

OFFICIAL DISPATCH

VIENNA

DISPATCH NO.: MAVA-2049

CLASSIFICATION

DATE: 1 November 1948

TO : Chief, Foreign Branch M

Attention:

FROM : Chief of Station, Vienna

SUBJECT: Difficulties encountered in burial of W/T Sets

REF :

The attached memorandum from dated 25 October 1948, subject above, is forwarded for your information.

Attachment

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

DOCUMENT NO. _____

NO CHANGE IN CLASS

DECLASSIFIED

CLASS. CHANGE TO: TS *2011*

NEXT REVIEW DATE: _____

AUTH: HR 19-2 JUN 4 1991

DATE: _____

REVIEWER:

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CLASSIFICATION

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MEMORANDUM

VIENNA

Attachment to MAV-2049

NO.: **VSM/NIL/709**

CLASSIFICATION

TO : **C**

DATE: **25 October 1948**

FROM : **C**

SUBJECT : **Difficulties encountered in Burial of W/T Sets**

REF :

NO. **11**
PR. CHANGE TO CLASS
 DECLASSIFIED
CLASS. CHANGED BY **TS S. S.**
NEXT REVIEW DATE: **11**
AUTH: HR 70-Y
DATE: **1 JUN 1968** REVIEWERS

A. The W/T sets themselves:

1. Of the ten W/T transmitter and receiver sets sent to this station, only one was ready for immediate disposal. All units of this set had been wrapped in waxed cloth and could be considered absolutely water-proof; no apparent effort had been made to water-proof the remaining nine sets and some difficulty was encountered preparing the units for disposal. In the boxes containing spare parts, antennas, etc., plio-film Thompson-Submachine Gun bags were found; these bags were used as an inner moisture proof cover for the sets. After many trials it was decided to put the entire set composed of three units (transmitter, receiver, and power-pack) into a 5-gallon lard tin and to solder the tin shut. The sets were consequently removed from their swivard carrying cases and repacked in the lard cans.

2. Although these lard-cans are heavy, unwieldy packages it is felt that they are an improvement over the original suitcase type packing. The suitcases although portable, seemed to have a demoralizing affect upon agents and would-be W/T operators. Besides, the suitcases did not fit into standard rucksacks and therefore the portability of the W/T set was limited. The 5-gallon lard can fits a rucksack well, and if discovered by an inquisitive policeman searching a traveller, a sealed lard-can might be passed off as containing lard or some other feedstuff, whereas a small, heavy suitcase would immediately excite suspicion. It is felt by this case officer that in the event of hostilities, immediate travel restrictions will be imposed by the Soviets, and all travellers (and even pedestrians within the city) will be subject to frequent searchings and controls; if such a lard-can were discovered chances are that it would be confiscated and not opened on the spot, thus offering the agent a chance to get away.

3. The 5-gallon lard-can is not accepted as the ultimate in cunning concealment of W/T transmitters. It is suggested by this case officer that Washington attempt to build the separate units of the sets into small, compact water-proof containers that can be disguised as food, oil or even paint cans. These smaller units could be transported individually with ease and could be more readily concealed.

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B. Concealment of V/T transmitters:

1. Three complete V/T sets were given to trained V/T operators controlled by this case officer; two sets were concealed by one operator south of Vienna in the Soviet Zone and detailed charts of the locations were submitted. The third was buried by the case officer and [] and the location subsequently shown to the operator. Although detailed charts on the locations of these three sets have been submitted by this case officer, it is believed that no attempt should be made to locate the sets should the agents be "knocked out". In this event the sets and their locations should be considered "blown" and highly dangerous; it would not take much time for the Soviets, once knowing the location of a buried set, to mine or booby-trap the area.

2. With reference to the concealment of two further sets by this case officer and [], it is pointed out that although six Districts of the city of Vienna are controlled by the US Army it was difficult to find reasonable burial locations. No suitable locations were found within the built-up area of the city. The parks of Vienna are small, well cared for formal gardens in which it would be impossible to conceal a radio; the bomb-damaged areas, ordinarily excellent places of concealment, are rapidly being cleaned up; some thought was given to hiding radios in the walls of buildings occupied by U. S. or friendly personnel, but the idea was given up when it was realized that these buildings in the event of hostilities, would be undoubtedly occupied by either the Soviets or the local Communists.

3. It was finally decided to bury the sets in the wooded area that surrounds the Western suburbs. There again difficulty was encountered in finding locations that were accessible, easy to describe and at the same time isolated enough to permit digging without discovery by the many Austrians who seem to have little more to do than roam the woods with their families collecting wood, berries, mushrooms or just walking. Several locations were examined by [] and this case officer; among them were monuments, bridges, road-intersections, power-pylons, etc.; these easily recognized land marks proved in the main unsuitable for two reasons: 1) either there was no place to conceal a V/T transmitter except by burial and the ground was too hard for quick digging using infantry entrenching tools, or (2) there was no suitable cover to mask our activities and the future activities of an agent eventually examining the set. Two locations were finally decided upon that fulfilled the basic requirements: good concealment and in an area easily found. Burial was done during very bad weather when the possibility of interference and discovery was at a minimum. The case officer and [] were surprised to find that the quick excavation of a hole 2 feet by 2 feet by 3 feet in solid, rocky ground using entrenching tools entail a lot more work than thought possible. There was also the problem of disposing with the loose earth; this was solved by shovelling the soil directly on to a tarpaulin and later dragging the tarpaulin a safe distance away and scattering the remaining earth in the underbrush.

4. Since burial the locations have been revisited and this case officer would like to state that in all instances little or no trace of digging can be found.