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OSTRICH File
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2006

April 1945

FRY-1388

TO: Major Holcomb

FROM: Lt. Michaelis

SUBJECT: Further information received from OSTRICH

OSTRICH crossed the lines at two o'clock on the morning of 16 January, and met the first German post three or four kilometers further on. After giving the password - "Deutsche agent. Bitte zum Ic" - he was introduced to the commander of the division and then to the Ic of the AK, Oberleutenant MEYER-ELSEN; the Ia was Ritterkreuztrager Major SCHNEIDER. This AK had arrived only a few days before, replacing the AK established at Belfort in October, and whose commander was General KNISS, the Hqn-Chef Colonel BEHLE, the Ia Major BECKER, and the Ic Oberleutenant JANKILHAN.

A telegram was immediately sent to Amt VI/S saying that LEO had arrived in Germany. The Ic of the AK was established at Vianden near the Luxembourg border, and OSTRICH remained there until a reply was received from BESEKOW. This came two days later and OSTRICH was ordered to go at once to Friedenthal. But in the meantime the Americans had started an offensive against Vianden, and the Ic could do nothing further for OSTRICH being obliged to retreat to a bunker in the Westwall.

On the morning of 18 January OSTRICH went on foot to Triers, where he announced his arrival to the SD. Then he proceeded on foot to Zeltingen, where he again presented himself to the Kommandeur of the SD. Still on foot, he continued to Coblenz where he took the train and arrived at Friedenthal on 23 January. There OSTRICH was very cordially received by SKORZENY, who introduced to about a hundred SS officers. This took place at the officer's mess in the castle where Amt VI/S 4 was established. After dinner OSTRICH gave a report to SKORZENY, RAEDL, BESEKOW, Hauptsturmfuehrer HUNKE, and the Ic of the Jagdverbande mitte Ostuf, RIEDEL, and was ordered to make a fuller report of his activities in France. OSTRICH's formal report was made exactly as agreed upon with Lt. Michaelis.

By the time SKORZENY reported OSTRICH's arrival to SCHELLENBERG, RAEDL, KAJTENBRUNNER, and the RfSS, OSTRICH was ordered to report to the Fuehrerhauptquartier because he had said that the attempts on De Gaulle's lifelast August were due to the JEANNE-RICHARD group. The Fuehrer ordered that the Swedish newsreel of the liberation of Paris should be shown to him. On 30 January, anniversary of the day the Nazis came to power, OSTRICH was officially named SS Obersturmfuehrer, and was decorated with the EK I & II. He received the EK I by personal order of the Fuehrer.

OSTRICH then had to develop his plans for a new mission to France, for which SKORZENY had promised to help him and which he actually did. The following day OSTRICH obtained the necessary equipment, a total weight of about one thousand kilos, and which included twelve anti-tank guns, high-explosives, arms, pistols, sabotage material, and a jeep and trailer. OSTRICH told SKORZENY about a plan he had to organize a maquis in France, which would seem to be a French undertaking without any apparent German support.

To lead this maquis OSTRICH planned to get a high-ranking French politician with German sympathies and make him into the Tito of France. He chose Jacques DORIOT, who was invited by SKORZENY to come to Berlin.

Early in February a dinner was given at the Hotel Furstenhof in Berlin, with the following people present: SKORZENY, DORIOT, Etienne LEANDRI, RAEDL, BESEKOW and OSTRICH. Everyone approved the plan, and DORIOT agreed to be the head of the maquis as soon as OSTRICH had founded it, at which time DORIOT would come to France and play the part of a Tito. However a few days later DORIOT was the victim of a machine-gun attack by an airplane. LEANDRI was ordered to go to Italy to join the Organisation JEANNE MICHEL, directed by Ostuf NEISSER, and to work together with his Kommando in San Remo. LEANDRI claimed to have every facility for establishing contact between France and Italy by means of his agents (V-Leute).

OSTRICH had all his equipment ready by 18 February, and left with a jeep and trailer and accompanied by a driver for Wiesbaden, where he stayed with the Jagdverhaende Sudwest formation until he got orders from the KG-200 to report to the Echterdingen airfield, near Stuttgart. OSTRICH sent a telegram to HAGEDORN telling him to come to Wiesbaden, in order to spend a few days with him at Badenweiler and Freiburg. About 28 February OSTRICH went to Freiburg and Badenweiler. He was invited to the HQ of XVIII SS AK, where he was introduced to Obergruppenfuehrer KOPPLER and the Ic Ostuf KUBAT. OSTRICH reported to them about the political and military situation in France. HAGEDORN went to Freiburg, and OSTRICH remained in the Waldesruhe house at Badenweiler.

One Saturday night OSTRICH received a telephone call from KUBAT who handed the phone over to Oberleutnant MERCK (Captain KAISER). MERCK told OSTRICH that a certain TONIN - whom MERCK said OSTRICH was supposed to know - had gone to the German authorities and had declared that a certain LEO had been captured in France by the Americans. It was two or three days later before OSTRICH got fuller information on what TONIN had said. BESEKOW and his adjutant, Obersturmfuehrer MAIER, came to Badenweiler and started an investigation. These were the facts: Alois TONIN, former Meldekopf Fuehrer from the Meldekopf Seelowe at Gerardmer, who had helped OSTRICH cross the lines last December, had been made prisoner when Strasbourg was taken. He had been turned around by the French and sent back to Germany, whereupon he immediately went to the German authorities and told them everything he knew. Amongst other things, he told them that the Lieutenant ALEXANDRE and Capitaine AMROISE who had interrogated him had told him that they had made a very severe interrogation of a certain Leo NEBEL, who had collapsed after a six hour interrogation, and that ALEXANDRE had later become a good friend of Leo who was going to work for the Americans. TONIN reported this conversation, and added that by this time Leo must be back in Germany.

TONIN also reported that a certain Kriminal Kommissar UHRING from the Kripo at Strasbourg, an Alsatian, was turned around by the French and sent back to Germany after he had told them all he knew about the Germans.

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OSTRICH had to defend himself against this story. He was not put in jail, but he could not go out unaccompanied and MAIER and BESEKOW, who are excellent policemen, watched everything he did. BESEKOW told me that he personally did not believe TONIN's story, and SKORZENY also said that he did not believe OSTRICH could have done this. SKORZENY himself said that if the accusation were really true, OSTRICH would have been able to kill SKORZENY, BESEKOW, and all the other personalities of the organization, thus rendering a great service to the Allies. Several times OSTRICH pretended to be crazy with rage, and generally played his part as well as he knew how. He told BESEKOW that he must be believed, simply because he was Leo, but now that he was an SS fuehrer he wanted to justify the confidence placed in him. BESEKOW promised him that justice would be done, and he ordered TONIN, who was in jail at Waldkirch, to be transferred to the SS Ausweichlager of the RSHA at Hof in Bavaria, for a supplementary interrogation. Several attempts were made to get OSTRICH drunk and learn something from him that way. On BESEKOW's orders, OSTRICH's departure for France was postponed until the end of the investigation.

HAGEDORN was replaced as fuehrer of the SS Kommando Badenweiler by Sturmabfuhrer Hans DUFFNER, and HAGEDORN and OSTRICH were under his orders. Ostuf LOBA and Ostuf DOBRITSCH were released and ordered to Hof. About the 25th of March news arrived that a list had been found on a captured officer of Allied target addresses. As a result the SS Sonderkommando had to move, and after a long search a new place was found between Kandern and Schlaachtenhausen - a lonely house in the Black Forest near Lorrach, a former Deutsche Jugendherberge. The Kommando moved there with all its material and ten tons of food and arms on 18 April.

Realizing that the Allied troops were approaching Freiburg, OSTRICH received permission from Stuf DUFFNER to go with the two NCO's, ULLBRICH and KUSSAK, to Freiburg in order to get gasoline and two motorcycles. On Saturday morning 21 April OSTRICH left the two NCO's, telling them that he planned to let himself be taken by the Allies at Freiburg, and then begin sabotage activities against them. ULLBRICH and KUSSAK, who were very attached to OSTRICH, asked if they could not stay with him. OSTRICH had them change into civilian clothing and hid them with friends of his. Saturday night Freiburg was occupied, and the next day OSTRICH tried to get in touch with the Securite Militaire. It took him two days to find the proper place to obtain permission to go to Paris. Meanwhile he introduced ULLBRICH and KUSSAK to Capitaine Masse of the S.M. of the division, asking him not to imprison these two but to use them as informers until OSTRICH should return with Lt. Michaelis. He agreed to this. OSTRICH also asked him to make inquiries at the Waldruhe house at Badenweiler, and to seize and hold at the disposition of OSS a box of hand-grenades specially manufactured for OSTRICH.

On Tuesday OSTRICH went by car to Strasbourg and arrived in Paris by train Wednesday night at ten o'clock.

SECRET