

8. Report of Interview with General Edwin L. Sibert on the Gehlen Organization, 26 March 1970

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT : Report of Interview with
Brigadier General Edwin L. Sibert
of the Gehlen Organization

1. General Sibert first heard of General Gehlen when Colonel W. R. Philp, Chief of the 12th Army Group Interrogation Center at Oberursel reported to him on the interrogation of Gehlen by Captain Boker. This was almost certainly in June 1945. Sibert did not see Gehlen that summer, in fact he did not see him until just before his (Sibert's) departure on PCS (to an assignment with CIA), in September 1946, (Sibert was unaware that Gehlen had spent months at Fort Hunt, August 1945 through June 1946.) This is not too surprising for the activity which Philp and Boker started the Germans working on was at this stage no more than a research project using POW's. Not a very big deal. After Gehlen and his five colleagues departed for the U.S. Wessel and Baun and a couple of others remained at Oberursel producing plans and so forth. So there was a group of Germans there turning out paper during the winter and spring of 1945-46 and Sibert did not miss Gehlen.

2. Sibert did not clear the employment of the Germans with General Bradley (who departed to the U.S. very soon after VE Day), or with General Eisenhower, who stayed on for several months, or with General Smith. It was his decision.

3. Sibert said that he had definitely never met Wessel and Baun.

4. During the winter of 1945-46 there was a gradual drift into operations by the Wessel-Baun group at Oberursel; they were in small operations by March 1946, as Herre has testified. Baun, in his diary, frequently spoke of General Sibert making a decision, for instance, to allow the Wessel-Baun group to start CI operations, then COMINT, and finally positive operations during that winter. Sibert could recall none of this. It is possible that his memory has failed him, but it is equally possible that he was not informed, and that the decision was made by Philp, or perhaps Deane. This point is not too important, for wherever the locus of decision was, it was a process of drift.

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8. (Continued)

5. General Sibert did not believe that he had made a rather formal, verbal, gentlemen's agreement with General Gehlen when he saw him for the first and last time in August 1946. It is entirely possible that the two men just said hello and goodbye. Gehlen has always treated the gentlemen's agreement as his first basic charter. It may be that the details were worked out between Gehlen and Philp and that Sibert simply gave the project his blessing. When I set forth the possible terms of such an agreement (priority number one - Soviet troops in the Soviet zone, no operations against the western allies, no cryptanalysis, etc.) he readily agreed that that would have been the type of agreement on which the Gehlen Organization's work was founded. The point is not vital for it is certain that the first written directive from the army to Gehlen was that of Colonel Schow's in October 1948.

6. Sibert did not recall too much contact with Crosby Lewis, Chief of SSU Germany. He did not remember getting in touch with him in the fall of 1945 about having SSU take over the German Organization.

7. Sibert stated that he briefed [] on the Gehlen Organization some time in the summer of 1946. He added the request that if the [] arrested any mysterious Germans in their zone who claimed to be operating against the Russians at the behest of the Americans, would he please "hand 'em over" to the U.S. Army.

8. He reported to duty with CIG in September 1946 and immediately briefed General Vandenberg on the Gehlen Organization. He states that as a result of this initiative the meeting with Dulles and Jackson was held in New York in December 1946.

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