

attd to MAVA-2646

MEMORANDUM

VIENNA

MICROFILMED
MAY 18 1965
DOC. MICRO. SER.

NO.: VSM/SLZ/1379

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TO: [] DATE: 9 March 1949

FROM: []

SUBJECT: WASH 0066, 4 March 1949
Operational: Re VILLAX and GYORFFY
REF: SBG-717 and VSM/SLZ/1207 and 1258

Gyoryffy, Barna
Villax Edmund
Joeliff

1. Before contacting the VILLAX family, I studied the problem of selecting agents in Hungary and came to the conclusion that our future contacts would have to be picked from the strata of Hungarian society which was unlikely to become a general target of the Hungarian State Defense Department within the foreseeable future. All civil servants taken over by the present regime, everyone who was active in politics outside the Communist party, all former Army officers, all priests, aristocrats, everyone dispossessed or being dispossessed by the present regime is likely to be a target of the State Defense Department and is being surveilled. Most of all, these elements are nowadays in no position to collect intelligence data of value, and if they are, their time is brief.

The strata in which the best potential agents could be found is the social strata of engineers, scientists, industrial or agricultural experts, whom the present regime can ill afford to discard and who are likely to keep their positions for at least a few years to come.

2. In December 1948 I met Suzanne GYORFFY, whom I have known since 1945, and I asked her about her family's well being. She spoke to me about her brother Barna who had been recently promoted, about his trip to Sweden and about his future plans of escape, which he had indicated in his letter from Sweden to her sister Sara in the United States. Nothing was mentioned on my part to indicate operational interest in Barna GYORFFY, and Suzanne GYORFFY has not been contacted since this conversation.

3. Having met Barna GYORFFY in Salzburg in 1945, in connection with war crime detection while serving with OSS, and having known him as a shy, unassuming, modest scientist who indicated even at that time his intense hatred for Communism, I thought of him, after this conversation, as a man whose assistance would be valuable to us and whose services could probably be enlisted.

4. On 5 January 1949, before I contacted the VILLAX family, I indicated to [] in Vienna my convictions as described in para 1, and that, among others, Barna GYORFFY would be a good target for us. He requested that the basic biographical data be assembled on Barna GYORFFY, and that I prepare plans to contact him.

AM H 2 (XAAZ-20623)
6 June 1951

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5. The VILLAX family's presence in the Zone was brought to my attention by Mr. Frank TOTZ of IRO in early December 1948. Because of other problems, I had no chance to contact them. On or about 8 January, however, I dispatched Grallatory to Werfen, where the VILLAX family still lives, with a message stating that I wished to speak with them at their earliest convenience, and that if they came to Salzburg, I should be contacted through the 430th CIC. Grallatory gave my cover name Roberts, and I met Ivan VILLAX a day or two later in Salzburg. The conversation and subsequent meeting with Edmund VILLAX resulted in SBG-717 and SBG-735.

6. Neither during the debriefing of the VILLAX family, nor during our subsequent contacts did I indicate to them that Barna GYORFFY was known to me, or that I had operational interest in him.

To follow up SBG-717, I wrote VSM/SLZ/1207^{MAY-47} in which I indicated what I knew of Barna GYORFFY, and also of my intention to contact him through his sister Susanne. Since no affirmative answer came, Susanne GYORFFY was not contacted, nor was his brother Barna.

7. After receiving VSM/FEB/671 from [] I contacted the VILLAX family again and reported this in VSM/SLZ/1259. Ivan VILLAX suggested that Barna GYORFFY be contacted and that his services be enlisted in connection with this work. His father, Edmund VILLAX, also thought that Barna GYORFFY was the proper man but remarked that the step-son of Barna, currently studying at the Kossuth Military Academy in Budapest, was unreliable and possibly a Communist. After some thought, the VILLAX's added that Barna's family life was unhappy and that he cared little for his step-son or his wife. In their judgment, Barna would know how to maintain his own security and would not be influenced by his family. Subsequently, I requested that Ivan and Edmund VILLAX prepare their plans to establish contact with Barna and submit these plans to me.

They indicated to me that they had people who were probably willing to serve as couriers, but to maintain a courier service to Salzburg would be costly and time-consuming. Therefore, it was suggested that I arrange for the messages to be taken over by one of my representatives in Vienna. I promised to provide them with a mail box in Vienna, which I did (see VSM/SLZ/1326). In order to see their way clear in regard to the courier system, they asked my permission to invite one of their friends from Burgenland to Werfen. Permission was given with the strict instructions that no one should learn about the real purpose of the courier system, and especially that there was more than personal interest involved on the part of the VILLAX family.

One SATLER (fnu) was asked to come to Werfen by Ivan VILLAX. SATLER could not be reached by mail, therefore another friend, Erno HEBERSTREIT, was invited and met Ivan and Edmund VILLAX on 3 March 1949.

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8. Erno HEBERSTREIT, born at Magyarovar, Hungary, in 1927, received his grammar and high school education at the Catholic school maintained by the Piarist Friars at Magyarovar. He attended the Jozsef Nador Polytechnicum as a student of mechanical engineering for two years up to the summer of 1948. Since HEBERSTREIT's father was born in Burgenland, he opted for Austrian citizenship, and this was granted to him in August 1948. HEBERSTREIT's family resides at Neusiedl am See, and Erno HEBERSTREIT is now continuing his studies at the Technische Hochschule in Vienna. In Vienna he lives at la, Esdersplatz. Ivan and Edmund VILLAX have known Erno *subject* HEBERSTREIT since early childhood as a sober, quiet, intelligent individual who is anti-Communist by his upbringing but is, in general, apolitical. HEBERSTREIT would be willing to undertake the direction of border crossing operations for the VILLAX family. As a student, he is free to travel between Vienna and his place of residence at Neusiedl am See on the Austro-Hungarian border, and he stated to VILLAX that he could enlist the services of other dependable men, if he so desires.

Mentioned throughout report.
9. VILLAX submitted, subsequent to his conversation with HEBERSTREIT, the following plan:

- a. He would ask Barna GYOERFFY in a letter if he would be willing to supply VILLAX continuously with scientific information on activities in the field of biological warfare, and request that he confirm his willingness with an open picture post card by placing the date in the upper left-hand corner and mailing it to a letter drop in Salzburg or Vienna. The brief to Barna GYOERFFY would not bear any address and would be deposited by a courier in Hungary first, at a safe place of his own choice for a day or two. The courier, after reporting that the letter had been safely taken across the border, would report back receive the address of one Agoston LANG, a 29-year old agricultural engineer currently employed at the flour mill of Magyarovar, who has been a trusted friend of HEBERSTREIT for the last 15 years but is unknown to VILLAX. He would then deposit the letter with LANG.
- b. *of Hungary? doc 1917* As couriers, VILLAX would like to pick one *Preferred by (to serve as one of his couriers)* Janos SZILAGYI, approximately 32 years of age, a former farmhand, employed until the end of World War II on the estate of Albrecht von Hapsburg and now working his own farm at Albrechtshazmer, which he received as a result of the Hungarian Land Reform after the war. SZILAGYI and his 26-year old brother (fnu), an electrician employed as line-man along a section of the Austro-Hungarian border, took the VILLAX family across the border when they escaped

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Hungary without accepting payment. The VILLAX family has known SZILAGYI previously only from sporadic contacts. SZILAGYI was recommended to them by one Agoston HALACS, who was SZILAGYI's superior for many years on the estate of Albrecht Hapsburg and who has known SZILAGYI as a loyal, simple farm hand, with no sympathy for the Communists.

- date 1914 Austria Dept*
cit
ccc
- c. HEBERSTREIT would first deposit the letters with one Sister GERHARDA, a Catholic nun, about 35 years of age who currently lives at the convent of Haltburg on the Austro-Hungarian border. GERHARDA is Hungarian, and she, too, assisted the VILLAX family while they were en route to the U. S. Zone of Austria. VILLAX has no biographical data on Sister GERHARDA, but claims that she is safe and would be willing to serve as a letter box. GERHARDA knows the SZILAGYI brothers from almost daily business contacts (the convent has a dairy farm), and also knows HEBERSTREIT by sight. She would contact one of the SZILAGYI brothers and request that the letters be taken across the border into Hungary. Once the letter is in Hungary, she would instruct SZILAGYI to take the letters to Agoston LANG at Magyarovar, Or Szapary Peter utca 2-d Company Bldg., ground floor, door to the right

- d. Approximately a week later a brief would be dispatched in similar manner to one Miklos BAUMAN at Magyarovar, instructing him to pick up the letter deposited with LANG and carry it by hand to his brother Bela BAUMAN in Budapest.

date 1924 of Hungary
Magyarovar, Hungary
Miklos BAUMAN is a chemical engineer working currently as a lecturer at the University of Magyarovar, Lucsony utca 16.

date 1924 of Hungary
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in detail Budapest
Bela BAUMAN has been studying medicine in Budapest for three years. He lives at Veress Pains utca 9/IV em. He, according to VILLAX, is a very conscientious and talented young man with iron nerves who leads a secluded life. VILLAX has known the BAUMAN brothers since 1942. He has been in daily contact with them over a period of years and regards them as his best friends. He has discussed with them, while still in Hungary, on a purely theoretical basis what could be done

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to rid Hungary of the Communist yoke, and both have declared their willingness to undertake work which might aid the common cause, in case they were convinced that their contribution would not be spent in vain.

Miklos BAUMAN is 25 years of age, and Bela is 23 years old. Their father was a district clerk (deceased). Their mother lives at Dobrk6s, a village in Tolna department. Both are anti-Communist by upbringing, and Ivan VILLAX regards them both as serious and dependable.

At about the same time Bela BAUMAN will receive a letter sent through normal channels in which reference will be made to Barna GYORFFY by a nickname known to Bela. He will learn in this way that the brief is to handed over to Barna GYORFFY.

9. This devious, complicated and slow way is proposed for the following reasons: No one would trust a brief received through the normal postal channels, fearing that it had been censored and the addressee would be shadowed. Therefore, it is important that the recipient should receive his brief through a person whom he knows and trusts. In case the brief is intercepted before reaching Barna, no one could finger at him because none of the intermediaries knows who is the final addressee. VILLAX is the only one who knows all parties participating in the chain.

HEBERSTREIT knows VILLAX, Sister GERHARDA and the SZILAGYI brothers. GERHARDA knows the SZILAGYI brothers and HEBERSTREIT, but knows nothing of the latter's contact with VILLAX.

The SZILAGYI brothers know Sister GERHARDA and Agoston LANG and, though they have known VILLAX, nothing will indicate that the VILLAX's are involved.

Miklos BAUMAN knows Agoston LANG and also knows VILLAX, but he *will not know the current location of the latter. He also knows, of course, his brother Bela.* *with Austria, active in anti-Soviet activities with brother and sister Bauman*

Bela BAUMAN will know of his brother miklos and of Barna GYORFFY.

Barna GYORFFY will know Bela BAUMAN and VILLAX.

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10. It is necessary, according to VILLAX, to break up the courier route into several small stretches so that no one should be forced to travel beyond the limits composing his normal and easily justifiable chores; otherwise, their travel would eventually arouse suspicion.

11. Each subsequent letter would bear a sign to indicate its serial number in order to check upon whether each one has reached its destination. In case the letters are intercepted at Barna GYORFFY's place, and he would be forced to go on with the game, he would have to indicate this in his reports to us by using a semi-colon after the salutation, instead of a comma, to alert us to the fact that he is controlled.

12. Re WASH 0066 -

Para 2 A - Personal and family histories to complete data available could be obtained only by contacting Susanna or Barna GYORFFY.

The personal history of the VILLAX family has been forwarded in SBG-717.

Para 2 B - All details furnished in present memo.

Para 2 C - All details furnished in present memo.

Para 2 D - All details furnished in present memo.

Para 2 E - The French and Canadian governments have offered the VILLAX family job and resettlement possibilities. They favor, however, the United States. GYORFFY would probably prefer the U. S. too, but has not been contacted.

Para 2 F - No commitments beyond VSM/SLZ/1258.

Para 2 G - Details on communications between GYORFFY and sisters not known, except that they use normal postal channels and that some sort of a code is used in letters.

Plan of VILLAX is given above.

1. Sent Wash as MAV-817
2. Sent Wash as MAV-827
3. Sent Wash as MAV-2326
4. Referred to in MAV-2473
5. Sent Wash as MAV-2473
6. Request for letter box (not sent Wash)

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13. In addition to the information already furnished on Barna GYOEFFY, Ivan VILAX mentioned recently that he omitted stating that GYOEFFY was requested by the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture in April 1948 to follow scientific developments in genetics and biochemistry in the satellite countries, to maintain liaison with scientists in these countries and to report periodically on new developments to the Ministry of Agriculture. The VILAX's know that GYOEFFY has extensive contacts in the satellite countries, but so far could not establish contact in the USSR proper.

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