

# BEST AVAILABLE COPY

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23 January 1946

*Copy to St. Helms  
31 Jan. 1946*

MEMORANDUM

TO: Saint, Amzon for AB/24  
FROM: Saint  
SUBJECT: Heribert VON STREMPPEL  
REFERENCES: ANZO 25267

<sup>non</sup>  
STREMPPEL  
ABC

1. FBI reports the following information <sup>AM</sup>  
on subject:

a. He lived at 721 Fairfax Road, Bethesda, Maryland, a residence formerly occupied by Manfred von Zapp, head of the German overseas news agency. After subject's internment at Hot Springs, Virginia, the Bureau received information to the effect he had purchased a bicycle which was under test by the United States Marine Corps for the use of its parachute troops. Subject explained that he was a member of a hunt club and desired the bicycle for this reason. An order placed by subject with the Compax Folding Bicycle Co. for twelve bicycles was cancelled when this information came to light.

b. Subject was returned in diplomatic exchange on the Drottningholm on 7 May 1942. FBI states because of subject's diplomatic immunity, they have no further information on him.

2. A State Department Special Interrogation Mission interviewed subject at MISC Oberursel, 18 November 1945. The following information was obtained:

a. Former colleagues of subject had indicated under interrogation that during his service as First Secretary of the German Embassy in Washington, he had been pay-off man for at least one German agent, George Sylvester Viereck. At the time the State Department Mission questioned subject, he was suffering from an eye infection, an attack of rheumatism, and was not in a mood calculated to produce best results.

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b. Subject had been reported by Ernst Adolf Hepp, a former colleague in Washington, to have been an honorary member of the SS in 1941. Subject denied that he had ever been a member of the SS and protested that he had never even joined the Nazi party. He stated that he was appointed to the Embassy in Washington because Dieckhoff, then German Ambassador to the United States, requested a First Secretary who spoke Spanish as well as English. Subject stated that his former service in the German Embassy, Chile, qualified him for this post and his chief, Aschmann, thought it would be safer if subject left Berlin.

c. Dieckhoff wanted a Spanish speaking secretary so that party contacts might be maintained between the German Embassy and the Latin-American missions in Washington. Part of subject's job therefore was to make friends with Latin-American diplomats. The one he saw most often was Bunge of the Argentine Embassy, since killed in an automobile accident according to Strepel. Strepel saw Bunge seldom except at social functions, and stated that he never received any valuable information from him. Strepel also recalled a social friendship with Manuel Perera of the Chilean Embassy and Brazilian Ambassador Martins. Both these associations, Strepel maintained, were on a social basis. He was unable to recall the names of any other Latin-American friends.

d. Subject's primary job was to report on public opinion in the United States and to see that the German point of view was favorably presented in the American press. He stated that Hans Thomsen, Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy, had instructed the staff to have as little contact with American isolationists as possible in order to avoid rousing public opinion and thus hampering the isolationist work. Subject states that his contacts with isolationist elements were very few and that most of them were handled through Viereck.

e. Subject saw Viereck frequently and continued the already established Embassy contact with Viereck. Strepel at first denied having control of any funds in the Embassy, but later admitted that he had funds at his disposal which were used to finance Viereck's operations. He stated that Thomsen's signature was required on all checks drawn for this purpose and he did not know exactly from what source in the Auswaertiges Amt these funds were drawn. No fixed sum was allotted but rather sums were made available to the Embassy as they were needed.

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f. Subject refused to admit that his operations through Viereck involved anything more than the payment of money to finance propaganda work such as the publication of the Flanders Hall books and other schemes such as newspaper advertisements.

g. Subject was asked about his relations with Lawrence Dennis. He replied that they were very casual but he did recall that Dennis had mentioned to him his desire to publish a German edition of his book.

h. Stempel did not divulge any important details concerning contacts with other agents or isolationist elements in the United States. He claimed to have been on cordial terms with various newspaper correspondents in Washington, including a Chicago Tribune representative whom he frequently met at lunch, but whose name he claimed to have forgotten. He stated that he had no contact with any one of the Tribune when he visited Chicago. Subject remarked that about 90% of his information was obtained from the press or newspapermen in Washington -- the other 10% from Viereck. He stated that he never met any of Viereck's friends or co-workers although the interrogation states that other persons had stated that it was through Viereck that subject established many of his contacts.

i. Asked if he had attempted to extend his activities into the Middle West, subject stated that he had made almost no contacts in that area and had been advised by Emil Baer, German Consul in Chicago, to leave the Middle West alone.

j. Subject also maintained contacts for the Embassy with the German Library of Information in New York, organized by Ulrich von Gienanth and headed by Matthias Schmitz. He stated that the Library was financed and directed by the Propaganda Ministry prior to the outbreak of war and subsequently through the German Consulate General in New York. Asked what he knew about von Gienanth's connections, Stempel stated that as an SD member, Gienanth reported to Berlin only on German officials in the United States. The Stempel Interrogation Mission had previously obtained a denial from Gienanth that he had ever performed any service for the SD.

3. Saint Lisbon reports that subject was in 1944 assigned to the American Section of the Foreign Press, Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Lisbon, charged with studying the American political situation and trend of fall elections. He also served as a propagandist and sent news reports clipped from Allied papers from Portugal to Berlin.

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