

25 Nov

FROM: Information Control, OSO

COUNTRY: Spain

SUBJECT: Ferenc VAJTA

DATE OF
INFORMATION: 1943 - 1947

EVALUATION: B-2

- Reference : a) DB-2922 of 31 January 1947;
b) DB-4407 of 16 May 1947;
c) Enclosures nos. 1 and 2 to a Madrid Embassy Dispatch,
dated 3 November 1947.

1. A memorandum of 3 November 1947 to Mr. Paul T. Culbertson, Charge d'Affaires at Madrid, from [redacted] describes some proposals made by Mr. Ferenc VAJTA and Mr. Marjan SZUMLAKOWSKI for the establishment in Madrid of an "Eastern European anti-communist center".

2. This office has copious records of Ferenc VAJTA, which are summarized here in view of the Madrid Embassy's recent contact with him and of their statement that he is contemplating a trip to the United States.

3. Ferenc VAJTA, whose real name is reported to be VLCSEK, was born at Debrecen, Hungary, in 1914. He studied at the Sorbonne and at Geneva, and later spent several years in Rome as correspondent of the Hungarian paper "Uj Magyarasag" until expelled in 1941 for his criticism of the Italian Army. While in Italy, VAJTA was in the service of both the Hungarian intelligence service and the German Abwehr. He is also reported to have worked for the Hungarian service, at dates not specified, in Belgrade and Istanbul. In 1941-'42 he was the Berlin correspondent of "Uj Magyarasag" and Cultural Attache to the Hungarian Legation at Berlin. Back in Budapest in 1943, he founded and edited the pro-Nazi weekly "Orszag". He was a member of the "Arrow Cross". Described as "a creature of MECSEK and ANTAL" (two principal political agents of the Germans in Hungary), his task was to destroy pro-American or pro-British sympathies in the upper and middle class readers of his paper; his comments were often verbatim translations of official German propaganda, and he made scurrilous attacks on President Roosevelt and other Allied leaders. VAJTA left Hungary in March 1944, and in October of that year, became Hungarian Consul General at Vienna. He was taken into custody by OSS on 7 June 1945 and subsequently released to 7th Army custody. He escaped from detention at Dachau and began to work for the French intelligence service at Innsbruck,

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

-2-

Austria; among the services he rendered to the French was leading them to 6,000 kilos of buried gold. At this same period, VAJTA was in contact with General JUIN.

In August 1946 there was founded at Innsbruck the "Hungarian Popular Front", composed of General FARKAS, Jozsef NYIRO, Count Mihaly TELEKY, Lajos LIPTAY, Elemer KORANI and VAJTA, which group was admitted officially into the "Intermarium".

In June 1946 VAJTA had gone clandestinely to northern Italy, still working for the French. By September 1946 he was in Rome. There he claimed to be a Hapsburg follower and boasted of his contact with De GAULLE. From Rome he made at least one trip to Paris. He had several contacts in the Vatican, including Msgr. Zoltan NYISTOR, head of the Vatican Press Office. At one time VAJTA was briefly detained by the Allied authorities.

In Madrid in February 1947, VAJTA approached the Spanish Foreign Office with the statement that he represented the anti-Soviet movement "Intermarium", which, he said, was to provide an army to fight on the side of England and France against the U.S.S.R. The Foreign Office approved his plans and put him in touch with the Cardinal Primate of Spain, the Archbishop of Toledo, to seek financial aid. VAJTA's ostensible purpose in Madrid, however, was to handle Hungarian refugee matters. He had a large sum of money at his disposal, which one source believed had come from the Vatican.

Returning to Rome about March 1947, VAJTA became increasingly active in Hungarian circles. He was in touch with Father Tibor GALLUS, acting head of Hungarian relief at the Vatican, and was also in touch with the "Intermarium" group. He had established a tile factory, purchased a restaurant, and written a book called "Save Hungary". He bitterly criticized American policy in Austria and Germany.

In April 1947 VAJTA was arrested by the Rome Questura at the request of the Communist Hungarian Charge; the Budapest Government requested his extradition as a War Criminal. VAJTA was eventually released by the Italians, but was told to "disappear". The police kept his documents for some time, and he was hidden by the Jesuits until he recovered his papers. On 1 September 1947 the Italian Foreign Ministry issued an extradition order against VAJTA, but a young American CIC officer, acting unofficially, helped him to get away on the S. S. "Ciudad de Valencia" sailing from Genoa to Barcelona. VAJTA arrived in Madrid on 25 September.

While in Rome, VAJTA had attempted to form an organization to be

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP

-3-

known as the "Unione Continentale" or "Center of Studies for the Balkans and Central Europe", whose purpose would be to assemble emigre anti-communist elements and, incidentally, to replace the "Intermarium". During the summer of 1947, VAJTA wrote and had published a book called "La Confederazione Danubiana", in which he summarized the ideas underlying his post-war activity. According to his own statements, the British and French have offered VAJTA assignments in the "Europa Union", an organization sponsored by those two countries, but he claims to have refused the offers.

VAJTA is married (to a second wife) and has one child, a son of eight years.

Source: WSMA-19
of 7 Nov. 47

State
cc. Madrid

See also PIRA-15-65
8 Oct. 47

DB-6820
inv. 5-Dec.