

SECRET

XX-9639

IR (030/8/64/2)

KOPKOW, HORST

Supplement to notes on the Espionage Organization "Rote Kapelle"
activity in Belgium and France.

It only became possible to penetrate the SOVIET "Rote Kapelle" Organization in Germany by means of the Belgian sector of the Organization. The head of this section was a Russian Captain called Kent. This man had to go from Belgium to Berlin in order to exchange information on procedure (Wireless programme and code) with Luftwaffen-Offizier Schulze-Boysen whereby the latter was in a position to send coded messages from Berlin to Brussels from where they could be transmitted to Moscow. Kent conversed with a number of other persons among whom was a Finn in a commission business which had concluded trade contracts with the OT and the Wehrmacht. The "net proceeds" went straight to the Soviet Intelligence Service which was working in conjunction with a certain Gilbert in Paris. Whilst Kent was the so-called sub-leader of the organization Gilbert played the role of Leader for all West European territories. Gilbert was in direct W/T contact with Moscow just as Kent was. They were attached to the Soviet Military Intelligence and not the NKWD. In both instances, turned W/T agents, under the code names of "Mars" and "Marianne", were operated from Marseilles and Paris respectively by Stapo organization against Moscow. This was carried on for 1½ years, that is to say right up to the very last. These operations gave an interesting inside view into the Soviets aims, especially in France, particularly as they were not only of a military nature but also of a political one. If necessary I can give specified details about this. Kent himself was taken back to Germany and Gilbert escaped whilst walking with a Stapo Official in Paris and was caught again.

Further details about the Soviet Espionage Organization "Rote Kapelle"
in France and Belgium.

The penetration into the "Rote Kapelle" movement in Belgium was only possible through the technical radio plotting by Orpo Supervision Forces, of a Soviet station in Brussels. On raiding the Station, Hermann Wenzel who had been known since 1933 as a very active Communist Official was arrested. He was a good wireless signaller and also member of a Soviet Intelligence Group in Belgium. After "turning" him the "game" with the NKWD Intelligence Service was continued. He was given more trust as the "game" went on so that finally he succeeded in escaping. His trace was later picked up again in Holland but he was not caught.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCES METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2000 2006

SECRET

13 NOV 45
XX-9639
200-6-1-76-2

SECRET

- 2 -

Wenzel doubtlessly ran one of the main Soviet Intelligence Service transmitting stations in Holland, where he worked with a number of other persons, amongst which as far as I can remember, was a certain "Gouluce" (?) who likewise continually was able to avoid arrest.

On rounding up the Wenzel Group in Belgium in 1942 the Gestapo came across another Soviet Espionage movement which used Wenzel's station to transmit its information to the Soviet Union. Some Soviet Agents were arrested in the Belgian bathing resort Spa, as a result of which the "Petit-Chef" of the Belgian Organization was later arrested. "Kent" came from Leningrad and had been trained for the Soviet Intelligence Service since childhood, having visited several Leningrad Intelligence Schools. In contrast to Wenzel, "Kent" was active with Military Intelligence and for years he had been installed in a big Leningrad Hotel. He was a Lieutenant in the Soviet Military Intelligence Service but during the course of the "game" he was promoted Captain. His closest collaborator was the Soviet student Jeffrimow who was living in Brussels as a Finnish subject, possessing Finnish papers. "Kent" ran an import and export business in Brussels called "Simexco" which was entered in the Belgian Trade Register in the normal manner and which concluded commission business on a large scale with the Todt Organization and Wehrmacht establishments. Trade relations also reached mainly to France where "Kent's" "boss", the so-called "Grand-chef" of the whole Soviet Espionage Organization in the West, lived. The Belgian Group also came under his jurisdiction during his stay in Belgium. Kent possessed false papers in the name of Vincent Sierra which alleged him to be a Uruguayan subject. The firm "Simexco" was a pure "cover firm" of the Soviet Intelligence Service whose main aim was to avoid the difficult transfer of currency from Russia to Belgium, and to earn the money necessary to finance the Intelligence machine on the spot. In that way it was possible by means of the legal trading business to get permission without undue difficulties from the existing authorities, to travel backwards and forwards and moreover contact circles (OT and Wehrmacht) who were able to give in conversation the best information about their fields of activity. "Kent" was led to understand that he had to take part in a pleasure trip to the English Channel and bring back military information which the Soviet Intelligence Service thought to be extraordinarily important. It concerned the German Channel Coast defenses under construction at that time.

Through this firm Kent was able to go to Germany without difficulty. He had received the instruction from his "bosses" (Soviet Military Intelligence Service) to go to Germany by any means whatsoever, meet Lieutenant Schulze-Boysen in Berlin and hand over to him new Code and Cipher material as well as wireless communication detailed documents. Kent carried out this mission and actually met Schulze-Boysen in Berlin who personally gave him extensive "treason" material. Schulze-Boysen was head of a section in the Attache Group of the Luftwaffe HQ Staff which belonged to the Air Ministry. In his position and with his contacts, already described, he was able to give all the latest information. At their Berlin meeting Kent and Schulze-Boysen discussed the radio transmission of espionage material from the Berlin Group to Brussels from whence it could be sent on to Moscow.

SECRET

SECRET

- 3 -

As far as I can remember three "Gegenspiele" were started by Germany after the rounding up of the Belgian-Russian Espionage System. These "games" did not meet with the required success; that is to say, they did not lead up to the discovery and penetration of further connections of the Espionage Organization in the West.

"Kent" was continually in contact with the "Grand-Chef" in Paris, who when later arrested, turned out to be the Soviet Russian Trepper alias Jean Gilbert. He was chief of the French Group but at the same time had the right of inspection over the Belgian Group. Trepper who came from Galacia, had come into contact with the Soviet Intelligence Service during early youth, visited several schools and held the rank of Captain in the Red Army. He was a personality in the truest sense of the word who understood how to contact numbers of people including wide intellectual circles in France of who he made use in his intelligence work. Gilbert was also "turned" by the Germans but he escaped in summer 1943 whilst taking a walk in Paris with an official of the Special Commission. From that moment onwards the Gestapo directed all its force on "Kent" in the "games" it was playing with Moscow. One day "Kent" received the order to go to Paris and at a later date the order to go to Marseilles where he had to fit up a Transmitting Station for the Soviet Intelligence Service with Moscow. The "Funkgegenspiel" from Marseilles under the cover name of "Mars" and the one from Paris under the cover name of "Marianne". One of the most important bits of information obtained from the Soviet Intelligence service resulting from the Paris Gegenspiel "Marianne" was the exposure of the name of "Solja" a Russian agent for many years who lived in Paris and with whom "Kent" had to cooperate from now on. "Solja" had to send his news communications in France to Moscow by a new transmitter which was to be erected. "Kent" received the order from the Sipo to maintain his communications with "Solja", from whom he derived important information for the Gestapo. I remember a French Captain who was in close connection with "Solja" and who was prepared to give information from French Military circles. This took place regularly, especially concerning French defense works. I recall among other things that the French Captain obtained the defense plan of Cherbourg Harbour which were passed on to "Solja" who then sent them on to "Kent" so that they finally reached the Sipo. Thus, valuable military information acquired from this communication was prevented from reaching Moscow. The demands of the Soviet Intelligence Service through these French "games" were principally of a military nature. I remember clearly that they wanted to know at any cost which new SS-Units were being formed in France as they were undoubtedly mainly interested in the presence of German armour in the West. These facts were really released by the German Military Authorities but numerous details about the German Atlantic Defenses were given on the other hand, about which the Russians were not especially interested. The Russian Intelligence Service not only showed great interest in military matters but also political groups of all kinds. The "Grand-chef" received extensive information and about these questions from a Professor Basil Maximowitsch and his sister. The former was at the time at the Sorbonne in Paris and the latter was a lady doctor also in

SECRET

SECRET

- 4 -

Paris. This pair had not only relations with DeGaulist circles in France but also, which was of much more interest to the Soviet, relations with circles who were in close contact with Petain's Vichy Government.

A certain Henry Robinson (real name) was responsible for the "Grand-Chief's" communication from France to the Soviet Intelligence Service in Switzerland. He travelled continually from France to Switzerland direct or via Germany. Robinson was much more a kind of Organization Chief liaising the work of the French Group with Switzerland than a news messenger - that was much more dangerous to the Soviet Intelligence Service. Robinson was arrested.

After the interruption of this well organized connection of the Soviets their only remaining contact with their French experts was the "Funkgegenspiele" turned by the Stapo. One day the question of financing the Western Group arose, which in the course of the "game" had been pressed more and more. Finally the Moscow Military Intelligence Service who still had full confidence in the "Grand-Chief", was ready to put Swiss Funds at his disposal. By means of "Mars" or "Marianne" the necessary Swiss gold franc for the finance of the "Grand-Chief's" Group fell into German hands. I must also mention that the "Grand-Chief" in Paris in 1942 ran a commission business under the name of "Simex" which worked in the same way as "Kent's" organisation in Brussels "Simexco" which I have already described. The turnovers here were also considerable particularly as Gilbert had Wehrmacht contracts which ran into millions. I remember the following names from the entire organization in Belgium and France.

- 1) Jacques Blumsack
- 2) Cruet
- 3) Jenstream (alias) - JERNSTROEM *Handwritten: P. J. FERREMOU*
- 4) Margarete Baróza (friend of "Kent's")
- 5) Katz Bros. and others

I recall that Professor Maximwitsch succeeded in fulfilling the Moscow order to get in contact with the German Embassy in Paris. This came about through his affairs with Fraulein Margarete Hoffmann-Scholz, a German secretary at the Embassy, who he promised to marry later. This girl was completely under the influence of Maximowitsch and gave away the most secret information from the Embassy office. Hoffmann's cousin was the German Kriegsverwaltungschef General von Pfeffer (War Administration Chief) a brother of Osaf. Pfeffer (Oberster SA-Fuehrer before Roehm) and former Regierungspraesident of Wiesbaden (district or county governmental administrative chief). Maximowitsch was able to approach Pfeffer through Hoffman and used Pfeffer's simple-mindedness to obtain important information which he gladly gave.

SECRET

SECRET

- 5 -

Moscow's wireless order, under no circumstances to contact the French Communist Party in any way for fear of discovery, ran like a red thread through the entire "Rote Kapelle" movement. The Russians finally agreed to it after the Germans had brought up this theme again and again. The Paris meetings arranged by radio had always a negative result.

The entire "Rote Kapelle" movement including the German sector was brought before a Luftwaffe Court Martial which was in session at the Reichskriegsgericht in Berlin. (Reich Supreme Military Tribunal.) At the end of 1943 two more Soviet transmitting organizations belonging to "Rote Kapelle" at Lyons and Lille were rounded up. The Soviet Military Intelligence Service had constructed two further paralled organizations in addition to the main one at Paris which however had been turned by the Germans. The wireless communication of these two organizations were mostly carried out by women. During these "round ups" the technical apparatus of the French Communists in Paris was broken into, whereby, about early 1944, a great quantity of homemade W/T sets, spare parts, valves, cables, quartz etc. were confiscated. The commission was led in Belgium and France on the German side firstly by Kriminalrat Karl Giering and later when he became ill by Kriminalkommissar Reiser. When the latter was recalled to Germany the job was taken over by Kriminalrat Heinz Pannwitz.

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

XX-9639
IR (030/8/64/2)

hor
KOPKOW, HORST

Further cases which were dealt with during the war by IV A 2 b

There was for instance the attempt by the Soviet Espionage Group "Rote Drei" by which the Soviet Intelligence Service obtained extensive information from leading circles of the German General Staff, which was relayed to Moscow by three Swiss transmitters in Lausanne, Verreux near Geneva and on the Monte Bree.

Almost all the Soviet Agents active in Switzerland were recognized. Amongst them was RADO the Hungarian leader, and other such as Puenter, the Debendorfer couple, the Swiss Left wing Radical Politician Nicole and an Englishman called Foote about whom it was uncertain as to whether he was working for both sides or not. In Germany this was never decided although there were several factors which pointed in this direction. The traffic contained hundreds of W/T messages of a military nature mostly from the Eastern Theatre and the Balkans but also from Central Wehrmacht Establishments. A study of this deciphered W/T traffic by the Chief of Operations Dept. at OKH itself showed that 40 to 50% of the information was useful. I can give further information about this matter.

~~SECRET~~

200-6-1-76-2