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CO, Hq, 56th CIC Group, WSAKMR,
APO 194, Attn: Mr. Doenau, CS Division

30 November 1955

T. C. Hughes, OCA

WENGERS, Erich, aka WOLTERS, Eduard

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2001 2007

1. Reference is made to previous correspondence concerning SUBJECT, employed by the Bundesamt fuer Verfassungsschutz in a "freier Mitarbeiter" capacity as a CR case officer, who was previously reported as one of the BfV employees likely to transfer from the BfV to service with the Military Counter Intelligence Service (MAD) to be established within the German Armed Forces. Particular reference is made to my memo of 27 June 1955, file W-55-1468, SUBJECT as above.

2. On 7 Nov 1955 SUBJECT informed me that if the BfV could arrange for his employment in an official civil service status, rather than continuing his present status as a "freier Mitarbeiter", he would remain with the BfV and would not seek transfer to the Defense Ministry for service with MAD. He said that he had discussed this matter with both BfV Vice President RADKE and BfV Department II head Richard GERKEN, both of whom told him that an effort would be made to secure the approval of the Federal Ministry of Interior to his official employment with the BfV. In reply to my query as to the employment grade to which he felt that he was entitled, WENGERS said that he believed he would be entitled to a grade equivalent to that commissioned rank which he could expect to receive from MAD, that of major. He said the equivalent civil grade was that of Regierungsrat, a grade which is that of a government official as distinguished from employee under the German civil service system. WENGERS said, however, that the BfV officials with whom he had discussed the matter had indicated to him that they could not initially request the Interior Ministry to approve his employment in the grade of Regierungsrat, that they would attempt to secure approval for his employment in the highest employee grade, TD-5, and later seek to secure his promotion to the grade of Regierungsrat.

3. On the same date Richard GERKEN confirmed to me that the BfV would attempt to obtain ministerial approval for the employment of WENGERS. GERKEN also said that if this could be arranged he intended to install WENGERS as head of the CR (II/G) section of his department to replace Dr. Walter STRAUSS who has been serving as the II/G section head since Hans PIETSCH was removed from the position as a result of his conduct of the Eily KINDENHANN case. GERKEN, who had previously indicated to me his dissatisfaction with STRAUSS, repeated his previous statements that STRAUSS is "impossible", incompetent and inefficient. GERKEN said that he had made a private agreement with Dr. Wilhelm LUDWIG, head of the BfV's Security Department IV, to provide for transfer of STRAUSS to Department IV in exchange for Dr. Heinrich HILDEBRANDT, a former member of BfV Department II who was transferred to Department IV some time ago. According to GERKEN, LUDWIG is dissatisfied with HILDEBRANDT and has agreed to take STRAUSS from GERKEN in exchange for HILDEBRANDT, thus opening the II/G section head position for WENGERS if the Interior Ministry approves his employment.

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4. Subsequently, BfV Vice President RADKE also confirmed that the BfV would attempt to secure approval of the Ministry for official employment of WENIGERS. RADKE said that he had discussed the case on a preliminary basis with the Ministry and that Ministry officials had indicated that they might make an exception in WENIGERS' case.

5. As previously reported, WENIGERS, despite his five-year service with the BfV as a "freier Mitarbeiter", has never previously been put up by the BfV for official employment because of his former service with the SD, service which would have made him objectionable to the Allies, particularly to the French, since WENIGERS allegedly served with the SD in France during World War II and was reputedly listed by the French as a wanted war criminal following the war. Aware of the general Allied position on the subject of employment by the BfV of former SD and Gestapo personnel, a position which until 3 May 1955 often resulted in Allied rejection of the candidacy of persons with such background for BfV employment, the Ministry has not permitted the BfV to officially employ such persons. However, even during the period prior to German attainment of sovereignty, a period in which the Allies had the right to reject BfV employment candidates to whom they objected, Interior Ministry State Secretary von LEX stated that the Ministry reserved the right to approve for BfV employment in exceptional cases persons of such background who were found to be of good character and not to have been guilty of any war crimes.

6. RADKE said that WENIGERS' services were invaluable to the BfV and, if he were to transfer to MAD, could not easily be replaced. For this reason, he said, the BfV was prepared to make a rigorous effort to obtain approval for his official employment. RADKE indicated that the main obstacle to an early approval of WENIGERS' employment was the question of what the attitude of the French would be and the problem of convincing the Interior Ministry, which in the person of von LEX experienced a difficult and embarrassing situation with the former Allied Directors of Intelligence in connection with the BfV candidacy of Walter ODEWALD (see previous correspondence on the ODEWALD case), a former SS and, possibly, Gestapo member, that there would be no disagreeable repercussions from the French to WENIGERS' employment. RADKE said that in order to ascertain the French position he first intended to ask the French liaison officer to the BfV, M. Paul DUCHENE, what if any were the French charges against WENIGERS and whether any such charges could be backed up by evidence or whether they simply stemmed from the fact that WENIGERS was a member of the SD serving in France. RADKE said that if DUCHENE's reply is not unfavorable to WENIGERS he will then inform DUCHENE that the BfV is contemplating official employment of WENIGERS and ask DUCHENE what the attitude of the French would be in the matter. If DUCHENE indicates that the French will not strenuously object, RADKE said that he will so advise the Ministry and is of the opinion that the Ministry will then approve WENIGERS' employment.

7. For your information.

Control copy to:

CS-Division

Paul-WENIGERS aka WOLTERS
Paul-STRAUSS
Paul-HILDEBRANDT

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