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23 June 1945

MEMORANDUM

TO: Major General William J. Donovan
Director, Office of Strategic Services

FROM: Winston M. Scott, ^{WMS} Lt. (j.g.) USNR
X-2 German Section

SUBJECT: Sections of the R.S.H.A. Possibly
Involved in War Crimes

1. Attached is a copy of a report on Sections of the R.S.H.A. Possibly Involved in War Crimes.

2. A copy of a chart giving the organization of the Reichsicherheitshauptamt (R.S.H.A.), prepared by X-2 here, is attached. Sections of the R.S.H.A. of War Crimes interest are marked on the chart.

Enclosure: 1 copy of chart (SECRET)

Distribution

General Donovan (1) ✓
Mr. Whitney, OSS,
War Crimes Representative (1)
Mr. Allan Evans, R&A (1)
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Sections of the R. S. H. A
Possibly Involved in War Crimes.

The German Intelligence Service at the end of the war was the Reichssicherheitshauptamt, or RSHA. The RSHA central organization was set up in nine offices, as shown on the attached chart. Of these, in regard to war crimes, we need carefully examine but four offices. These four are Amt III, the Sicherheitsdienst, or SD, the super-indoctrinated Nazi information service; Amt IV, the notorious Geheimestaatsspolizei (Gestapo), Nazi repressive arm and SD executive agency; Amt V, the Kripo Amt, corresponding roughly to the CID; Amt VI, the intelligence and sabotage branch.

To avoid swamping the reader in the mire of technical language and abbreviations concerning the sections, sub-sections and special sections of the RSHA, this report will deal with the headquarters organization, omitting detailed discussion of the smaller sections. In general, the various Aemter (headquarters sections) of the RSHA are divided into lettered sections known as Gruppen, which are sub-divided, infinitum, into numbered sections sub-sections known as Referate. Unhappily, the principle of division, if any, was partly geographic, partly functional and partly personal. For convenience in reference the sections of the RSHA of interest, as regards war crimes, will be marked in red on the attached chart.

The sections of the RSHA having no reference to this report are Amt I and Amt II, the personnel and administrative sec-

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tions of the RSHA; and Amt San and Amt N, respectively the medical and communications sections of the RSHA. While war criminals might well be found in any of these sections, it is no more likely that they should exist here than in any Nazi Party organization, or Wehrmacht-SS unit.

For purposes of study the RSHA may be divided roughly into three sections: Security and Repression, including the Amt III, Amt IV and Amt V; Intelligence, Amt VI and Amt VII; Sabotage, sub-sections of VI and special units. As the German Intelligence Service has been conservatively estimated to have 60,000 members, this report will not deal with personalities. X-2, can, however, supply personal data and descriptions of at least half of this personnel, and the names and duties of the bulk of the 60,000, if desired.

The security and repression section of the RSHA includes the SD, the Gestapo and the Kripo. The SD grew out of the SS, the original elite corps of the Nazi Party. Himmler, in 1932, realized that the party was growing too rapidly for him to maintain personal knowledge of potential defectors, non-sympathizers and other "undesirables". To help him in his security efforts he formed, from the most ardent and capable Nazis in the SS at that time, the SD as his personal intelligence service. It was their mission to penetrate all sections of the Nazi Party and to report to Himmler on the temper and morale of the members.

Soon, however, as the Nazi Party rose to greater national significance, Himmler ordered the SD to report on all Germany. The SD then proceeded to insinuate agents into every nook and

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cranny of the involved structure of the German state and social life. From the thousands of reports submitted by the paid and unpaid agents of the SD, Himmler was able to form a most accurate picture of the morale and opinion of the German people.

The SD had two other tasks of special interest to us - the surveillance and penetration of communities of German origin living outside Germany, that is, the Volksdeutsche; and the surveillance of foreign workers within Germany. These two duties were enlarged by the SD until at last it was engaged in running agents into enemy and neutral countries, and in active counter-espionage. Both the SD espionage and counter-espionage were well planned and executed. SD agents are recognized by the Allied secret services as among the most capable figures in German intelligence.

Through the tremendous volume of reports which the SD received from its agents in every section of German government, social and business life, the SD was able to tell the Gestapo where opposition was growing and where repression measures were needed. It could also keep the Government and Party accurately informed of public opinion. Though almost unknown outside of professional intelligence circles, the SD was the most dangerous group within the German Intelligence Service - capable, thorough-going Nazis.

It is well to keep in mind when reading documents concerned with the SD that untutored opinion often makes of the SD what it actually is not. The term SD is found to be used in three ways: correctly in reference to the SD proper, Amt III of

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the RSHA; incorrectly as an abbreviation for the term Sipo and SD (the secret police authority in occupied countries); and incorrectly again, as a loose term to describe German intelligence as a whole.

It is also to be remembered that while the Gestapo received much of the publicity and notoriety as the repressive arm of the Nazi Party, it was but the executive agency of the SD, who sat in the background and directed every move made by the Gestapo.

Amt IV, the Gestapo, was invented by that arch good-fellow Hermann Goering, when he took over the administration of Prussia in 1933. The first three years after its conception the Gestapo functioned solely on the authority of the Nazi Party, without any legislative support. It was engaged, at that time, in extirpating from German political life every individual movement, or institution that was or might become a center of resistance to the Party.

In 1936 the Gestapo was legalized by a law, framed in the broadest terms, which stated that the decisions and acts of the Gestapo were valid throughout the Reich and were not subject to review or restraint by any court of law. As we last knew it, prior to the peace, the Gestapo was responsible for the investigation and repression of opposition to the Nazi Party, including Communism, Marxism, partisan activities, reaction, pacifism, defeatism, sabotage, political assassination, forgeries, high treason, and violations of industrial security. The Gestapo had complete powers of censorship of all forms of communication; for suppres-

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sion of Jews; for investigating Catholicism, Protestantism, and other religious groups on political grounds. It was charged with maintaining the concentration camps and for the administration of protective custody. A separate section of the Gestapo was responsible for counter-espionage.

The proper picture of the Gestapo is that of a legal gang of ruthless and vicious killers, whose brain was supplied largely by the shrewd, 100% Nazi SD. It should be remembered however, that the "high" standard of Gestapo recruiting which characterized its early days was lost in the later years of the war and many members of the Gestapo had to be drafted from the relatively effete units of the Waffen SS, and certain police organizations. (In fairness to some of these members, they have been known to have complained bitterly of their new assignments.)

The Gestapo is the most likely home of the war criminal in the RSHA. As it was the executive arm of the security services, to it fell all of the blood and guts repression work which it carried out with vicious dispatch.

The Kripo, Amt V of the RSHA, can by no means be known as an Intelligence agency. It is purely and simply a criminal police service, engaged in preventing and investigating crime within Germany and occupied Europe. It is similar to the CID but is of slight interest here because of the fact that so many Gestapo members have been recruited from the ranks of the Kripo. It is possible that members of the Gestapo may try to cover themselves at this point by claiming Kripo positions.

Of special interest in Amt V is Gruppe V D, the Crimino-

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logical Institute of the SIPO. As shown on the attached chart, Referat V DI, is a laboratory for scientific criminal research. Section V D2 in combination with the Medical Institute of the SIPO for Criminal Investigation and the Biological Institute of the SIPO were responsible for the following: a. To maintain indexes of all anti-social and criminal "family groups" in Germany; b. To segregate according to the principles of criminal biology (whatever these may be) all juveniles who are regarded as harmful to society and who "necessitate" police action in the interest of crime prevention; c. To take part in research into the heredity of the German people and to compile records from the point of view of criminal biology.

The exact workings of these organizations are unknown to X-2, as they have no bearing upon counter-espionage, but it is believed that both of these organizations were engaged in experiments similar, though on a smaller scale, to those in the concentration camps.

The foreign intelligence agency of the RSHA is Amt VI W (with its subordinate the Mil Amt) and Amt VII. We may dismiss the latter almost immediately, as its functions have never been clear, either to us or the Germans. It was initially a section for research on intelligence matters, though later reports indicate that it was a means for the dissemination of Nazi culture through contact in neutral countries with learned individuals and societies, writers, journalists, and the like. Although its representatives sometimes engaged in the polite collection of scientific and political gossip, there is nothing to indicate that any of the rather scholarly personnel

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would have engaged in war crimes.

Amt VI, however, is another matter. It is the Amt wherein most of the German agents, in other years more appropriately referred to as spies, are to be found. As the illicit collection of information within the neutral and enemy countries is now common practice it is not thought that war criminals would be found in great quantity among the persons concerned with the planning, administration and execution of secret missions - such personnel constituting the bulk of Amt VI. There are however, three sections of possible interest. VI G is a Referat which, while collecting enemy equipment, records and scientific apparatus, was not above picking up objets d'art. VI C Z (Not listed on attached chart) is a special Referat concerned with sabotage on the Eastern Front; VI S and Mil Amt D were the RSHA sabotage units.

The German sabotage, subversive and terrorists elements fell under one command in the last year of war, that of Otto Skorzeny, best publicized for his release of Mussolini from Allied hands. In Amt VI we find Gruppe VI S concerned with sabotage and subversion. It was a small section and grew smaller as its personnel was drafted into Skorzeny's other and much more active units. Other Skorzeny units were the SS Jaegerbataillon 502 (not charted for it is an SS organization and not officially part of the RSHA) which included the Sondereinsatzabteilung and the SS Jagdverbaende. The SS Jaegerbataillon 502 was formed in 1943 incorporating many of the agents of various nationalities of Amt VI S. The Sondereinsatzabteilung was a unit of swimming saboteurs, one man torpedo

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operatives and the like. The SS Jagdverbaende included agents of many nationalities, but later, as personnel problems grew this outfit became predominately German. It was the SS Jagdverbaende that replaced the Brandenburg Division, one time Wehrmacht saboteur pool. Agents of the SS Jagdverbaende were sent individually or in small groups to their country of origin with missions such as reacting the post-occupational sabotage and subversive networks and performing acts of sabotage against specific targets. Some of these agents had terrorists assignments including assassination of important political figures or turned German agents. The organization was also responsible for Commando type raids on isolated outposts - these raids were sometimes performed by men in German uniform and sometimes in disguise or Allied uniforms. It was the SS Jagdverbaende that released Mussolini. The 150 Panzerbrigade, abolished in January 1945, was formed by Skorzeny to spearhead the Rundstedt offensive. It did this in Allied uniforms and using Allied vehicles and equipment.

As German sabotage groups within the German Intelligence are parallel to similar Allied groups, it is not presumed that they are all war criminals. The preceding information was listed to show where such personnel could be found, if they are of interest to the War Crimes Commission.

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