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119

Major General William Donovan
Office of the US Chief Prosecutor of Axis Crimes
APO 413.

My dear General Donovan:

Although I have had the honor of being introduced to you when I worked for the OSS in August 1943, you probably won't know my name. I am the editor of the oldest anti-Nazi newspaper in German language, published in the US, the Neue Volkszeitung, and, as a former member of the German Reichstag, was one of the earliest concentration camp inmates in Oranienburg near Berlin in 1933. As such, I was asked four weeks ago to give testimony for the Nueremberg trials in your office in Washington, and of course was delighted to do so.

If I may, I should like to ask your help in a matter which I know is of great importance with regard to the political effect of the trials in this country. I have just returned from an extensive lecture tour under the auspices of the Extension Division of the University of Minnesota, which took me all over the Dakotas, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, places with large settlements of Americans of German descent. Although, publishing a German language paper, I have never entertained any illusions about the attitude of a considerable part of that population, I was again unpleasantly amazed at this attitude; countless persons confessed to me that they did not even believe the pictorial reports on the concentration camps!

I have put in an application with the public relations office of the War Department for an accreditation as correspondent to cover the Nueremberg trials. Upon intervention of Elmer Davis who knows me and my paper well, Major General Surles, Director of the Bureau of Public Relations of the War Department, wrote me that the quota of correspondents established by the ET command would not permit any additional accreditations unless a more liberal policy is pursued in view of the forthcoming trials. I believe I do not need to point out to you the great importance of telling the story of the trials, in German, in the German language press in America; I would not only do so in my own paper whose circulation reaches all over the country but through an existing news-service reach 41 German language papers in this country. Therefore may I ask you, if you will, to be good enough to arrange with the public relations officer in your office who takes care of the reporting of the trials to take my application under favorable consideration. I do hope I am not imposing on you; I trust you will understand the influence upon the American population of German descent. I would be ever so grateful to you if you would kindly support my application for the reason given above.

Respectfully yours,



Gerhart H. Seger.

GHS:ggf