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9 November 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR: SADO
PB-I ✓

There is attached a memorandum by Mr. Offie covering his discussions with Mr. Ribiere on the question of BOFIEND, together with a transcript of a telephone conversation between myself and [redacted] of the British Embassy, in response to the query which he raised with me on November 7 concerning the line to be followed by "C" in a conversation with Ribiere scheduled for November 10.

[redacted]

Attachments: 2

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3028
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

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1. Mr. Ribiere inquired as to our activities in connection with Albania. He stated that he wished to be perfectly frank and let me know exactly what he had been able to learn about American activities vis a vis Albania, expressing that it was a bit unpleasant for him to do so in view of the understanding he thought he had reached with us during his visit to Washington last November. He stated that this was all the more unpleasant to him since he had come away from his meeting with Mr. Wisner and that the latter wished to develop really close cooperation with the French Services. I interjected with the statement that he already had received some information from OPC representatives in connection with the Albanian Committee and that, while I was not aware of what he had learned with regard to activities involving Albania, I could assure him that our plans on this subject, as indeed in the case of the other ~~enlisted~~^{FIEND} groups, had developed disappointingly slowly, and one of the items on my agenda today was to bring him up to date on this subject.

2. Mr. Ribiere then stated that the first contact he had had with an American official on the subject of Albania was last July when he had been approached by OPC representatives and his assistance sought in procuring French visas for travel of certain Albanian Nationalists who were involved in the formation of an Albanian National Committee. He said that this was the only American contact he had had. On the other hand, he had been to London, to Rome, and to Greece since that time. He had, as I must know, intimate relations with the Italian Secret Services, which relationship resulted in his receiving very full intelligence information from that country. He dwelt briefly upon his excellent Italian connections, which was unnecessary, as I know he has them. He told me that he had learned, from the Italians, a rather complete story of the negotiations during the [] and he was also informed, even unto the dates of the dispatch of intelligence teams into Albania. At this point I commented that of course he meant Italian intelligence teams which, as he knew, the Italian Naval Intelligence had allegedly organized. He said, "No, I mean British-American teams. I mean teams organized by British Americans." I said that of course there were a number of foreign powers which had dispatched intelligence teams into Albania, even into Greece, but that I did not want to go into detail on this particular subject for the reason that I did not concern myself with intelligence matters. He then went on, with determination, to explain that the Greeks had also advised him of a British-American operation involving Albania, and had rather complained of the lack of full coordination on the part of the British-American authorities. He stated that on his last trip to London the British had acknowledged their operations vis a vis Albania, which, from the remarks he made on this subject, I gathered to more or less cover the operation VALUABLE phase of the FIEND plan. Then ensued what to me was the most

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interesting part of the conversation on this subject, because Mr. Ribiere dwelt at some length on real British concern about any operations involving Albania because of the very delicate situation at present prevailing in Yugoslavia. I gathered from his remarks that his British opposite number is not at all convinced that Operation FIEND is a feasible plan, and indeed at one point of the conversation indicated to Ribiere that he would not be at all surprised if it should be desirable in the near future to curtail all intelligence operations. In this connection mention was made of the Tito Albanians in the Kosovo Area.

3. I thought it best to explain to Mr. Ribiere OPC's role in connection with Albania from the very beginning. I therefore reminded him of our query last November in Washington with regard to Albania. I stated that we were most grateful to him and to his compatriots in the French Foreign Office for such vital information provided with regard to Albania since last November. I said that, as he well knew, many people felt that this might be the appropriate time to undertake operations in Albania which might result in a change of regime. Since, however, the development of the ~~common-^{Cominfar}~~ Tito dispute had made the situation in that area most delicate, there was a very definite reluctance to undertake any operation which might bring about disaster. I said that it was primarily in accordance with our general program concerning emigre groups in exile, with which he was fully familiar, that we had undertaken to form the Albanian National Council. I further stated that this might probably be considered as phase one of our entire plan with regard not only to Albania but also to the other Iron Curtain countries. I went on to say that the depositing of intelligence teams in Albania was a routine matter for Intelligence Services, that I regretted I was not in a position to give him details on any American activity in this respect for the reason that I did not concern myself with intelligence matters, that I would undertake, however, should he be interested, to ascertain what the situation was in this respect. I then stated that there would come, perhaps—and the perhaps was a very big one indeed, for obvious reasons—a time when it might be desirable to attempt a coup d'etat in Albania. Such undertaking would require the most careful study and consideration not only by the Services people but also it would require the approval of the American National Military Establishment (Joint Chiefs of Staff) and the Department of State. It would further require the most careful diplomatic preparation involving several countries including France. I could assure him that while this subject had been discussed on many occasions and at great length, no definite decision had yet been made with regard to effecting an overthrow of the Hoxha regime in Albania. I said in this connection that I had frequently wished that he had a properly accredited representative in Washington to discuss such matters on his behalf, as there certainly was nothing with regard to any project pertaining to Albania which we would desire to withhold from him. Indeed, the French, because of the presence of their diplomatic mission in ~~Tehran~~^{Tirana}, and for other reasons, had a very important contribution to make in the event that any such project was undertaken. I stated further that when we began to give this project more serious consideration—and I thought this stage would be reached in the very near future—we would have Mr. Ribiere approached by competent British and American OPC representatives who would acquaint him with our intentions in this matter.

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4. Mr. Ribiere thanked me for this explanation and said that it would not be necessary for me to go to the trouble of ascertaining what intelligence activities has been undertaken in Albania by our people, that he felt he was adequately informed on this subject, thanks to his British, Italian, and Greek connections, and that he would look forward to being approached in the event that a decision is made to proceed with a serious plan for the overthrow of the Hoxha regime in Albania. He then volunteered the information, which I had already heard from our [] that French information indicated that Hoxha was very anxious to enter into contact with properly qualified Western representatives. I asked him whether he had received a definite confirmation of this report, and he stated that as yet he had received no reply to his further query on this point.

C. OFFIE
SADO

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Lia w/ Brit
filed

8 November 1949

Ribiere

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

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[] I have gone into this question we discussed. We are aware that he is very considerably informed on this situation.

[]: I see.

[] We certainly concur that he should be told.

[] Yes.

[] One of our people was there recently and was questioned very heavily and very closely on this situation.

[] Yes.

[] He rather passed over the second phase.

[] Yes. I understand.

[] He was of course already informed on the first phase. I did that myself some time ago. This chap passed over the second phase and said he was not concerned with such matters. He then went on and said this was obviously a question of constant consideration.

[] Yes.

[] No decision had yet been made on it, which is technically true.

[] Quite.

[] When a decision was made obviously it would require great diplomatic preparations and he would be approached by both ourselves and the British on the matter.

[] My understanding is that I can tell him that you agree to inform him that the thing is in the exploratory stage and if the results of that stage are we will expand the scope of the whole thing and bring him in on it. good

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[] That would be a little further than we would go. There is a commitment to bring him in to full participation which we are not prepared to make at this time.

[] We are observing the results of the exploratory stage and our future actions will be dictated by the nature of such results and just leave the question of his participation vague?

[] That will give your man the opportunity, as we say, to get himself off the hook with regard to the phase 2 stage in the best way possible.

[] There is another point. Do you know Dan who recently went over?

[] No.

[] He went primarily in the Admiral's interests.

[] Oh, yes, I do know.

[] Is he briefed on this?

[] No.

[] Should he coordinate his story with my man?

[] No. He is from the other side of the house. There is another item, the final statement you received to the effect he had been told a proposal would be forthcoming.

[] Yes.

[] I talked with a chap who dined with him and it works a bit the other way and this is in fact the proposal and our people (Bob) do want this information given to the other chap.

[] This is a question which must be thought in advance, how he is to comment. Thank you.

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