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Chief of Mission, Brussels

Chief of Base, Vienna

17. Nov. 1954

Operational/HIWAY

Comments on OBBA-2420

INFO: ER

1. We concur in [ ] feelings that reports attached to reference indicate possible AVH intention to make an attempt on the life of General ZAKO. We note that one such previous attempt (MAVA-6139, 27 July 1950 which forwarded CIC report re the attempted abduction of General ZAKO and the death of Attila KOVACS - not sent [ ]) ended in failure due to the fact that Attila KOVACS was intercepted first and put up such a struggle that the AVH agents assigned to execute the task were apprehended by the Austrian police. It does appear unusual that the AVH now maintains such an interest in General ZAKO and the MHBK, since presumably AVH penetration of the MHBK would have indicated the paucity of its resources and its lack of support by Western intelligence services. However, since the MHBK does represent a focus of anti-regime activity abroad, it is likely that the AVH still considers it an important target. [ ] statements concerning certain relatively elaborate AVH double-agent operations involving MHBK personnel would tend to substantiate this thesis.

2. Concerning General ZAKO's establishment at the Gasthaus Bogner, Absam bei Solbad in Tyrol, Austria, we note the following data from our files:

It has been the seat of General ZAKO's headquarters since early 1949.

It is owned by Hubert SCHINDL and is located at Hubert Schindl Strasse 21, Absam.

(Note: this is presumably the individual who keeps watch over visitors to General ZAKO as related by "Peter" on page 4 of the minutes of the 24 September meeting attached to reference.)

SO DE-29657, 11 October 1950 listed Lt. Ervion GEVAY as ZAKO's adjutant. (GEVAY was living with Attila KOVACS

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at the time of the latter's demise and was, in fact, the one who called the Austrian police to the scene.)

3. Concerning KOVAC's interest in SARVARY (Lasslo SARVARY), it is noted that in October 1951, when the latter was a member of the MHEK Vienna organization, SARVARY was the target of an unsuccessful attempt at kidnapping. He was subsequently transferred to the Innsbruck organization. We hold no information concerning his recent activities on behalf of the MHEK or of General ZAKO. The questions of KOVACS also possibly indicate that he is likewise still on the target list of the AVH for abduction.

4. To be able to comment more intelligently on the progress and conduct of Operation VENUS, we should appreciate receiving a review of the operation since the dispatch of EAVW-1663, 3 August 1953 (i.e. Att. A to OBBA-522). For instance, "Peter" must have (in fact, he refers to his "instructions") received instructions and briefing for his trip to Absam in August 1954 from KOVACS.

1) What were the exact instructions?

2) Who is his beau-frere? Had "Peter" been instructed by KOVACS to change his location of employment to Germany or with ZAKO, or with the Americans? Or was this cover for his trip to Germany and Austria? (See page 2 of the 3 September meeting). If so, was "Peter" given any reason for the desired change by the AVH?

3) Whence came the photographs of Absam? Did "Peter" not make the trip, but instead were photographs supplied by the [Belgians]. The only clue to this appears in the editor's note on the report of the meeting between KOVACS and "Peter" of 24 September 1954. (pense-t-11).

4) If the above is the case and "Peter" did not make the trip to Absam, the sketch which "Peter" then drew in the car must have been based on prior trips made to Gasthaus Bogner. When and how often have these occurred either on behalf of his MHEK duties or, if ever, on AVH orders? If, as in the case of the photos, he has never been there, "Peter" can be uncovered very readily by Budapest, which presumably has more than adequate coverage of General ZAKO, Gasthaus Bogner, etc., by individuals who frequent the place more often. Why then should "Peter" be given such an assignment by the AVH: could it not be a test? What details can "Peter" provide concerning the entourage of General ZAKO and those who are permitted access to his headquarters? These details of themselves are

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of no direct interest to us, but may help to determine whether or not the AVH has no other possible coverage of this installation and is so entrusting "Peter" with the mission or whether in fact it is a test placed on "Peter" by the AVH. It is for this reason that we would like to know in more detail the pattern of the operation over the course of the past year: his briefings; his target assignments; any possible training additional instructions re the use of photography; how often and where he meets KOVACS; views of the [ B ] concerning the operation; instructions they give to "Peter"; are they satisfied with its results; have they gotten other leads from this, VOLTAIRE or any other operations which might be of assistance in evaluating the entire AVH picture in Belgium, within Hungary, the Brussels AVH's liaison with other bases, such as Frankfurt and Paris. (Note: from [ ] we know that KOVACS was servicing Karoly JUNGER at the Frankfurt Trade Mission until JUNGER's return to Hungary.)

5. The lengthy discussions, assisted by the eliciting of "Peter" re KOVACS' views (official or otherwise) re Mendes-France, the traffic situation in Hungary, etc. are perhaps indicative of KOVACS' character and personality, but lead us to no conclusive views as to the operation itself, what the AVH expects from "Peter", its operational methods as evidenced through the briefings and directions of KOVACS'. While [ ] reported well over a year ago that the AVH was disappointed with KOVACS' performance in Brussels, there must be some reason why he was maintained there and not transferred to Paris, as earlier suggested, or recalled to Hungary. Perhaps there is another, or other operations, which requires his continued presence, perhaps even it is VENUS, of which we have as yet such a sketchy picture. Is it at all possible to obtain more coverage of the operation from the [ ]. Is there nothing more than the "take" we already have, or is VOB not read in, except where the operation steers itself toward Austria, such as the Absam, ZAKO twist?

6. We would also appreciate receiving travel data re the various mission members. Who are the recent arrivals? Do any of them appear to be involved in intelligence activities? Is BORSANYI still there? We call your attention to our round-up of the picture in Brussels as seen from here (EAVA-7811 of 27 July 1954), to which we have as yet received no reply.

7. As indicated above, we have found the report attachments to reference of considerable interest, and would appreciate

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receiving such reports on a continuing basis. They add much to our fund of knowledge re the modus operandi of the AVH, while in turn we believe that we can contribute to your support of [ B ] operations against the Hungarian target thru the provision of some analysis occasionally, we hope we can indicate a profitable line of operational direction. The reports may be forwarded in the form most convenient to you; translations are not necessary.

4 November 1954

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