

2 July 1957

SUBJECT: Personnel Dossiers of Abwehr Officers

1. Examination of German documents captured during World War II has produced a number of personnel dossiers of Abwehr members who were assigned or were about to be assigned to Abwehr bases outside of Germany. The documents were originally held in England by the Department of State and the British authorities and have since been microfilmed and returned to the Bonn Government. They are currently held in Washington by the Department of State where they may be viewed by referring to Serial 1110. Reproductions of these dossiers are attached.

2. The dossiers concern the following persons:

a. Heinrich Willi PIERT, aka Willi PIERT, born 21 June 1910 in Schaerbeck. PIERT was assigned to the Abwehr base in Bern under diplomatic cover as "Office Assistant" (Buerohilfsarbeiter), replacing (Dr. fnu^A LOEFF* whose cover was Vice Consul. PIERT assumed his duties on 1 July 1943.

b. Lothar PHILIPP, born 27 August 1900 in Dresden was assigned as an assistant to the CE officer in Bern under diplomatic cover, sometime in February 1942. Prior to this assignment PHILIPP held the rank of Private and was an interpreter in the Abwehr Office in Berlin. On 20 December 1943 he left Switzerland evidently in a great hurry as he failed to take along his personal belongings which were sent to him later by pouch. On 15 August 1944 PHILIPP had achieved the rank of Sonderfuehrer and was probably working for the Gestapo. At that time it was necessary for him to take a short trip to Switzerland and the Gestapo requested that the German Foreign Ministry make appropriate arrangements. The trip, however, was cancelled on 24 August 1944.

c. Siegfried PHILIPP, born on 12 January 1915 in Pirna and der Elbe was assigned to the Abwehr base in Lisbon under diplomatic cover, arriving there on 29 May 1943. PHILIPP worked as an Abwehr Finance Officer. Prior to this assignment he was with the Abwehr office in Danzig.

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* Probably Wolfgang LOEFF, author of the German book, "Spionage" (Aus den Papieren eines Abwehr Officers)

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d. Fritz BESGEN, was assigned under diplomatic cover to the Abwehr office in Lisbon and assumed his duties there on 4 December 1942. His predecessor was Erich PREUSS who had replaced Fritz IMMER.

e. Eberhard SCHROTT, born on 23 July 1906 in Hermannstadt/Siebenburegen was assigned to the Abwehr office in Goteborg under diplomatic cover as a Vice Consul and assumed his duties there in the middle of January 1943. However, the German Consulate in Goteborg took exception to the original Abwehr proposal to assign SCHROTT there, citing instances of previously assigned Abwehr personnel who had compromised themselves. As examples the Consulate mentioned Walter ROTHE (probably an Abwehr member) who in January 1941 was suspected of having been involved with the arrested brothers (fnu) RENHAMMAR, accused of reporting upon Norwegian vessels in Swedish ports. ROTHE had to leave Sweden and could not return as the Swedish police had pointed out the severe sentence awaiting him. The Consulate also cited the case of (fnu) FRITZEL (probably an Abwehr member) who had come to the attention of the Swedish police because of his involvement with (fnu) EVERS and (fnu) EICHBORN, Swedish nationals who had been arrested for espionage. This case had also caused the German citizens (fnu) VOGEL and (fnu) CORNELIUS to depart from Goteborg. In view of these details the Consulate felt that SCHROTT's cover would not stand up. However, because SCHROTT was urgently needed in Goteborg, spoke fluent Norwegian, had lived in Scandinavia for some time representing a large German paper factory, and was acquainted with local conditions, the Abwehr insisted that all possible be done to effect his assignment. As a result of several discussions between appropriate Foreign Ministry and Abwehr officials, it was decided that SCHROTT would be assigned to Goteborg, having first served approximately four weeks in Bern under diplomatic cover as a Vice Consul. He would then proceed to Goteborg as though a routine change in diplomatic assignments was taking place. The Goteborg Consulate agreed with this plan and SCHROTT left for Bern in the beginning of December 1942. SCHROTT left Bern on 19 January 1943. A directive outlining SCHROTT's duties as a CE officer was transmitted to him from the Abwehr on 25 February 1943 and included complete instructions concerning his responsibilities, area of operations, means of communications, etc. Concerning communications, it was stated that "GUENNAR" would be the cover name used in written communications addressed to the Abwehr Officer in Goteborg. Shortly after SCHROTT's arrival in Goteborg his name appeared in the press as being involved in an espionage case concerning the Swedish national Seth PETERS, a former customs official, born 9 July, 1890. PETERS was arrested, tried, sentenced to two years in the penitentiary, and received a monetary fine. At about the same time "a Norwegian agent" whose cover name was ASBJAERN was arrested while he was having a meeting with SCHROTT. As a result a finance receipt and "a letter to Dr. (fnu) FEUER (Oslo)" fell into the hands of the

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Swedish police. Another agent whose cover name was BALDUIN was also arrested at that time for black market activities. A subsequent communication indicated that ASBJAERN and BALDUIN were agents of the Abwehr office in Oslo. On 22 March 1943 the compromise of SCHROTT was discussed between a member of the German Foreign Ministry and Capt. fnu SALZINGER of the CE component of the Abwehr. The Abwehr insisted that SCHROTT's services in Sweden were indispensable, particularly since there had been an increase in Allied activity in the Jutland area and a build up in Allied intelligence personnel in Goteborg and Malmo. This matter was then discussed between the Abwehr chief in Sweden, Lt. Col. fnu WAGNER and the Chief of Swedish Military Intelligence, Lt. Col. Count fnu BONTE, who assured WAGNER that SCHROTT could continue his activity without interference.

f. Naval Captain Hans MEISNER, born 20 February 1895 in Dresden. On 19 February 1942 the Abwehr notified the German Foreign Ministry that MEISNER was to replace the Abwehr Chief for Switzerland Lt. Col. Eric KNABBE. On 9 March 1942 KNABBE left Switzerland to become chief of the Abwehr office in Stuttgart. Prior to his assignment in Bern, MEISNER had been assigned to Abwehr Headquarters in Paris. In Switzerland MEISNER was to serve under diplomatic cover and was to assume the same rank as his predecessor, i.e., "Honorary Attache" (Honorar-Attache). MEISNER assumed his duties sometime between 16 and 30 April 1942.

g. Werner SCHULZE-STENTROP, born 5 March 1913. In a memorandum to the German Foreign Ministry, the Abwehr proposed on 31 July 1939 to assign the civilian employee of the Air Ministry, SCHULZE-STENTROP as a meteorologist to be stationed under diplomatic cover in Iceland. It was explained that SCHULZE-STENTROP would be able to transmit weather reports in case of war. The dossier does not indicate whether SCHULZE-STENTROP's assignment was accepted by the Foreign Ministry and when he assumed his duties.

h. Dr. Hans SCHUSTER, born 24 January 1915 in Berlin. In January 1940, fnu von HAEFTEN a member of the Abwehr under diplomatic cover in the German Embassy in Bucharest requested that he be assigned an assistant to help him with his "additional duties." Dr. fnu (probably Paul) CHARLE had been proposed for this assignment, but could not be utilized as he was under consideration for another assignment. Consequently, SCHUSTER, who had been working for the Abwehr in Rumania since 1939, was assigned as von HAEFTEN's assistant. Prior to this assignment SCHUSTER had been working on the "build up of oil and transportation security" under diplomatic cover as an Academic Assistant in the Cultural Section of the German Embassy. He is said to have spoken English, French, and Rumanian. During 1938 and 1939 SCHUSTER spent one year in England, Scotland, and Ireland engaged in academic work. For unexplained reasons German Foreign Ministry correspondence,

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concerning SCHUSTER which was dated 25 November and later, was addressed to the German Consulate General in Zagreb. On 10 January 1942 the Consulate General in Zagreb advised the Foreign Ministry that SCHUSTER had hired Miss Lenti (Valentine) Laura Theresia GUTSOHN, a Yugoslav national, as an assistant. According to the biography which she furnished in her handwriting, she was born on 27 December 1916 in Nove Schowe. Photographs of SCHUSTER are included in the dossier.

i. Wilhelm STROELA was assigned to the German Consulate in Genoa under diplomatic cover, in accordance with a discussion between Admiral CANARIS and the German Consul General in Genoa fnu MAYR. Discussions concerning this assignment were also held between fnu HEYDEN-RYNSCH of the German Foreign Ministry and Major fnu RASPE, probably of the Abwehr. STROELA assumed his duties in Genoa sometime in the beginning of March 1940. Photographs of STROELA are included in the dossier. The final page of the dossier is a memorandum from the Abwehr (FI/Air/West) to the Foreign Ministry in which the complaint was voiced that courier communications from Berlin to "NINO" in Genoa were too slow. "NINO" was probably the cover name for the Abwehr chief of the Genoa office.

j. Fritz MALZACHER, born 6 September 1899 in Harpolingen was considered for assignment to Zuerich under diplomatic cover. However, on 17 October 1940 this was changed "because he is needed for other duties." No reason for the change was given.

k. Fritz UNRUH, born 30 September 1908 in Hamburg, was assigned to Zuerich under diplomatic cover in place of Fritz MALZACHER (see j above). An appropriate passport for UNRUH was requested on 11 November 1940. It is not known when he assumed his duties in Zuerich.

l. Lt. Com. Dr. Friedrich UNTERBERG, born 3 April 1896 in Duisburg was assigned to the Abwehr office in Brussels under diplomatic cover in September 1938. On 21 May 1940 UNTERBERG was referred to as the Abwehr chief in Belgium and held the cover rank of Press Attache. On that date (Lt. Col. fnu MAURER (probably of the Abwehr) and fnu von der HEYDEN-RYNSCH of the German Foreign Office discussed UNTERBERG's transfer to Bern where he was to continue the same type of work under diplomatic cover. When this proposal reached the German Envoy in Bern (fnu KOECHER), he suggested that UNTERBERG be assigned to the Consulate General in Zuerich as a Vice Consul. Subsequent correspondence indicates that UNTERBERG was assigned to Zuerich as a Consul and assumed his Abwehr duties there on 3 July 1940. On 1 August 1940 the Abwehr advised the Foreign Ministry that it intended to transfer "Honorary Attache" UNTERBERG in the near future. The dossier, however, does not contain information concerning UNTERBERG's further utilization.

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m. Mrs. Charlotte KEMMER, nee PAULY travelled to Brussels on 3 October where she was to work as UNTERBERG's (see paragraph 1 above) secretary.

n. Miss Gertrud BECKMANN, born 13 April 1917 in Wattenscheidt, had been UNTERBERG's (see paragraph 1 above) secretary and had worked as a secretary in the Abwehr office in Brussels since 1 March 1939. While travelling on a train which had been placed at the German Embassy's disposal by the Belgian Government, BECKMANN was arrested by a French officer. The arrest took place near the French border on 11 May 1940. She was kept in confinement and repeatedly interrogated by French officials who accused her of participating in espionage activities, accusations which she continually denied. She was released from confinement by advancing German troops on 25 May 1941. Her tribulations were set down in great detail in a report prepared by Krafft von DELLMENSINGEN, probably a member of the Abwehr. The following persons were mentioned in this report:

(1) Fnu CAMBIER, an agent of the Military Attache probably in Brussels whom BECKMANN had known and by whom she was confronted during her interrogation. It appears that CAMBIER was also working for the French.

(2) "EMIL", an agent of long standing of the Abwehr office in Muenster by whom BECKMANN was confronted during her interrogation. According to her statement, "it was proved that he was a provocateur and an employee of the Surete in Lille."

(3) "MANCHE", an agent of the Military Attache, probably in Brussels, by whom BECKMANN was confronted during her interrogation. Judging by his behaviour BECKMANN believed him to have also been a provocateur.

(4) Fnu BUERKLIN. The interrogators showed great interest in BUERKLIN's visit with the Military Attache in Brussels. BECKMANN claimed that she only knew that BUERKLIN was an officer of the German General Staff.

(5) "KLAUS". BECKMANN was asked whether she knew the significance of this name. She replied in the negative.

(6) "ULRICH". The same applies here as to "KLAUS" above.

(7) Fnu STARCK, an agent of the Abwehr office in Koeln. BECKMANN was asked if STARCK had ever visited her boss, UNTERBERG's, office in Brussels. She denied knowing STARCK or such visits.

(8) Miss fnu von BOETTICHER, apparently another German employee of the Embassy in Brussels or of the Abwehr who

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had also been arrested. BECKMANN was transferred with her to the jail in Loos.

(9) Fnu HAGEN, apparently another member of the Abwehr or of the German Embassy in Brussels who had also been arrested. BECKMANN rode in the same automobile with HAGEN when being transferred to Pontarlier.

(10) Fnu KOERBER. The same applies here as to HAGEN above.

On 3 July 1940 BECKMANN assumed her duties as a secretary of the German Consulate General in Zuerich. It appears that she continued to work for UNTERBERG.

o. Herrmann BRANDEL, had apparently been an agent of the Abwehr office in Brussels. On 12 February 1940 the Abwehr requested the German Foreign Ministry that his status be changed to that of a staff employee of the Abwehr under diplomatic cover in Brussels.

p. Dr. Frank WEILAND. On 7 July 1939 the German Air Ministry requested the German Foreign Ministry to permit WEILAND, a meteorologist, to spend two weeks at the German Embassy in Oslo so as to acquaint himself with local conditions and make the necessary plans for a permanent assignment there in case of war. Permission was granted and WEILAND proceeded to Oslo sometime in the latter part of July 1939. (The dossier on WEILAND also includes the fact that SCHULZE-STENTROP (see paragraph g above) was to be assigned to Reykjavik during the middle/end of July for an indefinite period of time.) WEILAND was permanently assigned to the Embassy in Oslo under diplomatic cover on 25 August 1939. On 9 September 1939 the German Ambassador to Norway, Dr. fnu SAHM suggested that fnu SPOERL be assigned to aid WEILAND in his meteorological work. The Foreign Ministry did not agree with this suggestion. On 2 November 1939 the Air Ministry requested that WEILAND be subordinated to the "recently appointed" Air Attache in Oslo, fnu SPILLER. However, in order to preserve WEILAND's cover, the subordination was to be only internal and was not to manifest itself outside of the Embassy.

q. Johannes ZAEHRINGER. In accordance with a request from the Abwehr, the Foreign Ministry requested the German Consulate General in Istanbul on 26 August 1940 to concur with ZAEHRINGER's assignment to the Consulate General under diplomatic cover. Consul General fnu SEILER advised that such assignment would not be possible. However, he stated that the Naval Attache had agreed to accept ZAEHRING as an "assistant officer". In view of this, it appears that from that point on ZAEHRING's assignment was handled by the military.

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3. In addition to the above individuals, the dossiers also include the names of numerous other persons who were administratively involved in arranging the above-described assignments under diplomatic cover. The names of these persons are not recorded here as they are relatively well-known persons and appear with great frequency in the dossiers as well as in many other captured German documents.

4. No Agency tracing of persons named in the attachments has been conducted. It is requested that coordination be effected with this Staff if this information is to be transmitted to the field or passed to another intelligence service.

Attachments: a/s

Distribution:

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