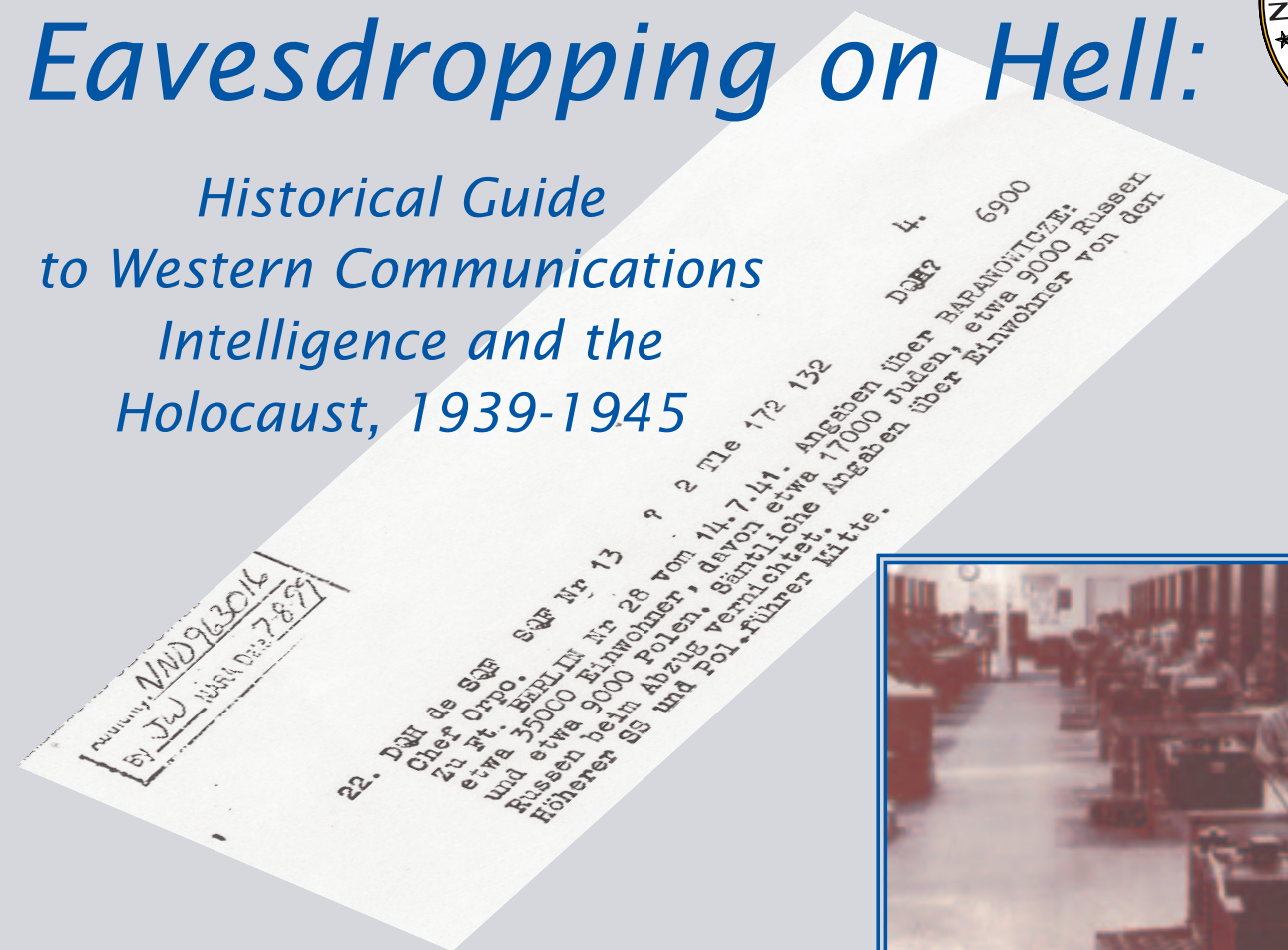




Eavesdropping on Hell:

Historical Guide
to Western Communications
Intelligence and the
Holocaust, 1939-1945



UNITED STATES CRYPTOLOGIC HISTORY

*Eavesdropping on Hell:
Historical Guide to Western
Communications Intelligence
and the Holocaust, 1939-1945*

Robert J. Hanyok



CENTER FOR CRYPTOLOGIC HISTORY

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This book is dedicated to those cursed with the memory of this horror and to those who assumed the burden of its remembrance.

Preface

***There is no river but memory
Raise up, raise up a pillar of
our tears.***

“Leaving Sodom” by Ann Lauinger

Surely, the grimmest part of the Second World War was the Holocaust (or Shoah). This entailed the systematic and wholesale destruction of European Jewry and other groups such as Slavs, Poles, and Romany (Gypsies), among others, which the Nazis had deemed “inferior” and then slated for destruction because of race, blood, or disability. In fact, one of the major war aims of Nazi Germany was the extermination of global Jewry. During the war years, Europe’s landscape was scarred by the presence of concentration, labor, and death camps. Einsatzgruppen (operations groups), and numerous German Police units roamed the western Soviet Union in the wake of the Wehrmacht, slaughtering Jews, Slavs, and Bolsheviks. Collaborationist regimes of nations allied to or conquered by the Axis powers cooperated with the Nazi security forces in extinguishing national or resident refugee Jewish populations. The darkness that overwhelmed Nazi-occupied Europe and threatened other nations in the world was only slightly lessened by individual acts of courageous opposition and the example of the nation of Denmark, which smuggled virtually its entire Jewish population to safety in Sweden. By the end of the war, it has been estimated that Europe’s Jewish population had been reduced to somewhere between a third to a quarter of its 1939 level.¹

In the years following the war, a number of histories, memoirs, and specialized studies about the Holocaust were published. These works were based on a variety of private and official sources

that were then available to the public. For the longest period, one element that was largely missing in the historical accounts was the records of the various Western intelligence agencies, such as the American Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and Britain’s M.I.6. Also absent was the intelligence gathered by the wartime Allied communications intelligence (COMINT) agencies, most notably the British Government Code and Cypher School (GC&CS), the U.S. Navy’s OP-20-G, and the U.S. Army’s Signals Intelligence Service (SIS). The revelations in the mid-1970s of the Allied code-breaking successes – the deep and persistent exploitation of Axis codes, ciphers, and communications, popularly referred to as “Ultra” – only whetted the appetite of Holocaust researchers. Once it was known that Allied code-breakers had pierced the Reich’s deepest secrets, the question posed was how much more information would be available for researchers?

Beginning in the mid-1970s, scholars of the Holocaust who had wanted to utilize the archived material of the wartime code-breaking agencies focused their research on the then available records at the United States’ National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and the United Kingdom’s Public Record Office (renamed the National Archives in 2003). During the first few years after the Ultra revelations, these scholars discovered little significant information about the Holocaust in the wartime records of the British GC&CS and the American SIS. These records, by the way, were stored in the record groups of their modern successor agencies. The records of the SIS were to be found in Record Group (RG) 457, the records of the National Security Agency (NSA). The GC&CS records were placed in Group HW, the records of the Government Communications Headquarters

(GCHQ). The actual number of records in either group was not large by any measure; nor were they particularly revealing. For example, in NARA by 1990, there were about 150 translations of intercepted wartime Japanese, German, and Vichy diplomatic messages that referred to the Holocaust, while at the PRO there may have been fewer.² Considering the nature and scope of the Holocaust – every country in Europe and many of their colonial holdings were affected in some fashion by what the Nazis were doing – the number of publicly available records seemed meager.

At the same time, the records that were available seemed to have large gaps in the subject matter that they covered. Topics of enormous importance to understanding the Holocaust, such as the depredations of the police and SS units in Russia, the operations of the death camps, and the roundup of the Hungarian Jews, barely were mentioned in the extant material. Especially when compared to the large body of records from these and other events during the Holocaust, that there were so few items from communications intelligence sources in the British and American archives during the 1970s seemed to invite disbelief, ridicule, or suspicion.

Researchers also could construe the absence of significant archival holdings of the wartime records of the Allied code-breaking agencies to mean that further, still unreleased, caches of records existed. These “absent” records were believed to be in either one of two forms: finished intelligence in the form of reports still classified and therefore withheld from the public, or there existed troves of “raw,” or undecrypted, Axis messages at these agencies. Exacerbating the situation was the publication, during the decade of the 1980s, of the official multivolume *History of British Intelligence in the Second World War*.³ This enormous history referenced British records of intercepted Nazi messages about the Holocaust, mainly those of the German Police who were one of the primary agents for the massacres of hundreds of thousands of Jews and oth-

ers in the western Soviet Union. The history also referred to intercepted messages from the SS concerning the slave labor populations at a number of concentration camps.⁴ Ironically, the actual records used to write the history still were not accessible by the public.

In a way these scholars were correct in their observations. Even by the late 1980s, the British and Americans still had much World War II cryptologic material to release. It was not until a number of further significant releases of wartime records of the Signal Intelligence Service and the Government Code and Cypher School through the decade of the 1990s that the amount of COMINT material available to researchers of the Holocaust dramatically increased.⁵ By early 2004, at NARA, over 600 translations and decrypts of various intercepted messages about the Holocaust could be found in the record groups of the National Security Agency. These included some decrypts of German Police messages that reported the massacres of Jews and other groups. Others are messages from mostly diplomatic sources that bear witness to such events as the roundup of Jews in Hungary and other countries in occupied Europe. At the PRO, the complete set of German Police and SS decrypts were available to be reviewed by the public.⁶

Even with the releases of the 1990s, the U.S. government still held back significant collections of U.S. government records about the Holocaust. But the remaining wartime records, and those from the postwar period that relate to the Holocaust and to Nazi and other Axis power war crimes will soon be declassified and released thanks to the efforts of the United States Interagency Working Group on Nazi War Crimes (IWG). Established in January 1999 in accordance with the Nazi War Crimes Disclosure Act (P.L. 105-246), the IWG was charged with locating, inventorying, and recommending for declassification all classified Nazi war criminal records held by the United States government. The act

was amended in 2000 to include declassification of U.S. government records pertaining to Japanese war crimes and war criminals.⁷ Many of the records that were released under the aegis of the Disclosure Act were from U.S. intelligence agencies. Hopefully, the release of these records will help dispel those claims and charges made over the years by some scholars and Holocaust survivors that “there had to be more records” or that the intelligence agencies were “holding back records.”⁸

To this historian, the problems that researchers and scholars of the Holocaust had had over the years with the number of available COMINT records appeared to lay elsewhere than just with the paucity of this material. Similar reactions to the later several releases of wartime records to the NARA and the PRO suggested to me that the issue was a fundamental one: That researchers and scholars still misunderstood the basic operation of the Allied wartime COMINT system. Many people did not understand how the wartime code-breaking agencies procured, processed, and disseminated communications intelligence. They did not realize that there were technical and institutional constraints and limitations under which GC&CS and SIS operated. Also, it was not generally well understood that there were priorities established for collection and decryption of Axis and neutral communications and that higher authorities in Allied intelligence and military operations had set these.

Many people also did not know that the operational needs of these agencies largely determined what wartime records were retained after the war, how the existing records were controlled, where the relevant records resided in various national archival collections, and who was responsible for their release. In short, the story of COMINT records relating to the Holocaust is much more than a simple matter of the number of pages available to the public at various national archives.

In considering all of the above, I determined that a historical guide would be useful for researchers, scholars, and the general public. Such a guide could help Holocaust researchers gain a better understanding of how Allied communications intelligence reported intelligence on the Holocaust. It would explain the variety of material that would be encountered in the records of the wartime cryptologic agencies. This guide, then, will concentrate on three topics that would be of interest and utility to scholars and the general public. First, it explains how the Western communications intelligence system operated during the war. It will consider how well the system operated and what were its limitations. This latter point is important when considering how Western COMINT handled intelligence about the Holocaust. Second, the guide describes how the wartime records of the SIS and GC&CS currently are organized in the national archives of Great Britain and the United States, where these records can be found, and the various formats they come in. Third, the guide summarizes what information is available from SIGINT records about the Holocaust. This summary consists of both a general chronology of the Holocaust and selected incidents for which significant communications intelligence records are available.

Despite the scope and detail of some of the material contained in this guide, it is not intended as a narrative history of the Holocaust based on the records of Western communications intelligence agencies. The major reason is that the archived COMINT records cannot sustain such a history. There are too many important parts of the history of the Holocaust for which no communications intelligence was collected. As will be demonstrated later in this work, communications intelligence could not reveal high-level Nazi policy deliberations regarding the Jews and other groups. On occasion, communications intelligence could “tip off” an impending action by Nazi security forces, as in Italy in the fall of 1943. But this advantage was rare. More often, COMINT was best as a chronicle of some campaigns that

already were under way such as the massacres carried out by the German Police units in the western USSR in 1941 and the roundup of the Hungarian Jews in mid-1944.

Although something of a historical narrative of the Holocaust is presented in the last chapter of this guide, it is meant to be a selected summary of the available information from COMINT records. It is beyond the scope and means for historians of cryptology to rewrite the story of the dreadful events of the Holocaust. Their mission is to discover the relevant records and write the history of cryptology and place that story within the context of larger events of the Second World War. It remains for historians of the Holocaust to utilize completely within their narratives the historical information provided by the records of the Allied code-breaking agencies.

This guide will limit its focus to the two major Western COMINT agencies that produced intelligence about the Holocaust during the war: the British GC&CS and the U.S. Army's SIS. Early in the war, the U.S. Navy's cryptologic element, OP-20-G, contributed some intercept of diplomatic communications, but by mid-1942, it ceded this work completely to the SIS and concentrated almost exclusively on Axis naval communications. A number of smaller Allies contributed to the overall Western radio intelligence work. These included Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and others. However, the American and British security concern to protect Ultra sometimes circumscribed the contribution of these smaller allies. Among these, refugee Polish cryptologists contributed major intercept and code-breaking efforts against German Police communications. Their work will be discussed later in the guide.

It is important to mention that the British had a limited COMINT relationship with the Soviet Union. Among other things, this included an exchange of technical information on German Police ciphers. (But it stopped short of revealing the Enigma breakthrough.) The Russians certainly

were in a position to intercept more police messages than the British (or the Poles). And they were able to read the same German Police messages as the British. But Western researchers do not know to what extent and for how long the Russians were able to exploit German Police radio traffic. Also, it is not known if the Soviets retained these decrypts in their archives after the war. These uncertainties mean that this guide will forego any consideration of the Soviet contribution to communications intelligence about the Holocaust. This subject must await future researchers gaining access to the appropriate archives in Moscow.⁹

The background chapter to this guide offers brief summaries of the history of anti-Semitism in the West and the early Nazi policies in Germany, as well as a short review of the limited body of historical and memoir literature prior to 1997 that pertains to both cryptology and the Holocaust. Chapter 2 will describe the general system by which communications intelligence was produced by the Allies during World War II. This description will encompass the system from the establishment of collection priorities, through the intercept of targeted Axis and neutral communications, next to the processing or analysis of the intercept for intelligence, and finally to the dissemination of the produced intelligence. Just as importantly, this section includes observations on how the nature of the communications intelligence process affected the collection of information concerning the Holocaust. Chapter 3 will list the various locations for relevant records of the American and British cryptologic agencies held by the National Archives and Records Administration and the Public Record Office. This chapter will also include a description and some examples of other smaller relevant records holdings. Chapter 4 will briefly review the available COMINT material that is part of the historical narrative of the Holocaust. This chapter includes a brief overview of the course of the Holocaust and somewhat more detailed descriptions of specific topics that include the refugee

problem and Palestine, Vichy and the Jews, the roundup of the Hungarian Jews, the situation of the Jews in the Far East under the Japanese, and German-Swiss trade and financial transactions during the war. Finally, Chapter 5 considers some important general observations about cryptology and the Holocaust. In a way, these observations are a summation of the material presented in the guide.

A Note on Terminology

Since the first revelations of the Ultra secret in the mid-1970s, the public has been exposed to a number of arcane terms associated with the business of making or breaking codes. Unfortunately, there has been a tendency among many scholarly and popular writers and reporters to confuse or mix terms. This misuse of terms often led to some inaccuracies in their texts such as referring to the German Enigma machine as a “code machine.” Although most of these terms are not relevant to this work, a few necessarily have to be used to accurately describe various activities and items of the Allied communications intelligence system. So I will define the most important ones and explain how they are used in this monograph.

COMINT is the acronym for *communications intelligence* and can be defined as measures taken to intercept, analyze, and report intelligence derived from all forms of communications. This definition describes most accurately the entire Western system to exploit Axis communications. The COMINT system included the code-breaking centers at Bletchley Park in Great Britain and the American centers at Arlington Hall, Virginia, and Nebraska Avenue in Washington, D.C. It also includes the monitoring stations manned by Allied radio operators that listened in and copies Axis and neutral radio transmissions. It further covers the work of the various Allied staffs and units that took the analyzed messages, picked out the intelligence that mattered and forwarded it to whatever Allied

command, ministry, department, or leader that would need it.

A similar term, *signals intelligence*, or *SIGINT*, is often used synonymously with communications intelligence in many histories of wartime intelligence. Signals intelligence is a term that encompasses a much broader category of electromagnetic emissions than just those used for communications. This category includes such emissions as radar and navigation beacons. During World War II, Western technical intelligence took an active interest in collecting such signals used by the Axis so that countermeasures could be developed against them. The famous British “window,” or chaff (strips of aluminum that reflected radar signals and created interference on German radar screens) was an effective weapon against German warning radars during the Allied bomber offensives. The British employed technical deceptive measures to defeat the Germans navigational beacons used by the Luftwaffe to guide its bombers during night raids against British cities.¹⁰

Cryptology is defined as the study of the making and breaking of codes and ciphers. *Cryptography* is the development of codes and ciphers. A *code* is defined as a method in which arbitrary groups of letter, number, or other symbols replace words, phrases, letters, or numbers for the purposes of concealment or brevity. To *encode* is to transform plaintext into a code. To *decode* is to break a code back to its underlying plaintext. A *cipher* is a method of concealing plaintext by transposing letters or numbers or by substituting other letters or numbers according to a key. A *key* is a set of instructions, usually in the form of letters or numbers, which controls the sequence of the encryption of text and the decryption of cipher back to the original plaintext. Transforming plaintext into cipher is called *encryption*. Breaking the cipher back to plaintext is called *decryption*. *Cryptanalysis* is the analytic method whereby code or cipher is broken back to the underlying plaintext. *Traffic analysis* is the

method by which intelligence is derived from the analysis of the communications activity and ele-



*Enigma Machine
(Courtesy of National Security Agency)*

ments of messages short of the actual cryptanalysis of a message.

Two examples of famous ciphers from World War II are the Axis cipher machines, the German Enigma and the Japanese Purple (known to the Japanese as the 97-shiki O-bun In-ji-ki, or Alphabetical Typewriter '97). Both machines substituted letters for plaintext elements according to daily settings (key) for each machine. Interestingly, most ciphers used by all sides during the war overwhelmingly were manual in nature. That is, they involved the use of paper charts and key. Such a manual cipher was the double transposition cipher used by German Police units to encrypt their reports about the massacres of Jews, partisans, prisoners, and Soviet commissars to Police headquarters in Berlin.

Codes used during the war usually came in the form of a book. On each page of the codebook, a plaintext word or phrase was aligned opposite its code group equivalent. Examples of a code include that used by the Soviets for its espionage messages known



*Purple Analog
(Courtesy of National Security Agency)*

through the Allied cover name as Venona and the Japanese operational naval code, JN-25. Both codes utilized books of code values for plaintext, but added an additional element: key, in the form of groups of numbers that were used to encrypt the code groups, further concealing the “true” code groups. This practice made decoding even more difficult: before a cryptanalyst could recover the plaintext value behind a code group, he or she first had to recover the true code group. An example of an ordinary code used during the war was the so-called “Black Code” used by the United States Army military attachés. This system was exploited by both Italy and Germany to great effect in 1941 and was probably Field Marshall Erwin Rommel’s best source of intelligence during the battle for North Africa.¹¹

To facilitate the understanding of readers who may be uncertain of the above jargon or uncomfortable with it, I will use terms like “cryptology,” “communications intelligence,” “COMINT,” “signals intelligence,” and “SIGINT” interchangeably either as adjectives or as nouns by which to describe or identify the overall system the Allies used to exploit Axis cryptography and communications. Using these five terms as general descriptors will not sacrifice accuracy and probably will make the text more readable. Other terms from cryptology, used once, will be defined as they are encountered in the text.

Acknowledgments

This guide took over five years to complete, far longer than originally planned when I began in late 1998. Why did it take so long to finish? Initially, like many other historians of cryptology, I believed that there was not much material available and felt therefore that a guide could be published within a relatively short time. In 1999 I previewed the guide in a paper delivered at the Cryptologic History Symposium held at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland. At the time I felt that relevant record sources mostly had been examined by scholars. A review of the symposium

paper in an intelligence journal had emphasized my remark about the “scanty” amount of communications intelligence records.¹² But I was wrong. The Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Nazi War Crimes (that soon included Imperial Japanese Imperial Records), which I joined in early 2001 as a technical advisor to its staff, already was deep into an extensive review all the records of Nazi crimes held by the many agencies and departments of the United States government, including its intelligence agencies. The records that were unearthed by the various intelligence agencies, and the clues they provided to supplementary finds in the British Public Record Office and the U.S. National Archives, indicated that there were many more pages of cryptologic records than earlier believed. Every further meeting of the IWG and the associated Historical Advisory Panel I attended had uncovered more records. I realized I had to delay the completion of this guide until the search by the IWG neared completion. The wait, I believe, was well worth it.

Within the National Security Agency, there were many people who contributed their efforts, directly and indirectly, to the publication of this Guide. First of all, the Publications Team of the Center for Cryptologic History (CCH) did its usual magic and turned my initial “heap of words” into the presentable form it now is. Many thanks go to the tireless efforts of Lula Greenwood and Barry Carleen. Within the CCH, Dave Mowry, Sharon Maneki, and David Hatch reviewed my manuscript and offered many useful points. Elsewhere, I am grateful for the insights from Robert L. Benson and Rona Lerner. There were others who contributed to this guide from the NSA, yet they cannot be mentioned by name. I wish to thank them publicly for their help.

Because of the scope of the information in this guide, it was necessary to consult with many individuals outside of the NSA. Although personal research provided much historical background to the Holocaust, the many months that I spent reviewing the literature of the Holocaust could

not provide me with that astute insight that is gained only from a deep and sustained professional study of a subject. So I queried a number of academic historians, independent scholars, and researchers familiar with the Holocaust for help. In all of my correspondence with them, I encountered nothing but gracious and full cooperation. My questions were patiently and quickly answered, requests for material were filled promptly, and several people took time from their busy schedules to review the manuscript. I hope that our effort was a mutually rewarding learning experience. Their cooperation suggests that history is more than a mere academic discipline; at times it can be a true community of effort, even, if at times, it can be a bit contentious. With this experience in mind, I wish to thank the following people for their incisive and useful comments on my manuscript: Gerhard Weinberg, Richard Breitman, Rebecca Boehling, Colin “Brad” Burke, David Alvarez, Christopher Lovett, Sebastian Laurent, Miriam Kleiman, and Ron Zweig. A very special thanks go to Stephen Tyas, Ralph Erskine, and Rebecca Ratcliff for both their comments on the manuscript and for sharing their historical research from the Public Record Office. And a final thanks to the archivists of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in selecting images from their photographic archives.

If there are any errors in this guide, then, in the eloquent words of the Qur’an: “If I err, I err just on my own.”

Robert J. Hanyok
Fort George G. Meade, MD
2005

Notes

1. Precise figures for the destruction of European Jewry are difficult to arrive at. Among other reasons, poor national census bases, a reluctance by some European nations to account for Jewish losses, and an uncontrolled refugee flow during and after the war have contributed to the continuing imprecision and discrepancies in the estimates. Most statistics are, in reality, good estimates. One source is Leon Poliakov and Josef Wulf, eds, *Das Dritte Reich and die Juden: Dokumente und Aufsatz* (Berlin: Arani-Verlag GmbH, 1955). The Jewish population of September 1939 Europe is estimated at 8.3 million. The number of Jews murdered is put at 5.97 million or about seventy-two percent. Another source, Wolfgang Benz in *Dimension des Volksmords: Die Zahl der Jüdischen Opfer des Nationalsozialismus* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991) places the final toll at 6.26 million Jews.

2. In the U.S. National Archives, some of the records in RG 457, "The Records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Service," can be found both the original version and a "redacted" version. This confusing situation resulted from the stricter requirements for declassification of the material released in the mid-1980s. By the mid-1990s, many of the earlier restrictions had been eased and original version of some of the material from the initial releases was transferred to the Archives without any deletions. Good examples of these dual versions can be found by comparing redacted Japanese translations found in Entry 9011 (notated also as "SRDJ"), or redacted French Vichy diplomatic translations, Entry 9021 (notated also as "SRDV) with the original, unredacted translation that can be found in the Historical Cryptographic Collection, Boxes 286 to 516.

3. F. H. Hinsley, et alia, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: Its Influence on Strategy and Operations*. (Volumes I-III) (London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1980 to 1990) Volume IV. F.H. Hinsley and C.A.G. Simkins, *Security and CounterIntelligence* (1990). Volume V. Michael Howard, *Strategic Deception* (1990).

4. Hinsley, Volume II (Appendix 5), 669-73.

5. For example, in 1996 the National Security Agency released some 1.3 million pages of World War

II records to the National Archives. This material was placed in the Historical Cryptographic Collection (HCC). The records originated with the U.S. Army's cryptologic agency known primarily as the Signals Intelligence Service. In this release were German Police messages and many more diplomatic messages from other countries, such as Switzerland and the Vatican, which referenced the Holocaust.

6. The numbers may yet change. At the PRO, there are a substantial number of GC&CS diplomatic translations still to be released to HW 12. Also, at NARA in RG 457, HCC, there are numerous boxes of so-called "Summary Translations" that consist of single pages with several short diplomatic translations. A single sheet can contain as many as five short translations, some of which are relevant to the Holocaust. (See Chapter 4 for an example of one of these "Summaries.")

7. Although a final count of records released under the Act remains to be made, as of January 2004, almost 700,000 pages from the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Security Agency, and the U.S. Army had been released. It is expected that the IWG will release three volumes of reports in 2004-5. There will be an overall report on the working group and its collaboration with other federal agencies. There also will be two volumes of reports by IWG-associated historians about the nature and significance of the declassified and released records. One volume will cover Europe while the other will consider Asia and the Pacific.

8. This historian personally encountered such charges, as well. At a NARA-sponsored symposium on Records and Research relating to Holocaust-era Assets in December 1998, a colleague from CIA and I were confronted by several Holocaust survivors who angrily claimed that our agencies were withholding records about certain Nazi war criminals. As it turned out, they had recently received negative responses to Freedom of Information Act requests concerning specific war criminals. They believed that NSA and CIA were withholding records on these individuals.

9. For further information see Hinsley, Vol. II, 57-65 and Bradley F. Smith, *Sharing Secrets with Stalin: How the Allies Traded Intelligence, 1941-1945* (Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas) 1996, 109-

111. Aspects of the proposed early British COMINT liaison with the Soviet Union can be found in PRO, HW 14/18, August 1941.

10. Probably the most complete and entirely readable book on the subject remains R.V. Jones's *The Wizard War. British Scientific Intelligence, 1939-1945* (New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, Inc., 1978).

11. See David Kahn, *Hitler's Spies: German Military Intelligence in World War II* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1978), 193-5, and *The Codebreakers* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1967), 472-4; Bradley F. Smith, *The Ultra-Magic Deals And the Most Secret Special Relationship, 1940-1946* (Novato, CA: Presidio Press, 1993), 111-112. For a description of U.S. diplomatic codes and ciphers during the period, see Ralph E. Weber, *United States Diplomatic Codes and Ciphers, 1775-1938* (Chicago: Precedent Publishing Co., 1979), 250-254.

12. Ralph Erskine. "Three Conferences." *International Intelligence History Association* (Vol. 7, No. 2, Winter 1999). The paper also is mentioned in James Bamford's *Body of Secrets: Anatomy of the Ultra-Secret National Security Agency from the Cold War through the Dawn of a New Century* (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 10-11.

Chapter 1

Background

The Context of European and Nazi Anti-Semitism

Anti-Semitism has been part of European history perhaps as early as Alexander's Empire in the 4th Century B.C.E. What has varied over the centuries since then has been the intensity of the animosity towards Jews, as well as the basis for it, whether it was grounded in political, religious, cultural, or ethnic differences. The early Roman emperors generally had a difficult relationship with Jews in the Empire. There was a major problem over the ritual of emperor worship, which Jews refused to perform. Imperial adjudication was required to settle disputes between Jewish and Gentile communities in such cities as Alexandria and Rome. After Constantine's reign (337 C.E.), the Christian emperors and church leaders placed administrative and legal restrictions on the Jewish population of the Roman Empire, although, for religious reasons, Jews were tolerated.¹

In early Medieval Europe there was popular hostility against Jews, but it was unsystematic and was charged with a clearly religious tone – more anti-Judaic than anti-Semitic. This attitude changed, though, in the 11th and 12th centuries when the zeal and intolerance of the Crusades spawned more virulent and violent anti-Semitic atrocities. During the First Crusade in 1096, Jewish communities, mostly in the Rhineland, were plundered and their inhabitants sometimes massacred by crusader armies on their way to the Holy Land. The following two centuries saw the growth of official policies that established ghettos, discriminatory laws, and financial victimization. In 1215 the Catholic Church's Fourth Lateran Council prescribed absolute ghettoization for urban Jewish communities and decreed

that Jews wear a yellow label as a sign of their pariah status.²

The religious wars of the reformation only brought more massacres and mistreatment for the Jews, especially in Germany. It was not until the Enlightenment and the French Revolution that conditions ameliorated somewhat when civil rights and citizenship were granted Jews. But in the latter part of the nineteenth century, anti-Semitism resurged throughout Europe. The centuries-old religiously based anti-Semitism continued to attract adherents. This old version was joined by a new strain that grew out the nationalistic fervor that dominated European politics well into the twentieth century. It was based on pseudo-scientific social and biological theories of racial differences that emphasized cultural, ethnic, and stereotyped physical differences. In some nationalist lexicons, Jews were now classified as members of the Semite "race."

The racial core of Nazi ideology was obvious from the earliest days of the movement in Munich. Early proponents of Nazism also hinted at the future destruction of Jewry. When the Nazis came to power in 1933, some anti-Semitic measures were adapted, but the initial policy was relatively unstructured. This changed in September 1935, when Hitler announced the passage of the Nuremberg Laws that, among others, prohibited relations and marriages between Jews and other Germans, forbade Jews to fly the German flag, and deprived them of citizenship. In later years during the war, American intercepts of German consular radio and cable traffic recorded how the effect of these laws was extended to overseas German Jews. These intercepts reported incidents in which individuals as far away as Argentina and China were deprived of German

citizenship because their Jewish parentage or denied state pensions unless a Jewish spouse was divorced.³

In the first years of the Nazi regime, the principal method for removing Jews from Germany was emigration. To “encourage” Jews to leave, the Nazis instituted a number of discriminatory measures that included the “aryanization” of the German economy, and, after the Anschluss with Austria, the placement of the mandatory “J” stamp in German passports held by Jews. By the beginning of the war, more than half of German and Austrian Jews had emigrated abroad. Some aspects of the early Jewish emigration from Germany appeared in the occasional Japanese diplomatic message from Berlin intercepted by the United States.⁴

In 1939, for European Jewry, two important events occurred that pushed their fate in the direction of the “Final Solution.” The first was in January 1939, when the control of anti-Semitic policy in Germany was delegated to the SS (*Schutz Staffel*). Operational control was placed specifically in the SS’s Reich Main Security Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt* or RSHA) under SS General Reinhard Heydrich. Heydrich controlled all Reich security services, including the Security Service (*Sicherheitsdienst* or SD) and the Gestapo (*Geheime Staats Polizei* or Secret State Police). Later, Adolf Eichmann was placed in charge of Department IVA4b of the RSHA, which was responsible for administering the “Jewish problem.”

The second occurred in September 1939 when Germany invaded Poland. England and France, honoring a defense pact with Poland, declared war on Nazi Germany. With these actions, the Second World War began, and the fate of European Jewry was changed for the worse. The war ended Germany’s original plan to rid itself of its Jewish population through emigration and expulsion. As more countries fell under its sway, the number of Jews under Nazi control grew dra-

matically. The early policy of enforced expulsion was useless; there was nowhere to send them, even to the colonies of the nations they had conquered as with the bizarre scheme to create a Jewish reservation on the French-held island of Madagascar off the Southeast African coast.

When exactly the mass murder of the Jews was ordered as policy is not absolutely certain. In late July 1941 Reich Marshall Herman Goering signed the order that Heydrich had drafted calling for a “final solution” (*Endloesung*) to the Jewish presence in German-occupied Europe. Two things about this order are significant. First, it was signed after massacres of Jews and other groups in Russia had begun in the wake of the German invasion. Second, this order also needs to be understood as part of Hitler’s position regarding Jews and their association with Bolshevism. In January 1939 Hitler had threatened the Jews with annihilation, but he made this threat within the context of a potential war, and then as part of the struggle against the “Bolshevikization [sic] of the earth.”⁵ In whatever terms or context it was stated, though, the destruction of Europe’s Jews was a prime Nazi goal during the war.⁶ During the final phases of the planning for the invasion of the Soviet Union, the SS and the German General Staff approved plans for killing Jews as part of the policy to liquidate all “undesirables,” which included Soviet political, military, and security officials.⁷ Following on the heels of the victorious Wehrmacht, Einsatzgruppen, along with numerous German Police battalions and SS units, massacred almost three-quarters of a million Soviet Jews in the first ten months of the invasion.

In late 1941 and into early 1942, the decisions and the first steps to exterminate all other European Jews were taken. In January 1942 Heydrich met with senior officials from the SS, the Police, the Foreign Office, the Nazi Party, and Reich Chancellery and Ministry of Justice in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee to map out the campaign of mass murder. As a guide to future plans,

Heydrich referred to the earlier order from Goering for the Final Solution he claimed he had drafted. Like the earlier order signed by Goering, the decision at the conference to exterminate Europe's Jews was taken after several actions already had begun. These included the operations of the first death camp at Chelmo in western Poland that had started already in December 1941. A month earlier, in Kovno, Lithuania, police units began murdering German Jews who had been deported there. And the construction of Auschwitz-Birkenau, begun in December 1941, was accelerated. The time of "night and fog" (Nacht und Nebel) over Nazi-occupied Europe had arrived.

The Holocaust differed in two significant ways from other examples of twentieth-century genocide. First of all, the Nazis did not simply indulge themselves in an orgy of massacres and other atrocities. Instead, to facilitate their policy of extermination, the Nazis borrowed from the panoply of twentieth century science and technology. They adopted techniques, equipment, and processes from engineering and basic sciences such as chemistry. They also adapted modern business methods, technology, and techniques from the fields of accounting, administration, transport, and bureaucratic organization. The Nazi and SS hierarchy took an avid interest in the progress of the extermination and demanded constant reports from subordinates, units in the field, and the death camps. While not always consistent and efficient, the Nazi machine was organized along methods that allowed for measurements of progress and any necessary "improvements" to the existing system.

Secondly, the Nazis moved to eliminate Jews from countries they had overrun during the war. The extranational nature of the Holocaust was the aspect that most differentiated it from other examples of genocide in the twentieth century, such as that perpetrated on ethnic Armenians by the Ottoman Turks in 1915-16 and the Khmer Rouge depredations in Cambodia from 1975 to

1979. As the Germans conquered Europe, they immediately established the administrative and enforcement machinery to seize and kill Jews living in the occupied countries. In this task various collaborationist regimes and local fascist organizations sympathetic to the Nazis helped the Germans in a number of ways. Some of these regimes murdered their own Jews or shipped them to the concentration camps in Eastern Europe. Other countries expelled non-national Jews and ethnic groups acquired through territorial acquisition, as happened in Bulgaria, or rounded up foreign Jews and shipped them to their deaths in the east as did France. The continental scope and bureaucratic nature of the extermination program compelled the Nazi apparatus to coordinate its efforts over an extensive region, from the Atlantic to the steppes of the western Soviet Union.

Both of these aspects of the Final Solution forced the Nazis to rely on modern communications to facilitate their efforts – both to satisfy the SS command in Berlin for progress reports and to coordinate their far-flung efforts over the European continent. Where underground cable systems existed, the Nazi authorities made use of them for their communications. The Allies could not monitor the ground cable system in continental Europe. However, the cable system's reach was limited. Where the local system had been destroyed during combat operations or had not yet been constructed, and this was common in most of the regions of the western USSR, the command in Berlin had to rely on radio communications to control the particular missions of the dispersed police units and Einsatzgruppen, as well as receive reports on their "progress." Meanwhile, diplomatic missions and nongovernmental organizations around Europe reported on the roundups and massacres they witnessed or about which they had received information. These communications also made it possible for Allied signals intelligence agencies to intercept, exploit, and disseminate information to their leadership about the Holocaust.

Previous Histories and Articles

For nearly thirty years after World War II, the United States and Great Britain generally succeeded in keeping completely secret from the public the story of the exploitation of the German Enigma and many other Axis codes and ciphers.⁸ This success was largely possible because of the willingness of the tens of thousands of wartime employees of the Western cryptologic services to keep silent about the secret. However, there were a few tears in the shroud over this period.

In 1967 a Polish historian, Wladyslaw Kozaczuk, published an account of the Polish breakthrough against Enigma, *Bitwa o tajemnice (The Secret Battle)*.⁹ Kozaczuk was the first to state that the Poles had solved the German Enigma. This book, though, received little attention outside of Poland. In 1973 Gustave Bertrand, the former chief of the French Army's radio intelligence branch, published his memoirs, *Enigma: Ou la Plus Grande Enigme de la Guerre, 1939-1945 (Enigma: Or the Greatest Mystery of the War)*, which revealed some more about the early Allied exploitation of Enigma.¹⁰ Bertrand had played a minor, if not unimportant role in the Polish breakthrough against Enigma. He had developed a contact in the German Ministry of War who turned over to him technical information and keying material for the Enigma. Bertrand, whose own country's code-breaking capability had deteriorated in the years after the First World War, passed the material to the Polish Cipher Bureau. Like Kozaczuk's work, Bertrand's book made little impression. German historians, who had reviewed Kozaczuk's book, tended to dismiss the claims that the Poles or any of the Allies had broken Enigma. The secret still stood into the 1970s.

Therefore, outside of intelligence circles, only a handful of people, mostly scholars, knew about the Allied cryptanalytic success against Enigma when, in 1974, F.W. Winterbotham's book *The*

Ultra Secret was published.¹¹ Winterbotham was a Royal Air Force officer who formed the Special Liaison Units that distributed Ultra to military commands. But he was not involved in actual codebreaking and other cryptologic activities. Winterbotham's book created a shock wave in the intelligence and historical communities. The British government contemplated legal action against him, but finally declined to prosecute him. *The Ultra Secret* went on to become a best seller. Many historians scrambled, perhaps prematurely, to incorporate Winterbotham's revelations into the narrative of World War II. Winterbotham's book, though, was full of errors, distortions, and omissions. Among other things, he attributed the solution to the Enigma to a spy who smuggled a complete machine out of Germany. This ignored the Polish contribution. He also claimed that the British won the Battle of Britain solely because of Ultra's contribution. This claim ignored the far more critical roles played by Britain's early warning radar network and Fighter Command's centralized command and control system.

There was no mention in Winterbotham's book about what information there might have been about the Holocaust from Ultra sources. Interestingly, prior to the publication of *The Ultra Secret*, there was some information already available about codebreaking and the Holocaust. The first inkling of what SIGINT records might hold about the Holocaust had appeared in Gustave Bertrand's *Enigma*. In the course of describing the operations of a small, multinational, Allied covert communications monitoring site in southern France, Bertrand revealed that this site had intercepted and decrypted German Police messages that contained information about massacres in the western Soviet Union. Bertrand stated that the site, over the course of a little more than two years, had intercepted over three thousand German Police messages. He related the substance of a police message from 21 August 1941 that reported that 5,130 Jews had

been shot by SS and police units.¹² Most of Bertrand's story was repeated in Wladyslaw Kozaczuk's *Enigma*, published in Polish in 1979.¹³ The information about the German Police decrypts in the books from France and Poland largely went unnoticed. This was probably because the works were slow to be translated into English, and the rather meager information they contained about the massacres was subsumed within the interest generated by the much broader revelations about the effect of the exploitation of Enigma on the course of the war. Another problem was that Bertrand's reference to the police decrypts was based largely on his recollections and personal notes. There were no copies of the intercepts or decrypts available.

The first account in English that discussed Ultra information in connection with the Holocaust was Walter Laqueur's *The Terrible Secret*, first published in 1980. This book tracked the knowledge of the Holocaust among various groups such as German civilians, international Jewish organizations, officials of the major Allied and neutral countries, the leaders of the Jewish communities in Europe and America, and nongovernment organizations such as the International Red Cross. His account carried some additional details over the previous histories that had referred to the decrypts of the German Police messages. He also mentioned that the British were reading the Enigma messages of the German railway service, and, as a result, this suggested that the British had the capability to track the movement of trains throughout occupied Europe, which would have included the trains transporting Jews to the death camps in the east. It appears that Laqueur had some access or knowledge of British code-breaking efforts against the German Police, SS, and railway Enigma ciphers. He refers to some specific details from the police decrypts, but it is not clear if he had seen specific documents from GC&CS because they had not been released to the public.¹⁴ Laqueur also interviewed Peter Calvocoressi, an important figure in the opera-

tions of one of the analytic centers at Bletchley Park. He also may have been a source of Laqueur's information.

In the same year as Laqueur's book, Calvocoressi published his wartime memoir, *Top Secret Ultra*.¹⁵ Calvocoressi had a more detailed knowledge of the British code-breaking effort than Winterbotham. In this book, he painted a more detailed and technically accurate picture of the operations of the GC&CS' center at Bletchley Park. Calvocoressi also added a gruesome detail that tied in *Enigma* cryptanalysis with the Holocaust. He claimed that German cryptographers used the numbers of the slave labor population from the daily SS concentration camp reports, encrypted in a "medium grade cipher," to set the keys (wheel settings) for their Enigma machines.¹⁶ But like the previous works, Calvocoressi used no source documents. They remained classified.

The publication that provided the first detailed description of what allied communications intelligence knew of the Holocaust was Sir Harry Hinsley's five-volume series, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, published between 1979 and 1990. Volume II, published in 1981, contained an appendix on the police decodes which described the operations of the Einsatzgruppen and police units on the Eastern Front and the SS messages about the death and labor camps.¹⁷ Hinsley, who had worked on the German naval intelligence section at Bletchley Park during the war, and his editorial and writing staff had been given access to GC&CS records, decrypts, and translations of intercepted Axis messages for the purpose of writing the history. Again, the material, while cited in the work, itself remained classified and inaccessible to the public and would remain so some fifteen years after the first volume of Hinsley's history had been published.

Hinsley's work also was based partly on a multivolume history of wartime activities pro-

duced by the GC&CS in the years immediately after the war. Volume XIII of the Air and Military History series concentrated on the exploitation of the communications and encrypted messages of the German Police and other Reich security organizations. It contained a short description of intelligence derived from concentration camps and an appendix that listed individual massacres on the Eastern Front contained in selected decrypted police messages.¹⁸ Many of these volumes would be released to the British archives in the 1990s.

In 1984 a monograph was published in the *Journal of Historical Review* that reviewed the published literature of wartime intelligence, including the Police decrypts, which carried information about the massacres and the concentration camps.¹⁹ The article called into question what the intelligence actually revealed about the Nazi's ultimate plan for the elimination of Europe's Jews. Unfortunately, the journal in which this article appeared was a well-known forum for that faction of scholars and researchers associated with a movement known as "Holocaust denial."²⁰ Rather than discuss the intelligence about the Holocaust and how Allied officials differed over its meaning, or review the Nazi program of silence and obfuscation about the Final Solution, the author claimed that the gaps in Allied intelligence suggested that many aspects of the Holocaust, such as the gassings at Auschwitz, were a fiction. However, the amassed evidence from captured records and the testimony of Holocaust victims and perpetrators overwhelms the article's contention. Later releases of Police decrypts to the PRO would illustrate how the missing intelligence was attributable to greater German security measures and the limitations in the communications intelligence system.

Two shorter pieces that dealt with the German Police and the Holocaust appeared in the mid-1990s. The first was a monograph, *SIGINT and the Holocaust*, by Robert L. Benson, a senior researcher at the National Security Agency,

known for his major role behind the release of the NKVD espionage messages referred to as VENONA. The other was a short piece in the *New York Times Magazine*, "The Holocaust Was No Secret," by William J. Vanden Heuvel. The article in the *Times* probably was published in the wake of news stories, featured initially in early November 1996 in the *Washington Post*, about the discovery of decrypts of German Police messages in the NSA Record Group 457 at NARA.²¹ Both Vanden Heuvel's and Benson's articles focused on the revelations contained in the decrypts of the German Police and SS messages about the massacres in Russia. Both authors also grappled with the question of why Allied leaders, especially the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, who knew of the atrocities, did not do anything to publicize, impede, or stop them? As the two authors pointed out, there was really nothing that the Allies could have done to stop or appreciably retard the slaughter except to totally defeat the Nazis as soon as possible.²²

As has been seen above, the critical element absent from all of these early works was the source material itself – in this case, the collection of decrypts of the German Police and SS messages. It also has been mentioned that an incomplete set of these decrypts had been discovered in RG 457 by American University history professor Richard Breitman in June 1996. This set of police decrypts was part of a larger 1996 NSA release of wartime records to the National Archives that numbered some 1.3 million pages. The set of German Police messages had been obtained by NSA from GCHQ in the mid-1980s and had been incorporated into the large release. The set that NSA had acquired was only a small portion of a much larger set of German Police messages that were still classified and resided in British archives. (See Chapter 3, page 62, about the background to the acquisition of these messages by NSA.) The publicity around the discovery of the police messages in the U.S. National Archives helped generate sufficient public pressure for the

release to the public of the complete set of police decrypts by the Public Record Office in May 1997.

It should be pointed out, though, that since the early to mid 1980s, translations of Axis and Vichy diplomatic messages that contained limited information about the Holocaust had been available at the National Archives in the United States. These documents were located in the NSA Record Group 457. Beginning in 1979, NSA had turned over “redacted” (that is, copies of documents with the still-classified portions blacked out) copies of translations of Axis and Vichy diplomatic messages to the National Archives. Unfortunately, there was no topical index for the collections, which totaled almost 150,000 pages. Those individual translations that were relevant to the Holocaust lay buried away in their archival boxes and remained largely untouched by researchers for years.²³

The first full use of any of these records in a historical study of the Holocaust did not occur until 1998 with the publication of *Official Secrets* by the same Professor Richard Breitman of American University in Washington, DC. The book contained a description of how the police messages were collected and processed by GC&CS. The largest part of Professor Breitman’s work looked at the response of the Allied governments to the course of the Holocaust, especially in light of information available from intelligence sources including the decrypts of the German Police and SS units. Using these, he was able, among other insights, to accord a far more significant role to the police units in the Holocaust, as well as reaffirm the importance of the Nazi policies of secrecy and deception that disguised the nature and scope of the Holocaust.²⁴ His book also detailed the information contained in the SS concentration camp reports mentioned earlier by Calvocoressi.

It took nearly twenty-five years from the publication of Winterbotham’s book about the Ultra secret for many of the official records of the

American and British wartime cryptologic agencies to be released to the public. Among the records were the collections of decrypts of translations of Axis and neutral messages, primarily German, which dealt with the Holocaust. The delayed release of the communications intelligence records did not impede scholarly research and understanding of the overall Holocaust phenomenon. Mountains of records had been available that documented Nazi planning and execution of the Final Solution. At worst, the lack of cryptologic material probably affected Holocaust scholarship of specific incidents. For example, the lack of police decrypts and translations may have contributed to scholars underestimating for decades the major role of the German Police in the massacres and other atrocities committed in the western USSR.²⁵

Notes

1 Michael Grant, *The Jews in the Roman World*. (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1973), 284-7.

2 Norman Cantor, *The Civilization of the Middle Ages* (New York: Harper Collins, 1993), 365-7. Richard Fletcher, *The Barbarian Conversion: From Paganism to Christianity* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1997), 292, 317-8.

3 See Berlin (Auswaertig) to Buenos Aires, 13 January 1943, SIS # 78845, NARA RG 457, Historical Cryptologic Collection, Box 359; Berlin (Auswaertig) to Tientsin, 4 August 1944, SIS # 135165, NARA, RG 457 HHC, Box 429; and Berlin (Auswaertig) to Tientsin, 15 December 1944, H-158178, RG 457, HHC, Box 456.

4 Multinational Diplomatic (MND) Translation, Washington to Tokyo, 17 January 1939, SIS #3494, NARA RG 457 Records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS), Historical Cryptologic Collection (HCC), Box 286.

5 Raoul Hillberg. *The Destruction of European Jews*. 3 Volumes (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1985. the Revised and Definitive Edition), 393.

6 Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 95-6, 191-2.

7 Richard Breitman. *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned. What the British and Americans Knew* (New York: Hill and Wang), 36-7.

8 News of the American exploitation of the Japanese diplomatic cipher known as Purple had been revealed in part in the immediate postwar period during a bipartisan U.S. Senate committee investigation of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. As part of the hearings, the important diplomatic translations, including the famous fourteen-part message, were released in their entirety. Subsequently, a number of histories of the attack utilized the information to propound a number of interpretations about the attack. Interestingly, during these hearings, a reference was made to the British helping the Americans to “decode German messages.” This brief allusion to reading German cryptographic systems was published in a *Time* magazine article on 17 December 1945.

9 Wladyslaw Kozaczuk, *Bitwa o tajemnice: Sluzby wywiadowcze Polski I Rzeszy Niemieckiej 1922-1939* (The Secret Battle: The Intelligence Services of Poland and the German Reich, 1922-1939) (Warsaw: Ksiazka I Wiedza, 1967).

10 Gustave Bertrand. *Enigma: Ou la Plus Grande Enigme de la Guerre, 1939-1945* (Paris: Plon, 1973).

11 F. W. Winterbotham. *The Ultra Secret* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974).

12 Bertrand, 117-8.

13 Wladyslaw Kozaczuk. *Wkregu Enigmy* (Warsaw: Ksiazka I Wiedza, 1979) Kozaczuk’s *Bitwa o tajemnice* predated Bertrand’s and Winterbotham’s narratives. It has been suggested that *The Secret Battle* was the predecessor to *Enigma*. If so, then it might have contained the earliest reference to the interception of the police messages about the massacres in Russia. The source in *Enigma* about the police messages (p. 139) is quite similar to that in Bertrand’s book (117-8). However, this author was unable to settle whether *The Secret War* contains such a reference to the police messages.

14 Walter Lacqueur. *The Terrible Secret: Suppression of the Truth about Hitler’s Final Solution* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1998), 84 –6.

15 Peter Calvocoressi, *Top Secret Ultra* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).

16 *Ibid.*, 15. This author is unable to determine conclusively whether this claim is true or mistaken in whole or in part. German concentration camp slave labor population reports were marked “ZIP” by the British. This indicated that the messages had been encrypted in a high-level system like Enigma, not a so-called “medium-grade cipher,” as Calvocoressi reported, which would have been marked “PEARL.” Also, the highest setting for any of the 3 wheels of an Enigma was “26.” So the highest number available was “262626.” A German code clerk conceivably could have selected a six-figure number (or a set of two or three-figure numbers) from a concentration camp report by which to set the wheels. Whether the Germans used this on a regular basis (or at all) cannot be determined.

17 F. H. Hinsley, et alia. *British Intelligence in the Second World War. Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume II* (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery office, 1981), Appendix 5, 669-73.

18 E. D. Phillips. *GC&CS Air and Military History. Volume XIII. The German Police* (London) 81-86, 234-6.

19 K. C. Gleason, “The Holocaust and the Failure of Allied and Jewish Responses.” *Journal of Historical Review* (Vol. 5, Nos. 2, 3, 4; Winter 1984), 215. Gleason correctly reports that, early in the war, many Allied intelligence organizations lacked conclusive information about the scope and nature of German plans for the Jews and other groups. He is also correct that some Allied intelligence analysts were not aware of the extent of Nazi atrocities. As an example of this ignorance, Gleason states that photo interpreters of the United States Army Air Force could not determine the nature of the activities at the Birkenau complex. They were not aware of the camp’s primary role as a death camp. Later photo interpretation specialists from the Central Intelligence Agency could not discover any large group of victims at Birkenau, though one photo from 25 August 1944 showed about 1,500 people being processed near the gas chambers.

There are several problems, though, with Gleason’s explanation. For one, he fails to mention that the technical capabilities of Allied photo interpreters were limited compared to current technology. They would have been hard pressed to find even large

groups of victims with the optical analysis equipment available in 1944. Also, he does not mention that there were only a limited number of aerial photography missions, perhaps five, flown between the initial one in early April 1944 and the last when Birkenau was dismantled in November 1944. Such aerial missions could take only “instant” snap shots. They did not linger for several passes or extended overflights. The first flight in early April occurred before the flood of Hungarian Jews arrived as part of SS operations to eliminate that country’s Jews commanded by Adolf Eichmann. Interestingly, this April mission did photograph a new rail spur that, unknown to the photo interpreters, was part of the upgrade of Birkenau’s facilities to handle the anticipated influx of Hungarian Jews. The next mission was flown on 26 June near the end of the first phase of the German deportations. Many of the deported Hungarian Jews had already passed through the gas chambers and the crematoria. For a full description, see Dino A. Brigioni and Robert G. Piorer, “The Holocaust Revisited: A Retrospective Analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Complex. (*Studies in Intelligence*, 45th Special Anniversary Edition, Fall 2000), 87-106.

20 The JHR is the publication of the Institute for Historical review, which is a loosely organized scholarly association ostensibly dedicated to revisionism of conventional historical interpretations. However, in its content, the JHR carries a heavy emphasis of articles pressing a revisionist or denial viewpoint about the Holocaust. For more on the history and purpose of the Journal and the IHR, see Michael Shermer and Alex Grobman, *Denying History: Who Says the Holocaust Never Happened and Why They Say It?* (Berkeley CA: University of California Press, 2000), 43-46, 73-80, etc.

21 “Decoded Cables Revise History of Holocaust.” *Washington Post*, 10 November 1996, Vol. 119, No. 341, A1

22 Robert L. Benson. “SIGINT and the Holocaust.” *Cryptologic Quarterly* (Vol. 14, No. 1, Spring 1995) 71-76; William J. Vanden Heuvel. “The Holocaust Was No Secret.” *New York Times Magazine* (December 22, 1996) 30-31.

23 In the early 1980s, the National Security Agency released a number of sets of translations of

Axis and Vichy messages and special research papers to the National Archives. These records actually were copies of the original translations and research papers. Information in the translations still considered classified had been redacted, or blacked out, from the originals. These redacted versions of the records are distinguished by the prefixed digraph “SR” in the series notation, e.g., “SRDJ” for Japanese diplomatic translations, or “SRA” for translations of Japanese military attaché messages. The diplomatic translations of interest were Japanese, or SRDJ; German, or SRDG; Vichy, or SRDV. Another set of diplomatic translations, categorized as “multinational,” or all countries, to include Axis and Vichy, was released in 1996 as part of the so-called Historical Cryptographic Collection (HCC), which the 1.3 million pages were labeled. The diplomatic translations in the HCC were not redacted.

24 Breitman, 67-8.

25 *Ibid.*, 5-7.

Chapter 2

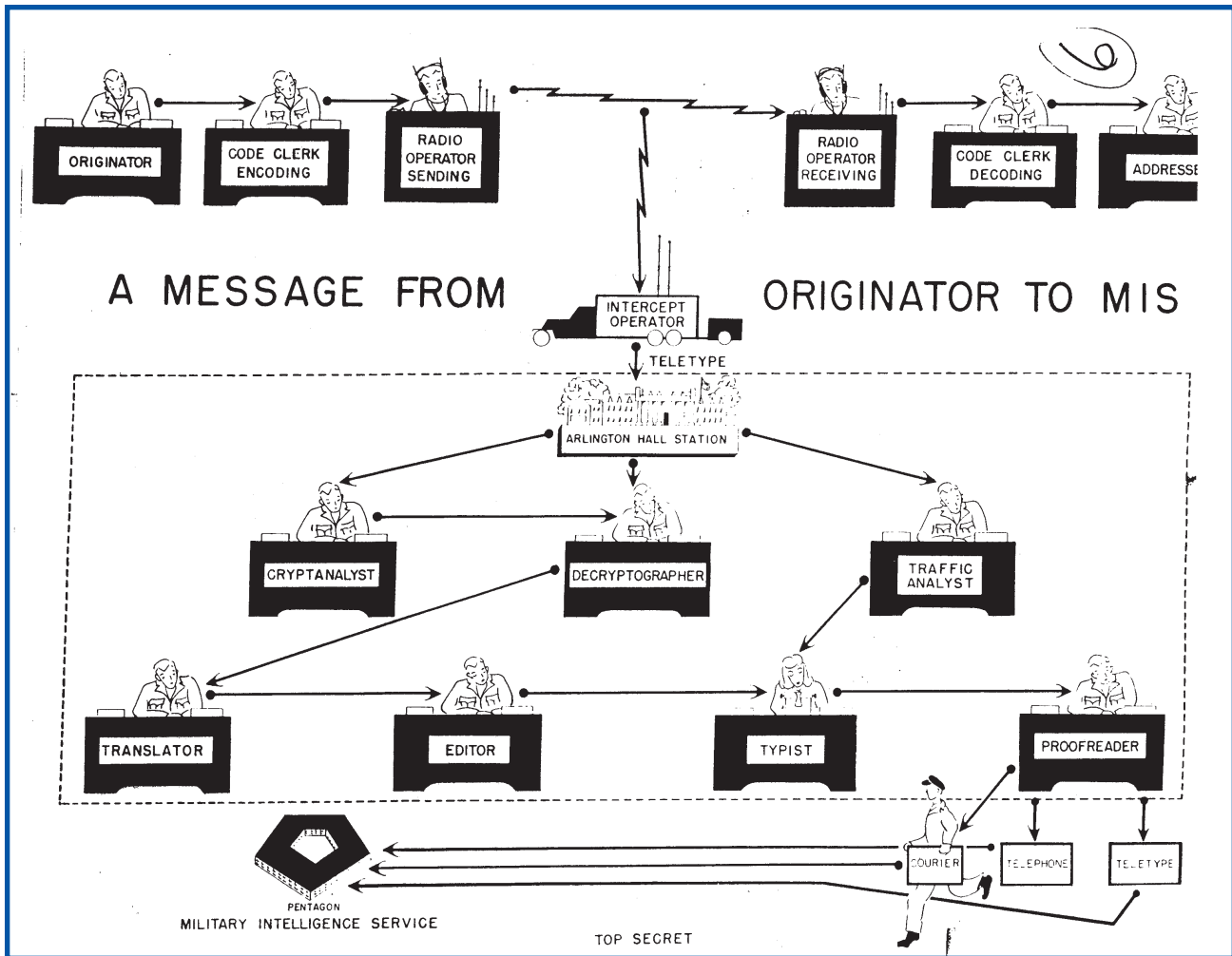
Overview of the Western Communications Intelligence System during World War II

During the Second World War, the United States and Great Britain operated the principal Western Allied code-breaking agencies. The Commonwealth countries of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and Britain's colony of India provided substantial support with personnel and material, especially in the Middle East, Pacific and Asia theaters of combat. There were lesser contributions from small European national detachments that had escaped from Poland, France, and the Netherlands East Indies. By war's end, this multinational effort had brought to a high-level of proficiency a worldwide system that intercepted, decrypted, translated, and disseminated intelligence derived from Axis and neutral communications.¹

A popular perception about Western communications intelligence and its subsidiary code-breaking function, often generally referred to as "Ultra," was that this information was available from all Axis and neutral sources at all times to the Allied commanders and leaders. This view is simply not true. The war between the Axis cryptographers to devise and emplace systems to protect their communications and the Allied cryptologists to collect and exploit those same communications (and the mirrored struggle between Allied cryptographers and Axis cryptologists) was marked by victories and defeats on both sides. Although there were major successes by the Allies early in the war, notably the exploitation of some versions of the German Enigma and the Japanese diplomatic machine system, known as Purple, the struggle for cryptologic supremacy was not settled until the midpoint of the war when the full resources of the Allied cryptologic effort finally achieved a general and consistent inroad into most, but still not all, major Axis cryptographic

systems. Even then, there remained gaps and shortcomings in the overall Allied capability that produced unpleasant tactical military surprises for the Allies later in the war, such as at the German Second Ardennes Offensive in December 1944. Several Axis and neutral cryptographic systems were never exploited due to a paucity of Allied intercept, the strength of the particular Axis code or cipher, or the late date of a cryptographic system's introduction into operation. In short, the Ultra success by the Allies was never total or constant when measured in terms of the total number of enemy or neutral codes and ciphers that could be broken or the duration of their exploitation. Where the Allies succeeded was in the exploitation of those Axis communications and cryptographic systems that were critical to the conduct of certain battles and campaigns. This ability also allowed the Allies the ability to gauge the strategic intentions of Berlin and Tokyo in a depth that otherwise would have been lacking if there had been no recourse to the information from Ultra, Magic, and the host of other systems.²

Trying to describe or graphically represent the entire Western COMINT system can be difficult. Some initial attempts were made by the U.S. services. One of the more popular early graphic efforts was a chart devised by the War Department's G-2 (Intelligence), "A Message from Originator to MIS." This version was taken from the postwar Army history *The Achievements of the Signal Security Agency in World War II* and is reproduced here.³ It illustrated the system that started with the transmission of a message by an originating entity. It then detailed several intermediate analytic steps to the point where the translation of the original intercept was disseminated to the War Department.



"A Message from Originator to MIS"

The system this chart illustrated was limited to those cryptologic functions from intercept to translation that were performed by the Army's Signal Intelligence Service at Arlington Hall. The chart failed, though, to describe why a certain message was to be intercepted in the first place. There were numerous Axis and neutral radio terminals and networks to intercept. What was the process that determined which one was monitored? Similarly, the chart also left out what happened to the intelligence after it reached the Pentagon. To whom did this information go and how did it get there? Was it handled any differently than intelligence from other sources such as captured documents? In short, the chart failed to explain the place and role of cryptology within the

context of the activities of the larger Allied intelligence system.

The production of Allied communications intelligence during World War II was a multistep system. It began with the determination of a hierarchical priority of intercept of Axis communications and was completed with the dissemination of the intelligence derived from it. This system can be likened to a "closed cycle" in which all steps were interrelated. Within this process a significant change to one step affected all the others. For example, a reordering of requirements due to a change in capability or a crisis in a military theater's situation would affect what was collected and processed. The rise or decline of cryptanalytic effectiveness, efficiency, or advances in tech-

nology or techniques could affect what terminals would be monitored in the future and what intelligence gained from them would be disseminated and to whom it would be sent.⁴

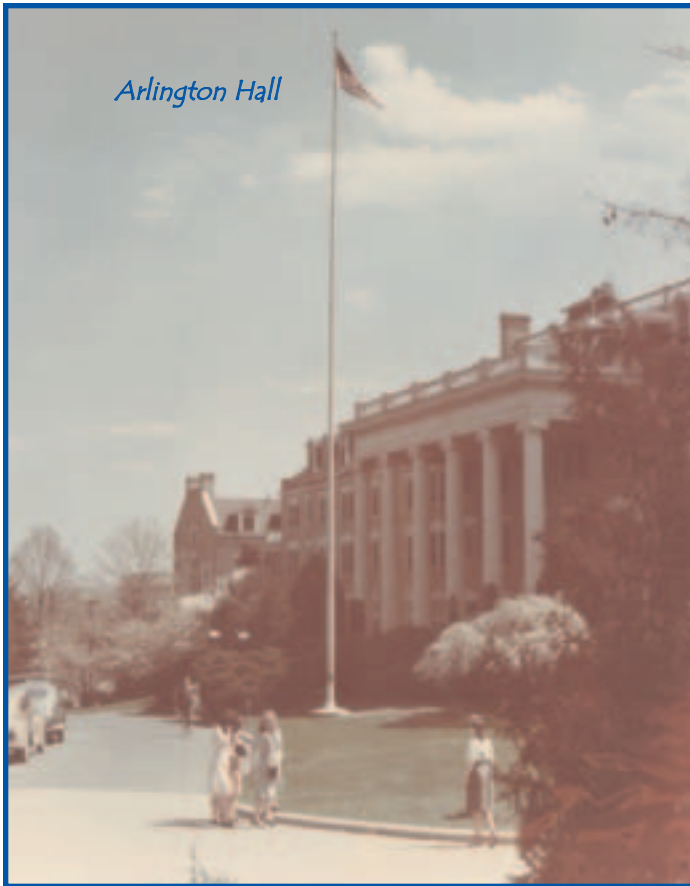
Besides being distinguished by the interdependent nature of its operations, the COMINT system, especially as practiced by the British, was noteworthy for the operational interaction of its analysts. That is, individuals at all points in the system contributed information that others could use in their separate jobs. This interaction developed partly from the background of a large number of the individuals who worked in the cryptologic agencies during the war. Many people who worked at Bletchley Park and Arlington Hall were current students, graduates, or faculty recruited from universities and other schools that prized cooperation and an intellectual detachment. And a majority of these hires were women.⁵ More so, the leadership of the cryptologic agencies encouraged the continuation of this free flow of ideas and information. Even those who merely logged in intercepted messages were encouraged to contribute insights and observations.⁶ One high-ranking American observer, who visited Bletchley

Park in May 1943, noted that the British personnel approach was “bold and forward-looking... an imaginable conception of the possibilities of obtaining results from attention to details and infinite pains.”⁷ The result of this approach was a system, which was described by William F. Friedman as “unified at the top and operationally intimate below.”⁸

The wartime Western Allied communications intelligence system consisted of the following steps: setting requirements, priorities, and division of effort; intercepting messages; processing the intercept; and disseminating the resulting intelligence. Each step consisted of a number of subordinate processes that contributed to its completion, though each process was not employed against every intercept or cryptographic system. Also, each step was affected by a number of technical and institutional constraints, as well as political/strategic influences or contingencies that further determined how effectively a step was carried out. Many of the subordinate processes and the constraints and outside influences for each step will be described in the proceeding sections.



Bletchley Park



Two other aspects of the Allied COMINT system need to be considered before we proceed with the description. First of all, when we talk of an Allied system, we are really describing two distinct national systems, that of the United States and Great Britain. While both countries carried out similar communications intelligence activities, we shall see that there were a number of differences between them in organization, security restrictions, equipment, training, and even technical jargon. Like much of the rest of the special relationship between the United States and Great Britain, the wartime Anglo-American COMINT relationship was marked by a search for ways to make the two national systems work in a more cooperative fashion.

Another characteristic of the wartime allied cryptologic agencies was the phenomenal growth experienced by both as the war progressed. In 1939 cryptologic organizations that barely num-

bered a few hundred were, by war's end, staffed by tens of thousands of civilians and military personnel. As a representative register of this massive growth, consider that the U.S. Army's signals intelligence arm was producing about forty translations a week in January 1942. By the time Japan surrendered, it was turning out about 1,025 translations a week.⁹ Also, during the war, both the GC&CS and the SIS grew organically. They had to design, build, refine, and modify their organizations, equipment, structure, practices, and procedures while they also worked against Axis cryptography and communications. In 1939 American and British COMINT were local cottage workshops. By 1945 they had become a joint global industrial concern.

What follows is a description of the communications intelligence system with a particular eye to the ways in which its operations influenced how it obtained and distributed intelligence about the Holocaust.

Step 1: Setting the Requirements, Priorities, and the Division of Effort

For the Allies, perhaps the most difficult step in the COMINT process was simply to decide what Axis communications to intercept, decipher, and report. To visualize the potential size of the Axis communications target is to grasp the scope and nature of the problem facing the Allied cryptologic agencies, especially early in the war: thousands of radio terminals on hundreds of radio networks around the world supporting Axis military, naval, diplomatic, security, intelligence, and commercial entities. All of these utilized hundreds of cryptographic systems from simple hand ciphers to complex book codes and intricate machines such as Enigma, Purple, and Tunny.¹⁰ Added to this initially uncharted wilderness were the hundreds of military, diplomatic, and commercial communications networks of important neutral and Axis-friendly countries, notably

Vichy France, Turkey, Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland, the Vatican, and those of Latin America. These networks, too, had potential as sources of intelligence and could not be ignored; many already were targets of Allied cryptologists.

Early in the war, the Allied communications intelligence effort could not adequately monitor the existing Axis communications networks, much less even hope to cover it completely. The British, beginning in September 1939, and later the Americans in late 1941, lacked the facilities, the personnel, and the technology to adequately monitor all of the Axis terminals that mattered. It would take time for the influx of money, training, and the development of administrative and technical support organizations to create the impressive Allied COMINT structure that existed by the end of the war.

Meanwhile, the disparity in capabilities between the Allied cryptologic agencies and the Axis communications networks forced the intelligence staffs in Washington and London to prioritize the Axis communications terminals and cryptographic systems that had to be attacked. This prioritization was determined by a number of general factors. First of all, there had to be either an already demonstrated or a reasonably high expectation that intelligence of value to the war effort could be derived from a terminal's messages. Another factor, which could override all others at times, was the perceived current strategic or tactical military needs of the moment. For all practical purposes, these factors were military-oriented. They dictated target listings throughout the war and dominated all prioritization schemes from strategic priorities to those in individual theaters of operation.

The COMINT agencies, too, had their own considerations to add to the calculations for target priority. Usually, these considerations reflected the agency's own measure of its technical ability to intercept or to exploit cryptanalytically a particular Axis terminal or a general target cate-

gory such as "Japanese military." The feeling within the SIS leadership, for example, was that tasking of radio links was far more complex than to be left to the whims of intelligence officers. In early 1943, the SIS disagreed with the idea that the War Department's G-2 could just hand it a list of radio terminals to go after. One memorandum stated that there were other factors "in the chain of events leading from G-2's desires to actual results." Rather, it continued, the priority of a target radio terminal should be determined first by whether a monitoring station could hear it and then whether any cryptographic systems used in its traffic could be read or were being studied.¹¹

As an example of how requirements were levied and how they changed with the war, it is useful to look at the experience of the SIS. For the overall U.S. COMINT effort, the SIS was responsible for intercepting and processing Axis military, weather, and air force communications traffic. It also was responsible for exploiting international diplomatic communications. This was a carryover from its success with the Japanese diplomatic cipher machine known as Purple. In April 1942, G-2 gave the Signal Security Service (SSS), as the Signal Intelligence Service was soon to be called, a set of priorities for collection and processing (which included cryptanalysis and translation).¹² The first priority included all German, Japanese, and Italian military traffic. Second priority was given to all Axis military attaché communications. Axis diplomatic traffic among their respective capital cities was in the third priority. The fourth priority was for all so-called German "administrative" radio nets, which probably referred to German illicit intelligence and security radio networks. The diplomatic messages of other countries, minor Axis and neutrals, were spread across priorities five to eight.¹³

Nearly a year later, in March 1943, the priority list had changed somewhat. The priority list for collection and analysis was organized now into groups identified by letters that ranged from "A," the highest, to "G," the lowest. For the SSS, the

Japanese Army was now the most important target. This was tagged “#1 Special Research Project,” which probably referred to the main Japanese army code that was still unexploited at the time.¹⁴ Weather traffic was also part of Group A, as were certain diplomatic links between Tokyo and Moscow, Berlin, and Rome. German military had fallen to the bottom of Group “B,” along with Japanese diplomatic messages to Europe (other than other Axis capitals) and “Security” (intelligence, espionage and security elements such as police) messages.¹⁵ The latter reference to “Security” traffic is interesting because the SSA still lacked the means to intercept consistently the communications of the German security agencies such as the Abwehr (military intelligence), the SD, and the German Police. The Americans had few monitoring sites that could intercept such communications in the European theater. There were some U.S. Army radio intercept companies in England and North Africa, but they were tasked with collecting tactical German military radio traffic. A note attached to the tasking for these intercept units indicated that the coverage of the German security elements was primarily for the purpose of tracking the volume of traffic and reporting this to Army counterintelligence.¹⁶

The SIS already was somewhat familiar with German Police communications and cipher systems. In January 1941, then SIS Major Abraham Sinkov, one of William F. Friedman’s original cryptanalytic staff, had headed a small technical exchange mission to GC&CS. It was this mission that provided the British with a working Purple and Red Japanese diplomatic cipher machines. During the ensuing technical discussions, one of Britain’s foremost codebreakers, John Tiltman, provided Sinkov with detailed information on how the so-called German Police cipher worked. He was informed that the descriptor “German Police” applied to the systems used by the Schutzpolizei, the SD, the SS, and the line Order Police battalions and regiments. Sinkov was told that the information in the police messages was

useful for mapping associated German military units.¹⁷ However, at the time the U.S. had no way of intercepting these communications; the cryptanalytic information was useless except for training.

As for the remainder of the revamped 1943 SIS overall requirements, these consisted mostly of targeted diplomatic communications from most minor Axis, neutral, and some minor allied nations. As in the previous year’s priorities they remained spread across the lower priority Groups from “C” to “G.” For example, the tasking requirement for intercept of diplomatic messages between Washington and major neutrals was now at the Group “D” level. The requirements to intercept diplomatic messages from the Vatican, Latin America, and European countries to elsewhere other than Washington were covered in Groups “E” and “F.”¹⁸

In the various combat theaters of operation, cryptologic working arrangements between the British and Americans followed de facto national theater command responsibilities. In Europe the British were preeminent for the first two years of the war. A gradual cooperative effort with the United States Navy’s OP-20-G cryptologists developed during the lengthy U-boat campaign in the Atlantic. In the European Theater of Operations (ETO), the GC&CS, and the supporting British service units, remained the principal Allied cryptologic agency when it came to the Axis military and air force. In the Pacific theater, the American army and naval cryptologic organizations supervised allied intercept and code-breaking operations. In the China-Burma-India Theater, there were British stations in Ceylon and India that had American contingents. Also, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand personnel served at various Pacific and Asian sites with the Americans and British.

These worldwide operations required that the United States and Great Britain eventually had to establish corresponding divisions of effort and

responsibility for setting requirements, intercept, processing, and dissemination. Otherwise, there would be problems with redundant operations, and misallocated resources. Also, the rules, methods, material, and channels for technical and intelligence exchanges needed to be ironed out between the two countries. The two countries had to make a general agreement to govern operations around the world. For the first eighteen months of the war, the GC&CS and the SIS and OP-20-G had a number of separate and limited reciprocal interchanges. By mid-1943, these various working relationships were institutionalized in a series of agreements between the British and the U.S. War Department, which culminated in the so-called BRUSA (Britain-United States of America) Agreement of June 1943.¹⁹ (The U.S. Navy would sign a separate, more limited, agreement. It was known as the Extension Agreement and applied to an earlier 1942 exchange arrangement known as the Holden Agreement.)

The main provisions of the BRUSA Agreement were the exchange of technical intelligence (sources and methods) and a division of effort in the daily activities of collection, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence. The two Allies formally agreed to the exchange of finished intelligence. There was no exchange of “raw” (undecrypted) intercepts, except for U-boat messages, and possibly some examples for training purposes.²⁰ The monitoring sites, though, would send their “raw” intercept to the national center responsible for processing it. The agreement did not include so-called “nonservice” (nonmilitary) intercepts. This uncovered category principally entailed Axis and neutral diplomatic and intelligence-related (illicit espionage and internal security organization) messages. Both countries continued individually to decrypt and exchange diplomatic translations, though a later mechanism for exchange between GC&CS and Arlington Hall was established in August 1943. As a result of this later agreement, the two Allied cryptologic agencies targeted the diplomatic traffic of every major Axis power, minor Axis ally, minor Allied

power, and significant neutral, though the total amount collected against each country varied. As for the category of Axis intelligence messages, another division of effort was arranged. The British collected and processed German intelligence and security-related messages in occupied Europe: the United States, principally the United States Coast Guard, collected and processed Axis overseas illicit and overt espionage radio traffic, notably Abwehr messages from Latin America, North Africa, and the Far East.

In essence, the BRUSA Agreement formalized the realities of the division of effort in the combat theaters that had existed since 1942. The Americans took the responsibility for Japanese service and nonservice communications, while the British oversaw that of the German and Italian military and security forces. This agreement did not preclude either country from collection and analysis of each other’s missions. In fact, both sides exchanged personnel who were then integrated fully into each other’s efforts. Three special SSA units were established in Britain to work alongside the British in the areas of collection, analysis, and security. American cryptologists could be found at various British intercept and analytic sites, including Bletchley Park. U.S. radio intercept units stationed in England and North Africa intercepted and analyzed Axis communications in the European and North African theaters, but they passed the take to the British analytic centers.²¹

Great Britain retained authority over the production of communications intelligence in Europe, while the Americans controlled similar activity in the Pacific. Because of this division of effort, German military communications remained a lower priority for the U.S. Army codebreakers at Arlington Hall Station for the rest of the war.²² Tactical communications intelligence, that is, intercept and analysis of plaintext messages or those encrypted by low-level codes and ciphers that were sent by Axis tactical or operational-level combat units, was produced by Allied

cryptologic elements attached to Allied military commands or units in Europe and North Africa. Theater or local commanders controlled the operations of these units and were the main recipient of that type of communications intelligence.

As mentioned above, the priorities for collection and processing shifted during the war according to current strategic needs and capabilities. This shift was especially obvious when it came to diplomatic targets. A good example of the shifting priorities of an individual target country's communications can be seen in the Allied effort against Switzerland's diplomatic radio traffic. During previous European conflicts, Switzerland had remained neutral. As a result, that nation had taken on certain roles such as representing the foreign interests of belligerents. These included monitoring the conditions in prisoner-of-war and internee camps, supporting International Red Cross relief activities, and allowing Swiss locales to be used for unofficial contacts between combatants. Considering these historic roles, Switzerland's diplomatic communications naturally were a target of interest for the Allied cryptologic agencies.

The GC&CS had been analyzing Swiss diplomatic messages since 1939, and the Americans began their separate attack in December 1942. But both agencies produced few translations during this period. There were some technical reasons for this paucity of communications intelligence. One was that for their European message traffic the Swiss relied mostly on the European cable network that was inaccessible to Allied communications monitoring sites. In addition, the Swiss used a large number of codes and ciphers – over ten systems, mostly manual ciphers and codes, and an early version of the Enigma cipher device for their diplomatic traffic. Yet, the most important reason for the small output of translations of Swiss traffic was that, early in the war, the messages to and from Bern appeared to carry little intelligence of value.²³ The intercept of Swiss diplomatic messages continued

for the purposes of training and cryptanalytic continuity, but not for reporting intelligence. By early 1943, the Americans downgraded the intercept priority of various Swiss diplomatic terminals to fourth and fifth priority on its list.²⁴

This situation changed in the summer of 1944 when the Allies discovered that the Swiss diplomatic cables now carried important information on the conditions in the Balkan capitals that were being overrun or threatened by the advancing Red Army. Of particular interest was the situation in Budapest, Hungary. The several changes in governments and the German-supported coup in October 1944 had kept the Hungarians in the conflict. Furthermore, the Germans were in the midst of a roundup, which had begun in the summer, of the sizable Jewish population in Hungary for transport to the death camps and slave labor details in German war industries. A review of the diplomatic translations from this period issued by the SIS shows a marked increase in the number of published translations of Swiss diplomatic messages. Allied interest in the Swiss diplomatic messages continued late into the war as concern grew over the possible fate of prisoners and internees under Japanese control. The Swiss, working in concert with the International Red Cross, reported their findings on camp and prisoner conditions throughout Asia. Another point of interest for the Allies concerned the activities of German banking officials who were negotiating payments and commercial accounts with the Swiss for German purchases of war material and currency exchanges. (See pages 104-110 for more details on this last point.)

One of the problems that bedeviled Allied cryptologists who tried to set requirements was that the intelligence value of the information carried on various communications networks or individual terminals could not always be predicted. The above example of Switzerland shows how reality did not always match expectations. On the other hand, useful intelligence could come from unexpected sources. For example, one of the best

sources for insight into Nazi Germany's strategic plans and Hitler's own appreciation of possible Allied moves came from the Purple decrypts of Japan's ambassador in Berlin, Baron Oshima Hiroshi. Oshima had developed a rapport with most of the Nazi hierarchy, especially Hitler and Joachim von Ribbentrop, the German foreign minister. They confided to Oshima some of the Reich's most important secrets. These personal connections made his long reports to Tokyo a gold mine of information on a number of topics, from German development of new weapons to Hitler's own appreciation of the Allied troop strength and strategic options for landing in Western Europe in 1944.²⁵ Oshima reported nothing on the concentration camps or massacres in the western Soviet Union, though a few of messages to Tokyo suggest he was aware of the situation of the Jews. (See pages 100-101)



Japanese ambassador to Germany Baron Oshima meeting with Nazi foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop

In a similar fashion, British codebreakers were probably surprised by the first bits of information about the massacres and camps that appeared on certain German Police radio networks, such as those servicing the police units in the Soviet Union and SS and SD units in occupied

Europe. The Allied intercept and processing of German Police and SS communications originally was performed as a supplementary source to intelligence about the German military, principally to gather administrative data and order of battle information. The police and SS communications also contained intelligence on German civilian morale and other domestic security concerns, information about the results of Allied air raids, and escapes by Allied POWs.²⁶ The police messages were also targeted since the manual cryptographic system used was similar to systems used by Wehrmacht units.²⁷

However, London and Washington would never make gathering intelligence about the fate of Europe's Jews and other groups targeted for destruction by the Nazis a major requirement for agencies like GC&CS and SIS. Both would collect and process some information about the

roundups, massacres, and the camps from Police and diplomatic communications. Yet, this information was a byproduct, perhaps even incidental to the coverage security and diplomatic nets. The primary purpose of the COMINT requirements placed on Bletchley Park and Arlington Hall was to gain intelligence dictated by the military exigencies of the war. Whatever advantage was gained from the intercept of Axis communications related to the Nazi atrocities was of little use to the current Allied prosecution of the war, except in a limited way for propaganda against the Axis.²⁸

Later, the British would gather it with the intent to use intelligence as evidence in proposed postwar war crimes tribunals. (See pages 50-51 for eventual fate of this intelligence.)

Step 2: Intercepting the Messages

After the requirements had been set, the next step was intercepting the radio terminals that were designated the highest priority targets. It was at this juncture in the communications intelligence system that the general requirements had to be translated from the vague entries such as “German military” to a list of targeted radio stations that could be monitored by Allied radio intercept personnel. Before discussing the allotment of target stations to monitoring stations, it is necessary to describe the communications the Allies monitored. There were two major types of communications media that were targeted: cable (or wire) and radio. Both had their advantages and shortcomings.

The first of these, cable intercept, proved to be a useful but limited source of communications intelligence. At the war’s outset, both the United States and Great Britain invoked wartime information contingencies and imposed restrictions on telegram and cable traffic to, through, and from both countries. All such wire traffic – personal, commercial, and diplomatic – was subjected to censorship review. Each resident foreign diplomatic mission was required to submit a copy of each message it sent, even in its encrypted form, to the appropriate government censorship office. The main reason for this was to control the flow of information out of the country that was critical to the war effort.²⁹ In England, the General Post Office oversaw this program, sometimes referred to as “traffic blanketing.”³⁰ The British also implemented censorship practices at all overseas Commonwealth cable terminals located in such places as Malta, New Delhi, Gibraltar, and Barbados.³¹ In the United States, the government, through the Office of Censorship run by Byron Price and staffed by civilians and contingents from the Army and Navy, received copies of all such wire traffic (before

transmission overseas or upon receipt from an overseas terminal) from the various cable and wireless telegram companies such as Mackay Radio, Western Union, Radio Corporation of America, and Global Wireless.³² These companies had terminals in New York, Washington, DC, New Orleans, Louisiana, Galveston, Texas, and San Francisco, California. Copies of cable traffic that passed through overseas U.S. and British terminals on to other countries were also collected under the wartime restrictions. This coverage affected mostly diplomatic, personal, and commercial cable traffic between Europe, the United States, Latin America, and Africa.

This cable intercept had the primary advantage of simplifying the intercept problem. All messages flowing through an American or Commonwealth terminal were accessible to Allied cryptologists. Another advantage was the errorless copy of the intercepted cable message; each message usually was free of transmission garbles and missed cipher groups that could hinder exploitation, except for errors by the originator’s code clerk. The collection of cable messages was inexpensive for the cryptologic agencies since



Copy of Netherlands cable from U.S. Censorship Office

the national censorship offices performed the task.

On the other hand, there were limitations to this collection method. For example, only cables sent between Washington (and other U.S. terminals with overseas connections such as San Francisco, New Orleans, and New York) and an overseas terminal were available to the Americans. Messages sent on cables not routed through American- or Commonwealth-controlled terminal stations were beyond intercept. There were few means then to obtain these cables except through covert means, such as placing taps or suborning cable clerks. These methods risked eventual exposure and were difficult to hide and continue without discovery by foreign security agencies.

Another difficulty was that some of the targeted countries knew or suspected that the Allies probably were reading their cable traffic. To defeat the intercept and possible exploitation of their cables, some diplomats were warned by their capitals to take certain precautions when sending cables, even encrypted ones. For example, Axis diplomats in Europe and the United States were told to be careful when they included excerpts of public speeches and newspaper stories in their messages. They were warned not to quote them verbatim because the excerpts were also available to Allied codebreakers and could be used as “cribs” to break the enciphered messages.³³ To defeat the Allied cable censors, some countries sent sensitive correspondence by diplomatic pouch or courier. Of course, the courier pouches could be searched covertly (“tossed” was the expression) by Allied agents. But this technique was difficult to arrange and, if discovered, was a possible source of diplomatic embarrassment. It appears that Allied agents probably did this anyway. In early 1942, the U.S. Office of Strategic Services, and its predecessor, the Office of the Coordinator of Information, received copies of diplomatic messages from the British Security Coordination. A number of these mes-

sages appear to have been obtained in this manner.³⁴ (See pages 65-6).

In occupied Europe, Nazi military and occupation authorities made use of cable telephone or telegram systems where available, thus denying the Allies access to these communications. Also, during the years of the war, the Germans, especially the military, expanded, repaired, and improved the European cable backbone network in occupied Europe in order to support their operations. In four years, the German army nearly doubled the size of the European cable trunk network to 6,900 miles.³⁵ This cable expansion denied more intercept to the Allies.

The other and much larger and lucrative source of Allied intercept was radio communications. Since its introduction at the turn of the century, radio communications had expanded dramatically. As technology advanced and industry was able to mass-produce components and radio sets, the speed and distances that information could be transmitted grew. Many advanced countries had developed complete national-level communications networks that served private and public functions. When the war began, governments quickly took over many facilities and converted them to military or other official uses. The use of these in place systems presented more problems for Allied intercept stations since they had to match Axis capabilities.

Many Axis and neutral diplomatic missions, not needing or trusting the Allied-controlled cable systems, transmitted their diplomatic messages by long-range, high frequency (HF) radio.³⁶ Axis naval and air force units and organizations relied on long-range HF radio for their communications, unless ground-based cable systems were available. Some communications operated on lower frequency bands similar to those used by commercial broadcast stations. Many Axis units used low-power high frequency radios to communicate with their local commands that reduced

the chance for interception by Allied monitoring stations.

The Axis used different modes of communications on the many frequency bands. The most common mode was manual morse, the famous “dit-dah” or on-off keying of a continuous wave signal. This mode appeared on all frequencies, and all service and government elements used it. The Axis also used teleprinter systems for high-volume traffic among command centers, though this appeared later in the war. Voice communications was also heavily used. Most often this appeared at higher frequency ranges. The most common users were aircraft pilots communicating among themselves and with ground controllers. Some aircraft and ground stations used long-range HF voice systems, though this was rare because of the lack of security.³⁷

German Police units operating in the western USSR used both long-range high frequency and the shorter-distance low frequency and medium frequency manual morse communications to send reports about their activities from major command centers in Minsk and Kiev to headquarters back in Berlin. Police battalions received radio or courier reports from companies and detachments in the field. The battalions, in turn, sent their radio reports over HF radio to regimental headquarters in the region in which they operated.³⁸

For the Allies, intercepting Axis and neutral radio communications of interest presented a myriad of problems. The most obvious problem, as mentioned earlier, was simply the number and location of Axis radio terminals – perhaps several thousand. In order just to hear these radio stations meant that the Allies had to develop extensive corps of thousands of radio intercept operators to man the monitoring stations to collect the Axis and neutral communications for intelligence.

The major Allied radio intercept organizations were, for the British, the Radio Security Service (belonging to M.I.6), the General Post Office, and those units of the various services of the British armed forces, known as the “Y-Service.” For the Americans, the radio intercept personnel were assigned to the Signal Intelligence Service (Army) and organized under the Second Service Battalion, OP-20-G (Navy), the United States Coast Guard, the Office of Strategic Services, and the Federal Communication Commission. Canada operated the Examination Unit of the Canadian National Research Council. A number of men and women from other Commonwealth countries also performed as intercept operators. These included personnel from Australia, New Zealand, and India. Commonwealth military personnel who performed intercept services were organized into units known as Special Wireless Groups. Additionally, contingents from smaller Allied forces also intercepted Axis communications.

All of these personnel were stationed at monitoring facilities located around the world. These facilities ranged from large field stations, such as at Beaumanor, Leicestershire, England, or Vint Hill Farms in Virginia, to small direction finding huts in Alaska or Scotland. It is difficult to get a precise total number of Allied monitoring sites. Many stations did exist for the duration of the war. Some served only to support a campaign. Many stations were limited to a direction finding function only. Some sites, such as the U.S. Navy station at Muirkirk, Maryland, originally were commercial radio stations that were taken over by the military. American sites, including those of the Army, Navy, Coast Guard, OSS, and FCC numbered over seventy-five. British and Commonwealth stations numbered around sixty and were located in the British Isles and overseas in Australia, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Egypt, Palestine, Malta, Iraq, Kenya, and India.

Generally, Allied overseas monitoring stations supported the commands in the theater of



An intercept section at MS-1, Vint Hill Farms, Virginia

operation in which they were located. For example, in early 1942 U.S. Army radio intercept companies that were assigned to locations in the British Commonwealth, such as in Northern Ireland, or in the Atlantic region, at sites in Iceland and Newfoundland, intercepted German military, naval, or espionage communications.³⁹ In the Pacific and Asian theaters, some field stations were manned by a mix of personnel from the United States and Commonwealth countries, such as the large sites at Central Bureau Brisbane and the Wireless Experimental Center in India. Other facilities were manned almost exclusively by personnel from one nation, such as the Americans at the U.S. Navy radio intercept site in Hawaii and the British in Ceylon. On the other hand, in the Southwest Pacific area of operations, Australian detachments accompanied SIS units to forward intercept sites in New Guinea and the Philippines to support General MacArthur's advance.⁴⁰

Most field sites were controlled and manned by one service element: army, navy, air force, or security service, such as M.I.6 or the OSS. This

arrangement was not absolute; other service contingents or nationalities could be present. Also, intercept missions could cross service boundaries and responsibilities. For example, early in the war, U.S. Navy sites did collect diplomatic com-



*Intercept operations of
USA Signal Radio Intelligence Company,
Fifth U.S. Army in North Africa
(Courtesy: National Security Agency)*

munications. But service priorities usually prevailed when it came to mission assignment. For example, a tentative 1943 intercept assignment list for the major SIS monitoring station #1, located at Vint Hill Farms, Virginia, was dominated by international diplomatic and commercial terminals. The number one assignment block included all government traffic between Tokyo and Rome, Bern, Vichy, Ankara, and Stockholm. The second and third tier priority was both German and Italian weather traffic (known as “WX”). The fourth priority was all government traffic to and from Berlin to Manchukuo, Madrid, occupied China, and Lisbon. Interestingly, the only military traffic assigned to Vint Hill Farms was that of Germany and it was reserved for the lowest priority.⁴¹



Sample intercept: German naval attaché message from Berlin to Tokyo copied by the U.S. Navy site “W” located at Winter Harbor, Maine

Eventually, the assignment of targets by city (or “circuit”) and specific types of messages was dropped because it was considered inefficient. Too often, there was needless duplicative copy of the same radio traffic. In mid-1943, the SIS adopted the procedure of tasking by frequency and terminal callsign. This targeting method was similar to that used by the British when tasking their field sites.⁴² The British also pioneered the central control of all collection sites. From Bletchley Park, GC&CS could direct the activities

of all the British intercept sites, though its measure of control over service monitoring stations may have been less certain.⁴³

By early 1944, the American and British sites were experimenting with a joint and centralized authority that controlled collection of important target networks. Field sites informed a control authority by teleprinter of current targets being collected. The control station then assigned any remaining priority target terminals that were not being monitored. Field sites also sent in weekly reports on their coverage that allowed refinement by oversight committees in both countries, the Y-Committee (later Y-Board) in Great Britain, and at Arlington Hall.⁴⁴

Still, even with the number of intercept and direction finding facilities that eventually would be built during the course of the war – over 130 – the Allies would never have enough monitoring positions and radio receivers to match the number of Axis transmitters and the volume of radio traffic they sent. Precise numbers on messages transmitted by the Axis and those intercepted by the Allies are not readily available. One estimate is that a Japanese area army command could send as many as 1,400 messages a day.⁴⁵ Some educated estimates by veterans and scholars of Allied wartime cryptology tend to support the contention that Allied intercept never resembled the popular analogy to a vacuum cleaner in which all Axis traffic was “scooped up in the ether.” If anything, Allied intercept more closely resembled a form of “sampling.” There is one estimate that the U.S. managed to intercept only 60 percent of all Japanese naval communications in the time leading up to and at the time of the Japanese strike at Pearl Harbor.⁴⁶ In rare cases, where the high-level interest existed that could focus resources, more complete coverage could be arranged. During the United States-Japan negotiations leading up to Pearl Harbor, all but a few of the messages between Tokyo and its embassy in Washington were intercepted. But such thorough coverage was not the norm.

Besides the large difference between the level of Axis communications and the Allied monitoring capability to collect it, there were a number of other technical limitations that hindered complete and effective Allied intercept operations. Atmospheric conditions, such as local weather and the presence of sunspots, affected reception of communications, especially those on the high frequency range, which was the most commonly used transmitting frequency band. The location of monitoring stations was critical to hearing enemy transmissions. The sheer distance between the transmitter and the monitoring station could determine whether the latter could hear its target. The time of day and the season could also influence the range and clarity of communications. At night, the composition of the layers in the atmosphere changes, producing two effects: increasing the range at which radio communications can be heard, while creating nonreception areas, known as “skip zones.” The local topographic conditions in which a radio transmitter was located played a role in how well a radio signal could be heard at an intercept site. Mountains, heavily forested terrain, or jungle dampened radio transmissions, while deserts increased the range of a transmission. The frequency and power output of the transmitting terminal also mattered. The sensitivity of the monitoring equipment at an intercept site was a crucial element.

All of the above environmental factors were considered when the Allies selected locations for their monitoring stations around the world. An important part of this process was the work of teams that performed field studies of potential sites. The results of their surveys determined the location of the monitoring stations.⁴⁷ One of the most productive Allied intercept stations against Japanese military communications originating from Japan was the U.S. Army’s site at Two Rock Ranch outside of Pentaluma, California. An U.S. Army site that specialized in intercepting international diplomatic communications was located near Asmara, Ethiopia.

At the monitoring station, the capabilities of individual intercept operators could make a distinct difference in what was copied or missed – the difference between so-called “clean” copy usable by cryptanalysts or linguists, or that riddled with missing or mistakenly heard characters or groups that hindered recovery of message text. The ability of Allied intercept operators varied according to training and experience. The training of these specialized personnel included general skills in communications procedures and modes of transmission, as well as training tailored towards specific communications targets, such as instruction in the difficult Japanese telegraphic kana code. As intercept operators gained experience, their “copy” would become usable.

Two sites primarily intercepted German Police communications. The first was the British Army Y-station at Beaumanor in Leicestershire, located about eighty miles northwest of London, England. Beaumanor was one of the largest British intercept sites and operated with 140 radio receivers by the end of the war. The primary mission of Beaumanor was German military communications and included that of the German Police. Because of the vast distances between the operational police units and their various headquarters hierarchy that extended back to Berlin, a variety of radio frequencies were used. These extended from the low frequency band associated with commercial broadcasts up to the standard high frequency bands used by the military.

The site was able to copy police messages from Russia on all of these frequencies. In fact, once the initial recovery of the police radio network was completed, that is, identifying all of their stations, operating frequencies and schedules, the collection effort was not too difficult to maintain, despite changes by the Germans. In early September 1942, the police changed their call signs, but not their frequencies or schedules. The Y-operators at Beaumanor were able to

quickly equate the new and old call signs within a few days.⁴⁸

The other allied monitoring station that copied police and SS communications merits a short consideration because of its unique contribution to the intercept of Axis communications relating to the Holocaust, as well as the curious story of the site itself. P.C. Cadix (P.C. stood for Poste de commandement or command post) was a covert Allied intercept site located in the southeastern part of unoccupied Vichy France at the Chateau de Fouzes near the town of Uzes. The site was manned by a polyglot team of Poles, exiled Spanish Loyalists, Free French, and the occasional stray Englishman. The monitoring station originally had been formed in late 1939 by Colonel Gustave Bertrand, head of the French Army's radio intelligence organization, the section d'examenner (S.E). In its initial configuration the site was first known as P.C. Bruno located near Paris, France.

Following the fall of France in June 1940, the team that had manned P.C. Bruno, after spending a short exile in Algeria, returned secretly to southern France. From October 1940 to November 1942, P.C. Cadix, as the site now was named, intercepted German high frequency communications in occupied France and elsewhere. Because of the peculiarities of HF radio propagation mentioned above – such as the interval of the angle of reflection off the ionosphere of the sky wave of a radio signal, known as the skip distance, and extended propagation of HF and lower frequency bands during the night – P.C. Cadix was able to monitor German radio traffic from the Russian front at night, and signals from Germany to the units during daylight. Because of this situation, Beaumanor and P.C. Cadix split the work on German Police traffic, with the British copying on even days and the French site working the police nets on odd days.⁴⁹ Among the radio messages intercepted by Bertrand and his team were over 3,000 sent by German Police and the SS formations, many of which contained reports of the

atrocities committed by these units.⁵⁰ P.C. Cadix transmitted the decrypts by radio to Bletchley Park. Ironically, these transmissions were encrypted with an Enigma.⁵¹ Cadix continued to operate until late 1942 when it was forced to shut down, and its staff had to flee pursuing German security forces during the occupation of Vichy France that followed the Allied invasion of French North Africa.

It is a most important point to understand that the intercept of an Axis message was the initial step in the communications intelligence process. The quality of the intercept pretty much defined whether that message eventually could be useful for Allied intelligence. Radio reception conditions and the abilities (or lack thereof) on the part of monitors dictated the duration and difficulty of the subsequent analytic exploitation of intercepted messages, or even if the analytic effort could be started at all.

Step 3: Processing the Intercept

Once the enemy's messages were intercepted, and if they were not decrypted at the site, then they had to be forwarded to theater or national centers for processing. Generally, tactical military communications, that is, those between Axis units of division-size and below, were decrypted and translated at a large intercept site or at intermediate processing centers located in such places as Hawaii, Egypt, Ceylon, and Australia. Allied tactical field intercept units also could monitor, decrypt and translate low-level encrypted or plaintext enemy messages and pass them along to their immediate commands. So-called higher level cryptographic systems – and this meant all traffic encrypted by Enigma, Purple, and other machines as well as Axis and neutral diplomatic messages – were processed at the major analytic centers of Bletchley Park outside of London, Berkeley Street in London, England, OP-20-G Headquarters on Nebraska Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C., and at Arlington Hall Station in northern Virginia.

through the British Security Coordination located in New York City. The BSC also relayed Canadian intercept from Ottawa, Canada. U.S. field stations as far away as Kunming, China, and Asmara, Ethiopia, could get their intercept transmitted to SSA Headquarters within a day via this series of radio and cable relays. The chart on page 37 from June 1945 illustrates the network.

Once the intercepted messages arrived at the centers, they were sorted by target country and service element. The copy was then distributed to the appropriate target country office for analysis. So-called traffic analysts performed the initial evaluation of message “externals.” (The British referred to traffic analysts as “discriminators.”) This traffic analytic process can be likened to the study of the outside of a mail envelope. Even without reading the enclosed correspondence of a piece of mail, the recipient’s and sender’s identity and addresses, the postmark, weight and size of the envelope, the postage class, special handling instructions, and the history of prior correspondence between the two can reveal much about the content of individual letters.

At Arlington Hall Station, analysts from the B-I section performed the initial review of the intercept. The externals they studied included parts of the intercept such as station call signs, message precedence (or its urgency), message serial number, the number of recipients and relays (if used), and tips to the cryptographic system. These items were studied for clues to the content of the message and perhaps the identity of the ultimate recipient. For example, many diplomatic messages were sent to radio terminals with

only the notation of the ministry for which it was intended, such as “Ministry of Foreign Affairs.” If possible, the analyst would try to determine to which department the message was addressed. The analyst would review the files on previous intercepts to see if there were any clues that indicated the message’s recipient.

From there, the message, or a copy of it, was routed to the appropriate code breaking office. At Bletchley Park, cryptanalysis was done at Hut 6 for military, air, police, and the SS, or at Hut 8 for naval traffic. The GC&CS site at Berkely Street in London received diplomatic and commercial intercepts. At Arlington Hall, the SSA cryptanalysts worked in section B-III, which handled all military and diplomatic intercept. The cryptanalytic task, the actual recovery of the message contents from its encoded or encrypted format, was a formidable one due to the enormous number of possible cryptographic systems employed by target countries. Allied codebreakers had to contend with almost 500 codes and ciphers.⁵³ For exam-



Typical Arlington Hall analytic section

ple, British cryptanalysts worked against over 100 German cryptographic systems.⁵⁴ Many countries employed numerous cryptographic systems. For example, France (including the Vichy, Gaullist, and Giraudist factions) used over 100 systems for its armed forces, diplomatic, and colonial communications. Switzerland had available over ten manual systems and a simplified version of Enigma just for its diplomatic messages.⁵⁵ Not all countries used all of their systems all of the time. Some systems were reserved for messages of certain levels of importance. Some military or naval encryption systems were designed for use by a single command or region. For some countries, most of their communications were encrypted using relatively few systems. For example, although the Vatican was known to have nine diplomatic systems available for its apostolic delegates, it used only three systems, and one of those was so seldom used by the Vatican that American and British codebreakers could make no progress against it.⁵⁶

It has been popularly portrayed that Allied cryptologists often could read enemy messages before the intended recipient. In a few instances this was true, such as occurred with some Purple decrypts prior to Pearl Harbor. Generally, though, this capability was rare. The ability to exploit encrypted traffic in a reasonable time after intercept was possible only after the cumulative application of physical resources and months of human analytic effort devoted to a single system such as Purple or the constellation of Enigma variants.⁵⁷ Allied cryptologists did not reach that level of expert or timely exploitation for all Axis cryptographic systems.

Another aspect to the cryptanalytic process was the constant risk that Axis cryptographers would change or replace current codes or ciphers that the Allies were exploiting. This danger existed for all major Axis cryptographic systems. There was a notable example of this in January 1942 when the German Navy replaced the three-wheel Enigma used by the U-boats with a newer

four-wheel version. As a result of this move, the Allies were unable to exploit U-boat messages encrypted in the new Enigma until November 1942. In another example, in September 1941 the German Police began to change over its current manual encryption system, a double transposition cipher to another, a double playfair.⁵⁸ This change was completed by early November. The playfair was quickly broken; in fact it was a simpler system. This switch illustrates the inherent risk that faced Allied codebreakers every day during the war.⁵⁹ (See pages 49-50 for more on the background to this change.)

It is also true that not all foreign cryptographic systems warranted the same level of cryptanalytic effort that had been made against the Purple machine or the various versions of the Enigma. There were a number of reasons for this. As pointed out above, there were quite a number of systems to attack, far more than the number of available cryptanalysts. For many systems, including manual codes and ciphers and some machine systems, not enough intercept was acquired to allow for their successful or timely cryptanalysis. Depending on the systems' complexity and potential for intelligence, some codes or ciphers would be exploited relatively quickly; others, because of their difficulty, took a great deal of time and resources to break. For example, the high-level German diplomatic systems, known as Floradora and GEE, took, respectively, four and five years for Allied codebreakers to solve.⁶⁰ A few machine cipher systems, such as the German Gestapo Enigma, known as TGD, defied Allied cryptanalysis completely during the war.⁶¹

The British had a large section in Hut 6 at Bletchley Park devoted to the decryption of the police ciphers. There were good technical, cryptologic reasons for this extensive effort. The texts of decrypted police messages sometimes provided cribs – plain text assumed to be present in enciphered messages – to those messages encrypted with the Enigma by other services such as the Wehrmacht. Also, many Wehrmacht and

Luftwaffe operational units retained reserve manual ciphers similar to the police system in case of Enigma failure, or used them for messages of a less importance.⁶² As for intelligence value, the police messages were important because they provided information on much more than the massacres of Jews and other groups in Russia. They contained information about economic, political, and social conditions in Germany and occupied Europe, the suppression of resistance groups in the conquered countries, the political situation in Italy after the fall of Mussolini, news of Allied POW escapes, the effects of Allied bombing on the morale of German civilians, and the SS plunder of art and other cultural items from other countries.⁶³

For systems that had been broken, there was virtually no retroactive effort by the Allied cryptologists to solve so-called “back traffic.” For example, there was no plan to go back and read the high-level German diplomatic messages that had accumulated prior to the cryptanalytic breakthroughs in 1944 and 1945. In another case, by early 1944, the War Department’s Special Branch conceded that there was no way that some 200,000 intercepted Japanese military messages, encrypted and encoded in systems that were now exploitable, which had been stock-piled, would ever be read by the Army. Arlington Hall conceded that there was too much current intercept arriving from the field and just keeping up with that flow negated any chance for work on the old messages. Also, the Army’s analysts had to stay on top of the current systems in case the Japanese changed them. The author of a memorandum reviewing this situation at Arlington Hall could only muse about how much “priceless intelligence” was lost.⁶⁴

How much of the total intercept ultimately was exploited cryptanalytically is not known. There is no quantitative data about how many possible messages may have been missed (or copied too poorly for use by the code-breaking sections). There is not much data about intercepted messages encoded or encrypted in cryptographic systems that were unbreakable. Likewise, there is little statistical

information available to determine an overall success rate for Allied codebreakers. The few records with statistics concern how many messages were intercepted and how many were broken. If the incident about the Japanese Army messages related in the preceding paragraph can be used as an indicator, then it is possible that a substantial number of messages were intercepted but not exploited. In reality, the general rate of successful decryption or decoding of intercepted messages may not have been particularly high, and this estimate includes messages that were partially exploited. For example, in fiscal year 1944, the Allies intercepted about 576,000 Axis and neutral diplomatic messages. The SSA cryptanalytic branch at Arlington Hall, B-III, managed to solve about 89,000, or a rate of slightly less than 15.5 percent.

This low rate, though, does not mean that the Allied codebreakers failed to produce intelligence. For one thing, the priorities established by the Allied staffs ensured that the communications most important to the war’s prosecution received the most coverage and analytic attention. Axis military systems, such as U-boat Enigma traffic, were exploited in much larger numbers and a greater rate relative to intercept than targets of lower interest such as neutral diplomatic networks.⁶⁵ As for the diplomatic problem, the major targets of interest, Japanese embassies in Axis and neutral capitals were the highest priority and accounted for approximately 54 percent of all diplomatic translations.⁶⁶ Success for the Allied cryptologic effort must be measured in the intelligence gathered that affected the course and outcome of the war. Still, the general result of the codebreaking was that a relatively small percentage of the intercepted messages were available for the next set of analysts – the translators.

Translations of the decrypted high-level Axis and neutral messages were done at Huts 3 (military and air) or 4 (naval) at Bletchley Park, at Berkeley Street in London (diplomatic and commercial), and at the B-III section of Arlington Hall Station. A translation took a few steps to complete. Initially, a

linguist would complete a worksheet. Usually this took the form of the decrypted text with a word-to-word translation. Next, the linguist would compose a draft English text based on the worksheet. A final version of the text would then be written. Usually this form carried any comments considered necessary for the reader of the translation. For example, if a particular passage proved to be difficult and open to other interpretations, that bit of text in the original language would be included in a footnote.

The translation problem facing the cryptologic agencies was enormous. The nature, size, and logistical needs of the language problem proved to be as daunting as that of decryption. The target countries, Axis, minor allied, and neutral, used three-dozen languages. The mixture was an almost devilish variety that ranged from relatively familiar European languages, such as French, German, and Spanish, which were taught at many American and British schools, to the unfamiliar and rarely taught Amharic, Arabic, and Thai.⁶⁷

At the beginning of the war, one of the major issues confronting the Allied cryptologic organizations was that they had to produce a large enough cadre of linguists to handle the range of languages found in the decrypted messages. This early lack of translators created a bottleneck in the processing of intercept. For example, during the month of March 1943, SIS had received over 114,000 intercepts, mostly Japanese Army, but also weather and diplomatic messages. Yet, Arlington Hall could produce only 4,500 translations. The problem was a lack of translators to handle the load.⁶⁸

Once training programs were running and producing linguists, other problems intruded. Again, wartime priorities often defined the direction of the linguistic training effort. For the Americans, Japanese was the language emphasized in its training programs. This emphasis was driven partly by the division of effort with the British, though the latter had their own Japanese training program. Other languages of interest were not ignored, but American linguistic training was dominated by the

needs of the war against Japan. Besides the dominance of Japanese language needs, another problem was other organizations that competed with the cryptologic agencies for these rare linguists. The most important was the Allied Translator and Interpreter Section (ATIS), which performed critical roles such as POW interrogation and translation of captured enemy documents in all combat theaters.

Once the linguists were assigned to analytic centers, their work was supposed to be verified at various steps for correctness and readability. Nonetheless, the quality of translations the cryptologic agencies produced during the war varied. In the archival record collections, researchers easily can find numerous excellent translations, and many with serious shortcomings in grammar, syntax, and vocabulary. Many of the problems probably arose from technical gaps in linguistic resources. Linguists not only had to become proficient in a language, as they went along in their work they had to learn or develop specialized glossaries for military, nautical, and aerial jargon, equipment references, and so on.⁶⁹ The text of diplomatic messages often contained exactly precise language that was difficult to render into equivalent English. Many diplomatic messages reported conversations and interviews with individuals that had been translated from the language of the host country. Also, messages were composed with a background context that assumed a prior understanding between original sender and intended recipient. If the linguist had not seen any previous messages, allusions to other individuals, issues, and the significance of topics in the text could be opaque to an Allied translator. For the recipients of the translations, though, these shortcomings may have not always posed a problem: the main ends to translation were availability and utility, not elegance and erudition.

The rapidity at which a translation could be completed varied, as well. The above difficulties affected the turnover from decrypt to translation. Further, if an intercept was considered important,

and the decryption could be done quickly, it would be translated relatively quickly. If not, it could be some time before a translation was completed and disseminated, perhaps weeks or even months. An example of this difference can be illustrated by two diplomatic intercepts of late June 1944 from Budapest. Both messages had been received at Arlington Hall one day after being intercepted by the U.S. Army's monitoring station in Asmara, Ethiopia (MS-4). The first intercept was a 26 June 1944 Hungarian diplomatic message to Ankara, Turkey, that reported world reaction to the initial roundup of Hungarian Jews. It took Arlington Hall from 27 June to 16 December 1944 to complete its decryption and a formal translation to be issued – almost six months. The second intercept was of a Vichy diplomatic message from Budapest to Ankara, Turkey, that reported the situation of a group of Lebanese Jews trapped in Budapest. It took Arlington Hall from 13 June to 24 June to decrypt and translate this message, or only eleven days.⁷⁰

The specific reason (or reasons) for the long delay in issuing the translation of the Hungarian intercept is not known. The quick processing of the Vichy intercept probably can be explained by the long familiarity of Arlington Hall analysts with Vichy diplomatic cryptographic systems that had been solved about two years earlier, as well as the comparatively easier French plain text. The delay in processing the Hungarian intercept suggests more difficulty with Hungarian cryptography, as well as problems with the Magyar language. The long processing time for the Hungarian intercept does not mean that information of intelligence value it may have contained would have been held back until a full translation was done. In a heat of operational necessity, intelligence could be passed informally.

At the beginning of the war, the United States cryptologic agencies were producing only a few separate series of translations, notably the diplomatic series by the SIS and Japanese Navy translations by OP-20-G. These early series of translations suffered from a number of limitations. There were too few

being written; they were not timely; and the translations suffered from missing portions of text. As the war progressed, both army and navy codebreakers got better at breaking Axis and neutral cryptographic systems, and began to exploit more systems. As the number and variety of readable intercepts increased, the number of resulting translations also grew.

The initial translation series proved to be inadequate to handle the growing flood of intelligence. The analytic centers created additional specialized translation series that were categorized by topic, source, or administrative needs. By the end of the war, the U.S. cryptologic elements were producing over sixteen separate series of translations. Some were for a general intelligence audience, such as the Japanese military translations. Others were for the cryptologic elements themselves. These series usually carried the notation “CI” for “Code Instruction.” Most of the translation series had no or very little information about the Holocaust beyond a passing reference. The two that contained the most information were the “H” (Multinational Diplomatic) and the “T” (Reserved, or Restricted Diplomatic) series.⁷¹ These two series are discussed in some detail in Chapter 3, pages 61 to 64. The British created fewer translation series compared to those of the SIS.

Although a precise accounting of the final tally of finished translations produced by the Western cryptologic agencies is beyond this study, it should be pointed out that the intercepts that were translated represented only a part of what previously had been decrypted, which, in turn, was a portion of what originally had been intercepted. Even by the end of the war, the overall rate on some targets was still relatively low. In July 1945, an Inspector General survey of OP-20-G activities indicated that only 10 percent of all intercepted Japanese naval messages were being fully processed and disseminated to the various military commands.⁷² Recall that the number of decrypts produced by B-III in 1944 was 89,000 (out of 576,000 intercepts, or 15 percent); the estimated number of translations for

the same period is about 50,000. This represents about 56 percent of the decrypts, but only 8.6 percent of all diplomatic intercepts.⁷³

The 1944 American total of diplomatic translations issued is surprisingly close to that of GC&CS at the start of the conflict. In 1940 the Diplomatic and Commercial Section of GC&CS reported that it had received (intercepted by radio or cable, or acquired through espionage) 100,000 telegrams, read 70,000 of them, but circulated only 8,000. The British numbers also represent another aspect of this problem mentioned earlier: the relative dearth of intelligence of importance that was contained in the intercepted messages. The low figure of translations disseminated through the British government, some 8 percent of all intercepts despite a 70 percent success rate of decryption, suggests that many messages that London intercepted contained little intelligence of importance to the prosecution of the war. The intercepts were largely of minor neutrals and allied governments in exile.⁷⁴

Once the translations were completed, other intelligence analysts reviewed them for usable information. At Hut 3, this work was done in the indexing sections. These individuals, many of them women, extracted those elements of intelligence that contributed to the larger information matrixes that were important to the war's prosecution – order of battle, equipment listings, names of individual officers, etc. At Hut 3, a senior indexer would flag the information that needed to be entered into large index card catalogues for further use. The information was entered onto index cards, cross-referenced, and stored in cabinets within Hut 3 for future reference.⁷⁵

No information was overlooked. Even that data that appeared innocuous and subsequently not important by the Axis, could reap benefits from good indexing. For example, prior to the war, the British intercepted messages from the Italian Air Force in North Africa. The messages contained seemingly mundane information: specifics about repairs of the engines to Italian aircraft. Many of

the messages listed engines by serial number. Alert British analysts compiled these serial numbers. The payoff was that, by knowing the status of almost every aircraft engine, the British could develop a complete picture of the size, composition, and availability of aircraft to the Italian Air Force in North Africa when hostilities began in September 1940.⁷⁶

Step 4: Disseminating the COMINT

Once a translation was completed, there remained the problem of getting the intelligence it contained to the military and civilian leaders and organizations that needed it. In Britain, the Joint Intelligence Committee, which served under the Chiefs of Staff, produced intelligence reports for the rest of the government. The JIC had been functioning since before the war (when it had been called the Joint Intelligence Subcommittee). The major services and Foreign Office were represented on it. The services and the Foreign Office, which was responsible for M.I.6, and, ultimately, GC&CS, funneled intelligence to the JIC, which, in turn, distributed it to the necessary recipients. The JIC also issued the military, political, diplomatic, and economic estimates of the war.⁷⁷

Early in the war, the United States SIS produced and disseminated COMINT to other agencies and commands, usually in the form of translations. This system soon broke down. The Army codebreakers were swamped by the increase in messages to exploit. SIS was unprepared organizationally and lacked the resources to distribute the COMINT. It reported communications intelligence in a haphazard fashion; no effort was made to check the signals intelligence against other sources. Organizationally, the SIS remained within the Signal Corps. Its product had to go to G-2, the War Department's intelligence arm. Another organization, the Special Branch, was formed in mid-1942 under the control of the War Department's operational intelligence arm, the Military Intelligence Service. Special Branch thereafter would handle the analysis of the COMINT product from SIS, combine

it with other sources of intelligence, and then disseminate to the rest of the government whatever useful intelligence it had gained. Special Branch produced the “Magic” Summary and also other special topical studies.⁷⁸ In 1944 Special Branch was broken up and subsumed under the War Department’s Military Intelligence Service, which took over the management of COMINT analysis and dissemination.⁷⁹

Within the British government and ministries, the Ultra material was distributed to the intelligence and service ministries that required it. As a general rule, copies of all Ultra translations or decrypts were sent to Secret Intelligence Service Headquarters in London and the intelligence departments of the three services. This distribution scheme varied, though, as the war progressed. A good example of this change can be seen with the dissemination of the German Police decrypts. For example, in August 1941 eight copies of police decrypts were produced and distributed. One copy went into the files. Two copies went to M.I.6 HQ, while another was transferred from the Service to the Ministry of Economic Warfare. A fourth copy went to the Air Ministry intelligence section. The fifth copy went to M.I. 8, British Army Y staff. The War Office section responsible for occupied Europe, M.I. 14, received a copy. One final copy was sent to Bletchley Park as part of a standing intelligence exchange, known as the B.P.I.E.

Starting in late 1942, the police decrypts carried a distribution list that contained both office designators and named individuals within M.I. 6 or the intelligence section of the Air Ministry or War Office. Why the distribution became name-specific is not clear, though it may have reflected a maturing topical specialization by individual analysts within M.I. 6 and other ministries. Also, after 1943 it appears that copies of the police decrypts, including those of the SS, were passed to the American contingent at Hut 3 in Bletchley Park. For example, in August 1944, a Lieutenant Colonel Taylor, most likely Lieutenant Colonel Telford Taylor, the G-2 Special Branch representative to Bletchley Park,

received a copy of an SS message detailing the rail transport of almost 1,300 Jews from Hungary to Auschwitz.⁸⁰

For the Allies, this last step in the communications intelligence system potentially was the trickiest because it was the one most likely to compromise Ultra to the Axis. It was recognized early in the war that such information, being at once the best source for Axis plans, intentions, and capabilities, also could be the most ephemeral of all intelligence sources. To lose the advantage that Ultra conferred on the Allies – what Churchill on one occasion called his “golden eggs” – could have been critical to the progress of the war, if not to its outcome. This was especially true in the early years of the conflict when Ultra was just about the only edge that a beleaguered Great Britain had against the military and naval forces of Germany and Italy in the various combat theaters. A method was needed to allow access to the intelligence derived from Axis communications, known variously as “Boniface,” “Most Secret Source,” or Ultra, to those who had the “need to know,” especially in overseas commands. Yet, that method had to ensure that the cryptologic sources would not be compromised and subsequently lost.

To solve the security problem posed by disseminating Ultra to overseas commands, the British developed a system to control the distribution of COMINT and, concurrently, to minimize the chance of its exposure. In August 1941 an organization, the Special Liaison Units (SLU), was formed under the control of the Chief, Secret Service, that administered the dissemination of Ultra to British commands in the Middle East. Soon, SLUs were present at every command of the British armed forces. These units were staffed largely by Royal Air Force personnel who were familiar with the signals intelligence sources and could offer technical background information concerning the intelligence. The unit also enforced the security regulations that protected the Ultra intelligence.

The units, many of which were attached to the various Allied commands around the world, received the Ultra intelligence from Hut 3, most commonly in the form of a translation. The intelligence was transmitted by enciphered radio, cable, or carried by a courier. When normal communications service was not available to an SLU, the transmission of Ultra information to the field was handled by Special Communications Units (SCU). The translation, or the message that contained it, carried a special designator (two- or three-letter combination) known as a delivery group that specified the recipients. A single translation could carry several delivery groups depending on how many commands had the “need to know.”⁸¹ The SLU, in turn, dispatched special representatives who delivered the information to those individual commanders, ministry heads, and diplomats cleared to receive it.

or their equivalents in the other services. For example, in the United Kingdom, a late 1944 Ultra distribution list for the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force of cleared army and air force personnel ran some twenty pages and included about 500 names.⁸² Yet, when one considers the size of SHAEF, and the subordinate commands involved, this listing is not particularly large.

The Americans developed their own version of the SLU, called the Special Security Officer or SSO. The SSO system was sponsored by the War Department’s Special Branch and officially was adopted by the War Department in late 1943 as the main method of Ultra distribution to major U.S. commands. The SSO liaisons were first established in the Pacific, Southwest Pacific, and China-Burma-India Theaters. Eventually, by spring 1944 an SSO was set up in Europe to support General Eisenhower, although an SLU counterpart also was present. Like their SLU counterparts, these officers personally handled all aspects of the Ultra traffic. They received the intelligence messages sent from the War Department, carried the intelligence to their designated recipients, briefed them, and then returned with the material.⁸³

The other major American system of distribution of communications intelligence was by summary report. This distribution method began with the early typewritten “Magic” Diplomatic Summary and was published first in March 1942. The summary remained limited to senior officials within the Washington, D. C., area: the White House and the War, Navy, and State Departments. A subordinate office of the Special Branch of the Military Intelligence Service compiled this summary. It was a digest of relevant translations based mostly on diplomatic sources with a preponderance of Purple, or Japanese diplomatic translations. Some other sources of information included mostly prisoner debriefings and digests of reports from aerial imagery. Occasional press and OSS-produced intelligence sometimes would be slipped into a summary, but COMINT material clearly dominated the content of the summaries, sometimes comprising



Sample Ultra translation with delivery groups

Keeping the lists of recipients approved, or “cleared,” to receive Ultra was another facet of the SLU system. The lists were fairly limited; recipients usually were high-ranking ministers or military officers, generally no lower than corps commanders

over 90 percent in a single issue. Occasionally, communications intelligence was the only source in a summary.⁸⁴ It was understandable why this was called the “Magic” Diplomatic Summary.

With the closer liaison between GC&CS and SIS, and the resulting access to more intelligence, the number of American summary reports grew. A European version, the “European Summary” was started in late 1943. Special Branch representatives in Britain culled Enigma translations published by Huts 3 and 4 for items to include in this summary. The European Summary was based mostly on translations of Axis military intercept. Also, the distribution of the European Summary was limited to about a dozen copies sent to Washington.⁸⁵ Except for two examples, a complete set of this summary series has yet to be located in any archival holdings in the United States. In July 1944 a “Far East Magic Summary” was started. It summarized the military, political, and diplomatic Magic translations and military intelligence reports related to the campaign against Japan. It was published through the surrender of Japan in September 1945.⁸⁶ This latter summary carried no information on the Holocaust.

Access to the “Magic” Summary was limited, usually with only a few copies hand-carried to the War, Navy, and State Departments, and the White House. The service chiefs, General George Marshall of the Army and Admiral Ernest King of the Navy, saw them, as did their deputies for intelligence and operations. Secretary of State Cordell Hull and the Assistant Secretary of State, Adolph Berle, received the summaries. Whether the copies of the summary were returned immediately to Arlington Hall when reviewed or held in a secure area for a short period is not clear. Whatever the case, it appears that the copies of the summaries eventually were returned to Special Branch.

How much communications intelligence reached the “top,” that is, the desks of Prime Minister Churchill and President Roosevelt, depended both on their individual predilection and the selection process by their staffs. Churchill has

been portrayed accurately as a voracious consumer of Ultra information. In September 1940 Churchill requested that “C,” Stewart Menzies, the head of M.I.6, provide him daily all Enigma messages.⁸⁷ This request clearly was impractical because of the number of decrypts. By summer of 1941, Churchill was receiving a daily brief from “C” that summarized important Ultra material. Bletchley Park produced a veritable daily banquet of information from which Churchill simply feasted. Sprinkled throughout the daily briefings are reports about the massacres of Jews in Russia, Hitler’s directive to shoot German political refugees taken prisoner with Free French units, Jewish internees in North Africa used to unload Axis ships in Tunisia, anti-Jewish hostility in Turkey, Himmler’s instruction to the SS to remove all works of art from Florence, Italy, rumors of the German Reichsbank hiding gold and sensitive documents, and SS orders to move Jewish inmates to Dachau late in the war.⁸⁸

Churchill used the intelligence from the daily briefings for planning strategy and berating commanders who were slow to exploit local advantages that he saw from Ultra decrypts.⁸⁹ At these briefings he also was informed of sensitive political and intelligence issues, such as the danger of passing Ultra to the Soviets, increasing German signals security, and the chance that Ultra might be compromised by a “precipitous” military action against Field Marshal Erwin Rommel’s Headquarters.⁹⁰ The daily summaries he received from Bletchley Park during the war, as contained in the PRO series HW1, illustrates the depth and breadth of the intelligence brought to his attention.

On the other hand, FDR seems to have been living on, if not quite a monk’s diet, then certainly a somewhat leaner ration when compared to Churchill’s appetite for Ultra. It was not that Roosevelt was uninterested and ignored the intelligence from radio intercepts. He referred to the Purple translations closely during the failed negotiations with Japan prior to Pearl Harbor. He did, in fact, continue to receive this intelligence in various forms throughout the war. The most notable was

the “Magic” Summary. Roosevelt’s aides would brief him in the morning or afternoon (or both) on the highlights from the various summaries. The White House also received “translations of interest” from either the Army’s Signal Intelligence Service at Arlington Hall or Special Branch throughout the war. Sometimes he would ask to read some of the translations used in the summary. All of his aides have reported that the president was extremely well informed from the intelligence. Usually when the president went abroad to conferences, such as Casablanca and Cairo, the Magic material was forwarded to him.⁹¹ And FDR would complain about a lack of intelligence on a particular issue he found important. For example, in November 1943 he called the secretary of war, Henry Stimson, and the secretary of the navy, Frank Knox, to the White House to complain about a lack of intelligence on the domestic and political situations inside Japan.⁹²

It appears that other U.S. officials were not always satisfied with the distribution of “Magic” information to the president and his use of it. General George Marshall, who well understood the importance of the COMINT, established a new summary system in early 1944 for President Roosevelt, creating a presidential “Black Book” of briefings. He did this after discovering that FDR was not getting or reading the Magic decrypts from the Army. In February 1944 he addressed a memo to President Roosevelt specifically on this issue. In the first paragraph he reported that he had learned that the president “seldom sees the Army summaries of ‘magic’ material.” Marshall later explained that a new arrangement of material had been prepared and that the president should avail himself of these.⁹³

It is difficult to determine the precise context for Marshall’s complaint. FDR was receiving intelligence daily, indeed even on occasion demanding it. Marshall may have believed that Roosevelt was not utilizing “Magic” when making wartime decisions. Certainly, Roosevelt’s approach to wartime leadership differed substantially from Churchill’s. Unlike

Churchill, who hectored his generals and admirals for action and often used Ultra as his hammer, FDR left the execution of the war to his military chiefs. Roosevelt preferred a personal working relationship with his commanders. They would develop and carry out operations subject to his approval. As long as his military commanders kept FDR’s confidence, they were free to direct the military operations of the war. Perhaps to a person of Marshall’s business-like attitude, FDR could appear maddeningly casual or detached from the direction of the war, especially when compared to Churchill’s tendency to get involved to the point of almost meddling.⁹⁴

A review of the “Magic” Diplomatic Summary files shows that they contained very little information about Axis atrocities or crimes against Jews or other groups in occupied Europe. There were perhaps three or four items a year beginning in mid-1942.⁹⁵ Additionally, from the set of translations SIS forwarded to the White House from early 1942 to the middle of 1945 only one – an Irish diplomatic message from Rome in October 1943 – can be found that had anything to do with the Holocaust.⁹⁶ Whether these few reports from American signals intelligence on the Holocaust eventually were briefed to President Roosevelt is unknown. This small number of references in the summaries is interesting because U.S. COMINT produced over 400 translations dealing with aspects of the Holocaust. Almost all of these were from diplomatic sources. Also, it seems that Roosevelt never saw the German Police decrypts that GC&CS had produced earlier in the war.⁹⁷ This gap, though, may be explained by the fact that the German Police and SS mostly had stopped reporting by radio about the massacres in Russia and the concentration camps by the end of 1942. Whether he was apprised of the information in the British decrypts through other sources, possibly the OSS via its exchange with the British Security Committee in New York, is unknown. The president had other sources of information about the Holocaust, including the OSS, his advisors, like Rabbi Stephen Wise, and personal

briefings from first hand observers like Jan Karski.⁹⁸

Throughout the war, President Roosevelt's reaction to the news of the Holocaust could be characterized as sympathetic, but also as realistic and restrained. He did authorize the Allied Declaration condemning the Nazi killing of the Jews in late 1942. He also publicly denounced the Nazi execution of civilians in October 1941. The president favored the postwar retribution against Axis war crimes. Yet, he believed that the best course to end the killing was the successful and quick defeat of Nazi Germany.⁹⁹ Furthermore, Roosevelt, like Churchill, understood the political problems that would follow from any statement that singled out Nazi atrocities against the Jews. The Germans could very well use any specific declaration about the Holocaust against the Allies as a propaganda weapon. And, on occasion, they did, denying claims about gassing of Jews and publicizing stories about Jewish control of the Allied war effort.¹⁰⁰

There was also an overriding security consideration regarding the dissemination of Ultra material about the Holocaust. Publicizing any information based on Ultra could seriously compromise the work at Bletchley Park, especially the exploitation of the German high-level Enigma and its many variants. If the Germans had been warned that the Allies had penetrated their most secret ciphers and codes, they could have installed new systems. Allied codebreakers then would have been returned to the difficult early days of the war when Enigma's workings were a mystery. If such a compromise had occurred in 1941 or 1942, the attendant loss of information could have adversely affected the Allied strategic posture against Germany.

The fear of compromise of Ultra sources rightly dominated and formed the entire British (and later American) administration of the dissemination of intelligence derived from it. The Allies developed some ruses and cover stories to protect these sensitive cryptologic sources.¹⁰¹ The initial British approach to disguising Ultra material was to make

it appear to have originated from a traditional espionage or agent source. The original cover name for Enigma decrypts was "Boniface," and the material from Bletchley Park was issued by M.I.6 to further disguise its source. This cover name was used to suggest that the information came from an agent high in the German command that was controlled by M.I.6. This approach may have secured the cryptologic source, but it often subverted the impact of the Ultra material since many recipients were skeptical of what they assumed was human agent information. But the British leadership appeared to accept the loss of some operational efficiency as long as security was maintained.¹⁰² By late 1941, though, the volume of Enigma decrypts had increased dramatically as had the number of recipients. This growth forced the British to finally extend the initial SLU presence in the Middle East and give more recipients the "need to know" about the source of Ultra intelligence.

While this expansion of approved recipients solved one aspect of the security problem, it still left the problem of compromise of Ultra information through its use in military operations. When there were no other intelligence sources to account for knowledge of Axis plans and moves, the Allies had to devise ways to disguise the role of Ultra information. An example of this was the British use of reconnaissance aircraft flights to "discover" Axis convoys in the Mediterranean that were known already through Ultra. When British codebreakers learned the date and route of an Axis supply convoy, the Allies would schedule many days of air reconnaissance over the route.¹⁰³ In the Pacific, the aerial ambush of Admiral Yamamoto in April 1943 had been based on a decrypt of the valuable Japanese naval code, JN-25. The cover story, told to the U.S. Army Air Force pilots who carried out the mission in case they were captured, was that the information on Yamamoto's flight came from Allied coast watchers.¹⁰⁴ In another interesting example, shortly after the German invasion of the USSR, the British supplied the Russians with signals intelligence based on high-level cryptanalysis. However, London was aware that the Germans could exploit

many Soviet ciphers and that Berlin could discover Ultra information in Moscow's radio traffic. Therefore, London disguised the Ultra it gave Moscow and characterized it as "a most reliable source."¹⁰⁵ In all of the above cases, a subterfuge was used to cover the real source of the information. Still, no matter the deception or cover for the real source of information, there was always a chance of discovery by the Axis. And this fear weighed heavily on the Allied codebreakers.

The handling of the information derived from the German Police decrypts from the Russian front in the summer of 1941 points to the dilemma just discussed. On 24 August 1941, Winston Churchill delivered a radio speech about the atrocities committed by the police on the Eastern Front. It was based on information derived from police decrypts. The prime minister was aware of the German depredations against Jews and other target groups in Russia since the start of the invasion. He may have been motivated to make the broadcast because of the shocking information in the reports. In the radio address, Churchill mentioned that Russian inhabitants from entire districts were being exterminated, but he made no reference to Jews being a specific target of the police units. Instead, Churchill made a general statement about German Police executing Russian "patriots." Perhaps in the first months of the invasion, the prime minister had not yet understood the emphasis on the Jewish target by the police and SS.¹⁰⁶

Even though the sole source for British knowledge of the massacres in the western Soviet Union was the police decodes, it appears that Churchill was not sensitive to the potential for compromise when he included a reference to the police executions in his broadcast. Nor is it certain if senior officials of M.I.6, GC&CS, or the Joint Intelligence Committee were themselves sensitive to the possibility of a compromise of the police decodes. Churchill may have viewed the military situation in August on the Russian front as critical. Certainly, there were members of his cabinet who believed

that the Soviet Union was facing defeat.¹⁰⁷ He may have wanted to bolster domestic British support for Moscow's struggle by delivering the speech.

A probable result of Churchill's speech was that, on 12 September 1941, Kurt Daluege, the commander of the German Police units, sent a message to all of his command to cease transmission of reports by radio of the mandated executions on the Russian Front. A second probable effect of Churchill's speech was that, in November 1941, the police changed the manual encryption system for their messages from a double transposition cipher to a double playfair system, the latter of which, ironically, was a relatively easier system for Bletchley Park to exploit. The British cryptologists believed that Daluege's order and the cryptographic change were inspired, in part, by Churchill's broadcast.¹⁰⁸ Although the order to cease reporting by radio had been sent on 12 September, nearly three weeks after the broadcast, it is likely the speech influenced the German changes. Daluege's 12 September order probably was preceded by a period of deliberation within the police leadership and staffs in Berlin about the practice of radioing reports of massacres. Not to be overlooked as a possible influencing factor, as well, is that Daluege's order may have reflected a long-standing concern with the cryptographic shortcomings of the police cipher and that the speech was the impetus for a final decision to rectify a long-standing cryptographic security issue.¹⁰⁹

The dissemination of information derived from Ultra sources presented a constant security risk for the Allies during the war. The compromise of this capability, that is, of the cryptanalytic exploitation of any of the high-level Axis cryptographic systems could have closed a valuable source of information. Churchill's speech condemning German atrocities in Russia, by referring to the role of the German Police, contained a reference to the source of intelligence that may have tipped the Allied advantage in this one case.¹¹⁰ And it appears that the Germans quite likely changed their cipher in response to the prime minister's broadcast. That the Germans

replaced the then current police manual cipher system with one easier to exploit was a matter of good fortune for the codebreakers at Bletchley Park; the opposite, that is, the replacement with a stronger cipher system, was just as likely an outcome. The reliance on intelligence from singular cryptanalytic sources such as Ultra only increased the potential for a major compromise of the Allied codebreaking. For the Allies, no matter the demands of the situation, whether it was countering an Axis military operation or revelations about the police massacres, the best security policy to follow was to avoid risking the disclosure of their cryptologic secrets throughout the war.

In October 1942 the British began to accumulate information on war crimes by the German Police units to be forwarded to the Foreign Office, which would keep the dossier. This arrangement had been agreed upon between Sir Alexander Cadogan, the permanent undersecretary for foreign affairs and the head of M.I.6, Stewart Menzies, following a suggestion by Sir Victor Cavendish-Bentick, who chaired the Joint Intelligence Committee.¹¹¹ Two Foreign Office officials were to gather the information. How it was to be organized is not certain. Notes attached to the police decrypts suggest that the evidence was to be organized into three categories: (a) the number of people shot or maltreated in known and unknown areas, (b) officials responsible with summary of atrocities each had perpetrated, and (c) a listing of Police, SS, and Army units and a summary of the atrocities each had committed.¹¹²

At war's end, the Foreign Office had gathered together a number of Police and SS decrypts. In late May, Cavendish-Bentick approached Menzies about the classification of the material and whether that would mean it could not be turned over to the Nuremberg War Crimes Commission. Menzies passed the request to Edward Travis, the director of GC&CS after 1942. The response from Travis was that the Police decrypts that contained information about the massacres and other atrocities in Russia was "medium-grade" and could be released to the prosecution at Nuremberg. (The category was

known as PEARL, referring to material derived from low-level cryptanalysis such as the manual ciphers used by the Police. This category was later recast as PINUP and included everything NOT derived from high-level cipher systems such as Enigma.) Travis added that the concentration camp messages could not be released because they contained some SS Enigma material, known as "Orange."¹¹³

This material, though, was never used at the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials in the prosecution of major or other criminals. Many Police officials were included in the group of lesser criminals, or Category 2, and some of them were tied to atrocities in the decrypts.¹¹⁴ Another striking feature with regards to the absence of the decrypts in the Nuremberg evidence was that the head of the staff for the American prosecutor, Chief Justice Robert Jackson, was none other than Colonel Telford Taylor. Prior to the trials, Taylor had supervised the exchange of Ultra material with the British from 1943 to 1945. As part of the BRUSA Agreement in June/July 1943, Taylor probably had received copies of Police decrypts from later in the war.¹¹⁵ But he most likely did not receive copies of any Police decrypts from prior to the agreement.



Telford Taylor (right front), formerly head of Special Branch liaison with London, now a brigadier general, pictured with his staff at Nuremberg War Crimes Trials
(Source: NARA)

Taylor had worked at accumulating evidence against Axis war criminals for two of the general counts against the accused, that is, crimes against peace and crimes against humanity. Considering that some of the material, namely, the lower-level decrypts such as those of the police, could have been used as evidence, the failure by Taylor to utilize the material seems to demand an explanation. This is especially pertinent since one possible result of this unwillingness to use the decrypts was that many Police junior officers, noncommissioned officers, and rank and file police were not investigated for war crimes immediately after the war.¹¹⁶

There are probably two explanations for why the decrypts were not used by any of the Nuremberg tribunals. The first was that, according to Taylor, sufficient evidence already existed in the forms of captured documents, eyewitness testimony, and the depositions of the accused senior Police and SS officials. Taylor also deferred to the British, who, he contended, had more expertise about German organizations such as the Police, the SS, and others.¹¹⁷

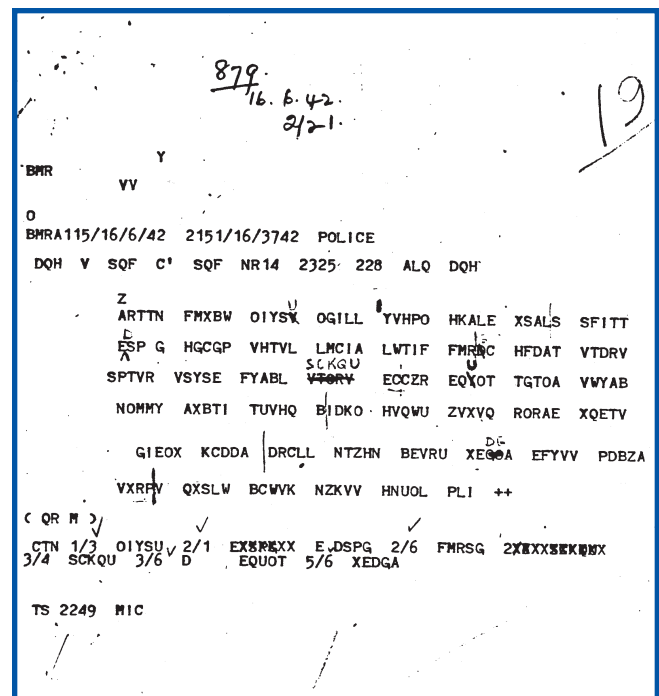
The second reason, and perhaps the more compelling one in light of the ensuing thirty-year cloak of secrecy that dropped around Ultra, was the overriding concern by both British and American intelligence officials to keep secret the advantage gained from the wartime exploitation of high-level German cryptography. In the immediate postwar situation in Germany (and later for Japan) intelligence officials in both countries were concerned about resurgent national feelings or the chance that underground resistance movements might start up against the occupation governments. The Allies could suppress such potential movements by exploiting any ciphers or codes that might be used by the insurgents.

Also, the Western Allies took the long view when it came to protecting Ultra. New threats to world security could arise in the future. If there were a general awareness of the Allied success in codebreaking, then any future enemy would be on

guard against the possibility that its communications might be exploited, and this would hamper any American or British effort against them.¹¹⁸

From Intercept to Decryption – the Story of One German Police Message

How the COMINT process functioned can be illustrated with an example of this German Police message of 16 June 1942 from commander of the Police in central USSR to Reichsfuehrer Heinrich Himmler and the Chief of the Order Police, Kurt Daluege in Berlin. The message, Nr. 14, was sent from Mogilev (callsign “SQF”) in Byelorussia to Berlin (callsign “DQH”) on 16 June 1942. The message was intercepted on 3742 KHz at 9:51 PM (GMT) at the British Army intercept site at Beaumanor (BMR) by shift operator “A115.” The handwritten changes to certain characters in the cipher groups indicate that the operator had difficulty in copying the message. Another message was sent some time after “14,” but the operator was unable to copy it due to man-made interference that is notated as “QRM.” The interference could have come from inadvertent transmissions from



Intercept copy (NARA, RG457 HCC, Box 202)

other radio stations near the same frequency or from Soviet radio jammers trying to prevent the Germans from communicating with one another.

completed, this form would be forwarded to a cipher clerk, who would apply the day's key and decipher the intercepted message.

Once the deciphering of message Nr 14 was complete, the text would be entered onto the day's other German Police decrypts (Nr. 21) by Hut 3 for dissemination. If the message were to be translated that job would have been completed at Hut 3. A rough translation of the message is as follows:

To: Reichsfuehrer SS and the Chief of the Order Police.

On the Bobruisk to Mogilev road, [there was] a skirmish with partisans: 16 men from the 51st Police battalion were killed. In the town of Borki, [Unlocated. There are several towns named Borki in present day Belarus – author.] where weapons and ammunition were found, and was leveled in the usual manner. The inhabitants were liquidated. From: Senior Officer SS and Police Chief Central Russia.

Western communications intelligence during the war grew from a set of small national efforts to a partnership that spanned the globe. It consisted of the major cryptologic agencies of the United States and Great Britain with supporting contingents from the Commonwealth as well as from other Allied nations. Western COMINT comprised a multistep system that set priorities for the collection, processing, and intelligence signals intelligence. Western COMINT primarily targeted Axis military, naval, and diplomatic communications. Secondary targets included the less important Axis

The image shows a 'W/T RED FORM' with handwritten entries. At the top, it says 'W/T RED FORM.' and '2241'. There are several boxes for call signs, frequency, and time. Below these is a grid with four columns and several rows of cipher groups. The groups are written in a shorthand style, such as 'ALTTU', 'AMEDU', 'CIVCU', 'OGILL', etc. There are also some handwritten notes and initials on the form.

Copy of W/T Red Form (NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 202)

Once copied, the message was sent from Beaumanor to Hut 6 at Bletchley Park for processing. The important information from the intercept was entered onto a form such as the “W/T (wireless telegraphy) Red Form” shown above. The cipher groups, with corrections or alternates, were entered into the blocks on the sheet. Other intercept information – call signs, frequency, time of intercept, and organization – was entered on the form. Once

The image shows a typed German message. The text is as follows:
 21. DGH de SGP SGP Nr 14 2325 226 BQH 3742
 An Rf SS und Chef Orpo.
 An Strasse BOBRUISK-MOGILEW, Partisanenkampf: 16 Mann von pol. Batl. 51 gefallen. Das Dorf BORKI, in dem Waffen und Munition gefanden wurden, wurde dem Erdboden gleichgemacht. Die Einwohner schaft liquidiert.
 Von Hohenheim SS u. Pol.fuehrer Russland Mitte.
 XX.

Decrypt of Police message (NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386)

communications and those of neutral countries. Axis and neutral communications that carried the most information about the Holocaust, German Police and international diplomatic were targeted mainly for the intelligence that these networks might contain that supported the main war effort against the Axis. Information about the Holocaust that appeared on these networks was collected as a byproduct of the main COMINT effort.

Notes

1 See Euna O’Halpin, “Small States and Big Secrets: Understanding SIGINT Cooperation between Unequal Powers during the Second World War.” *Intelligence and National Security* (Vol. 17, No. 3, Autumn 2002), 1-16. For more on the relationship with France, see RG457, HCC, Box 1277, Folder 3732, “Liaison with the French on Signal Intelligence Matters,” 28 November 1944; and PRO, HW 14/3, January-February 1940, “Liaison with French and Poles.” For relationship with Netherlands, see PRO, HW 14/18, August 1941, “SIGINT Exchange with Dutch in the Far East.” For more on the relationship with the Poles, see, among others, PRO, HW 14/8, regarding a Polish-manned intercept station in Stanmore, England.

2 For example, see Carl Boyd, *Hitler’s Secret Confidant: General Oshima Hiroshi and Magic Intelligence 1941 - 1945* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1993), pages 57-74, about Axis plans for 1942 and pages 117-139 for German appreciation of the Allied intention in 1944. Also, see Hinsley, Vol. I, pages 429-493, about COMINT and other intelligence sources regarding German plans and preparations for the invasion of the Soviet Union known as Operation Barbarossa.

3 SRH-349, *The Achievements of the Signal Security Agency in World War II* (Washington DC: The Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, 1946).

4 Memorandum for the Deputy Chief of Staff from Major General Clayton Bissell, Subject: Intercept Facilities. 8 September 1944. SRH-145, 200-201. Also Memorandum for Mr. McCloy from Colonel Carter Clarke, no subject 16 March 1944, SRH-145, 158-A.

5 For more on the phenomenon of women in these agencies, see Jennifer Wilcox, *Sharing the Burden: Women in Cryptology during World War II* (Fort

George G. Meade, MD: Center for Cryptologic History, 1998), SRH-152, “Historical Review of OP-20-G,” 1945, 3; Alvarez, 115-119.

6 “German Traffic Analysis in Sixta,” NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1429, Folder 4729.

7 “Report of Colonel McCormack’s TDY to London, May-June 1943.” NARA, RG457, HCC, Box 1119, Folder 3600, June 1943.

8 William F. Friedman, “E Operations of the GC&CS at Bletchley Park,” NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1126, Folder 3620.

9 SRH-349, Appendix, “Bulletin production – Average Daily Volume of Translated Messages,” 1 December 1941 – 31 August 1945.

10 The Enigma and Purple cipher machines are well known from the literature of World War II. Less famous, but important as sources of intelligence, were some other Axis cipher machines. Tunny was the cover name applied to the Lorenz Company’s on-line enciphered teleprinter known to the Germans as Schluesselzusatz 40 or SZ-40. GC&CS first broke it in mid-1941.

11 Memorandum from Major Brown to Mr. Friedman, 28 January 1943. RG 457, HCC, Box 1432, Folder “SSS Intercept Priorities Memorandum.”

12 The Signal Intelligence Service underwent many title changes during the war. From 1929 to 1942, it was the Signal Intelligence Service. In June 1942 it was briefly renamed the Signal Intelligence Service Division. One month later it was again renamed the Signal Security Division (SSD). In 1943 the SSD became the Signal Security Service. In late summer 1943, the SSS became the Signal Security Agency (SSA). It remained the SSA until 15 September 1945 when the SSA was renamed the Army Security Agency (ASA).

13 Memorandum, “Expansion of Signal Intelligence Service.” 18 April 1942, SRH-145, 25.

14 The SIS would achieve its first cryptanalytic breakthrough against the main Japanese army code in April 1943. In January 1944, Australian troops captured the entire cryptographic library of a Japanese Army division that clinched the mastery of the Imperial Army’s codes and ciphers. See Edward Drea, *MacArthur’s Ultra*, 61-92, for details of the year-long struggle.

15 That the German military traffic was placed in Group B was a further indication that the two countries were arriving at a division of effort dictated by geography

and expertise. Throughout 1942, SIS had been working on an ability to exploit Enigma, but lacked sufficient intercept, expertise, and technical information. The British refused to allow the SIS to join in the exploitation. However, by mid-1943 a compromise for exchange was worked out that formed the basis for a more formal exchange of all Axis intelligence. See Benson, 99-108.

16 One interesting multiforce, multinational intercept operation against clandestine Axis radio stations in North Africa occurred in North Africa in late 1944. A special effort included personnel from the SIS, the OSS and Free French forces, who operated intercept and direction-finding stations in Algiers, Tunis, and Morocco. RG 457, HCC, Box 1417, Folder 4619, "Special Report on Clandestine Radio Activity in North Africa." The OSS, though excluded from performing cryptanalysis by FDR's directive of July 1942, and prohibited from receiving COMINT by a May 1942 agreement among the Army, Navy, and FBI, still established its own intercept and D/F stations outside of the U.S.

17 Major Sinkov's Report of Cryptographic Mission, 1941." NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1296; also see Benson, 19-20.

18 Memorandum, "Priorities for Operations of the Signal Security Service." 8 March 1943. SRH-145, *Collection of Memoranda on Operations of SIS Intercept Activities and Dissemination, 1942-1945*. (Fort George G. Meade, Maryland, 1983), 92.

19 The story of the BRUSA Agreement, which proceeded from earlier negotiations, is, itself, a tale of bureaucratic complexity. The American Army and Navy each made agreements with the British. They then had to make one between themselves. See Benson, 97-133, and Bradley Smith, 105-170. See also "Army-Navy Agreement Regarding Ultra." RG 457, HHC, Box 1413.

20 This major exception, the processing of undecrypted U-boat radio traffic by both the United States and Great Britain, began in earnest in late 1942 following the Holden Agreement of October 1942. After the installation of the American-built "bombes" at the OP-20-G Headquarters on Nebraska Avenue, N.W., in Washington, DC, the U-boat cipher text was transmitted there for decryption. The resulting translations were then transmitted to the appropriate Allied naval commands. Eventually, the bombes were turned against German Luftwaffe and Wehrmacht Enigma traffic. For

more on the Holden Agreement, see Ralph Erskine, "The Holden Agreement on Naval Sigint: The First BRUSA?" *Intelligence and National Security*, (Volume 14, No. 2, Summer 1999), 187-197.

21 SRH-349, 32.

22 Memorandum: Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Subject: Priorities for Operations of the Signal Security Service." March 8, 1943, SRH - 145.

23 David H. Hamer, Geoff Sullivan and Frode Weirud, "Enigma Variations: An Extended Family of machines." *Cryptologia* (Vol. XXII, No. 3, July 1988); SSA "Effort against the Swiss Cipher Machine (SZD)." NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 1284; History of the Signal Security Agency in World War II, Vol. 2, 237.

24 Memorandum, March 8, 1943. SRH-145.

25 Boyd, 178-9.

26 Phillips, 5-10.

27 Hinsley, Vol. 2, 670.

28 On how the Allies handled this information, among others see Walter Laqueur, *The Terrible Secret* (New York: Owl Books, 1998), 202-4.

29 War Department Memorandum, October 19, 1942, "Experiment in Intercepting Cable Transmission." NARA, RG 457, Box 1276, "Secrecy of Radio and Cables."

30 Information on the censorship mission of the General Post Office is located in pieces HW 53/10 to HW 53/12.

31 "Report of Colonel McCormack's TDY to London," June 1943, Tab B, "Berkeley Street," 1.

32 Initially, the U.S. Army and Navy performed this censorship mission. It was assumed by the Office of Censorship, which picked up the military censorship programs. This censorship also included all mail entering and exiting the United States. Telephone calls, whether over cable or radiotelephone, also were monitored. For a history of the Office of Censorship, see Michael Sweeney, *Secrets of Victory: The Office of Censorship and the American Press and Radio in World War II* (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 2001). Of interest is that the eventual commander of the SIS, Colonel Preston Corderman, began his wartime service in the Office of Censorship directing and training postal censors.

33 For example, see Lisbon (Foreign Minister) to Washington, 22 June 1944, MC-916, in which the Washington embassy is reminded to paraphrase public

text, such as speeches, so as to avoid the use of them as plaintext cribs. Also, Washington (Hopenot/Baudet) to Algiers, 13 May 1944, MC-806, in which the French Committee for National Liberation is reminded that all cables can be obtained by the “enemy” and exploited because the cables were encoded with Vichy codes. RG 457, HCC, Box 879, “Code Instructions.” Also, Tokyo (Shigemetsu), 9 August 1943, warning that the Allies may purposely print news stories that diplomats would quote and thereby could endanger Japanese codes because plaintext would be known. NARA, RG 457, HCC, MND Translation #93904. Finally, Berlin (Oshima) to Tokyo, 5 March 1944, CI-1813, in which the Japanese diplomats in Germany discreetly instruct Tokyo to keep new communications routes secret from the British “telegraph office.” RG 457, HCC, Box 954, folder 2863, “Japanese Message Translations Categorized as CI (Code Instructions) for Diplomats, 1943-45.”

34 “Intercepted Diplomatic Messages,” NARA, RG 226, Entry 210, Boxes 400, 402, 406, et alia.

35 Kenneth Macksey. *The Searchers: Radio Intelligence in Two World Wars* (London: Cornell University Press, 2003), 108-9.

36 Radio frequencies are part of the electromagnetic spectrum. The most used frequency bands during World War II were very high frequency (30-300 Megahertz), high frequency (3-30 Mhz), medium frequency (300 kilohertz – 3 Mhz), and low frequency (30-300 Khz).

37 During the war, in 1943, the Allies developed and fielded a secure speech unit for use on HF radiotelephone circuits among the Allied commands and capitals. The system, named SIGSALY, was contained in an equipment hut that weighed 55 tons. For more on this see J.V. Boone and R.R. Peterson, *The Start of the Digital Revolution: SIGSALY. Secure Digital Communications in World War II* (Fort George G. Meade, MD: Center for Cryptologic History, 2000).

38 NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 202, “Study of German Police Communications.”

39 “Radio Intelligence Companies, Locations, 3-20-42.” SRH-145, “Collection of Memoranda on Operations of SIS Intercept Activities and Dissemination, 1942-1945.” 6.

40 Geoffrey Ballard, On *ULTRA Active Service. The Story of Australia’s Signals Intelligence During World*

War II. (Australia: Spectrum Publishing Ltd., 1991), 238-252.

41 “Directive for Station 1, listed in order of priority (tentative).” 30 January 1943. RG 457, HCC, Box 1432, “SSS Intercept Priorities Memorandum.”

42 “History of Intercept Control,” June 1944, NARA, RG457, HCC, Box 1128, Folder 3634, “History of Intercept Control.”

43 This control was not without a struggle. Several times early in the war, service intelligence heads tried to limit GC&CS control through bureaucratic maneuvers in the Y-Board, a committee under the JIC that managed intercept operations. See Hinsley, Volume II, 23-4 and Macksey, 129. Also PRO HW 14/30, “GC&CS Directorate, Policy Papers,” “No. 6. I.S.,” 1 March 1942.

44 Memorandum from Williams, “International W/T Services. Cover in the U.K.” 21 January 1944, and “History of Intercept Control,” June 1944, NARA, RG457, HCC, Box 1128, Folder 3634, “History of Intercept Control;” also see Macksey, 160-2; SRH-349, 15-16.

45 Edward Drea, *MacArthur’s Ultra: Codebreaking and the War against Japan, 1942-1945.* (Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992), 52-53.

46 Philip H. Jacobson, “A Cryptologic Veteran’s Analysis of *Day of Deceit.*” *NCVA Cryptolog*, (Vol. 21, No. 1, Winter 2000), 3.

47 See RG457, E9032, Box 584, Folder “Optimum Intercept Locations, 1943” 1943 1201 and Box 1382, Folder “Choice Site for Station AY,” 1944 0328.

48 “German Police and SS Traffic,” NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386.

49 PRO, HW 14/11, “Report on German Section No. 4, I.S.,” 2.

50 Bertrand, 118.

51 Ibid., 129-30.

52 Stephen Budiansky, *Battle of Wits: The Complete Story of Codebreaking in World War II* (New York: The Free Press, 2000), 286.

53 “Cryptanalytic Short Titles,” NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 941, Folder 2740; “Tentative Trigraphic List of Cryptanalytic Short Titles,” Box 1370, Folder 4289; Frank B. Rowlett, *The Story of Magic: Memoirs of an American Cryptologic Pioneer* (Laguna Hills, CA: Aegean Park Press, 1998), 253-5.

54 Hinsley, Vol. 2, Appendix 4, 656-668.

55 Rowlett, *Ibid.*; “Cryptanalytic Short Titles.” “Cryptanalytic Branch Annual Report for Fiscal Year 1944,” NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1116, Folder 3567.

56 “History of the Solution of Vatican Systems in SSA and GCCS, 1943-44.” (Washington: September 1944) RG 457, HCC, Box 1284.

57 For example, it took Frank Rowlett’s team in SIS from April 1939 to September 1940 to break Purple. GC&CS codebreakers took from September 1939 to July 1940 to master the Luftwaffe’s Enigma, and until June 1941 to exploit the Kriegsmarine version of Engima.

58 For an explanation of the double playfair cipher, see “Study of German Police Traffic,” NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 202.

59 For a discussion of the relative difficulty of both systems, see William F. Friedman and Lambros Callimahos, *Military Cryptanalytics Part I* (Washington, DC: National Security Agency, 1956), 181-188, about Playfair systems. See Lambros Callimahos and William F. Friedman, *Military Cryptanalytics, II* (Washington, DC: National Security Agency, 1959), 431-433, for transposition systems.

60 For the work against the German systems, see Budiansky, 218-220 and 310-11; Alvarez, 234. Also see NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 942, Folder 2746, 11 May 1945, “GEE Problem”; Box 1317, Folder 3945, 1944, “History of Special German Diplomatic Net, Summer 1942 to Winter 1944.”

61 Nigel West. *The SIGINT Secrets: The Signals Intelligence War, 1900 to Today* (New York: William Morrow, 1988), 307. See Alvarez, 176, for the Allied failure against Swedish systems. Hinsley, Vol. 2, Appendix 4, 656-668, for a summary of success against all German systems.

62 Hinsley, Vol. II, Appendix 5, 670-2.

63 Phillips, 7-11.

64 “Memorandum for Colonel Clarke,” 3 January 1944. James L. Gilbert and John P. Finnegan, *U.S. Army Signals Intelligence in World War II. A Documentary History* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1993), 63-4.

65 According to one historical review conducted by the U.S. Navy, some 300,000 German Navy messages were “read,” meaning they were decrypted by the Americans or Commonwealth codebreakers. Of these, about 69,000 were German U-boat messages. About

49,600 U-boat translations were published between early 1941 to June 1945 for a rate of around 72 percent. These translations are notated “SRGN” and are available at NARA, RG 457, Entry 9019 and at the library of the National Cryptologic Museum. “Historical Review of OP-20-G, RS #77967, 8 October 1945, untitled background notes, Author’s private collection.

66 This is a rough calculation determined by comparing the number of translations of the Japanese diplomatic collection at NARA, Entry 9011 (SRDJ), with that of the Multinational Diplomatic collection, Entry HCC, Boxes 286-516.

67 Rowlett, 253-5; Contrary to popular opinion, the Vatican messages were in Italian, not Latin. Switzerland had diplomatic codes for German and French texts to account for that nation’s major language divisions.

68 Memorandum for Colonel Carter W. Clarke, Subject: “Origins, Functions, and Problems of the Special Branch, MIS.” 15 April 1943, Gilbert and Finnegan, 55.

69 For example, see NARA, RG 457, Box 590, for “Glossary of Japanese terms,” and Box 619 for “Glossary of German Army Equipments.” For German Police messages, Boxes 202 and 1386 contain glossaries of abbreviations and shorthand terms used by the Police in their messages.

70 MND Translations, Budapest to Ankara, 26 June 1944, H-157087, RG 457, HCC, Box 455; and Budapest (Charmasse) to Ankara (AmbaFrance), 12 June 1944, SIS #127775. RG 457, HCC, Box 424

71 Briefly, these series are: A – “Sensitive Diplomatic Traffic,” Baker Cables – Translations exchanged with Britain, CG – Coast Guard translations of Axis illicit messages, CI/AI/GI – “Code Instructions,” D – Japanese Military Attaché translations, F – Japanese Air Force, FT – “File Texts”, J – Japanese military, JR – Japanese Water Transport, H- Multinational Diplomatic, L – Military Attaché other than Japan, M – German traffic, not further identified, MC – Multinational (or Miscellaneous) Code Instructions, and T – “Restricted Diplomatic.” Interestingly, there was no special designator for the Japanese Navy translations produced by OP-20-G.

72 From: Naval Inspector General, To: Secretary of the Navy. Serial 001971, “Survey of OP-20-G Section of Naval Communications Division of the Bureau of Naval

Personnel which Procures Uniformed Naval Personnel.” 13 July 1945. RG 457, HCC, Box 1286. Item 23 (d)

73 Rowlett, 253-4

74 Non-notated and unsigned memorandum on diplomatic cryptanalysis for 1940, 31 January 1941, HW 14/11, “Government Code and Cypher School: Directorate: Second World War Policy Papers,” as cited in John Ferris, “The Road to Bletchley Park: The British Experience with Signals Intelligence.” *Intelligence and National Security* (Vol. 17, No. 1, Spring 2002), 53-84.

75 Peter Calvocoressi, *Top Secret Ultra* (New York: Pantheon, 1980), 61-66.

76 J.E.S. Cooper, “Lecture on SIGINT History,” September 1961. Author’s copy. Also available at PRO HW 3, Naval Intelligence Division and Successors: History of UK Signals Intelligence, 1914-1925.

77 Hinsley, Vol. I, 36-43.

78 Many of these studies were of political and diplomatic topics. These studies were notated as Special Research Histories (SRH). Some examples include: SRH-083, “Chung-King-Yenan Controversy,” and SRH-094, “French-Indo-China (Political Situation).” The SRHs can be found in NARA, RG 457 and the Library of the National Cryptologic Museum.

79 See SRH-035, “History of Special Branch, MIS, War Department, 1942-1944,” 9 July 1979 and SRH-117, “History of Special Branch M.I.S., Jun 1944 – Sep 1945.” 2 March 1981.

80 HW 16/70, CIRO/PEARL/ZIP/AT 1194/ 14.8.44

81 Hinsley, Vol. III, Part 2. 975-8, “Series Prefixes and Delivery Groups used for SCU/SLU Signals to Commands.”

82 Bradley F. Smith, 181; “List of Ultra Recipients and SHAEF G-2 Organization, Mission, and Function.” RG 457, Entry HCC, Box 1277, Folder 3735.

83 SRH-107, “Problems of the SSO System in World War II.” 13 December 1980.

84 Gilbert and Finnegan, 10.

85 One extant European Summary, dated 11 April 1945, carried two distributions. The first one listed 11 recipients within the War Department; the second listed the President, his Chief of Staff, and the CINC U.S. Fleet, and the Deputy Director Military Intelligence, British Army Staff. SRH-005, “Use of CX/MSS Ultra by the United States War Department, 1943 – 1945,” 49.

86 The “Magic” Diplomatic Summaries are located in RG 457, Entry 9006, Boxes 1-19. The “Magic” Far East Summaries are found in Entry 9001, Boxes 1-11.

87 Hinsley, Vol. I, 295-6. Churchill’s demand for the COMINT grew out of dissatisfaction with the tendency of the JIC and the service intelligence directors to publish long appreciations, the “bulk of which defeats their purpose.”

88 In order, HW 1/1, Item 30, 28 August 1941; HW 1/28, Item 643, 13 June 1942; HW 1/58, Item 1134, 24 November 1942; HW 1/65, Item 1267, 28 December 1942; HW 1/129, Item 3113, 26 July 1944; HW 1/149, Item 3658, 1 April 1945; HW 1/151, item 3713, 27 April 1945.

89 Churchill received GC&CS items from “C” that had not been given to the various department and ministry chiefs. They often were unaware of the material the prime minister used to criticize them. *Ibid.*, 295-6.

90 In order see HW 1/58, Item 1134, 22 November 1942; *Ibid.*; HW 1/23, Item 469, 2 April 1942.

91 David Kahn, “Roosevelt, Magic, and Ultra.” *Cryptologia* (Vol. XVI, No. 4, October 1992), 289-319.

92 Christopher M. Andrew, *For the President’s Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996), 139.

93 SRH-111, “Magic Reports for the Attention of the President, 1943-1944.” 1980; Bradley F. Smith, 187.

94 See Eric Larrabee, *Commander-in-Chief: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, His Lieutenants and Their War* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 11-12, 16, 643-4; James F. Schnabel, *History of the JCS and National Policy, 1945 – 1947*. (Washington, DC: GPO, 1996), 3; Andrews, 125-6; *Ibid.*, SRH-111.

95 Alexander S. Cochran Jr. *The Magic Diplomatic Summaries: A Chronological Finding Aid* (New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1982). From 1942 to the end of the war in Europe, there were fewer than 12 references to Jews or the Holocaust. For example, Summary No. 397 from 28 April 1943 contains information from a German diplomatic message to Dublin concerning Aryan spouses of Jews.

96 “Collection of Multinational Diplomatic Translations of White House Interest.” RG 457, HCC, Boxes 833,1030 to 1032.

97 Jan Karski, an alias for a Polish intelligence courier, Jan Kozielski, visited the Warsaw ghetto and Belzec. He came to London in late 1942 with information about the Holocaust. See Laqueur, 118-120, and E. Thomas Wood and Stanislaw M. Jankowski, Jan Karski: *How One Man Tried to Stop the Holocaust* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 1994).

98 Persico, Joseph. *Roosevelt's Secret War: FDR and World War II Espionage* (New York: Random House, 2001), 218-220.

99 Laqueur, 94-5.

100 Breitman, 105, 151-3; MND Translation, Kabul (Pilger) to Berlin, 10 May 1943, SIS #81006 (RG 457, HCC, Box 363), concerning Reuters News Agency publication of information about gassing of the Jews; MND Translation, Berlin to Buenos Aires, 14 April 1943, SIS #82728 (RG 457, HCC, Box 363), which urges the German embassy there to make no statement on the protests against the perceived anti-Jewish policy of Churchill. (This "anti-Jewish policy" is not further explained in the German message.); MND Translation, Berlin to Far East stations (NPD (Neue Presse Deutsche) Broadcast), 3 March 1944, SIS #112776, (RG 457, HCC, Box 399) which urges German correspondents to push stories about behind the scenes machinations of world Jewry.

101 Perhaps the most famous anecdote, though false, was the bombing of Coventry on 14 November 1940. Winterbotham was the first to claim that Churchill allowed Coventry to be bombed to protect the Ultra secret. (See his *Ultra Secret*, 94-96) However, Winterbotham got it wrong. Ultra carried no information on Coventry. For the correct story of Ultra and bombing of Coventry see Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, Vol. I., Appendix 9, 528-48, and Nigel West, *A Thread of Deceit* (New York: Random House, 1985), 9-17.

102 Hinsley, Vol. I, 138, 145, 417, and 570-1.

103 PRO, HW 1/XX, Item 1470, 13 March 1943, Memorandum from SCU Algiers. For more, see Hinsley, Vol. 2, 283-7, about the Mediterranean convoys.

104 For the Yamamoto ambush, see SRH-288, "Radio Intelligence in WWII: Tactical Operations in the Pacific Ocean Areas, April 1943." 336-7, and Edwin Layton (along with Roger Pinneau and John Costello), *And I was There, Pearl Harbor and Midway* –

Breaking the Secrets (New York: William Morrow and Company Inc., 1985), 474-476.

105 Hinsley, Vol. 2, 58-67; see also Smith, *Sharing Secrets with Stalin*.

106 Breitman, 93-4, 106.

107 Hinsley, Vol. II, 87-9; Smith, *Sharing Secrets with Stalin*, 30-33.

108 Breitman, 92-96; Philipps, 84-5.

109 It is also possible that another standing concern of the police command was the possibility that someone within the police or SS organizations might reveal information about the massacres to the Allies or neutral countries. Passing the reports by radio meant that a number of people saw the messages: radio operators, code clerks, dispatchers, etc. Sending the reports by courier limited the number of people who might see them.

110 On 6 December 1941, the Nobel Laureate German author, Thomas Mann, made a radio speech from Los Angeles on the CBS network in which he called attention to the massacre of 300,000 Serbs and "unspeakable deeds" against Jews and Poles. It is not clear if this speech provoked a similar reaction from the Germans. – *New York Times*, 7 December 1941, Vol. XCI, No. 30,633.

111 HW 14/54, "GC&CS Directorate, Policy Papers." 1942, October 1-10.

112 NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 1386, "German Police and SS Messages."

113 HW 14/128, "GC&CS Directorate, Policy Papers." 1945 May 16-31, Notes from 26 and 28 May. The British developed a number of categories of cover names for the various German cipher systems, both machine and manual. Here are some representative examples:

Luftwaffe: Colors (Red, Yellow)

Weather: Vegetables (Leek, Garlic)

Army: Birds (Albatross, Bullfinch)

SS: Fruit (Orange, Quince, Grapefruit)

Police (Playfair): Games (Rummy, Poker)

114 Breitman, 218.

115 For example, a Colonel Taylor, presumably Telford Taylor, was named in the distribution for CIRO/PEARL/ZIP/AT 1194/14.8.44, HW 16/70, "German Police Decrypts."

116 Breitman, 219-221

117 Robert E. Conot, *Justice at Nuremberg* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, New York, 1983), 16
118 Smith, *Ultra-Magic Deals*, 212-214

Chapter 3

Sources of Cryptologic Records Relating to the Holocaust

There are two major locations of cryptologic records of interest concerning the Holocaust, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) in the United States and the Public Record Office (PRO) in the United Kingdom. (Since April 2003 the Public Record Office has been renamed. It is now the National Archives.) The record collections in both archives reflect the unique approaches to records management and disposition taken by both countries. In addition to the national archives of both countries, the library of the National Cryptologic Museum also contains partial sets of certain PRO holdings in which there occur occasional references to the Holocaust.

The National Archives and Records Administration

The cryptologic records at NARA in College Park, Maryland, that contain information pertinent to the Holocaust are located in Record Group (RG) 457, the records of the National Security Agency/Central Security Service (NSA/CSS), and the RG 226, the records of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Another major cryptologic collec-

tion, the Commander Naval Security Group series in RG 38, the records of the Chief of Naval Operations, most likely does not contain any relevant material except for duplicates of that found in RG 457. Also, while it is logical for World War II cryptologic records to be in RG 457 - the NSA is the most recent successor to the wartime SIS - the presence of such material in the OSS records group will require an explanation that will be given below. The relatively recent discovery (2000) of relevant cryptologic records in the OSS group, which was part of the records review process conducted under the auspices of the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Records Interagency Working Group, is symptomatic of the peculiar and sometimes unpredictable nature of the intelligence exchange process during World War II. The implication of this discovery is that there may be more such records located in records groups hitherto considered unrelated to communications intelligence operations.

There are five collections of records in RG 457 that hold material relevant to the Holocaust. The first one is the collection of German Police (GP) decrypts (these messages are referred to as decrypts

GERMAN POLICE DECODES: 11.9.41.

(Additional Traffic sent on a separate key.)

1. DSQ de DQH SQM Nr.2 1000 2Tle 177 154 DSO DPV DQH DSQ 6900.
An Rf SS, Chef Orpo, Chef Sipo, Kdo Stab Rf SS.
Erstens). Standorte unverändert. Zwo tens). Tätigkeit:-1. SS
Brigade: Instandsetzungsarbeiten, Ausbildung, Vorbereitung für
beabsichtigten Einsatz. Pol. Regt. Süd: Aktionen nach Kriegs-
brauch. Drittens). Erfolge:- Pol. Regt. Süd liquidiert 1548
Juden . Viertens). Verluste:- keine.
Höherer SS und Pol.führer Russland Süd.

German Police Decrypts, ZIP/G.P.D.353/14.9.41. Decrypt No.1 is from the Senior Commander of the SS and Police in Southern Russia to Heinrich Himmler, the Chiefs of the Order and Secret Police and the Himmler's staff. (Source: NARA, RG 457, Box 1386)

and not translations because the text is in the original German) and technical reports about the police ciphers. The decrypts are located in Box 1386 in the Historical Cryptographic Collection (HCC), which is also referenced as Entry 9032. The NSA collection of police and SS decrypts is only a small portion – the exact percentage is unknown – of the much larger PRO collection located in HW 16 (See PRO section). These German Police decrypts were transferred to NARA as part of a January 1996 NSA release of 1.3 million pages of previously classified World War II records. In Great Britain, the German Police and SS messages were released to the public in 1997 when the British Public Record Office made these available in early May of that year.

These police decrypts first came to the NSA because of the postwar search for Nazi war criminals. The decrypts originally were not part of any wartime exchange; these messages were intercepted and decrypted well before the BRUSA exchange agreement of mid-1943. They arrived in the U.S. as a result of a 1982 request by the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI), relayed through the National Security Agency to the British SIGINT organization, the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ). The OSI was reviewing files of individuals suspected of being war criminals who may have entered the United States after the war. It was believed that the decrypts might help in the investigations since they contained much information on the personnel, organization, and operations of the German Police and SS units that operated in the western Soviet Union during the war.

There are four other boxes in the HCC that hold technical information about the German Police ciphers and organization. In Box 202 there is a folder, "Study of German Police Traffic," that contains technical reports on the cipher system used by the German Police. There is an instructional guide on the system and some sample undecrypted and decrypted police messages. Another Box, 171, in the HCC contains a glossary titled "German Police Abbreviations." This document is useful when read-

ing the decrypts since the address portion of police and SS messages contain numerous abbreviations, in German, of SS and Police title and organizations. Similarly, the texts of many police messages contain German language abbreviations and shorthand references to units and activities. In Box 91 of the HCC, there is a copy of volume XIII of the GC&CS Air and Military History series about the German Police. Finally, Box 1279 in the HCC contains a folder titled "German Police Material" that holds some additional technical publications on the German Police, the SS, and SD. These are mostly short U.S. War Department and British reports on the organization, ciphers, and activities in Russia. There are also many reports on Abwehr illicit agent radio nets and organization of overseas espionage rings.

The second collection of records is known as the Multinational Diplomatic Translations and is located in boxes 286 to 516 of the Historical Cryptographic Collection, in RG 457. This collection consists of individual translations of diplomatic communications issued or received by the Army cryptologic organization at Arlington Hall. There are over 202,000 individual translations in this set that total a little under a quarter million pages. The collection extends from early 1939 and runs to the 14 August 1945 Japanese acceptance of the Allied surrender demands.

The diplomatic communications of virtually all countries of significance were targeted and collected during the war. Included in this mix were the major Axis powers, minor Axis allies, minor Allied nations, Allied governments-in-exile, neutral nations, and some nongovernmental organizations (NGO) such as the Jewish Agency for Palestine and the International Red Cross. The latter sent their messages via commercial cable or used the diplomatic communications facilities of certain countries, such as Switzerland. The proportion of intercepted messages from individual countries reflected the wartime priorities of the Allied commands and the technical capabilities of the Allied cryptologic agencies. Japan was the priority diplomatic COMINT target, and the translations of its mes-

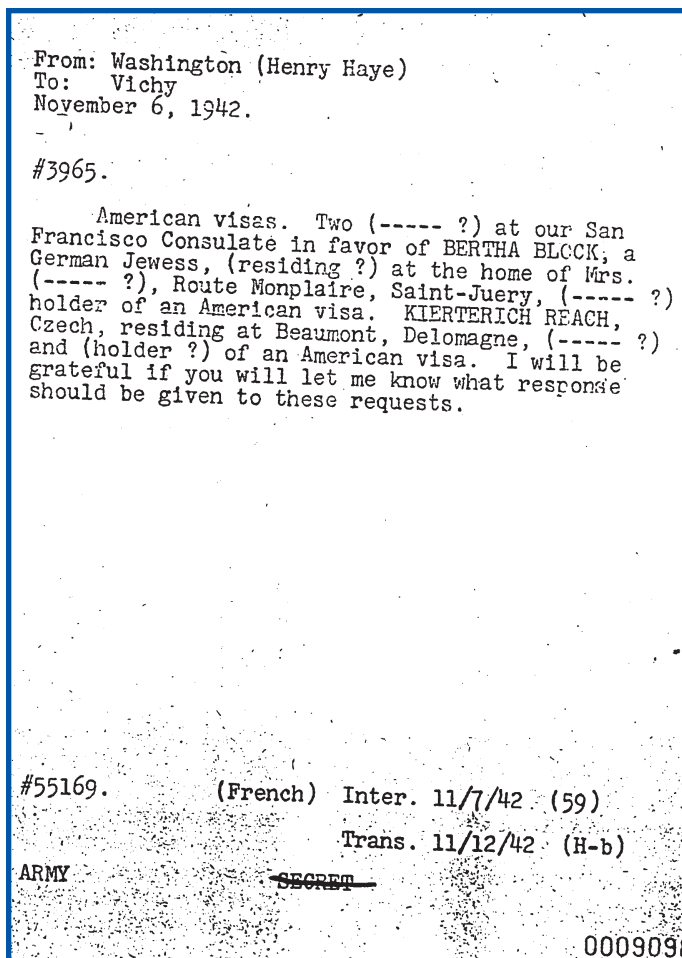
sages account for as much as 54 percent of the total translations in this collection. The translations of intercepted German, Swiss, French (Vichy and Gaullist), and other nations' diplomatic messages account for much smaller percentages of the total translation collection.

The translations of German diplomatic messages would be of particular interest to those interested in the Holocaust. These translations, though, consist mostly of consular traffic, press releases by German news services, and traffic from embassies located in countries of less importance to Germany such as Afghanistan, Argentina, and the Republic of Ireland. This diplomatic radio traffic was encoded

using a codebook and then further enciphered with an additive phrase. This system was a code named FLORADORA by the Allies and was partly exploitable beginning in 1943. German high-level diplomatic communications to embassies located in countries important to Germany such as Japan, Spain, and Switzerland, etc., were encrypted in a one-time pad (OTP) that, for most of the war, resisted the efforts by both American and British cryptanalysts. However, in March 1945, this system succumbed to American codebreakers at Arlington Hall.¹

It should be mentioned here that, when it comes to the national diplomatic translations, there is some overlap among other entries within RG 457. This is because in the early to mid-1980s, NSA separately released Japanese, German, and Vichy French diplomatic translations.² Certain technical information was sanitized from these early releases. The original versions of the translations remained at NSA until their release in 1996 as part of the aforementioned Historical Cryptographic Collection. The diplomatic translations in the HCC appear in a number of forms. It can be either an original version of the translation or, if the original paper version has been lost or put on microfilm, a copy of the original. During the war, the translations were typed on stencils, and then numerous blue ditto copies were run off and distributed. The HCC set of translations contains both ditto pages and xeroxed copies of these sheets.

The third relevant collection is known as the Multinational Diplomatic Summaries. This collection is not to be confused with the so-called "Magic" Summaries that were digests of diplomatic messages from other countries, but mostly Japan, and included with intelligence from other sources. The "Magic" Summaries were issued by the Special Branch of the U.S Army's Military Intelligence Service (MIS) of the War Department's General Staff. The summaries under discussion here actually were a compilation on one or more pages containing a number of

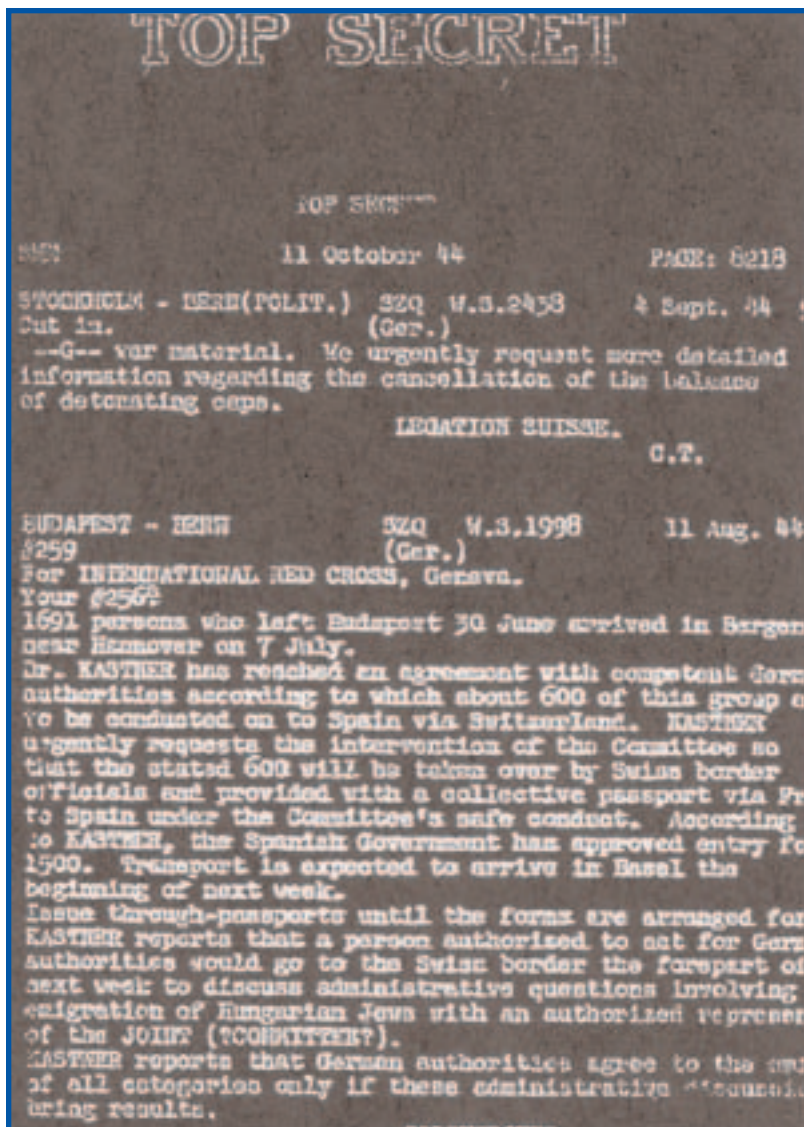


Diplomatic translation – message from Vichy minister in Washington, Henry Hays, to Vichy regarding American visas for foreign Jews in France

shorter translations from a single diplomatic target, for example, Spain. Why this approach was taken, instead of issuing a single translation for individual messages, is not fully understood. These summaries contain some fairly long texts and occasionally have items of high interest. Arlington Hall issued four sets of these summaries: In addition to the multinational set, there were ones for the Japanese, German, and French (which included Vichy) diplomatic messages. They are notated as follows: SMM – Summary of Multinational Messages; SFM - Summary of French Messages; SGM - Summary of German Messages; and SJM -

Summary of Japanese Messages. These Summaries are scattered throughout the Historical Cryptographic Collection. Most can be found from boxes 881 to 902, 933-4, 948, and 1281.

The fourth collection is what is popularly referred to as the “Nazi Gold” translations and can be found in Entry 9009 of RG 457. This collection of translations is of Swiss diplomatic messages between Washington and Bern from August 1945 to June 1946. Of the total of 371 translations, about 170 are related to the Allied Tripartite Commission – Swiss negotiations in Washington, DC, on the issue of the disposition of looted national gold from European countries overrun by the Germans and German assets retained in Swiss banks and corporations. The negotiations lasted from March to June 1946 and produced the Washington Accord. These translations were released in the spring of 1997 as part of the 1997 interagency Preliminary Report on U.S. and Allied Efforts to Recover and Restore Stolen Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II. More details on this topic can be found in Section VI.E.



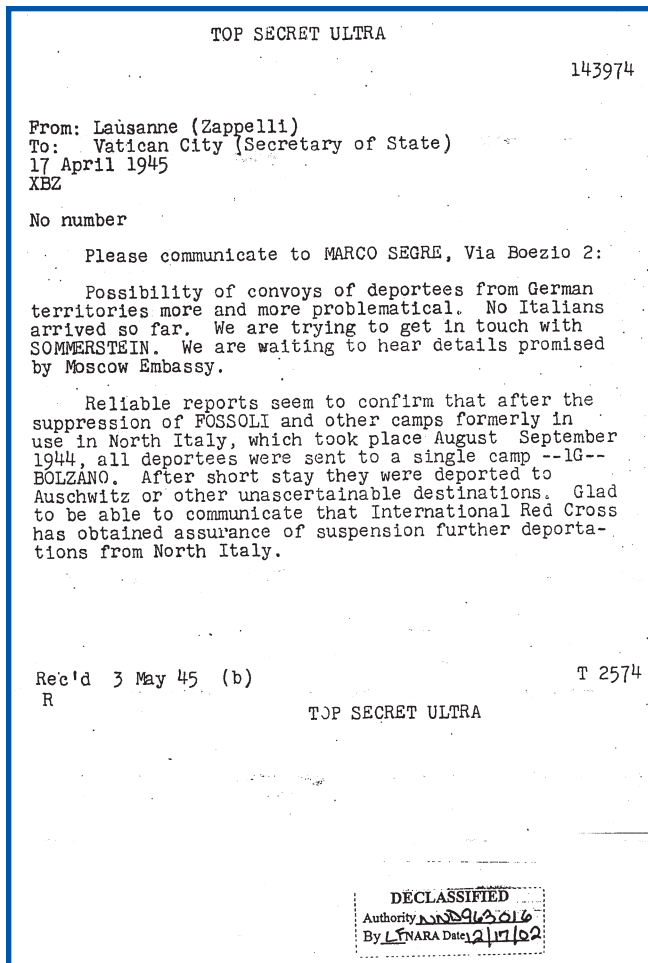
Sample SMM – Swiss message about Jews in Hungary

expanded American exchange with the British, government agencies contributed more translations to this series from other sources considered “sensitive.”³ These included messages from the Vatican to its apostolic delegates, radio and cable traffic of the French Committee for National Liberation, Polish and Czech intelligence reports from occupied Europe, and selections from the so-called Boston source, the OSS source inside the German Foreign Office.

Boston was the cover name given to documents from the German Foreign Office (Auswaertiges Amt) taken or copied by a mid-level official, Fritz

Kolbe, who passed them to the OSS station chief in Switzerland, Allen Dulles. Kolbe, assigned the covername “George Wood” by the OSS, passed these documents to the OSS from 1943 through 1945. The Allies found these documents of great interest. Some of the documents, mostly Foreign Office messages, were translated and then incorporated by the SIS into the “T-series.” Some of the messages were from the German embassy in Bern, Switzerland, and concerned issues such as Swiss-German trade, currency negotiations, and transit permissions for supply trains from Italy. A few were from the German mission in Hungary that was in charge of rounding up the Jews in Hungary and sending them to Auschwitz. (See Chapter 6.) Although not strictly communications intercepts, the messages acquired from Kolbe were included in the translations of the T-series.⁴

Another group of translations of interest in the T-series consists of messages between the Vatican and its apostolic delegates stationed in several countries. The British had intercepted and decrypted Vatican diplomatic messages from before the war. The messages that could be exploited were largely administrative and were of little intelligence interest to the Allies. Beginning in late 1944, though, there were a number of intercepted Vatican messages dealing with the relief of refugees and prisoners of war (mostly Axis), as well as Vatican intercession for the release of high-profile Catholics and other internees held by Germany in various concentration and detention camps. In several messages, the Vatican urged its delegate in Germany to intervene on the behalf of prisoners, among whom were French politicians held in Germany since 1940, individuals such as a Signora Navet and her daughter held in Ravensbruck, and the royal family of Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria, which was rumored to have been transported to Germany.⁵ There are about seventy-five Vatican translations in this series.⁶



T-2574, 17 April 1945, from Apostolic Delegate in Lausanne, Switzerland, to the Vatican regarding reports of deportees from camps in Germany (Source: NARA, RG 457, Box 520)

All of the above-mentioned records, decrypts and translations, are categorized as “basic” intelligence documents, that is, primary product from

the intercepted original. Another set of records in RG 457, located in the Entry "Magic" Diplomatic Summaries' (a portion are carried also in Entry 9006), has been a popular source of research for scholars since their release in the early 1990s. However, the "Magic" Summaries, produced by Special Branch, are digests of the much greater body of translations, and do not offer anywhere near the detailed information available in the latter. The information is summarized under five major categories: (1) military, (2) political, (3) economic, (4) psychological and subversion (mainly items on propaganda, nationalist agitation, and resistance

movements), and (5) miscellaneous (for example, outbreaks of epidemics).

The "Magic" Summaries were a major method of disseminating selected information from the translations of intercepted Axis and neutral communications, as well from other intelligence sources such as press, foreign radio broadcasts, prisoner of war debriefs, U.S. diplomatic reports, and traditional espionage. The COMINT easily is the largest single source of information in the Summaries. The Summaries often contain an appreciation of the information by the Special Branch analysts. The "Magic" Summaries are much less important as a research tool about the Holocaust. The only incident covered with any depth is the roundup of the Jews in Hungary during the latter part of 1944. A survey of the summaries reveals only about twenty entries of various degrees of details on subjects related to the Holocaust; this is out of a total of around 11,000 entries in the entire wartime Summary series. These few entries also are only a fraction of the many hundreds of translations available in RG 457 that reference the Holocaust. (See Chapter 2, pages 45-47, for more on the role of the "Magic" Diplomatic Summaries.)

In Record Group 226, the records of the Office of Strategic Services, there are located some translations of intercepts produced by the British GC&CS during the war. These translations were discovered in mid-2000 as part of a review of wartime OSS records under the provisions of the 1999 Nazi War Crimes Act. The appearance of these COMINT translations in OSS records initially surprised researchers. A directive from President Franklin Roosevelt signed in July 1942 had ruled against the Service performing cryptologic functions, specifically code-breaking. Only the Army, Navy, Federal

Total pages--11	ULTRA	Copy No. <u>MI-3</u>
No. 1103 - 2 April 1945	TOP SECRET	SLS 1625
By Auth. <u>A. C. of S., G-2</u>		WAR DEPARTMENT
Date <u>2 April 1945</u>		Office of A. C. of S., G-2
Initials <u>O. W. G.</u>		
	<u>88C</u>	

"MAGIC"—DIPLOMATIC SUMMARY

NOTE: No one, without express permission from the proper authorities, may disseminate the information reported in this Summary or communicate it to any other person.

Those authorized to disseminate such information must employ only the most secure means, must take every precaution to avoid compromising the source, and must limit dissemination to the minimum number of secure and responsible persons who need the information in order to discharge their duties.

No action is to be taken on information herein reported, regardless of temporary advantage, if such action might have the effect of revealing the existence of the source to the enemy.

The enemy knows that we attempt to exploit these sources. He does not know, and must not be permitted to learn, either the degree of our success or the particular sources with which we have been successful.

DECLASSIFIED per Part 3, E. O. 12958
by Director, NSA/Chief, CSS
CEH Date: 25 JAN 1993

A. MILITARY

1. **French resistance in Indo-China:** The Japanese Army General Staff "Weekly Intelligence" circular for 24 March stated that the disarming of French forces in Indo-China was going "exceedingly well" and that "5,000 French troops who fled to the northern districts are being mopped up" (DS 26 Mar 45). The circular for 31 March now adds the following:

(D-9923
174996
175371
175373
175604
WCM)

"Magic" Diplomatic Summary, No. 1103, 2 April 1945. Source: NARA, RG 457, Entry 9006

Bureau of Investigation, and United States Coast Guard could produce communications intelligence. The directive had been meant to prevent government agencies, other than the SIS, OP-20-G and the FBI, from performing cryptanalysis. Somehow, the Army and Navy construed the order to mean that these other agencies were to be denied access to all COMINT information, as well.⁷ The result was that government agencies such as the OSS, the Federal Communications Commission, and Office of Wartime Information were denied access to American-produced communications intelligence.

However, the explanation for the appearance of such records in the OSS files was quite simple. By early 1943, the OSS had been allowed to send a staff to join the counterintelligence group of British Secret Intelligence Service, known as M.I.6, Section V. The Radio Security Service (RSS) was the principal interceptor of radio traffic sent by Axis illicit agents and security and intelligence organizations. All decrypts of topical interest to counterintelligence, which included Axis espionage, intelligence, and security activities, were sent to this site. By March 1943, OSS counterintelligence (X-2) personnel had joined their British counterparts and were soon sharing all such decrypts.⁸ Most of the decrypts, and some translations, were strictly espionage or security related. Amongst these translations and decrypts were those of the SS, the SD and German Police. These latter groups, while they performed counterespionage operations and criminal investigations, were charged with eliminating Jews and other groups targeted by the Nazis.

Of particular interest to historians are the translations of messages concerning the roundup of the Jews in Rome during October 1943. These translations include messages from Police Leader Karl Wolff, who had arrived in Rome to oversee the situation; Herbert Kappler, the German Police attaché in Rome; and Ernst Kaltenbrunner, SS General and head of the Reich Security Office (RSHA) that included the SD. Whether any of these translations reached the OSS reporting element, the Research and Analysis Branch, is not currently known. In all

likelihood, the British may have restricted the X-2 organization in regards to what other branches of the OSS could have shared the German decrypts. The SD translations can be found in RG 226, Entry 122, boxes 1 and 2.⁹

The OSS also benefited from another exchange arrangement with M.I.6 that started early in America's involvement in the war. Beginning in March 1942, the OSS (and its predecessor, the Central Office of Information) received, via the British Security Coordination (BSC) element in New York City under Sir William Stephenson, copies of so-called "Q" material, or copies of intercepted diplomatic messages, most likely, again, to have come from M.I.6. Interestingly, this material predates the formal exchange program of 1943 between the American and British cryptologic agencies. It is not always clear what the source (or sources) of the translations may have been. Some may have been received from postal and cable censorship offices. It also appears that many of these diplomatic messages may have been purloined from diplomatic pouches or couriers. Almost all of the translations are marked with the caveat "Most Secret Source," which was a standard British reference to intelligence derived from high-level cryptanalytic processes.

Many of the translations in the OSS files consist of excerpts from the original diplomatic messages. Also, most of these translations are of messages from lower level diplomats, attachés, or consular officials of neutral countries or Axis friendly regimes like Vichy France. The contents of the majority of translations are about internal conditions in Europe. Some of the translations contain references to the situation of Jews in various countries, but these are not common. The "Q" series can be found in Entry 210, boxes 400, 402, 403, 405, 408, 412, and 415.¹⁰

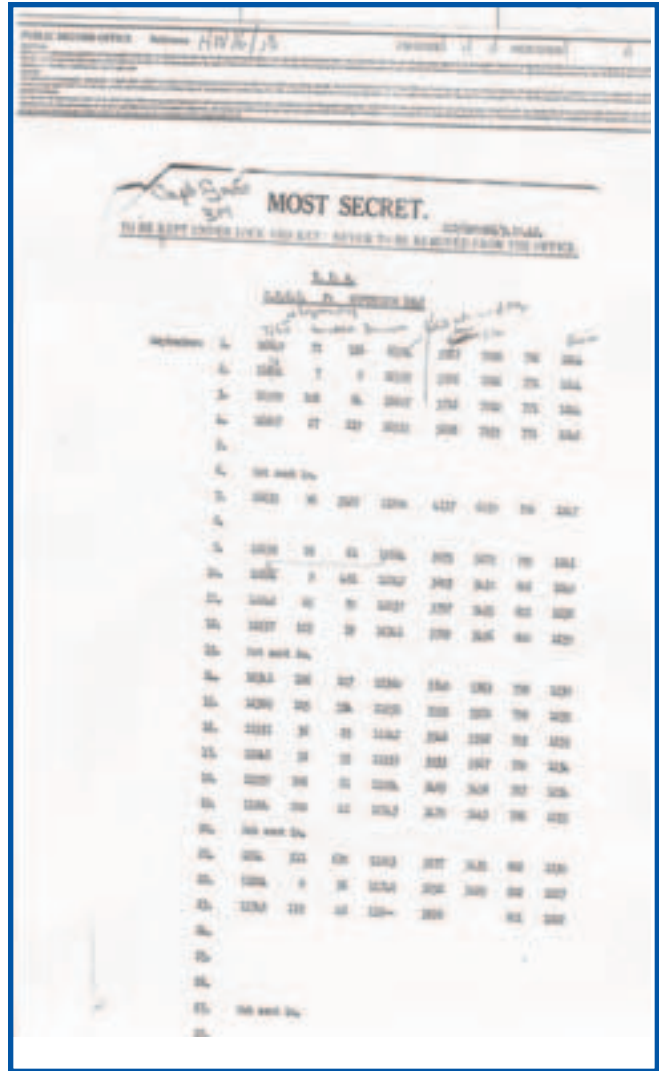
The Public Record Office

The central collection of cryptologic records of the Government Communications Headquarters,

as the GC&CS has been known since after World War II, is located at the Public Record Office, Kew, United Kingdom (in Southwest London). The records include material dating from 1914 to 1946. British PRO record grouping designations differ from the NARA record group system. The British use the term “Class List” instead of Record Group to specify the records of a single ministry, agency, or commission. The Class List is followed by a numerical designator, one or two digits that specifies a collection of related records. This is followed by another set of digits called a “piece” or “folder” that refers to a specific record, which could be a single document or set of documents. Within “HW” are 49 series, each an individually titled collection of records, usually representing types of correspondence and records of singular COMINT targets or functions, such as intercept activity or administration.

However, for purposes of searching and locating records, the PRO/National Archives catalogue uses a different set of descriptors for the locations of the folders/pieces. This system is used by the online search engine called the PROCAT. Consider for example, the reference HW 16/46. This would consist of the Class List HW 16, German Police Decrypts, with a piece or folder 46, “Illustrations of war crimes from the GPD.” For a researcher, the catalogue divides this reference in the following manner: “HW” is called the Department; the two-digit designator “16,” or German Police Decrypts, is the series; while the two-digit group to the right of the dividing slant, “46,” is known as the “sub-series” that consists of a group of related “pieces” within a series.¹¹

The GC&CS records are, for a number of reasons, more extensive in time and scope than those of the American cryptologic agencies held in RG 457 at NARA. For one thing, British cryptology was engaged in intercepting communications in Europe even before hostilities began in 1939. The British had intercept facilities in the British Isles and imperial and mandated holdings in and around Europe, such as Gibraltar, Egypt, and Palestine. From these



SS concentration camp monthly report on slave labor population in Buchenwald for November 1942. ZIP/GPCC82/3.12.42. Source PRO, HW 16/10

sites, the British intercept organizations, such as the Radio Security Service, as well as numerous military monitoring facilities, could collect, analyze, and distribute reports based on the communications of the Axis and neutral nations. Also of particular value was the British censorship office that obtained copies of selected letters posted overseas as well as all cable traffic moving through London and other overseas British or Commonwealth controlled cable terminals. This collection effort included message traffic of the Allied governments-in-exile based in London, and the missions of all the neutral countries.

In the GC&CS records, information about the Holocaust have been found in the following Class Lists:

HW 1 – GC&CS Signals Intelligence Passed to the Prime Minister, Messages and Correspondence.

HW 12 – GC&CS Diplomatic Section and Predecessors: Decrypts of Intercepted Diplomatic Communications (BJ Series).

HW 14 – GC&CS: Directorate: Second World War Policy Papers.

HW 15 – GC&CS and GCHQ: Venona Project: Record

HW 16 – GC&CS: German Police Section: Decrypts of German Police Communications during [the] Second World War.

HW 19 – GC&CS: ISOS and ISK Sections: Decrypts of German Secret Service (Abwehr and Sicherheitdienst) Messages (ISOS, ISK, and other Series).

HW 29 – GC&CS: untitled “Commercial Reports,” January 1938 -December 1945.

HW 1 is the collection of GC&CS signals intelligence materials that was passed to the prime minister. It consisted of the intelligence material selected (and often briefed) by the head of M.I.6, Sir Stewart Menzies (known as “C”), whose service administratively controlled Bletchley Park. Normally, this material was presented to the prime minister daily, sometimes even twice a day; but it was not uncommon for Churchill to demand more. The intelligence consisted mainly of Enigma decrypts, Axis and neutral naval intelligence, and diplomatic translations of interest (known as “BJ’s” for “blue-jackets,” or “Black Jumbos”). There are 3,785 folders or pieces of material in the briefing files of the prime minister. For the most part, there is no general content title list for a particular volume, so the files have to be reviewed individually. For example, the piece HW1/62, is listed with the title “no description available,” but it is from September 1941, when the P.M. was informed of German Police massacres on the Eastern front.¹² HW 1’s contents illustrate Churchill’s voracious appetite for all levels and kinds of intelligence:

strategic, tactical, military, diplomatic, security, and scientific. After late 1941, the prime minister continued to receive occasional intelligence on the Holocaust.

Perhaps the most pertinent class list, HW 16, is the German Police decrypts. This collection constitutes the most complete set of existing police decrypts. Within this department there are four pieces or series, 16/44 to 16/47, which are titled, “GP (German Police) War Atrocities – Executions in Russia.” The first, 16/44, contains miscellaneous notes and working aids to the police decrypts, such as order of battle, names of the police units’ commanding officers, breakouts of the police and SS radio callsigns, and of the abbreviations to the addresses of the decrypts. This series closely follows the contents of those in boxes 1386 and 202 of the HCC in the NARA RG 457 and probably was the source for the latter. The next three series contain a number of decrypts that illustrate the scope and nature of the executions carried out by the police units, especially in the central and southern fronts of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union.

HW 16/10 contains the German Police Concentration Camp (GPCC) monthly reports of the inmate totals for a number of camps. These totals include arrivals, losses, and various nationalities and groups, including Jews. These reports did not carry information about those who arrived in the trains and were immediately murdered in the gas chambers. Instead, these reports list the inmate, or slave labor population totals. As transmitted by the Germans, these were formatted messages, known as “proforma” reports, that is, the intercepted text was a series of numbers preceded by a columnar indicator. The sending and receiving police or SS organizations understood the meaning of the columns and the figures. The Bletchley Park analysts recovered the meanings for the various columns of figures in the reports. The camps did not all send the same categories of figures in these reports. For example, Auschwitz (identified as “F” in radio traffic) would send population totals for the beginning and end of the day. Buchenwald (identi-

fied as “D”) sent only a single daily total.¹³ A number of other files in this series contain messages from concentration camps, notably HW16/17 to HW 16/26. (See Section 5.A, pages 78-80, for more on these reports from the slave labor camps, as well as the recent discovery of an intercepted report on death totals from selected death camps in Poland for 1942.)

Another relevant series is HW 19, the records of the section in GC&CS that was responsible for decrypting messages of the Abwehr, German military intelligence, and Sicherheitsdienst, or intelligence arm of the SS.¹⁴ Messages from Abwehr agents and foreign reporting centers that were encrypted using manual systems (paper codes and ciphers) were called ISOS, Intelligence (or Illicit) Source Oliver Strachey. The decrypts of Abwehr messages encrypted with an Enigma device were known as ISK, or Intelligence Source Knox for A. Dillwyn Knox. Strachey and Knox were senior leaders in GC&CS. Both were veterans of the Admiralty’s famous World War I code-breaking operation known as Room 40, whose most famous exploit was the decoding of the Zimmermann Telegram in 1917. A third subseries within HW 19 is composed of SD messages known as ISOCICLE (breakout unknown) that were encrypted with SD manual ciphers.

Messages relating to all aspects of the Holocaust are sprinkled throughout this series. For example, series HW 19/237 contains SD reports on the situation in Italy after its surrender to the Allies. There are as many as 1,500 messages in this subseries. Some of the messages report the roundup of the Jews in Rome in October 1943. Others detail the transfer of Albanian gold, probably seized originally by Fascist Italy when it occupied Albania in 1939, to Berlin and the attitude of the Vatican to events in and around Rome. Other subseries containing information on Jews in Italy can be found in subseries HW 19/238 to HW 19/240. Another subseries, HW 19/236, deals largely with events in Bulgaria. Of the nearly 2,000 decrypts in this subseries are some reports about the expulsion of non-

Bulgarian Jews, emigration of Jews to Palestine through Bulgaria, messages about Finnish Jews, and the Jewish population in North Africa.

HW 29, the “Commercial Reports,” contains translations of commercial code messages intercepted by the British during the war. Commercial codes were designed primarily to decrease transmission time and message length by reducing standard business expressions and statistical entries in business correspondence to a series of short code groups. Shorter messages meant cheaper communications costs. Commercial codes were available to the public and therefore did not provide security for the contents of business correspondence. Businesses and financial institutions, such as banks and insurance companies, could produce customized versions of the standard commercial codes for security and privacy purposes, but this was not done often probably due to the cost of designing custom code variants and printing sufficient copies for all recipients.

There are 321 folders containing 61,188 translations of commercial messages in HW 29. They run from January 1938 to December 1945. They are labeled with the prefix “CS,” which probably stood for “commercial series.” There are a number of messages from the Reichsbank in this collection. Some messages deal with credit transactions for overseas official German diplomatic and military representatives such as consuls and attachés. However, there are some Reichsbank cables and messages that are part of gold sales and purchases, currency exchanges, and trade activity with neutral countries such as Switzerland.

There are two other Class Lists that contain commercial reports. One is HW 31, “Commercial messages sent in privacy company codes.” This list contains some 2,770 reports that run from June 1943 to August 1945. These reports carry the prefix “PRI.” The other Class list is HW 32, “Commercial Messages passed over diplomatic channels.” This list spans March 1942 to June 1945. There are 32,471 translations in this list and are prefixed by

“COM.” It is not known currently if these last two commercial Class Lists carry any information about the disposal of funds, gold, or property looted by the Nazis.

A number of other HW series house collections of diplomatic decrypts and translations produced by GC&CS, dating from 1919 to 1945. While there are a number of relevant translations, it is not certain how many pertain to the Holocaust. One series, HW12, contains translations of diplomatic messages from 1919 to 1945. Since 1997, the British have been slowly releasing the body of wartime diplomatic translations. This turnover to the PRO was completed in early June of 2003.

The diplomatic translations are arranged in monthly files for a single year and then further subdivided alphabetically by country. The largest portion of the collection consists of translations from all European countries leading up to and including the end of the war. Many of the intercepted messages were of the governments-in-exile of the minor allied nations that resided in Great Britain. GC&CS also intercepted messages from many countries in the Middle East, such as Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt. Of peculiar interest is the GC&CS continued to intercept diplomatic messages from the United States up to early 1942.¹⁵ From September 1939 to September 1945, GC&CS produced more than 74,000 translations of intercepted diplomatic messages.

Two other series contain diplomatic translations that might pertain to the Holocaust. They are HW 36, “Reports of German Diplomatic Messages” (1942-1943), and HW 37, “Diplomatic Decrypts Passed to the Secret Intelligence Service for Distribution” (1935-1945).

One final Class List deserves mention and that is HW 13, “GC&CS: Signals Intelligence, World War 2.” This collection is composed of summary reports published by GC&CS. Of interest are pieces HW 13/118 to 13/124 (26 July 1941 - 6 April 1945) that are titled “Reports on Railway Movements based on

German Army and Air Force High-grade Traffic.”¹⁶ During the war, GC&CS was able to exploit the so-called German railway Enigma, known as “Rocket,” and then later as “Blunderbuss” and “Culverin.” The railway Enigma was exploited beginning in February 1941. The decrypts initially were processed and reported by GC&CS. But its efforts were hampered by the esoteric format and text of the messages. An element of the British Ministry of Economic Warfare (MEW), the Railway Research Service, soon complemented the Bletchley work. The information from these messages was about German military logistics shipments. They proved to be useful in determining future German strategic and theater military initiatives.¹⁷

Since the Nazis made use of the railway system of Germany (and later that of occupied Europe) to transport Jews to the death camps, it would seem that there should be much information in these summaries. However, it is not clear from the limited research conducted of these files if they contain any such information. To date, messages about trains transporting Jews to the camps have been found only in HW 16, the decrypts of German Police messages.¹⁸

Miscellaneous Collections

There are other collections of cryptologic records that have a few translations among them that apply to the Holocaust. These records include the intercepts and translations of clandestine communications from European communist party organizations and resistance groups to Moscow (known as ISCOT, or Intelligence Source Scot), the Communist International (MASK), and Soviet intelligence organizations (Venona). These collections are available in whole at the Public Record Office/National Archives or in part at the United States National Archives and the library of the National Cryptologic Museum at Fort George G. Meade, Maryland.

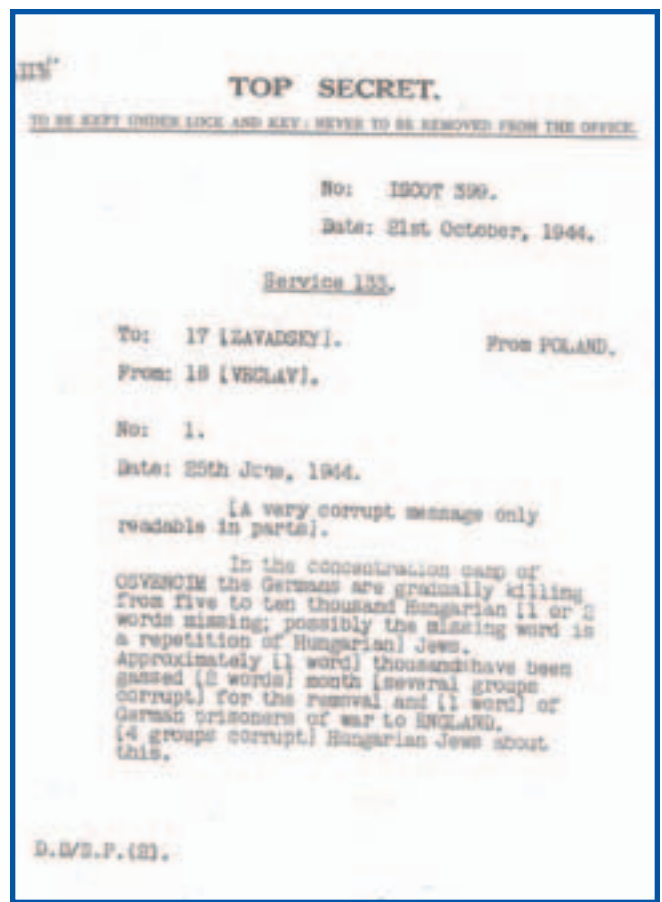
The Venona translations probably are the most famous of the three collections. These are the trans-

lations of messages between various Soviet intelligence network controls, or “rezidants,” and the Moscow headquarters of Soviet intelligence agencies – the NKVD (Narodniy Komissariat Vnutrennikh Del, “Peoples Commissariat for Internal Affairs”) and the GRU (Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoe Upravleniye, “Main Intelligence Directorate” of the Soviet General Staff). There are only two translations in the over three thousand that refer to any aspects of the Holocaust. These include the movement of German gold into Swiss banks and a discussion of the Wallenberg family.¹⁹ The Venona translations are available in RG 457 at NARA in College Park, Maryland, the PRO (HW 15), and at the library of the National Cryptologic Museum.²⁰

The ISCOT material, named after the head of the section at the GC&CS that handled illicit communications, is a collection of translations of messages between the various European (and Asian) communist party organizations and resistance groups and party headquarters in Moscow during World War II. These messages were intercepted, decrypted, and translated by the GC&CS and turned over to the responsible section in M.I.6. They date from mid-1944 to the end of the war. Of the nearly 1,500 translations, only six pertain to the Holocaust. The ISCOT translations are located at the PRO in series HW 17, pieces 39-118, Government Code & Cypher School Decrypts of the Communist International (COMINTERN). A set of the ISCOT translations also is available in the library of the National Cryptologic Museum.

Finally, there is the so-called MASK material collection, which consists of intercepts of COMINTERN material decrypted by the famous British cryptanalyst, Brigadier J.H. Tiltman, from 1934 to 1937. The Communist International was the administrative conduit through which foreign communist parties were controlled and financed by Moscow. The messages in the collection are from the International’s headquarters in Moscow to various local communist party organizations in several European countries, the United States, and China.

The reports are mostly what one would expect: espionage and illegal tradecraft, party and network finances, propaganda, travel plans of COMINTERN agents, and messages about domestic political, military, and economic situations. There are several messages that report on conditions in Germany after Hitler’s accession to power and the situation in Austria prior to the Anschluss of 1938. Although there is no direct information about anti-Jewish measures, there are references to the concentration camps that, in those early years of the Nazi reign, held a large number of opposition political inmates such as communists, social democrats, and others. The MASK translations (and decrypts in French) are located in folders 1 to 38 of HW 17.²¹ The National Cryptologic Museum’s library also has a set of the MASK translations.



ISCOT 399, issued 21 October 1944 (intercepted 25 June 1944) reporting the gassing of Hungarian Jews at Auschwitz (Osvencim)

Even though there are number of translations relating to the Holocaust from the above three smaller collections, they represent only a small portion of the actual number of messages transmitted on these illicit radio networks. It is possible that the archives of former Soviet intelligence organizations and the COMINTERN may contain a number of messages concerning all aspects of the Holocaust and other Nazi depredations.

Notes

1 For more on the Allied effort against German diplomatic systems, see Alvarez, 164-6.

2 These are: Entry 9011, Japanese Diplomatic Messages (SRDJ) and Japanese-German Diplomatic Messages (SRDG); and Entry 9021, Vichy French Diplomatic Messages (SRDV).

3 The British placed restrictions on “sensitive” material that the Special Branch representatives attached to GC&CS work centers could see and pass back to G-2 in Washington. This material was referred to as the “Reserved Series.” See “History of Special Branch,” 21 fn., NARA RG 457, Entry 9032, Box 1113.

4 A complete set of the Boston series can be found in the records of the Office of Strategic Services, RG 226, Entry 210, boxes 440-446. Other captured Axis messages were placed in similar relevant translation series. For example, Japanese messages, captured during the Philippines campaign, were placed in the appropriate Japanese military (SR) and air force (SRF) translation series available in RG 457, entries 9005 and 9012, respectively.

5 Vatican to Berlin, 11 October 1944, T-1124, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 518, “Decrypted Diplomatic Traffic;” Vatican (Montini) to Apostolic delegate to Germany (Eichstatt), 8 May 1945, T-1996, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 519, “Decrypted Diplomatic Traffic;” Vatican City (Montini) to Apostolic Delegate to Germany (Eichstatt), 7 April 1945, T-2056, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 519.

6 Information regarding the British and American cryptanalytic effort against Vatican codes and ciphers can be found in RG 457, HCC, Box 1284, “History of the Solution of Vatican Systems in SSA and GCCS, 1943-44.” (Washington: September 1944)

7 Benson, *A History of Communications Intelligence* 54-5. Along with the OSS, the Federal

Communications Commission and the Office of Censorship, both of which were conducting small-scale intercept and cryptanalysis, were barred from further cryptologic work. The Coast Guard’s intercept and code-breaking sections were absorbed into the Navy’s cryptologic effort and designated as OP-20-GU.

8 Bradley F. Smith, *The Ultra-Magic Deals*, 149.

9 This set is only part of the larger collection contained in the PRO. The distribution list of British officials who received the translations from this period named eight individuals and their departments – four from M.I.6, one from M.I.5, and one each for the Directors of Intelligence for the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

10 Other translations that were distributed through OSS and passed on to other U.S. government elements, such as the U.S. Department of State, carried the caveats “Secret Source,” or “A Most Reliable Source.” These distributed versions usually had certain pieces of source information, such as the name of the official under whose signature the message was sent and the date of the message, removed or “sanitized” from the original version. Interestingly, it appears that none of these diplomatic translations were shared with the SIS. Also, these translations, for the most part, are from minor neutrals and even some cables from diplomats that contain mostly personal information. A useful discussion about one particularly important translation of a Chilean diplomatic message concerning the situation of Jews in Prague in November 1941 can be found in the Richard Breitman monograph “What Chilean Diplomats Learned about the Holocaust.” It is available at the NARA Interagency Working Group website: http://www.archives.gov/iwg/research_papers/breitman_chilean_diplomats.html

11 For a more detailed and complete description of the catalogue and the PROCAT search system, go to the PRO/National Archives website at <http://catalogue.pro.gov.uk>. The equivalent NARA on-line search engine is called ARC (archives research catalogue) and is available at the U.S. National Archives website: <http://www.archives.gov>.

12 “The Special Action Staff assigned to the 302nd Police Battalion, subordinate to the regiment assigned to Army Group South, reports shooting 4200 Jews.” “Signals Intelligence Pass[ed] to the Prime Minister,

Messages and Correspondence.” HW 1/62, September 1941.

13 In late 1942, the various concentration camps that sent status messages by radio were identified by single letters thusly: A – Oranienburg, B – Dachau, C – Mauthausen/Gusen, D – Buchenwald, E - Flossenburg, F – Auschwitz, G – Hinzert, H- Niederhagen, I – Lublin, K – Stutthof, and L – Debica. Two of these letters, and possibly the others, may have been derived from the last letter of the radio callsign of the camp. In those cases, Auschwitz was identified with callsign “OMF” and Buchenwald with “OMD.” Obviously, this list does not include all of the camps. See ZIP/OS 4/27.11.42, Section II, “Concentration Camps,” PRO, HW 16/66 and Phillips, Lt. E.D., GC&CS Air and Military History Vol. XIII. The German Police. 83. Also, it appears that the Death Camps in the General Government (the part of Poland directly overseen by the Nazis) had their own letters: B – Belzec, L – Lublin, S – Sobibor, and T – Treblinka. However these designators may have been arbitrarily assigned. See Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas, “A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of Jews during ‘Einsatz Reinhardt’ 1942.” *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (Vol. 15, No. 3, Winter 2001), 468-486, fn 8, 480.

14 The SD merged with the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA) or Reich Security Office in September 1939. The SD’s foreign activities, Branch III (Ausland) were transferred to RSHA VI, or foreign intelligence headed by Walter Schellenberg.

15 See HW 12/272, January 1942.

16 These summaries are marked with the serial “CX/MSS/SR.” The files of the MEW were transferred to FO 935.

17 Hinsley, Vol. 1, 357-8.

18 See Breitman, 116-7, for a discussion of the railway decrypts and potential importance to Holocaust research.

19 Venona Translation T840, 21 June 1945, Washington to Moscow, and T2201, 13 April 1942, Stockholm to Moscow, National Cryptologic Museum.

20 For a description of the messages and a short history of their intercept and decryption see Robert L. Benson, *The Venona Story* (Center for Cryptologic History, National Security Agency, Fort George G. Meade, MD; 2001), Reproductions of the Venona trans-

lations are also available online at the NSA website: <http://www.nsa.gov/docs/venona/index.html>

21 Curiously, many ISCOT and MASK decrypts were in French and were not translated by GC&CS into English. Also, many intercepted French diplomatic messages, whether Vichy or Gaullist, which were exchanged with the Arlington Hall remained in the original French.

Chapter 4

Selected Topics of the Holocaust

As mentioned previously in this guide, the records from the Allied COMINT agencies hold information on a wide array of incidents and certain aspects of the Nazi campaign of extermination. However, a historian could not write a complete general narrative of the Holocaust based solely on these records. The information from the records is, for the most part, episodic and partial. Where in those few instances there is much detail, the information is often concentrated in a single aspect of a larger event.

For some these limitations may appear a disappointment. However, historians recognize them as part of the landscape of the process of historical reconstruction of events by utilizing data from a number of sources. For historians of the war and the Holocaust, the body of records composed of the messages decoded by the Allies is another source of information. By itself, the information from decodes is not a “secret key” to understanding the war or the Holocaust. Instead, these decodes must be combined with information from all other sources to produce the narrative fabric that is history. In some cases, the decodes can add a new or telling aspect to a story already familiar, provide the insightful anecdote or quote, or allow the historian to add an exclamation point to a thesis.

This chapter of the guide is intended to demonstrate how some of the available information from Allied cryptanalysis of Axis and neutral messages can contribute additional information to the history of the Holocaust. This section will begin with a general review of the course of the Holocaust and what the information from decodes sometimes can add to it. This will be followed by some selected topics for which there is some substantial information from COMINT sources. These include the refugee

phenomenon and the growing strife in wartime Palestine, Vichy and the Jews, the destruction of Hungary’s Jews, Japanese attitudes and treatment of the Jews in the Far East, and Swiss and German wartime trade and transfer of stolen gold and other personal and national assets.

Before beginning this chapter, one general observation should be made. It is that Allied communications intelligence discovered nothing of the prewar and early wartime high-level Nazi planning for the general campaign against Europe’s Jews and other groups targeted for elimination. This situation also was true for most of the large-scale wartime plans, such as the massacres in the western Soviet Union or the death camps. There were few exceptions to this trend, most notably the intercept and decryption of German police messages that indicated that Italian Jews were soon to be subjected to roundup and deportation to camps in October 1943. Usually, though, Nazi planning, preparations, and orders to carry out these operations were not communicated in a means such as radio that could be intercepted by the Allied monitoring stations. Plans and orders were delivered by courier or were communicated orally at meetings and thus denied to Allied monitors. As a result, information that could have warned of an impending operation was missed. Generally, the communications that supported activities such as the German Police massacres in the western USSR were intercepted only after the latter had begun. The intelligence that was recovered came from a variety of communications sources: message traffic from neutral, Allied and Axis diplomats, Axis security forces, anti-Axis partisan groups, and Axis and Allied covert intelligence networks.

A. The General Course of the Holocaust and Allied Communications Intelligence

Immediately after the conquest of Poland in September 1939, German security elements moved to implement hostile policies directed against targeted segments of the Polish population and Jews in general. A limited number of German Police messages reported such events as the mass arrest of Polish officers near Warsaw and the transfer of 2,000 Jews from the town of Nasielesk to Novydvor (both towns about twenty kilometers north of Warsaw).¹ Yet, information about anti-Jewish actions in Poland remained sparse, and there were no further decrypts of police messages in 1940 and 1941 from Poland.² The lack of intercepts of radio messages suggests that the telephone and telegraph network in Poland had been repaired by the Germans shortly after the occupation had begun.

During the second half of 1941, the Nazis made a number of decisions about the course of the plan to exterminate the Jews. In late July, Reich Marshall Herman Goering signed a memorandum that authorized the SS to plan for “the complete solution to the Jewish question within the German sphere of influence in Europe.” The memo further called for a Final Solution of the Jewish question.³ In October 1941, SS chief Heinrich Himmler banned any further Jewish emigration from German-occupied Europe. In November 1941, the first massacres of German Jews, who had been deported to the east, occurred in the Baltic cities of Riga and Kovno (Kaunas).

On 20 January 1942, in the Berlin suburb of Wannsee, Reinhard Heydrich, head of the Reich Security Head Office, chaired a meeting of senior German officials from the SS, other security offices, the General Government (western Poland), occupied Poland, the German Foreign Office, and the Ministry of Justice to work out the details for the final solution of all European Jews. The German officials discussed policies that had been in effect for some time inside the Reich, and laid out a general plan for coordinating similar plans for coun-

tries allied to the Axis, as well as for occupied Europe. The decisions reached at this meeting were not revealed outside of Nazi leadership circles. Germany’s allies were uninformed of any impending changes. This secrecy is suggested by a fragment of a Japanese diplomatic message from about the time of the Wannsee Conference. A 28 January 1942 message to Tokyo from the Japanese minister in Sofia, Bulgaria, stated that the “German policy towards the Jews is well known. It is seen that the aim is their complete elimination from the European continent (perhaps to the Island of Madagascar).”⁴ But if the German policy decisions had not been publicized at the time, the results of those policies already were being felt in the occupied territories of Europe and the Soviet Union.

The first indications from COMINT sources of large-scale efforts to annihilate Jews and others came shortly after the invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941. The Nazi policy for several groups living in Russia was one of extermination. This policy had been established by the Nazi leadership some months before the invasion. In a speech to German military leaders in March 1941 during the planning for Operation Barbarosa, Hitler had explained that the upcoming campaign in the Soviet Union would be different than all others, that a war of extermination was at hand, and that Russia was to be cleared of all racial groups that were not Aryan. The slaughter of Jews would be complemented with the policy of allowing the hundreds of thousands of Russian prisoners of war taken in the early part of the campaign to die of starvation, neglect, and disease.⁵

In the wake of the invading Wehrmacht formations came police and SS units charged with killing “undesirables” such as communist party officials, COMINTERN (Communist International) personnel, commissars, and Jews in official positions. (Whether all Jews were included in the original orders is unclear. Some latitude may have existed, but within a short time Jews everywhere in the occupied Soviet Union were targeted for death.)⁶ Some of these formations were known as

Einsatzgruppen. There were four of these groups whose manpower totaled about 3,000. They were composed of a mixture of SS and *Sicherheitdienst* (SD or Security Service) personnel. The four groups were assigned regions of operations. *Einsatzgruppe A* operated mostly in the Baltic region; *Einsatzgruppe B*, worked near Smolensk in the western Russian Federated Republic along main axis of attack for German Army Group Center; *Einsatzgruppe C* operated area Kiev in the central Ukraine; and *Einsatzgruppe D* worked in the southern USSR along the Black Sea coast and the Crimea. Working in conjunction with these groups were some SS brigades, such as the Reiter and Cavalry Brigades. The largest single element of these forces was the German Police. Over thirty reserve and regular German Police battalions, numbering about 12,000 policemen, participated in the massacres in Russia. As far back as the Wilhelmian Empire, German police had existed as paramilitary organizations organized into regional or municipal formations. These formations were known as *Ordnungspolizei* (*Orpo*) or Order Police. Referred to originally as Uniformed Police, these formations were easily integrated into the German military and traditionally had performed rear area security duties early in the war.⁷

Because of the vast distances involved and the inadequacy (and destruction) of the Soviet domestic telegraph and telephone cable communication system, the police and SS units exterminating the Jews and other groups relied on HF radio communications to send their action reports and administrative messages back to SS and Police headquarters. Within a month of the invasion, GC&CS, thanks to the British army intercept station at Beaumanor, and partly through the intercept and the cryptanalytic work by the covert Allied site in southern France, P.C. Cadix, was producing decrypts and translations of the German reports about many of the massacres. The police and SS reports were specific about the numbers and categories of victims: Jews, “Bolsheviks,” partisans,

“bandits,” and Russian soldiers are listed in the police unit reports sent to higher headquarters.⁸

The first intercept that referred to a massacre probably was an 18 July 1941 radio message from the Police Regiment Center (that is, assigned to Army Group center) that reported the execution of 1,153 Jewish “plunderers” near the town of Slonim in Belorussia.⁹ And the numbers of victims mounted as the police and other groups moved east into the Soviet Union. On 3 August the SS Cavalry brigade reported it had liquidated some 3,274 partisans and “Jewish Bolsheviks” (*judische Bolschewisten*).¹⁰ On 7 August 1941 the same brigade reported that it had executed some 7,819 people since the invasion had begun, while an accounting of all actions in the sector where Army Group Center operated totaled some 30,000 executions.¹¹ On 11 September 1941 Police Regiment South reported to Police and SS Headquarters that it had liquidated 1,548 Jews.¹² One of its subordinate battalions, the 314th, had shot 69 Jews.¹³ Within a short period, the German units were supplemented by formations composed of ethnic groups such as Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and others in the newly conquered territories. There is also a



German Police and Ukrainian militia shooting Jews from the village of Chrystnowka (Courtesy: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum)

suggestion that Germany's lesser allies contributed to the massacres. A June 1942 Japanese message from Budapest noted that Hungarian troops serving in the rear near Kharkov in the Ukraine had been "successful in mopping up some 38,000 "guerillas."¹⁴

Complementary information about the effects of similar large-scale massacres or liquidations from elsewhere in the occupied Soviet Union was provided by a Japanese diplomatic message from Berlin in late February 1942. It contained a partial list of "population changes" in the Baltic States that the Germans had occupied. The Japanese reported that in the first six months more than 180,000 civilians had been interned or executed. In Estonia it was estimated that the male population between the ages of 20 and 35 had declined about 45 percent.¹⁵

In late 1941 the Nazis began implementing some of the legal and administrative machinery to carry out effectively their plans for exterminating Europe's Jews, including those in occupied countries. German police decrypts carried information about the rail transport of German Jews from cities such as Berlin and Bremen, to ghettos in occupied territories to the east in cities like Kaunas, Lithuania, and Minsk in the Ukraine.¹⁶ Other reports from neutral and Axis diplomats carried a small amount of information on conditions in various countries. In Vienna a Japanese report from late February 1942 mentioned that 10 percent of the workers in the area were kept in concentration camps and that the police were watching all for suspect activity.¹⁷ A report from the Chilean consulate in Prague, dated 24 November 1941, carried information on the legal proscriptions against German Jews: revocation of citizenship for German Jews living overseas and limits to property transfer and sales. The report also mentioned that Jews in the Protectorate would be sent to Poland or to Terezin [Theresienstadt] in Czechoslovakia.¹⁸

At the same time, another critical part of the Nazi direct extermination plan began to operate –

the death camps. The Nazi system of camps, known generally as concentration camps (*Konzentrationslager*) had been started within a year of Hitler's accession to power. The early camps were used to incarcerate all "anti-social elements" and political opponents to the Nazi regime. These included Jews, communists, Social Democrats, trade union representatives, religious dissenters, homosexuals, ordinary criminals, and others. Over the years the camp system expanded and diversified into various functions. The most infamous, and largest, was Auschwitz, which actually was a complex of about forty separate camps. Auschwitz had been started in mid-1940 as a labor camp. In the fall of 1941, the Nazis began building the first "special treatment" (*sonderbehandlung*) camp, Birkenau. Birkenau represented the most sinister part of the Nazi plan for eliminating the Jews. On 8 December 1941, the extermination camp (*Vernichtungslager*) at Chelmo, Poland, went into operation. The less direct methods of extermination, such as starvation and overcrowding that had been employed in the ghettos like Warsaw and Lublin, had proven too slow for the demands of the Nazi hierarchy. The death camps were set up to speed along the Final Solution.

The camps communicated periodic reports to SS and Police headquarters in Berlin by radio. The SS had set up a radio network over which its general administrative communications were transmitted. The SS had their own version of the Enigma cipher machine, which they used to encrypt messages that reported the conditions and the population counts of the various camps. The GC&CS, which broke this SS Enigma cipher in late 1940, gave the network, and the key used to encrypt these communications, the cover name of Orange. This radio net carried most of the early reports from the concentration camps sent in 1942. Each camp sent a daily report, or a monthly report, listing for each day the tally of laborers from various ethnic and national groups. An example of a typical report, sent on October 3, 1942, detailed the totals and subtotals of the slave labor population from Auschwitz, which was identified by the single letter

“F” (derived from the last letter of the camp’s radio callsign, in this case “OMF”). There were eight columns of numbers that broke down in this way: “Total at the beginning of the day,” “Increase,” “Decrease,” “Total at the end of the Day,” “Jews,” “Poles,” Unknown,” and “Russians.” These reports tallied only the slave labor population and not those being executed upon arrival at the death camps. The numbers from the available messages usually reported significant changes to a camp’s population. For example, a report from Auschwitz for September 1942 shows a loss at the end of the month of about 32 percent of the total labor population. A report from Dachau for November 1942 shows an increase in the labor force of about 2.5 percent.¹⁹

Only recently have scholars discovered that the SS also radioed information to Berlin regarding the extermination totals of Jews in the death camps. An article published in the late 2001 issue of *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* described a message sent from the SS leader in Lublin to the SS commands in Cracow and Berlin on 11 January 1943.²⁰ This message, located in the PRO in HW 16/23, enumerated the numbers of Jews eliminated as part of Operation Reinhard (Einsatz Reinhar[d]t) at four death camps in the General Government (Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor, and Treblinka) for both the last two weeks of December 1942 and for the year 1942. The total number of persons eliminated for 1942 was 1,274,166. This number agreed with (and probably was) the basis for a statistical report of

ZIP/GPCC/3.10.42

MOST SECRET.

IPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY: NEVER TO BE REMOVED FROM THE OFFICE

V. P. A.

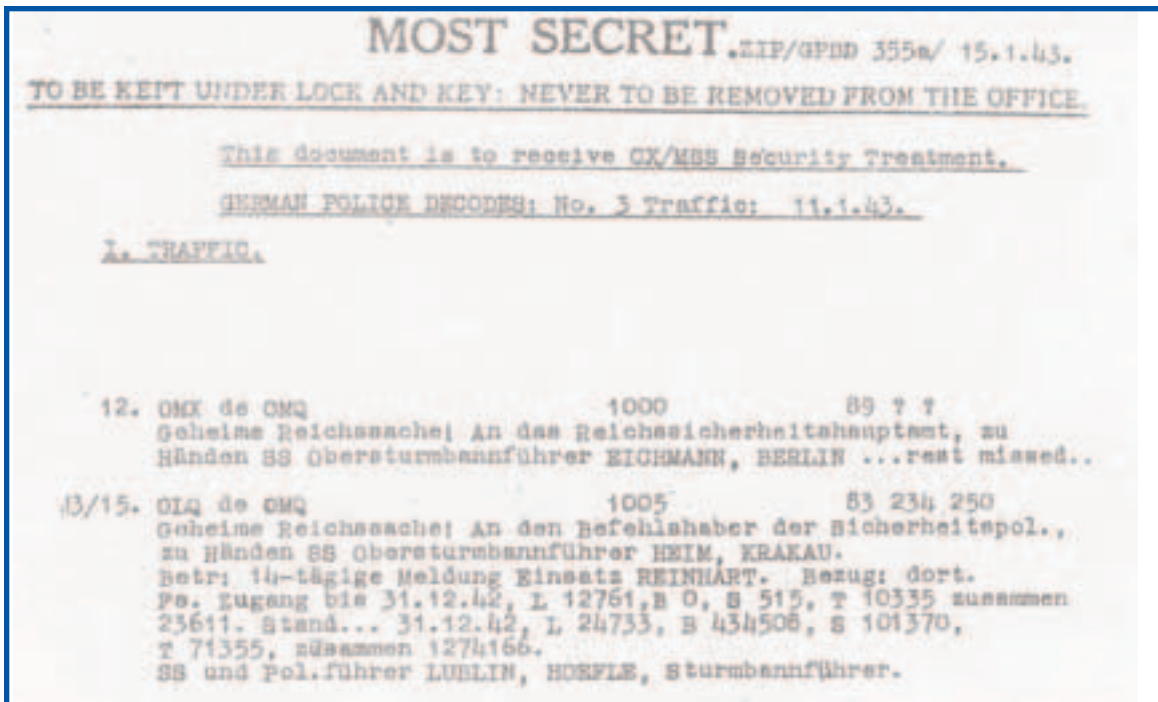
G. 2. C. C. P. 1. SEPTEMBER 1942

Number	Total	Increase	Decrease	Total	Jews	Poles	Unknown	Russians
1.	16609	-	136	16588	5727	7866	786	1289
2.	16588	-	2	16589	5726	7866	771	1281
3.	16589	102	31	16607	5716	7910	771	1286
4.	16607	27	119	16515	5698	7835	771	1282
5.								
6.	Not same in.							
7.	16605	96	389	13200	4137	6039	796	1287
8.								
9.	12699	26	61	12664	3975	5675	795	1281
10.	12664	9	481	12212	3803	5430	802	1280

September 1942 SS Report from Auschwitz listing available slave labor force. Handwritten notes are by Bletchley analyst that read “Total at beginning of day,” “Increase,” “Decrease,” “Total at end of day,” “Jews,” “Poles,” [unknown], and “Russians.” Source: PRO HW 16/10 ZIP/GPCC/3.10.42

Reinhardt's effectiveness that had been commissioned by the SS leader Heinrich Himmler in December 1942. It appears the British analysts who had decrypted the message missed the significance of this particular message at the time. No doubt this happened because the message itself contained only the identifying letters for the death camps followed by the numerical totals. The only clue would have been the reference to Operation Reinhard, the meaning of which – the plan to eliminate Polish Jewry that was named after the assassinated SS General Reinhard Heydrich – also probably was unknown at the time to the codebreakers at Bletchley.²¹

these SS reports completely ceased to be sent by radio. It is likely that the SS leadership was concerned about the security of the information that was transmitted in these messages, not unlike Daluge's worries about Police messages in October 1941. By this time it is possible that telephone or telegraph lines had been run out to the camps and messages could be sent without the worry of eavesdropping. Later in the war, as conditions in Eastern Europe worsened with the Russian advance, the SS may have returned to using radios to communicate. GC&CS broke a few messages about the camps encrypted in the new SS Enigma key given the cover name "Grapefruit." But these decrypts remained few in number.²²



*January 1943 message listing number of Jews killed as part of Operation Reinhard
(Source: PRO HW16/23 ZIP/GPDD 355a/ 15.1.43)*

From February 1942 to about February 1943, these radio messages continued to be sent from the camps to SS headquarters. However, there were limitations to what could be learned from these decrypts. Not all the camps set up by the Germans in the east reported by radio; nor did the camps set up by minor Axis powers and Vichy France that were used to hold Jews for transport to the Nazi death and labor camps to the east. By early 1943,

From early 1942 until the end of the war, the SS organized and oversaw a system in which Jews from occupied Europe, and from Axis-aligned countries, were transported to the various labor and death camps in Eastern Europe. Adolf Eichman's special bureau within the SS main security office that dealt with the evacuation of Jews worked with the German Foreign Ministry to facilitate this system. The transport of mass numbers of

Jews required the cooperation of national governments and their local security or paramilitary forces. The scope and effectiveness of these cooperative arrangements varied according to country. Generally, Jews living in those regions under the German direct administration (the General Government), German military occupation (France, Serbia, and Salonika), and the Reichskommissariat (Netherlands) were affected the most. Ironically, countries allied or associated with Germany had more latitude when it came to policy towards their Jewish populations, though this does not mean that their Jewish populations ultimately suffered less grievously. In countries like Hungary and Italy, resident Jewish populations temporarily were spared being rounded up and sent to the camps. Before the war, the regimes in Rome and Budapest had imposed their own anti-Semitic measures that aimed at restricting the Jewish presence in national economic, social, and cultural activities. While more restrictions were added during the war, there were no large-scale incarcerations in concentration camps; nor were there any major deportations. However, these reprieves ended when German SS and police units arrived in Italy shortly after its surrender in July 1943 and Hungary in May 1944.²³

The first non-German Jews transported to the death camps came from the Slovak Republic in early 1942. (German Jews deported to the Baltic States and Polish Jews from the General Government regions of Poland already were in the process of being sent to the first death camps.) Beginning in the summer of 1942, Vichy officials started the deportation of foreign Jews from France to the camps in the east. (See Section C, Vichy Regime and the Jews, for a description of world reaction to this roundup.) By the fall of 1942, trains transporting Jews to the camps at Auschwitz now included Czech and Dutch Jews. Decrypts of German police messages indicated that these trains sometimes were accorded priority routing through the German rail system.²⁴

In 1943 the Nazi roundup of Jews extended to more countries in occupied Europe. By March of that year, allied cryptologists were intercepting messages from a number of sources that indicated that the Nazi plan was in full operation. In the southern Balkans, it was learned that Bulgarian authorities had gathered up about 14,000 Jews from occupied Thrace and put them in the concentration camps at Gorna Dzhumaja and Dupnitsa. In Macedonia, Jews living in Skopje and Bitolj had been “stripped of their belongings” and left out in the open near the latter town, and that many infants had died, presumably due to exposure to the cold. Other Jews from the region were shipped to the death camps by rail.²⁵ A Japanese report from May mentioned that some 4,500 Jews from Thrace who had been interned previously by the Bulgarians had been shipped to Poland.²⁶

Because it had aligned with Germany, Bulgaria was allowed to garrison adjacent stretches of territory in neighboring Greece and Yugoslavia that contained large numbers of ethnic Bulgarians. Bulgaria carried out a campaign of expulsion against all foreign ethnic groups living in the newly acquired lands. The Bulgarians expelled some 30,000 Turks from Thrace and as many as 500,000 Greeks who lived in the region. Jews amongst the expelled ethnic groups lost their Bulgarian citizenship and were shipped to the death camps.²⁷ Vichy diplomatic cables from Sofia noted that there was much popular opposition to the wholesale removal of the Jews from these territories. According to the French diplomats, the Bulgarian government had explained to their mission that, since Jews, as a group, desired Germany’s defeat, it had arrested them as “enemies of the nation.”²⁸ Still, Sofia resisted the wholesale surrender of Bulgarian Jews to the Nazi killing machine.

In Romania during mid-1941, some 200,000 Jews were deported to Transnistria, the Romanian-occupied region of the Ukraine. There about 120,000 Jews were slaughtered by the Romanian occupation authorities. However, in November dictator Ion Antonescu ended deporta-

tions of Romanian Jews to the region. During the roundup of Jews in Hungary in 1944, Bucharest's diplomats worked to obtain passports and aid to Romanian Jews trapped there.²⁹ Still, approximately some 425,000 Romanian Jews perished during the war. This was about half of the prewar population.

A Japanese report from Budapest regarding conditions in Greece mentioned that, since the German occupation, Greek Jews had been forced to wear a yellow star. The Japanese also estimated that some 50,000 to 70,000 Jews had been sent to Poland and another 25,000 to 30,000 had been exiled.³⁰ Ultimately about 80 percent of all Greek Jews died during the war.

Meanwhile, in the Netherlands, by June 1943 messages from the Dutch communist underground to Moscow that were intercepted by British Radio Security Service revealed that there was substantial local opposition to the early May roundup of Dutch Jews. A 4 June message described how only 10 percent of the Jews in Amsterdam had appeared for registration prior to deportation to the east. The city's Jewish Council responsible for supervising the registration had failed to bring in the number required by the Nazis for deportation to the east. Finally, on 26 May the Germans sealed off the center of Amsterdam and rousted out whatever Jews they could find.³¹ Some Dutch Catholic clerics protested the roundups. Another translation reported that a pastoral letter was read on 16 May to protest the roundup and deportation. The letter countered German arguments that the struggle against the Soviet Union was the equivalent of victory for Germany. The letter added that, "...those who fight against bolshevism, which is condemned so sharply through [one word missing], must not suppress Christianity as this is being done by the National Socialists."³²

The Nazi drive to transport Europe's Jews to the camps continued in other countries. In Italy, in late July 1943, a coup in Rome unseated Benito Mussolini, who had been the Fascist dictator since

1923. Secret negotiations followed and Italy signed an armistice with the Allies. On 3 September Allied troops crossed over from Sicily and began the slow drive north up the Italian peninsula. Hitler rushed additional troops and security forces into Italy and propped up a rump Fascist regime in northern Italy under a recently rescued Mussolini. In late September 1943, Heinrich Himmler ordered the roundup and deportation of Jews living in Rome and dispatched SS General Karl Wolff to oversee the operation. Due to an unexpected cryptanalytic window of opportunity – the exploitation of an SD Enigma key beginning in late August 1943 – the British were able to monitor this operation from September through October 1943.³³

The German police attaché in Italy, SS Major Herbert Kappler, who also performed duties for the Gestapo and SD, was placed in charge of the actual operation to round up Rome's Jews. He had reported to Berlin in early September that some Jews had attempted to escape Rome on a train with Spanish diplomats. He added that these Jews had bought Spanish, Portuguese, and Mexican passports from the Vatican.³⁴ Initially, Kappler had attempted to extort the Jewish community in Rome. The Irish minister in Rome reported to Dublin on 6 October that Rome's Jews were required to supply the Germans with fifty kilograms of gold within twenty-four hours, or else 200 Jewish youth would be sent as hostages to Germany. According to the message, the "Vatican offered help," though no specific aid from that source was mentioned.³⁵ The message also noted that the Germans were looting the houses of wealthy Italians and taking silver, paintings, antiques, furniture, and jewelry. Presumably those being robbed were Jewish, though it is unclear from the translation who was targeted. By the second week of October, SS General Ernst Kaltenbrunner cabled Kappler with the order to evacuate the Jews from Italy without delay. He added that it was no longer a question of using the Jews for labor, or even trusting the local Italian authorities to do the job. The longer the delay, the better chance that

Jews would move to the houses of sympathetic Italians and then disappear.³⁶

The roundup began on 16 October. It was carried out by 365 German policemen from the *Sicherheitspolizei* and *Ordnungspolizei*. Italian police units were not used by the Germans because of their “unreliability.” Kappler reported to Berlin that 1,289 Jews had been arrested. After releasing those of mixed blood, mixed marriages, foreigners, and family servants, some 1,002 were retained. Interestingly, Kappler reported that there was much passive resistance by Italian citizens.³⁷ A report by Irish diplomats on 18 October that claimed, “All Jews in Rome, including women and children have been arrested,” clearly had exaggerated the results of the initial German police drag-net.³⁸ Actually, this first sweep arrested about a sixth of Rome’s Jewish population. On 18 October the train with 1,007 Italian Jews left Rome.³⁹ A report from the Argentine ambassador from early November estimated that the Germans, using a municipal “Civil register” had imprisoned some 5,000 Jews, including men and women eighty years old and infants.⁴⁰ Arrests by the German Police in Rome would continue for months afterwards. In early February 1944, the Japanese ambassador to the Vatican, Harada Ken, reported to Tokyo that, on 4 February, police raided buildings adjoining the Church of San Paolo’s, which enjoyed extraterritoriality status under the Lateran Treaty. Harada reported that some sixty people were arrested, including Italian army officers, Jews, and draft dodgers. According to Harada, the Vatican had “expressed regret” over the incident and, in a letter to Rome’s diplomatic community, promised that indemnity proceedings would be started soon.⁴¹ Ultimately, about 20 percent of all of Italy’s Jews were victims of the Holocaust.

At about the same time that the German police began seizing Italian Jews, in Denmark there occurred one of the rare examples of an effective national humanitarian effort on behalf of its Jews. In early October the German occupation forces in Denmark planned a nationwide roundup of Danish

Jews. The Danes, including their monarch King Christian, had publicly supported the Jewish population since the Germans had occupied the country in April 1940. When news of the impending German sweep became known, the Danish underground carried off the escape of virtually all of Denmark’s 9,000 Jews to Sweden. The Germans reacted to this virtually empty bag of Jews with extreme embarrassment. German Foreign Office instructions to its press representatives overseas contained the broad statement that as of 2 October “...they [the Jews] have been eliminated from the public life of Denmark and have been prevented from further poisoning the atmosphere. In conversations, *please do not go into the subject deeply* (my italics). Up to now, a few hundred full-blooded Jews have been deported to Germany.”⁴²

In late 1943, as the Axis forces retreated west all along the front before the resurgent Red Army, the Nazi authorities were faced with the problem of destroying the evidence of the earlier massacres perpetrated by the *Einsatzgruppen*, police and SS formations. In October 1943 intercepted and decoded radio messages of the SD revealed that the Germans were in the process of exhuming the sites of mass executions and destroying the remains. The texts of the intercepted messages were written in the obtuse language that the Germans used for all matters pertaining to the Holocaust. These messages indicated that such work, executed by *Sonderkommandos* (Special Detachments), and included cleaning up “special places of work” in the Baltic region southwest of Leningrad, near the cities of Novgorod and Pskov. Interestingly, in trying to identify the murder sites, SS officials had to rely on information from Latvian and Russian collaborators.⁴³

One of the most important sources of information about the death camps, specifically Birkenau at the Auschwitz complex, was the Vrba-Wetzler report of June 1944. Rudolph Vrba and Alfred Wetzler were two young Jews who had escaped Auschwitz in the spring of 1944. They made it safely to Slovakia where they composed a report of what

they had learned while inmates at the camp. There had been some prior knowledge of Auschwitz from other sources, but the Vrba-Wetzler report contained many new details. The report was carried to Budapest and then on to Bern, Switzerland. There a copy was shown to the OSS regional chief, Allen Dulles, who, according to reports, was so shocked by it that he wired Washington about its contents.⁴⁴ Another copy was cabled to the Czech government-in-exile in London. The cable was intercepted by the British censors and turned over to GC&CS. A copy of it was sent to Arlington Hall Station as part of the standard exchange program, but it did not reach the U.S. Army until early January 1945.

Among the details the two escapees provided were the daily food ration level (300 grams or about 11 ounces), the treatment policy for ill slave laborers (sent to the *Krankenbau*, literally sick place or infirmary), the procedures for gassing those selected for immediate extermination, numbers and nationalities of those exterminated, the procedure for killing “Aryan” prisoners (by shooting), the creation of a half million false discharge documents to cover those who actually had been gassed, and a list of the SS camp leaders who were responsible for these acts, as well as people identified as “criminals” who also participated in killing Jews.⁴⁵ (See attached document No. 1 for a complete copy of the Vrba-Wetzler cable to London.)

More information about the camps was learned when some in the east were overrun by the advancing Red Army. In July 1944 Russian troops liberated the Majdanek concentration camp near Lublin, Poland. The German administrators had not had the time to dismantle the camp and destroy its records, most of which were captured intact by the Russians. Journalists from Allied and neutral countries were invited to view the camp. Reports carried in Soviet newspapers estimated the number killed at Majdanek at over a million. After a review of the captured records, it was realized the Soviet estimate was much too high. Later estimates ranged between 175,000 and 235,000. In mid-September 1944, the French ambassador to Moscow, Roger Garreau,

cabled the French Committee of National Liberation (FCNL) in Algiers with a report on the newspaper stories about the camp. He pointed out to the FCNL that of the executions for March 1944 at the camp over 6 percent were French nationals. He also observed that the current publicity given “to the enormity of the crimes committed” was not enough. He urged that the committee consider publishing the reports about the camp.⁴⁶

As Nazi Germany’s military situation continued to deteriorate during 1944, fears grew in the Allied and neutral capitals that the Germans would accelerate the extermination of Jews and others in the remaining camps, or that they would move prisoners from the various slave labor camps into what was left of the Third Reich’s territory. What had happened to Hungary’s Jews seemed to set a precedent for what might come elsewhere in Europe. There a special SS detachment had arrived and organized the deportation of Hungary’s Jews to Auschwitz and later marched thousands of other Jews to slave labor factories in the Reich. (See Section D of this chapter for a description of the action against Hungary’s Jews.) In mid-1944, some countries had begun diplomatic measures to protect their own citizens, Jewish and Gentile, held by the Germans or residing in Germany as foreign workers. In other cases, neutral nations were asked by private groups to intervene with Germany to save the remaining Jews held in Nazi-occupied Europe.

In May of 1944, the Portuguese charge d’affaires in Vichy cabled Lisbon that during a meeting at the German embassy he had been told that orders were soon to be given to return to France those Portuguese workers who had been forcibly sent to Germany. At the same time, the Germans told the charge that a visa for a collective passport for Jews would be granted in another ten days. How these plans turned out is not clear from the intercept; nor is it certain specifically what group of Jews was referred to in the cable.⁴⁷ In June, the Romanian ambassador to Hungary signaled Bucharest that several thousand ethnic Romanians living in north-

ern Transylvania were being rounded up to be sent to Germany and Hungary as forced labor. At least 50,000 ethnic Romanians already had been conscripted into labor battalions throughout Hungary. The ambassador reported that many towns in the region of Transylvania had been “denuded of population.” He was going to protest these forced drafts to the German ambassador and the Hungarian prime minister.⁴⁸ In the summer of 1944, the Irish and Spanish ambassadors in Berlin had brought to the attention of the German Foreign Ministry the precarious situation of numerous Jews held in a camp in Vittel, France. Many of the remaining Jews were from South America and supposedly were being held to counter any possible actions against German civilians interned in those countries since 1942.⁴⁹

In mid-October 1944, the Spanish ambassador to the United States reported that he had met with a committee of American rabbis, who had been recommended by Congressman Sol Bloom (D-NY), the chairman of the House Foreign Relations Committee. The rabbis delivered a memorandum that stated, “Reliable sources indicated that German authorities intended to exterminate all those who are interned in Concentration Camps.” The rabbis asked that the Spanish government intervene with German authorities to respect internment laws of countries and international law. The Spanish ambassador, Cardenas De Silva, added his own comment to Madrid that any action by Spain would bring about a “very favorable atmosphere for our government and would change public opinion in this [USA] country.”⁵⁰ The next week, the Irish ambassador in Washington reported that he had been asked by Leon Kubotinski, an official of the World Jewish Congress, if the Irish government could follow the example of the Swedish diplomatic mission and help save some of Hungary’s threatened Jews⁵¹

In January 1945 the Jewish Agency for Palestine asked the Czech government-in-exile to send a message to its representative in Stockholm to be relayed to the Soviet ambassador, Madame

Alexandra Kollontay. The message, intercepted by the British, asked that the Soviets initiate some surprise military action to seize the German death camps in Poland before the Germans executed the thousands of Jews and “other anti-fascists” still held in them.⁵²

By early March 1945, other countries, such as Brazil, France, Turkey, and Italy, had heard rumors that Jewish nationals held in the concentration or internment camps were in danger. In many cases, these governments had been informed that the Germans had separated Jewish prisoners of war from the other prisoners. These countries appealed to neutral nations to intervene with the International Red Cross for help.⁵³ Reich Foreign Ministry officials responded to these claims by issuing a statement that there was “no truth to the claim” that Jewish prisoners of war are treated differently than others. Jewish persons, the statement said, were separated from other prisoners for the sake of “camp discipline.”⁵⁴ Right up to the Nazi surrender, fears persisted of a possible last spasm of extermination of Jews held by the Germans. A number of neutral countries, including Sweden, Switzerland, and the Vatican, made demarches with Germany to not carry out this extreme measure.⁵⁵ A 17 April 1945 message from the Apostolic delegate in Lausanne, Switzerland, to the Vatican, reported that Italians held in concentration camps in northern Italy in the late summer of 1944 had been transferred to Auschwitz and other “unascertainable destinations.” The report added that the International Red Cross had gotten German assurance that these transfers had been suspended.⁵⁶

In mid-February 1945, the Allied armies stood prepared to cross the last major river obstacles to Germany: the Rhine River in the west and the Oder in the east. On 18 February 1945, the few remaining diplomatic posts of the Third Reich received an extremely long (19 pages) message that contained a statement from the German foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop. He instructed his diplomats to seek out a secret channel to relay the points in the address to “important English and American

personalities.” The speech possibly was done on Ribbentrop’s own initiative. It was a rationalization of Nazi Germany’s war against the world. Among other points, it claimed that, in reality, Germany’s war all along had been a crusade against world Bolshevism. He further claimed that Germany had liberated many ethnic groups from their oppressors and that Nazism had a “positive attitude to Christendom.”

As for the effort to exterminate world Jewry, Ribbentrop had this to say:

*The question of the Jews is a German domestic affair which, if Germany doesn’t want to fall to Communism, must be solved in Germany. The Jewish Question in other countries does not interest Germany, in fact, in Germany we are even of the viewpoint that we can cooperate with other countries in the solution of the world’s Jewish problem.*⁵⁷

B. Jewish Refugees, the Holocaust and the Growing Strife in Palestine

The history of the Holocaust is notable for the duration and intensity of the resulting refugee flood. From the earliest days of Nazi rule in Germany in 1933, until the very end in 1945, Jewish refugees from the Holocaust were an ongoing concern for many countries. In some nations, such as France, the Jewish refugee presence aggravated already tense domestic antipathies towards foreigners and Jews. This domestic strife led to further restrictions against foreign Jews. This large number of those fleeing Nazi oppression would test the immigration policies in other countries, such as the United States and Britain, whose refusal to either increase or waive quotas on refugees sealed the fate of further thousands of Jews.

In the first years of the Nazi regime, American and British cryptology discovered little on the refugee issue. It was not until early 1939 that

American codebreakers began to pick up any reflections of the refugee problem. These hints came mostly from intercepts of messages from Japanese diplomatic legations around the world, but mostly in Europe, who were reporting to Tokyo on efforts by Jews to leave Germany and annexed Austria. This preponderance of Japanese diplomatic messages as a source for information is an important point. Knowledge on the part of American intelligence officials about the plight of Jewish refugees was filtered through the biases of Tokyo’s diplomats.

In one Japanese message from Washington to Tokyo of 17 January 1939, the Japanese ambassador recounted that, in late 1938, President Roosevelt and Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes had made public statements criticizing German treatment of the Jews. The U.S. State Department had followed up with a note including the same charges to the German Foreign Ministry. The Japanese ambassador reported that Berlin had responded to Ickes’ statements and requested that Washington advise it of one instance in which an American citizen had been mistreated. Berlin added that if Washington could produce one case in which treaty rights had been violated it would settle it. According to the Japanese, in this case, Washington had conceded that no Americans had been maltreated during the period in question. To the Japanese ambassador in Berlin, the American concession had suggested that the issue was resolved.⁵⁸

Through the first nine months of the war, at least until June 1940, Allied COMINT revealed that Japanese steamship lines, notably *Nippon Yusen Kaisha*, were some of the prime carriers of Jewish refugees from European ports to destinations, which, in many cases, were located in the Far East.⁵⁹ In one instance in early 1940, the Japanese shipping lines encountered difficulties from Portuguese authorities. It seemed that Jewish passengers had received limited visit visas from Lisbon, but upon landing they had stayed instead of departing for other destinations. To fix the prob-

lem, the Portuguese demanded that, from now on, Japanese shipping officials either get permission for extended visas or not allow Jewish passengers to leave the ships when they docked.⁶⁰ These sea routes for refugees ended with the German invasion of France and the Low Countries in May 1940.

From the next year, until June 1941, one of the remaining principal avenues of escape for refugees was across the Soviet Union to its Pacific ports, principally Vladivostok. Typically, Jewish refugees, mostly Poles and Germans, obtained visas from Japanese diplomats in the USSR or a nearby country. They then secured transit papers from Soviet authorities and traveled east along the length of the Trans-Siberian Railroad to the Pacific coast port of Vladivostok. From there the refugees would embark to Japan for further transit to ports in the United States, Latin America, or to the substantial and established Jewish settlement in Shanghai. From the translations it is not certain how many Jews eventually escaped over the Siberian route.



Japanese consul in Kaunas, Lithuania, Chione Sugihara (Courtesy of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM))

Some historians suggest that as many as 30,000 Jews fled by this route, the majority of whom ultimately arrived in Shanghai.⁶¹

One of the interesting sidelights of this overt “underground” railroad was the contribution of the Japanese consul in Kaunas, Lithuania, Chione Sugihara. Sugihara was a diplomatic official who also doubled as an intelligence officer. He was stationed first in Koeningsberg and later in Kaunas. He issued nearly 2,000 visas to Polish and German Jews, often against Tokyo’s explicit orders, from late 1939 into 1940.⁶² He accomplished this before the consulate was closed after the occupation of Lithuania by the U.S.S.R.⁶³

Another interesting aspect to the refugee phenomenon was the increasing number of Jews who emigrated or fled to the British Mandate of Palestine during the war. Palestine had been part of the Ottoman Empire for centuries. A small Jewish



Jewish refugees from Transnistria arrive at the Atlit reception camp in Palestine. (Source: Central Zionist Archives via the USHMM)

population had lived in Palestine. In 1917 British foreign secretary Arthur Balfour declared that the government favored the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, provided that nothing would be done to “prejudice” the non-Jewish communities already there. After the First World War, the League of Nations made Palestine a Mandate under British control. For the next two decades, there was a growing antagonism between Jewish immigrants and settlers and the indigenous Arab population. The British, in their 1939 White Paper, had set a limit of 70,000 Jewish immigrants as a concession to the local Arab population. However, Arab leaders in the region, and especially in Palestine, complained to London that many more Jews than allowed for by the paper’s limit had arrived during the war. An intercepted message from the Japanese diplomatic mission in Ankara reported an Arab claim that over 100,000 Jews had entered Palestine between 1939 and 1943.⁶⁴

As early as 1942, the Japanese reported additional Arab concerns caused by the formation of the Jewish Brigade in the British 8th Army, the establishment of a Jewish police force of some 36,000 personnel, and agitation by the communist Jewish labor organizations in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.⁶⁵ Later Japanese reports dated in early 1944 from the Japanese embassy in Ankara stated that an agent who had recently returned from Palestine noted that the Jewish underground had been building up arms caches that included machine guns. These had been smuggled in from Egypt or purchased from British or Polish soldiers garrisoned in Palestine. The Jewish underground also had set up secret factories for manufacturing more arms and ammunition. Because of these Jewish efforts, the agent suggested that the British probably would “be lenient” when looking into Arab acquisition of arms in order to placate the latter. The report ended with the observation that there would be large scale “disturbances” in the future.⁶⁶ In February 1944 the Saudi Arabian consul in Jerusalem described a gunfight between British police and Jewish terrorists in Haifa in which twelve policemen were killed. The terrorists also entered a church and murdered

a well-known British scholar. The same consul reported that there were other “incidents” in Tel Aviv. The Saudi diplomat added that the cause of the recent attacks stemmed from a Jewish agency demands for the abrogation of the White Paper, due to take effect in May.⁶⁷

Early in 1944, members of both houses of the United States Congress drafted resolutions that called for the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine and the abrogation of the British White Paper. The Arab nations of Egypt, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia were opposed to these proposals since they would open Palestine to virtually unlimited Jewish immigration. Arab diplomats in Washington especially were upset over the attacks on the Arab people and the American lawmakers’ casual dismissal of their rights to the same land. In February the Iraqi minister in Washington reported that he and his Egyptian counterpart had met with Undersecretary of State Edward Stettinius to protest the proposed resolutions in the House and Senate. Stettinius assured the Arab diplomats that President Roosevelt and Secretary of State Cordell Hull were committed to leaving the solution of the problem of Palestine until after the war. Despite this assurance, the Arab ministers informed their capitals that they intended to monitor the situation.⁶⁸

On the other side of the Palestine question, a cable from the French ambassador, Henri Bonnet, to Paris in early April 1945, recounted a meeting between embassy staff and a Mr. Akzin [*sic*], a representative from the Jewish Agency for Palestine. Mr. Akzin was sounding out the position of the French regarding Zionist representation at the upcoming San Francisco United Nations Conference. He was hoping that the issues of immigration and the formation of a Jewish State in Palestine could be settled. The French reminded Akzin that these problems were not included in the purpose of the conference. Akzin told the French that the various sponsors of the conference, except

for Great Britain, seemed either not opposed to or in favor of such a representation.⁶⁹

C. The Vichy Regime and the Jews

The historical experience of the Jews in France differed from that of the rest of modern Europe. This difference stemmed from the changes brought about by the French Revolution of 1789, which made French Jews the first national Jewish population emancipated from the medieval legal and administrative strictures of ghetto life. Prior to 1789, Jews living in Paris were considered foreigners. Elsewhere in France, their status varied: there were legal restrictions in the east, while some Jews in some communities in southwest France could vote in the Estates General. Statutes passed in 1790 and 1791 by the Revolutionary government granted Jews full civil rights throughout France.

During the 19th century, Judaism in France identified with the values of the revolution and Republican France. Many Jews adopted a secularized identity – officially members of a distinct religion, but living with a French cultural and ethnic identity. However, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Jews came under attack from an increasingly polemical conservative wing of French politics, which included the Jews as a target of their general attacks against the liberal tendencies of the Third Republic. The French right, which combined a strong nationalism with a radical socialism, made anti-Semitism a major part of its platform.⁷⁰ The Dreyfus affair (1894-1906), in which a Jewish French Army officer was accused falsely of treason and then exonerated, seemed to be the lightning rod for the forces of anti-Semitism in France. The most powerful of these voices, Charles Maurras and his *Action Francaise*, emerged in the midst of the drama, and would continue to make anti-Semitism a part of extreme conservative opinion for many more decades. In the end, though, the supporters of Dreyfus won. The anti-Semitic storm abated, and soon the worst

aspects of it were forgotten temporarily with the spirit of the *union sacree* of the First World War.⁷¹

However, by the 1930s the situation in France had become again difficult for Jews. A combative French nationalism had emerged in reaction to France's postwar economic and political decline. It had, as one of its foundations, a widespread xenophobia. Caught in this backlash against foreigners were Jews of foreign ancestry living in France. Many French Jews could trace their ancestry for generations. But another sizable segment of the Jewish population, perhaps as many as 75,000 or so, had arrived in France as part of the flood of 300,000 immigrants and refugees that lasted during the postwar period from 1919 until the very eve of the Second World War. Some 55,000 of these arrived after 1933 as a result of the Nazis taking power in Germany.⁷² With a France weakened by its war losses and the Depression, and rent by internal political strife between extremes on the left and right, Jews, especially foreign Jews, would be doubly vulnerable if a reactionary, nationalist regime ever came to power. Unfortunately for the Jews in France, this occurred after France surrendered in June 1940. The Third Republic collapsed and Marshal Philippe Petain became chief of state. The seat of the French government moved to Vichy in the unoccupied southern part of the country.

Since the beginning of the Second World War, Allied code-breaking agencies had been attacking successfully a number of French codes and ciphers. The new Vichy regime continued to use the fallen Third Republic's prewar diplomatic and colonial office cryptographic systems for its overseas communications. Some of the most lucrative sources of French communications were those to Washington, D.C., and capitals in Latin America. These messages were sent via the transatlantic cable that had terminals in the United States. The retransmission of these cables required that a copy be turned over to the U.S. cable censors. With so much traffic in hand, French codes were exploited relatively early after the formation of the Vichy regime.⁷³ American codebreakers soon found references to the anti-

Jewish laws in Vichy diplomatic and colonial cable and radio traffic.

By the fall of 1940, the first *Statutes des Juifs* were promulgated by Marshal Philippe Petain's regime. These laws were designed to remove Jews from public service and various skilled professions such as architecture, law, and medicine. Jews also were excluded from the press and other media. The restrictions carried in these statutes would be continuously refined, expanded, and then reissued over the next two years.

In October 1940 Vichy informed colonial administrators throughout the French empire to start registering government employees of Jewish descent for a later determination whether they would be retained past a 19 December deadline previously set in the statutes.⁷⁴ Vichy regulations provided some exemptions to the groups targeted for removal, mainly for military veterans, among others. However, Vichy's requirements for identifying Jews actually were more rigorous than even those of their German overseers. As one intercept went, Vichy told its colonial administrators that if certain Jews claimed they were not practicing their religion, then the civil servants were to consult birth certificates or even go scour Jewish cemeteries for proof of ancestry.⁷⁵

From COMINT sources it is not certain how many Jews were discharged from various governmental positions within France and its overseas colonies. In late October 1942, a message from the Japanese naval attaché in Vichy reported that, according to SS sources, Laval's policies were being resisted by the eighty or so Jews left in the various government departments. In August 1942 in Indochina, the governor-general, Admiral Jean Decoux, reported that nearly 700 military personnel stationed throughout the colony had been released from duty under the Vichy exclusion laws. However, this number, besides including Jews, also counted members of "secret" societies, such as the Masons, and German members of the French

Foreign Legion.⁷⁶ However, it does not appear that any Jews from France's colonies were returned to France.

Free French propaganda targeted the Vichy regime over its treatment of Jews. In early 1942 the Vichy French minister in Havana, Cuba, recommended to Vichy that it press Havana to deny visas to refugee French Jews arriving in that city. He reported that a number of these refugee Jews had been contributing to the spread of propaganda hostile to the Vichy regime. He noted that Free French representatives in the city were pressuring Jewish refugees to make critical statements about Vichy. Visas to the United States were so scarce that the Free French officials had insinuated to the refugees that the only way to get a visa was to agree to make such statements. The Vichy diplomat noted that the campaign was subtle and referred to the possible influence on the refugees by fellow Jews who had "important financial means."⁷⁷ Later, in August 1942, the same minister queried Vichy for a current statement that contained the whole body of legislation relating the Jews.⁷⁸

In the summer of 1942, France, under pressure from the German occupation authorities, began to round up Jews for shipment to the so-called "resettlement sites" in the east. In reality, this was the start of the dispatch of Jews in France to the death and labor camps to the east. Vichy's role in this event was notable for its cooperation with the German occupation authorities: as German officials would report, French officials were exemplary in their roundup. On one occasion, Vichy administrators even offered SS General Heydrich to include, in the roundup, Jews from the unoccupied part of France over which the Germans had little control!⁷⁹

The Vichy leadership always could find ample rationale for its actions. In late September 1942, the Vichy representative to Washington, Henry Haye, received a long cable from Vichy, under the signature of Pierre Laval, who held both offices of the Vichy prime minister and foreign minister, which explained the government's actions regarding the

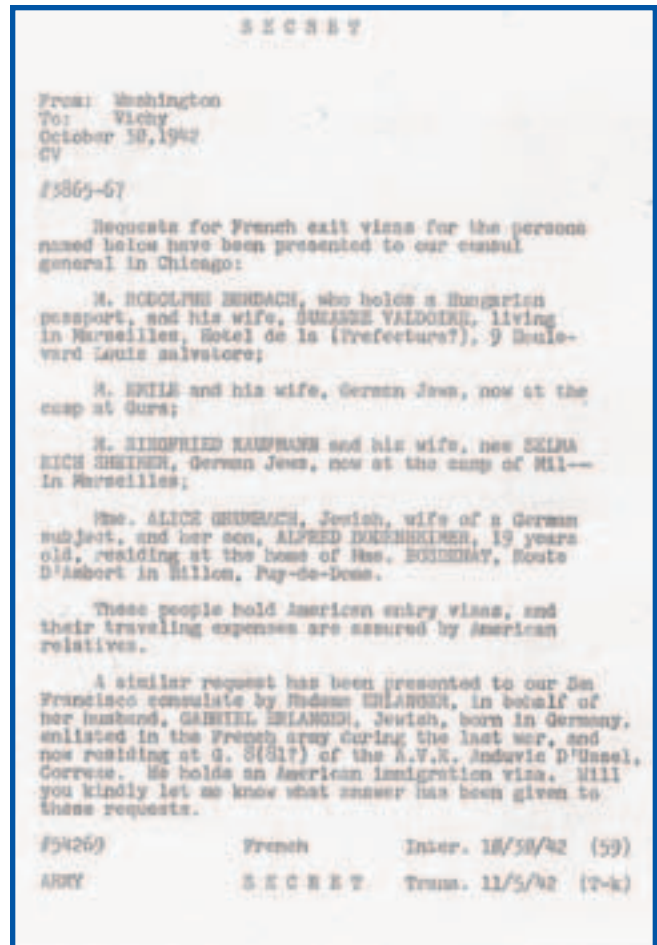


Roundup of Jews on the boulevard Voltaire in the eleventh arrondissement (district) of Paris. (Courtesy: Bibliotheque Historique de la Ville de Paris via the USHMM)

Jews. The message revealed much about the long-standing nationalist French attitude towards foreign Jews and the supposed influence of them on the social and political life of France. In it, Laval claimed that the war had created an “excessive” percentage of Jews in a “region” of France that already had contained a high number of them. These “people without a country” (*apatrides*) were an element that was “manifestly dangerous” to France. Faced with a variety of tribulations, Laval claimed that the foreign Jews were especially susceptible to outside propaganda and would be a source of disturbances. The only solution, according to Laval, was repatriation to Eastern Europe, the “land of their origin.” Laval claimed that this “operation” was not a persecution. He lambasted other countries that dared to criticize France, notably the United States, which had “close[d] their doors to Jewish immigration.”⁸⁰ [See attachment 6 for the translation of the full text of Laval’s statement.]

Laval’s September statement added new rationalizations for Vichy policy that he previously sent to

his ambassadors in Latin America on how to respond to the criticism from that region. In one earlier message for the Vichy mission to Brazil, he said that France could not “permit the prolongation of the stay on its soil of [alien?] Jews whose principle [*sic*] occupations are black marketing and Communistic propaganda.” He would go on, “None of them works, but each consumes and diminishes by so much the [supplies?], which are indispensable to the French.”⁸¹



Translation of message from Vichy mission in Washington to Vichy inquiring after status of visas for foreign Jews living in France (Source: RG 457, HCC, Box 332)

The Allied codebreakers recorded the international reactions to Vichy’s policy and performance in regard to the Jews. As a result of the roundup, the cable lines and airwaves between Vichy and foreign capitals, especially Washington,

were filled with desperate appeals by Jews in the U.S. and Latin America seeking information about relatives who awaited a decision on their fate while interned in French concentration camps at Drancy, Rivesaltes, Casemeuil, Gurs, and other sites. Pleas for exit visas for the interned Jews came through the Vichy mission in Washington, DC, which relayed the requests from the consulates in other American cities, such as New York, Chicago, and San Francisco.⁸² In other cases, important individual Americans, such as Congressman Samuel Dickstein (D-NY), chairman of the House Immigration and Naturalization Committee, personally interceded in appeals for exit visas. Also, influential Jewish organizations, such as the World Jewish Congress and the Jewish Relief Society intervened on behalf of Jews stranded in Marseilles and in North Africa.⁸³

Allied COMINT also recorded the international tide of protest heaped on France as a result of the roundup of the Jews. The sharpest rebukes were contained in the reports from French diplomats in Latin America. They itemized for Vichy the many protests against the deportation of Jews from the mostly Catholic populations of the region. As one French diplomat in Argentina noted, the most influential paper in that country had editorialized that France, once the fatherland to Saint Louis and Joan of Arc, was now “an anti-Christian country.”⁸⁴ In a message intercepted by the Canadian Examination Unit, the French ambassador in Brazil asked Vichy for a clarification of charges in the British and American press that the French clergy and press have attacked the deportations. “Because of the repercussions these two [last] allegations can have in strongly Catholic countries, I should like to be sent the true facts of the matter.”⁸⁵ Other diplomats reported how the Western press services reported on the arrests and deportations of Jews, and “incidents,” such as the arrest of a school headmaster in Lyons who refused to turn over a list of Jewish children of whom he had taken charge.⁸⁶

In Washington, Ambassador Haye reported on 31 October that the Polish ambassador stationed

there had passed along the complaint of the Polish government-in-exile in London about the deportation of Polish Jews and veterans who had fought in the French army in 1940. The Pole also protested to Vichy the recent obligatory mobilization of Polish workers for work in Germany.⁸⁷ In a response to Haye’s cables, Vichy dismissed the protests and claimed that, since there were no diplomatic relations between Vichy and the Polish government-in-exile, there was no need to answer the ambassador’s complaints. Vichy did allow Haye to verbally assure the Poles that no Polish workers from the unoccupied zone would be mobilized. The situation of the Polish Jews was not even mentioned in the dispatch.⁸⁸

Other countries complained to Vichy regarding the treatment of their nationals by the Vichy authorities. In one case, the Mexican government strongly objected to the seizure of the property of a Jewish Mexican national living in Nice. The Mexican diplomats also objected to the harassment of this person by French police. The French offered to appoint a Mexican administrator to oversee the liquidation of the individual’s property. The Mexican ambassador reported that Vichy had ignored earlier protests regarding the treatment of its citizen. He urged the foreign ministry in Mexico City to make the strongest statement possible and consider commercial reprisals against Vichy. The Mexican ambassador also informed his superiors that Vichy was seizing the property of Jewish citizens of the United States and Turkey, as well as restricting their activities.⁸⁹

The Vichy regime would continue to be unmoved by foreign criticism. Marshal Petain appeared to believe that he was acting in the best interest of the French state. But he would be chastised by no less an authority than the Pope’s representative. At a late July luncheon at a hotel in Vichy, Petain commented to the Apostolic Nuncio, Cardinal Valerio Valeri that he was consoled by the fact that the Pope understood and approved his policy on the Jews. Valeri had to correct Petain. According to a report by the Ecuadorian minister to

Vichy that was intercepted by the British, the Nuncio told Petain at the luncheon that he was mistaken about the Pope. The “Holy Father does not approve of it.”⁹⁰ Valeri later asked for another meeting in which he delivered the Pope’s plea to stop the persecutions. Even the personal protest of the Pope to Marshal Philippe Petain, the chief of state, stirred “Le Marechal” only to limit the ongoing deportations to foreign Jews living in the occupied zone of France.⁹¹ Vichy’s attitude remained fixed. Another intercepted cable of 13 September carried the revealing statement that, “It is a matter of purifying France of the foreign Jews.” The same cable carried another remark attributed to a Vichy official that “nothing would divert the French Government from the policy it is following about the Jewish question.”⁹²

An emotionally charged case that arose during the deportations concerned the fate of about 5,000 (maybe as many as 8,000) children of foreign Jews left in France as orphans after their parents had been “sent east.” The governments of both the United States and Vichy France took up the issue. In late August 1942 the U.S. charge d’affaires, Pinkney Tuck, had approached Laval about the orphaned children. Laval played a cynical game with the Americans. His administration leaked an offer it claimed to have made to the United States: that France would send all of its Jews to America if Washington would grant them exit visas. This leak was probably a ploy to embarrass the U.S., for it appears that Laval never intended to allow the children to leave. He already had turned down an offer by the Dominican Republic to take in many of the children.⁹³ He soon released a statement that France would solve this problem in a “humane” manner and not separate the children from their parents. But France would not stop deporting the foreign Jews. Privately, though, Laval continued to play with the Americans. He insisted that no fanfare would accompany the children’s arrival in the U.S. The situation became more confused when stories were published that claimed that children of

French workers sent to Germany as forced labor were to go to the United States.⁹⁴

On 30 October the Vichy ambassador in Washington, Henry Haye, met with Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles, who assured Haye that the U.S. would not “make one believe” that the children belonged to French workers. Welles added that the State Department publicly would explain that not all of the orphans were Jewish so as to calm the fears of unidentified “groups of Americans” that “too many Jews” were coming into the country.⁹⁵ Despite a public statement by Secretary of State Cordell Hull that “negotiations were going along satisfactorily,” the French had backed off from releasing the children. Ultimately, Quaker relief workers managed to get about 350 of the children out, but the rest remained in France. Many reasons have been put forward for Vichy’s clumsy and cynical handling of the issue – the foreign Jewish children helped meet the German quotas for Jews and protected French Jews; it made administrative sense not to separate families; or Laval’s desire to avoid further tension with German occupation authorities.⁹⁶

With the Allied invasion of French North Africa in November 1942, the communications intelligence window to the roundup and incarceration of foreign Jews in mainland France closed. Axis covert intelligence agents, located in Spanish-controlled Tangier, reported that the Jews, along with communists, and Allied national internees in the newly liberated regions of French North Africa, had been freed from the numerous concentration and labor camps established by Vichy.⁹⁷ The number of Jews held in French detention camps in North Africa numbered about 15,000 out of a population of around 295,000.⁹⁸ The Axis agents also reported that the prohibitions against the Jews in governmental service and the schools had been lifted. Interestingly, though, the removal of these sanctions only occurred months after the Allies had liberated French North Africa. The new regime in North Africa under Admiral Jean Darlan and General Henri Giraud had refused to abrogate the

Statutes des Juifs immediately after liberation. One of their claims was that to remove the laws would incite the Arab population. However, Moslems as a group steadfastly and consistently had refused to participate in Vichy's anti-Jewish program. In fact many of the Moslem elite openly had supported the Jews.⁹⁹

After the Allied invasion of North Africa, Vichy's propaganda organs continued to crank out a range of pieces that emphasized the claim that there were Jewish connections with communist front groups that, in turn, were working for the eventual Bolshevik takeover of France's former colonies. Vichy's propagandists in their effort to discover any Jewish connection with the Free French, also pointed out the fact that the wife of General Georges Catroux, one of General De Gaulle's principal subordinates, was Jewish.¹⁰⁰

An interesting sidelight to the liberation came from the intercepts of the messages from the French Committee for National Liberation to its High Commissioner in Algiers that indicated that many Jews in North Africa had resisted the reinstatement of the provisions of the Cremieux Decree, an 1870 law that conferred French citizenship specifically on Jews in Algeria. Many Algerian Jews felt that the decree created animosity between them and the Arab population, and "preferred to recover their citizenship as did every other group."¹⁰¹

For the rest of the war, the only hints from Vichy communications as to the fate of Jews in its territories came out of Indochina. There, in January 1945, Governor-General Decoux had decided to drop the various repressive statutes instituted under the Vichy regime. Among others, the bans against secret societies and the anti-Jewish statutes were repealed. The French administration in Hanoi had claimed that it had instituted the laws only because of pressure from Vichy. Now that Vichy had vanished, the colonial administration saw no need for the strictures. The governor-general's administration in Hanoi restored former university and lycee professors, employees,

and officials to the positions they held prior to the decrees. As the colony's chief political officer noted to a Japanese official, all of this only came "after it had become obvious that Vichy was virtually extinct."¹⁰²

As for the Holocaust in France, ultimately 90,000 Jews from that country were sent to the camps in the east. Fewer than 3,000 returned. While Allied COMINT revealed their roundup and transport to holding camps in France, it did not record their ultimate fate in the East.

D. The Destruction of Hungary's Jews, 1944

If one were to look at a map of Europe in early 1944 to see what havoc had been wreaked on its Jewish population, there would have been much devastation. One of the few exceptions in this landscape of death was the Jewish community of Hungary with its approximate 800,000 members. Hungary's Jewish community could hardly have been unaware of what had happened elsewhere in Europe. Information on the fate of Jews elsewhere in occupied Europe had been flowing to Budapest for some time, but had been largely ignored or discounted as not being relevant to the situation in Hungary.¹⁰³ Ultimately, Hungarian Jewry suffered enormous losses after the Nazi extermination machinery was turned on them. This happened in the last year of the war in Europe when the power of the Nazi regime was falling before Allied military assaults from east, south, and west. The reduction of Hungary's Jews is also remarkable because it happened in full view of the outside world, mainly before Budapest's community of foreign diplomatic missions and nongovernmental organizations, such as the Red Cross, which reported on the initial roundups in the countryside and the final onslaught in Budapest itself.

That the fury of the Holocaust was visited late on Hungary's Jewish population was the result largely of that country's role in the war as a limited ally of Germany. Hungary had aligned itself with Nazi Germany for opportunistic reasons. This

alliance allowed Hungary to annex land from neighboring Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania. Hungary had long-standing territorial claims and historic concerns over sizable ethnic Magyar populations living in all three countries. Hungary also picked up a sizable ethnic Romanian population when it received Transylvania. The price for this cooperation was that Hungary got involved in the battle between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. Within the context of the gigantic campaign on the eastern front, Hungary's limited territorial aims were meaningless; hopelessly entangled with Berlin's fate, Budapest had to go along with the war against Moscow and, ultimately, the Nazi plan for the liquidation of its Jews.

Hungary's prewar Jewish population was a little over 400,000. The government had implemented a number of restrictive measures against its Jews through a series of decrees from 1938 to 1941. The early laws applied only to Jews defined by their religion. In August 1941 Hungary's first law that defined Jews in racial terms was adopted. This definition applied even to Jews who had been baptized into Hungary's Christian churches, though the law was not ironclad. This ruling increased Hungary's Jewish population by about another 100,000. By 1941 Hungary's Jewish population totaled about 800,000. This was nearly double its prewar number. Much of the increase was due to Hungary's territorial expansion; lands annexed from its neighbors contained many Jews. Other Jews had fled to Hungary with the illusion that it would remain a haven. Still, the full effect of the implementation of these anti-Semitic measures was mitigated for almost three years until early 1944. Much of this restraint was due to the critical position that many Jews held in Hungary. To a large extent they constituted a large segment of Hungary's professional and middle class and were considered indispensable to its economy.¹⁰⁴

The Nazi leadership was never pleased with Hungary's unenthusiastic prosecution of the war and of the "Jewish Question." Even as early as October 1943, Japanese diplomats reported that

Hungary might "follow in Italy's footsteps." Germany, they reported, was unhappy with Hungary and convinced that Premier Milkos Kallay was backed by a "Jewish financial clique."¹⁰⁵ This tolerance appeared to Berlin as just another example of Budapest's overall lukewarm participation in the war and implementation of German racial policies.¹⁰⁶ So, in mid-March 1944 Hitler personally presented the Hungarian regent and dictator, Admiral Miklos Horthy, with the choice of German military occupation or the formation of a German-approved government dominated by Hungarians friendly to Germany. The new prime minister (and foreign minister) was Dome Sztojay, the former Hungarian minister to Berlin. A number of German officials moved into Hungary and directed that country's military, economic, and security activities. Horthy agreed to form a new government on 22 March.

A German *SondereinsatzKommando* (a special task force) was formed in Germany under Adolph Eichmann to organize the roundup and destruction of the Hungarian Jews. Among the first efforts by the Germans and their Hungarian allies was the enforcement of more stringent economic measures against Jewish businesses and investments. In early April, Japanese diplomats in Budapest notified Tokyo of these new measures.¹⁰⁷ Three months later they noted that by June all of the stock held by Jews in Hungary's mining and heavy industrial firms had been transferred to the Hermann Goering Werke. The Japanese also reported that the massive deportations had been efficient and estimated that some 200,000 Jews were on their way to Poland. Already, they noted, this action was being "praised" as reducing Jewish influence in Hungary.¹⁰⁸ Regarding the deportation, a Hungarian diplomatic dispatch to Ankara, Turkey, from 12 June contained the curious statement that Hungarian Jews were being sent to Germany to work, and that, because "Jews are willing to go to a strange place to work if not cut off from their families, the members of families are sent with them." The Hungarian officials in Turkey were assured that the conditions for the Jews in Germany were



Hungarian Jews being rounded up in Budapest (Courtesy: USHMM)

“satisfactory.”¹⁰⁹ Between the middle of May to the middle of July, the first massive deportation of Jews by the SS task force was completed.

Not all Hungarians approved of the new government or the deportations. In April some Hungarian diplomats in Finland, Switzerland, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden refused to recognize the newly installed, German-supported government. As a result of this opposition, some of these diplomats were removed from their positions or stripped of Hungarian citizenship. In another case, during the roundup of Jews in June, the Hungarian minister to Switzerland sent a message to Baron Apor, the Hungarian representative to the Vatican, begging him to publicize the danger to the Jews.¹¹⁰ Presumably, Baron Apor was to alert some element within the Papacy to the crisis in Hungary.

An ancillary issue that arose during the first operations by the SS was the status of foreign Jews living in Hungary. During the summer deportations, the diplomatic missions of Vichy France, Romania, and Switzerland were ordered by the Hungarian government to facilitate the departure of their nations’ Jews from the country.¹¹¹ In the fall, more countries would intervene on the behalf of their Jewish nationals trapped in Hungary and threatened by the Nazi dragnets.

In late July there was a lull in the deportations. After the failed attempt on Hitler’s life, the Germans backed off from pressing Horthy’s regime to continue further, large-scale deportations. Smaller groups continued to be deported by train. At least one German police message decoded by GC&CS revealed that one trainload of 1,296 Jews from the town of Sarvar in western Hungary

had departed for Auschwitz on August 4.¹¹² In late August Horthy refused Eichmann's request to restart the deportations. Himmler ordered Eichmann to leave Budapest. During this time, some foreign missions and nongovernment organizations began modest rescue efforts of the remaining Hungarian Jews. For example, the International Red Cross (IRC) was working on an agreement with so-called "competent" Germans to reroute 600 Hungarian Jews originally destined to be transferred to Bergen-Belsen on 30 June. The IRC was planning to move these Jews into Switzerland. From there they would travel through France to arrive in Spain.¹¹³ This latter message probably referred to a train with 1,684 Jews aboard who had paid a ransom to flee Hungary. A member of the Budapest Jewish Refugee Committee, Rezso Kastner, had arranged with local SS officials for this train to be part of a trade of a "Jews for trucks" deal. On 30 June, Eichmann, angry over the proposed plan, ordered the train diverted to Bergen-Belsen.

Later that month, Swiss diplomats were arranging a transfer of Jewish children to hospitals in Switzerland and Sweden. In late September, Swiss diplomats in Budapest reported that the Germans had layered on various conditions for the rescue of these Jewish children. These included the stipulation that the first train out of Budapest contained only "Aryan" children (possibly a reference to baptized Jews). The Jewish children were to be added to a group of refugees slated for Palestine. (It is possible that the Swiss originally intended to send these children to Tangier, but that the plans were changed. Instead, they were to go to Switzerland.¹¹⁴) However, the Nazis and Hungarian authorities stipulated that the children could not leave until a general deportation of Jews from Budapest to the Hungarian provinces had begun. The Swiss diplomats said they could not agree to this last condition. However, on 12 October, despite the holdup of the train with the Jewish children, the Swiss recommended to Bern that the train with the Christian children, of whom 40 percent were converts, be sent. "We recommend saving as many children as possible," the diplomats informed

Bern.¹¹⁵ However, from the limited COMINT it is unknown if this particular rescue initiative was successful.

In September Hungarian authorities relaxed some restrictions on the Jews living in Budapest. At the same time, some Hungarian politicians and diplomats began secret surrender negotiations with the Allies. German intelligence knew about these maneuvers both from sympathizers within the Horthy regime and their own intercepts of Hungarian diplomatic messages that contained surrender overtures to the Allies.¹¹⁶ In eastern Hungary, the military situation for the Axis had turned critical. In early October the Red Army had crashed into southern Hungary and was only a hundred miles from the city. The Germans moved swiftly to retrieve the situation, and on 15 October a sudden coup spearheaded by a commando team commanded by the *SS Sonderkommando's Oberst Urbannfuhrer* Otto Skorzeny toppled Horthy's regency. The OSS reported that German officials planned to remove all Hungarian national gold, estimated at some 30 million Reichmarks, to the Reichsbank branch in Dresden.¹¹⁷

Meanwhile, the Red Army's advance into Poland forced the SS to close the camp complex at Auschwitz. The Germans were in need of slave labor for the underground plants producing jet aircraft and the various V-missiles. A decision was made to use Hungary's remaining Jews in these and other assembly plants.¹¹⁸ Eichmann returned to Budapest on 17 October to oversee the new deportations. With rail transport unreliable and scarce because of Allied air attacks and military priorities, the only way to get these Jews to Germany was by forced march across central Europe's autumn and winter landscape. The Hungarian minister of interior announced that Jews would be "mercilessly" treated. The Portuguese reported that all Jewish homes had been closed and that Budapest was "still in a state of siege."¹¹⁹ The situation ameliorated by the 21st when exemptions to the deportation decrees were allowed to Jews who

had married Aryans or had received the protection of foreign legations.¹²⁰

There were few illusions among outside observers as to what would happen to these Jews. On 24 October the Portuguese minister to Budapest reported to Lisbon that 60,000 Jews, men and women, were going to be deported. He added that 14,000 had already left for Vienna, Austria, in a forced march of twenty kilometers a day with “minimum” rations. “It is evident,” he reported, “that the great majority will die even before crossing the frontier.”¹²¹ In the days to come, the Portuguese legation’s messages would be one of the principal sources of communications intelligence about the Hungarian Holocaust.

In October the foreign delegations banded together to try to save as many Jews as possible. They had already done this once before in the summer, but the forced exodus of the remaining Jews under impossible conditions, and a new inhospitable Hungarian regime, was a spur to further action. Other countries, such as Mexico, considered granting visas for Jews to escape.¹²² One of the major problems for the diplomats was the question of recognition of the puppet regime under Ferenc Szalasi. Szalasi, a cashiered army officer, who previously had led the Arrow Cross, had replaced Horthy after the German coup. As the Portuguese minister reported, it was known that Horthy had been forced to sign a decree renouncing plans for an armistice with the Allies. Most of the foreign delegations were uncertain what to do. The Swedish diplomatic mission was reluctant to accommodate Szalasi. For some time it had been handing out numerous “protective passports” to Hungarian Jews. Raoul Wallenberg, the third secretary of the Swedish delegation and son of the Swedish banking family, was the central figure handing out the passports, arranging for food supplies, and interceding on behalf of detainees.¹²³ The Papal Nuncio to Budapest decided, on his own, to recognize Szalasi, because of “the great interests of the Catholic Church” in Hungary. He also was concerned about his Jewish “protégés...who would be

the first victims of the eventual rupture in relations.”¹²⁴ According to Portuguese diplomats in the Vatican, that country had not recognized the Szalasi regime, though papal representatives were hoping that “events will take it upon themselves to resolve this contradictory situation before it becomes necessary to make its [Vatican] attitude clearer and more coherent.”¹²⁵ The other delegations, however, were awaiting instructions from their capitals.¹²⁶

The actions by Raoul Wallenberg have earned him a justly deserved high regard in the annals of the rescue of victims of the Holocaust. The Allies could not exploit high-level Swedish diplomatic messages that would have contained information about conditions in Budapest and information about Wallenberg’s rescue efforts.¹²⁷ The only reference to Wallenberg in Allied SIGINT translations appears in an intercepted Spanish diplomatic message from Washington to Madrid that referred to his appointment to Budapest.¹²⁸ Diplomatic messages from other delegations in Budapest refer to



*Raoul Wallenberg
(Courtesy: USHMM)*

unnamed Swedish representatives attending meetings by the neutral diplomats as the latter tried to coordinate a rescue policy. It is likely that some or all the reported comments at these meetings made by the unnamed Swedish delegates(s) can be attributed to Wallenberg.¹²⁹

However, the foreign delegations saw much of their work defeated when the German and Hungarian security forces arrested Jews who held these protective passports. As the Portuguese reported, the Germans did not respect the passports because, in their view, the Jews had not surrendered Hungarian citizenship when they received the papers. The Portuguese ambassador somberly informed Lisbon that he and the Swedish minister were “equally incapable at this moment of averting the impending tragedy.”¹³⁰ Furthermore, by mid-November 1944, the Hungarian government planned to abolish the extraterritoriality of the foreign legations in Budapest. It claimed that it could no longer protect the diplomats’ premises. In practical terms, any effort by a third country to try to save Jews would have to be conducted between Berlin and its foreign ministry.¹³¹

Still, some diplomats continued to press relief efforts. In Berlin, the Portuguese ambassador, acting under instructions from Premier Antonio Salazar, took the matter to the German Foreign Office State Secretary Adolf von Steengracht. Steengracht told the ambassador that Germany or Hungary would not admit that any Jews holding foreign passports or protection cards would receive protection from the deportations. The German went on to state that the situation for Hungary’s Jews was similar to that experienced earlier by Germany’s Jews. Either they leave the country or they remain subject to the laws set for the Jews. Steengracht went on that Germany would not assume responsibility for Hungarian actions. He denied the ambassador’s claim that Germany controlled Hungary. He ended the meeting by stating that Germany would not intervene in the matter.¹³²

By late November, the Szalasi regime, in order to organize and facilitate the final deportation, established five categories of Jews: (1) Jews with protective passes were to be concentrated in certain houses and they would be approved to leave pending permission from Berlin to transit Germany; (2) so-called “borrowed Jews” (*Leih Juden*), who were to be handed over to Germany for labor service; (3) remaining Jews – children, elderly, pregnant women – were to be put in a ghetto; (4) clergy and persons with special military or other honors were to be separated, but not in a ghetto; and (5) Jews from neutral nations who were to leave by 1 December.¹³³

The conditions for the Jews who remained in Budapest remained hard and dangerous. Left to the depredations of the Germans and the Arrow Cross, another 10,000 would die. Some of those who received protective passports would reach safety in Switzerland and other neutral countries. But by war’s end, Hungarian Jewry had been largely destroyed. A German diplomatic message of 30 December from Edmund Veesenmayer, the main Nazi official in Hungary, reviewed the results of Eichmann’s special task force. A total of 493,000 Jews had been deported from Hungary. Of these, some 440,000 had been shipped out. Another 42,000 had been sent to build fortifications or work in munitions plants. In the Ghetto in Budapest, about another 100,000 remained, mostly “old men, women as well as Jewish children.”¹³⁴

E. Japan and the Jews in the Far East

During the war years, the Jewish communities in the Far East living under the Japanese occupation - principally the 30,000 in Shanghai, but also small communities in other Chinese cities and throughout the Netherlands East Indies and Philippines – lived under an administrative policy that was noteworthy for its generally neutral attitude. (Another group lived in French Indo-China, but they were subject to Vichy’s anti-Jewish laws and suffered removal from government positions and had prohibitions placed on their activities. See

Section C.) Although a small number of Jews suffered maltreatment at the hands of individual Japanese officials, few were imprisoned or restricted because of their identity. In these latter cases, the Jews were singled out because they were stateless persons, having been stripped of their Polish or German citizenship by Nazi policy, not necessarily because they were Jews. Overall Japanese policy and actions towards Jews as a group was one that could be characterized as studied even-handedness. The Japanese did not single out the Jews for special attention or restrictions because of their “ethnic” or religious uniqueness. On the other hand, the Jews shared equally in the suspicion that the Japanese held for all neutral and non-Japanese nationals living within the Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere.

The Japanese view of the Jews probably grew out of the complicated mixture of racism, nationalism, and fear of foreign conspiracy and secret control of international events that dominated Japanese national attitudes towards all foreigners, especially those living in western countries.¹³⁵ Significant anti-Semitism first appeared in Japan after World War I and was probably part of the extremist, anticommunist reaction against the Bolshevik Revolution that strongly emphasized the Jewish “nature” of the revolution, its ideology, and its leaders. With the signing of the German-Japanese Anti-COMINTERN Pact in 1936 and the Tripartite Treaty of September 1940, anti-Semitism gained a more formal footing in some of Tokyo’s ruling circles. Meanwhile, the Japanese public was exposed to a campaign of defamation that created a popular image known as the *Yudayaka*, or the “Jewish peril.”¹³⁶

Still, attitudes among individual Japanese diplomats and politicians varied greatly towards the Jews and the attendant myths about them like that of Jewish worldwide political and economic influence. For example, in October and November 1937, Japanese diplomats in Paris reported to Tokyo that part of the West’s opposition to Japan’s invasion of China came from “English, American,

and French Jewish plutocrats.” These bankers were intent on supplying China with arms, and were willing to sustain this support “in a long struggle.”¹³⁷ An earlier Japanese diplomatic message from Paris had reported that the Jews were also making use of local newspapers to stir up opposition to Japan. This message also mentioned that a Japanese national in Paris had deplored the change that had occurred since the “days of the Russo-Japanese War when the Jewish financial clique was trying to help Japan in retaliation against Russia.”¹³⁸

On the other hand, in 1939 the Japanese ambassador to Berlin, Baron Oshima Hiroshi, reminded Tokyo of Japan’s debt to certain Jews who had helped it during the war with Russia in 1905. On 16 January 1939, he cabled Tokyo about one Jew, unnamed, who had fled Nazi Germany for Britain and was in dire personal straits. Oshima admitted that there was little that Tokyo could do for this man. However, Oshima noted that the person performed valuable intelligence work for Japan during the 1905 war by notifying it of the sailing of the Tsar’s Baltic Fleet, and that his steamships (presumably this individual owned a shipping line) had been used to gather intelligence from Russian ports. Oshima suggested that this individual should be given some sort of token of Tokyo’s gratitude.¹³⁹ In another similar case that same month, Tokyo’s ambassador to Washington, Kensuku Horinouchi, went out of his way to assure an American acquaintance that a German Jew, Kurb Singer, a professor of economics teaching at a university in Tokyo, had not been removed from his position because he was a Jew. The ambassador insisted that Jews were not discriminated against in Japan. Horinouchi suspected that the professor had been let go for some other reason and that he was cabling Tokyo to find out what had happened.¹⁴⁰

These few examples illustrate the difficult problem of attempting to generalize the variety of opinions held by Japanese diplomats and other officials towards the Jews. The majority of the Japanese political, diplomatic, and military leadership probably did not embrace the philosophical, theological,

racial, or pseudo-scientific bases that underpinned the Western, and primarily European, versions of anti-Semitism. On the other hand, many Japanese officials appear to have been impressed enough by the claims of Jewish worldwide political and economic influence to try to use it to Japan's advantage. Based on Western signals intelligence sources, in this case almost exclusively Tokyo's diplomatic message traffic, the Japanese attitude towards world Jewry was revealed in further detail as a subtle, complex, and contradictory structure that combined a suspicion of everything foreign with a pragmatic, opportunistic effort to exploit a "Jewish card" in relations with Western countries, especially the United States.

In the late 1930s, the Japanese were examining various political and economic tactics by which to exert some leverage on American leaders regarding problems such as Pacific-wide security arrangements, trade relations, and the ongoing war with China. In late 1939, for example, Japanese diplomats in Washington had urged Tokyo to establish guidelines for the Imperial Army that would avoid or minimize damage to American economic interests in China.¹⁴¹ Tokyo's politicians suggested another approach to take with Washington. The plan was to organize a liaison effort with American Christian missionaries in China so as to remove that source of friction with Washington.¹⁴²

Along the economic front, Japanese officials in occupied China and the puppet regime in Manchukuo had tried various measures to lure foreign investment capital from the U.S. so as to ease relations between Tokyo and Washington. One tack, revealed by intercepted messages, was to tie the investments to a policy of eased immigration for European Jews to Shanghai.¹⁴³ In late 1939 to early 1940, a series of intercepted Japanese diplomatic messages revealed that a private Japanese citizen with quasi-official connections to Tokyo and a prominent Jewish manufacturer from New York had developed a similar plan that included a subsidy for Jewish immigrants to Shanghai. However, both plans went nowhere as they ran aground on

the reefs of heightened mutual suspicion between Tokyo and Washington.¹⁴⁴

The Japanese also were interested in exploiting the possibilities offered by individual Jews with whom they believed held a certain influence in international affairs. One such person was Sir Victor Sassoon, an investment banker and leading citizen of the long-standing Sephardic Jewish community in Shanghai. (Jews from the Iberian Peninsula originally were referred to as Sephardic Jews. Later, the term included all Jews from North Africa or the Middle East. In the late 19th century, a large number of Sephardic Jews from Iraq had immigrated to Shanghai and established the community there.) In 1939 Sassoon traveled to the United States on a business trip. Translations of intercepted Japanese diplomatic messages revealed that Tokyo had alerted its diplomats to watch Sassoon at his every stop, record what he said, and with whom he met. In fact, in New York City, an individual, termed a "secret agent," made a covert contact with Sassoon's private secretary to determine the businessman's purpose for the trip. It turns out this "agent" was a United Press correspondent who told the Japanese that Sassoon was staying at the Ritz Towers for about a month. Apparently the banker was looking into building a manufacturing facility in New Jersey.¹⁴⁵ On his return trip to Shanghai, Japanese diplomats in Honolulu reported Sassoon's comments at a press conference there regarding the situation in China.

After the start of the war in the Pacific and with the resulting closer workings with the other Axis powers, the Japanese were pressured by the Germans to do something about the Jewish communities under their control – principally Shanghai. The Japanese were aware that Berlin's cancellation of German citizenship of all Jews who had left Germany that affected several thousand Jews in Shanghai. And in May 1942, an intercept of a message from the Japanese embassy in Berlin revealed that Alfred Rosenberg, Nazism's "philosopher" and Minister to the Occupied Eastern Territories, had urged the Japanese to do some-

thing about the Jews living in their territories before they became a “problem.” He was particularly anxious to limit their free travel through the rest of southern Asia.¹⁴⁶

Yet, the Japanese refused to go along with the German demands. In late January 1942, even as the German authorities met at Wannsee to finalize the mechanisms for the Holocaust, Tokyo’s policy was, as some of their diplomats said, “to go easy in our policy towards the Jews.”¹⁴⁷ In mid-March 1942, the Japanese policy towards the Jews was set out in a message broadcast from Tokyo to all diplomatic stations in the Far East. The message declared that the fundamental policy towards Jews, as set out in a Japanese Diet declaration in 1938, would be only partly modified to account for the Axis alliance. Jews would still be considered as any other group of foreigners, although the distinction of “Jewishness” would be based on race and culture. But this distinction applied only to stateless refugees – which

meant German and Polish Jews. Any expulsion of Jews from Japanese-controlled territory was considered contrary to the stated Japanese national policy of the Common Brotherhood of Mankind (*Hakko Ichiu* – literally “8 roofs, 1 house”). Therefore, Tokyo’s official policy was this: Jews holding citizenship of any country would be accorded treatment comparable to citizens of that country. Jews without citizenship would be considered stateless, in the same category as White Russian émigrés. This group of Jews would be under surveillance because of their “racial characteristics.” Another category of Jews, those who could be considered “useful” to Japan because of their political or economic influence, would receive the same treatment that they received prior to the war.¹⁴⁸

For the duration of the war, the Japanese held to this policy in the lands that they occupied. Aside from some isolated incidents of harassment by individual Japanese occupation functionaries and a



*A row of shops owned by Jewish refugees on Seward Road in Shanghai
(Courtesy: USHMM from YIVO Institute for Jewish Research)*

small number of Jews who were interned in detention camps in Malaysia and the Netherlands East Indies, the Japanese treated the Jews no differently than other neutral or national groups.¹⁴⁹ In the Philippines, the Japanese military occupation administration issued a general warning to Jews believed to have been involved in black market operations, price manipulation, and espionage. A German report from its embassy in Tokyo noted that the Japanese threatened drastic actions against anyone involved in these activities, “irrespective of the nationality of the persons concerned.”¹⁵⁰

True, Jews in Shanghai were legally circumscribed in their daily activities. Yet these restrictions were the same the Japanese had ordered for all neutral nationals.¹⁵¹ In French Indochina, the Japanese requested that the French institute similar restrictions of Jews and citizens of neutral countries who held anti-Axis opinions. They also asked French authorities to keep Jews and neutrals under surveillance and that the Vichy colonial regime limit any influx of “such people” into Indochina.¹⁵² Japanese concerns about Jewish attitudes towards them (and the Axis in general) grew more anxious, especially as the course of the war turned against Tokyo.¹⁵³ Overall, though, the Japanese remained scrupulously correct in their treatment of the Jews.

Interestingly, the Japanese official attitude was tested in mid-1944. In May, Baron Oshima Hiroshi, the Japanese ambassador to Berlin, reported to Tokyo that he had been invited by the German Foreign Office to participate in a forum sponsored by the international anti-Jewish front to be held in June or July in Krakow, Poland. The theme of the forum was “The Role of the Jew in Contemporary World Politics.” Participants would include scholars of the “Jewish question” such as ethnologists, historians, economists, and others. The Germans were anxious to secure the attendance of representatives from neutral countries in order to “underscore the international character of the meeting.”¹⁵⁴

Oshima reported that a number of high-ranking individuals from occupied Europe were going to participate in the forum. These included Premier Tuka of Slovakia, a General Bonnard from France, the interior minister of Hungary, and the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem.¹⁵⁵ The Baron cautioned Tokyo about participating in this forum. He mentioned that Japan’s current racial policy precluded it. “The Germans do not consider the Jewish question as one related to the human race, but the proposition...is not held generally.” The ambassador added that the Allies would make much propaganda from Japan’s participation. Yet he mentioned that the “Jewish question” was going to play a greater role in European politics. Also, for purposes of solidarity with the Axis, Japan should attend as an observer.¹⁵⁶ Tokyo agreed with Oshima’s reasoning and told him to do as he had suggested. However, because of the Allied invasion in Normandy, the conference was postponed until the fall of 1944. This conference never convened.¹⁵⁷

During the war, the biggest problem facing the Jewish communities in the Far East was the constant shortage of supplies and money for the relief of the tides of refugees that had arrived at the various cities since 1939. Throughout the war, Japanese officials in Chinese cities were reminded to allow Jewish relief organizations to operate and that Tokyo’s officials were to cooperate with the agencies in their efforts. They were to cooperate even if suspicious of their “direction and leaderships.”¹⁵⁸ Interestingly, in September 1944 Swiss diplomats in Shanghai reported that the Japanese were reluctant to allow the International Red Cross to intervene and help the Jews in the city. The Swiss added that the Japanese claimed that Jewish organizations were adequately helping the refugees. The Swiss representative finally noted that he had refrained from passing along individual complaints from the refugees about mistreatment by certain [Japanese] officials since it might jeopardize his work with prisoners of war and interned civilians.¹⁵⁹

This relief work was especially difficult in Shanghai because of the nearly 20,000 refugee Jews who had arrived at the city during the previous few years. Allied intercept of Swiss, Vichy French, and Japanese diplomatic messages from that city offered glimpses into the various efforts to get funding from donations and remittances from Jewish relief agencies, primarily those in the United States.¹⁶⁰ For example, from late 1943 to late 1944, the stateless Polish population in that city, including many Jews, was in dire straits. Both the Polish government-in-exile and Vichy France – many Poles were living in the French Concession – provided relief funds for various aid groups and individuals in Shanghai.¹⁶¹

A number of Jews, maybe as many as 15,000, and made up probably of a large number of stateless persons, were living in a restricted area in Shanghai already heavily damaged by the fighting between Japanese and Chinese forces in 1937. In late July 1945, during several American 14th Air Force bombing attacks on the city, stray bombs had hit this section killing some 30 inhabitants and injuring another 300. Because of the damage, the Japanese allowed many of these Jews to relocate to other sections of the city. They also allowed the American Joint Relief Committee to extend war relief funds to those affected by the bombing.¹⁶²

By the end of the war, the Japanese attempted to press a propaganda theme that pointedly contrasted their treatment of the Jews in Asia to that of the Nazis in Europe. Some of Tokyo's diplomats and other government officials seemed to believe that this distinction would gain them influence among Jews around the world. Following this line of reasoning, then, these Japanese officials believed that Jews in the United States and Great Britain would influence government policy favorably towards Japan.¹⁶³ However, the Japanese consul-general in Harbin informed Tokyo on 6 March 1945 that the Jews in his region looked upon the impending defeat of the Germans as "divine punishment," and believed that the Japanese had no

hope of victory.¹⁶⁴ The idea that the Japanese could persuade Jews from around the world, based on their fair treatment of the latter, to influence Allied policy, comes full circle to the prewar belief of the Japanese about Jewish influence, which was as mistaken in 1945 as it had been in 1939.

For whatever reasons, it was true that the Japanese had treated the Jews in their territories equitably, but Tokyo had an entire hemisphere of atrocities and war crimes for which it had to answer.

F. Nazi Gold: National and Personal Assets Looted by Nazis and Placed in Swiss Banks, 1943 - 1945

The expression "Nazi Gold" has become a popular, shorthand reference that covers a number of illicit wartime economic activities carried out by Nazi Germany in collusion with neutral countries like Sweden, Portugal, Spain, and, most importantly, Switzerland. These activities included the expropriation of personal wealth from Jews by the Nazis; the seizure of national gold holdings by the Germans; its processing and shipment to Switzerland as payment for purchases of war material from other neutrals; and the exchange of German Reichmarks into more acceptable currencies such as Swedish kroner or Swiss francs. It also refers to the wartime activities by private and public Swiss banks, notably the Swiss National Bank in Bern, which purchased the German gold, as well as the postwar expropriation of the assets from dormant accounts of Holocaust victims by these banks and other financial institutions.

In the fifty years after the end of World War II, a number of separate efforts in Europe and the United States coalesced and refocused attention on the issue of settling the claims of Holocaust victims whose private assets were stolen by the Nazis or expropriated by Swiss financial corporations. While this aspect of the issue was prominent in the daily news during the mid-to late 1990s, the related problem of national gold looted by the Nazis and

transferred to Swiss banks resurfaced, as well. In 1997 the National Security Agency released to the National Archives over 300 Swiss diplomatic translations dealing with the Allied-Swiss negotiations over this issue that produced the Washington Accord of May 1946. These translations were used in the U.S. government's report *U.S. and Allied Efforts to Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II – Preliminary Study*.¹⁶⁵ However, there also was some wartime cryptologic intelligence that related to the Nazi looting. This section will discuss briefly that wartime information. Those interested in the postwar negotiations between the Allied Committee and Switzerland should refer to the U.S. government study cited above, pages 63-88.

From the beginning of the war, Great Britain was aware of the importance of the economic, industrial, and financial underpinnings of the Nazi war machine. Germany could benefit from trade in strategic raw materials such as chrome from Turkey, wolfram (tungsten) from Spain, and iron ore from Sweden. Germany also purchased industrial products from Sweden and Switzerland. It was the potential industrial and financial support that Switzerland could provide to Germany that most concerned Great Britain and, later, the United States. Switzerland's industries could produce war material from finished steel to actual military equipment such as optics, ammunition, and guns. In the financial sphere, the Swiss banking structure could facilitate currency exchanges, gold transactions, international fund transfers, asset liquidation, and the formation of front corporations to acquire restricted raw material and other contraband.

To manage the war on the economic front, the British formed the Ministry of Economic Warfare in 1939. The United States established the Board of Economic Warfare in December 1941 that replaced the Economic Defense Board. The Allies also made a number of administrative actions and declarations that expanded the boundaries of economic

restrictions against the Axis. Beginning in April 1940, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 8389 that froze Norwegian and Danish assets in the United States. Many European country's assets, except for those of the United Kingdom, were included in this order. This was followed by declarations against trade by hostile firms and individuals, and transfers of property in occupied countries. On 22 February 1944, the United States declared that it would not recognize the transfer of gold by the Axis. Project Safehaven, established in the late summer of 1944, was the Allies' major effort to curtail all Axis economic, financial, commercial activity outside occupied territories during the war. It also was charged with ensuring that German assets would be available for reparations, and that looted properties would be returned to its rightful owners. Safehaven also was meant to prevent the Nazis from accumulating funds to finance any postwar resurgence. Included in these many aims were more detailed instructions to restrict the flow of capital and gold from Germany for the purchase of war material.¹⁶⁶ Despite this and similar efforts by Great Britain, it is estimated that Nazi Germany still confiscated some 579 million dollars in gold from eleven countries and that about 300 million dollars' worth had gone to Swiss banks (figures in 1945 dollars).¹⁶⁷

It should be noted that Allied concern with neutral trade in war-related material with the Axis was not restricted solely to Switzerland. Other neutrals, such as Spain, Portugal, Turkey, and Sweden also were pressured during the war to cease favorable currency trading and the export of raw materials and manufactured items that the German war machine could use.¹⁶⁸ In the case of Sweden, Japanese diplomats reported in late March 1945 that Stockholm had protested to Washington about the February announcement of an American so-called "blacklist" that included about 550 Swedish firms accused of trading with the Axis. The United States government declared that it would prohibit any trade with any of these firms, or any other firms that traded with those on the list. According to the Japanese diplomats, the Swedish minister of

Commerce had detailed the discovery and crack-down on Swedish firms that were involved in the transfer of German capital. By mid-March, the Japanese reported that the Americans had softened their stance on Swedish trade.¹⁶⁹

Most of the communications supporting substantive trade and financial negotiations and agreements between Berlin and Bern, and other European neutral capitals, were done in ways that were generally inaccessible to Allied communications monitoring: cables, telephones, couriers, or direct talks. What signals intelligence had been obtained about German-Swiss economic activity came from Allied intercept of Axis and neutral diplomatic and commercial radio traffic. One prominent source about these talks and transactions was the communications of the ubiquitous Japanese diplomats, in this case, the Japanese minister in Bern, Kase Shunichi. The Japanese had a vested interest in the commercial and economic talks between the Germans and Swiss because they, too, were affected directly by Allied efforts to curtail Axis economic activity. The Japanese purchased war material in neutral and Axis-dominated Europe. Japan often paid for its purchases in gold or used Swiss francs.¹⁷⁰ So when the German and Swiss representatives met to discuss trading activity, payment, and Nazi accounts, the Japanese took an interest in the outcome and reported what they learned to Tokyo.

Another SIGINT source was the intercept of the messages of the German Reichsbank's foreign transactions by the monitoring stations of the GC&CS and RSS. Their take was turned over to a small effort within GC&CS mounted against commercial traffic that had been started in 1938. With the beginning of the war, this section significantly expanded and subsequently settled in working spaces near the GC&CS diplomatic effort in London. Surprisingly, most of the effort was aimed at commercial message traffic either sent in the clear or that used publicly available commercial codes such as the Bentley system. In the case of the Reichsbank, the messages were transmitted in the

Peterson Code, another popular and publicly available commercial code.¹⁷¹

A third source of information was the translations of the diplomatic and commercial dispatches provided to the OSS in Bern – the previously mentioned Boston Series from source George Wood (a.k.a. Fritz Kolbe). Some of the messages that Kolbe turned over to Allen Dulles were cables from German diplomats in Switzerland who reported on financial and trade negotiations, and messages from Emil Puhl, the vice president of the Reichsbank, who often journeyed to Switzerland and conducted meetings with Swiss bank representatives regarding economic and financial activity such as gold and currency exchange transactions.

Interestingly, the Germans also had a COMINT source that allowed them, in turn, the limited ability to monitor Allied efforts to curtail German trade and financial activities within Switzerland. Three German cryptanalytic bureaus – the *Forschungamt* (Directorate of Research) controlled by Herman Goering; the codebreaking office (*Chiffrierabteilung*) of the German Armed Forces Command (*Oberkommando der Wehrmacht*), or OKW/Chi; and the German Foreign Ministry's *Pers Z* – were able to exploit a number of U.S. Department of State cryptographic systems during the war. This ability came through a combination of physical compromise of some State Department cryptographic systems and pure cryptanalysis of some other codes and ciphers. Specifically, the Germans were able to read cables secured in the Department's Black and Brown Codes, and the O-2 Strip Cipher System, though mostly from the latter.¹⁷²

Beginning in early 1943, and continuing through December 1944, the OKW/Chi exploited cables from over fifty overseas U.S. diplomatic facilities. The intercept was done by two German monitoring stations at Treuenbrietzen near Berlin and Lauf-an-der-Pebnitz near Nuremberg. The Germans had a limited ability to read the American minister's messages, and it sometimes took time for

the intercept to be turned into a reportable form. These intercepts were decrypted and translated into German. The resulting translation, known as a ‘VN’ (for *Verlaessliche Nachrichten* or “Trustworthy Reports”) was circulated among the membership of the Nazi hierarchy. According to Nazi officials, useful intelligence was retrieved from the messages. One official recalled that as many as three or four of the dispatches from the U.S. ambassador to Switzerland, Leland Harrison, were included in the daily summaries known informally as the “Brown Sheets,” or they were included in the German High Command’s (OKW) daily briefing.¹⁷³

The traffic between the overseas diplomatic missions and Washington covered a number of topics of interest to Berlin: Allied proposals to restrict German trade with Switzerland, limits to bank accounts opened by German nationals, the status of efforts on behalf of Jewish refugees, postwar asylum to war criminals, assignments of OSS personnel, and intelligence gathered by the Allies in Switzerland.¹⁷⁴ Among the many messages were State Department reports on the plight of Jews in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania.¹⁷⁵ Also intercepted were several U.S. intelligence reports sent by Harrison to Washington about the German financial and economic situation, such as the effect of the Allied bombing offensive on Reichsbank note circulation and gold reserves, and the smuggling of German, French, and Italian currency into Switzerland.¹⁷⁶

It is not known what, if any, specific use was made of these decrypts by the Germans. Considering the time frame, especially during late 1944, of negotiations between Emil Puhl, the vice-director of the German Reichsbank, and various Swiss banking and trade officials, it is possible that, because of the VNs, the German bankers were aware of some of the concurrent talks between the Allies and the Swiss to limit Berlin’s trade and financial activity.

The Bretton Woods Conference of July 1944, known as the United Nations Monetary and Financial Conference, approved a resolution that called on neutral countries to take measures to prevent movement or the disposition of stolen assets from occupied countries within their jurisdictions.¹⁷⁷ On 11 October 1944, the Japanese reported that, because of the pressure from the Allies to enforce the Bretton Woods Agreement, the Swiss, as well as the Bank for International Settlements, were instituting several restrictions on the opening of new accounts and were establishing limits on the functions of current accounts. Furthermore, the Swiss Banking Association had sent a notice to its members to take action that would block the movement of capital from Axis to neutral countries. The Japanese believed that there was “some room” in interpreting the limits of the new rules, but they held out little hope since the “Swiss were exceedingly weak-kneed towards the British and Americans.”¹⁷⁸ In a cable from the previous day, which the Americans had intercepted and decrypted, Kase had noted in its final paragraphs that “of course the Germans have a good deal of money tucked away in secret, in various types of currency, and of course, in gold and so on. I understand that there is already an (? enormous amount?) of money hidden around under Swiss names.”¹⁷⁹ Another Japanese official, Kojiro Kitamura, the Yokohama Specie Bank representative in Berlin, who was in Switzerland at the time, added that while the Swiss banks were refusing to make remittances of Axis funds to Spain and Portugal, the Germans had set up Swiss “straw men” in whose names the remittance could be made.¹⁸⁰

In December 1944 Kase sent two messages to Tokyo describing a series of meeting he had with Puhl who, at the time, was in Switzerland for negotiations with the Swiss National Bank on a variety of economic and financial issues. One of the points of discussion, in which the Japanese had an interest, was a Swiss proposal to restrict foreign currency transactions. Kase reported several further comments that Puhl had made to him. Among other things, Puhl had told Kase that the acquisition of

viable currencies, such as Swiss francs and Swedish kroner, was almost impossible. The German also mentioned that the Bank for International Settlements was insisting more strongly that credit to Germany be withdrawn.¹⁸¹ In a message sent to Tokyo a week later, Kase revealed more comments from Puhl and the president of the Swiss National Bank, Ernst Weber. Kase was told that, due to the problem of currency payments to Germany, the Swiss were going to pay for German commodities with gold purchases to a “proportionate degree,” but not with “looted gold.” (This latter expression was included in the Japanese message in English.) Puhl also mentioned that a Swiss seizure of the assets of German firms in Switzerland would be a “last resort” to settle back payments. Puhl added that such remaining German assets in late 1944 amounted to no more than 100 million Swiss francs. Puhl mentioned to Kase that there must be a good deal of money in funds related to the “Party,” presumably Nazi, and other “obscure funds,” but that every bit is held under Swiss names.¹⁸²

Interestingly, a Boston translation provided a slightly different aspect to the December 1944 Puhl-Weber meetings. In a message from the German mission in Bern to Berlin, it was pointed out that the Swiss bankers were still in favor of a free currency exchange and purchase of foreign currency balances. The bankers “would not give up the advantages of a free currency...unless they were forced to by the [Swiss] Federal Council for political reasons.” The German message also added in the next paragraph:

The negotiations with Mr. Weber and the directorate of the Swiss National Bank were conducted in the same atmosphere of confidence that has always prevailed. The National Bank recognized that since July of this year the Reichsbank has exercised the restraint in payment of gold which the National Bank recommended earlier. The National bank is now agreed to take over in December and in

January a considerable sum from the Reichsbank’s gold deposit in Bern. It is also agreed to replenish the gold deposit in Bern in which connection the National Bank will itself undertake to move the gold over the Frontier in the interest of camouflaging operations.[my italics]¹⁸³

In late January 1945, the United States, United Kingdom, and eventually, France, put together a delegation to go to Switzerland to negotiate the cessation of all trade between Germany and Switzerland, and gain agreement from the Swiss to adhere to Safehaven objectives.¹⁸⁴ The delegation was headed by Lauchlin Currie, a special assistant to President Roosevelt. Currie had served in several positions in the Roosevelt administration going back to the early days of the New Deal. Among these was as a monetary expert in the Department of the Treasury and the Federal Reserve Board. Another major figure in these negotiations, from the Washington end of the negotiations, was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury Harry Dexter White, who was prepared to push for severe measures against the Swiss.¹⁸⁵

Japanese diplomats in Bern reported that although the Swiss population generally seemed to be enthusiastic about the arrival of the Allied Economic Delegation, many government and banking officials privately were upset with the Americans. Kase reported that Bern had received no official communications from Washington about the delegation and its purpose and only had learned about it from a U.S. State Department press release. Bern feared the pressure this delegation would cause by raising expectations of a complete rupture of all economic activity with Germany. Some Swiss bankers also suspected that the Allies were trying to eliminate the possibility that some Nazi groups might use their funds in Switzerland to continue the fight even after Germany fell.¹⁸⁶

In particular, the head of the Swiss National Bank, Ernst Weber, saw two more issues above and

beyond that of Swiss trade with Germany: stolen gold and the privacy of personal accounts. Weber dismissed the idea of a flight of German funds out of Switzerland. He was not concerned about any large purchase of Swiss francs, since that was limited to payments for living expenses of Germans residing in Switzerland. However, Weber insisted that the “Jewish plutocracy,” composed of those who had escaped to the U.S., was pressuring the American government to recover all stolen Jewish property. Weber further believed that not all of the stolen wealth was still in Switzerland. He opined that there was proof that “great quantities” of it had gone to Spain, Portugal, and Argentina, and that the Allies should investigate this possibility before all others.¹⁸⁷

The other major issue for Weber was that of privacy of Swiss bank accounts, a legal arrangement that went back to 1934. Weber conceded that there would be great pressure from external sources, principally the United States, and internal groups such as Swiss socialists, to reveal the identities of account holders. Weber told Japanese minister Kase that the Swiss were prepared to be stubborn; if a reversal of policy would be unavoidable, then maybe a deal involving some sort of distinction in types of funds and accounts could be made with the Allies.¹⁸⁸

On 16 February 1945, the Swiss Federal Council agreed, under certain conditions, to block German assets in Switzerland. This agreement was not unlike similar Swiss decrees promulgated in 1940 that blocked assets of combatants such as France, Belgium, Italy, etc.¹⁸⁹ On 8 March 1945, Switzerland and the United States reached an agreement that stipulated general controls on German monetary activity, hidden enemy assets, and an accounting of German assets in Switzerland. Although Currie considered his efforts a success, revelations from various intelligence sources, including intercepts, of continued Swiss purchases of German gold and new meetings in April between

Swiss banking officials with Emil Puhl cast a pall on later U.S.-Swiss relations.¹⁹⁰

In late February 1945, a German diplomatic official in Bern provided a different version of the same meeting’s substance. After meeting with Walter Stucki, a high-ranking member of the Swiss Foreign Office and former representative to Vichy, the German filed a report on the effects on German trade and financial activity caused by the Swiss agreement to Allied demands. Stucki had told the German that the Allies had “showed their fists.” Currie had demanded that it was time for Switzerland to “take its stand on the side of the Allies.” The Americans demanded some “spectacular” display of Swiss compliance. The Swiss were threatened with the loss of navicerts (certificates issued by the Allies that allowed the transport of Swiss goods on the Rhine River) and transportation through Allied territory unless they made a complete break in economic relations with Germany. Stucki reported that the Swiss Federal Council had decided not to attack Germany “from behind” by banning exports or transit of goods from Italy through Switzerland to Germany. Switzerland would not follow the Swedish example.¹⁹¹

The German reported that the Federal Council also had received a demand from the president of the Italian Republic, Ivanhoe Bonomi, to cease all transit of Italian coal through Switzerland to Germany. Bonomi claimed that the source of the coal, the northern Italian Fascist rump state, was not a country but German-occupied territory, and that the Gotthard Agreement of 1909 guaranteeing transit through Switzerland therefore did not apply. Stucki reported that the Federal Council was close to stopping all such traffic from Italy. Stucki also told the German that the Federal Council was prepared to block all German funds or balances in accounts to insure that the assets would not be used for a new war. Since late 1944, the Allies considered this demand to be *sine qua non* in any arrangement with Switzerland. The German considered the net effect of Switzerland’s agreements would end any

further basis for economic activity between the two countries.¹⁹²

In early April 1945, Puhl returned to Bern for new negotiations. He reported to Berlin that he had “practically” broken the blockade on German-Swiss commercial and monetary transactions concluded by Currie’s delegation in the previous month. Later that month, Puhl also persuaded the Swiss National Bank to purchase some gold for German payments to Switzerland. How much total gold the Swiss purchased was not clear. Ministry of Economic Warfare intercepts indicate that Puhl, during this period, had transferred about 1.5 tons of gold to the Swiss National Bank, Bern, and the Bank for International Settlements, Basel, Switzerland.¹⁹³ However, Puhl was not certain if the Bank for International Settlements would take it owing to some “unspecified objections from Basel.”¹⁹⁴

Almost two weeks later, Kitamura reported another conversation he had with Puhl regarding the Allied discovery of the hidden cache of gold, art, and stolen art and personal possessions in the Merkers salt mines in Thuringia in southwest Germany. Puhl complained that the early press claims of 100 tons of gold were exaggerated. Kitamura went to report to Tokyo that he was given to understand from Puhl that the Reichsbank had deposited gold in various other hidden places in southern Germany along the Swiss border.¹⁹⁵

After the war, Puhl’s activities with the Swiss, which constituted a major circumvention of the agreements achieved by the Currie mission to Switzerland, became a significant issue between the United States and Switzerland. During the Swiss-Allied negotiations in the spring of 1946 in Washington, the Swiss Legation informed Bern that, as long as the issue of German assets in Swiss banks remained unresolved, American suspicions about control of them would remain. There was even a concern that these assets could be used to fund a fifth column of Nazi sympathizers or secret atomic research.¹⁹⁶

In the summer of 1946, the Allied-Swiss Accord was finalized. The Swiss promised to liquidate German assets and distribute them on a 50-50 basis with the Allies. Switzerland also was to make available to the Allied Gold Pool some \$58.1 million on demand in gold. The United States promised to unblock Swiss assets and discontinue the “black lists” of Swiss firms and individuals. However, the issue continued to percolate and the Nazi Gold problem would return fifty years later to haunt the Swiss.

Notes

1 PRO HW 16/1, GB 221: Police W/T decrypts: 7 November 1939, 18 November 1939

2 Philips, 16

3 Quoted from Lena Yahil, *The Holocaust: The Fate of European Jewry* (New York: Oxford, 1987), 254-5

4 MND Translation, Sofia to Tokyo, 1 February 1942, SIS #29056, RG 457, HCC, Box 303.

5 Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms*, 190

6 Breitman, 44-5

7 There were a number of German police organizations, among them the *Schutzpolizei* (Schupo), or civil police, the *Sicherheitspolizei* (Sipo), or security police that included the *Geheime Staatspolizei* (Gestapo), or Secret State Police, and the *Kriminalpolizei* (Kripo), or criminal investigation police. The most prominent police organization was the *Ordnungspolizei* (Orpo), or uniformed police. The uniformed police were organized into military style battalions and worked with the SS units and the *Einsatzgruppen* on the Russian front. These police units performed a number of functions in Germany and occupied Europe. The *Sipo* worked with other Reich security services against partisan activity behind German lines and in occupied Europe. The *Kripo* was concerned with criminal activity and escaped POWs. There was a technical branch of the *Orpo* that performed direction-finding operations against Allied agents using radios. The *Sipo* was involved in the German program of controlled Allied agents who had been “turned” and were then forced to send phony radio reports to their handlers in London, a technique known as *Funkspiel* or radio deception.

8 For descriptions of the atrocities, see the *GCCS History*, Vol. XIII, The German Police, 83-6, and

Appendix B, 234-6; Hinsley, Vol. II, 671-3. Breitman carries the most detailed narrative, 54-68.

9 ZIP/G.P.D. 292R/18.7.41, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386, "German WWII Police and SS Traffic."

10 ZIP/G.P.D. 309R/2/4.8.41, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386, "German WWII Police and SS Traffic."

11 ZIP/G.P.D. 316R/24/7.8.41, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386, "German WWII Police and SS Traffic."

12 ZIP/G.P.D. 353/114/9.41, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386, "German WWII Police and SS Traffic."

13 ZIP/G.P.D. 335R/18/26.8.41, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386, "German WWII Police and SS Traffic."

14 "Magic" Diplomatic Summary, 14 June 1942, Item A.7. NARA, RG 457, Entry 9019, Box 1.

15 MND Translation, Berlin to Tokyo, 21 February 1942, SIS #30111, RG 457, HCC, Box 304.

16 German Police Decodes, 17 November 1941, No. 35, ZIP/GPD 467/30.11.41, and 20 November 1941, ZIP/GPD 575/25.12.41, PRO HW 16/32

17 MND Translation, Vienna to Tokyo, 20 February 1942, SIS #30047, RG 457, HCC, Box 304.

18 RG 226, Entry 210, Box 386, Folder 6, "Q," or Intercepted Diplomatic Messages

19 ZIP/GPCC66/3.10.42, "F," 16649 on 1 September and 11310 on 30 September and ZIP/GPCC82/3.12.42, "D," 8878 on 2 November and 9092 on 30 November. PRO, HW 16/10

20 For a full study of this important radio message, see Peter Witte and Stephen Tyas, "A New Document on the Deportation and Murder of Jews during 'Einsatz Reinhardt' 1942." *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* (Vol. 15, No. 3, Winter 2001), 468-486. One item of interest was the discrepancy in the spelling of Heydrich's first name. Heydrich preferred to have his first name spelled "Reinhard," but his official SS files and SS Service Lists carry him as "Reinhardt" Heydrich.

21 Ibid.

22 Hinsley, Vol. 2, 673

23 Losses in the Jewish populations of minor Axis powers varied. Bulgaria lost about 15%; Romania nearly half; Hungary also almost half of its prewar population; and Italy lost slightly more than a quarter of its Jews. Source: Poliakov and Wulf, 229

24 ZIP/GPDD 259b, transmitted 7 October 1942, PRO HW 16/21

25 ZIP/ISOSICLE 3980, 28 March 1943, Sofia to Berlin, PRO HW 19/238

26 MND Translations, Sofia (Roux) to Vichy, 16 March 1943, SIS # 71491, RG 457, HCC, Box 356; and Sofia (Yamaji) to Tokyo, 12 May 1943, SIS #83190. NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 364

27 Message 4019, Sofia to Berlin, 29 March 1943, PRO HW 19/236

28 MND Translations, Sofia (Roux) to Vichy, 27 March 1943, SIS # 78424, RG 457, HCC, Box 359; and Sofia to Vichy, 17 March 1943, SIS #79537. NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 366.

29 See MND Translation, Budapest to Bucharest, 15 July 1944, SIS #144554. NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 440.

30 MND Translation, Budapest to Tokyo, 8 June 1943, SIS # 87928. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 370.

31 Service 16 to Moscow, ISCOT # 1078, 4 June 1943 (translated on 19 March 1945), National Cryptologic Museum Library.

32 Service 16 to Moscow, ISCOT # 1077, 2 June 1943 (translated on 19 March 1945), National Cryptologic Museum Library.

33 The exploitation of this SD key, which was never given a cover name, continued into February 1944.

34 Kappler to Berlin, 24 September 1943, decode No. 6728. RG 226, entry 112, Box 1.

35 MND Translation, Rome (Irish Minister) to Dublin, 6 October 1943, SIS # 123490. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 415. It is not clear what was the nature of the Vatican's aid, or from where in the Vatican hierarchy (if from there at all) this offer originated. The role of the Vatican during this roundup has been the subject of much controversy. A number of Catholic clergy and institutions, as well as many individual Italians, aided Jews by offering sanctuary or the means to escape the Nazi dragnet. These actions appear to have happened spontaneously, or at the least, without any explicit instructions from the Vatican leadership. There is no evidence from the translations that any official policy of rescue originated in or was coordinated by the Papacy or its office even though it was informed of the impending German actions. See Susan Zuccotti, *Under His Very Windows: The Vatican and the Holocaust in Italy* (New York: Yale University Press, 2000), 175-201. A more critical view of the Papacy's role during the roundup is offered by John Cornwell in *Hitler's Pope: The Secret*

History of Pius XII (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 297-318. The archived decrypts and translations contain no evidence that conclusively can resolve the controversy over the Vatican's official policy towards the Final Solution.

36 Kaltenbrunner to Kappler, 11 October 1943, Decode No. 7458. NARA, RG 226, Entry 112, Box 1.

37 Kappler to Berlin, 16 October 1943, Decode No. 7668. NARA RG 226, Entry 112, Box 1.

38 Vatican to Dublin, 18 October 1943, Baker Cable # 471, GCCS to Signal Security Agency. NSA Records Center (NCRC) Microfilm, Box 112, Reel 5155.

39 ZIP/ISOSICLE 7754, 21 October 1943, PRO HW 19/238.

40 "Magic" Diplomatic Summary, D.S. # 592, 8 November 1943. NARA, RG457, "Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 8.

41 MND Translation, Vatican (Harada) to Tokyo, 8 February 1944, SIS #11352,. NSA RG 457, HCC, Box 400.

42 MND Translation, Berlin (Auswaertig) to Nanking (Circular), 11 October 1943, SIS # 99145, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 382.

43 ZIP/ISOSICLE 7639, Berlin to Crimea Area, 12 October 1943 and ZIP/ISOSICLE 7654 (combined with 7684), 13 October 1943, PRO HW 19/238.

44 Laqueur, 98-9.

45 MND Translation, Bern (Czech Representative) to London (Czech Government), 26 June 1944, SIS # 160126, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 460.

46 MND translation, Moscow (Garreau) to Algiers (Diplofrance), 17 September 1944, H-145841, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 441.

47 Vichy to Lisbon, 26 May 1944, Baker Cable 2611 (1 July 1944). NCRC Microfilm, Box 112, Reel 5158; MND translation, Vichy to Lisbon, 23 May 1944, SIS # 126576, NARA, HCC, Box 419.

48 Budapest to Bucharest, 9 June 1944, Baker Cable 2769 (19 June 1944). NCRC Microfilm, Box 112, Reel 5158; "Magic Diplomatic Summary, D.S. # 819, 22 June 1944, NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 11.

49 MND Translation, Berlin to Dublin, 5 July 1944, SIS # 133600, RG 457, HCC, Box 427; and Dublin to Berlin, 12 September 1944, SIS # 143682. NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 438.

50 MND Translation, Washington to Madrid, 11 October 1944, SIS #145262, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 440. Spain was a nonbelligerent during the war and generally sympathized with the Axis, even sending a division of "volunteers" to fight in Russia. In 1944 the Allies pressured Spain with a partial blockade of essential materials such as gasoline and demanded, among other things, the expulsion of all Axis espionage agents (the knowledge of which was derived partially from decrypts of Japanese and German diplomatic and agent communications). After the war, in many European and American countries, there were calls for the overthrow of Franco and his regime. Cardenas' personal attitude towards Jews was mixed. In November 1943 he had advised Madrid that he would not attend a ceremony marking the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Joint Distribution Committee, an international Jewish relief agency. He told Madrid that members of the Committee in Spain had "made several verbal promises which they repeatedly refused to keep." However, he added that aid should be extended to Spanish Jews wishing to go to Algiers or Palestine. "Magic Diplomatic Summary, D.S. # 606, 22 November 1943. "Magic Diplomatic Summary, Box 8.

51 MND Translation, Washington to Dublin, 18 October 1944, SIS # 127365, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 420.

52 MND Translation, London (Czech Government) to Stockholm (Czech Representative), 27 January 1945, H-169498, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 470. In late 1944, the numbering system of the multinational diplomatic translations was changed. The numbering sequence remained, but all such translations now carried the prefix "H."

Decades after the war, some individuals have speculated that the Allies could have bombed the railroads leading to the Auschwitz complex, thereby saving thousands of Jews. A review of this argument can be found in *The Bombing of Auschwitz: Should the Allies Have Attempted It?* Edited by Michael J. Neufeld and Michael Berenbaum. (New York: St. Martins' Press, 1999).

53 MND Translations, Rio de Janerio (Exteriores) to Lisbon, 12 March 1945, H-171950, RG 457, HCC, Box 474; Washington (Bonnet) to Paris, 15 March 1945, H-172526, RG 457, HCC, Box 475; Rome to Berne, 17 March 1945, H-173117, RG 457, HCC, Box 477; and Ankara to Berne, 17 March 1945, H-173502, RG 457,

HCC, Box 477. Also, see Hinsley, Vol. 3, 735 fn, which cites GPD translations 4068/10 and 4085/10 for information on rumors of movement of Jewish inmates from concentration camps.

This “special treatment” of Jewish POWs affected American soldiers, too. In late 1944, American POWs of Jewish origin from the 106th Infantry Division, who were captured during the Battle of the Bulge, were separated from their Gentile comrades and sent to Berga, a satellite camp of Buchenwald, where they were forced to perform slave labor. This incident was the subject of the Public Broadcasting Corporation’s documentary by Charles Guggenheim, “Berga: Soldiers of Another War.” Also see Mitchell Bard’s, *Forgotten Victims: The Abandonment of Americans in Hitler’s Camps* (CO: Westview Press, 1994).

54 MND Translation, Berlin to Circular (all Stations, Kabul recipient), 28 March 1945, H-176446, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 481.

55 MND Translation, Vatican City (Secretary of State) to Washington (Apostolic Delegate), 27 March 1945, T-2325, and Lausanne (Zapelli) to Vatican City (Secretary of State), 17 April 1945, T-2574. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 520.

56 Lausanne (Zapelli) to Vatican (Secretary of State), 17 April 1945, T-2574, Ibid.

57 Berlin to Dublin, 16 February 1945, H-168493, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 1032, “Collection of Multinational Diplomatic Translation of White House Interest.” Shortly after this message was translated and disseminated, officials in the United States wanted to release its contents to the Soviet Union. However, Churchill, Menzies, and the Foreign Office disagreed with the suggestion. See PRO “Signals Intelligence passed to Prime Minister Churchill,” PRO HW 1, Box 145, Folder 3562, 2 March 1945.

58 MND Translation, Washington (Horinouchi) to Tokyo, 17 January 1939, SIS #3494, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 286. The text of the German response, signed by Ernst von Weizsaecker, State Secretary in the German Foreign Office, is contained in the telegram of 3 January 1939, from the U.S. Charge, Germany, to the State Department. The line in the German response referred to by the Japanese is “To date the American Embassy has not informed the [German] Foreign Office of a single case in which, in its opinion, such treaty rights had been

violated by German measures. If such cases should be brought to its attention by the American Embassy, the German Government for its part is prepared to examine and settle them on the basis of prevailing treaty provisions.” *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1939. Vol. II, General, the British Commonwealth*, 574-6.

Prior to the war, FDR had made some limited efforts to facilitate Jewish immigration from Germany and Austria, such as combining German and Austrian quotas. But President Roosevelt never pressed for a policy to accept a much larger number of refugees. Most likely he was constrained by public opinion and a Congress that was overwhelmingly against easing immigration quotas. See Robert Dallek, *Franklin Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy, 1932-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981), 166-168.

59 MND Translation, Lisbon to Tokyo, 13 February 1940, SSA #6191, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 288, and Tokyo to Berlin, 23 July 1940, SS #9395, Box 290.

60 MND Translation, Lisbon (Yonezawa) to Tokyo, 13 February 1940, SIS #6191, Ibid.

61 MND Translation, Shanghai to Tokyo, 16 May 1942, SSA #37068, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 310. This message estimated that there were 20,000 German-Jewish refugees in the city in early 1942.

62 See MND Translation Kaunas to Tokyo, 24 August 1940, SSA #10179. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 383. This case involved a Polish Jew who had applied for an American visa through a relative in New York.

63 Sugihara was more than just sympathetic with the plight of Polish Jews. According to an OSS/SSU report from 1946, Sugihara was providing intelligence to covert agents of the Polish Intelligence Service. He had two Polish assistants in Kaunas. Sugihara forwarded the intelligence to a Polish contact in Riga, Latvia, who, in turn passed the information to London. An OSS report quoted a Sipo assessment of Sugihara as “a friend of England and Poland.” Strategic Services Unit, Washington, D.C., X-8989, “Japanese Wartime Collaboration with the Polish Intelligence Service.” RG 226, Entry 212, Box 6.

64 MND Translation, Ankara to Tokyo, 18 June 1943, SSA #86854, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 369.

65 “Magic” Diplomatic Summary, 14 September 1942, Section A.1. NARA, RG 457, “Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 2.

66 MND Translation, Ankara to Tokyo, 3 March 1944, SIS #112744, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 399.

67 Jerusalem to Riyadh, 23 February 1944. Baker Cable 1691, GCCS to SSA, 4 March 1944. NCRC Microfilm. Box 112, reel 5157.

68 Washington to Baghdad, 11 February 1944. Baker Cable 1450, GCCS (Randolph) to SSD (G-2), 14 February 1944. NCRC Microfilm, Box 112, reel 5157.

69 MND Translation, Washington (Bonnet) to Paris (Diplomatie), 6 April 1945, H-176818, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 481. During the San Francisco Conference that created the United Nations, the Signal Security Agency laid on additional intercept coverage of communications supporting the various national delegations. For more on this, see Stephen Schlesinger, "Cryptanalysis for Peacetime: Codebreaking and the Birth and Structure of the United Nations." *Cryptologia* Vol. 19, No. 3 (July 1995), 217-234.

70 Michael R. Marrus and Robert O. Paxton. *Vichy France and the Jews* (New York: Basic Books, 1981), 29.

71 Ibid., 30-32; Eugen Weber. *The Hollow Years: France in the 1930s* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), 101-110.

72 Marrus and Paxton, 36

73 For example, see "Vichy Codes," 13 July 1944, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 59, Folder 1490 and "Army Translations of Decodes of French (Vichy) Cipher Messages, 1941-43," 4 June 1941, RG 457, HCC, Box 830, Folder 2415.

74 MND Translation, Vichy to Brassaterre (Circular), 27 November 1940, SSIS #24673, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 300.

75 Ibid.

76 Vichy to Tokyo, 20 October 1942, Japanese Naval Attaché msg (SRNA) Nr-295-6 RG457, E8013 Box 1. MND Translation, Saigon to Vichy, 1 August 1942, SIS #54807, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 332.

77 MND Translation, Havana to Vichy, 26 March 1942, SIS # 32962, RG 457, HCC, Box 306, and Magic Diplomatic Summary, 11 April 1942, RG 457, Entry 9006, Box 1.

78 "Magic" Diplomatic Summary, 15 August 1942, D.4. NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 1.

79 Marrus and Paxton, 232

80 MND Translation, Vichy to Washington, 30 September 1942, SIS #51208, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 328.

81 MND Translation, Vichy to Washington, 9 June 1942, SIS #48570, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 324.

82 MND Translations, Washington to Vichy, 12 October 1942, SIS #53265, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 330; and Vichy to Washington, 30 October 1942, SIS #54269, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 332.

83 MND Translations: Washington (Henry Haye) to Vichy, 3 July 1942, SSA #40795, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 314; Washington (Henry Haye) to Vichy, 24 March 1942, SSA 32801, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 306; and Washington (Henry Haye) to Vichy, 30 October 1942, SSA #54317 NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 332.

84 MND Translation, Buenos Aires (Latournelle) to Vichy, 12 September 1942, SSA #49376, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 325.

85 MND Translation, Rio de Janeiro (St. Quentin) to Vichy, 5 September 1942, SIS #53628, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 331.

86 MND Translation, Vichy to Ottawa, 15 September 1942, SIS #49790, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 326.

87 MND Translation, Washington to Vichy, 31 October 1942, SIS #54154, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 331.

88 MND Translation, Vichy to Washington, 6 November 1942, SIS #54845, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 332.

89 MND Translations, Vichy (Reyes) to Mexico City, 12 August 1942, SIS #44826, RG 457, HCC, Box 320, and Vichy (Bosques) to Mexico City (Office of Foreign Relations), 23 September 1942, SIS #51152, RG 457, HCC, Box 328.

90 Q Translation, 12 October 1942, NARA, RG 226, Entry 210, Box 402, File 11734, "Intercepts of Foreign Diplomatic Messages."

91 Ibid., also Washington (Henri Haye) to Vichy, 5 August 1942, SIS #44111, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 319.

92 MND Translation, Washington (Henry Haye) to Vichy, 13 September 1942, SIS #48810, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 325.

93 MND Translation, Vichy to Ciudad Trujillo, 6 September 1942, SIS #49158, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 325.

94 MND Translation, Washington (Henry Haye) to Vichy, 16 October 1942, SIS #53004, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 330. Also see Marrus and Paxton, 266-68.

95 MND Translation, Washington (Henry Haye-Picot) to Vichy, 30 October 1942, SIS #54170, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 331.

96 Marrus and Paxton, 268.

97 German Clandestine Message (SRI), Tangier to Berlin, 10 February 1943, CG3-2008. NARA, RG 457, Entry 9022, German Intelligence/Clandestine Agents Messages. It is estimated that some 14-15,000 Jews were interned in 6 camps in Morocco and Algiers.

98 Marrus and Paxton, 191-2.

99 Ibid., 194-5

100 MND Translation, Vichy to Tokyo, 1 July 1943, SIS #89663, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 372; and DNB Propaganda Broadcast to Vichy, 4 January 1943, SIS #63664. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 344.

101 MND Translations: Mission Francaise (Hoppenot) to High Commissioner, Algiers, 21 March 1943, SIS #75893, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 356; and 23 March 1943, SIS #76229, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 356.

102 MND Translation, Hanoi (Matsumoto) to Tokyo, 30 January 1945, H-165861, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 466.

103 Laqueur, 138-142; Hilberg, 823-4

104 Raul Hilberg, 803.

105 "Magic" Diplomatic Summary, D.S. #560, 7 October 1943. NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 7.

106 In October 1942, Japanese diplomats in Budapest reported that Hungarian prime minister Miklos Kallay had spoken twice on the need for Hungary to concentrate on the war and intensifying its anti-Jewish policy. However, the Japanese noted that many Hungarians considered Romania as Hungary's primary enemy. See MND Translation, Budapest to Tokyo, 30 October 1942, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 332.

107 MND Translation, Budapest (Taraoka) to Tokyo, 1 April 1944, H-131364, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 425.

108 MND Translation, Budapest to Tokyo, via Berlin (Oshima), 7 July 1944, H-127152, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 420.

109 MND Translation, Budapest to Ankara, 26 June 1944, H-157807, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 456.

110 MND Translations: Budapest to Tokyo, 1 April 1944, H-131363, Geneva to Vatican City, 15 July 1944, H-131282. NARA, RG457, HCC, Box 425.

111 MND Translations: Budapest to Berne, 12 July 1944, H-133584, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 427; and Budapest to Bucharest, 15 July 1944, H-144554, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 440.

112 PEARL/ZIP/AT 1194/ 14 August 1944, PRO, HW 16/70.

113 Multinational Diplomatic Message Summaries (SMM), Budapest to Bern, 11 August 1944, 8218. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Boxes 882-891.

114 MND Translation, Bern (Politisches) to Budapest, 11 September 1944, H-144451, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 440. See Hilberg, 859. The Papal Nuncio to Budapest handed out 20,000 passports, but these went to "baptized" Jews. Eventually, between 15,000 to 16,000 exit permits to Palestine were granted by the Reich and the Hungarian regime.

115 MND Translations: Budapest to Berne, 23 September 1944, H-145264 and Budapest (*Schweizerische Gesandtschaft*) to Bern, 12 October 1944, H-146293. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 440.

116 Wilhelm Flicke, *War Secrets of the Ether*. (Fort George G. Meade, MD: Office of Training, 1959), 224-5. Flicke claims that the Germans had been exploiting Hungarian diplomatic messages since 1943.

117 "Disposition of Hungarian Gold," Circle Report, RG 226, Entry 210, Box 144, "Classified Sources and Methods."

118 Hilberg, 856

119 "Magic Diplomatic Summary, D.S. #943, 24 October 1944, NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summary, Box 13.

120 "Magic Diplomatic Summary, D.S. #952, 2 November 1944. NARA, RG 457, magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 14.

121 MND Translation, Budapest to Lisbon (Branquinho), 24 October 1944, H-147668, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 444.

122 MND Translation, Mexico City to London, 2 October 1944, H-146223, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 440.

123 Scattered pieces of signals intelligence during the war indicate that the Wallenberg family was involved in some efforts to broker separate peace initiatives among the combatants. A Venona translation from 13

April 1942 (the final version of the translation issued in May 1976) states that either Jacob or his brother Marcus had met with a British correspondent who had suggested that the Swede “get into touch with English financiers on the question of concluding an Anglo-German peace based on a return to the position up to 1939.” According to the Soviet agent, Wallenberg declined the offer and asked it be made directly to the British diplomatic mission in Stockholm. Venona Translation 3/MBF/T2201, 6/5/76. In March 1944, Japanese diplomats in Stockholm reported that the “persons most instrumental in arranging the contacts between the Finns and Russians were the Wallenbergs.” MND Translation, Stockholm to Tokyo, SSA #115968, 10 March 1944. NARA, RG 457, HCC, box 402.

124 MND Translation, Budapest to Lisbon, 23 October 1944, H-147752. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 444

125 MND Translation, Vatican (Portuguese Charge d’Affaires) to Lisbon, 1 December 1944, H-158058. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 456.

126 MND Translation, Budapest to Lisbon, 23 October 1944, H-147752. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 444.

127 “Cryptanalytic Short Titles.” 19440201. NARA, RG 457, HCC, box 941, File 2740; Alvarez, 176; “List of Cryptanalytic Short Titles,” 1 February 1946. Army Security Agency. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 935, Folder “Short Titles.”

128 MND Translation, Washington to Madrid, 20 October 1944, H-146824. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 442.

129 MND Translations: Budapest to Lisbon, 23 October 1944, H-147752, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 444; Bern (Politique) to Budapest, 7 November 1944, H-153452, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 451; and Budapest to Madrid, 14 November 1944, H-154424, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 452.

130 MND Translation, Budapest to Lisbon, 17 October 1944, H-146360. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 442.

131 MND Translations: Budapest to Madrid, 15 November 1944, H-154425, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 452; and Budapest to Madrid, 16 November 1944, H-153555. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 451.

132 “Magic Diplomatic Summary,” D.S. 970, 20 November 1944. NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 14.

133 MND Translation, Budapest (Schweizerische Gesandtschaft) to Bern, 23 November 1944, H-153272. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 451.

134 MND Translation (Boston), Unknown (Veesenmayer) to Berlin, 30 December 1944, T-1810. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 519.

135 For an overview of the origins of Japanese attitudes and many beliefs about Jews, see David Kranzler, *Jews, Nazis, and the Japanese: The Jewish Refugee Community of Shanghai, 1938-1945* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1988, second edition), 177-209.

136 Herbert P. Bix, *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* (New York: Perennial Books, 2001), 280-1.

137 Japanese Diplomatic Translations, Paris (Sugimura) to Tokyo, 2 November 1937, SIS # 813. NARA, RG 457, Red Machine Translations, Box 1.

138 Japanese Diplomatic Translations, Paris (Sugimura) to Tokyo, 5 October 1937, SIS #80, NARA, RG 457, Red Machine Translations, Box 1.

139 MND Translation, Berlin (Oshima) to Tokyo, 16 January 1939, SIS #3504, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 286.

140 MND Translation, Washington (Horinouchi) to Tokyo, 17 January 1939, SIS #3608, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 286.

141 MND Translation, Tokyo (Nomura) to Washington, 20 October 1939, SIS #5099, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 287.

142 MND Translation, Tokyo (Nomura) to Washington, 18 October 1939, SIS #5064, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 287.

143 MND Translation, Tokyo (Nomura) to Washington, 16 November 1939, SIS #5294, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 287.

144 MND Translations: Washington (Horinouchi) to Tokyo, 24 November 1939, SIS #5330, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 287; and Tokyo (Nomura) to Washington, 10 January 1940, SIS #5801. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 287.

145 MND Translation, New York to Tokyo, 18 February 1939, SIS #3710 and New York (Wakasugi) to Tokyo, 10 February 1939, SIS #3644. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 286.

146 MND Translation, Tokyo to Berlin, 12 December 1941, SIS #26279, RG 457, HCC, Box 301; and Magic

Diplomatic Summary, 11 May 1942, RG 457, Entry 9006, Box 1.

147 MND Translation, Sofia to Tokyo, 28 January 1942, SIS #29056, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 303.

148 MND Translations: Tokyo to Hanoi (Circular to all stations), 13 March 1942, SIS #31162 and 31209. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 305.

149 For incidents against Jews in Shanghai, see Kranzler, 493-501. For the listings of internment camp populations by nationality, see Japanese Army Translations, Singapore to Saigon, J-102875F-J, 3 September 1945 and Sapong to Saigon, J-104386A-6, 2 September 1945, RG 457, Entry 9032, Boxes 1269 and 1271.

150 MND Translation, Tokyo (Vollhardt) to Berlin, 29 January 1943, SIS #63844, RG 457, HCC, Box 344.

151 MND Translations: Tokyo to Saigon, 17 December 1942, SIS #62124 NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 342; and Tokyo to Nanking (Circular), 7 January 1943, SIS #61872, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 342.

152 MND Translation, Tokyo to Saigon, 17 December 1942, SIS #62124 NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 342.

153 MND Translation, Shanghai to Peking, 24 May 1943, SIS #83737 NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 365.

154 "Magic" Diplomatic Summary, D.S. 768, 2 May 1944. NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 11.

155 Tuka was Slovak Premier Volpetch Tuka. General Bonnard probably was Abel Bonnard, the Vichy minister of education. The interior minister of Hungary was Andor Jaross, who was executed as a war criminal in 1946. The Grand Mufti (jurist) of Jerusalem was Amin al-Husayni, who had fled to Germany in 1939 and made anti-Jewish and anti-British speeches for the Nazis during the war. Al-Husayni also was involved in several projects by the SS to raise Moslem units in Bosnia.

156 MND Translation, Berlin to Tokyo, 22 June 1944, SIS #129788, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 424.

157 MND Translations, Tokyo to Berlin, 1 July 1944, SIS #129535, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 424; and Tokyo to Berlin, 5 July 1944, SIS #129925. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 424.

158 MND Translations, Shanghai to Hsinking and Harbin, 24 November 1943, SIS #106323, NARA, RG

457, HCC, Box 39; and Shanghai to Hsinking, 12 October 1943, SIS #98986. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 382.

159 MND Translation, Shanghai (Fontanel) to Bern (Politique), 30 September 1944, SIS 146354, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 442.

160 MND Translation, Bern to Shanghai, 2 October 1944, SIS #143831, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 439. See also *New York Times*, "U.S. Lets Jewish Unit Repay Shanghai Loan," 4 October 1943.

161 MND Translations Shanghai to Berne, 3 December 1943, SIS #104073, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 391; Berne (Jardin) to Shanghai (French Consul), 18 July 1944, SIS #132299, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 426; and Berne (Verge) to Shanghai (French Consulate), 1 December 1944, H-154218, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 451.

162 MND Translation, Shanghai to Tokyo, 1 August 1945, H-199657, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Boxes 514. Japanese Army translation, J88496A-D, G-J (Also notated SRR 117407-9), 27 July 1945, NARA, RG 457, Entry 9005.

163 MND Translation, Harbin to Tokyo, 21 October 1944, H-150832, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 448; Japanese Naval Attaché (SRNA), Bern to Tokyo, 31 July 1945, #50801, RG 457, Entry 9013, Box 7.

164 MND Translation, Harbin to Tokyo, 6 March 1945, H-175408, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 481.

165 *U.S. and Allied Efforts to Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II, A Preliminary Study*. Prepared by William Slany, May 1997. Also, the *Appendix to U.S. and Allied Efforts to Recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II*. Finding Aid to Records at the National Archives at College Park. Prepared by Dr. Greg Bradsher, NARA, College Park, MD. May 1997. And the *Supplement to the Preliminary Study: U.S. and Allied Wartime and Postwar Relations and Negotiations With Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey on Looted Gold and German External Assets and U.S. Concerns About the Fate of the Wartime Ustasha Treasury*. Prepared by William Slany. June 1998.

166 For more on Project Safehaven, see Donald Steury, "The OSS and Project SAFEHAVEN," *Studies in Intelligence* (Unclassified Edition, Summer 2000, No.9), 35-50.

167 Preliminary Study, 66. Figures are given in 1945 values. Current values are determined at a factor of approximately 9.74: 5.6 billion dollars and 3.9 billion dollars, respectively.

168 As an example, in late November 1944, the secretary general of the Bank of Portugal allowed for the sale of Swiss francs for escudos by the German Reichsbank. MND Translation, Lisbon (Dietmar) to Berlin, 22 November 1944, T-1625, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 519.

169 MND Translation, Stockholm (via Berlin/Oshima) to Tokyo, 21 March 1945, H-175763, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 481.

170 MND Translations, Lisbon (Morishima) to Tokyo, 6 January 1943, SIS #62000, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 342; and Berlin (Yamamoto) to Tokyo (Totsukami), 1 September 1944, SIS #142491. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 437. An interesting but relatively unknown factor in determining the amount of gold in Swiss banks may have been the Japanese penchant for paying for purchases in Europe in gold. How much gold they transported to Europe is unknown. However, a Japanese diplomatic message from Tokyo to Berlin refers to an informal decision to send two tons of gold to Europe for purchases of war material. MND Translation, Tokyo to Berlin, 28 February 1944, SIS #112177, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 399.

171 The Peterson Code used by the Reichsbank probably was the 3rd edition published in 1929. The 4th edition was published after World War II. See *Peterson International Code – Signal PETCO* (New York: Peterson Cipher Code Company, 1929). A copy is available in the library of the National Cryptologic Museum, Fort George G. Meade, MD.

172 European Axis Signal Intelligence in World War II as Revealed by “TICOM” Investigations and by Other Prisoner of War Interrogations and Captured Material, Principally German. WDGAS-14, Chief Army Security Agency, 1 May 1946. Volume 7 – Goering’s Research Bureau. 59, 74-5, Volume 6 – The Foreign Office Cryptanalytic Section. 33

173 Blue Intelligence Summary No. 45, 19 June 1945, page 3, RG 457, HCC, Box 192;

174 For an idea of the spectrum of topics in the cables that the Germans might have seen, refer to *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*,

Diplomatic Papers, 1943. Vol. I, General (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1963), 824-908 and *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers, Vol. IV, Europe* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1966), 706-800.

175 For example, see VN 1831/7.44, issued 27 July 1944 about Jews in Romania; VN 372/8.44, 4 August 1944 about Hungarian Jews; and VN 1837/4.44, 28 April 1944, about the arrival in Istanbul of a Bulgarian ship with Jewish refugees for Palestine. All from RG 457, Entry HCC, Box 205 “German Decrypts of U.S. Diplomatic Messages.”

176 See VN 1888/3.1944, 24 April 1944, “Wirkungen des Luftbombardments auf den Reichsbank-Notenumlauf,” (“Effects of the Aerial Bombing on the Circulation of the Reichsbank’s Bank Notes.”) RG 457, HCC, Box 206; and VN 615/10.44, 15 October 1944, RG 457, HCC, Box 208.

177 Preliminary Report, 18.

178 MND Translation, Bern (Kase) to Tokyo, H-145035, 11 October 1944, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 440.

179 MND Translation, Bern (Kase) to Tokyo, H-144958, 10 October 1944. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 440. The substance of this statement appeared in a cable from the Yokohama Specie Bank representative in Berlin, Kojiro Kitamura. The Yokohama Specie Bank was Japan’s official overseas government bank.

180 “Magic” Diplomatic Summary, D.S. # 940, 20 October 1944. NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 13.

181 MND Translation, Bern (Kase) to Tokyo, H-158281, 16 December 1944. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 457.

182 MND Translation, Bern (Kase) to Tokyo, H-158409, 22 December 1944. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 457. The 100 million Swiss francs were equivalent to about \$24 million in 1945.

183 MND translation, Boston, Bern (Koecher) to Berlin, 13 December 1944, T-1626, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 519.

184 Preliminary Report, 31.

185 Preliminary Report, 71. The involvement of Currie and White in the negotiations is significant for another reason: both men were longtime agents for the Soviet secret police organization, the NKVD. In the U.S.

Army translations of the NKVD messages from 1943 to 1946, known as Venona and issued by the Army Security Agency, both men figure prominently. Currie, known as PAZh (Page) and White, whose cover names were YuRIST (Jurist) and changed later to LAJER (Lawyer), had been Soviet agents since the 1930s. They had been identified as Soviet agents in Venona translations and by other agents turned witnesses or informants for the FBI and Justice Department. From the Venona translations, both were known to pass intelligence to their handlers, notably the Silvermaster network. White also was known to exert substantial influence on Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau. Another Soviet agent was V. Frank Coe, cover name PIK (Pick), a Treasury official who had been involved in the Safehaven program. It is not certain if the actions by Currie, White, or Coe during the negotiations with the Swiss were in any way affected by their role as Soviet agents. Nor is it known if they reported to Moscow about the U.S. government's efforts to restrict Swiss-German financial activity. For further information on the roles of these three men, see Allan Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev, *The Haunted Wood* (New York: Random House, 1999), 157-169.

The Soviets had other sources reporting about the German assets in Switzerland. Venona translation No. 205 from 21 June 1945, Washington to Moscow, contained the contents of an Office of Strategic Services report to a U.S. Treasury representative in England. The report listed a number of Germans who were involved in assisting the transfer of Nazi funds to unspecified foreign banks.

Soviet goals probably did not differ much from those of the other Allies when it came to limiting Nazi economic activity in Switzerland. Moscow would have been interested in seeing Swiss trade with the Germans end thereby reducing the effectiveness of the German military facing them in Eastern Europe. Preliminary Report, 33.

186 MND Translation, Bern (Kase) to Tokyo, 29 January 1945, H-164327, NARA RG 457, HCC, Box 465; and Bern (Politique) to Washington, 27 January 1945, H-165648. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 466.

187 MND Translation, Bern via Berlin (Kase) to Tokyo, 6 February 1945, H-166117, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 466. In the postwar period, the Allied Gold Commission met with a number of nations that had been

neutral during the war, but had traded with Germany. A summary of these meetings can be found in *U.S. and Allied Wartime and Postwar Relations and Negotiations With Argentina, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and Turkey on Looted Gold and German External Assets and U.S. Concerns About the Fate of the Wartime Ustasha Treasury. Supplement to Preliminary Study on U.S. and Allied Efforts to recover and Restore Gold and Other Assets Stolen or Hidden by Germany During World War II*. Coordinated by Stuart Eizenstat, Under Secretary of State for Economic, Business, and Agricultural Affairs. Prepared by William Slany, Historian, Department of State. June 1998.

188 Ibid, MND Translation.

189 MND Translation, Berlin to Tokyo, 19 February 1945, H-168142, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 469.

190 Preliminary Study, 35.

191 Translation, Bern (Schnurre) to Berlin, February 1945, Boston Series, T-2624. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 521

192 Ibid.

193 Ministry of Economic Warfare Translations, CS 58695, Parts I and II, and CS 58638, Part II, NARA, RG 226, Entry 19, Box 143, XL 10464.

194 MND Translation, Bern to Berlin (Auswaertig), 6 April 1945, H-215456. Mandatory Declassification Review #42560 (National Security Agency), 12 March 2003.

195 "Magic Diplomatic Summary, D.S. #1120, 19 April 1945. NARA, RG 457, Magic Diplomatic Summaries, Box 16.

196 The Allies were convinced that the Germans had hidden stolen assets in places other than Merkers. An Operation Sparkler was a plan to locate and seize these caches. In September 1946, a series of raids were conducted, but the results were meager. Thanks to Miriam Kleiman at NARA for this source. RG-319, Records of the Army Staff, Vols 1- 7. MND Translation, Washington to Bern, H-215680, 27 November 1945 and Washington to Bern, 26 November 1945, H-218258. NARA, RG 457, "Swiss Gold," Box 1.

Chapter 5

Some Observations about Western Communications Intelligence and the Holocaust

In the preface to this Guide, we asked two major questions: What did the Allied communications intelligence agencies learn about the Holocaust and when was this intelligence known? In the preceding chapters, we have described briefly the operations of the communications intelligence system of the GC&CS and the SIS. We have described the available archival collections at NARA, the PRO, and other places. Finally, we surveyed some of the hundreds of reports produced by the cryptologic agencies that bear on the history of the Holocaust. Using this information, we should be able to answer both questions. At the same time, we can add some observations about other aspects of the archival records, specifically their limitations, how they came to be organized as they did, and their potential uses for today's scholars and researchers.

There are two points that need to be understood that relate to these two questions before we consider them. First, because the United States came into the European war only after December 1941, much of the following discussion applies to the activities and personnel of the GC&CS. The SIS did not establish a COMINT mission for the European Theater that was fully separate from the British. The SIS collaborated with the British on many European Axis military cryptologic efforts, but in generally subsidiary or complementary roles. After the agreements of 1943, the Americans relied on the British for much COMINT about Europe.¹ The SIS did not receive any German Police decrypts or SS messages until after the BRUSA exchange. At that point in the war, the intelligence about the Holocaust gleaned from those sources was meager because of specific German security measures implemented gradually (but never completely effective) from late 1941 into 1943. The SIS developed some information about the Holocaust from its own intercept, mostly

derived from the messages of the diplomatic missions of several countries. But this intelligence generally consisted of eyewitness reporting of events by diplomats on the scene or information they gathered from interviews or other sources.

Secondly, it is important also to remember that the GC&CS developed only one source of intelligence – communications intelligence – during the war. What the GC&CS gathered from its intercepts and the subsequent decrypts was forwarded up and across the echelons of the British intelligence, defense, and security establishments. The British (and the Americans) utilized many other sources of intelligence besides what they pulled from Axis signals. These included classic espionage agent sources, aerial photography, collection of intelligence by technical means such as radar, captured equipments and papers, reports from diplomatic missions, debriefs of prisoners, defectors, and refugees, and monitoring of foreign radio broadcasts. During the war, the Western Allies used intelligence from all these sources to formulate campaign and battle plans, political and diplomatic strategies, and to follow the course of the war in other theaters such as the Russian front. In some military campaigns, such as in North Africa, Ultra was the more decisive source of intelligence. Yet in others it was less critical to outcomes of the Battle for Britain in 1940 and the U-boat campaign. We need to keep in mind this mix of intelligence sources and the contribution of each to the Western Allied knowledge of the Holocaust. There were other sources of intelligence about what the Nazis were doing and some of these proved to be superior to COMINT.



Aerial photograph of gas chambers and prisoner barracks at the Auschwitz I complex taken on 4 April 1944

(Source: Studies in Intelligence. Special Unclassified Edition, Fall 2000. Page 93)

What Was Known from Western COMINT

The archived wartime records of the British and American cryptologic agencies hold a number of translations and decrypts that bear on the history of the Holocaust. Due to limited research, only an approximate estimate can be made, and that ranges from 700 to 900 individual translations and decrypts. The information in them covers the entire period and scope of the Nazi effort to eliminate Europe of its Jews and other “undesirable” groups. Yet, while numerous and diverse, when taken together these records do not constitute a complete narrative about the event. For many of the individual dramas of the Holocaust, such as the roundup of Jews in the Netherlands, the escape of the Danish Jews, and the deportation of foreign Jews from France, the information from COMINT records is fragmentary or episodic at best.

A large number of the intercepts were originated by the Nazi organizations that were directly responsible for carrying out the Final Solution. These organizations included the various formations and commands of the German Police, the ele-

ments of the SS charged with running the various camps and supervising the roundup of Jews in occupied countries, and the SD, which actively worked along with the police and SS. The messages sent by these organizations form a contemporary chronicle of their activities. Other intercepts such as the diplomatic messages of Vichy France and the Sztojay and Szalasi regimes in Hungary contain the grotesque official rationales for the depredations inflicted on their victims. These particular intercepted messages stand as first-person indictments of those who committed the war crimes and those who aided the criminals.

Still, despite the incriminating information from the SIGINT, the information in the police and SS decrypts does not provide historians with a complete picture of the extent and nature of the Nazi program to eliminate Jews from Europe. For example, the arithmetic sum of information from the decrypts, measured in terms of reported deaths and general actions such as “liquidated inhabitants,” although a grim accounting, did not give anything near the total deaths that the police units and *einsatzgruppen* caused. This was partly due to the

Western inability to intercept and decrypt every message sent by the police or SS units. As such, much of the intercept came from the police and SS units operating with the German Army Groups Center and South. Very little was intercepted and decrypted from the police units operating in the Baltic area of operations.² Also, the security measure slowly implemented by the Police command eventually closed this pipeline of information.

The decrypts from the concentration and death camps that the British analysts reviewed have similar problems. These particular reports were periodic accounts, usually in the form of a monthly summary, of the day-to-day available slave labor population at a particular camp. Often, a camp's population report was broken down further by nationality or ethnic group. In some cases, the report was further refined with a statement of the totals from the beginning and end of each day. Absent from these reports was information about those groups who arrived at the camps and immediately were sent to the gas chambers. Why this latter information about the gassings was withheld from the camp reports is not clear. Quite possibly, the SS hierarchy wanted to maintain as much secrecy as possible about the extent of the Final Solution. Later German security precautions only added to the silence. The result was that analysts at GC&CS, using only SS and police decrypts, could not provide explicit intelligence about the mass extermination activities at Auschwitz/Birkenau and other such camps.³

Another large collection of intercepts consists of multinational diplomatic messages. Most of the intercepts were of messages from European diplomats stationed in various capitals who reported occasionally about the plight of the Jews. As mentioned earlier, the priority to collect these types of messages was never high, except for those from Japanese diplomats in Berlin and Rome. Reports by diplomats occasionally carried information about the roundup of Jews in a particular country. Only during the roundups and deportations in Vichy France in the summer and fall of 1942 and in

Hungary during the late spring and fall of 1944 did the diplomatic traffic report in any depth about what was happening. In the latter case of Hungary, Allied and neutral interest in events there initially may have been related to the secret maneuvers by Budapest to abandon the Axis and sue for peace.

Still, the records of the diplomatic eyewitnesses or those who reported what had been discovered from their own inquiries, such as many of the intercepted diplomatic reports in essence were, provided a dramatic element to the narrative of the grim events that happened throughout Europe. Diplomats from neutral countries filed most of these reports. In many cables, their objectivity as observers often was challenged by the tragic and horrible nature of the events they reported. This is poignantly illustrated in the traffic sent by the Portuguese ambassador in Budapest. Other messages are a chronology of failed or futile efforts by neutral diplomats to organize or effect the rescue of some of the victims.

When the COMINT Agencies Knew about the Holocaust

For decades, an important issue for historians of the Holocaust has been to establish the point in time during the war when sufficient information from all sources reached the Allies that disclosed the full nature and extent of the German plans to eliminate the Jews. The critical time period encompasses the beginning of the massacres in the western Soviet Union, that is mid-1941, and runs to the middle or end of 1942 when the complex of death camps reached nearly full operation. But it is difficult to provide a simple answer to the second question of when the COMINT agencies knew about the Holocaust during this period. This is because any answer anticipates that, from such a date when signals intelligence was known about the massacres in Russia or the operations of the death camps, the Western cryptologic agencies could have discerned the full intent of the Nazi policy of extermination, the full extent of which became known as the Final Solution.

On the surface, the timeliness of communications intelligence – especially the German Police messages that were intercepted and decrypted shortly after the invasion of the Soviet Union began, and the SS concentration camp radio reports from as early as mid-1942 – suggests that this intelligence source could have warned of what would eventually befall Europe’s Jews. However, there were two major obstacles that prevented communications intelligence from being the single “warning” factor.

The first obstacle was that the usefulness of the intercepted police and SS messages was undercut by two fundamental shortcomings in the nature of the intelligence itself. The most important of these was that these messages were intercepted after the programs of massacres and death camps had begun. The police actions in the western USSR had begun prior the intercept of the earliest police radio traffic about the massacres in the Soviet Union. The first intercept that mentioned any of the massacres probably was the 18 July 1941 radio message from the Police Regiment Center that reported the execution of 1,153 Jewish “plunderers” near the town of Slonim in Belorussia.⁴ This was nearly a month after Nazi Germany invaded the Soviet Union. Even more importantly, Nazi policy for the elimination of all undesired racial types during the invasion of the Soviet Union had been established back in March 1941. At that time, Hitler, in a meeting with military leaders, had established that the invasion would be a war of extermination. The arrangements to implement this policy were made in the next two months between the army and the SS.⁵ But nothing of this planning appeared in the intercept.

The SS messages about the concentration camps suffered from the same time lag. The messages sent by the concentration camp SS commanders and encrypted in the SS Enigma machine, were not intercepted and decrypted until early June 1942. This date was well after the death camp at Chelmo, Poland, had started operation in December 1941. It also was months after the beginning of operations of the Birkenau complex at

Auschwitz in March 1942.⁶ The intercepts about the concentration and death camps also came well after the important conference at Wannsee in January 1942, which considered extending the Final Solution to all of occupied Europe.

The second shortcoming of the intercepts was that they contained fragmentary or unclear information that could be ambiguous to analysts who reviewed it. Therefore, the COMINT could be subject to differing interpretations regarding the full intent of the Nazi activities reported in the intercepted messages. The analysts that studied the communications intelligence could and did miss or misinterpret the significance of the information in them. Axis decrypts were filled with abbreviations, acronyms, and terms that the Allied intelligence analysts first had to understand. We can add to this mix of problems the Nazi policy of disguising references to various phases and activities of the Final Solution. Sometimes this program effectively obscured the information in the intercepts to the point where its importance went unrecognized. A good example of this was the German Police message of 11 January 1943 that listed the number of Jews and others gassed at four death camps in the previous year. The decrypted message referred to an “Einsatz Reinhardt” followed by a set of numbers for the last two weeks of 1942 and for the entire year. British codebreakers appear to have not recognized the reference and that the message was, in fact, a report on the number of victims gassed in the four death camps located in the General Government (southeastern Occupied Poland).

The second obstacle to effective use of Western COMINT was how the intelligence was received and assimilated by the analysts and officers at Bletchley Park and the rest of British intelligence structure who were familiar with the reports about the massacres, deportations, and concentration camps. Although historians are wary of making generalizations about the inner thoughts and attitudes of a population in any period, some observations about the historical context of European anti-Semitism could be useful if we are to understand, in

any small way, how intelligence about the massacres and camps was received at the GC&CS.

The first thing to consider is that what the Nazis were doing was outside of the historical experience and imagination of most Europeans. Certainly the historical landscape of European anti-Semitism had been one marked with almost nineteen hundred years of unremitting ugliness – the pogroms, massacres, deportations, banishments, ghettoization, extortion, blood-laws, and auto-da-fes. But even this common heritage of brutality could hardly prepare people for what the Nazis planned and were working to fulfill: an effort to eliminate from Europe (and later, the world) all vestiges of Jewry. Not only were Jews targets, but also many other segments of the European population were to be eliminated – mentally and physically handicapped persons, Slavs, Poles, Romany, etc. This larger aim, too, was beyond the historical experience of Europe. And for the Nazis to carry out this plan meant that the old techniques of murder and starvation were not adequate. Hence the Nazis employed mass industrial techniques of slaughter to achieve what they wanted. Realizing that what the Nazis did was so horribly unique, could it be expected realistically that the analysts at Bletchley Park and elsewhere could have determined the totality of the Nazi plan, and the means to achieve it, based on the fragmentary evidence at hand from the intercepts? And could they have grasped the implications that the massacres in Russia and the camps were some of the means to achieve a Europe that was *Judenfrei*?

A second consideration is that, while many people may have received the news of the massacres and camps with horror, the truth is that much of the world's population, including many in the major Allied powers of the United States and Great Britain, held, to some degree, anti-Semitic sentiments. This observation may be unsavory to modern ears; it is, unfortunately, a historical fact. We have seen some allusions to it in the preceding pages of this guide. Most notably, there was the difficulty experienced by the United States when it

came to saving some 5,000 Jewish orphans in France (See page 92). This was, in part, caused by the refusal by some in Congress to accept more Jews. Both President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were often hampered in their limited efforts to alleviate some of the suffering by the general anti-Semitic sentiment in both nations.⁷ Just how many British signals intelligence analysts, either individually or as a group, held this attitude is unknown.⁸ And how much it affected their reactions to the intelligence is likewise unknown. But it must be considered in any discussion about how the COMINT was received.

Whatever their beliefs or intentions, many people in the West, and some of them were in a position to know otherwise, simply could not comprehend or refused to believe the evidence of what was occurring in Nazi-occupied Europe.⁹ For example, the famous American historian, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., then an analyst in the Research and Analysis Branch of the OSS, remarked that, in the summer of 1944, even with the flood of reports about concentration camps, what was happening was interpreted as an “incremental increase in persecution rather than...extermination.”¹⁰ And in December of 1944, John McCloy, the assistant secretary of war and a regular recipient of Ultra intelligence, asked Leon Kubotinski of the World Jewish Congress, “We are alone. Tell me the truth. Do you really believe all those horrible things happened?”¹¹

The little evidence that historians of cryptology have to work with suggests that within the ranks and leadership of the GC&CS, there was a division of opinion about what the police decrypts augured regarding the extent and nature of what was happening to the Jews and other groups throughout Europe. Two examples illustrate this split. In September 1941, an intelligence analyst from Bletchley Park had attached this grim comment to a Police decrypt about massacres in Russia: “The tone of this message suggests that the word has gone out that a decrease in the population of Russia would be welcomed in high quarters and that the leaders of the three sectors [The commanders of the

police units assigned to the three German Army Groups invading the Soviet Union] stand somewhat in competition with each other as to their 'score'." This comment reportedly caused the War Office to respond with a sharp retort that this interpretation was based on a minimum of evidence.¹²

On the other hand, on 11 September 1941 Nigel de Grey, the deputy director of the GC&CS, noted on a series of early decrypts of German radio reports of massacres by many police battalions and the SS Cavalry Regiment that, "The fact that the Police are killing all Jews that fall into their hands should now be sufficiently well appreciated. It is not therefore proposed to continue reporting these butcheries unless so requested."¹³ De Grey's comment could represent either his inability to appreciate the implications of the massacres, or his willingness to ignore what the Nazis were doing. Whatever his reason, even someone as highly placed in British intelligence as de Grey, exposed as he was to the daily decrypts detailing the many massacres and other atrocities occurring in the western USSR, would not draw attention to the continuing slaughter in the western USSR.

In either case of the Police massacres in Russia and the operations of the death camps, COMINT could not provide a timely warning of the totality of the tragedies that eventually were to fall on Europe's Jews, Slavs, Poles, and others. This is not to say that the intercepts were useless. In the case of the police massacres, at the very least, the decrypts did alert the British to what was happening in the occupied Soviet Union. As for the concentration and death camps, information about them from intercepts was available only some time after the camps had begun operation. In this case, information from other sources, such as the revelations of Jan Karski, and that gathered by the American diplomats in Switzerland may have proved more useful in alerting the West to the extent of the horrors occurring in the camps.¹⁴

Despite what was known, Allied communications intelligence, by itself, could not have provided

an early warning to Allied leaders regarding the nature and scope of the Holocaust.

Some Further Observations Regarding the Available Archival Records

There are limited COMINT agency records about the Holocaust.

Early in this Guide, we referred to a popular misconception that the Allies intercepted all, or nearly all, Axis communications during the Second World War. This notion probably arose and gained popular credence because of a number of presentations by journalists, television reporters, and popular writers about the cryptanalytic successes against various Axis cipher machines, such as Purple and Enigma, and numerous manual codes and ciphers such as Japanese naval operational code JN-25. Whatever the authors of these presentations about Allied code-breaking successes intended, and whatever was inferred by their audiences, what subsequently developed was a lively image of "sweeping" or "vacuuming" the radio airwaves of all Axis messages. To continue the image, the Allies would then decrypt all of these intercepted messages.

The reality, as has been presented in this Guide, was much different. The COMINT system, from intercept to dissemination of the intelligence, more closely resembled a process that, in most cases, intercepted varying portions of Axis and neutral communications, and then slowly winnowed out the chaff of unusable or unimportant messages. Against the many thousands of Axis radio transmitters, or terminals, that operated on a daily basis, the Allies had a much smaller number of intercept positions at monitoring stations located around the world. They could copy only a limited number of messages. What terminals they covered, in turn, were determined by priorities that were meant to meet the strategic, theater, or operational requirements of the various allied commands. Of those messages sent by the Axis terminals that were copied, a number might have contained too many errors in the transmission by the Axis radioman, or

in the transcription by the Allied monitor, which would have rendered them useless for decryption or translation. Of the copy that was usable, a portion may have contained messages encrypted in systems that could not be exploited by Allied cryptanalysts. Many messages that were successfully decrypted did not contain information that was immediately important or useful for Allied intelligence analysts. Only that information that met the priorities set by the command structure would be processed and disseminated to the appropriate recipients. Although no general set of statistics exists, as we have seen, some accounting of translations as a percent of the total intercept range from about five to fifteen percent, though targets of higher priority, such as U-boat communications, had a much higher success rate.

Of course, this explanation applies only to the radio and cable communications that the Allies were able to intercept. A large portion of German internal communications, and those sent to nearby neutrals and conquered nations or regions, was conducted on landline or submarine cable telephone and telegraph systems, which Allied monitors were unable to access. Collecting messages sent over cable required physical access to a terminal or cable through which the messages traveled. The actual acquisition of the messages required either the placement of a tap on the wire in a secret or secure overseas location, or the subversion, bribery, or the blackmail of employees of neutral or enemy national post, telephone and telegraph agencies. However, while Axis cables sent within occupied and neutral Europe were accessible by means of covert operations, protecting the tap from discovery and getting the information from them in a timely manner would have been extremely difficult and dangerous.

Another constraining factor was the prioritized requirements system established by intelligence commands. It hardly would be a surprise to say that COMINT priorities weighed most heavily towards purely military communications. Military communications, especially those by Axis air force and

naval forces, most likely would not contain much information on the Holocaust. Wehrmacht communications from the Russian front might have contained some items on massacres, but probably not consistent. German Police and SS communications, which proved to be the major source on the worst depredations of the Holocaust, originally were collected as a supplement to intelligence on the military and civilian domestic situation in Germany.¹⁵ Yet, even these communications terminals were not the highest Allied priority.

Nonmilitary communications, principally diplomatic and commercial, which might carry some information about the roundups, concentration camps, or looting were assigned to a secondary priority. Then, not all diplomatic terminals were of equal importance. The American ability to exploit fully Japan's high-level diplomatic communications encrypted with Purple perforce made that country's messages a priority object of Allied intercept. Japan's terminals in the major Axis and neutral capitals were preeminent targets. Japanese communications to other countries rated much lower in importance. While the diplomatic traffic of neutrals generally rated lower in the priority for intercept.

Axis military and diplomatic terminals were emphasized when it came to tasking the COMINT system. This was because of the paramount importance of intelligence from these sources to the successful prosecution of the war. Information about the Holocaust came mostly from lower priority terminals: German Police and neutral diplomatic terminals. To raise the priority for these would have detracted from the primary Allied strategic effort to defeat the Axis, especially Germany. Intelligence elements, including communications intelligence, were tasked to acquire that information necessary to achieve this aim.

A final delimiter to information about the Holocaust was the policy adopted by the Nazis to control the spread of information about the plans and operations carried out to meet the goal of elim-

inating all Jews and other undesirables from Europe. While the SS and other Nazis would tout their successes in eliminating Jews and others, they did not always record them. This attitude can be illustrated by the remark by Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler's comment at a speech to SS notables in which he stated that the Final Solution was "a glorious page in our history, never written (*niemals geschriebenes*), and perhaps never to be written."¹⁶ Aside from some intercept of police, SS, and SD radio messages, and occasional references to Allied publicity about the massacres, deportations, and the concentration camps, there is little other official German radio communications relating to killing operations or other activities relating to the Holocaust. This is partly attributable to the Nazi hierarchy's relatively effective policy limiting official references the actual operations to exterminate the Jews. This policy precluded detailed public discussion or announcements.

Nazi officials also developed a vocabulary of evasion, utilizing obscure bureaucratic language and euphemisms when referring to the Nazi objectives and actual techniques employed by the police, SS, SD, and others. In one directive from Martin Borman, even the expression "final solution" (*Endloesung*) was disallowed from correspondence. Of course the premier example of this policy of official obscurity was the January 1943 message about the results of Operation Reinhard. It appeared to be an innocuous message with numbers, dates and an unclear context. Analysts at the time missed its significance.

If the official policy was not always followed, and it was hardly a "masterpiece of deception" as claimed by German general Alfred Jodl, it did have the effect of restricting discussion and correspondence about the Holocaust.¹⁷ It should also be pointed out that the radio reports by the German police about the massacres in Russia and the SS status reports from the concentration, labor, and death camps eventually were discontinued because of doubts by the German Police and SS high commands about the security of these communications.

In light of the above factors – technical limitations, German deception, and Allied military priorities – it is unlikely that Western communications intelligence could have produced more intelligence during the war than it ultimately did.

There are significant differences between the Archival record holdings of the cryptologic agencies of the United States and Great Britain.

Although the differences in the size and content of the records of the American and British cryptologic agencies should not be a surprise, it was only recently that historians understood why. There are two reasons for this gap. The first is the simple fact that the United States entered the war some twenty-six months after it had begun in Europe. During that period, the British had developed an extensive cryptologic effort that encompassed the European Theater. American expertise and capability still were sparse when it came to Axis communications in Europe, even after some staff technical exchanges with British cryptologists in 1940 and 1941. Instead, American cryptologists, because of then current military situation and a decade of pre-war expertise, had taken responsibility for communications intelligence in the Pacific Theater of operations. This dominance became more pronounced when the sole British code-breaking site in Singapore redeployed to Ceylon and then further west to British East Africa in 1942. Eventually, American cryptologists arrived in Britain and were integrated as individuals or as units into the GC&CS operations, but they remained subordinate to the British.

The second reason for the difference probably stems from a misunderstanding of the nature and timing of the official British-American exchange program known as the BRUSA Agreement of June/July 1943. Prior to the agreement, there were separate and limited, reciprocal interchanges between the GC&CS and the SIS and OP-20-G.¹⁸ The June 1943 agreement covered exchange of technical communications intelligence and opera-

tional intelligence information between GC&CS and the U.S. War Department, as represented by Special Branch and Signal Security Service. (The U.S. Navy would sign a separate, more limited, agreement. It was known as the Extension Agreement and applied to a 1942 exchange arrangement known as the Holden Agreement.) The BRUSA applied to the military sphere only; diplomatic affairs were not included and were arranged in a separate agreement between the Americans at Arlington Hall Station (AHS) and the GC&CS diplomatic section at Berkeley Street, London.¹⁹

Also, it needs to be recalled that the U.S. Office of Strategic Services had its own exchange agreement with British intelligence, specifically with its counterintelligence and counterespionage units, M.I. 5 and Section V. of M.I. 6. These exchanges included communications intelligence material that was not given to the American cryptologic elements. These arrangements account for the significant but limited numbers of British decrypts and translations that can be found in OSS records.

Also, and more importantly in regards to archival records holdings, the trade in intelligence that followed the agreements was not retroactive. Only current technical and operational intelligence was passed between London and Washington; though there may have been some limited transfer of dated technical cryptographic and cryptanalytic material used for training purposes. This explains, for example, why there were no copies of German Police decrypts (except for a few training samples sent to Arlington Hall later in the war) in the wartime files of the Signals Intelligence Service. Before the agreements in 1943, this source largely had dried up when the police and SS stopped using radio for transmitting reports about massacres in Russia and the situation in various concentration camps and, instead, passed this information by courier or cable.

The intelligence that was exchanged between the COMINT agencies did not include all of the

actual Axis or neutral decrypts or translations. The logistics of such a transfer of information would have been too daunting. The amount of paper traffic would have swamped communications lines between the two capitals. Transmission rates, even of teletypewriters (50-100 words a minute), would have been inadequate. Physically transporting the material across the Atlantic was not a solution: the amount of intelligence generated would have militated against a reasonable or timely review. The digests, summaries, and relatively limited number of translations of the significant intelligence that were transmitted back and forth between the two capitals were considered sufficient.²⁰ This solution probably suited the needs of the leadership in Washington, DC. The most important American customers of British Ultra information were the military commands located in England, such as the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF) under General Eisenhower, the Allied naval and air authorities, and those in the North African and Italian fronts.

There also was a security angle that limited the American and British exchange. Ever since the British codebreakers had first contemplated meeting their American opposites in 1941, some officials in the London security establishments had fretted over the history of loose control of security information in Washington. The British concerns stemmed partly from the poor American control procedures, and a genuine fear of a press and society unhampered by any Official Secrets Act.²¹ At the same time, the British concern reveals just how much they appreciated the slender nature of their Ultra triumph. For the first few years of the war, the basis for their mastery over some of the Enigmas rested on cribs (plaintext assumed to be present in an encrypted message), individual German radio operator insecurities, and captured key and Enigma machines.²² Only slowly did the British cryptologic establishment let the Americans in on their cryptanalytic success against Enigma. Although this sharing began in early 1941, it was not until later agreements in 1942 and 1943 that exchanges of

technical and operational intelligence was exchanged on a regular basis.

The result is that the current archival records of the British and American COMINT organizations reflect the division and emphasis of efforts between both countries that was established by the July 1943 Britain-United States Agreement. The British records are European-oriented and go back to 1939. American records reflect the emphasis on the Pacific campaign and, except for U-boat campaign and worldwide diplomatic intercept, are bereft of most German military and other service translations.

The Western communications intelligence agencies collected many more intercepts than they finally processed during the war.

It must be remembered that the primary purpose of the Allied intelligence agencies, including the COMINT organizations, was the collection, processing, and dissemination of information supporting the prosecution of the war against the Axis powers. As such, the processing and retention of information based on communications intelligence was contingent upon the strategic exigencies of the moment. As we have seen, intercepted messages that were not processed or used, either because of technical reasons, or overtaken by events as the operational situation changed, were rarely (if ever) retained for future processing. As was mentioned above, as much as 85 to 90 percent of all messages collected by the Allied COMINT agencies were not processed to the point of formal dissemination. This does not exclude the possibility that some intelligence was disseminated in an informal fashion. There likely were instances of hurriedly translated intercept during a fast-moving military situation that was passed along verbally or by phone. And some intercept was processed partly, perhaps only decrypted, but not translated or disseminated in the form of a serialized formal report or translation. In this latter category there are the police decrypts produced by GC&CS that remain in the original German language form. But the decrypts

were retained and the information in them was disseminated to the British leadership in the form of briefings and reports.

After the war, the U.S. Army and Navy cryptologic agencies destroyed virtually all of the unprocessed intercept. With victory over the Axis, there was no operational rationale for retaining it. Only two types of “raw” traffic, intercepts that had not been decrypted or analyzed, were retained after the war. The first consisted of a small set of samples of various wartime targets for training purposes. The second set of retained intercept was that relevant to postwar activities. This latter intercept included the U.S. Navy’s decryption and translation of Japanese naval messages related to the prewar period, especially those directly concerned with the attack on Pearl Harbor; Soviet espionage messages decrypted by the Army Security Agency, known under the project name of Venona; and German military attaché and diplomatic messages between Berlin and Tokyo. These latter messages contained information about subjects of continuing intelligence interest: wartime Axis technical material and equipment exchange and intelligence that Germany and Japan shared on the Soviet Union. The latter was important in the context of the growing postwar concerns about Soviet intentions and capabilities.

The finished reports that were retained by the COMINT agencies consisted, in the main, of the serialized intelligence product series produced during the war: the numerous series of translations, decrypts, summaries, or reports derived from targeted Axis and neutral military, naval, commercial, security, diplomatic communications. The other material retained was made up of technical reports about cryptologic techniques, equipment, and procedures. It is these collections, stored and available in the Public Record Office and the National Archives, which constitute the records of Allied communications intelligence from the war.

Concurrent with the postwar destruction of unprocessed intercept was the closure of many

offices that had been responsible for producing the intelligence material. These closures were part of the drastic, general postwar reduction in the American and British military and intelligence establishments.²³ The administrative records and intelligence reports of the various wartime cryptologic work centers were retained by their successor agencies. The papers would not be transferred to their respective national archives for public use until decades later.

In the postwar period, GC&CS, the Army Security Agency (the postwar successor to SIS), and OP-20-G would write in-house histories of their activities during the war. These general works varied in size and scope. The GC&CS histories were very detailed and extended over three dozen volumes. The ASA also produced a multivolume history of the SIS activities, though nowhere as extensive as the British work. Also, a number of short histories of the cryptologic tactical units were written. Some special problem target studies also were published in the years after the war. It was not until the 1980s that these numerous histories were released to the public, but only very slowly, and many of them contained redacted text.²⁴

There are pertinent uses for the available records from the COMINT agencies related to the Holocaust.

Of the perhaps few million translations and decrypts published by the Allied cryptologic agencies during the war, those containing information pertinent to the Holocaust currently number between 700 and 900.²⁵ Even in the collection of the thousands of German Police decrypts that resides in the PRO, only a limited number of them actually carry information about Holocaust-related atrocities. Most of the Police messages cover administrative, order of battle, logistical, or transportation subjects or are concerned with the security situation behind German lines in Russia. In the larger context of the history of the Holocaust, when one considers the enormous amount of public and private records available from all other sources, the

COMINT contribution is quite small. Aside from this paucity of records, the information they contain for the most part is not new. Yet, there are some startling finds such as the German police message that contains the number of Jews exterminated in the General Government in 1942 during Operation Reinhard, and details of the operations in Auschwitz contained in the Vrba-Wetzler report in mid-1944. Still, the records have two particular uses for today's researchers and historians.

First of all, in some cases, the COMINT translations are the only extant and contemporary record of some aspects of the Holocaust. In particular, the GC&CS decrypts of the German police, SS, and SD messages are the only existing records of the daily operations of these organizations, since the Germans destroyed most of the original orders, reports and other correspondence. Even as episodic and fragmentary as the police and SS decrypts are, they constitute an important part of the record of the roundup of Jews in Rome and the massacres on the Russian front, and the operations of the concentration and death camps. In other cases, such as the roundup of Jews in Vichy France in 1942 and in Hungary in 1944, the communications intelligence information supplements well the already extensive sources. But, just as important as the translations and decrypts are as a source, like most other COMINT, these records constitute a contemporary record of events. These messages were written as an activity occurred or were composed shortly after while the information was fresh. It is the immediacy of these decrypts and translations that is particularly useful to scholars reconstructing events.

Second, many of the COMINT reports and translations, especially diplomatic messages, point to possible new sources of information or to aspects of the Holocaust that have been overlooked or minimized in conventional narratives. These translations also suggest new avenues of research that consider the attitudes, reactions, or activities of countries not normally associated directly with the Holocaust. In the first instance, in particular, during the roundup of Hungary's Jews, the reports

filed by neutral diplomats stationed in Budapest usually not associated with large-scale, international relief work such as Mexico, Portugal, Spain and Eire appear to contain much information about the course of the SS dragnet and the measures taken to rescue Jews. The relative handful of intercepted messages from these countries indicates that their diplomats made significant attempts to help the endangered Jews. If nothing else, these diplomats were fairly reliable reporters of events during the several months of the Hungarian tragedy. These diplomatic intercepts suggest that the foreign ministry archives of those countries may contain more pertinent information than hitherto considered in conventional historical narratives about the Holocaust. Also, other countries with Jewish nationals caught up in Hungary made efforts to rescue their countrymen. Romania, which lost part of Transylvania to Hungary, was concerned over Jews from that region seized by Hungarian authorities.²⁶

The COMINT records also indicate that the waves from the storm of the European Holocaust had reached the shores of Latin America. The reaction by Latin American countries to events in Europe varied. For example, a Vichy diplomatic cable of 24 September 1942 reported on a newly passed Bolivian legislation that further restricted immigration by Jews, Asians, and Africans, and limited the number of Jews allowed to own or work in commercial ventures.²⁷ Other diplomatic reports, whether from neutral Latin American countries, or those sympathetic to the Axis like Argentina and Chile, or minor Allied combatants such as Mexico and Brazil, carry references to the Holocaust. Some countries, such as Brazil, were concerned for Jewish nationals who were caught up in the Nazi extermination machine.²⁸

Notes

1 *The Achievements of the Signal Security Agency in World War II* (Washington, D.C.: Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, 1946), 31.

2 Phillips, 234-6; Michael Smith, (Bletchley Park and the Holocaust. *Intelligence and National Security* (Volume 19, No. 2, Summer 2004), 266-7.

3 Breitman, 114-5.

4 ZIP/G.P.D. 292R/18.7.41, NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1386.

5 Christopher R. Browning. *The Origins of The Final Solution* (Lincoln: The University of Nebraska Press; Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2004), 213-224. Also, Weinberg, 190-2. For a somewhat detailed description of the military-SS meetings that followed, see Breitman, 36-42.

6 As reported in Breitman, 114, German Police Decode, 5 June 1942, items 5 and 6, PRO HW 16/19,

7 See Laqueur, 91-93, for a survey of British popular attitudes and Dallek, 166-8, for problems that President Roosevelt faced with American reactions to any effort to help Jews. For more on American general attitudes towards Jews and reactions to news of the Holocaust, see David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear. The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 410-415, and William O'Neill, *Democracy at War: America's Fight at Home and Abroad in WWII* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 226-229.

8 The question of anti-Semitic attitudes surfaced occasionally within the confines of GC&CS and SIS personnel. Three of the major leaders of SIS, William Friedman, Abraham Sinkov, and Solomon Kullback, were Jewish. This fact was noted in passing by GC&CS participants in early discussions with SIS in 1940-42, but appears not to have made any difference in the close cooperation of the two agencies. PRO, HW 1/2, 10 March 1941 "Signals Intelligence passed to Prime Minister Churchill including Enigma messages." And HW 14/62, 26 December 1942, "GC&CS – Directorate, Policy Papers."

9 See Laqueur, 93-100 and 159-170, for examples of reaction in Washington and among worldwide Jewish groups.

10 Arthur Schlesinger Jr., "The London Operation: Recollections of a Historian." George Chalou, Editor, *The Secrets War: The Office of Strategic Services in World War II* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1992), 66-7.

11 Kai Bird, *The Chairman: John J. McCloy and the Making of the American Establishment* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), 206.

12 As reported by Michael Smith, *Station X: The Codebreakers of Bletchley Park* (London: Channel 4 Books, 1998), 72-4.

13 De G[rey], 11 September 1941, PRO HW 1/62.

14 Laqueur, 62-4, 109-11, 119-120 .

15 Hinsley, 670-1; Phillips, 5-12.

16 NARA, RG 238, Nuremberg International Military Tribunal records. Document PS 1919, Prosecution Exhibit USA 190, p. 64-66. From NARA, *Holocaust, the Documentary Evidence* (Washington, DC: NARA, 1993), 35.

17 John Lukacs. *The Hitler of History* (New York: Vintage Press, 1998), 193.

18 For background to these exchanges, see Bradley F. Smith, *The Ultra-Magic Deals*, 40-129.

19 Benson, 108-121.

20 Bradley F. Smith, *The Ultra-Magic Deals*, 163-4; Benson, 111-114; See NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box1026, File 3284, "American Embassy, London, Messages to Military Intelligence Division," May 1943; Box 1119, Folder 2600, "Colonel McCormack's Trip to London, May-June 1943," June 1943. This restriction makes more sense when considering the context of the tide of intelligence reports from all sources. A January 1945 listing of sources of reports by the library section of Special Branch runs 42 pages and contains over 850 titles. See "Sources and Titles of Records Received in Document Section of the I&L Branch, SPSIR-7." 19 February 1945. NARA, RG 457, HCC, Box 1432, Folder "Sources of Titles of Reports."

21 Bradley F. Smith, 58-63 and 176-180; F. Hinsley, *British Intelligence in the Second World War, Its Influence on Strategy and Operations* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery office, 1984), Vol. III, Part I, 52.

22 F. H. Hinsley, et alia. *British Intelligence in the Second World War, Its Influence on Strategy and Operations, Volume I* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1979), 336-7, 391; The matter of the "completeness" of sharing COMINT occurred again from late 1942 into early 1943, when the SIS and GC&CS clashed over access to Enigma traffic and Alan Turing's participation in the Bell Laboratory development of a voice scrambler device. See Robert L. Benson, *A History of Communications Intelligence during World War II: Policy and Administration* (Fort George G. Meade, MD:

Center for Cryptologic History, National Security Agency, 1997), 97-108.

23 Smith, *Ultra-Magic Deals*, 221.

24 For example, The 37-volume Government Code & Cypher School Histories of World War II, the Military, Air, and Naval sets are located in Series HW 11 at the Public Records Office. Available at either U.S. National Archives, RG 457, HCC or the library of the National Cryptologic Museum are such examples of these histories as: SRH-001, *Historical Background of the Signal Security Agency* (3 Vols.), (Washington, DC: Army Security Agency, April 1946); SRH-279, OP-20-G File, *Communications Intelligence Organization, 1942-1946* (Washington, DC: National Security Agency, 1984); SRH-135, *History of the Second Signal Service Battalion, 1939-1945* (Fort George G. Meade: NSA/CSS, 1981); SRH-042, *Signals Intelligence Service Staff, HQ, Third U.S. Army, Third Army Radio Intelligence History in Campaign of Western Europe* (Washington, DC: Army Security Agency, October 1945) .

25 Interestingly, scholars of wartime cryptologic history can only estimate the total number of translations and decrypts produced by the United States and the United Kingdom. One of the reasons was the tendency of Allied cryptologists to combine more than one decrypt into a translation or a summary (or "compilation" as the British called it). Another problem was that some translation series were started and then stopped without publication, or were merged into another series. In some cases, decrypts were produced, but not published except for fragments of information, which were put into reports. Also, in some target problems, such as diplomatic intercept, there was substantial duplication in records because of the wartime exchange system. Finally, the job of tabulating these totals would require, in some cases, a manual count – a daunting project, to say the least.

In view of the above, the best estimate possible at this point is that the U.S. and U.K., at a minimum, produced over 4.5 million translations and decrypts. The U.S. produced about 800,000 (+/- 50,000), while the U.K. put out about 3.7 million translations and decrypts. In arriving at these estimates, I wish to thank Ralph Erskine for his advice on the British figures.

26 MND Translation, Bern (Anastasiu) to Bucharest, 12 December 1944, H-157300, NARA, RG 457 NSA/CSS, HCC, Box 456.

27 MND Translation, La Paz (Mory) to Vichy, 24 September 1942, SIS # 50917, NARA, RG 457 NSA/CSS, HCC, Box 328.

28 MND Translation, Rio de Janeiro (Exteriores) to Lisbon, 12 March 1945, H-171950, RG 457 NSA/CSS, HCC, Box 474.

Appendix 1
Selected Allied Monitoring Stations (MS) and Designators
(USA=United States Army, USN= United States Navy)

Site	Designator, “MS”
Vint Hill Farms, VA (USA)	1
Two Rock Ranch, Pentaluma, CA (USA)	2
Miami, FL (USA)	3
Asmara, Ethiopia (USA)	4
Territory of Hawaii (USA)	5
Amchitka, AK (USA)	6
Wireless Experimental Center, New Delhi, India (USA element)	8, also 94
Bellmore, NY (USA)	9
Santa Rosa, CA (USA)	10
Radio Corporation of America	12
Fort Sam Houston, TX (USA)	17
United Kingdom sources	92 (Includes Beaumanor)
Commonwealth sources (Canada - Examination Unit, National Research Council)	94; also, “E”
Cable Censor (United States Navy)	59
Federal Communications Commission	81
Cheltenham, MD (USN)	56 also “M”
Bainbridge Island, WA (USN)	54; also, “S”
Chatham, MA (USN)	“C”
Jupiter, FL (USN)	55; also, “J”
Washington, D.C. (USN)	“N” (“NEGAT”)
Winter Harbor, ME (USN)	“W”

USN stations also carry their own designator. The “MS” system was unique to the Signals Intelligence Service and was a way to designate all of the so-called “sources of traffic” that included U.S. civilian agencies such as the Federal Communications Commission, commercial sources (Radio Corporation of America), and British and Commonwealth sites. – See NARA, RG 457, HCC, “Sources and Types of Traffic,” 9 November 1943, Box 936, NR 2694.

Appendix 2
Annotated Sample of Diplomatic Translation
and German Police Decrypt

TOP SECRET
 WAR DEPARTMENT

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TOP SECRET

Sender	From: Lisbon (Minister)
Recipient	To: Berlin
Message date	19 October 1944
Cryptographic designater	POU 283
Message number	

Although the situation in Budapest is very confused, we have information^a which positively states that the German Legation in Budapest have said that they do not recognize the protection of Portuguese passports of those which were issued to Hungarians whom the Hungarian police considered as having the nationality of the country which had granted the passports. In order to put forth every effort tending to save the people who appealed to us, I ask Your Excellency to be so good as to take insistent steps to have modified the attitude of the German authorities in Budapest, since it would be impossible to prevent that attitude from producing an adverse effect here.

Reference to other translations a - SSA #146360

	Intercepted by station MS-1, Vint Hill Farms, VA, USA	Language of text	SSA translation number
Date intercepted	Inter: 19 Oct 44 (1)	Portuguese	#146359
Date received at Arlington Hall	Rec'd: 19 Oct 44		
Date translation issued	Trans: 19 Oct 44 (4205-K)	—Translator's worksheet number (destroyed)	

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

WAR DEPARTMENT

DQH — Berlin
 SQF — Mogilev
 DSO — Kutten RFSS command staff
 DSQ — Himmler's special train

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
 9. DQH De SQF SSD SQF Nr 15 2145 6Tle 175 173 176 174 137 71
 8 — Rf SS Pers.Kdo, Stab Rf SS und Chef Orpo. /DQH DSO DSQ 3742. — 10
 Lagebericht: Bei SS Kav.Brigade gestrige Standorte nicht 9
 wesentlich verändert. Nördlich und nordostwärts des SPOROWSKI
 Sees hat Regt. 1 einen Kessel gebildet zur Bekämpfung gemelde-
 ter Banden. Bis 3.8.41 abends hat SS Kav.Brigade 3274 Parisa-
 nen und jüdische Bolschewisten liquidiert. Eigene Verluste kein
 Auf Anforderung des Befehlshabers hat ein SS Sonder Kdo eine
 Munitionskolonne der Wehrmacht, die nicht aufzufinden war, ge-
 funden und den Transport sicher an Ort und Stelle geleitet.
 Mit Polizeikräften lediglich kleinere Aktionen. Pol. Batl.307
 im Sicherungsabschnitt wie gestern. Bei Säuberungsaktion von
 Pol. Batl. 306 260 Freischärler erschossen. Russische Kavalle-
 rie nördlich Rollbahn 1 ist eingekesselt und geht der Vernich-
 tung entgegen. Russische Kavallerie südlich Rollbahn 1 nach
 mehreren Feuergefechten mit Wehrmacht und SS scheinbar in süd-
 östliche Richtung den PTSTSCH [= Pestsch ?] überschritten.
 11 — Höherer SS und Pol.führer Mitte.

- 1 — Receiving station - Berlin
- 2 — Transmitting station - Mogilev (Belorussia)
- 3 — Precedence - Urgent
- 4 — Message number
- 5 — Time of transmission
- 6 — Message contains 6 other messages
- 7 — Letter count (of each attached message)
- 8 — Internal address for Heinrich Himmler, his staff and chief of Order Police
- 9 — Sent to other stations: Kutten, General Himmler's command staff (DSO) and special train (DSQ)
- 10 — Frequency on which message was intercepted
- 11 — Signed - Higher SS and police commander, central (Russia)

Appendix 3 *Attached Documents*

1. Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944. (6 pages)
2. German Foreign Office message to Buenos Aires stating the status of the pension of the retired headmaster Karl Laudien depends upon the “unequivocal separation” from his Jewish wife. (1 page)
3. Intercepted 20 October 1944 Spanish diplomatic cable from the ambassador to Washington, Cardenas de Silva, to Madrid that reports request for Spanish delegation in Budapest to intervene on behalf of the endangered Jews, as well as the notice of Swedish plans to help, including the dispatch of Raoul Wallenberg. (1 page)
4. German VN (*Verlaessliche Nachrichten* – “Trustworthy Report”), which is a translation of an intercepted U.S. State Department cable from Bern, Switzerland, to Washington, D.C., reporting on the status of efforts to help Jewish internees by Sweden and the International Red Cross. (2 pages)
5. Boston-series translation of a message from Budapest reporting the results of Adolf Eichmann’s special action group in removing Jews from Hungary. (1 page)
6. Vichy Premier Pierre Laval’s statement of September 30, 1942, “With Respect to the Treatment of the Jews in Unoccupied France.” (3 pages)

~~TOP SECRET~~

139566

From: Bern (Czech Representative)
To: London (Czech Government)
26 June 1944
JBT

S 83, S 85.

Secret RIFKA.

The working conditions in Birkenau and Oswiecim (Auschwitz) are incredible. The work is being done either in the Camps or in the surrounding country. Roads are being built, concrete buildings are being put up, quarries are being worked. People are also employed in the neighbouring coal mines and in the factory for synthetic rubber, "Buna". Some of the people are employed in the administration of the Camps. Those who do not accomplish the tasks set by the authorities are beaten up and in some cases killed.

The food consists of three hundred grams of bread, one litre of vegetable soup and a drop of coffee. This is for the Jews, the Gentiles receive a bit more. Those who cannot work and have over 38.5° of temperature are sent to the "Krankenbau", a barracks for sick people. There they are divided, by a German doctor, into two groups:

Czechoslovak

H 160136

~~TOP SECRET~~

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Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944 (1 of 6 pages)

TOP SECRET

those who can be cured and those seriously ill. The seriously ill are disposed of by injecting Phenol into the neighbourhood of the heart. With the Gentiles it is only the really seriously ill who are disposed of in this manner, but in the case of Jews 80%-90% of all the sick people are being disposed of. About twenty thousand people have perished through these injections. Inhuman scenes have been enacted during the killing of the seriously ill, during the typhus epidemic. Next to the "Krankenbau" stands the so-called Hygienic Institute, used mainly for sterilization, artificial insemination of women and blood tests for transfusion; only Jews are used for all these experiments.

From March 1942, large transports of Jews arrived almost daily in Birkenau and Oswiecim. Out of these only a small number was actually placed in the labour camps while about 90% were sent straightaway to their death. These mass executions took place first of all in the forest of Birkenwald where ⁱⁿ a special building they were gassed and then cremated. By the end of February 1943 four new crematoria had been built in Birkenau, two large and two small. Each crematorium has a large hall, a gas chamber and an oven. The people are gassed in the hall which holds two

Czechoslovak

M-160136

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Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944 (2 of 6 pages)

~~TOP SECRET~~

thousand and looks like a public bath. They have to undress and are given a piece of soap and a towel as though they were going to have a bath and then they are herded into the gas-chamber which is hermetically sealed. Then a few S.S. men, with respirators on, insert poisonous gas called "Cyklon" manufactured in Hamburg, through slits in the ceiling into the gas chamber.

In three minutes time all the people are dead. Afterwards the bodies are transported on little trollies into the oven to be burned. There are nine ovens, each with four doors, each door can hold three bodies and full cremation takes an hour and a half. Each crematorium can daily dispose of two thousand bodies and all the crematoria can dispose of six thousand daily.

These crematoria can be recognized from the outside only by the tall chimney-stacks.

As a rule only Jews are being gassed, the Aryans only in exceptional cases. Mostly they are executed by means of pistol shots on a special spot between Blocks 10 and 11 in the Oswiecim Camp. The first executions started in the summer of 1941 and they reached their peak a year later when hundreds were shot at once. The Aryans were

Czechoslovak

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Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944 (3 of 6 pages)

[REDACTED]

taken straight from the train to the place of execution and their names did not appear in the camp register. According to the most conservative estimate in the period between April 1942 and April 1944 in both Camps the number of Jews gassed or otherwise disposed of amounted to one million and a half to one million and three quarters. Half of this number were Polish Jews, the other half were Jews from Holland, Greece, France, Belgium, Germany, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Italy, Norway, Lithuania, Austria and Jews from various Camps in Poland.

From the transports arriving at Oswiecim and Birkenau ninety per cent were disposed of straight away and ten per cent were placed in the labour camps and each person received a number. Up till April 1944, one hundred and eighty thousand people, Jews and Gentiles, were registered in these camps.

I have a detailed list of each transport starting from number 28,300 up till 174,000. The two transports of Czech Jews from Terezin are included.

At the beginning of April of this year there were only 34,000 people left in the camps, 18000 Gentiles and 16,000 Jews, the others have perished either by illness,

Czechoslovak

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Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944 (4 of 6 pages)

~~TOP SECRET~~

typhoid, or malaria, or through so-called selections. Twice a week the camp doctor selected people who were then gassed. There was a special register of selected people and they were marked with letters S.B. (Sonderbehandelte). All the deaths are notified to the Headquarters of all the camps, which is in Cransburg.

At the beginning of 1943 the political section (Camp Gestapo) in Oswiecim received 500,000 printed copies of the discharge papers. They were filled with the names of people who were gassed, and were entered in the archives of the camp.

The following are the names of the people responsible for the atrocities in both camps:

Camp Commandant HOESS,
Camp Leader, Untersturmführer Huber SCHMIDT,
Chief of Political Section, Lagerführer GRABNER,
Oberscharführer PALITSCH,
Scharführer STYREK,
S.S. Scharführer WYKLIFF,
S.S.-Mann KLIM,
Standortarzt WIRTZ,
Lagerarzt KENTREDT.

Czechoslovak

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Page 5

Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944 (5 of 6 pages)

[REDACTED]

Further, professional criminals who undertook
in the camps the killing of Jews:

Alexander NEUMANN,

Albert HAEHNERLE,

Rudi OSTERINGER,

Rudi BERCHERT,

Arno BOEHN,

ZIMMERMAN.

Finally, German prisoners:

Alfred KISH,

Alois STAHLER.

Rec'd 7 Jan 45 (E) Czechoslovak
RIB

H 160136

[REDACTED]

Page 6

Intercepted cable version of report on conditions in Auschwitz by Rudolf Vrba and Alfred Wetzler report to Czechoslovak intelligence, June 1944 (6 of 6 pages)

From: Berlin (Auswaertig)
To: Buenos Aires
January 13, 1943

#58

For Valparaiso 1, January 13.

In reply to report of August 18, 1942 - WJ 4 #2
A/B - #68.

The German Department of Education agrees to let retired Headmaster KARL LAUDIEN stay on until further notice. The remittance of his pension (?depends on?) unequivocal separation from his Jewish wife. General instructions as to the handling of persons of mixed blood of the first degree follow.

Request acknowledgment of receipt.

LUTHER.

#78845

(German)

Inter. 1/13/43 (9)
Rec'd. 1/26/43
Trans. 5/7/43 (AH-1)

~~This sheet of paper and all of its contents must be safeguarded with the greatest care. It is essential to prevent drying up this sort of vital intelligence at its source.~~

~~SECRET~~

German Foreign Office message to Buenos Aires stating the status of the pension of the retired headmaster Karl Laudien depends upon the "unequivocal separation" from his Jewish wife. (1 page)

WAR DEPARTMENT

TOP SECRET
TOP SECRET

7681

From: Washington (CARDENAS (DE SILVA))
To: Madrid
20 October 1944
SPA

1007

A representative from the Jewish World Committee came to see me to ask if I would find out if it would be possible for our Legation in Budapest to extend protection to a larger number of persecuted Jews. The representative assured me that the Swedish Government is sending a special delegate, Mr. WALLENBERG, authorized by his government to offer documents of protection, and that they intend to utilize the building which is now used as the annex of the Swedish Legation in Budapest.

Inter 20 Oct 44 (55)

Spanish

#146824

Rec'd 20 Oct 44

Trans 1940 21 Oct 44 (2162-E)

TOP SECRET

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WAR DEPARTMENT

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Intercepted 20 October 1944 Spanish diplomatic cable from the ambassador to Washington, Cardenas de Silva, to Madrid that reports request for Spanish delegation in Budapest to intervene on behalf of the endangered Jews, as well as the notice of Swedish plans to help, including dispatch of Raoul Wallenberg

Gebeime Kommandosache

OKW/Chi

V. N. Nr. _____

VN

Sofort an Chef Chi zurück!

Weitergabe, auch innerhalb des Hauses, selbst in veränderter Form und mit Verschleierung der Quelle, verboten!

1260 /10.44 (U.S.)
F. 19.10.44 (hbo-wiz)
Eingeg. 23.10.44

29. Oktober 1944

Betrifft: UNGARN - Betreuung jüdischer Internierter

Von: USA-Gesandtschaft Bern
An: Staatsdepartement Washington
Nr. 6927

19.10. 1100 h

Für das Kriegsflüchtlingsamt von McOleliand.

Riegner vom Jüdischen Weltkongress, Genf, teilte mir mit, daß dessen Vertreter in Stockholm, Hilel Storch, nach Beschaffung der Erlaubnis bei den schwedischen Behörden genügend Lebensmittel eingekauft habe, um 40 000 Pfundpakete zu packen, die für die jüdischen Deportierten in Bergen-Belsen und Theresienstadt gedacht sind. Riegner hat die einzelnen Namen und Anschriften von 2200 in Bergen-Belsen und 4000 in Theresienstadt Internierten für die erste Sendung an Storch übermittelt.

Storch telegraphierte Riegner am 13. Oktober, daß wegen der endgültigen Ausfuhrerlaubnis einige Schwierigkeit bestünde, insofern als die Schweden und, wie ich glaube, unsere Gesandtschaft die Zusicherung verlangt haben, daß das Internationale Rote Kreuz die ordnungsmäßige Verteilung und den Empfang dieser Pakete überprüfen würde.

Ich habe die Angelegenheit mit dem Internationalen Roten Kreuz am 18.10. besprochen. Das Komitee (des Internationalen Roten Kreuzes) erklärte, es habe bekanntlich nur einmal Theresienstadt besuchen können, und es sei ihm noch nicht gelungen, die Genehmigung zum Besuch von Bergen-Belsen zu erhalten. Das persönliche Quittungskartensystem hat jedoch sehr befriedigende Ergebnisse gezeigt und zwar an beiden Plätzen, besonders aber in Theresienstadt. Es ist

German VN (Verlässliche Nachrichten - "Trustworthy Report"), which is a translation of an intercepted U.S. State Department cable from Bern, Switzerland, to Washington, D.C., reporting on the status of efforts to help Jewish internees by Sweden and the International Red Cross (1 of 2 pages)

des Internationalen Roten Kreuzes erreichen die Empfänger regelmäßig und so normal, wie es unter den Umständen erwartet werden kann. Auch die jetzt in der Schweiz befindlichen Ungarn aus Bergen-Belsen berichten von befriedigender Ankunft und Verteilung derartiger Pakete in der Zeit, in der sie dort waren.

Das Internationale Rote Kreuz ist bereit, seinen Delegierten in Schweden anzuweisen, Etiketten des Internationalen Roten Kreuzes an diesen Paketen anzubringen und Einheitsquittungskarten beizulegen.

Ich würde alle Schritte begrüßen, die Sie unternehmen könnten, um die Freigabe dieses Postens Pakete zu erleichtern. Mir kommt es vor, als ob dieses Projekt dem 100 000-Dollar-Programm des Jüdischen Internationalen Rote/Internationalen Roten Kreuzes (siehe Telegramm des Staatsdepartements Nr. 437 vom 9.2.44, 1200 h) sehr ähnlich sei, welches genehmigt wurde, obwohl mir die Quelle der in Stockholm zum Ankauf dieser Lebensmittel verwendeten Gelder des Jüdischen Weltkongresses unbekannt ist.

Im Hinblick auf den Zeitfaktor, der hinsichtlich des Transports der Waren von Übersee und der zunehmend schwierigen Transportlage innerhalb Deutschlands und der von den Deutschen besetzten Gebiete eine Rolle spielt, sowie auf die Knappheit der käuflichen Lebensmittel ist die schnelle Verwendung irgendwelcher in Europa sofort verfügbaren Waren höchst empfehlenswert.

Harrison.

12 mal

DECLASSIFIED

Authority AWD963016
By SP NARA Date 11/10/03

German VN (Verlässliche Nachrichten – "Trustworthy Report"), which is a translation of an intercepted U.S. State Department cable from Bern, Switzerland, to Washington, D.C., reporting on the status of efforts to help Jewish internees by Sweden and the International Red Cross (2 of 2 pages)

TOP SECRET

V-2-28

From: [-ED---VAR ?] (VEESENMAIER)
To: [Berlin]
[30 December 1944]
BOST

No number.

Re final status of Jewish questions in Hungary.
OBERSTURMFUEHRER EICHMANN was ordered back to Berlin. The remainder of the Command is picking up any Jewish workers who can be found; it will then suspend activities. The goal of having all Jews capable of work removed from Budapest may be regarded as on the whole already achieved. According to final figures available here we have the following picture:

Clean-up of the province [or provincial area ?] in the summer of 1944 - 440,000.

Jews provided for building fortifications in NIEDERDONAU [Lower Danube Province of Austria] some 20,000, of these 6,000 sick have been taken to German concentration camps.

For work in munitions plants some 22,000 Jews have been sent to Germany.

--? LIM--.

From the area NERKOKOLO-PASCHAU some 8,000 Jews were sent by rail through Slovakia. Remaining Jews still to be expected, perhaps 5,000; total therefore in round numbers 493,000 Jews.

In the Ghetto at Budapest about 100,000 Jews are left almost exclusively old men and women as well as Jewish children.

TOP SECRET

WAR DEPARTMENT VEESENMAIER.

Trans 22 Mar 45 (255-E) German P-1810
This sheet of paper and all of its contents must be safeguarded with the greatest care. Utmost secrecy is necessary to prevent drying up this sort of vital intelligence at its source.

TOP SE

Boston-series translation of a message from Budapest reporting the results of the Adolf Eichmann's special action group in removing Jews from Hungary (1 page)

SECRET

Premier Laval's Message of September 30,
1942, With Respect to the Treatment of
Jews in Unoccupied France

The measures which we have been forced to adopt towards the Jews, from concern for our own security, are giving rise to unfair comment and bitter charges, which we cannot leave unanswered. The following discussion, while enlightening you regarding the reasons and scope of these provisions, will also enable you to repel the attacks of the faction in the United States which is resolved to stop at nothing in order to misrepresent our motives and actions.

As a result of the military campaign of 1940, those parts of our country spared by the invasion were flooded by most of the Jews not only from the Occupied Zone but also from Holland, Belgium and Luxemburg. This influx completely upset the racial equilibrium of a region which, already containing many Jews (who had come from Central Europe in 1919), suddenly found its Hebrew population had reached excessive proportions.

Under abnormal conditions now existing, these Jewish people without a country constitute an element which is manifestly dangerous. Depressed by the hardships they have undergone since leaving their homes,

-1A-

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED
Authority: 67-00063016
PROV. STARA Date 12/1/00

Vichy premier Pierre Laval's statement of September 30, 1942, "With Respect to the Treatment of the Jews in Unoccupied France" (1 of 3 pages)

SECRET

these uprooted people, whether living in groups or scattered throughout the countryside, are not assimilated into the normal economy and live only through the black market. Subject to the wiles of unscrupulous propaganda, they have become so many inciters of demoralization and sources of disorder.

The public authorities would fail in their duty if they paid no attention to a menace so dangerous to public order. These authorities have thus arrived at the conviction that the only means of avoiding this peril was the return of these individuals to the lands of their origin in Eastern Europe. This movement has begun. It is taking place by families, the minor children going with their parents, unless the parents prefer to go alone.

This plan, brought about exclusively by our concern for national safety, is intended only to free our soil of the presence of immigrants who have come among us in too great numbers during the past few years. It has no ulterior motive and is in no respect therefore in the nature of a persecution.

The question is furthermore dependent exclusively upon our own sovereignty, and we could not tolerate outside

Vichy premier Pierre Laval's statement of September 30, 1942, "With Respect to the Treatment of the Jews in Unoccupied France" (2 of 3 pages)

Authentic NND 457328
By MW NARA Date 3/3/04

SECRET

interference in this field. Moreover, attempts to ex-
coriate this repatriation come from countries which,
while unsparing both in their sermons and their criti-
cisms, make no effort to aid and continue to close
their doors to Jewish immigration. This applies notably
to the United States.

Such is the object of the measures taken with
respect to the Jews without a country. As for the
French Jews, they remain subject to the regulations
applied to them by the legislation in force.*

*The "legislation in force" includes a law enacted
on July 24, 1941. Two reports from the Mexican Charge
d'Affaires in Vichy (the first of which was noted in the
August 15 Summary) deal with the application of that law
to one Isaac Bejar, who, although born in Mexico, has,
for at least 12 years, been in the wholesale cloth goods
business in Unoccupied France. According to the Charge,
an official administrator has begun the sale of Bejar's
property and has threatened to sell his house. Under
the applicable law, after Bejar's property has been
liquidated, the proceeds will be withheld, subject to
the order of the commissioner in charge of Jewish affairs,
and Bejar will be given only a small food allowance.
Bejar and his wife have been prevented from receiving
correspondence and he has often been "personally molested"
by the police.

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Vichy premier Pierre Laval's statement of September 30, 1942, "With Respect to the Treatment of the Jews in Unoccupied France" 3 of 3 pages)

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Glossary of Terms, Abbreviations, and Acronyms

Abwehr – German military intelligence

AHS – Arlington Hall Station

“BJ” – “blue jacket” or “Black Jumbo,” terms for diplomatic translations done by the GC&CS

BPIE – Bletchley Park Intelligence Exchange

BRUSA – Britain/United States of America

C/A – Cryptanalysis

CI – code instruction

Cipher - A method of concealing plaintext by transposing letters or numbers or by substituting other letters or numbers according to a key

Code - A method of concealing a message text in which arbitrary groups of letters, numbers, or other symbols replace words, phrases, letters, or numbers for the purposes of concealment or brevity.

COMINT – communications intelligence

COMINTERN – communist international

CSS – Chief, Secret Service (Director, MI-6)

D/F – direction finding

Einsatzgruppen – “Action groups” consisting of SS, SD, and other security elements that were established to massacre Jews, partisans, and communist officials in the wake of the German armies during the invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941.

Enigma – German high-level cipher machine

FCC – Federal Communications Commission

GC&CS – Government Code and Cypher School

GCHQ – Government Communications Headquarters (Successor organization to GC&CS)

Gestapo – Geheime Staats Polizei (Secret State Police)

GPCC – German Police Concentration Camp [communications]

GPD – German Police Decrypts

HCC – Historical Cryptographic Collection, RG 457

Hut (3/4/6/8) – Buildings in the Bletchley Park complex in which the various operational activities, such as decryption and translation, of the GC&CS were conducted

ISCOT – Intelligence Source Scott

ISK – Intelligence Source [Dillwyn] Knox. Abwehr machine ciphers.

ISOCICLE – SD ciphers

ISOS – Intelligence Source Oliver Strachey. Abwehr manual ciphers.

JIC – Joint Intelligence Committee

Kripo - Kriminal polizei (Criminal Police)

MAGIC – Cover name for translations from Japanese diplomatic messages

MASK – Cover name for translations of COMINTERN messages by GC&CS

MEW – Ministry of Economic Warfare (Great Britain)

M.I.5 – British Security Service (or Security Service)

M.I.6 – British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS, or Secret Service)

MIS – Military Intelligence Service, G-2 of the U.S. War Department

MS – Monitoring Station (usually followed by a one- or two-digit designation)

MSS – Most Secret Source, a caveat for intelligence derived from high-level cryptanalysis

NARA – National Archives and Records Administration

NGO – nongovernmental organization

NSA/CSS – National Security Agency/Central Security Service

OKW-Chi – Oberkommando der Wehrmacht/Chiffrierungsabteilung

OP-20-G – Designator for the U.S. Navy's cryptologic organization. It was an element of under the Director for Naval Communications.

Orpo – Ordnungspolizei (Order Police)

OSS – Office of Strategic Services

OTP – one-time pad

OWI – Office of Wartime Information (U.S.)

PRO – Public Record Office/National Archives

Purple – U.S. designator for Japanese diplomatic cipher machine "B"

"Q" – designator for GC&CS diplomatic translations

RSHA – Reichssicherheitshauptamt (Reich Security Main Office)

RSS – Radio Security Service

SB – Special Branch, G-2, War Department

Schupo – Schutz Polizei (Civil Police)

SCU – Special Communications Unit

SD – Sicherheitsdienst (Security Service)

Sipo – Sicherheits Polizei (Security Police)

SIS – U.S. Army Signals Intelligence Service

SIS – Secret Intelligence Service (MI-6, UK)

SLU – Special Liaison Unit (UK)

SS – Schutzstaffel

SSO – Special Security Officer (U.S.)

T/A – Traffic analysis

Ultra – cover name for intelligence derived from high-level cryptanalysis

Venona – The cover name given the project by the U.S. Army (and continued by the Armed Forces Security Agency and its successor, the National Security Agency) to exploit the encoded messages of the various Soviet intelligence services, the NKVD and GRU, that contained information from the various intelligence agents and networks operating within the United States.

Y-Service – term used by British to categorize intercept and related activities.

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