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MEMORANDUM

For: Files

From: [ ]

Subject: Walter Kopp

JOSEPH 51

(1947)

MGW-7976

1. In June and July 1945 I was stationed in Buttenwiesen bei Wertingen, not far from the residence of Walter Kopp. I had seen his wife several times on the street and one day in July 1945 she approached me with the request that I send a letter to her sister in Switzerland, explaining that the latter was probably worried about her relatives in Germany. I consented to do this, but checked the contents of the letter before mailing it. The letter was addressed to Fr. Hilda Eisele, Villa La Rondine, Lugano-Castagnola, Switzerland. Inside the cover envelope was another containing a letter written by Walter Kopp, addressed to another person in Switzerland, whose name, as I recall, was Dutch.

2. This letter was in no sense a personal one, but rather a four page political diatribe, lamenting the defeat of Germany and condemning the Allies. Two items I remember were: 1) That the Americans were responsible for the inflation in Germany, since they had issued occupation currency; and 2) That the Allies had no right to accuse Germany of violating the Geneva Convention, considering the manner in which Germany was being treated. The person who gave me a summary translation of the letter remarked that although he, too, had been a good Nazi, he was at least willing to see what the Americans had to offer, which was apparently more than Kopp was willing to do.

3. I made no effort to send this letter to Switzerland, but returned it personally to Kopp about a week later, explaining to him that I wouldn't send a letter of this kind. Kopp rather indignantly demanded to know what was wrong with the letter. This was the only time I spoke to the man, although I have seen him several times.

4. I next heard news of Kopp in February 1949. I received a letter from Mr. Georg Kirner, a resident of Buttenwiesen bei Wertingen. Kirner is the proprietor of a successful general store in Buttenwiesen, a member of the town council, and a delegate (CSU) to the Landkreistag. In 1945 he was appointed assistant Burgermeister of Buttenwiesen by the Military Government. I have known him since this time as a widely-respected person in the community. Kirner stated that he had been attacked and brutally beaten by Kopp and two of his friends from out-of-town, both former Colonels. As a result Kirner suffered serious injuries and had been bed-ridden 10 days.

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

EXEMPTIONS Section 3(b)

- (2)(A) Privacy
- (2)(B) Methods/Sources
- (2)(G) Foreign Relations

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Date: 2005

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5. Kirner subsequently brought suit against Kopp and the two former Colonels. I later read his affidavit to the court concerning the incident, a summary of which is approximately as follows: Kirner and his daughter were sitting in the inn in Pfaffenhofen, the village adjoining Buttenwiesen. They were invited to join another table where Kopp, his wife, the two former Colonels, and possibly others were seated. This Kirner and his daughter did, but left the table when this group, headed by Kopp, began to sing obscene songs (some rather startling extracts from which were cited in the affidavit). Kirner was asked by a member of Kopp's party why he had left the table, to which he replied that gentlemen didn't conduct themselves in such a manner, or in words to that effect. Shortly thereafter Kirner was told that someone wished to speak with him outside. Kirner left the inn and upon entering the front courtyard was seized and brutally beaten by Kopp and the two former Colonels for a period of several minutes. Passers-by broke up the fight, and according to Kirner, it was only at his insistence that other persons in the inn did not attack Kopp and his two confederates. Incidentally, Kirner's affidavit refers to Kopp as a former Oberleutnant. This is inconsistent with Kopp's PRQ, wherein he states that he was made a Colonel on 1 Jan 1945.

6. Kirner informed me that he had been notified by Kopp's attorney that the latter's client was willing to discuss payment of Kirner's medical expenses (about 250 DM), as well as compensation for the time spent in bed, but that Kopp balked at the demand that he print a letter of apology in the newspaper. I have no further knowledge of later developments in this lawsuit.

7. In April or May 1949 Kirner informed me that he had heard from a friend in the tax office in Wertingen that Kopp was in serious financial trouble and had been compelled to sell his car. Kirner believes that the farm machinery agency and adjoining property belongs to Kopp's wife.

8. Regarding Kopp's movements at the end of the war, one of Kirner's sons told me that Kopp arrived in Pfaffenhofen around the middle of April 1945, and that he remained there until the Americans came--on 26 April. As further evidence he cites Kopp's appearance in full uniform in front of the former synagogue in Buttenwiesen, used as a storage depot, where some villagers were helping themselves to Wehrmacht clothing supplies. Kopp waved his pistol and threatened anyone who molested Wehrmacht property. This incident occurred a few days before Americans entered the area. This testimony is, of course, inconsistent with Kopp's statement in his PRQ, that on 15 April 1945 "with authority from Hitler and Himmler" he was transferred to the 19th Army in Southern Germany, and that on 2 May 1945 he was commander of Karwendel and the upper Isar valley.

9. The Catholic priest in Pfaffenhofen, a neighbor of Kopp, told me in the summer of 1949 that he considered Kopp an embittered Nazi-militarist who has not been very successful in his civilian pursuits.

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