

Allen Dulles and Nazi Secrets

Out of the Bern night walked Allen Dulles—into a deepening story of wartime intrigue.....Page 13

DEEP INTRIGUE

Dulles Coup On Secret Documents

(Top men of the Kennedy administration represent the full political flowering of the World War II veteran's generation. But one man, America's top intelligence agent, serves President Kennedy after missions for seven other presidents. He is an older man, yet he played a vivid role in World War II.)

**ALLEN W. DULLES, DIRECTOR, CENTRAL
INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**

A few minutes before midnight, Aug. 23, 1945, Allen Dulles climbed the steps to the apartment of a bachelor friend and colleague, Gerald M. Mayer, in Bern, Switzerland.

Dulles, then 50, a tall man with somewhat stooped shoulders and who wore spectacles and usually smoked a heavy pipe, was a familiar figure to Swiss police for he was head of the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in Bern and thus the top Yankee spy in that city of wartime spies.

Spies of both the Axis and the Western democracies were tolerated in neutral Switzerland, but this night Dulles took special precautions to make sure he would not be followed.

A few hours before he had been electrified by an unexpected offer of secret documents from a stranger. It could be a trap—or it could be the greatest intelligence treasure of the war.

On the face of it, the proposition had been incredible, even for a man accustomed to dealing in the bizarre and the shadowy.

Kennedy's Men of War

By Fletcher Knebel

(Of The Tribune's Washington Bureau)

Secret Dispatches

The United States, in brief, had been offered condensations and, in some cases, exact texts of top-secret dispatches flowing in code between the German foreign ministry in Berlin and some 50 Nazi embassies and legations scattered over the world.

There also were promises that the transfer of these documents could continue indefinitely, opening up the possibility that the Allies could know every major Axis move before it was made.

The circumstances were almost too simple to be credited.

Dignified Prussian

That morning a tall, dignified Prussian, who said he had fled the Nazi regime and was a citizen of a Latin American country, had walked into the office of Mayer, who

was head of the U. S. Office of War Information in Bern.

The stranger said a friend had access in Berlin to almost all foreign ministry dispatches and wished to make them available to the Allies because he hated Adolf Hitler and the other Nazi masters of Germany.

Mayer, all skeptic, nevertheless called Dulles.

When the OSS agent arrived, the two Americans quizzed the stranger at length.

Envelope

The former German drew from his pocket an envelope and took out three dispatches in German. They purported to be messages from Nazi ambassadors in France, Turkey and Czechoslovakia to Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.

Dulles told the stranger candidly that he suspected he was an agent provocateur who would either (1) let the Americans have the papers and then denounce them to Swiss police as spies or (2) let them radio the contents of the papers to Washington and then monitor the broadcast as a method of breaking the U. S. code.

The stranger admitted the justice of the accusation, but implored the two men to meet again that night with his friend, the man from Berlin who got the documents.

The clandestine appointment was kept at midnight in Mayer's apartment.

When Dulles walked in, he found Mayer, the tall a short, stocky man who wore a black leather jacket

and who was as nervous and taut as a cat about to spring.

Suspicious

Mayer passed around highballs, but though all drank, the atmosphere was heavy with suspicion. After preliminary sparring, the short, stocky German beckoned Dulles and Mayer to a table.

He broke a red swastika seal on a large brown envelope and poured out the contents. There were no less than 186 documents, some mere notes, but others verbatim texts of foreign office dispatches.

Dulles, who spoke and read German with great ease, riffled through the papers, reading a paragraph here and another there.

The four men talked until almost dawn of Aug. 24.

References

What Dulles wanted particularly was references outside Germany. The little man from Berlin supplied them in abundance.

He also went over his own life in detail.

He said he was an assistant to Dr. Karl Ritter, the German army's liaison chief in the foreign office. Over Ritter's desk passed a duplicate, not of every embassy dispatch, but of every one which concerned the army, in wartime a high percentage.

He said that for almost two years he had tried to

get to Switzerland to make contact with the Allies, but his every effort was thwarted. Finally a courier took sick and he was permitted to carry the diplomatic pouch to Bern as a replacement courier.

How could he take the papers without being apprehended?

It was his job, he said, to brief the dispatches for Dr. Ritter since they were too voluminous for the head man to study in detail.

Dulles and the two Germans left the apartment separately after hours of talk. The courier from Berlin returned to his hotel.

Two Things

Dulles did two things at once.

He radioed Washington from the secret OSS transmitter in Bern for an extensive check of every name, place and relative supplied by the courier.

He then spent hours poring over the documents. Many were weeks old and, to his amazement, they chronicled exactly many major moves the Germans had made since.

In due time, back came the OSS report from Washington. Every fact checked. Only then did Dulles place the dispatches on the air to Washington in code.

He was convinced now this was no code-breaking trap.

Code Names

For the next 20 months, until the Third Reich crumbled in flames, Dulles received a steady flow of documents from Berlin.

The little Allied benefactor now had his own code name, "George Wood," and Dulles gave code names to each batch of new messages.

The first were "Alpha," the second "Beta" and so on through the Greek alphabet. OSS officers later referred to the whole intelligence coup as the "Kappa papers."

Every month shipments came to Dulles regularly every month.

Usually he got them from a Swiss mail drop.

The Bern agent, became friendly with the regular Berlin - Bern diplomatic courier, told him he had a girl friend in Switzerland and asked him to mail her letters upon arrival in Switzerland.

The "girl friend" was Dulles and the most highly secret German foreign dispatches came to him through the ordinary mails. Miraculously the courier never suspected.

Once, about a year later, George Wood came to Switzerland himself, bringing papers stored in a false bottom of the diplomatic dispatch case.

Via Sweden

Some of the information was slipped out via Sweden, where an OSS agent in Stockholm, alerted by Dulles, transmitted the papers to Washington.

Some of the biggest German "secrets" 343-44-45 were known to the Allies within days, thanks to the Kappa papers.

As a sample, George Wood once sent the complete Japanese fleet order of battle. This became a vital clue to U. S. navy intelligence officers in confirming the fact that they had broken a key Japanese code in the Pacific.

The Wood dispatches revealed that Franco was secretly shipping tungsten to Germany, told which German cities were being paralyzed by bombing and, most important of all, gave Gen. Dwight Eisenhower's officers an accurate breakdown of the German forces which would oppose them in Normandy after the D-Day landings.

Within the small command circle in Washington, the Kappa papers were a tremendous hit.

Roosevelt Elated

President Roosevelt, elated and intrigued by the secret treasure, was briefed on each new batch and often read them himself.

Many of the papers enabled him to keep a few ally, Sir Winston Churchill, who was fed by the veteran

and brilliant British intelligence service.

After the war, Dulles was decorated twice, for secret negotiations leading to the German surrender in Italy in late April and for helping to pin-point the German buzz-bomb launching sites on the German coast.

Small Group

Because of post-war intelligence ramifications, the secret of the Kappa papers was kept within a small group.

Not until 1950 was anything written about it and then, since Dulles declined to confirm the story, few believed the yarn.

The entire file of Kappa papers, still in government hands, covers thousands of German foreign dispatches.

Aside from a little expense money, Dulles and his men never paid George Wood a cent for his efforts, although he was feted when he slipped over the border into Switzerland with a final packet of documents just before the Nazi collapse.

Still in Germany

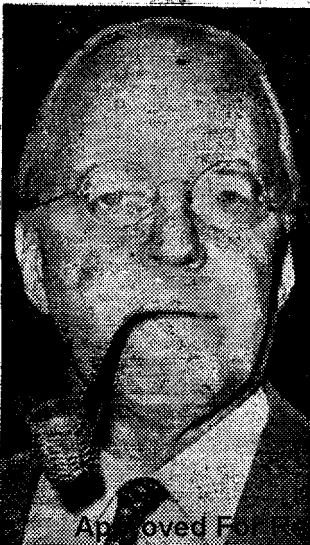
George Wood still lives in Germany under his real name. Dulles has seen him many times since the war.

Some day, if the two men could collaborate and join memories of the operation, it would make one of the most fascinating and factual accounts in the history of international espionage.

Mayer also is still alive, a businessman who lives in Paris, Bern and Geneva.

(After the war Dulles returned to law practice in New York. President Truman appointed him deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] in 1951. Two years later President Eisenhower made him the CIA director as Dulles' brother, the late John Foster, was made secretary of state. President Kennedy, a few days after his election, asked Dulles to remain as intelligence chief. He is still on the job.)

The next article in this series, which will appear the day after tomorrow, will tell of the wartime experiences of Pierre Salinger.



ALLEN DULLES