

SECURITY INFORMATION

NAME **GEHLEN, Rheinhardt (General)**

CASE No.
DATE 27 August 1953

NATIONALITY **German**
PRESENT POSITION **Chief, Intelligence**
Organization
LOCATION
GEN. OCCUPATION **Intelligence Agent**

BIRTHDATE
BIRTHPLACE
RACE
SEX **Male**
MARITAL STATUS
NAME OF SPOUSE

EDUCATION

CHILDREN
RELIGION
POLITICAL AFFILIATION

LANGUAGES

ATTITUDE TOWARDS: U.S.

HONORS

U.S.S.R.

REMARKS:

Former General, Rheinhardt GEHLEN, who served in Hitler's General Staff as Chief of the Department of Foreign Affairs reportedly currently heads a secret organization in West Germany which evaluates intelligence from the East. When the Hitler armies collapsed in 1945, Gehlen is said to have escaped westward with most of the secret files of his department. He allegedly kept in his control many of the top secret lists of German agents planted in the Soviet Union and the eastern neighbor states which subsequently became Soviet satellites. He supposedly had the key to the espionage network built by Canaris, Minler and Schellenberg. The Americans reportedly took him prisoner but not for long because American intelligence chiefs reportedly became very impressed by his ideas and his documentation which he was able to put at their disposal. They are said to have set him up in an office and permitted him to pick a small staff of ex-Wehr officers (Gen. Canaris's Intelligence Service) most of whom were equipped with good anti-Nazi records. Within a few weeks Gehlen was providing excellent reports on Soviet military and political activities in the eastern zone and was subsequently permitted to expand his staff and his scope of activities. As he expanded, however, many Nazis, SS men and SD men crept into his organization where they enjoyed full protection.

Today Gehlen's espionage organization is said to have agents in all parts of the world. The Americans reportedly supply the funds which amounts to \$3,500,000.00 a year. The former General is said to be able to multiply this sum to many times its original value through clever business deals. It is believed that he has already succeeded in piling up a substantial reserve which would enable him to carry on independently should the Americans cease to support him. The material collected by Gehlen is said to be of first class value. 1/ The interpretation of it, done by his

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(General)

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skills. Analysts at their headquarters in Munich has impressed not only the Americans but the British and the French as well. A Navy intelligence report of November 1948 states that Gehlen's organization maintains 15 to 16 outer listening posts along the borders of the Russian occupied zone while the organization itself is composed of between 30 and 40 General Staff officers and 50 to 60 other officers. 2/

The danger of Gehlen's organization lies in the future. It has already become an immense underground power in Germany and has key men in all German Government offices, in the police, newspapers, radio stations, etc. His organization has even penetrated the Adenauer Government's Office for the Protection of the Constitution (deemed the secret police office). 1/ Gehlen has been suggested for a position with this office, according to several reports. 3/ 4/ In any event for the present, his network is only using its underground power to expand its influence still farther, get its member in strategic positions, and cover ex-Nazis and SS men from any persecution.

Gehlen himself is reportedly not ambitious for political power. (He is however listed as a member of the Bruderschaft) 5/ His hope supposedly is to become the intelligence chief of the European Army. The many ex-Nazis and ex-officers high up in his machine, however, are regarded as ambitious and representing the real danger. 1/

SOURCES:

- 1/ DAILY EXPRESS, 17 March 1952, Unclassified.
- 2/ Navy, Comnavforger, 350-8-48, 15 November 1948 (B-3), Secret.
- 3/ State, Bonn Report, 7 April 1950, Confidential.
- 4/ State, Ol Bonn Memo to Ol Frankfurt, 14 April 1950, Secret.
- 5/ State, BI files, Confidential.

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