

~~SECRET~~DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013*Office Memorandum* • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : FOR THE RECORD

DATE: 3 August 1962

FROM : Ralph A. Brown

SUBJECT: Discussion with Mr. O'Donnell

1. This morning Mr. O'Donnell came to see me to discuss the following developments. On Tuesday he had a discussion with Rainer Hildebrandt who informed him that a group of young men is planning to arrange the escape of 45 East Berliners through a tunnel. Hildebrandt asked O'Donnell's help to get funds for this effort which was to have taken place on Thursday, 2 August. O'Donnell called Dan Schorr and arranged a meeting with the group in Berlin to discuss the sale of TV rights. The meeting was held on Wednesday with Rainer Hildebrandt, Dietmar Gamp (Leibneizstr. 86, tele 321264), Fritz Warner (telephone 613131), O'Donnell and Dan Schorr. At this and subsequent meetings during the day the escape was discussed in detail and terms for the TV rights settled. From the original price of 100,000 DM the Germans were willing to go down to 55,000 DM plus an unspecified payment for a film of the 13 August 1961 proceedings which is to be brought out by one of the East Berlin residents who is a cameraman. The tunnel has been dug for one month in the vicinity of the S-bahn property on the line leading to the Baumschulen Weg station (see attached sketch). With the exception of the last two meters of tunneling which is still required for a breakthrough on the East side, the tunnel has been completed. On Thursday, Dan Schorr's German cameraman took pictures of the tunnel. Further meetings of the group are planned for tonight and it has tentatively been agreed to carry out the operation on Sunday.

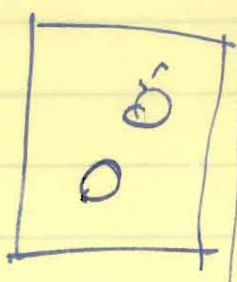
2. O'Donnell asked our help in getting background information on the three Germans connected with this enterprise and was generally interested in discussing the operation. He explained that his principal motive in the affair is to see to it that proper publicity is given to a tunnel escape. Schorr asked O'Donnell several months ago to tip him off if he becomes aware of escape plans which could be filmed. Schorr wants to use the film for a TV program which is to be transmitted on 13 August.

3. I expressed concern about these plans and recommended to O'Donnell that he drop his contacts with the group. I pointed out that the American press had previously been accused of exploiting escapes from the East and that this had an adverse effect on our relations with the German press and Berlin city officials. I told him that this tunnel operation has probably been blown to the Eastern authorities and could probably not be carried out successfully.

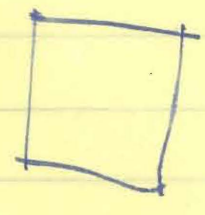
~~SECRET~~



S. Ba
Baumstr. 100m



2x
Liespa



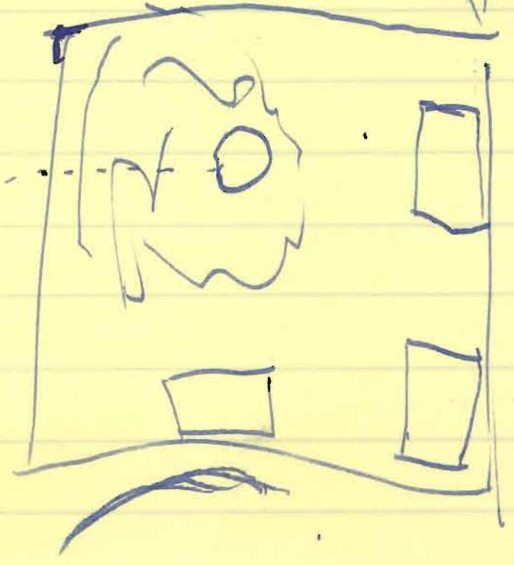
S. Ba
100m



Planer - Sektor L



Wohnen



FM ARTHUR DAY, BERLIN
TO ROY PERCIVAL, BONN
ZEM

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

~~SECRET~~

TOD: 041306Z Aug '62

~~SECRET~~

BLN 684

MISSION UNDERSTANDS ATTEMPT IS TO BE MADE BY GERMAN STUDENTS TO BRING 45 RPT 45 REFUGEES FROM EAST BERLIN TO WEST BERLIN THROUGH A TUNNEL. LIKELY BE ATTEMPTED TOMORROW.

*ref.
W*

WE UNDERSTAND DAN SCHORR (CBS) AND JAMES O'DONNELL (WAS ON CLAY'S STAFF PAST YEAR, NOW HERE PRIVATE CAPACITY) ARE IN CONTACT WITH STUDENTS, AND HAVE AGREED PAY STUDENTS 5,000 DM FOR TV RIGHTS.

SCHORR REPORTEDLY PLANS FILMING ESCAPE FOR USE IN DOCUMENTARY ON AUGUST 13. HAS ALREADY HAD FILMS TAKEN OF TUNNEL THROUGH HIS GERMAN CAMERAMAN. IN ADDITION, ONE OF REFUGEES IS PHOTOGRAPHER BRINGING FILM OF AUGUST 13, FOR WHICH CBS WILL REPORTEDLY PAY UNSPECIFIED AMOUNT.

WE CONSIDER IT WOULD BE MOST DAMAGING TO U S INTEREST TO HAVE ASSOCIATION SCHORR AND O'DONNELL BECOME PUBLIC. PARTICULARLY GIVEN PLANS FOR DOCUMENTARY APPEARS HIGHLY LIKELY WILL BE BECOME PUBLIC.

WE INTEND ATTEMPT PERSUADE SCHORR AND O'DONNELL DISASSOCIATE THEMSELVES AND NOT USE FILMS OF ESCAPE IN ANY WAY THAT WOULD INDICATE ANY ASSOCIATION.

IF SCHORR DOES NOT AGREE, WE MAY RECOMMEND CBS IN U S BE APPROACHED BY DEPARTMENT.

IN VIEW INABILITY TALK TO YOU ON TELEPHONE, AND URGENCY OF SITUATION, WE PROCEEDING ARRANGE MEETING WITH SCHORR AND O'DONNELL THIS AFTERNOON.

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Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

FM MR. PERCIVAL, BONN
TO MR. DAY, BERLIN
ZEM

~~S E C R E T~~

BON 222

HAVE DISCUSSED WITH MORRIS AND LIGHTNER. THEY NATURALLY APPROVE
YOUR ATTEMPT TO DISSUADE O'DONNELL AND SCHORR FROM ASSOCIATION WITH
ESCAPE.

~~SECRET~~

TOP: 04 14 40z Aug 62

W
T&F

FM: HULICK, BERLIN
TO: HILLENBRAND, DEPT OF STATE
WILLIAMSON, AMEMBASSY, BONN
INFO: Baker (USAREUR)

ZEM

BAKER

~~SECRET~~

BLN 689

IN BRIEF DISCUSSION WITH SCHORR THIS AFTERNOON FOLLOWING PRESS BACKGROUNDER, I AGAIN IMPRESSED UPON HIM SERIOUS SITUATION HE WOULD BE IN IF OTHER SIDE WAS PRIVY TO AND DIRECTING AFFAIR IN WHICH HE INTERESTED -- A SITUATION IN WHICH OTHER SIDE WOULD HAVE THE DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE AND POSSIBLY IN THE END SOME OF HIS PEOPLE IN THEIR HANDS. SCHORR REAFFIRMED THAT HE MEANT WHAT HE SAID WHEN HE TOLD ME LAST NIGHT HE WOULD GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO POINTS I HAD MADE. HE STATED HE WAS LESS CERTAIN NOW ABOUT GOING AHEAD THEN HE WAS TWO DAYS AGO.

SUBSEQUENTLY, O'DONNELL INFORMED MISSION OFFICER EXERCISE PLANNED TAKE PLACE AUGUST 7, 1800 HOURS; THAT GROUP NOW ENLARGED TO NINETY (90); THAT SCHORR AND CHIEF CAMERAMAN DEPARTING FOR BONN TO BE ABSENT FROM SCENE; AND THAT SECOND CAMERAMAN LEFT BEHIND WITH DECISION AS YET UNMADE AS TO WHETHER LATTER WOULD ATTEMPT FILM AT THIS END, BUT IMPLICATION IS HE MAY BE ON THE SCENE.

WHILE UNCERTAIN RELIABILITY O'DONNELL INFO WOULD APPEAR SCHORR HAS HAD SECOND THOUGHTS AND THAT CHANCES HAVE IMPROVED HE MAY DECIDE NOT RPT NOT HAVE ANYONE IN HIS EMPLOY DIRECTLY CONNECTED WITH FILMING OF PLANNED EVENT SHOULD IT TAKE PLACE.

FOREGOING REPORTED IN CASE EMBASSY WISHES APPROACH SCHORR IN BONN TOMORROW AND AS PERTINENT ANY ACTION DEPARTMENT CONTEMPLATING.

~~SECRET~~

TOD (TO HQ): 061752Z Aug

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

*T.C.F.
USCORB: W*

~~SECRET~~

AEBU-IO

7 August 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Possible Refugee Influx (U)

1. (S) A reliable source has reported that on 7 August, approximately 90 refugees will be exfiltrated from East Berlin. This operation is being directed by a group of West Berlin wholesale butchers who operate trucks between West Berlin and East Berlin. In conjunction with a local student group, they have constructed a tunnel which allegedly egresses into Neukollen (U.S. Sector). Source reports that Dan Shore, CBS Commentator, has already taken 3 rolls of film of the tunnel, for which he paid the operators 5,000 DMW. Film is allegedly to be released on 13 August.

2. (U) Evaluation of Source is B-3.

GERALD V. SABATINO
Lt Col, GS
Acting Intelligence Officer

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

INCOMING

U.S. MISSION BERLIN

COPY # /

ACTION: DECLASSIFIED
OAC 1 Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

INFO: FROM: DEPARTMENT
F&R NO: 129 - 7 AUGUST 62 - 1 AM
DUMMY

~~SECRET~~
Classification

Control: 69

Recd: AUGUST 7, 1962
0710

W

NIACT

ACTION BERLIN NIACT 129 INFO BONN PRITY 359

EYES ONLY

TO HULICK FROM SECRETARY

I SAW CLARK TONIGHT AND HE AGREED SCRUB CES PARTICIPATION IN
TUNNEL PROJECT.

HOWEVER THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT THIS MATTER HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF
COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SCHORR AND HIS HOME OFFICE OVER PERIOD OF
TIME. I AM DISTURBED THAT SO MANY PEOPLE AWARE OF PROJECT. I
CANNOT ASSESS MATTER FULLY HERE AND MUST LEAVE TO LOCAL DISCRETION.
BUT URGENT CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO STEPS TO ALERT EAST
GERMANS INVOLVED TO HIGH PROBABILITY THAT SECRECY BROKEN AND
THEY WALKING INTO TRAP. IF POSSIBLE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHETHER
NOT ADVISABLE SCRUB WHOLE EFFORT.

YOU SHOULD ALSO CONSIDER QUIET SURVIELANCE OF AREA TO ENSURE THAT
PHOTOGRAPHERS AND OTHERS NOT POISED FOR TUNNEL EXIT. END.

RUSK

69 NNH

~~SECRET~~
Classification

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

DATE: 8 August 1962

SUBJECT: Compromised Escape Tunnel

1. About one month ago, a representative of the LfV-Berlin received word that a mass escape tunnel was being constructed from West Berlin. Participants were affiliated with three West Berlin groups: The Fritz Wagner group (already famous for its work in tunneling); a Technical University group; and a Free University group. This was an initial tunneling effort for the Free University group. The objective of the tunnel was to exfiltrate about 90 East Berlin residents by transporting them in trucks to a large parking lot situated near Kiefhozstrasse, East Berlin, where the eastern terminal of the tunnel is located, and then enable the escapees to crawl to the Western terminal, about 65 meters distance, to a lumber yard in Neukoelln adjacent to the Treptow Railroad Freight Station. The exfiltration was to have commenced on 31 July 1962. It was postponed until 2 August and was again scheduled for 1600 hours on 7 August. [The operation was called off at about 2000 hours on 7 August when a counter-surveillant in East Berlin observed a heavy concentration of uniformed personnel in the parking lot area and sent out a warning message to participants. Two female would-be escapees were detained by VoPos near the parkinglot and at least thirty-seven other arrests were prevented by the action of the counter-surveillant. It was thought that perhaps 15-18 persons involved in the eastern phase of the operation might have been rounded up, but exact information on this point has not yet been collected.]

2. The LfV representative who dealt with Wagner did not like the looks of this operation. The security was very poor, there were far too many western participants and many western non-participants were also knowledgeable that a mass escape was planned. Recently an American television representative photographed a portion of the tunnel's western segment and had agreed to pay Wagner 5000 DMW to be able to photograph the actual escape of personnel. Originally Wagner had asked 100,000 DMW for this favor. Rainer Hildebrand, well known peripheral intelligence type and sometimes-writer, had obtained and turned over to one of the Western participants a VoPo uniform which was to be used in East Berlin to provide security coverage for the escapees when trucks transporting these persons reached the eastern parking lot. The LfV-Berlin representative felt the

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

DATE: 8 August 1962

SUBJECT: Compromised Escape Tunnel

Page Two

operation might be compromised in East Berlin through soliciting such a large number of escapee-candidates and he intentionally did not become deeply involved in the operation. He also disliked the rivalry for personal glory which had sprung up amongst western participants. On the other hand, he had no reason to suspect disloyalty on the part of any one of the West Berlin participants.

3. Wagner had the original idea for a tunnel at this site in December 1961. Work actually commenced in April 1962; was suspended and begun again in June; again suspended and finally got underway again about one month ago. It was completed on the afternoon of 7 August 1962. Wagner, who acted as coordinator of the operation, told the LfV representative today that he considered the tunnel completely compromised and would, under no circumstances, utilize it.

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TELEGRAM

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OUTGOING U. S. MISSION BERLIN

COPY # 2

~~SECRET~~

Charge:

Classification

Control: 46

CA

ACTION: SecState WASH 159 NIACT
AmEmbassy BONN 146 PRIORITY

Date: AUGUST 7, 1962
11:15 PM

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY

BONN EYES ONLY FOR WILLIAMSON

Ref Berlintel 153 to Dept. 140 to Bonn

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NND 67230

By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

Escape effort not made today. Not clear at this time whether
project abandoned or postponed.

OAC 1
F&R 1 DMV

LIGHTNER

EHL
7

SOL:ARDay
8/7/62

CN 46 MLB

~~SECRET~~
Classification

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

OUTGOING U. S. MISSION BERLIN

COPY # 2

~~SECRET~~

Classification

Change:

Control: 51

BHTT GA

Date: AUGUST 8, 1962
7:15 PM

ACTION: SecState WASH 163 ~~EXACT~~ PRIORITY
AmEmbassy BONN 149 PRIORITY

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY

BONN EYES ONLY FOR WILLIAMSON

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

Ref Berlintel 159 to Dept; 146 Bonn.

According to
Based on LFV report operation called off about 2000 hours 7 August

when counter-surveillant in East Berlin observed heavy concentration of uniformed personnel in parking lot area where eastern terminal of tunnel located. Warning message was sent to participants and LFV believes those

OAC 1 would-be-escapees (now stated by LFV to have been total of 37) being brought
F&R 1 DMY to parking lot area in truck may have evaded arrest through warning.

However, according to latest LFV information an additional total of approximately twenty would-be-escapees, making a total of 57 rather than 90 previously reported, planned to make their way to parking lot area on foot. Two female members of latter group are known to have been detained by Vopos near parking lot. LFV, while not yet in possession firm confirmation, believe perhaps additional 15 to 18 persons of (latter) this group may have been rounded up.

Leader of West Berlin organizing group, who coordinated planned operation, told LFV today he considered tunnel completely compromised

CN 51 MLB

~~SECRET~~

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~~SECRET~~

CN 51

- 2 -

and that he would not consider using it in future.

Worst aspects of what could have been politically very embarrassing development seem to have been avoided. However, with two known arrests and possibly more of would-be-escapee group, ^{it is possible} SED regime may ~~subsequently~~ mount show trial with statements from those arrested implicating CBS participation in planned operation.

← There is ~~also~~, also possibility ~~that~~ West Berlin organizer^s may eventually use Schorr, O'Donnell involvement to excuse failure of their operation, especially if as many as 20 ~~more of would-be-escapee group~~ actually arrested and brought to public trial.

Lightner
LIGHTNER

OAC:CEHulick:man
8/8/62

~~SECRET~~

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Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

USCOB	W
C/S, USCOB	TOP
Staff Sec'y	

~~SECRET~~
ARD

FM: MR. WILLIAMSON, BONN *af*
TO : MR. LIGHTNER, BERLIN
INFO: MR. HILLENBRAND, STATE DEPARTMENT
ZEM

SECRET
TOP: 090945Z Aug 62

~~S E C R E T~~

BON 232

WITH REF TO YOUR 163, AUG 8, WOULD THERE BE ANY OBJECTION TO INFORMING SCHORR IN GENERAL TERMS OF SOME THE RESULTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF ATTEMPT FOR TUNNEL ESCAPE? IT MIGHT HELP MODIFY HIS CURRENT ATTITUDE FOLLOWING PHONE CALL FROM WASHINGTON. HIS CURRENT LINE IS THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT CANNOT TAKE ACTION BUT IT CAN CERTAINLY PREVENT IT.

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

2

INCOMING

U.S. MISSION BERLIN

#

1

ACTION:
OAC 1 ✓
MIN MORRIS

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Authority NND 67230

By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

~~SECRET~~
Classification

Control:

119

Tob
W

INFO:
F&R DUMMY

FROM: DEPARTMENT

Recd: AUGUST 10, 1962
0820

NO: 142 - 9 AUGUST 62 - 5 PM

PRIORITY

ACTION BONN PRITY 389 INFO BERLIN PRITY 142

EYES ONLY MORRIS AND WILLIAMSON FROM SECRETARY

EYES ONLY LIGHTNER AND HULICK

UPON CONFIRMATION FROM LIGHTNER THAT HE SEES NO OBJECTION FROM BERLIN SIDE, REQUEST YOU INFORM SCHORR OF VERY SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS TUNNEL ESCAPE AND IN GENERAL OF DEVELOPMENTS IN PAST 24 HOURS. US OFFICIALS HAVE NO APOLOGY FOR PROMPT ACTION TAKEN WITH CBS AND SCHORR; SCHORR INVOLVED HIMSELF IN A MATTER WHICH WAS FAR BEYOND HIS PRIVATE OR JOURNALISTIC RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEEDED AMATEURISHLY IN A MATTER FILLED WITH GREATEST DANGER FOR ALL CONCERNED. AS WE ANTICIPATED, OTHER SIDE TURNED OUT TO BE FULLY AWARE OF ENTIRE MATTER AND LAID A TRAP WHICH HAD COULD HAVE RESULTED IN MASSACRE THOSE INVOLVED. WE CANNOT HELP BUT BE DISMAYED AT DEGREE OF INVOLVEMENT WHICH SCHORR HAD CONTEMPLATED, APPARENTLY WITHOUT ANY REGARD FOR GRAVE POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES.

RUSK

ACTION TAKEN:

NO ACTION
REQUIRED

DATE _____

INITIALS _____

119 NNH

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TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
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572

INCOMING U S MISSION BERLIN

1

ACTION: DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 67230
OAC 41 By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

~~SECRET~~
Classification

Control: 124

W

INFO:
F&R 1

Recd: August 10, 1962
6:45 PM

FROM BONN

NO 107 AUG 10 5 PM
PRIORITY

ACTION DEPT PRITY 437 INFO BERLIN PRITY 107

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY

BERLIN EYES ONLY FOR LIGHTNER AND HULICK

DEPTEL 389, BERLIN'S 153

SCHORR INFORMED THIS AFTERNOON IN GENERAL TERMS THAT PLAN FOR ESCAPE HAD BEEN COMPROMISED, THAT ARRESTS POSSIBLY UP TO TWENTY HAD BEEN MADE AND POSSIBLE TRIAL MAY BE HELD WHICH WILL IMPLICATE HIM AND CBS. HE WAS ALSO INFORMED THAT EXTENT HIS PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT IN PLAN OF MAGNITUDE SO EASILY COMPROMISED WAS INCREDIBLE AND THAT IT COULD HAVE RESULTED IN LARGE SCALE LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE HAD EFFECTIVE ACTION NOT BEEN TAKEN TO PREVENT ITS FULFILLMENT. HE WAS TOLD ALSO THAT INFORMATION CONCERNING COMPROMISE OF PLAN AND SUBSEQUENT ARRESTS WAS HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL AND SHOULD BE DISCUSSED WITH NO ONE EXCEPT LIGHTNER AND HULICK.

SCHORR APPEARED CHASTENED BY FACT THAT A PLAN WHICH WAS TO BE HIS GREATEST TELEVISION ACHIEVEMENT HAD FAILED. HE DID NOT GIVE SLIGHTEST APPEARANCE OF BEING CONTRITE. HE STATED HE BELIEVED SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE TO DRAMATIZE SITUATION SINCE STATE DEPT HAD TAKEN "A NEGATIVE ATTITUDE" TOWARDS COMMEMORATION OF AUG 13. A MASS ESCAPE WOULD SERVE PURPOSE AND AT LAST COUNT 120 WERE SUPPOSED TO ENTER TUNNEL. HE MADE KNOWN MONTHS AGO DESIRE TO FILM TUNNEL ESCAPE AND WAS APPROACHED FOUR MONTHS AGO BY "GERMAN GROUP" (UNIDENTIFIED) WITH DEMAND FOR 100,000 MARKS TO FINANCE ENTERPRISE. HE STATED THAT HE HAD PAID 5000 MARKS TO GROUP. HE WAS INFORMED ON AUGUST 2 THAT TUNNEL WAS NEARLY READY AND MADE PREPARATION FOR FILM.

IN POSSIBLE THAT WHO TAKEN AWAY BEING DEVER" IS HE WVD NOT
SCHORR SVS CRIMINAL LOW INFORMATION DIVL HE MIGHT BE IMAGED

-5-

RTG/124

~~SECRET~~
Classification

-2-

SCHORR WAS GRATEFUL FOR INFORMATION THAT HE MIGHT BE INVOLVED IN POSSIBLE TRIAL AND ASKED THAT BLAIR CLARK, IF HE HAD NOT ALREADY RECEIVED IT, BE GIVEN INFORMATION OF THIS POSSIBILITY, AS WELL AS ARRESTS.

SCHORR WILL BE IN BERLIN TOMORROW AND WILL ATTEMPT TO SEE LIGHTNER OR HULICK. HIS CHIEF CONCERN WAS TO DETERMINE HOW PLAN BECAME COMPROMISED. WHETHER DISCUSSION MADE ANY IMPRESSION ON HIM CAN ONLY BE DETERMINED BY HIS FUTURE ACTIONS AND STATEMENTS.

MORRIS

ACTION TAKEN:

NO ACTION
REQUIRED

DATE _____

INITIALS _____

Mr. Hulick:

Your Blw 689
dispatched 6 Aug. 62.

Williamson Requested
this be shown to
Morris, Lightner &
Percival.

Carl Kemper

TELEGRAM

Foreign Service of the
United States of America

3

OUTGOING

U.S. MISSION BERLIN

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Classification

Charge:

Control: 57

Date: AUGUST 10, 1962
1130

ACTION: SecState WASH 167 PRIORITY
AmEmbassy BONN 153 PRIORITY

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY

BONN EYES ONLY FOR MORRIS AND WILLIAMSON

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Authority NND 67230
By BKT/NC on 2 May 2013

Ref Deptel 389 Bonn.

I fully concur in Secretary's suggestion. Of course sources of information on developments August 8 should be protected. We may also have occasion talk to Schorr here in next few days.

OAC 1 ✓
MORRIS 1
F&R 1 (DUMMY)
ALSO

Lightner
LIGHTNER

OAC: EALightner:man
8/10/62

AW

57 NNH

~~SECRET~~

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