

HEADQUARTERS  
2677TH REGIMENT  
OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES (PROVISIONAL)  
APO 512, U.S. ARMY

16 December 1944

SUBJECT: Vatican Contacts  
TO : Chief SI  
FROM : Esolt Aradi, Hungarian Section Caserta

Reference our conversation on above subject:

1. To gain the confidence of the Vatican circles, two conditions must be met:

- a) Do not ask them for help, support, or backing.
- b) Be an independent-minded Catholic.

If one could offer support instead of asking for it, it would be much easier. In this particular case my position could be considered as very good. Considering these facts I believe that the initial plan would be to visit all of my old contacts, one by one.

2. In conversations with Della Torre and Alessandrini I would raise the question of the "Catholic press" which is one of the main problems which interest Mons. Montini. His old idea visualized the arrangement of a permanent bureau for the Catholic press in Rome and to build from the Nuncios offices a network of radio, press, etc. attaches to form an independent, not clergymen, group of semi-diplomats.

3. It would be quite natural for me to begin discussion of this project with Della Torre and Montini, sponsoring the idea and helping to build up the Rome bureau. I could conduct the discussions in such a manner that Montini, Alessandrini, and Della Torre would ask that I collaborate.

4. It would not matter if they knew or surmised that I am in contact with U.S. authorities or agencies but it would be harmful should they discover that the Vatican is also a subject of my activity. On the contrary, a collaboration from a personal and Hungarian National point of view with the U.S. would, in their eyes, be unsuspecting, natural, and would preserve for me the important unchanged independent position. Later, it would not be difficult to contact the National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service (Washington) whose Central European and Balkan correspondent I was until 1940. I could then re-establish the old relationship between this news agency and myself. This would be the basis and justification of my personal penetration of the Vatican.

5. My approach to Alessandrini would be much more difficult. Whatever I offer must be done in such a way that his conscience could remain clear in regard to not working against the religion and the Pope. The first contacts certainly would be of only political interest and concern only Balkan, Central European and general Vatican policy subjects. Anything else would come later.

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6. Through several unfortunate events a number of Hungarians know that I am with the OSS. For the purposes of security of the proposed task, it is highly important that this situation be remedied. Since the OSS Rome office is located outside the city, the danger of being seen there is negative. As stated before, it does not matter if it is known that I am in contact with U.S. personnel but there is no reason that any Hungarian in Rome should know of this contact.

Zsolt Aradi