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Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : []
FROM : []
SUBJECT: Theodor SAEVECKE.

DATE: 15 July 1954

On 14 July SAEVECKE informed me of the following circumstances surrounding the current attacks on his person

On 1 July Dr. Ernst BRUECKNER, head of the SG, and SAEVECKE were first informed of the attack on SAEVECKE. On that date BRUECKNER was called to the Interior Ministry where he was informed by a Regierungsrat FRITZE of the Personnel Section of the criticism of SAEVECKE. BRUECKNER defended SAEVECKE, pointing out that the latter had not attempted to conceal his past when applying for employment with the BKA in 1950, and insisted that SAEVECKE also be informed of the charges against him and be provided with the opportunity to defend himself. As a result of BRUECKNER's attitude, SAEVECKE was then also called to the Ministry where FRITZE informed him that objections to SAEVECKE's employment had been raised on the basis of his former activity in Italy. The charges against SAEVECKE are

- 1) that he participated in the execution of Italian civilian hostages in MILAN, Italy;
- 2) that he participated in the persecution of Jews in Italy;
- 3) that he participated in the arrest and deportation of Italians;
- 4) that he participated in or at least tolerated the mistreatment of Italian prisoners who were under his supervision and control.

In conversation with FRITZE, and subsequently, SAEVECKE has determined that this attack was initiated some months ago when a member of the Italian Parliament, (fnu) MEBA, contacted the German Foreign Office, BONN, with some sort of a story concerning SAEVECKE's former activity in Italy. SAEVECKE does not know the details of MEBA's contact with AA personnel.

Later, in some manner unknown to SAEVECKE, he was denounced to the Interior Ministry. He states that he does not know whether or not the denunciation was passed to the IM by the AA, as a result of MEBA's contact with the AA, or whether there was a separate contact with the IM. At the end of June, RR FRITZE was sent by the IM to Italy to investigate the denunciation. FRITZE contacted and interviewed the following people concerning SAEVECKE's former activity in MILAN:

Consul Dr. (fnu) MATZKE, German Consul, MILAN,
Mgr (fnu) KREY, MILAN, (German National ?)
Mgr (fnu) Don BICCHIARAI, MILAN
Pastor (Pfarrer) (fnu) VABNITZ, MILAN (German National ?)
Dr. (fnu) KARTSLEB, MILAN (German National ?)

EXEMPTIONS Section 3 (f)
(2)(A) Privacy
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Dr. (fnu) MARTIN, MILAN (Austrian Commercial Attache ?)
(fnu) BENUZZI, MILAN (fomer confidant of SS Standartenfuehrer RAUFF)

According to SAEVECKE, FRITZE's interviews were limited to the foregoing and to two other persons who refused to identify themselves. FRITZE first contacted the German Consulate where he spoke to MATZKE and the latter then arranged the interviews with the others. FRITZE informed SAEVECKE that MATZKE stated: " Wir wollen gar nicht, dass er bestraft wird. Er soll nur aus dem Dienst entlassen werden. Sonst koennte es zu Schwierigkeiten betreffend die Beziehungen zu Italien kommen." Further, as told to SAEVECKE by FRITZE, the denunciations were not specifically detailed, i.e. SAEVECKE did such and such on such and such a day in the presence of this or that person, but of a generalized nature.

As a result of his interview with FRITZE, and at the suggestion of BRUECKNER, SAEVECKE, denying the accusations and demanding an investigation to clear his record, took leave as of 1 July at his own volition until such time as the matter is clarified. He is not suspended, in the official sense of the word, and to his knowledge no official action has been taken to initiate an official investigation. Following his interview with FRITZE, SAEVECKE prepared a statement in his own defense which he forwarded to FRITZE. He has given me a copy of the statement and I am attaching one copy hereto. At his request, it should not be discussed with German authorities nor should they be informed that a copy is in our possession.

SAEVECKE is not certain of the motivation behind the attack although he believes that it may be the result of his indirect participation in the so-called "PARRI trial" which occurred in Italy in the fall (November ?) of 1953. SAEVECKE's identity had been mentioned and publicized in Italy in connection with that trial as a result of an interview which he gave to a reporter interested in that trial on 17 Sep 1953. In this interview he defended PARRI, who had been accused of some collaboration with the German security police during the war, and SAEVECKE feels that his statements may have had considerable weight in influencing the court decision which amounted to a victory for PARRI. SAEVECKE believes that PARRI's opponents may have now chosen an attack on his past as the best means of revenging themselves for his defense of PARRI.

On the other hand, SAEVECKE also seems to feel that BENUZZI may be primarily responsible for the denunciations. He describes BENUZZI as a person of doubtful origin, a former member of the Italian OVRA (?), and as having been very close to RAUFF (ein Vertrauter von RAUFF). He suspects that BENUZZI may be attempting to whitewash RAUFF by painting SAEVECKE as having dominated RAUFF and being responsible for any reprehensible activity carried out in the area under RAUFF's jurisdiction.

SAEVECKE's statement, attached, seems to be lucid and clear and, if his denials are true, it will be difficult for any specific charges to be lodged against him. He has in his possession some recommendations from Italians who were acquainted with his activity in Italy, including, oddly enough, one from Don BICCHIARAI, and states that he is in a position to secure more.

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As far as his activity in Africa is concerned, SAEVECKE says that he did not participate in the deportation of Jews and that, as a matter of fact, to his knowledge no Jews were deported from Africa. He states however, that as a police Kriminalrat, SS Hauptsturmfuehrer (Rangangeglichen), he was detailed to the so-called "Kommando RAUFF" in TUNIS in early 1943. While under RAUFF's command in TUNIS he did participate in arrangements which were made for the commandeering of Jewish labor for the Wehrmacht. These arrangements were made on order of the Wehrmacht and in order to implement the Wehrmacht order SAEVECKE negotiated with the Council of the Jewish Gemeinde in TUNIS. As a result of these negotiations, Jews were selected by the Gemeinde for this labor. Those selected were either picked up by the Wehrmacht and transported to the work or themselves reported to the place of work. Force was not involved.

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