

AIR

EGS-A-6014

Chief of Station, Bonn

Att:  Chief, Berlin Operations Base

INFO: EE, COM, CADRAIN

GALL/Operational

0) CANLET - Evacuation Rumors

1. Without disclosing to CANLET that I had learned about his having brought to Bonn a report alleging that the Americans had been making preparations for an emergency evacuation of Berlin, I raised with him the general issue of so-called intelligence reports on American plans and actions on 1 July 1953.

2. I started off by mentioning to CANLET that I inferred from a talk with CANLET-2 that he had received reports indicating that the Americans, during the critical June days, had been taking specific measures, such as preparing Tempelhof for another Air lift and getting ready for another blockade. These rumors, when brought to my attention, had struck me as so ridiculous that I had brushed them off rather lightly. On second thought, however, I would like to be given some additional assurance that such reports, which I considered of "the cloacal variety", wouldn't fall into the wrong hands. I reminded him of the concern he recently expressed in connection with alleged Kampfgruppe activities during the riots and their being exposed to compromising disclosures. I further pointed out that I had been making it a practice to bring to his attention all reports suggesting clandestine meetings between ranking SPD and SED functionaries, before forwarding them with my comments, or relegating them to the wastepaper basket.

3. CANLET was noticeably embarrassed by the whole performance and assured me rather volubly that no report was leaving his office without his express approval. My only comment was that I trusted that in this particular instance this approval had not been forthcoming. He assured me that this had been the case and that no one besides him and CANLET-2 knew about the report. I heaved a sigh of relief and wound up the discussion by stating that his discretion in matters of this kind was very reassuring.

Date of origin: 2 July 1953

glp:bjt

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4. I need not emphasize that neither by work nor implication did I let on that I knew that the report in question had been given to [ ] and to the GPD. This, however, does not rule out that CANLET may have surmised that the story has leaked. At any rate, you will be on safe ground in denying to [ ] that I knew anything about the Bonn end of the story and in assuring him that it was CANLET-2 who leaked the story to me.

5. I, of course, realize that CANLET has told me a flat lie. There would be little advantage, however, in confronting him with the facts. I believe that in this particular case, a shot across the bow was more effective than calling his bluff. Besides, I used the favorable psychological climate to strip him of one of his best sources.

6. As far as the substance of the report is concerned, I need not emphasize that it is a complete fabrication. During the critical days we did, of course, a lot of conjecturing. In so doing, however, the possibility of another blockade, let alone of a Soviet invasion, was never once thrown into the debate. Neither [ ] nor I know of any measures taken which could be construed as battenning down our hatches. We shall make further checks in order to determine whether the story about CIC's lost agent is true.

7. May I again express our thanks for your timely coverage of events that have an immediate bearing on the Berlin situation. It would help considerably if, in passing this information to us, you could indicate what operational use if any we are permitted to make of it.

Approved by:

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