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Executive Registry

10-6829

25 August 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: [] Executive Officer

SUBJECT: Former Waffen-SS General Karl Wolff

1. This memorandum is for information only.

2. The former Waffen-SS General Karl Wolff took the initiative in March 1945 in arranging the surrender of German and Fascist forces in North Italy through negotiations with the Director. The Director prepared an affidavit to this effect dated 21 May 1949. Wolff was interned by American military authorities from 1945 to 1949, when he was released. Charges that Wolff had committed war crimes were raised but eventually dropped. Further information on Wolff is available in extensive files on him in the Director's office.

3. On 20 May 1958 Wolff visited the American Embassy in Bonn and asked to see either [] or [] both officers of this organization. Neither was available, but Wolff was received by another organization officer. He produced a copy of the Director's affidavit to establish bona fides and stated the reason for his visit: he has a daughter married to an American and residing in the United States. He also has a son residing in the United States for one year to learn the language and people. His children have invited Wolff to visit them late this summer and Wolff desired to do so. Before requesting a visa and making preparations for the trip, however, he desired reassurance that his background would not preclude the granting of a visa and that his request would not cause general embarrassment.

4. Our officer discussed the matter with the Bonn Embassy Consular Section, which advised the visa would be granted if Wolff had not been convicted of war crimes. Our officer so advised him on 21 May. Wolff applied for a visa on 22 May. The Duesseldorf Consulate having jurisdiction referred the matter to State Department Headquarters for decision on 11 July.

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5. EE Division has monitored the progress of the case through State Department Headquarters channels by means of normal liaison. The question of possible commission of war crimes has caused some delay within State. State informed our liaison officer on 22 August, however, that this question has now been dropped. The case has been referred to the German desk within State for certain routine checks prior to approving the visa request. It thus appears that Wolff's visa request will be granted and that he will visit the United States later this year.

6. At no point in the discussions with Wolff did he mention an intention to visit the Director while in this country.


Acting Chief
Eastern European Division

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