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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
MISSION FOR GERMANY
UNITED STATES FORCES
EUROPEAN THEATER

7 July 1945

TO : Chief, OSS Mission, Germany
FROM : Chief, OSS/X-2, Germany
SUBJECT : Dissension in German Intelligence Services.

Following is a report on above Subject, written by Lt. Williams, X-2, as a result of your suggestion to the undersigned.

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Discord and duplication of function within the German Intelligence Services seriously crippled operations during hostilities and prohibited any well coordinated plan of action after defeat. These circumstances are now being supported and illuminated by disclosures of GIS personnel under interrogation.

A well-known lack of understanding existed between SD and Abwehr; but dissension, duplication and vicious professional jealousy within the departments of the two major services also contributed to the final damaging result.

In the latter aspects of the European war, independent personal and small group enterprise flourished in the enemy Intelligence and related agencies. GIS plans for future activities and resistance mushroomed, regardless of the overall intended scope of a person's or a group's responsibilities.

Purpose was not unified. There was no strong concentrated direction. Individual talent worked at cross purposes -- unknowingly or deliberately -- with other individual talent. And antagonism between the services remained so great that there are known instances where records were protected for the purpose of turning them over to the conquering Armies rather than to a rival service in the GIS.

It is understandable that underground and secretly controlled resistance in Germany failed to have the immediate effect anticipated by the Allies.

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The independent action and internal discord prevailing in the RSHA are epitomized in 21 Army Group CI News Sheet No. 24:

"Evidence so far available from the most reliable sources shows that internal dissensions within the RSHA, dating back to long before the advent of military defeat, reached such a point in the last days of the Reich as to cause the office virtually to disintegrate into its component services, each of which pursued its own line in the matter of post-occupational preparations, the line being in most cases for the higher officials to make belated and ineffective attempts to save their own skins. Thus, KALTENBRUNNER, who was in the last days given full powers over Austria, states that he intended to attempt to negotiate with the Western Allies. HIMMLER's own similar attempt is sufficiently well-known, as is that of WOLFF, the SS General and plenipotentiary in Italy. A recently captured member of Amt VI/Wi has described in some detail SCHELLENBERG's plan for a Restkommando to remain in the North. Finally, SCHULZ has alluded to serious conflict in 1943/4 between himself as Amtschef I and MUELLER, Amtschef IV, leading to his transfer to SALZBURG as IdS. It is against such a background of internal feud and last-minute scrambling for personal safety that any plan of the SP/SD for post-occupational work must be appreciated."

The destructive differences resulting from parallel intelligence agencies operating in non-combat or neutral territory are evidenced in data from the report "Memo to the Officer in Charge, Hidesheim, Germany, 2 June 45" on Otto KURRER, formerly an Abwehr Captain and then a SD Liaison Officer. This was the GIS in Lisbon, as early as 1942:

"There was enormous rivalry between the Abwehr, Gestapo and SD and often duplicate reports came in from the different bodies, each obviously purchased by the Germans from the same agent with the Gestapo generally offering very high prices. The Gestapo even succeeded in spiriting a man named JEBSEN, a German agent of another intelligence branch, to Oranienburg concentration

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camp near Berlin by drugging him in Abwehr headquarters and sending him in a trunk. This plan failed with a double agent named Dr. RUSER who escaped to Madrid. All intelligence services had to cope with German agents whom no one but the Gestapo had the slightest idea as to what branch of the government they were working with. GOERING, GOEBBELS and HIMMLER all had their personal staffs of agents in addition to the swarms of regular branches of the Government and diplomatic service...."

These parallel services brought about competitive exaggeration of activities. KURRER report further states:

..."While German agents were active in all countries their number was always augmented in German reports by inter-bureau rivalry which would have agents in certain places, when neither had any, in order to "get ahead" of each other....

..."Elaborating on the amalgamation of the Abwehr and SD, KURRER said that it also was a failure as it resulted chiefly in over-organization, with two sets of officials and men doing the same jobs, and frequently disagreeing on the worth of the information..."

Within Germany, there are even more startling reports of rivalry which pointed toward mutual deterioration. Georg DUESTERBERG, former head of ABWEHR finance branch (Abwehr ZF) was later in Amt II of RSHA after the "re-organization" of the German Intelligence systems, and remained in RSHA until 1 April 1945. Following is statement from Annex "A" of DUESTERBERG interrogation report made at Camp 93 (CI) 9th US Army 14 May 45:

"The antagonism between the Abwehr and the SD went at times so far that agents of Abwehr II inside Germany were used to sabotage Intelligence operations of the SD when they were considered prejudicial to the German cause by Admiral CANARIS who always insisted that all Intelligence operations were to be kept within the limits of International Law and Usage."

This refusal to share and coordinate intelligence operations extended to a sort of blind denial of other existing agencies. From 7th Army Report of 17 June 1945 on Heinrich BERNARD of Abteilung 6B-2 comes the following:

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"Subject emphasized the difference that arose between the Gestapo and the SD on several matters and occasions, especially in using V-Men. The informants, before being employed by the SD, were always asked if they were working for any other organization such as the Gestapo or Abwehr. If so, all further contact with individuals was immediately stopped."

On the other hand, they had no scruples where personnel snatching served the purposes of the immediate agency. Interrogation Report of Leon OLMOS reveals the following:

"The one item of possible counter-intelligence significance is the fact that he was employed by the SD, Cologne, although the SD officials knew quite well that he was a deserter from the regimented Streifkorps (one of SKORZENY's units). It is not improbable, as espionage and sabotage groups become larger and more organized under SS control, that the "lone agent" is becoming increasingly difficult to find and that the SD might, in a competitive spirit, have no scruples against taking personnel away from organized groups to act as single agents for its foreign labor espionage."

Oberstleutnant Wilhelm KUEBART, who went to Abwehr I-H on detached service in August 1943 and became its Leiter in April 1944 is subject of MFIU No. 4 Interrogation Report on 1 June 1945. Critique on Abwehr Berlin is made and the conflict between Abwehr Berlin and the SD of the RSHA is summarized:

"There was little cooperation between the two organizations; they competed with each other. Abwehr Berlin, which was very inefficient in general, feared the SD would eventually take away all of its functions and powers. Some men in the Abwehr, particularly those connected with the 20 July affair, fought against the growing power of the SD, resenting the fact that the SD already was beginning to take over many of the duties of the Abwehr....."

Occasionally a working cooperation between the Abwehr and the SD was accomplished on the temporary and unreliable basis of friendship among individual leaders. But even such arrangements as this, which existed in Holland at one time, could not circumvent the forced absorption of Abwehr by RSHA.

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Such an account is contained in Case History of Gerhard Gottfried Eduard HUNTEMANN, First Army Report of 5 May 1945. HUNTEMANN was active in the Abwehr in Holland and Belgium from December 1941 until March 1944, at which time he became a member of FAK 307.

"In Holland, fairly good cooperation existed between the SD (Gestapo IV E) and the Abwehr III. This was mainly due to the personal understanding between the two leaders, GISKES and SCHREIEDER. The SD had to be notified in all cases of certain leads which might possibly help detect underground activities. The Abwehr could work on a case, but did not have the right to carry out arrests. Neither was it allowed for the Abwehr members to interrogate the SD prisoners. Sometimes SCHREIEDER allowed GISKES in unusual cases to have one of his men talk to a prisoner, but solely concerning military matters. The SD had the right to keep all its cases and to do with them as they deemed fit. In several instances, however, the Abwehr was permitted to use some of these agents after they had been "turned". This does not mean that all "turned" agents were handled by the Abwehr, since many cases remained under the immediate control of the SD. As a matter of fact, the Abwehr was completely ignorant of any details of such cases

"The situation in Belgium was somewhat different. If the Abwehr III investigated a case, it always tried to have it solved by Army personnel, and for that reason most arrests were carried out by the GFP. This, however, was not possible in all cases since the SD often had more complete files on personalities than the Abwehr. In such cases a man was arrested and interrogated by the SD. After incorporation of the GFP into the SD in 1944, all cases were thenceforth handled by the SD."

First Army Interrogation Report of 8 May 1945 on Oberstleutnant Herman Josef GISKES of FAK 307 discloses:

"Subject stated that cooperation between the SS Jagdverband and a FAK was non-existent. He also mentioned that the FAKs did not cooperate with the SD and Gestapo, but were dependent on the latter agencies for arrest, detention and interrogation of captured foreign agents. Only after specific instructions were issued was a member of FAK allowed to talk to a prisoner, and then only in the presence of a Gestapo member."

Deliberate aloofness between the agencies is substantiated further in this interrogation. It is stated that the FAK took no steps for underground activities after the cessation of hostilities. And it is then stressed that this was only with reference to Abwehr III activities. GISKES remarks:

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"(He) is fairly certain that the SS and RSHA AMT VI will have planned certain elaborate schemes for post war activities, although he claims to be completely ignorant about any details."

The supremacy of RSHA did not eliminate the problems. As late as 23 April 1945, Leitstelle II Sudost officers were concealing the location of documents from the SD. In SCI Preliminary Interrogation Report of Lt. Hans BAUER, 24 June 1945, is the following:

"The Leitstelle officers had known for a long time that the SD was interested in laying their hands on the documents (unterlagen), especially those pertaining to radio communications with the V-Funker. This interest obviously had some relation to the German post-war plans of which the anti-Nazi personnel of the Leitstelle did not approve, and which it wanted to prevent. Consequently it was by common consent.....that it was decided to hand over these documents to the Americans. But in order to accomplish this objective orders were given by Lt. Col. FECHNER to be on guard for any attempt by the SD or SS to remove the documents from the Leitstelle by force."

Even in 1943-44 various agencies were striking out on their own, and in the sabotage field numerous networks were originating against the Russians. Abt II, Ast BUCHAREST - Lt. GUENTHER of the Abwehr School at KAMENZ - the SD under SS Ustuf WINTER - Oberleutnant KOENIG of Lehrregiment KURFUERST, who had been charged by Mil Amt D with preparations for sabotage - FAK 206 attached to Army Group South Ukraine: all were engaged in organizing their own sabotage operations. The situation was such that it had to be resolved in Berlin.

Particularly toward the end of hostilities did the folly of a cumbersome disunified intelligence system become evident. Resistance networks, staybehind plans, Werewolf activities sprang up independently. There was duplication and error and, most of all, no unified strength. Amts III and IV - themselves within the RSHA - and the HSSuPF's as superior SS and police chiefs in the Wehrkreise - were formulating independent plans, as has been disclosed in numerous reports. HSSuPF SCHIMANA of the Vienna Wehrkreis reported that the Wehrmacht began taking an active interest

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in Werewolf chiefly because of difficulties that had arisen or might arise because of overlapping activities of the Werewolf and regular Wehrmacht people.

There occurred a hodge-podge of such overlapping and duplication. Amt VI was organizing an information network in Belgium complete with W/T operators, while Amt III was also planning to cover this area.

Amt IV N was organizing stay-behind sabotage groups quite independently of any SKORZENY or Werewolf enterprises.

A captured document reveals that late in 1944, OHLENDORF, head of Amt III, issued instructions to AMT III B to organize a network of agents of foreign nationality to work among foreign laborers. This represented the unexpected condition of Amt III employing agents in Germany who were not German nationals and paralleled and duplicated the efforts of Amt IV N in that direction.

Amt VII and Amt VI Kult likewise appear from reports to have had more or less identical functions.

Some attempt to control these un-coordinated efforts of Amt VI E and the Werewolf in the southeast is brought to light in an interrogation report of HOETTL, 20 June 1945:

"KALTENBRUNNER signed a decree prepared (and proposed) by WANECK in March 1945 ordering that political operations could be undertaken by the Jagdverbände (and the Werewolf) in this area only with the consent of the heads of the proper Landesgruppe in VI E. This was aimed against SKORZENY's political stupidity. VI E already had agents in the national partisan groups, and there was some confusion through the SKORZENY agreements with them."

Subsequent interrogations of GIS personnel should contribute additional convincing examples of the dissension and internal conflict which impaired the efficient and productive functioning of the German intelligence agencies, and delayed and confused their preparations for the future. At the war's end, this situation had become too far-flung and insidious for hasty repair.

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