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XARZ-29030
5 JANUARY, 1945

POUCH #173

To: SAINT, Washington
From: SAINT, London (B.S. 113)
Subject: Enemy Intelligence Activities in Turkey and the Middle East, November, 1944
Source: British

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20/1/45

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ENEMY INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES IN TURKEY AND THE MIDDLE EAST

NOVEMBER 1944

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PART A.

1. The Germans do not appear to have reaped much benefit from the elaborate stay-behind ~~network~~ preparations which they made in Turkey. Several of the networks were well and truly penetrated by the Turks even before the diplomatic rupture took place and during last month at least one group is known to have been arrested and other stations have been warned either to close down entirely or to curtail their activities drastically for security reasons.

2. The sum total of intelligence reaching the Germans from sources in Turkey is extremely small. The communications which still pass between the interned intelligence officials and Germany are concerned almost exclusively with internal worries and appeals for ~~everything~~ everything possible to be done to accelerate the exchange of diplomatic officials.

3. Nevertheless there are signs that the Germans have not entirely abandoned the possibility of penetrating the Middle East. A party of paratroopers was despatched to Iraq from Vienna at the end of November and enquiries concerning weather conditions which are known to have reached German agents in the Middle East from their controlling station in Vienna may possibly preface further expeditions to this area.

4. Nothing sensational has come to notice during the month in the activities of the Japanese Intelligence Service in Turkey. They are proceeding very cautiously with plans for building up an intelligence organization in the Middle East and seem most reluctant to undertake any major operation without the approval of Tokyo and without taking all possible steps to ensure its ultimate success.

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PART B.

GERMAN INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES

(4) TURKEY

5. The interned German intelligence officials in Turkey are known to have two principal W/T links with Germany operating from their places of internment. The S.D. officials Bruno WOLF and ~~Hell~~ ²⁰¹⁻²²⁰¹⁰ ~~Hell~~ in the Summer Embassy at Therapia are in touch with Berlin. The operator of their set is probably Erich KROHNE, formerly employed by SOHNKERS. The officials detained in the German Consulate, who include such prominent ex-Wehr figures as Erich PFRIFFER, Thomas LUPPE and Walter HIEB, are in contact with Vienna. It is believed that their W/T set is not sufficiently powerful to report to Berlin.

6. Communication between the two interned establishments is maintained through the German Hospital and at least one case is reported of a "patient" from the Consulate seeking to be admitted to the hospital for the express purpose of communicating with Bruno WOLF.

7. There is considerable evidence that the morale of the internees is deteriorating and that there is fear of defection and betrayals. In particular, Dr. Kurt ZÄHRINGER, formerly head of Miss Marine who is at Therapia, is believed by his fellow detainees to be responsible for the increased suspicion of them by the Turkish officials which it was feared might lead to a search of the Embassy buildings. The possibility of such a search gave rise to anxiety concerning their W/T transmitter which was illicitly continuing to operate, and it was considered essential that its location should be changed.

8. Berlin have been urged to do their utmost to effect a speedy exchange between Turkish and German diplomats before discontent becomes even more widespread. Complaints were made that, in negotiating with the Swiss on this matter, the Consul-General, ~~PEAROWSKI~~ had sought to differentiate between real diplomats and persons working under diplomatic cover. The latter included such prominent S.D. officials as Bruno WOLF and ~~Andolf ROSEN~~ and appeals were made to Berlin that no exchange would be made without safe conduct for all. The German Government is believed now to have begun negotiations through Sweden and according to one rumour a Swedish ship is about to leave Gothenberg for Istanbul, there to collect the diplomats and take them for exchange to some Iberian port.

9. One of the (very) minor compensations which the S.D. hope to gain as a result of the exchange is that a Turkish consular official at present in Vienna, named Ismail ~~ORTAY~~, is pledged to co-operate with the Germans and is apparently to work for them in Istanbul on his return to Turkey.

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10. Reports going back to Germany from German official channels in Turkey are concerned almost exclusively with the internees' own difficulties and include only a very small proportion of intelligence matter. This is also of course due partly to the difficulty of maintaining contact with their sources since they have become suspicious of all means of communication with the outside world even including the Turkish Doctor, QUINCKE, who is Chief Physician at the German Hospital.

✓ 11. It is unlikely that the Germans are obtaining much intelligence from independent stay-behind agents. For security reasons one stay-behind station which had four W/T sets was recently ordered to close down. Another was ordered to proceed with extreme caution. The reason for this warning was the arrest of an Italian ^{agent} and his accomplices in Syria, Radkooy and in the Hatay for possessing and working a secret transmitter, said to have been given to the group by a German courier who used to travel between Istanbul and Iskenderun. Any remaining stay-behind W/T sets still operating to German territory are almost certainly being worked under the control of the Turkish Intelligence Service.

12. A further blow was suffered by the German Intelligence Service on the 16th November with the expulsion into Syria at Allied request of Willi GORZ who had represented KLAPP's Dienststelle in Istanbul since June 1943. He was one of the very few experienced German agents still operating in Turkey and had been enabled to continue his activities because he possessed a Hungarian passport and operated his set from the Hungarian Legation. Even before GORZ's departure, however, it is believed that the change of government in Hungary had caused the Germans to look out for another shelter for the W/T set, possibly in the Japanese Embassy.

(11) THE MIDDLE EAST.

13. German agents in Syria and Egypt are still being encouraged by their masters in Vienna to expect long-promised funds, though the possibility of effecting payments is becoming more and more remote and Istanbul has warned Vienna that their co-operation in this matter can no longer be counted upon.

14. Notwithstanding the loss of all reasonably accessible bases, attempts are still being made by the S.D. to penetrate the Middle East. In the early hours of 28th November a party of Iraqis was dropped by parachute at Tel Afar near Mosul, having flown from Vienna in a four-engined aircraft in nine hours. The party was equipped with W/T, guns and ammunition, and a Zeiss camera, and from preliminary interrogation it appears that the object of the expedition was to form bands of irregulars to be expanded into a rebellion against the Iraqi government and the British in Palestine. The Germans were to be informed by W/T when further arms were required. It is thought that as in the case of the parachutists captured near Jericho last month, the ex-Mufti, Grand Mufti may have had some hand in organising this expedition.

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15. Of the Jericha party of five agents, two are still at large. The other three have been interrogated and it appears that the expedition was originally planned by the Mufti to support the Arabs against the Jews by supplying arms and that the S.D. later reinforced the party, which was equipped with sabotage material and several high-grade secret writing methods.

16. The two repatriates from the S.S. ZANZAM who, as reported in para. 14 of last month's report, were known to have been trained as W/T agents in Germany have both confessed their missions. One, who was trained in Bremen, was given instructions to collect a W/T set in Cairo and then proceed to Alexandria and commence operations there three months after his arrival in Egypt. He was to concentrate primarily on naval intelligence. He was also trained in three types of secret writing. The other man was trained in the S.D. school at Lebnitz and was instructed to collect his W/T set through a man who would meet him in Martini's bar in Cairo.

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PART C.

JAPANESE INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES.

17. The Japanese in Turkey are proceeding cautiously with their plans for obtaining information from the Middle East. They appear unwilling to embark on any major operation without obtaining approval from a higher authority, either in Berlin or Tokyo, a fact which has considerably slowed down the momentum which marked the early stages of their independent work against the Middle East. They suspect in some cases that the hand of the Allies, either British or American, may lie behind the proposals made to them by some of the former German agents who have contacted them since the German/Turkish rupture. They are taking elaborate precautions to assure themselves of the agents' bona fides and in at least one case have uttered dire threats of what happens to people who try to double-cross the Japanese.

18. One agent who is still on probation has been asked if he could arrange to open accounts in his own name in Cairo, Basra, Baghdad and Teheran. The details of these transactions are extremely involved as the money to be paid into the accounts, which in the case of Teheran was to be in the neighbourhood of £20,000 sterling, was to come from Kabul and the Iberian peninsula and was for payment of Japanese agents not in the countries of the Middle East but in Turkestan, Baluchistan and India.

19. By the nature of questionnaires given to agents, it is constantly emphasized that the main interest of the Japanese in Turkey continues to be in Egypt, particularly the Canal area and in Persia, where it is apparently considered that the greatest possibility exists of obtaining information about Russian intentions. They appear, however, reluctant to provide W/T sets for the rapid transmission of information about ~~these areas~~ from these areas and up to the present have relied upon couriers. In connection with their interests in the Canal area, it is perhaps significant that latterly the Germans have also been paying marked attention to this area region and have expressed approval of reports concerning the despatch of groups to the Far East which they have recently received from agents in Egypt.

20. There is some evidence that the Japanese consider the Dashnak party to be of great potential value to them and there is reason to believe that some information on the Middle and Far East has already reached them through Dashnak channels. They are also very interested in the fact that one of the agents who has recently offered them his services is believed to be connected with an Armenian Secret Intelligence Society which the Japanese think might be usefully exploited, presumably in connection with their work against Russia.

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