

10 May 1946

LSX 251

To: Saint, Washington
Attn: JJ1

From: Saint, Austria; DD 101 DD⁰¹

Subject, Specific: Project SYMPHONY
General: Direct overt contact with Political Department,
Jewish Agency.

Ref: Original SYMPHONY Project Report, LVX 216, LVX-228

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B26
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2006

1. Shortly before your office distributed X-2TS-2231 and X 4115, this office began laying plans for a project which was to use the present extensive Jewish emigration for a source of CI information. Preliminary investigations on the subject plainly showed that no one in the American Forces in Austria had a clear picture of either the procedure or the agencies involved. Consequently, it was decided to approach the Jewish agency directly, appealing to them as former Allies and war time collaborators, in an effort to gain the basic knowledge of the Jewish Emigration Service, channels, and personalities. At the same time it was anticipated that through a sincere direct approach much fresh CI information could be obtained (see LVX 216, para A-1).

2. At the same time, it was anticipated that certain covert operations could be carried on even in the preliminary stages of this project through direct contact and a certain amount of penetration (see LVX 216, para A-2).

3. Thereafter, in the long-range picture, it was planned to penetrate completely both the Jewish Agency, Political Section, and those other intelligence services using the Jewish Agency courier and emigration services (see LVX 216, para A 3).

4. With the above in mind DD 101 advised DD 110 to approach directly the head of the Jewish agency in Austria (CONDUCTOR). This approach was originally made by DD 110 in the guise of a correspondent searching for the complete Jewish emigration picture. The contact was successfully made by DD 110 and CONDUCTOR was sincerely led along for weeks to a point where the question of counter-intelligence information came up. At that point DD 110 advised CONDUCTOR that he was with an American Intelligence organization and desired to obtain this information on a purely local basis. DD 110's approach and timing were excellent, because CONDUCTOR now continues to provide exceedingly good CI and SI information and is extremely discreet concerning his contact with DD 110.

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SECRET CONTROL

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SECRET CONTROL

-2-

5. It is anticipated that the long-range aims will not be begun for some months and then on a most cautious basis.

6. In the meantime, however, CONDUCTOR requested that DD 110 meet Mr. RUFFER, Roving Representative in Europe for the Political Section of the Jewish Agency. CONDUCTOR stated that some very important discussions would take place. It was quite evident at that point that CONDUCTOR had reported his American Intelligence contact to his chiefs and, from previous discussions with DD 110, had indicated that he desired to make an official contact with American Intelligence. DD 110 was instructed to keep the discussions on a purely local level and indicate that he would pass on the information to higher authorities for any overall decisions. DD 110 handled the meeting exceedingly well and, for the sake of clarity, his report is reproduced below.

a. As previously announced, DD 110 had an interview with CONDUCTOR and his chief, Mr. RUFFER, the Roving Representative in Europe of the Political Department of the Jewish Agency. The latter generally stays in Geneva whenever he is not travelling around Europe.

b. DD 110 told RUFFER that at this particular time there could be no question of an overall policy of official cooperation of our organization and the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, but that he was convinced that the policy chiefs saw no objection to field stations cooperating closely with the local emissaries of the Political Department. DD 110 gave him examples of our stations in London, Cairo and Jerusalem, who, he had to admit, were working quite fruitfully with the Jewish Agency representatives.

c. This did not exactly please RUFFER. He had hoped that since the British do not want to work with the Jewish Agency during peacetime (he previously stated to DD 110 that the British had broken off official contact with the Political Department), somehow the American Intelligence Services would cooperate. In order to explain his position, he gave DD 110 the following explanation:

1) The Political Department of the Jewish Agency did some intelligence work during this war and did it with the collaboration of the British and American intelligence services. Right now the political Department had no interest in running an intelligence service outside Palestine. The British know perfectly well that the Political Department has an intelligence service in Palestine which is a tactical area for them. RUFFER continued by saying that the entire emigration was not run by the Political Department (but forgot to add that CONDUCTOR ran it in Austria). He emphasized that CONDUCTOR was here not as the representative of the Political Department, but of Palcor (the Palestine Telegraph Agency). He apparently forgot that DD 110 found a stamp in CONDUCTOR's office bearing the imprint "Political Department of the Jewish Agency, Section Vienna". He also forgot that DD 110 knows that Palcor is a cover for the Political Department, headed in London by UEBERALL, one

SECRET CONTROL

of the most active members of the Political Department in Istanbul during this war. He continued to say that the Political Department had some activities in Europe and admitted quite frankly that a number of messengers were sent either by the Geneva or the Austrian section into the Balkans. He also said that one of the main interests of the Political Department right now is the collection of evidence against Nazis who have committed atrocities against the Jews or against members or agents of the Political Department who have betrayed the Jewish cause (read: Jewish Agency) during this war. These messengers of the Political Department in order to do their work efficiently have a number of secret contacts, some of low-level, some very highly placed. Quite naturally they hear and see an enormous lot of things. And the Political Department of the Jewish Agency, which is immensely grateful to America for all it is doing for Jewish immigration, would be only too glad to pass along that accidentally obtained intelligence to some American agency.

2) He furthermore said that although he looks with favor upon close cooperation between American Intelligence field stations and local stations of the Political Department he still had some misgivings which were founded on past experiences. He cited the examples of the Jerusalem section of OSS working closely with them, getting a lot of information without giving the Jewish Agency credit for it and at the same time playing the same game with the Arabs. The second example he cited was that of the British Intelligence services during this war refusing an overall collaboration with the Jewish Agency outside Palestine and still using the Political Department's Swiss representative and his network to obtain valuable intelligence without again giving the Jewish Agency credit for it.

3) He then took up again the matter of his messengers and said that even if some intelligence would be required by me, he could only get it for me provided it did not go against any Jewish interests, it did not demand a special risk from the messenger not connected with his usual duties, and it would not antagonize the Russians. He reminded me that 650,000 Jews are still living in Russian-dominated countries and that he saw no percentage in endangering the situation of these Jews by spying upon the Russians.

4) Later on he softened and said that if all those conditions were observed, he would be glad to cooperate with me and place his agents at my disposal for the collecting of intelligence. He posed one condition, that Washington should know that I obtained this intelligence from the Political Department in order to show what a close collaboration between a field station and their local representative could produce.

SECRET CONTROL

-4-

He hoped that if at a later period this collaboration of local nature would prove valuable enough to Washington, Washington would then continue an overall collaboration which would not be limited to a certain geographical area, but to Europe and the Near East.

d. After having reached this point, RUFFER then asked what kind of intelligence I would eventually require. I have to note here that I am constantly emphasizing that I am a counter intelligence officer and not a collector of active intelligence against any other country. I insisted that the United States and this organization had no interest whatsoever in spying upon a foreign country or upon an Ally. That the only intelligence requested was that of such nature which would give evidence of any aggressive acts, trends, or parties against the US Forces in Austria or the United States in general. To be specific I posed the following requirements:

1) The collection of intelligence about any racket run by Jews, by non-Jews, by philanthropic or humanitarian organizations which use the flow of immigration into Austria or Germany for purposes other than pure immigration. I pointed out that the uncovering of such activities could only emphasize in the minds of high-placed US personalities that the immigration run by the Jewish Agency was a purely humanitarian one and had nothing to do with the above-mentioned rackets.

*as high grade
int. name
of Jew
immigrants*

2) Intelligence about any foreign agency which would use the immigration channel illegally to penetrate the US occupied zones for any activity whatsoever. (This was kept vague on purpose).

3) The intelligence gathered from the interrogation of such individuals.

4) Any intelligence which would show a proof of an aggressive act by some foreign nation against the US, be it political or military.

5) Any intelligence about war criminals which would be uncovered by the Jewish Agency representatives and would benefit either the War Crimes Board or the State Department.

e. Seeing that my requirements were actually less demanding than he originally thought, RUFFER then told me that I did not have to be that timid about my requirements and that he would personally see to it that any information gathered by the messengers of the Political Department which would not have a direct Jewish interest would be passed along to me. He even went so far at the end of the interview as to say that if I had a certain specific requirement which did not fall into the categories mentioned above, he would have it fulfilled by one of his agents to the best of their capabilities. He ended the interview with informing me that

SECRET CONTROL

SECRET CONTROL

-5-

should the Political Department uncover any intelligence of high policy level and which would go beyond this local and geographical area, it would be turned over to us at a policy level. He added that he had such a specific case in mind but that he would have to confer with SHERTOK (who is now in Paris) before taking any action on this. He did not go further in the matter. "

7. It is requested that the war time background of the OSS - Jewish Agency cooperation be restudied and then a decision made concerning the overall policy of direct contact with Jewish Agency Political Section. In the meantime, here in Austria, we shall continue with this direct contact on a purely local basis unless otherwise directed. It is felt that at the present, as long as this contact is purely one way (just receiving information), that continued contact will not be compromising as long as a proper evaluation is made of the material.

8. Your comments are requested soonest.

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✓ ARMIA LUDOWA - People's Army

AL - Polish
underground
Army during
war = this
is the Russian
under governed
pro-Communist

Armia Krajowa - Homeland
AK - was the anti-
Russian