so. He turned down an active participation for me because I always had to remain undercover. The assignments of this group as far as I was led to know are the following: First, the smuggling of weapons to the foreign workers and to aid them in their escape out of Germany. Also another assignment is to write on the walls of buildings at night phrases running in the following sense: "Stop the war, we want peace," or "We are starving and freezing, therefore end the war," etc. In Ludwigshaven I have myself read an inscription on a wall saying the Hitler Regime must go, then the war will be over. The groups have even gone to the extent of trying to demolish by the use of explosives munitions depots with the aid of foreign workers. In other words these people from one word have taken the task of destroying and hindering everything which furthered the continuance of the war. These people have never been in accord with Hitlerism and are entirely weary of the war.

The groups consist primarily of girls and boys who are true enough to the BDM and HJ but through loss of membership and the fact that they themselves have to participate in everything and finally through the realization that it is a needless sacrifice, these boys and girls, with an inner striving for peace and freedom have taken up the struggle for their freedom. Some have even volunteered into the Army in order to obtain weapons and other material. Old people who still work in industries are also included. They in particular bring about the contact between the foreign workers and the groups. Of these I can name two people. They are: Friedrich RITZ, Mannheim, Draisstr. 57b and Anna Ritz, Mannheim, Laurientusstr. 3 or 5. To the best of my knowledge the Organization exists chiefly in Mannheim where the headquarters are located. It also functions in Ludwigshaven, Speyer, Heidelberg, Darmstadt and Weinheim. Since late October, movements have started in Stuttgart and Tuebingen. In Tuebingen I know of one woman who is employed at Res. Laz. I, Tigerwalk-Kaserne, Tuebingen. I do not know where she lives. In Mann-

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heim I know of the following names. The above named Friedrich RITZ is in charge of the boys and Anna RITZ in charge of the girls. Anna RITZ herself was jailed for 1½ years on suspicion of distributing airplane leaflets criticising the government and for belonging to a communistic movement. That was in 1937. She has five girls who are in the conspiracy. They carry the following nicknames: GERDA, MAGDALEN (Lenchen), KAEHTE, HILDE and ANNE. Besides these there are in the city a Liesel SPRANZ. I do not know her address by memory as it was taken from me by the Americans upon my apprehension. Other addresses that I had written down but did not know by memory were also taken away from me. The groups practice the utmost caution in their work and almost never divulge names. The persons concerned who are leaders are known to each other and the others carry out assignments according to the orders they receive. A new comrade who wishes to join is first tested by making inquiries and observing him. When the same is in order, he is then inducted but does not at first learn anything more except the names of persons which are absolutely essential for him to know. If an order has to be carried from one group to another group a password is used for example: Freedom, Beauty of the Alps, and Our Struggle is a commonly used password. The password is changed almost every day. Various groups carry an Edelweiss under the collar of their coat or pinned to the shirt. The Edelweiss looks something like the following:



The dots are green, brown and yellow. The stem is made of metal and has a pink or white stripe running down the center.

I myself have carried material in an envelope, (the contents of which I did not know) to another group. It was done in the following manner:

I was informed to hide the envelope well and in case of running into the Gestapo or some other difficulty to destroy it in any manner I see fit. Then I was told to go to the railway station in Speyer and to look for a girl reading a Muenchen Illustrierten. She was to be standing by the right hand side of the door. My password was "Lebwohl". I met everything at the specified time, passed the girl, said the password and strolled slowly out of the entrance of the railroad station in front of which I stood and waited. After a short time the girl approached. She started a conversation and after assuring herself that we were unobserved, showed me the Edelweiss. I gave her my envelope; she gave me one and we parted again. Thus the organization does its work. As I have said before and have experienced the mentioned district has a strength of 300-350 persons. As far as RITZ explained to me, they are not armed, neither do I know exactly whether they make use of clandestine radio transmitters.

It was told to me that the hopes of these people lie in establishing contact with the Americans, and obtain aid from them. I emphasize again that these groups are extra cautious as they are required to be so and therefore very difficult for strangers to come in contact with them. However their work is very efficient and clogged because they are constantly being

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preached to by the old ones that it is their freedom and the salvage of the homeland what there is left to salvage. Beside this it is clear to the youth that the present government has not lead them, but misled them. The leaders, as soon as they have arms and the opportunity, have a plan to open all concentration camps with the aid of the foreign workers, and to release the inmates. By this method they hope to bring about a revolution and consequently end the war. From my viewpoint, however, the right man would be missing upon such an undertaking. The only possibility of a stranger to come into contact with these people is the following. As soon as a song of the Edelweiss is repeatedly sung in a cafe by a group of young people it is instantly known that a group of the Edelweiss are present. However, this will only be known to whoever is informed. A conversation is then started concerning the colors of the Edelweiss (as it is worn in the organization). Now the reactions of the group are observed till one gives a sign to go out to the lavatory. There he will ask what is demanded of him. Another method with strangers is that when these people are gathered in a cafe and a member of the Organization enters, he will observe and listen to what the others say. If he trusts one of them he will develop a conversation with the stranger and then break off without having the same realize with whom he had any dealings. He is then observed for a certain length of time till he can be trusted. After that he is asked if he is ready to accept something. He declares he is ready and participates. Only then is he informed of the most essential things that are necessary for him to know. By this method the Organization seeks its fighters but in that method they are again careful as in all other assignments.

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