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DATE 2000 2006

Nr. 6801

1 April 1953 ✓

TO : 40

FROM : 25.50/B

SUBJECT : PONGER/HOETTL - KRUG Connections

1. Attached is a copy of a letter from Curt L. PONGER to Dr. Wilhelm HOETTL, dated 26 August 1951, which in the first paragraph makes obvious reference to KRUG, and indicates that he and PONGER talked for nearly six hours after they held their "Kaffeeklatsch" with Willi HOETTL on the shores of Fuschlsee in August 1951.

2. Without revealing to K the existence of this letter, I queried him in the presence of his wife on the evening of 28 March 1953 in BAD REICHENHALL, seeking to establish the exact date, place, and length (as well as topic of discussion) of each meeting with PONGER. K remembered several additional details regarding this August 1951 meeting with HOETTL as our conversation progressed. PONGER appeared at K's house in BAD REICHENHALL and told him HOETTL was in Salzburg. (This was the first time, incidentally, that PONGER had visited 52 Fruehlingstrasse; on his two previous visits to BAD REICHENHALL, PONGER had visited at Wienbacherstrasse, but K and his wife are both certain they were already in their present home by August 1951. How PONGER obtained this address is unknown to me; K states there had not been an exchange of letters between them.) K states he had had no previous intimation that PONGER would visit him; PONGER had mentioned, during his second visit to K in March 1951, that he saw HOETTL from time to time, and suggested a meeting, but no definite plans were made. On the spur of the moment, K agreed to join PONGER, and they drove in PONGER's "Audi" across the border to SALZBURG, where they found HOETTL, probably in Hotel Zum Hirschen, drove around SALZBURG looking for a suitable cafe where they could talk, and finally undertook the jaunt to Fuschlsee. K states the cafe was also chosen by chance, after checking various cafes near FUSCHL until they found one which was relatively deserted. The talk with HOETTL could not have lasted much more than two hours. PONGER appeared in BAD REICHENHALL between 2 and 3 PM; they drove to SALZBURG, drove to FUSCHL, and then they took HOETTL to the station in FUSCHL, K thinks, where he caught the last train to ALT AUSSEE, which K thought left either at 5 or 6 PM. Following this, he and PONGER returned to SALZBURG, where K says PONGER made some purchases (this is rather unclear, as stores are not normally open after 6 PM, if that late, on Saturdays during the summer in SALZBURG.) They then drove to BAYRISCH OMAIEN (Austrian side), where PONGER's wife's parents (Mr. and Mrs. VERDER) were staying in the Hotel NOSTTZEL. K and PONGER apparently had dinner, possibly there. When K left, intending to take the bus home, it was already so late that the last bus to BAD REICHENHALL had left, and he returned to the Hotel and had PONGER drive him home. K's wife recalls that K arrived home very late from this meeting with PONGER, and the time he arrived home was moved progressively from 9 PM to "after 11 PM" as our talk progressed. K

NR-6801

distinctly recalls that PONGER left his wallet or documents with the border guard, because of some irregularity (he thinks because PONGER had extra cans of gasoline in the car, so left something for safekeeping, saying that he would return via the same crossing point in a few minutes). They crossed at BAYRISCH GMAIN, PONGER dropped him off at his home, and returned to Austria.

3. K maintains that no conversation regarding placing HOETTL in Amt GEHLEN occurred, other than the single time (in October 1952) when PONGER asked him to help HOETTL, and K at that time told him his influence was insufficient. In addition, as can be seen from his reports, it was in the August 1951 meeting that K told HOETTL there could be no thought of HOETTL's finding a position with any German office until he had clarified certain allegations against him, e.g., RURA gold, and KEREMAYR. Therefore, PONGER's remark about "organizational consequences" in the attached letter may be invented to encourage HOETTL, and not reflect any actual conversation with K, but I must point out that it has taken a total of four written reports from K and three meetings with him to arrive at something approaching a clear picture of the dates and extent of his meetings with PONGER, and that PONGER's statement that he talked with KRUG until midnight after leaving HOETTL does appear to be substantially true.

4. The extent of meetings with PONGER now appears to be as follows:

(1) Late fall 1950, possibly just before Christmas: PONGER with wife appeared unexpectedly at K's home in BAD REICHENHALL at about 9 PM. The two families drove around, found no restaurant open, talked briefly about general family matters, PONGER and wife returned to SALZBURG, enroute to VIENNA.

(2) March 1951, shortly after 5 March: PONGER and wife again appeared at Wiesbacherstrasse. K's son had just had a birthday, and PONGER gave him an automatic pencil when he heard this. (K's son recalled the date.) They talked of family matters, and took some pictures in the backyard. HOETTL was mentioned by PONGER, and K indicated he would not object to seeing him.

(3) August 1951: PONGER appeared on a Saturday afternoon, with a letter he had had HOETTL write. They made the famous trip to FUSCHL with HOETTL.

(4) 11 October 1952 (Saturday): PONGER appeared in BAD REICHENHALL, having already written three letters. Informed K that HOETTL could not keep a planned engagement that day, and arranged that all three would meet on Monday, 13 October, in VIENNA.

(5) 13 October 1952: PONGER and HOETTL joined K for lunch in the Autobahnhof Restaurant. They talked for about an hour, during which K claims no mention was made of Buero GEHLEN, and HOETTL allegedly did not ask for a job with the Organization. HOETTL did state he was enroute to BOHE to talk to some people of Amt BLANK. (It will be recalled that HOETTL had been fired by Col. HEINTZ a few weeks previously.)

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- 3 -

(6) 20 October 1952: PONGER called K's wife in BAD REICHENWALL, as K had told him to do during their meeting 13 October if PONGER desired to meet with K again before he returned to VIENNA. K's wife called K, told him to visit PONGER in the Hotel SCHUETZEN in Schuetzenstrasse, MUEENCHEN. K describes this meeting as one instigated by PONGER from "boredom", since PONGER was just sitting in the hotel, awaiting delivery of a lens from WETZLAR. Conversation allegedly lasted not more than 15 minutes, and was devoted chiefly to discussion of persons HOSTTL had met in Germany during his travels. HOSTTL was not present, and K and PONGER simply had coffee together, after which K went on his way.

5. I believe you, or someone from the Organization, should have another talk with K, asking him to explain the attached letter, and to ensure that we now have full details from K regarding his meetings with PONGER.

25.50/B

1 Enclosure:

Letter PONGER to HOSTTL 26 Aug 51

cc: 50