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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM American Consulate General, Bremen DESP. 132

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

16 January 1952
DATE

State

REF

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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2007

SUBJECT Banning of BDJ in Bremen

On January 13 Bremen, along with Hamburg and Lower Saxony, banned the Bund Deutscher Jugend (BDJ) and the so-called Technischer Dienst (Technical Service). The decision was taken by the Bremen Senate on the basis of Article 9 of the Basic Law and was announced by Willi DEHNKAMP, Senator for Schools and Education, acting for Interior Senator Adolf EHLERS, who is ill. In his statement to the press, Dehnkamp announced that while not a great deal ("uebermaessig viel") of evidence against the group had been discovered in Bremen, this constituted no grounds for failure to act. The Laender, he said, had begged the Federal Minister of the Interior in vain to prohibit the BDJ nationally and had finally had to take the initiative themselves.

Dehnkamp further stated that the Technischer Dienst had had some 160 members in Bremen, most of them former officers of the German Wehrmacht or of the Waffen-SS. Of the 160, some 25 had been to the "partisan school" at Waldmichelsbach. The BDJ itself had about 80 members.

COMMENT:

On the basis of what we know about the BDJ locally, the reporting officer feels that the Bremen Senate could have found greater threats to the constitution without looking very far. The Landesamt fuer Verfassungsschutz (very much SPD in Bremen) has had an informant, one Gert RICHTARSKY, in the Bremen BDJ office for some months. It is also likely that the head of the BDJ in Oldenburg, Dieter von GLAHN, has been performing the same function for the LFV of Lower Saxony. Richtarsky has turned over to the LFV every scrap of correspondence from the BDJ office over a long period of time. We have seen much of this correspondence, and, through the courtesy of the Bremen C.I.S. unit, we have also seen transcripts of innumerable telephone calls between Richtarsky and the LFV. The reporting officer believes that the recent sensational revelations concerning the Technischer Dienst came as a great surprise to the BDJ proper in Bremen.

The Bremen BDJ has been a rather insignificant and penurious outfit for some time and has approached the Consulate General on occasion for financial support. Until recently it was headed by Eugen SCHADE, who had

FOR COORDINATION WITH State

REPORTER

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connections with the Deutsche Partei and the notorious Dr. Heinrich LAUTS. Schade is now faction manager of the Bremen FDP, which is a respectable party in this area. The new BDJ chairman, Hans DUIJKERS, has been attempting to build up the group as an anti-Communist organization. He and other BDJ members have concentrated on attending political gatherings and participating in the discussions which followed the main speeches. In this work he has had the support of the CDU, the FDP, and such organizations as the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Demokratischer Kreise and the Europa Union. Perhaps the worst that can be said of the present leadership of the Bremen BDJ is that they are too prone to look for a fight without thinking of the possible advantages this may give to the Communist propaganda line (witness their attacks of last fall on KPD meetings in Bremen). They have also been too inclined to lump the KPD and the SPD together under the generic term "Marxists."

As far as the so-called Technischer Dienst is concerned, this office is admittedly lacking in information. However, the reporting officer views the figures given by Senator Dehnkamp with some skepticism. An attempt will be made to obtain further information on this subject.

The conclusion which one is forced to draw, then, is that Bremen, like the other SPD-dominated Laender, is simply tagging along with the national SPD leadership in a matter which makes a highly satisfactory political football. This is not to say that there are no grounds at all for taking action against the BDJ and its offshoot, the Technischer Dienst, but the reporting officer reiterates that it would be easy to find more subversive groups. Furthermore, the fact that the BDJ is anti-SPD has undoubtedly helped to shape the SPD's course of action, as has the fact that the whole affair has caused considerable embarrassment to the government coalition in general and Minister of the Interior LEHR in particular.

This last point was well illustrated during a conversation which two officers from the Consulate General had with Buergermeister KAISEN on January 15. Bremen's public relations man, Alfred FAUST, came in during the course of the conversation with word that the British had arrested members of a neo-Nazi organization in their zone. Faust took this as another illustration of a job which should have been done by Lehr before someone else did it for him and suggested that this might well force Lehr's resignation. This is by no means the first example we have had of Lehr's personal unpopularity in Bremen SPD circles.

The initial reaction to the BDJ ban in right wing political circles in Bremen has been extremely unfavorable. The DP, seconded by the CDU, has demanded that the Senate defend its action before a special secret session of the Buergerschaft. The FDP, which, with the CDU, is the SPD's coalition partner, is equally incensed, and the FDP weekly, Der Roland, will take a very strong stand against the ban in its next issue.

FOR THE CONSUL GENERAL:


Philip F. Dur
American Consul

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