

*Orig. sent*

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

9 April 1945

TO: Capt. D. De Bardeleben  
FROM: R. Carter Nicholas  
SUBJECT: Aradi - National Catholic Welfare Conference News Service Cover

REVIEW OF FACTS

*Aradi, Zolt*

Zsolt Aradi has been acting as consultant in the Hungarian Section of Colonel Chapin's Central European Division for some months past. Maddox has also been using him to maintain certain contacts in the Vatican where Aradi is widely acquainted. Hitherto the residence of Aradi's family in Rome has been sufficient to explain his presence but Maddox feels he needs a cover to explain his interest in political affairs. To that end he sent on 10 February 1945 a letter to Shepardson asking that we deliver to Mr. Hall of the NCWC, or to its Director if Mr. Hall is no longer there, a letter from Aradi which was enclosed. Maddox suggested that the letter be taken in person by someone who could explain that it was brought over by a traveller by whom an answer could be sent; that it might be explained that Aradi had once been an advisor at AFHQ on Hungarian matters; that although the bearer did not know Aradi personally he had heard of him as a man of reputable character with extensive contacts in Rome; and that the bearer should consult with Joyce for further details. A copy of the letter from Aradi to Mr. Hall proposed for delivery is attached. In it Aradi says among other things, "there is no difficulty in sending cables and pouch reports in the quickest way."

On reading the 10 February letter, Mr. Shepardson commented, "I do not warm up to WPM's suggestion." You talked to Joyce and I believe, were unimpressed. X-2 formally notified SI that the man was a threat to the security of Maddox' office. On examination into the question the X-2 objections appeared to be limited only to access to files at Caserta, and Aradi did not have access to such files.

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*Wash-51-Pers-17  
Sold to 1. B. 11*

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DATE 2008

A cable was sent to Maddox about X-2's objections, suggesting that the Vatican picture was getting cluttered and asking whether Maddox insisted on pushing the proposed cover arrangement. Maddox replied that he definitely hoped that we would arrange the NCWC cover.

At this point the matter was referred to me by Penrose, not for cover clearance (as the proposed cover arrangement was not approved by the Branch) but for comment. After conference with you and Shepardson I went to New York and discussed the proposal with Dolbeare who in turn discussed it with Hughes. Dolbeare replied that the NCWC "is an organization definitely controlled by the Bishops of this country, the head of which, Bishop Mooney, is an extremely conscientious and meticulous administrator, and follows every detail of the work of the organization. To make use of this organization for cover in the way proposed, would contain seeds for a scandal of serious proportions. If it is proposed to go any further, I would urgently advise consulting with the General, who is, himself, familiar with these matters and would, I believe, insist on the very greatest prudence. I may add that the draft letter to Mr. Hall contains one or two statements which seem to me wholly incautious, such as 'there is no difficulty in sending cables and pouch reports in the quickest way.' Incidentally, the NCWC, at present, makes use of Pucci, and supposedly, they shortly will have the services of Mr. Max Jordan, formerly of NBC." Dolbeare requested that I consider his comments as a personal rather than a formal statement.

Hughes commented "under no circumstances do I believe the proposed letter should be delivered to the NCWC". Under the circumstances Mr. Shepardson did not wish to recommend the approval of the cover arrangement to Cheston. I advised Shepardson that I thought Cheston would turn it down if it was presented. On 31 March Shepardson cabled Maddox that the cover could not be arranged.

On 4 April Maddox replied asking for a reconsideration and stating that a simple delivery of the letter from the subject was all that was required.

Shepardson referred the question to Penrose, you and me, with you in charge. He asked that it be reconsidered with Mayer and Dolbeare and that the value of the "Crabbe" reports be studied. Penrose talked to me Saturday, asking that a cable along the lines of the attached proposed

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cable be sent to Maddox, and that a letter also be sent him (Maddox). Since you are in charge, I should think you should write the letter. This memorandum may help you.

My own conclusions are:

1. The letter in its present form should not be delivered because of Hughes' and Dolbear's opinion, and Penrose's agreement.
2. If the arrangement is to be made at all, Aradi should write another letter through the ordinary mails but Maddox should see it to make sure it is not indiscreet. OSS should have no other connection with the matter.
3. There is some question as to whether Cheston's and the General's approval should not be had as even Maddox' knowledge of the letter is close to a cover arrangement.

R.C.N.

Attachments