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Report on the Specialists returning from the Soviet Union

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Summary:

Report on the return of German scientists from the Soviet Union. The report informs the SED leadership which of the German scientists desire to return to the West and which will stay in the East. The report also discusses the political attitudes of the scientists. It makes suggestions as to ways to secure their cooperation with the East German government.

Original Language:

German

Contents:

Translation - English

After consultation with the responsible administration and the representatives of State Security, perusal of the available documents and personal discussions with 100 specialists in Sukhumi and Moscow, the following material has been put together:

1. A general specialist evaluation of the individual specialists.
2. Their political attitude towards the Soviet Union and the German Democratic Republic.
3. Their links with West Berlin, West Germany and [other] foreign, capitalist countries.
4. Operational information which has been obtained on 48 people.
5. The possibilities of tying them to the German Democratic Republic.

6. Which specialists intend to go to West Germany.

Currently, there are in:

Sukhumi, 104 families=309 people

Volga, 26 families=77 people

Moscow, 5 families=11 people

Kharkov, 2 families= 5 people

Voronezh, 1 family=2 people

Rostov-on-Don, 1 family =1 person

Total, 139 families=405 people

Sub-division according to profession

1 professor of chemistry

19 doctors of physics

6 doctors of chemistry

4 doctors of medicine

22 engineers/designers

9 chemists

2 physicists

57 skilled workers

1 journalist

1 student

17 without a profession

The von Ardenne collective

The von Ardenne group forms a closed collective of 15 people. This group will work with him in the institute in Dresden.

The responsible comrades of the Soviet administration said that among the remaining specialists are experts, some of greater scientific importance than von Ardenne.

The following is known about von Ardenne:

Von Ardenne is an engineer and has no further scientific qualification. He is an outstanding specialist.

Our information is that upon his return he intends to undertake research projects which are of great importance to the USSR and GDR.

Our Friends [the Soviets] do not yet know anything about these [projects]; they

intend to talk to him some time about them.

He was head of an institute in Berlin and had connections with Himmler, Göring and Göbbels. He paid financial contributions to the NSDAP [National Socialist German Workers Party] and carried out military research tasks during the War.

His conduct up to recent times has still displayed an anti-Soviet attitude, though outwardly he presents himself as loyal.

He has a bank account in West Germany into which sums of money are regularly deposited by the Americans in respect of patents and [of] his house.

He is very greedy and makes thorough and inconsiderate use of his co-workers. One of his characteristics is a need for [personal] admiration.

He has links with West Berlin, West Germany and [other] foreign, capitalist countries. At the end of the War he intended to work for the Americans, however as the Soviet troops were quicker into Berlin he offered his services to the Soviet Government. A letter [in this regard] to the American Military Government is available.

In our opinion and that of our Friends, it is necessary to bring von Ardenne home with the first transport, so as to make it clear that his importance is fully recognized. By making use of his greed and his need for admiration, it is possible to keep him in the GDR.

Upon their return, seven people in von Ardenne's collective must be subjected to operational processing. The reasons [for the interrogation, they would have been placed under surveillance and investigation] are suspicions of espionage, anti-Soviet views, connections with the Gestapo and anti-democratic opinions [anti-Communist]. Concerning the other people, nothing of importance is known.

The most important person among the remaining scientists is:

Riehl, Nikolaus - Dr. of Physics

Riehl is an internationally-known scientist, is a member of many scientific societies, has extensive connections with West Germany and [other] foreign, capitalist countries and has visited almost all the countries of Europe.

He is a "Hero of Socialist Labour" and has once won the "Stalin Prize 1st Class" (receiving 200,000 rubles). In the Soviet Union all his wishes were fulfilled.

It is known that the Americans, as well as West Germany, for scientific and political reasons, are very interested in him and will try, using all means, to convince him to leave the GDR.

He is politically inscrutable, extremely cunning and knows how to adapt himself to the prevailing circumstances. He thinks very highly of himself and knows his worth.

In the opinion of our Friends it is imperative to keep him in the GDR. He is well-informed about a number of developments in the USSR. Only by showing him appropriate respect and by finding him appropriate employment can he be kept in the GDR.

Information is available, according to which he intends to leave the German Democratic Republic. [...]

The following specialists must be subjected to operational processing:

Barwich, Heinz

Dr. of Physics

Bumm, Helmut
Dr. of Physics
Siewert, Gerhard
Dr. of Chemistry
Ortmann, Henry
Dr. of Chemistry
Herrmann, Walter
Dr. of Physics
Hartmann, Werner
Dr. of Physics
Schuetze, Werner
Dr. of Physics
Froehlich, Heinz[13]
Dr. of Physics
Kirst, Werner
Engineer, Chemistry
Bernhardt, Fritz
Engineer, Physics
Sille, Karl
Engineer, Fine Mechanics

These people have links to secret services, were formerly counter-intelligence officers in the Gestapo, displayed a hostile attitude at work or have interesting connections with persons in foreign, capitalist countries.

No operational material of importance exists concerning the remaining specialists. They did their work satisfactorily. [...]

The following people have shown a positive attitude towards developments in the USSR:

Dr. of Physics
Prof. Vollmer, Muehlenfort

No operational material of importance exists concerning the skilled workers and those people who are doing no work. In general, they have done their work satisfactorily and did not display a negative attitude. 3 skilled workers were members of the SED. [...]

Once the specialists had been consulted and the available information examined, a final discussion was held with the management of the Sukhumi Institute and with Comrade Colonel Kuznetsov.

By way of summary, on the basis of the personal impressions formed in the discussions with the specialists, of the available information and [of the] the opinion of our Friends, the following conclusion can be reached:

The majority of the scientists and engineers will only make a decision upon their return to the GDR and according to the criterion of [the availability of] work. Almost all of them intend to obtain a good job. Their employment will be decisive in tying them to the GDR. For this reason it is imperative to arrange a fitting reception for the specialists.

Our Friends are interested in the following scientists remaining in the GDR, since they had worked on important research projects:

Schimor [misspelled: actually Schimohr] Schilling
Barwich Born
Muehlenfort [misspelled: actually Muehlenpfordt] Ziel [misspelled: actually Ziehl]
Schmidt Lange
Wirts [misspelled: actually Wirths] Riehl
Kirst Thieme
Toppin [misspelled: actually Tobin] Siewert
Katsch [misspelled: actually Catsch] Zimmer
Zuehlke Schibilla [perhaps misspelled and actually Przybilla]

Further, our Friends are further of the opinion that those of the specialists' children who express the wish to complete their study in the USSR should be assigned to the "Deutsche Landsmannschaft".[14]

Furthermore, the Soviet administration explained that there were no contracts with the specialists which placed obligations on the GDR.

The Soviets are again examining whether the specialists have entitlements deriving from their contracts. Should this be the case, the government of the GDR will be notified.

A list is available with the names of the people who are considered for the first transport.

Of importance are the von Ardenne collective and Prof. Vollmer (1st transport).

The Soviet administration again asks for official confirmation via the GDR embassy that the GDR government is ready to admit the planned 139 families to the GDR. This will also facilitate the organization of the transports.

The private notes of some scientists will be examined by a Commission and handed over to the embassy for forwarding. Thus it will be possible to ascertain whether [any] research results have been achieved which are of importance for the GDR. The result of the examination and the documents will be handed over to the embassy.

It is proposed to send the first transport from Sukhumi to Dresden, since in it will be chiefly specialists who will live and work in Dresden. For reasons of competence, the transport from the Volga must be sent to Berlin, since 11 families are to be accommodated in Berlin and 6 families are going to West Berlin.

The remaining 9 families will be distributed among the various cities in the GDR. The same applies to the Moscow group. 3 people must be accommodated in Berlin and one person is going to West Berlin.

In accordance with the wishes of the individual specialists, a list was drawn up concerning:

- (a) the specialists who will work at the Academy [of Sciences],
- (b) the specialists who want to work in industry,
- (c) the specialists who want to study or work at the universities and technical high schools,
- (d) other persons, as well as those who will pursue no profession,

(e) persons who will go to West Berlin or West Germany.