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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2E  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2005

Dear Cecil,

23 Jan 74  
X-638

1. Reference is made to your JPF 44 (5/6453) of 21 January 1974 relating to a recent communication which you have received from LAVINIA.

2. The reference to WENDLAND is a fascinating one. Our records on WENDLAND the man, like those of MI-6, also contain no reason to suppose that his suicide was based on more than depression, perhaps induced by a career of frustrating overwork and possibly unrealized ambition to succeed General GEHLEN. The tendency to depression and to suppressed emotions was easily evident to anyone who dealt with WENDLAND. On the other hand, if one accepts KGB control on whatever basis of what LAVINIA was writing to us while still in place, then the lead to Heinz FELBE must be considered a KGB gift, unlikely to have been forthcoming unless the KGB was in possession of comparable or better access within the BND and/or larger considerations involving other services.

3. As for other possible KGB assets within the BND, another pertinent lead, received by LAVINIA directly from the KGB and provided us also almost verbatim by KAGO, asserted that the KGB between 1953 and 1955 was engaged in actions designed to compromise GEHLEN so that a KGB agent could be installed as his replacement. Although GEHLEN from a very early period viewed Gerhard WESSEL as his own eventual replacement, WENDLAND in the time in question was a senior assistant of GEHLEN in charge of administration ("ORGANIZATOR") who would not have been an implausible successor, and may well have seen himself in this light. Admittedly, the "replacement" lead is as suspect as the FELBE lead itself, but the basic question may be less the validity of the lead than the reason for KGB passage of it. Several alternative hypotheses are available, revolving in part about the person of WESSEL. Perhaps, knowing that WESSEL was the heir apparent, the KGB deliberately gave us the lead to destroy WESSEL, thereby making way for somebody else, possibly WENDLAND. We have discussed the facts and mulled over various speculations extensively with the BND, unfortunately inconclusively.

4. We would like to know any further details or context of the lead recently supplied about WENDLAND. Apparently LAVINIA did not tie it to his "replacement" lead. If the leads represent genuine independent bits of information, then they would seem to be mutually strengthening and require further contemplation of WENDLAND as the "replacement".

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5. If LAVINIA even superficially discussed the KISSINGER lead with CIA, it is not reflected in the rather complete special card index covering our LAVINIA holdings. It might be of particular interest that he says he informed the CI staff. We should like to know more precisely when, with whom and in what context, in the event you have occasion to ask him.

6. We have tried within the limitations of time available and the formidable research task involved to answer at least some of those questions on which we could make a contribution. It seems fair to say that we have so far found aspects of LAVINIA's recent statements which are demonstrably and remarkably accurate, within the bounds of his knowledgeability. On the other hand there is evidence that some of his offerings are tainted if not inspired by his reading of the press. No amount of research is likely to provide a definitive answer as to the overall mix between fact and invention. Still, the potential of important information in LAVINIA's mind precludes dismissing what he may say. Based upon his impressive record of production, assessment of the reliability of any given LAVINIA lead should perhaps best be made only on the specific terms of the individual lead seen after investigation and in the light of LAVINIA's access. Whether he is now mad, or given to telling us what he thinks may pique our interest, may be for practical purposes beside the point, or at least not susceptible to our control.

Yours,

James Angleton

Mr. [ ]

ORIG: [ ]/mt 25 Jan 1974

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