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12/23/43

RECORDED

Date:

To: Mr. Edward J. Conis
Director, Alien Enemy Control Unit

From: J. Edgar Hoover - Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Subject: OTTO VON HAPSBURG

Further reference is made to your memorandum under the above caption dated December 6, 1943.

For your additional information with respect to the activities of Otto von Hapsburg, I am attaching hereto a photostatic copy of a confidential memorandum dated December 2, 1943, recently received at this Bureau from the Foreign Nationalities Branch of the Office of Strategic Services.

Enclosure

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OSS *D. Pool*
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FOREIGN NATIONALITY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES
MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
FROM THE FOREIGN NATIONALITIES BRANCH

Number B-120

2 December 1943

O O
Otto von Hapsburg
ARCHDUKE OTTO OF HABSBERG IN CHICAGO
AND CZECHOSLOVAK OPPOSITION

W. F. ...
Howe

Speaking at Chicago for the second time in recent weeks, Otto of Hapsburg encountered Czechoslovak demonstrations against himself and his House. In his address to a largely Catholic audience, Otto praised the Moscow Conference and again emphasized his belief in the importance religion would have in Europe after the war.

AS NOTED in FN Number B-111 of 17 November, Archduke Otto of Hapsburg has been lecturing in the Middle West during recent weeks. On Sunday afternoon, 21 November, he made a second appearance in Chicago (having been there previously 9 November) and spoke at the Morrison Hotel under the auspices of the Charles Carroll Forum, a Catholic organization. At the end of the meeting three men attempted to distribute an anti-Hapsburg leaflet emanating from the Czechoslovak National Council of America. Czechoslovak spokesmen have joined the *Chicago Sun* in attacking Otto for his Chicago appearances.

Talking privately with a prominent newspaperman in Chicago after his lecture 21 November Otto denied that in his previous speech in that city he had specifically applauded King Victor Emmanuel of Italy, though he was widely reported in the press as having done so. Otto said that he had limited himself to expressing his belief in the dynasty as an institution.

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With regard to his attack on Count Sforza in the earlier speech, Otto told the newspaperman that he had spoken as he had only after reading in the press a speech made by Sforza in Italy. In the course of this speech Sforza had adopted what Otto described as the demagogic course of claiming that Italy must continue to possess the Austrian Tyrol. Otto felt he had to rejoin.

Attendance at the Charles Carroll lecture was reported at 2,000 or more, "about 98 per cent Catholic." A number of priests and nuns were present. The audience was enthusiastic.

Speaking on "Europe in Revolt" Otto predicted a resurgence in religious fervor among the peoples of Europe. He praised the wartime record of Europe's various churches and of the Pope in particular. The stands taken, Otto maintained, had in many cases raised the prestige of the churches to a new all-time high. He predicted the restoration of labor unions on a par with religious bodies.

Announcing approval of the Moscow Conference, Otto lauded the agreement on unconditional surrender. He opined that the Conference had solved one of the greatest worries, namely the fear that Russia would make a separate peace with Germany and allow Germany's army with its Prussian militarism to remain in power. The fear (he recalled) had some valid foundations because of Stalin's recent dealings with those German militarists whom Stalin had found among his prisoners of war and had brought together in his Free Germany Committee.

Otto asserted a belief that the Reich's unconditional surrender was the only way "to insure a lasting peace after this war." He warned his audience that Germany's rulers, aware of their ultimate defeat, were

"already preparing a tremendous peace offensive to get around unconditional surrender, in order to keep German might intact in defeat."
Berlin's offers of peace might be tempting to many people.

Asked during the discussion period after his talk whether he felt that borders in Europe ought to revert to their pre-war status, the Archduke replied (at the risk, it might be noted, of appearing anti-Polish) in the negative. He held that border disputes were among the main reasons for the present war; many of the pre-war boundary lines were "simply stupid."

A member of the audience has reported:

I spoke to the Archduke after the lecture about civil liberties and rights of minorities in a post-war Austria if he were to rule that country. His answer dealt mainly with the proof of the Habsburg rule in the past: the freedom of minorities and the other liberties under the old Empire. He also remarked that many in Europe today would be only too glad to exchange their lot with that of the people in the earlier Austria. He declared that under his rule all minorities would naturally be protected, and that freedom of the press and other civil liberties would exist. I asked him specifically about the danger of clericalism in such a government. He said that of course he was not discussing such matters at this time. It would only produce dissension. But he was most cordial as he said this to me.

At the close of Otto's lecture, three men attempted to distribute a leaflet published by the ~~Czechoslovak~~ National Council of America under the title "No More Habsburgs." There was a minor disturbance ~~as a representative~~ of Otto's sponsors -- the Charles Carroll Forum -- ordered the distributors to desist and urged the departing audience not to

accept the leaflets. Thereupon one of the three men distributing the leaflets made this statement to a newspaperwoman from the *Chicago Sun* who was present at the lecture: "We have nothing against Archduke Otto personally or the talk he gave today. We are just against the re-establishment of the Habsburg throne." The *Sun* printed this statement the next morning.

The *Chicago Sun* has lately taken pointed notice of Otto by attacking his talks in Chicago and his general activities in this country. On 15 November the *Sun* ran an editorial coupling Otto's name with that of ex-King Carol of Rumania, and declaring, "Their missions are the same: Seizure of power over their hapless homes with the help of any backing they can pick up from reactionary or confused Americans." A few days later the *Sun* published several readers' letters in praise of this editorial. One of the letters was from the Reverend Ivan Ladizinsky in the name of the United American Slavs of Gary, Indiana; another, from the commander and the adjutant of the Masaryk Post of Czechoslovak Legionnaires in Chicago. Yet another letter was over the signature of Joseph Martinek, executive secretary of the Czechoslovak National Council of America.

Criticizing Otto for his recent remarks in Chicago, Martinek wrote:

Otto certainly showed his hand in these remarks. While his other relative, Albrecht, plays ball with the Fascist crowd in Hungary, his imperial highness Otto pretends to be a good democrat -- at least while he stays in America. Yet his democratic conviction is of a very recent date. During the time of the civil war in his own Austria he sided definitely with the native Austrian Fascists, supported by Mussolini. In Czechoslovakia he opposed Benes, the democrat. In Spain he supports Franco, the Fascist. In Italy he is for King

Emmanuel and against liberals. To some observers he may seem to be inconsistent in his democratic faith, but really, there is no inconsistency in his attitude, because the main and the only goal of his Imperial Democratic Party is to put Otto on the throne, help him to save and petrify the last remnants of feudalism in Central Europe and make him a true and tried ally of all Francos and Victor Emmanuels in Europe. There is only one drawback in this magnificent plan. The peoples of Central Europe do not want Habsburgs.