

Att A to EGM 54025, 23 Mar 61  
Contact Report, meeting  
with BERNHARDT 15 March 1961

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(COMMENT: When BERNHARDT first mentioned the case, he claimed that the French agent had committed suicide. [ ] said that if the agent really had been murdered by the UB, it was no doubt the same case that [ ] had heard about in general detail during his recent home leave. BERNHARDT then said that he believed [ ] was right and that the agent had been murdered; although newspaper reporting on the incident had listed the cause of death as suicide, he now recalled the French had been definite in saying their double agent had been murdered.)

12. FRIESEN. BERNHARDT talked about FRIESEN at various times and at considerable length during the meeting. He made it quite clear that he has had his eye on FRIESEN for a considerable period of time - at least since some point in 1957. BERNHARDT noted that there were obvious flaws in FRIESEN's background which had come to the attention of UPHILL and which had necessitated a thorough and quiet check-out. BERNHARDT indicated that he had still been working on the FRIESEN case before the [ ] information had made his investigation take on such added significance. BERNHARDT indicated he had FRIESEN better tapped than we probably imagined and said that if there was anything wrong with FRIESEN, he thought there was a reasonably good chance to get to the bottom of it. BERNHARDT noted in general that he thought FRIESEN was a dangerous man because he was an inordinately skillful manipulator and elicitor, was much sharper than most of the people around him, and was the sort of guy who could really, without being too obvious, get his hands on almost anything. BERNHARDT noted that even UTILITY had succumbed to FRIESEN's charm and that FRIESEN, unlike almost any other officer of his level in UPHILL, for many years had had the privilege of personally briefing UTILITY on especially interesting and sensitive Soviet matters. BERNHARDT noted that in most other cases the "Abteilungsleiter" would do the briefing with someone of FRIESEN's level present, if at all, sitting in the background to provide facts upon request. BERNHARDT said that in FRIESEN's many personal contacts with UTILITY, he no doubt had picked up a great deal of general background information, including information of UTILITY's intelligence and counterespionage philosophy, in the course of UTILITY's ruminations on specific cases being discussed. In the course of the meeting, the following specific points on FRIESEN came up:

a. [ ] gave BERNHARDT the results of our BDC check on FRIESEN. BERNHARDT did not appear to be in the least interested and it seemed apparent that he had obtained this information long ago.

b. BERNHARDT mentioned that a surveillance of FRIESEN was particularly tough because FRIESEN, in his present job, knew practically every UPHILL surveillant in the field as well as members of the "Hauskapelle". BERNHARDT said it would be disastrous to surveil an officer such as FRIESEN with personnel he would immediately recognize.

c. BERNHARDT went on to say that he was particularly interested in FRIESEN's choice of a country residence in Oberadorf, where FRIESEN spent all of his weekends. BERNHARDT noted that if anything was wrong with FRIESEN, he was nappily located to carry out contacts with the East with relative simplicity since he was located practically on the Austrian border.

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BERNHARDT said that he was so interested in FRIESEN's weekend activities that BERNHARDT had selected one of his very good and special security types (whom FRIESEN has never seen officially) who had obtained quarters in Oberadorf. BERNHARDT said his man's location was such that he could easily surveil FRIESEN's house and BERNHARDT thought get a pretty good reading on just how FRIESEN spent his weekends - how often he wandered into Austria, etc.

d. BERNHARDT said he also had enlisted the help of GARNOLD, Chief of the Dienststelle handling index matters, in an effort to keep an eye on FRIESEN. BERNHARDT said GARNOLD was a good and reliable friend of his and said it had been necessary only to tell GARNOLD that BERNHARDT was worried about FRIESEN's security. BERNHARDT said GARNOLD, thus far, had come up with the fact that FRIESEN had access to an apartment in Cologne located on Zuelpicher Platz. BERNHARDT said the apartment apparently belonged to an unknown friend of FRIESEN's and FRIESEN had his own key to the apartment. BERNHARDT said GARNOLD also had reported that FRIESEN quietly was making noises in the field about the raw deal his old friend Dr. KLAUSNER was getting from UPHILL. FRIESEN had mentioned to several people that he had called KLAUSNER over the Christmas holidays to express his sympathy. BERNHARDT said this was slightly odd since until recently FRIESEN had openly despised KLAUSNER.

e. BERNHARDT said his best line on FRIESEN was provided by one of BERNHARDT's special sources, who now works on index matters under GARNOLD. BERNHARDT said the officer in question got the index job more or less fortuitously over the objections of FRIESEN, although FRIESEN recently has warmed up considerably as far as BERNHARDT's friend is concerned. BERNHARDT said he had selected his man some time ago to play into FRIESEN because he has an attractive background from FRIESEN's point of view, because he is an extremely skillful elicitor and con man, and because BERNHARDT trusts him completely. BERNHARDT said his man had joined the SD at a very early age. BERNHARDT said his man also had - on BERNHARDT's instructions - secretly joined the German Communist Party years ago. BERNHARDT said he had thought at the time that the man's KPD membership might come in handy, and he thought perhaps the time had come.

f. BERNHARDT said that during a three-and-half-hour discussion between his source and FRIESEN at the Munich Bundesbahn on 28 February, FRIESEN had let down his hair and become extremely friendly with BERNHARDT's source. FRIESEN, in the course of this discussion, had mentioned numerous facts that were unknown to BERNHARDT. Among other things FRIESEN mentioned that he has a small photo lab in the cellar of his house at Oberadorf; at one point during the war his intelligence assignment was in a section called Aufklaerung Schweiz - apparently working on Rote Kapelle matters; during the time in 1947 when FRIESEN was working for the British, he made various trips on their behalf to the DDR and on one occasion was picked up by the VoPos; in 1948 the British ordered FRIESEN to travel no more to the DDR because they had learned from one of their sources that he would be arrested - however FRIESEN made several other trips; later when FRIESEN was working for the LfV

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in Duesseldorf he was involved in some sort of raid on a KPD installation; FRIESEN claimed that between October 1960 and February 1961 he saved 3,000 DM on his "Dienstreisenkosten"; FRIESEN talked at some length about the raw deal persons like himself and BERNHARDT's friend with SD backgrounds got in present-day Germany; etc.

g. BERNHARDT said that although he was not sure of the timing, he expected to stage a low-key provocation against FRIESEN. BERNHARDT said he was planning to have his source reveal in great confidence and strictly off the record to FRIESEN the fact of his illegal KPD membership; BERNHARDT's man would do this while requesting advice from FRIESEN as a friend and former fellow SD officer, with considerable intelligence experience; BERNHARDT's friend would explain he was becoming increasingly concerned that his party membership would be discovered by UPHILL with disastrous consequences. BERNHARDT said he would be very interested in seeing how FRIESEN reacted to this revelation and whether or not the revelation to FRIESEN would be followed by an approach from the East to BERNHARDT's source.

h. As regards FRIESEN's house in Oberdorf, BERNHARDT said he had done as much checking as possible within obvious security limitations and had been able to piece together information indicating that the financing of the house had been such that it logically could have been managed without any significant outside income. BERNHARDT said he also had determined that several persons were living in the house on a sub-lease basis and thereby providing FRIESEN with funds that could be used to pay off the mortgage.

i. BERNHARDT said he had confided in STURM, to some extent his doubts about the security of FRIESEN. BERNHARDT said that STURM's initial reaction had been one of skepticism, but after BERNHARDT had related various aspects of FRIESEN's background, especially in light of  information about the UJDRACO trip, STURM had decided there must be something really wrong with FRIESEN. BERNHARDT said that when STURM had reached this point, he was eager to transfer FRIESEN immediately to some relatively harmless field assignment. BERNHARDT said that among other things, STURM was very concerned about FRIESEN's knowledge of KUBARK activities, especially in Berlin. BERNHARDT said he had worked hard to convince STURM that transferring FRIESEN could have disastrous consequences and really would solve nothing. BERNHARDT said STURM finally had agreed and BERNHARDT hoped we too agreed with his thinking.  said our thoughts on the matter were completely in line with BERNHARDT's thinking.

j. BERNHARDT concluded his comments on FRIESEN by saying that he wanted us to know that, as should be clear from his various comments, he held FRIESEN under extreme suspicion. BERNHARDT added that in spite of this, as far as he was concerned, one had to be fair and proceed on the basis that FRIESEN was innocent until proved to be guilty.

13. CHEHMANN. BERNHARDT said that it was difficult to come to grips with the problem posed by HERMANN; and noted that the only significant clue was the fact that he was a member of the Index Staff when it was founded and also one of the relatively few officers who presumably could have passed the defection instruction on to the East. BERNHARDT made a quick review of HERMANN's background and stressed

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