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DISPATCH	CLASSIFICATION S E C R E T	DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NO. EGNA-25875 49
TO Chief, EE INFO Chief of Station, Germany		HEADQUARTERS FILE NO. 32W 5 13/6
FROM Chief of Base, Bonn		DATE 5 Jun 63
SUBJECT OPERATIONAL CART LIAISON Postponement of MEIER/WENGER Trip	MICROFILMED JUN 12 1963	RE: "43-3" - (CHECK "X" ONE)
ACTION REQUIRED See Para 5	DOC. MICRO. SER.	MARKED FOR INDEXING NO INDEXING REQUIRED INDEXING CAN BE JUDGED BY QUALIFIED HQ. DESK ONLY

REFERENCE(S)

REF: Bonn-4582, 29 April 63 - to CIA: CE/SE (Kubark)

1. We will summarize here the reactions of Dr. Richard MEIER and Erich WENGER to the postponement of their planned visit to PBPRIME in May 63. Reference reported that MEIER and WENGER, when first informed of the postponement, appeared to accept the reasons given, namely, illness of several key KUBARK staffers and last minute changes in the travel plans of [redacted] necessitated absence from Headquarters of other key staffers during the critical period. However, after some reflection both MEIER and WENGER developed some strong doubts, which they voiced to us a few days later, that this was the real reason for the postponement. Both of them commented, for example, that it was difficult for them to believe that the reason given was the real reason particularly because it was very similar to the explanation given for the postponement in the Autumn of 1962.

2. MEIER appeared to be genuinely disturbed by the thought that there might have been reasons which KUBARK did not want to disclose. He commented that, among other things, the thought had entered his mind that KUBARK could suddenly have come into possession of a report which reflected adversely upon the BfV or upon him or WENGER personally. He admitted that this was purely conjecture on his part, but emphasized that he had the distinct impression that there was more to the postponement than met the eye and this left him with an uneasy feeling.

3. WENGER's reaction requires somewhat more elaboration. It should first be noted that, when the trip planned for the Autumn of 1962 was postponed, he expressed some concern to us that this could be an attempt by KUBARK to cancel the trip discreetly because of his Gestapo background. At that time he emphasized that, if that were the case he hoped we would so inform him and then eliminate him from any future planned visits. He stated that under no circumstances did he want to be an obstacle to future visits by others including his own subordinates. We assured him at the time that his background had absolutely nothing to do with the postponement and predicted that this would be proven when the trip materialized in the Spring of 1963. When we visited WENGER's office a few days after the recent, and second, postponement WENGER commented that the best way to insure against cancellation of future visits would be to eliminate him from any future plans. When we asked him to explain this remark he stated that there was little doubt in his mind that the trip was cancelled because of the danger of embarrassment to KUBARK resulting from his derogatory background. He then related to us full details of the anonymous tip to Der Stern previously reported, eliminating only references to Peter STAEHLE, the correspondent, and the visit to the office of Dr. TOYKA. At the same time WENGER reminded us of an occasion when we were in his office in approximately mid-April shortly before calling on GERKEN at which time he commented that GERKEN would probably have something special to tell us. (Comment: GERKEN did not volunteer anything special when we called upon him and since he claimed to have a tight schedule that day we cut our visit short after completing the business at hand. We assumed WENGER was referring to a new CE case and felt confident that, whatever the nature of the matter, we would learn of it in due course.) WENGER now explained that the matter in question was the anonymous tip to Der Stern, that he had urged GERKEN to tell us about it and had fully expected him to do so, but that at the last minute GERKEN changed his mind because he feared that it might unnecessarily complicate the planned visit to PBPRIME.

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NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
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FORM 10-57 53b (40)	USE PREVIOUS EDITION. REPLACES FORMS 51-28, 51-28A AND 51-29 WHICH ARE OBSOLETE.	CLASSIFICATION S E C R E T	PAGE NO. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> CONTINUED 1
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4. We assured WENGER that his background had nothing to do with the postponement of the trip pointing out that his past was no secret to us, that if it had been an obstacle we would not have invited him in the first place and would certainly not have rescheduled the visit after one postponement. We told him that his professional competence in his current position was fully recognized and respected by KUBARK and that this carried infinitely more weight with us than his past membership in the GESTAPO. Although possibly not fully reassured by our remarks, we had the feeling that they impressed WENGER considerably. Nevertheless he re-emphasized that, if his background does represent an obstacle, he hoped we would not let it jeopardize opportunities for visits by any of his colleagues. WENGER commented that he considers it likely that the provocation against him was inspired by the East; on the other hand, he does not rule out the possibility that the Israeli IS was behind it. He conjectures that the latter might have erroneously blamed the BfV for the arrest of Otto JOKLIK and Joseph BEN GAL in Switzerland. It will be recalled that the Swiss authorities credited German counter intelligence authorities with having rendered considerable assistance in this action. Actually the BfV was not involved; the LKA Baden Wuerttemberg passed the lead directly to the Swiss authorities. WENGER is also at least mildly concerned that someone within the BfV may have leaked information on him. Additional comments by WENGER on his background and its effect on his career will be reported separately.

5. Although MEIER and WENGER fully appreciate their status as guests of KUBARK on such a visit as contemplated, it must be recognized that recurrent scheduling and postponement will inevitably complicate our liaison relationship, particularly as the pretexts for postponement become progressively less plausible. We still feel strongly that a visit by MEIER and WENGER would be a highly productive exercise. Accordingly we request Headquarters confirmation that DIR-35459 constitutes authority to reschedule the visit firmly for September of this year. In establishing a new schedule we believe that we should be prepared to follow through with the visit even at some risk on the matter of WENGER's background. It is our opinion that the risk is actually small, particularly when measured against WENGER's value to the CE effort in the Federal Republic and his special value to KUBARK as a liaison partner. WENGER's background has been a constant burden to him and has caused him considerable difficulty and disappointment. It would not be in the interest of KUBARK or the BfV to aggravate the situation further by still another postponement.

6. It should be mentioned that we anticipate some difficulty in rescheduling a trip for MEIER and WENGER together in September. GERKEN plans to use his remaining accumulated leave at that time after which he will retire. With MEIER replacing him it will be difficult to arrange for both MEIER and WENGER to be absent at the same time. We are hopeful, however, that this will still be possible, and would like to initiate concrete discussions on the matter without undue delay.

7. As yet there has been no publicity on WENGER. With the passage of time and the recession of public interest in other cases, such as SAEVECKE's, we believe the likelihood of WENGER's case hitting the press will grow progressively remote.

Distribution:

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