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DISPATCH NO.: MGW-A-95

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CLASSIFICATION

DATE: 17 March 1949

TO : []
FROM : []
SUBJECT: "The Soviet-Communist Peace Offensive", Report by []
REF :

1. There is enclosed, for your general information, two copies of a report prepared by [] under the subject of "The Soviet-Communist Peace Offensive".

Encls:
Rpt of 1 Mar 49
above subj. (2).

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1 March 1949.

Subject : THE SOVIET-COMMUNIST PEACE OFFENSIVE ;

Notes and Comments on some of its effects in Germany.

The following is based on overt sources, publications from Western Germany and from Berlin, and on conversations with perhaps a dozen Germans, mostly of the educated classes, of different political views. The opinions expressed herein are purely those of the writer.

1. The current Soviet-Communist peace offensive which started about the beginning of this year, has taken in Germany thus far the following specific shapes :
 - (a) All Soviet-Communist media have given widest publicity to the well-known Stalin interview, to the speeches by Cachen, Togliatti ~~and~~ have stressed the purely "negative" reception these "peace ouvertures" have found in the West
 - (b) A large-scale campaign to have mass petitions for peace and the outlawing of the A-bomb ~~has~~ among the women of all 4 zones (in Germany today, women constitute almost two thirds of the voters) has been started by Communist women's front organizations, such as the DEMOKRATISCHE FRAUENBUND in Berlin and the Soviet Zone and the FRAUENAUSSCHUSS, Hamburg, for the West
 - (c) A campaign of mass meetings for peace is being prepared by the Communist Party and its affiliates
 - (d) A new project for ~~the~~ a German peace treaty, to be preceded by the "piecemeal" evacuation of Germany by the occupying powers, has been launched in a devious way (cf NEW YORK TIMES, International Air edition, 23 February) (for General Clay's reaction to this project, cf NEUE ZEITUNG, 26 February)
 - (e) In this connection, the German "People's Council", pivotal Communist front set-up in Berlin has proclaimed a "state of national emergency" for all Germany, urging a "nation-wide resistance movement" against the "Western warmongers" etc.
 - (f) At the same time, the Communists appear to encourage any German middle class movements in favor of German "neutrality" between West and East (cf editorial "Zweifelhafter Applaus" in NEUE ZEITUNG, 26 February, commenting on Communist praise for the "Nauheimer Kreis" of Prof. Ulrich Noack and for August Haussleiter, deputy chairman of the Bavarian CSU and member of the executive committee of the "Deutsche Union")

2. There is no evidence indicating that the direct Communist propaganda contained in the above defined "peace offensive" has impressed non-Communist Germans to any substantial degree thus far. There appear to be, however, indirect consequences of considerable potential impact :

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(Peace Offensive - p. 2)

- (a) The "peace offensive" coincided - rather unfortunately - with two developments in the West, namely, the wide-spread public debate in the U.S. whether our first line of defense is on the Rhine, on the Pyrenees or at the British Channel - and second, the suggestion that Germany might supply manpower and armaments to the Atlantic Pact, resp. to a European Union.
- (b) It is not clear to this writer whether ~~that~~ or to what extent that latter suggestion was launched by German nationalist and militarist circles, or (as some sources suggest) by the French, or perhaps even in some devious way by Soviet-Communist sponsors (a possible, purely hypothetical channel for the latter would be from the Free Germany Committee and its military following in the East to German officers etc. in the West, whether the latter were being used as agents or as an unwitting "transmission belt").
- (c) In any case, these two lines of thought have not only been exploited by Soviet-Communist propaganda, their direct impact upon the German mind is much more substantial and dangerous - they logically convey to the Germans the idea that the U.S. is abandoning all territory East of the Rhine in any case, the rest of Europe possibly, while at the same time anxious to use German manpower in a "delaying action", in which whatever German men and installations are left would be sacrificed to "buy time" for an American offensive against Russia. Whatever the military merits of the case, the extremely unfortunate results of this reasoning as it affects our possibilities in political warfare here are becoming quite obvious.
- (d) Significant non-Communist German statements to this ~~complex~~ complex issue are, for instance :
- "Kling, Klang und Gloria ?" by Hanns Erich Haack, in DEUTSCHE RUNDschau, Stuttgart, January '49 (Key conclusion : " As long as there is no consolidated Europe, it would be better we Germans would allow ourselves to be run over in any war of the continents ... and wait what our fate would be. ")
- "Man braucht Deutschland - auch Deutsche Soldaten ?" ("One wants Germany - German soldiers, too ?") by Eugen Kogon, the well-known catholic author of "The SS-State", in the FRANKFURTER HEFTE, January '49 (this article, apart from war and rearmament question, discusses also how the Communists might attempt to seize political power after the withdrawal of the occupying forces)
- "Deutschland und Europa", by Alfred Weber, in DIE WANDE, Heidelberg, February '49 (describes Germany's rearmament on the side of the Western Union as "suicide" and predicts that Russia would invade Western Germany in the event of any rearmament ; demands a political federation of Europe - clearly separated from the military alliance of the Western Union which Western Germany could join)
- "Das Niemandsland östlich des Rheins" ("The No-Man's-Land east of the Rhine") in CHRIST UND WELT, 17 February '49

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(Peace Offensive - p. 3)

3. It is obvious that the U.S. as a democratic nation and in peace time cannot suppress opinions voiced in its own press, however adversely such opinions affect our foreign policy. (Recent statements by columnist Walter Lippmann have been a favorite basis for critical and sceptical German statements on US foreign policy : see, for instance, the front-page editorial of ECHO DER WOCHE, Munich, 25 February, headlined : " Ein falscher Prophet Amerikas. Walter Lippmann für Nervenkrieg gegen Bundesgenossen " - " A false prophet of America. Walter Lippmann advocates war of nerves against allies ") However, it seems to this writer that some of the unfortunate effects of such publications might be mitigated if they are corrected or overshadowed by

- (a) well-coordinated statements of policy on top government level
- (b) offensive counter-action against Soviet-Communist political warfare moves

4. So far as this writer could observe, no counter-action against subject peace offensive has either been taken by the overt outlets of official US opinion here, nor has such counter-action been ~~initiated~~ initiated by German anti-Communist groups. To illustrate this point :

- (a) Stalin's statement, he would like to meet Pres. Truman but could not go very far on his doctor's advice, might have been countered by
 - (i) a dramatic description of how Pres. Roosevelt, shortly before his death, despite all medical advice, went to Yalta, to meet Stalin (with all obvious conclusions that Roosevelt wanted peace while Stalin only talks peace),
 - (ii) a methodical rumor campaign about Stalin's ill health, perhaps even implying that Stalin is actually dead and the "dummy" holding his place cannot afford to go abroad
- (b) With reference to the ~~XX~~ "Women's peace petition campaign", mentioned in para 1-b above : intelligence agencies here had documentary proof about the behind-the-scenes preparations for that campaign, before it even started, demonstrating the origin of this "unpolitical women's crusade" in the central secretariat of the S.E.D. in Berlin - but no use was made of this material
- (c) With reference to the "evacuation and peace treaty project", mentioned in para 1-d above : not only was nothing done to counter this not entirely unattractive (for Germans) offer, but THE NEW YORK TIMES, Internat. Air Edition, of 23 February even mentioned "the anxiety expressed by Western Military Government officials over the reception accorded the plan by some German politicians" and reported "doubt whether the anti-Communist parties in the West would be strong enough politically now or in the near future to quell the onslaught of the militantly organized Socialist Unity Party."

Points (b) and (c) in particular emphasize, in the opinion of this writer the need for early policy coordination among US agencies in Germany, if any political warfare activity shall not be defeated by statements or actions of other agencies.

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(Peace Offensive - p. 4)

5. It is well to bear in mind that although the Western Zones of Germany are not our target, all Germany despite zonal disruption, thinks and feels politically and psychologically as a whole. Any development that tends to make people in Western Germany turn away from the U.S., make them doubt our policies or our strength, pushes them towards an illusionary "neutrality between East and West", makes our task among the people east of the Iron Curtain even more difficult :

- a) it furnished ammunition for Soviet-Communist propaganda
- b) it diminishes the possibilities of using Western German political groups and communication media for our purposes
- c) it makes Germans on either side of the iron curtain less receptive.

6. In this connection, reference should also be made to the repeated, official and unofficial, often contradictory U.S. statements on German nationalism. This writer is not yet prepared to judge how much nationalism there is and how dangerous from the viewpoint of U.S. foreign policy it may become. But in any case, it appears highly desirable

- a) to distinguish in all public statements between the ~~reawakening~~ reawakening of German national feelings, along the lines of patriotism, national pride etc. which are common to all civilized nations - and excessive, aggressive nationalism of the Nazi and militarist types (two distinct elements which apparently have been frequently thrown together even in official US statements)
- b) to clarify U.S. policy in this matter (it does not ~~make~~ make much sense, for instance, to permit Nazi party members in responsible civil service and in key economic positions, while on the other hand castigating German nationalism in general and sweeping terms).

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