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MICROFILMED 23 April 1953

TO : Chief, EE
FROM : Chief of Base, Vienna, Attn: C
SUBJECT: GENERAL— Operational/GROOVY/TOPHOXY
SPECIFIC— Reinterrogation of Dr. Wilhelm HOETTL

JAN 19 1962

DOCUMENT MICROFILM SERVICE

REFERENCE: EAVA-2251

Info: Fran
Salz
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Forwarded herewith are copies of the report of reinterrogation of Dr. Wilhelm HOETTL on 4 April 1953. The remaining reports on the confinement and interrogation of HOETTL are being processed and will be forwarded as they are finished.

Attach: As described above
(In triplicate)

20 April 1953

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20 April 1953

INTERROGATION OF DR. WILHELM HOETTL: Reaction to Solitary Confinement

1. Circumstances. A second interrogation of Dr. Wilhelm HOETTL was conducted on 3 April 1953 in the cell where he was confined near Salzburg. From approximately 0600 hours on 28 March 1953 until sometime the 30th of March 1953, HOETTL was held in solitary confinement in an uncomfortable cell adapted from a garage. On 30 March 1953, he was moved to another solitary cell adapted from a wine cellar under a villa near Salzburg. This cell contained no windows and was generally chilly and uncomfortable, though by no means unbearably so. During the period of confinement HOETTL had been permitted to have a typewriter and paper in his cell and had been encouraged to write down any information which, as he was told, might be helpful to himself or to his interrogators.

2. HOETTL's Complaints. HOETTL complained to the interrogator that the cell in which he had been confined was uninhabitable and that he had in effect been submitted to torture. He stated that on the previous night he had had a heart attack and that he had been afraid that he would die and that his attempts to get assistance by beating on the door had brought no response from his jailers. The interrogator stated that as a matter of fact HOETTL was probably in more healthy circumstances than he would be if he were out exercising on the streets. Although the room was somewhat cooler than those in which he would normally live, he was still able to rest as much as he wished and this rest could hardly be said to injure his heart. The interrogator added that if HOETTL should die suddenly during the night while in confinement it would present no particular problem since disposal of a cold body is not much more difficult than disposal of a warm one. The interrogator added that he had no particular wish that HOETTL should die.

3. Response to Questions

a) HOETTL maintained under questioning that he had nothing to add concerning his relations with Kurt PONGER or with any other of the personalities mentioned during previous interrogations. The interrogator covered a certain amount of old ground in attempting to develop a new line of questioning concerning the PONGER case but learned nothing new from HOETTL about his activity in this case.

b) Gmundener Freunde B. On being quizzed again concerning the identity or identities of the mysterious Gmundener Freunde B who had been mentioned in the letter from Harry EAST (see previous reports), HOETTL continued to maintain that he did not know to whom EAST referred. After much pressure on this point, HOETTL finally said that the only B he could think of would be Dr. Anton BOHM.

c) Relations with US Agencies. The interrogator queried HOETTL at some length on his understanding of the present organization of the United States Intelligence. It was clear from HOETTL's answers that HOETTL believes that the situation prevailing in 1947-48 continues in American Intelligence: rivalry and intrigue between TIC and SAC, rivalry and intrigue between G-1 and G-2 in Austria (evidently HOETTL had learned something of local rivalries as they existed in 1947 and 1948 particularly in respect to G-2 Linz), rivalry and intrigue between United States Army and the Department of State.

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rivalry and intrigue among all other US intelligence agencies. It is unclear to the interrogator just how HOETTL mapped out this pattern of intrigue in his own mind but evidently he hoped to be able eventually to solve all his own problems by applying directly to Mr. Allan Welch Dulles. The interrogator is inclined to take 5-to-11 odds that this curious group of opinions, combined with HOETTL's natural inclination towards intrigue and his general cast of mind, which suggests the early stages of schizophrenia, motivates him to withhold information which in his mind would cause one American agency to be hostile to him because of his activities on behalf of another American agency. There is also some indication that he had attempted to penetrate or at least to gather information on intelligence offices which he took to be American-controlled and which he assumed to have something to do with Mr. Dulles; he would naturally be most reticent about this activity because it could be interpreted by Mr. Dulles, whom he believes to take a direct personal interest in local operations, as hostile.

4. HOETTL's Proposals

a) Johann SANITZER. Always the operator, HOETTL took occasion during this interrogation to propose that he be employed by United States Intelligence by establishing contact with Johann SANITZER, a former double agent operator of the German intelligence service who is now thought to be active on behalf of the Soviets. HOETTL proposed to reestablish contact with SANITZER's wife, or to attempt to make a connection with SANITZER through Dr. Othmar TRENNER, Dr. Karl ASNER, or Inga Karl KOWARIK. The interrogator permitted HOETTL to expatiate at sufficient length to determine that HOETTL does not in fact know very much about SANITZER, either in the present or in the past. It is noteworthy that in a written memorandum which HOETTL had prepared on his typewriter before the interrogation containing the same proposal, he was unable to spell SANITZER's name correctly. (He spelled it SARNITZER). The interrogator then told HOETTL that he obviously did not know very much about the case and would not be qualified to operate in such a capacity, even if we were to change our entire orientation and decide that he could be trusted with such an assignment.

b) Double Agent Proposal. HOETTL then suggested that he might be employed to establish contact with the Soviet intelligence office which had operated VERBER and PONGER. When the interrogator asked whether HOETTL really believed that after having been arrested and interrogated by the Americans he would be accepted by Soviet intelligence in Vienna as a reliable person, HOETTL explained that he did not intend himself to travel to Vienna or to establish direct contact but that he thought perhaps by mail to PONGER's wife he might establish an interest in Soviet minds which would cause them to send somebody to contact him. All readers of this report will doubtless be overwhelmed by relief to be told that the interrogator did not accept HOETTL's offer.

5. Future Plans

a) After this re-interrogation of HOETTL it was decided that a press release would be prepared implicating HOETTL in the VERBER-PONGER case and that this press release would be made public if concurrence was received from the Department of Justice in Washington.

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2) Release. It was decided that HOETTL would be released from confinement two days after the press release had been given out. The two-day lapse would ensure that our version of the story would appear first in the newspapers so that no reporter would be able to check with HOETTL before printing his story.

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