

SECRET

JAN 6 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHIEF, INSPECTION & REVIEW STAFF

SUBJECT: Information on British Activities in Rome

1. During the last year and a half SE Division [] have had occasion to observe a number of British persons and have passed to headquarters the following resume of their observations. This information is in turn relayed to you as a matter of interest to your staff.

a. Insofar as SIS Albanian activities are concerned, [] in the British Embassy, appears to work along alternate lines. Normally, his contacts with the British liaison officer with the Albanians, appear to be conducted through [] in the automobile agency of Selby, Whigham and Cole, and with [] On occasion, however, [] is known to have had personal meetings with []

b. Selby, Whigham and Cole, ostensibly an automobile agency, also exports and imports many other items, such as handicraft arts manufactured on the island of Capri, machine parts, and oil refinery material. (In connection with the latter, Selby, Whigham and Cole recently made what are reported to be exclusive contracts with important oil pipe line producers in Europe. Material obtained through these connections is being exported throughout the world to markets formerly supplied by U.S. interests which are hard pressed to meet demands due to the current U.S. steel shortage. In connection with this activity, Frederick Cole asked the SE Division [] if he had any friends in the oil industry who might be interested in this source of supply. The SE Representative told him the only person he knew in the industry was D. J. Martin, with the Hughes Tool Company in Texas and that Cole might contact him.) By and large, however, [] and [] appear to be engaged [] pertaining to the Balkan area, with primary interest in Yugoslavia and Albania. Since both are acquainted with Tito, contacts with the Yugoslav Ambassador in Rome are not infrequent.

c. [] of the above-mentioned concern, is practically unknown to the SE [] To all outward appearances, he seems to devote the major portion of his time to the export-import business. The SE representatives are not in agreement on this, however, as one feels that there is some significance in the fact that [] had in intelligence for three years during the war and now lives in Rome with an American by the name of [] who, according to the [] is a free lance writer, an eccentric, and an old (SO) man.

d. There are two other people who may be members of this clique. One is an Italian lawyer, by the name of Paolo Arancio-Ruis, who spends

much of his

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much of his time operating the export-import business of Selby, Whigham and Cole. The other is an English woman named Ann Partini Wood, 35 or 40 years old, who seems to be the local factotum for the British. Formerly married to a well known Italian architect, she is the person who finds living quarters for personnel, entertains visitors, arranges tours, etc. She spends much time at the Cole's villa.

e. Cole's wife has made a number of statements to the SE [] which may be of interest. She claims, for example, that personal effects of Ex King Peter of Yugoslavia (including a bust of his father) are stored in her house in Frascati. She has said on two occasions that Ex King Peter's bank account in Switzerland is in the name of Frederick Cole and that Ex King Peter is currently 29,000 Swiss francs overdrawn in the account, which makes it difficult for Frederick Cole to enter or leave Switzerland.

f. Frederick Cole and John Selby are both mentioned in MacLean's book "Escape to Adventure" and were members of the Yugoslav Military Mission during World War II. [] worked at that time at a base in Cairo with [] who was in charge of Yugoslav affairs for the British intelligence group attached to Field Marshal Wilson's headquarters. For at least ten years before 1949, Cole's wife lived in Yugoslavia. Before marrying Cole, less than three years ago, she was Mrs. Jill Sharp. She is the daughter of an English diplomat stationed for many years in the Balkans.

g. The home of the Coles in Frascati is obviously [] property, with a constant flow of visitors from London.]

h. The Red Lion Shop, Via Babuino, Rome, operated by two British women, appears to be [] It is frequented daily by various Britishers known to be engaged in intelligence activities.

2. This office has no comments to add to the above at this time.

[]
C/SE]

cc: G/VE

SE/CPF []
2 January 1953]

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