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Memo: PIRA-299

14 March 1947

TO : Washington

FROM : Rome, Italy

SUBJECT : Ferenc VAJTA - French Agent *red*

SOURCE : KILKENNY

EVALUATION: A-2

COUNTRY : Hungary/Italy/Austria

ORIGIN : Rome

REFERENCE : PIR-181, Para 18, 30(b); PIR-883, Para 12;
PIRA-52

1. Ferenc VAJTA, when he arrived in Rome in December 1946, contacted, among others, Father Tibor GALLUS, the then acting head of the Hungarian relief. *red* As GALLUS knew of VAJTA's background and record, he at first refused to maintain contact with him; but when VAJTA promised to provide help for the Hungarian refugees through his "high level Italian contacts", GALLUS decided to utilize his offer of assistance.
2. Source has known GALLUS for the past 15 years, and when he arrived in Rome the early part of March 1947, he phoned GALLUS for an appointment. When Source saw GALLUS, he was informed that VAJTA would like to see him to explain his past and present activities. Source knew VAJTA before the war in Budapest and Rome; in Rome, VAJTA had been a correspondent for the various Hungarian newspapers. *red*
3. GALLUS arranged the meeting between Source and VAJTA and they drove to Ostia, outside of Rome, for their conference. Before meeting Source, VAJTA and GALLUS had lunch with a Mr. PECORANI and a certain *red* SABATA. Those are VAJTA's main Italian contacts. PECORANI is known as the best friend of FERRARI of the Italian Ministry of Interior, who is in charge of control of foreigners. During the luncheon, the problem of the Hungarian refugees was discussed and both VAJTA and GALLUS were elated because they learned that this problem has been favorably solved. None of the Hungarian refugees will be forced to leave Italy. *red*
4. VAJTA told Source that he had been arrested in Austria in 1945, as the result of the denunciation of Karoly BOCHKOR. (Source's comment: At that time BOCHKOR was a voluntary informant for OSS in Austria. Many of the Hungarian Nazis and members of the former Hungarian government were arrested on information provided by BOCHKOR. BOCHKOR is a young Hungarian merchant who lived in Vienna during the war. Prior to that time he had been a student of Catholic theology in Budapest. At the present time, he makes the purchases for the Army PX gift shop in Vienna.)
5. VAJTA said that he was arrested first by the CIC and then confined in Dachau by the Seventh Army. In the fall of 1945, he escaped from Dachau with the aid of visiting British officers. For several weeks he lived as a manual laborer on a farm in Bavaria. From there he wanted to go to Paris where he had friends, among whom he mentioned a Monsieur De VIOUX, the relative of a former French diplomat to the Holy See. On his way to Paris, he stopped at Sankt Anton in the French Zone, Austria, to visit the Hapsburg Archduke Francis Joseph and his wife, Anna. While he was talking to the Archduke, Anna went to the Sures and denounced him. Upon leaving the Archduke's residence he was arrested by the French, taken to Innsbruck and treated very badly. From the prison, he wrote letters to De VIOUX and others, stating that he never had been a member of the Hungarian Nazi Party; that he had made mistakes, but he was a young man who had

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only fought Communism. He requested his friends to help him. After several weeks had passed, he was taken out of the prison and placed under custody in the Hotel Post, Innsbruck, and treated well. He was then contacted by a Capt. De BROUWON, Chief of the Bureau de Documentation, who told him the French service believed that he had not done anything detrimental. BROUWON then requested him to collaborate with the French Intelligence Service. This collaboration was for the purpose of intelligence among the Balkan people, censorship of letters, and formulation of political plans for Balkan refugee groups. (Source was of the opinion that VAJTA eventually became a paid employee of the Bureau de Documentation.)

6. VAJTA said his main aim was to create a unified Balkan anti-Bolshevistic front against the Soviets, but without any U.S. or British interference. He told Source that the people in the French Intelligence Service in Innsbruck and in Baden-Baden were extremely pleased whenever a mistake was made in U.S. policy in either Austria or Germany, resenting U.S. attempts to dominate the European scene.
7. During his stay in Innsbruck, VAJTA censored letters from Hungarian dissident diplomats in Paris written to officials in the Hungarian Government, among them BAKACH-BESZENTKI's. At that time, these diplomats were very eager to offer their services to the Hungarian Government and the F.I.S.
8. During this period, the whole French Service was under the influence of General BETHOUARD, French commander in Austria, who supported, with any means, the Hungarian and Austrian Monarchists.
9. When the brothers of Otto of Hapsburg came to Innsbruck early in 1946, VAJTA held several conferences with them, on behalf of the French. Also, when Otto arrived in Innsbruck, the F.I.S. gave orders to VAJTA to make contact with him. VAJTA did not want to make the contact and he told the French that if he did he would "leave the French service and join Otto completely". VAJTA told Source that he did not want to contact Otto as a French agent.
10. VAJTA stated he was so involved with the Hapsburg family and the Austrian Monarchists - Count Fritz SPOLEBERG and a certain (fn) ANDRSEPTA (?), Monarchist leaders in Innsbruck - that with all these Monarchists and Hapsburgs leaving Austria, he was arrested again (formally) by the French. However, he was informed that this arrest was only a political maneuver. After seventeen days confinement, he was released and he immediately resumed his work in the same capacity and a dinner was given him, at which General BETHOUARD and others attended.
11. During his stay in Innsbruck and his employment with the French, VAJTA told Source that CIC Austria made every effort to have him extradited to the American Zone, Austria. He was shown the requests sent by the Americans and also the French replies. The last reply was signed by General BETHOUARD, upon the decision of the French Foreign Office to refuse the extradition. (Source's comment: At no time did VAJTA mention that OSS, which was requesting his extradition.)
12. VAJTA said that the French asked him about the location of the Hungarian gold, but he could not inform them because he had never had anything to do with the Hungarian treasures.
13. In the early fall of 1946, VAJTA was sent to Paris and the French Riviera to recuperate from an illness which was aggravated by his seventeen day confinement in prison. When he returned to Austria, he was given the assignment of organizing two B.Doc. bureaus for Balkan affairs, in the French Zone of Germany. He accomplished this assignment, but he did not disclose to Source the nature of his help nor the names of his collaborators. These two bureaus are still operating.
14. Later, VAJTA was sent to Rome to contact Hungarians and amplify the French plan among them and other Balkan refugees. He told Source that he has a completely

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free hand in his activity. When he came to Rome, VAJTA contacted British circles. The reason, he said, is that the British are interested in the Balkan problems in the same manner as the French, and cooperation between the British and French concerning Hungary and other Balkan countries is very possible. He stated he had seen British and French plans for future political orientation.

15. VAJTA claimed that he has a "group" of Hungarians, which consists of deputies of the former Hungarian Parliament, who are now living in Germany and Austria. The group is divided into two sections, one political and the other military. The military is under General Ferenc FARKAS, who is living in Landshut, in the American Zone of Germany. Recently, General GLAY, with whom FARKAS has the most "excellent" contacts, permitted him to proceed with his work of organizing the former Hungarian military people. The second section, the political, is headed by VAJTA. One of his chief collaborators was Janos STORPAI-STITZ. Because he considered STITZ a stupid man, VAJTA, in order to get rid of him, assigned him as liaison to Otto of Hapsburg, and STITZ is allegedly in the United States.
16. The group, according to VAJTA, does not agree entirely with Otto and the Hungarian Monarchists. However, if Otto will succeed in saving Hungary, then VAJTA's group will accept him. The aid of VAJTA's group is a federate central Europe, and for this purpose he is personally in constant contact with MACEK and his secretary, Branko PESEC, Milko KREK, Karol SIDOR, and many other individuals from the Internarium Group. He considers the Internarium a British sponsored project and Polish managed. He does not agree entirely with the Internarium because the role Hungary would have to play would be very difficult. VAJTA stated former Arrowcrossers have been excluded from his group and the Internarium. For this reason Colonel NADAS is no longer with the Internarium.
17. VAJTA said his group and the Internarium are opposing Otto's tactics, particularly the tone and policy of his Hungarian newspaper (Kronika) in the United States. This paper will become a daily very soon, with a world-wide distribution. VAJTA declared the reason why he does not agree with the views of the newspaper is that Otto's policy is too conservative and anti-Semitic.
18. A further aim of VAJTA's activities is to obtain the release of the thirty-six thousand Hungarian DP's in Germany from the refugee camps and organize an emigration for them to the South American countries. For his own activities, he asserted, he had the complete backing of the French Intelligence, and although he is not a French citizen, he is in possession of the best French travel documents. Furthermore, the type of service in which he was working was entirely anti-Communist, and since the French Parliament has been elected for five years, they (the French Intelligence Service) are formulating plans for the next five years. The French knew that the Surete was largely penetrated by the Communists, but the "purification" is now almost completed.
19. VAJTA bitterly criticized American policy in Austria and Germany, especially because the Americans were the only nation which extradited Hungarian war and political criminals; the French and British refused.
20. The reason for his extradition from Italy because of a slur on the Italian Army he supposedly made to the Germans, VAJTA claimed, is not true. The real reason was that he made a ridiculous remark about MUSSOLINI, which was intercepted by the Italians. He has seen the records to this effect.
21. COMMENT: The above was stimulated from a request by JKLL for any information on Subject. JKLL showed us a telegram from London quoting Lisbon that VAJTA was working in Rome and attempting to revive, if not control, Internarium. The cable also stated that VAJTA was living with a certain IPESABATA. According to JKLL, the latter is known to have been an Italian agent in Cairo who was stirring up anti-British propaganda in 1937.

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