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MEMO

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7 April 1952

Chief, SE
Chief, EE
Chief of Station, Frankfurt

MEMORANDUM

Marie K. GIO. DAMO's Experiences in the Obwehr.

Ref: MEM-A 08669

A continuation of Giordano's answers to general questions concerning his experiences, part of which were forwarded to you as attachment C of reference, is hereby transmitted.

Approved:

[Signature]

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13 March 1952

CONTINUATION of

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ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS RISEN IN CONNECTION WITH
THE WRITING " MY EXPERIENCES "; OF 30 NOV 1951.

2. Types of missions assigned to the various groups,
specific training which was given the groups in order
to carry out these assignments.

A. The missions.

- A) The Estonian agents which were left in Estonia when the
last German officials left the country in winter 1940/1941, had
- a) to collect information concerning the Soviet troops in Estonia,
 - b) dito conc. the political situation,
 - c) to maintain the contact to the units of the former Estonian Army.
- B) The groups sent from Finland to Estonia in summer 1941 had,
according to the situation, military-tactical missions:
- a) to contact Estonian national fighters who had hidden themselves in forests,
 - b) to act as communication agents between these fighting units and the organization in Finland, supporting them with reliable information about the situation, as these units had no close and organized contact between themselves, and supplying them with weapons and ammunition;
 - c) to collect information conc. the local disposition of the Soviet forces and their activities.
- C) The groups sent to Estonia in 1944/1945 had double missions, the official German ones, and the clandestine Estonian ones.
- The German missions were: collecting information about
- a) the restguration of the bases of the Red Navy in Estonia (especially in Tallinn, Paldiski and on the islands,
 - b) the presence of the Navy units in Estonia,
 - c) dislocation of the Red Army and Air Forces in Estonia,
 - d) Railway traffic between Estonia and Russia, its intensity and characteristics of freights.
- The Estonian missions were:
- a) contacting the anti-communist underground movement for the sheduled cooperation with the western Powers after the collapse of the German forces,
 - b) collecting of true information about the communist policy and ferocities,
 - c) reporting the worst communist activists,
 - d) revivement of the agents left in Estonia by the Germans in autumn 1944, for the exclusively Estonian work,
 - e) organization of anti-communist groups for long-time passive resistance in hope that this fight will be supported by the western Democracies after the war will be finished.

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- D) The two Estonian groups sent to Russia had the missions:
- a) to collect information about the traffic on the railway Archangelsk - Moscow, using different ways, especially the systematic observation of this traffic and the wire-taping,
 - b) making and reporting meteorologic observations,
 - c) contacting the Estonians deported from Estonia to Ural.

- E) The Russian agents and groups, according to the areas where they were sent, had the missions: to collect information about
- a) concentration of great reserves,
 - b) moves of these reserves on railways,
 - c) transportation of war materials on railways,
 - d) presence of the western troops in Archangelsk,
 - e) movements of ships from and to Archangelsk.

The common and general rule given to the agents was: -to see and to hear all they could, and to report, as soon as they could, all what they found to be of any military importance.

B. Specific training.

It seemed to be the viewpoint of the leading German officers that if we can convince the men to work against the Soviets, teach them to use W/T sets, send them out and maintain the W/T traffic to them, then all is in order. Therefore the main stress was laid on teaching W/T (Morse, mainly) and the ciphers. On this field strict prescriptions were issued by the Chief W/T Officer East of the Wehrmacht Intelligence Service (FULEI OST - Funkleiter Ost).

There were no elaborated German tuition plans for different other subjects. The work had to be done just some way, so far and so well as the occasionally available teachers and instructors could manage it. This may explain the lack of precision often seen in the missions given to the Russian groups.

In connection with teaching ciphers I realised the difficulties the recruits had in composing the messages, and even in registering the facts they had (or might^{not} had) seen or heard. As there was nobody foreseen to teach them in these subjects, so I started this, too. The men were taught to look and to see consciously and to remember the facts, so they could report them later. They were often asked to write a report of all what they had seen during a walk they had taken together with some instructors. As, in the beginning, there was not much what they could report, because of having remarked a few things only, the accompanying instructors read their reports from the same walks, so the recruits could check whether they really had not seen or remarked the facts mentioned by the instructors,

or they simply did not remember them, had not fixed them conscientiously. By time the men could report a lot of things, even more than the instructors.

For training selection of informations as to their usefulness, the men were dictated or given records of different happenings and observations, some of them of military importance, the others being of no use and of no worth for reporting. The recruits had to find out what to report from such a collection of news, how to build up a message so to have said as much as possible with minimum of words. The same was repeated in connection with ciphering or coding of messages. The men had to build their messages up in a way so the different possibilities for shortening given by the codes were used duly, but without troubling the reader to find the real meaning of the sentences, avoiding possible misinterpretations caused by unduly selected abbreviations or false punctuation, e.g. (in Russian) "povesitj, neljzja pomilovatj" against "povesitj neljzja, pomilovatj". - in first case: "hang him, no mercy", and in the second case: "don't hang, forgive him", all depending on the position of one comma only.

Proposal was made to give the recruits some practice in observing the railway or highway traffic, so they could recognize different types of carriages and their loads. Although this was found to be necessary, it was not carried out because of the difficulties connected with: the rail- and highways were under constant guard and defense against the sabotage acts, and appearance of our recruits would have troubled the guards.

The recruits were shown patterns of different Soviet uniforms and insignia so they could recognize different services. They were also shown photos and silhouettes of Soviet war ships, airplanes, tanks and different weapons. Their attention was called to different specific points of these silhouettes or pictures by help of which they could differentiate between different types of similar objects. They were also taught to recognize the types and the tonnage of different cargo-ships.

In one occasion the men were taught in interception of telephone talks, but practically they could not use the devices they were supplied with, mainly because of insufficient knowledge of the Russian language.

In the same occasion the men were taught in meteorologic observation and reporting, which gave very good results.

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To give the agents the possibility to receive reliable information for their own orientation the Finns taught the agents to use small primitive but reliable broadcasting receivers by means of which they could hear well the Finnish news broadcasted daily over a powerful transmitter (Lahti) on long wave.

In connection with the scheduled naval operations in the Finnish Gulf against the Soviet maritime fortresses, bigger shock-troops were composed and taught in use of explosives. These troops received much training on small boats and different kinds of landing means, which had nothing to do with intelligence work directly, although thought to be used for smooth penetration of the agents under cover of the noise and excitement caused by the attack of such a shock-troop. No such use was made of these troops practically.

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- 3. Problems of handling Russian personnel, and methods of avoiding or solving these problems, and
- 5. Methods of indoctrinating of Russian personnel.

A. National policy.

In these headings the word "Russian" should be replaced by the word "Slav" because a difference must be made between the Russian and the different other Slav nationalities of the U.S.S.R., which do not agree with their being called "Russian" and treated accordingly.

The Slavs are highly emotional and one would hurt the recruit, if he is e.g. a Ukrainian, when taking and treating him like a Russian.

The slogan "Spasaj Rossiju" which was pretty popular and common between the many nations in imperial Russia until 1915/1916, has lost its attraction. The national feelings of the different people of imperial Russia got a strong push forward during the last years of World War I. The Russian hegemony was shaken off. Now these people, especially their political refugees, seeing the deadly depressing communist power coming from Moscow, the old center of Russification, dislike this communist influence much more than they disliked the old imperial Russian influence which was not so terrific and bloody as the communist one is.

If today somebody still speaks of the restoration of the "uniform and indivisible Russia" (Jedinaja njedelivaja), then such a person is either -

- a) an old Russian emigree who has not been able to follow the flow of the life of nations and sticks therefore still to the idea he had some 35 years ago, or -
- b) a communist agent who uses the cover of a Russian nationalist, trying to profit of the old pan-Slav idea for the communist cause, or -
- c) a mal-informed or ill-advised alien who has not deepened himself into the psychology of the people under the communist regime.

Thus we can not speak of the Russian recruits in general, and we can not build our policy on the restoration of the "good old Russia", but we have to base our policy on the liberation of nations from the deadly communist oppression.

It would be wrong to speak of liberation from the Russian communism. There are "own" communists, "national communists" and "international communists of, let us say, Estonian nationality" in every

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IN ESTONIAN LANGUAGE

people. It is perhaps ~~SECRET~~ the most communist rulers in the Soviet Union are of Russian ~~Security Information~~ can not let us be influenced by this fact, because:

- a) the Russian people is far not entirely communist or expansion-greedy imperialist-minded,
- b) this nation, too, is suffering under the communists and has to be freed from its communist rulers, and
- c) the other nations need the help of the Russians in their common fight against the communists.

B. Primacy of the life conditions before policy.

It would be wrong to base our work on the complicated and tricky national politics only.

Notwithstanding how primitive or highly developed a nation, the main and most important problem for each man or woman is and remains HOW TO GET SOMETHING TO EAT, AND HOW TO GET A WARM PLACE WHERE HE/SHE COULD LIVE IN SOME WAY AT ONE'S EASE.

The political émigrés and refugees from the countries behind the Iron Courtain feel here, in western world, their food and personal life secured, and occupy themselves with different second-matter political questions. They forget easily that the main problems of life are not yet solved in respect of their people still under the communist regiment, that for their nations not the future political structure of their countries, but the things they miss the most -

- A HUMANLY BEARABLE LIFE AND SOME PERSONAL SECURITY AND LIBERTY - are the subjects of their dreams and longings, are the matters of really first importance.

This must be the real base of our work, this must be made clear to the recruits, this idea must be combined with that of tolerance and cooperation of the nations, because so only the goal can be reached.

C. Some characteristics of the Slavs to be counted.

The Slavs, in general, are good-natured, and credulous, and confiding as having no ideas of their own. A good agitator can do much with, and out of, them. But as easily as one speaker can persuade and win the Slavs for himself and his ideas, another can the same, too, bringing the same Slavs to quite opposite ideas only a very short time after the first agitator had won them. The soul of a Slav is manifold. It is a fertile ground for every culture one likes to sow there in. It can and likes to rise a good crop. But it is ready to take and to cherish a second culture at any time, too, letting the first one dying without pity. This does not depend on

dishonesty, he simply forgets the first talk and finds that the last one was better. Thus all depends on the vigilance of the first sower, he must be on alert, not letting any others to his field, giving his seeds a special endurance. It is therefore that the Iron Courtain is so essential to the communist leaders knowing their folk - no other sower, no other seeds may be let to these fields of fertile ground of hungry stomachs and souls.

Good-natured and talkative as the Slavs are, they like to make good friends and to bring this to show, too. The Soviet life taught and forced them to hide their thoughts even before the closest relatives and the best friends in fear of the forced denuntiation. They suffered under this "keeping silence", and feeling themselves now, in the western World, free of this threat, they just have a longing to talk, to make friends, to confide in their new Western acquaintances. Therefore the recruits are usually well-disposed and easily indoctrinated - our seeds will find a fertile ground... But how long will our culture thrive, will this last when the agent will be sent to work and will not hear us talking any longer?

The Slavs are of collective mind. They like the company very much. The greater the number of the members of the company the safer they feel themselves in it. Left alone, a Slav feels lonely, ever desperate.

If sent to work in Soviet Union as a single agent, such a man will soon be tempted to join the population - he can not remain in hiding for long time. He suffers under loneliness. He hopes that he can dive into and disappear in the great mass of his own people, and he probably will try this, if not held back by somebody from doing this. Doing so he may still have the good intention to work with us against the communists, but then he will unavoidably come under the influence of the local communist agitators, of the other sower. Now the result will depend upon the stability of our seeds, whether they can stand the attack of the political communist propaganda or not. If we had feed him with talks and explanations only, then he will be lost for us soon, as the influence of the hammering communist propaganda can not be underestimated.

D. Methods of indoctrinating.

To win the battle and not to lose our agent, we must supply him with something which is faster and more solid than the communist propaganda, based on talks and mass psychology only. We must give him something what he can not forget easily, which he will remember.

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automatically when hearing the exaggerated talk of the communist agitators about the prosperity of the Soviet life in comparison to the life of the people in "rotten west". This "something" is the memory of the good life he himself had during his stay in west, and the memory of the good life of the western people which he knows himself out of his own consideration. This is the most promising basis for indoctrinating the Slav recruits. Thus -

- 1) let them have a very good life here themselves, so they will remember this long time, especially when having nothing to eat or a very poor Soviet table only,
- 2) and let them have a really good picture of the good life of the western people, so the comparison given by the communist agitators will fade before his own comparison.

The force of the lasting communist propaganda may not be undervalued, and the first task to build a solid groundation which will not break under this hammering, must be taken very seriously. The men must be given the best possibilities to learn all about the western life. They must be brought to systematical and conscious and conscientious comparison of different details of the western life with the corresponding details of the Soviet life which they know well themselves. They must be reminded of the life in Russia (imperial Russia) before World War I (1913-1914). If they are young and do not know this out of their own experiences, then real old Russians, knowing this life, must tell them objectively and in very simple life-close manner every detail they like to know. This picture showing the life in Russia must be confronted with another showing the life in western countries at the same time, so they could compare the both and find out the ways of development the life has gone during the last 40 years in the "rotten west" and in the "free communist world". They must be helped to do this comparison. They must be made aware of the cost these achievements in amelioration of conditions of life have cost the people in west and in Soviet Union.

The Slavs are not suspicious by nature, but they are taught to be by the communists. We may hope that our Slav recruits will be freed from that enhammered suspicion already, but eventhough, it is advisable to let them get convinced in facts not by our explanations or assertions only, which they may take for "propaganda", but by their own experience. The impressions gathered by the people themselves, by direct touch, sight and exchange of questions and answers, are of much ^{more} lasting character and much more convincing than these received by listening to professors' explanations.

If you like to show them a factory or a farm, so they could see the real life of the "working classes", don't fix the factory or the farm where to go, but, if possible, let the recruits fix the place and the time, so they could be sure there is no "show" been prepared for them, as they probably will have heard about the famous Russian "Kotemkinskije ssjela", and know well the communists' achievements of the same kind of propaganda - the pattern factories, kolkhozes, a.s.o., which served mainly for being shown to the different aliens visiting the Soviet Union. Our agent, indoctrinated in such a practical way, when listening later to the propaganda talks of the communist agitators, will have the solid basis of his own knowledge on which he can check the agitator's talk. He will see that the man does not have any real idea himself of what he is speaking. The better knowledge of our man will itch on his mind, will defend him from falling back under the influence of the communist propaganda, will make him a valuable worker for freedom.

The above characterizing lines were typical for the Slav recruits we had during World War II. It is possible that these Slavs who escaped Soviet Union after World War II, are a little more individualistic than their predecessors of war time, and the great Slav masses. They must have had their own opinion of the human rights and liberties, or they would not have risked their life and would not have succeeded in coming out from behind the Iron Curtain. But the better they must be able to understand the great difference between the Western and the Soviet regimes, the better they can later, helped by our indoctrination, stand the communist propaganda when back in Soviet Union, on work. But one can not be reborn. Therefore the general characteristics of the Slavs remain valid for these people, too, and the indoctrinating of these people has to be made with much care, too.

As told, the Slavs like speaking and they listen willingly to a good talk. An instructor who likes to influence his Slav listeners, must not be a dry and real "professor", but a friendly and pleasant entertainer, giving his lecture in form of a causerie. The greater the audience, the surer he can be in his success, provided that there will be nobody opposing him actively and intentionally. Fun and good-natured jokes are on right place in every instruction camp, especially in these of Slav recruits. The same are different entertainments like singing, music, dancing and parties with good eating and drinking and many spe

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The aforesaid stipulates great numbers of mass-tuition, which is in contradiction to the security precautions asking for small centers, so one agent or group would know nothing of the others.

But we have to count with the Slav character of the recruits, and some compromises must be made. Therefore, if the knowledge of being a part of a mass gives some ease to the recruits, let them remain together in bigger groups for all the time of general tuition.

It seems that it is too risky to send out single-going Slav agents for longer periods of work if they may not legalize themselves. It would be better to send groups of 2 or 3 men, so they could support one-another against the feeling of loneliness. During the period of general tuition the recruits have to make friends and such groups have to find together. Later these groups must be taken into special centers of individual tuition for a relatively short but very intensive last period of special instruction.

Taking into consideration the very great extent of Soviet Union, where the agents may be sent out on work, the fact that the recruits have been taught together and know a little about the existence of such other groups, does not count much against the profit coming of this common tuition period giving the recruits the steady feeling of a mass-enterprise, that he or his small group will not be going alone, but there will be many groups of the same center and hundreds of groups of different other centers going on work in the same time.

In such general center different Slav nationalities could be taught together, in some subjects, using Russian language, so far they do understand the language duly. This would give a good opportunity to indoctrinate them the need of cooperation of the nations now under the Soviet regiment, and that their work is not sheduled against the Russian people, but together with the Russians against the communists, whatever may be their nationality and their national slogans: the communist idea is international, it is a trick only that they play sometimes on the tune of the nationality or of the Pan-Slavism in the Slav countries.

The Slavs like great ideas. They are ready to sacrifice themselves for great goals. They do not care much of their lives and are ready to risk even with the life if only the cause looks to be worth of this. Being sons of numerous nations, especially the Russians (Veliko Rusy), they are proud of the grandeur of their national

families, and they like have for their friends and helpers the sons and daughters of other great nations. They do not like have too close relations to the members of different small alien people. Especially they do not like to be taught by people belonging to such small nations, because: it is not the personal value of an individual that they feel, but the pride of the mass to which they know this individual belonging to. This was very clearly seen in the German tuition camps during World War II, and there are no factors which would have changed this situation. Therefore, if any non-American and non-Slav has to be used in connection with tuition of the Slav personnel, then such a person a very good cover giving him the "pride" he needs in eyes of his Slav listeners additionally to his personal value.

Thus, for indoctrinating the Slav recruits is needed:

- 1) Good life conditions for the recruits in comparatively big groups during a longer period of general tuition, and later in small groups during short but hard special training.
- 2) A l i t t l e political explanatory work aiming to the need of urged help for the starving people, and to the need of brotherly cooperation of all the nations against the communists, but not against any other nation.
- 3) M u c h first-hand practical knowledge about the real life- and work-conditions of the western people, and good conscious comparison of these with the Soviet ones.
- 4) Good "professors" who like their work and are prepared to do it in a simple but real way, themselves shining in a light and illuminating a light which both together will be bright enough to impress positively the grandeur-bound Slavs.

-24- - IS MISSING

-25- FOLLOWS!

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4. Problems of handling non-Russian personnel,
differentiating between Latvian and Estonian.

A. The Estonians.

The Estonians are individualists and do not depend so much on the cohesive pull of the mass than the Slavs do. Therefore there is no need for great agglomeration of Estonian recruits. Better results can be obtained if the tuition will be done in small closed groups allowing more individual work of the instructor with the single man or with each member of the small group.

The Estonians are frank and like plain talk. Much talking is usually wrong, because they are mostly not too talkative and do not care much of pathos.

They estimate true friendship very much, but usually they do not show their friendliness off.

They are sometimes too sensitive, especially what concern their national feelings. They have suffered much under the Soviet communists (whom they mostly take identic with Russians) and under the Germans, too. They have hoped into the understanding and help from the side of the western Democracies, but they have been disappointed in this hope till now. Therefore they have some distrust as to the (effectiveness) efficiency of the present and the expected steps of the western anti-communist activity...

The Estonians are restless because they know that the Estonian people is a small one, and that it is a comparatively simple affair to the Soviet Union to annihilate the Estonian people physically during a short time. They know that every lost day causes essential losses to their people which lacks the defending ^{HELP} fact offered by the mass of a great people, from which the enemy can not kill so many people as ~~will~~ will be born in the same time. They see, with right, no ~~many~~ sense in a help which may be given after long years when there will be no Estonians any longer to be helped in Estonia.

They know the dangerousity of the communist peril better than the Western people and Powers know it. They think to know that the longer the decisive fight will be postponed, the greater will be the prize of the victory not only for the Estonian but for all free people, and the less will be the aspects of a victory at all. They are afraid that the valuable days, months and years are not used for efficient preparations for the decisive fight, but mostly for unnecessary talks.

It would be good they could be convinced in the contrary: that the time has not been wasted, that the decision will be brought in as soon as technically possible, that the steps in preparation are effective.

Good life conditions and the possibilities to learn to know the Western life from the first-hand sources, is essential for the Estonian recruits, too, as they they, too, need some bright picture in their mind they could think of during the moments of depression something overcoming the people compelled to work under very hard conditions and without any signs of release.

B. The Latvians.

The aforesaid corres, nis in general to the Latvian recruits, too, with a small inclination to the side of the Slavs to whom the Latvians stand nearer than the Estonians, the latter having nothing or very few in common with the Slavs.

C. Other non-Slav nations of the Soviet Union.

It may not be forgotten that there are many non-Slav nationalities, too, between the people of the Soviet Union. But the writer has had no contact with, and no experiences in tuition of, the recruits of these nationalities.

6. Methods of analysis of W/T traffic for authenticity, control signs used.

A. Use of W/T instructors knowing the "hand" of the agent.

Every W/T operator has some specific notes in his Morse-"handwriting" allowing the differentiation of work of the operators using even the same method of traffic. Therefore, if the same W/T instructor who has taught the recruit in wireless traffic, will act later as W/T operator in traffic with the same man on work, there will be no difficulties in authentication of the agent, he would remark at once if some alien will work instead of his known pupil.

B. Recording of recruit's "handwriting" on Morse tape.

To be quite sure in this procedure of recognition of the handwriting of the agent, and for having the possibility of a check in case that there are no old instructors working as operators, it would be good to take some samples of every recruit's work by an automatic recorder on a Morse tape during the period of school-traffic. This has to be done without knowledge of the recruit himself, and many times, in the beginning of his independent work, when he is still excited and nervous because of the newness of the task, and later when he will be used to this work already.

Later the work of the agent, who has to be checked, has to be recorded, too, on Morse tape, and thus unmistakable possibilities of check will be given.

C. Comparison of the style of the messages.

Every person has some specific habits in stressing the sentences. So it is with the orthographic errors. Therefore collecting of samples of the agent's school-messages during the tuition period and comparing these with the messages sent when already on work, give a good authenticity control. If the messages of the agent show an other style and the usual orthographical mistakes will not appear there any longer, then this is a sure sign that somebody else is working instead of our man. In one occasion the work of one of our Russian agents was found suspicious just because quite different style of one message. As later more suspicions arose and

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the control sign : asked, then no answer came any more from the line, which shows that the agent was not more working himself and he had not revealed the control sign although the enemy had come to knowledge of the cipher in use on that line.

D. Control signs used.

We tried to use some fixed deformation of the "handwriting" for authenticity and alarm signs, e.g. giving of lengthened dots in some fixed letters or making fixed errors when calling the opposite station or giving own call. But this method was not sure enough, as the men made such errors sometimes unintentionally, too, - their ability in Morse and in traffic was not sure enough to allow the use of this method.

Therefore other methods of control were used, mostly bound with the text of the messages, like:

- 1) exchange of fixed questions and answers. The general ruling was that a control had to be answered in the first message the agent sends after he has received the control-message.
To the control-question different answers were foreseen:
 - a) for the case that all was in order,
 - b) " " " " the agent was still working himself but under pressure, being in power of the enemy.
- 2) The agents were asked before their start to write an exposition about some specific happenings out of their life, so we could put them later control questions on the base of these writings to which they only could give right answers.
- 3) In some cases alarm signals were fixed by which the agent could draw our attention to the fact that he has been caught by the enemy and was working under pressure.

There was no routine in fixing these control methods. Each agent or group, sometimes even different men in our and the same group, received quite differently composed control signs.

Some examples:

- to 1) If the home station started a cable with the question about the health of the crew, then this meant a control and nothing more. The answers were fixed:
 - in case a) the words "don't ask" followed by a group of numbers, e.g. the number of groups in the received control-message + the date on which the answer message was ciphered.
 - in case b) no answer at all to the control question, or the fixed answer without the additional group of numbers.

An answer explaining the health condition of the agent would have shown us that the agent was not working himself or he was not free to compose the message according his will.

- to 3) Nervous work with many errors and corrections of errors served usually as an alarm sign. The operators of the home station had to report such appearances and control questions were then given with the next cable.

15 MARCH, 1952