

Dispatches: Austria. 2/24/87-4/22/88

CONTINUED

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

REB

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B) FROM

VIENNA

Dated February 19, 1938

Rec'd 2:10 p. m.

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

RUSH

31, February 19, 2 p. m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

762.63/461  
DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
FEB 21 1938  
HATIE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

On instructions of his Government French Minister has seen Chancellor Schuschnigg and informed him of French representations in Berlin where French Ambassador informed German Government that France considered the independence of Austria indispensable for peace of Europe. Puaux told the Chancellor France and England were concerting action and he enquired what France could do in order to help Austria. Chancellor replied that it was essential to eradicate impression of Halifax visit. Great Britain could do a great deal in Berlin. Hitler eagerly desired an understanding with London. Above all Schuschnigg said France and Great Britain must not permit Germany to get the impression that they would be passive should Austria be violated. The Chancellor explained that Germany had

FEB 23 1938

FILED

Confidential File

FP

762.63

REB

2-#31, From Vienna, Feb.19, 2 p.m.

had demanded the exchange of 100 officers. He added that in the interest of "comradship" between the two armies he had willingly acquiesced but had not agreed to any fixed number which he intended to keep reduced and of lower rank. Germany had also demanded currency union and complete coordination of the economy of the two countries within their separate frontiers. This he categorically refused. He admitted that the situation had become much more dangerous and difficult. He claimed however that he had not yet "lost the game" and still had trumps to play. Chancellor seemed less sure of himself when the French Minister queried him with regard to the significance of the admittance of National Socialists into the patriotic front (see my 30, February 19, 1 p.m.). He replied however that they would have to accept the principles of the Christian cooperative state. The French Minister asked what would remain of their weltanschauung. Schuschnigg replied hatred of the Jews and Socialism.

The Chancellor informed the French Minister that Seyss-Inquart had never been a member of the National Socialist

REB

3-#31, From Vienna, Feb. 19, 2p.m.

Socialist Party in Austria and that his greatest fear was that he would show himself too good an Austrian which might precipitate matters with Hitler. Seyss-Inquart had not been personally known to Hitler and had been recommended to Goering by a group of intellectual but not activist Nazis in Austria.

The French Minister clarified role of Italy in recent events. Italian Minister informed February 10th on the proposed visit. Mussolini acquiesced. After the Chancellor's return from interview with Hitler Mussolini acquiesced in reconstruction of Government. Schuschnigg has not been keeping the Italians fully informed. Schuschnigg explained that everything he had confided to Rome had been repeated to Berlin.

French Minister is urging the Chancellor to see Mussolini.

Schmidt not present at interview.

The French Minister considers the situation as encouraging in respect of the immediate future. He fears however that at best one cannot look forward to more than six months respite.

Repeated by telegraph to Rome, Paris, Berlin and London.

WILEY

CSB

cu

MB

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (B)

Vienna

Dated March 25, 1938

Rec'd 8:25 a.m.

Secretary of State,

Washington.

144, March 25, 11 a.m.

FROM MILITARY ATTACHE.

"I talked with Hungarian colleague who states his belief Czechoslovakia defying economic and political suffocation that six months will see liquidation of Czechoslovakia without necessity of war. As German minority demands are presented the demands of Poland and Hungary will be simultaneously formulated. Hungarian Army G 2 stated Hungary would bring intensive campaign for minorities. Newspaper reports indicate this already begun."

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66-64

860200/462

WILEY

RR:W/C

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

File  
DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
JUL 23 1938  
CABLE TO VIENNA AND  
PARAGRAPHS 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

REB

This telegram must be closely paraphrased before being communicated to anyone. (br)

VIENNA

Dated July 22, 1938

Rec'd 3:05 p. m. JUL 23 1938

Secretary of State,  
Washington.

ADVISED ON POLITICAL RELATIONS  
MR. DUNN  
JUL 23 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

RUSH

271, July 22, 5 p. m.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

Though no large concentration of troops greatly increased military activities during the last few weeks, preparations for offensive warfare including air fields are being rushed to completion, stocks of foodstuffs and motor fuel are being assembled, reservists and doctors are being called up for short muster or ordered to await call, rumors from military and party sources allege that ultimatum to and invasion of Czechoslovakia scheduled for this year.

British passport control officer, who apparently represents British military intelligence, believes that either war is imminent or that Germans are creating atmosphere with view to extracting far-reaching concessions.

Repeated to Berlin.

WILEY

GW-CSB

760F.62/503

FILED

FP

copy & forward  
to O. N. I. and M. I. D.  
July 22/38. (18)

PARAPHRASE  
OF TELEGRAM

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

From: American Consulate General,  
Vienna, Germany.  
To: Secretary of State,  
Washington, D. C.  
Dated: July 22, 1938, 5 p.m.  
Rec'd: July 22, 1938, 3:05 p.m.

For some weeks past military activities have been intensified though troops have not been concentrated, but air field construction and offensive war preparations have been expedited. The assembling of motor fuel and foodstuffs has been noted, and doctors as well as reservists are on short muster or under call orders. Reports originating in Party and military circles claim that before the end of the year the Germans may enter Czechoslovakia in connection with an ultimatum. A source considered as representing a British military information organization holds the opinion that Germany is either endeavoring to build up a background which she may intend for bargaining purposes, or that she may intend to take armed action in the near future.

(18)

Eu:Flack:DG

No. 345

*Handwritten notes and stamps:*  
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JAC  
AN  
EU  
AMT  
DIVISION OF  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

VIENNA, July 26, 1938.

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION.

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

WASHINGTON.

*Handwritten notes:*  
"VB"  
M.I.D. } in strict  
O.N.I. } confidence  
AUG 2 1938  
POF - G

760F.62/577

SIR:

760F.62/503  
506

Confirming my telegrams No. 271 of July 22, 1938, 5 p.m., and No. 273 of July 25, 1938, 1 p.m., relative to military activities in Austria, I have the honor to report that there is no evidence of any large concentration of troops in the region of Vienna nor along the Austro-Czech frontier. German army forces in Austria is a subject which has greatly interested my British colleague, and he tells me that as a result of his researches he estimates the number of German, as distinguished from Austrian, troops of all arms now in the Ostmark at 18,000. Constantly, however, new units are being identified, but without substantial change in the total number. So far as is known, there has been neither increase nor reduction in the mechanized equipment(\*) of the Army in Austria during the last several months. For example, the large park of tanks at Laxenberg (near Vienna) has remained static since the invasion of Austria.

Preparations for offensive warfare are, however, being

rushed

(\*) Reliable reports indicate that the quality of the mechanized equipment is distinctly inferior. The mechanical casualties in the invasion of Austria greatly exceeded what might normally have been expected.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
A-M-C  
AUG 23 1938  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

CONFIDENTIAL FILE

GML

rushed to completion, and work on military air fields is being conducted day and night(\*). A high authority of the Technische Hochschule, a man with world wide renown in the field of engineering, informed me that military preparations in Austria would be completed by the middle of August. The technical facilities of the Hochschule have been taken over by the military authorities, and I gathered the impression that my informant was speaking on a basis of considerable knowledge. Sometime ago he was called to Berchtesgaden for personal consultation with the Führer. He described the outlook as "most alarming".

There is a very general calling up of many classes of reservists for short muster, ranging from five days to eight weeks service. Many doctors have received instructions not to leave the area of their homes and to be prepared at any time to respond to a summons from the military authorities.

From several sources along the frontier I have definite information that in certain areas there the population is being evacuated; in many instances abandoning their crops in the fields. Where estates have been involved, the owners have been obliged to sell. Peasants have been promised indemnification in houses and land elsewhere in Germany. The purpose is presumably that of military works.

In motoring over the countryside, one frequently sees army motor trucks. They are never in great numbers, but they give

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(\*) Mr. Morgan has personally confirmed this.

they give the appearance of being engaged in definite missions. It may therefore be possible that the German General Staff is following the same tactics that were adopted in the East in the days of the Black Reichswehr and is quietly storing arms, munitions and military supplies in country houses. Probably frontier bases are being prepared for a possible advance into Czechoslovakia. Foreign Military Attachés, however, have not as yet been able thoroughly to investigate the countryside and there is no indication that foreign powers have succeeded in organizing efficient "services" in the Ostmark.

So far I have not been able to get confirmation from local oil companies that abnormal stocks of motor fuel are being assembled. I have, however, definite information that substantial quantities of gasoline are being sent into Austria from Germany by rail in drums and in fleets of motor tank wagons. Also a "third party", according to reliable information, is now negotiating on behalf of the military authorities for extensive storage space for motor fuel along the Danube. There is, moreover, information that food supplies are being collected in Austria for military purposes.

It is difficult to evaluate the character of the foregoing indications. The conquest of Austria would naturally imply that the German General Staff would endeavor to consolidate the military position in Austria as rapidly as feasible, and it is perhaps possible that there is nothing underway that exceeds the German conception of normal preparedness. It is, moreover, true that the German General Staff considers that the Austrian Army must be

entirely

entirely re-equipped and retrained as a prerequisite for military service. The fact remains, however, that no time is being lost in order to synchronize military preparedness with the harvest, which may possibly lend the shadow of credence to the many rumors current in respect of German designs on Czechoslovakia.

As was the case before the Anschluss, there are many disquieting rumors and reports. Field Marshall Goering is said to be talking in a most alarming manner, repercussions from Munich allege that the Führer is in a dangerous temper, Party members have dropped casual remarks that would suggest that they anticipate war in the near future, German officials of foreign oil companies have become close-mouthed, and there have even been indications from German military sources which are far from reassuring: Mr. Alfred W. Donegan, Foreign Service Officer retired, who has been living in Vienna for the past year or two, has just transferred his residence to the United States. When he took leave of an Austrian officer now on active service in the German Army, the latter suggested that they would probably never meet again. He told Mr. Donegan that Germany would send an ultimatum on August 15th, that the ultimatum would be followed immediately by the invasion of Czechoslovakia. Another alarming factor which is being cited is the fact that Germany expects to have a bumper crop. Finally, Reichswehr privates have boasted that they would soon be on wartime pay.

The Polish Military Intelligence (which is in close touch with the Polish Consulate General) also seems to believe

believe that war will come this year; that time is working against Germany. French Military Intelligence (the office of the Military Attaché in Berlin frequently sends an officer to Vienna) takes a less pessimistic view, but is exercising great vigilance. The British Consul General is under orders to watch constantly for any sign of mobilization. He feels the responsibility acutely. He tells me that a telegram from him could start "unofficial" mobilization in Great Britain forthwith.

My own impression is that the diplomatic situation between Germany and Czechoslovakia is too active for it quietly to subside without at least a period of tension. The visits of Henlein and Captain Wiedemann to London; the advent of Runciman in Prague are thought by local observers to be less reassuring than alarming. They are believed to be last minute efforts to reconcile the Czechs to a self-abnegation which cannot be realized by mere persuasion.

The present German objective, however, may be limited. Perhaps a diplomatic victory will suffice for the present; something that would be a prelude to eventual final action in the fashion of the agreement of July 11, 1936, between Austria and Germany, which preceded the Anschluss.

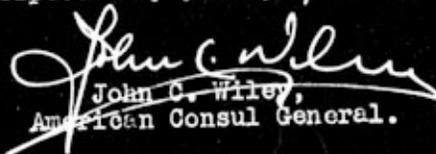
There appears to be at least one encouraging factor in the situation, namely, that Germany would not desire the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia to give Poland and Hungary a common frontier. This, I am told, is a subject

which is

which is quite openly discussed in well informed Nazi circles, where the thesis is maintained that Hungary and Poland as contiguous states would constantly plot and connive against the Reich.

The purpose of the foregoing is neither to forecast war or peace, but to bring to the attention of the Department such manifestations as are visible from Vienna, together with those echoes which reach the provincial capital of the Ostmark. The role of Austria, of course, is that of Germany's springboard into the Balkans. The springing, though, will be done from the Alt Reich and in consequence the perspective here is foreshortened. The political aspect of anti-Semitism is, however, becoming clear. Pan-Slavism was the vehicle for Russian expansion. Anti-Semitism is evidently to be a parallel development. In other words, anti-Semitism directed from Berlin will endeavor to play the erstwhile role of Pan-Slavism directed from St. Petersburg.

Respectfully yours, ,

  
John C. Wiley,  
American Consul General.

JCW/lmp.

File No. 820

X 718

No. 378

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Ayk

AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL  
VIENNA, August 18, 1938.

DIVISION OF  
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 7 1938  
Cor  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SUBJECT: MILITARY PREPARATIONS.

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222  
562.20

RECEIVED  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CC: AD DIVISION  
SEP 2 1938

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

M. I. D. } in confidence  
O. N. I.  
1577 EB

Supplementing my despatch No. 345 of July 26, 1938,

I have the honor to report that military preparations continue on what appears to be an ever increasing scale. This is particularly true of military air fields, which appear literally to be studding the country. In the immediate vicinity of Linz there are already four, and a fifth is to be constructed. An additional field with underground hangars is being constructed not far from Vienna near St. Andrä-Wörden in the vicinity of the station Langenlebern. Indeed, plans in respect of aviation would appear to foresee the possibility of war in the air on a very large scale.

Reports from various sources indicate that special attention is being paid to anti-aircraft defenses; particularly in and around strategic or industrial centers. At the Neusiedlersee, a small body of water at the Hungarian frontier which is a favorite Viennese resort place for the small bourgeoisie, there is frequent night firing practice which, according to first hand accounts, shows surprising accuracy. The system employed is simple and apparently effective: the point of intersection of three searchlight beams is converted into

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SECRETARY  
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SEP 23 1938  
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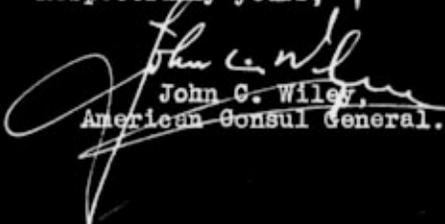
a moving target. Shell bursts from rapid-fire anti-aircraft batteries indicate the accuracy of the fire. The informant states that there is an amazing number of "bulls-eyes".

According to first hand and reliable information forty-nine villages along the Czech frontier have already been evacuated by the German authorities. This includes not merely the local population, but live stock as well.

In various regions throughout Austria all owners of motor cars are obliged to report to the military authorities with their vehicles. This measure is described as a normal mobilization exercise.

In respect of the calling up of reservists, there is nothing special to add to previous reports. Many are given the choice of appearing for service now or in the spring.

Respectfully yours,

  
John C. Wiley,  
American Consul General.

JCW/lmp.

File No. 820

Copy to: Embassy at Paris  
" " Berlin

H 7P  
ag

DIVISION OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS  
SEP 7 1938  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

*Handwritten initials and scribbles*

Vienna, August 24, 1938.

SUBJECT: MILITARY ACTIVITIES.

RECEIVED  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

~~STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL~~

TH 3  
HONORARY  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND RECORDS

SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

Rating  
Grade

*M.I. 92 in strict confidence*  
*O.K. 15*

SIR  
SEP 6 1938

*7607.62*  
*462.20*

7607.62/672  
GDG

Supplementing my despatch No. 378 of August 18, 1938, in which mention was made of the evacuation of German villages along the Czechoslovakian frontier, I have the honor to report that I have received the following information directly from an informant whom I consider as entirely reliable. As will be noted, he gives his sources:

Villages which are already evacuated or which are to be evacuated:

RECEIVED  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
SEP 10 1938  
SECRETARY OF STATE

1. According to information obtained from a functionary of the county administration (Kreisleitung):  
In the district of Allensteig (Southwest of Göpfritz) 28 villages (included among which is the "original" home of Hitler, the village of Döllersheim; a list of at least part of these villages was promised me for one of the coming days.
2. According to information obtained from a functionary from Raugsdorf:  
In the Raugsdorf district (South of Enns) 14 villages, the names of which I may be able to ascertain.
3. According to information from Tulln:  
In the Tulln district many peasants and landlords evacuated from the Swettl district have already purchased property.

CONFIDENTIAL

These people were given the alternatives of selling their property located in areas to be evacuated to the State against cash or of being settled on Government land; these people preferred the first. I have heard from school teachers in areas destined for evacuation that they have already received their assignments to other posts.

I may add that the information numbered paragraph 2 is entirely new and, as will be noted from the map, substantially extends the salient which is directed against Czechoslovakia.

From a colleague whose source of information I believe to be reliable I have received the following additional data with respect to the construction of military air fields in the vicinity of Linz which I originally reported in the despatch under reference:

Region of Linz.

It is reported that south of the Danube on both sides of the city of Linz and at a distance of 55 kilo meters there are four flying fields under construction.

These fields are situated as follows:

1. Near Laibing, on the north side of the Linz-Passau road;
2. Near Marchtrenk, on the north side of the Linz-Jelsk road;
3. Near St. Florian on the south side of the Vienna road and between Linz and Ems;
4. Near St. Valentin, on the Linz-Markt road, between Ems and St. Otten.

It is noted that these four fields neatly encircle the Göring works which are under construction in the suburbs east of Linz.

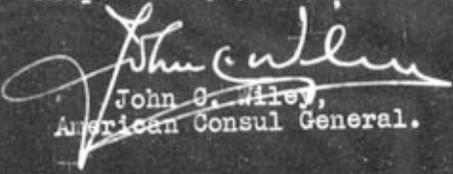
3.

With respect to the flying field at St. Valentin the following details are furnished:

The terrain is like a plateau on two levels. The intervening slope between the two parts is marked by a cliff. The terrain strictly speaking is under construction on the lower part, and the cliff is being excavated and arranged into doorways for subterranean hangars.

There is enclosed a sketch-map of the flying field under construction near Langenlebern referred to in my despatch No. 545 of July 26, 1938.

Respectfully yours,

  
John G. Wiley,  
American Consul General.

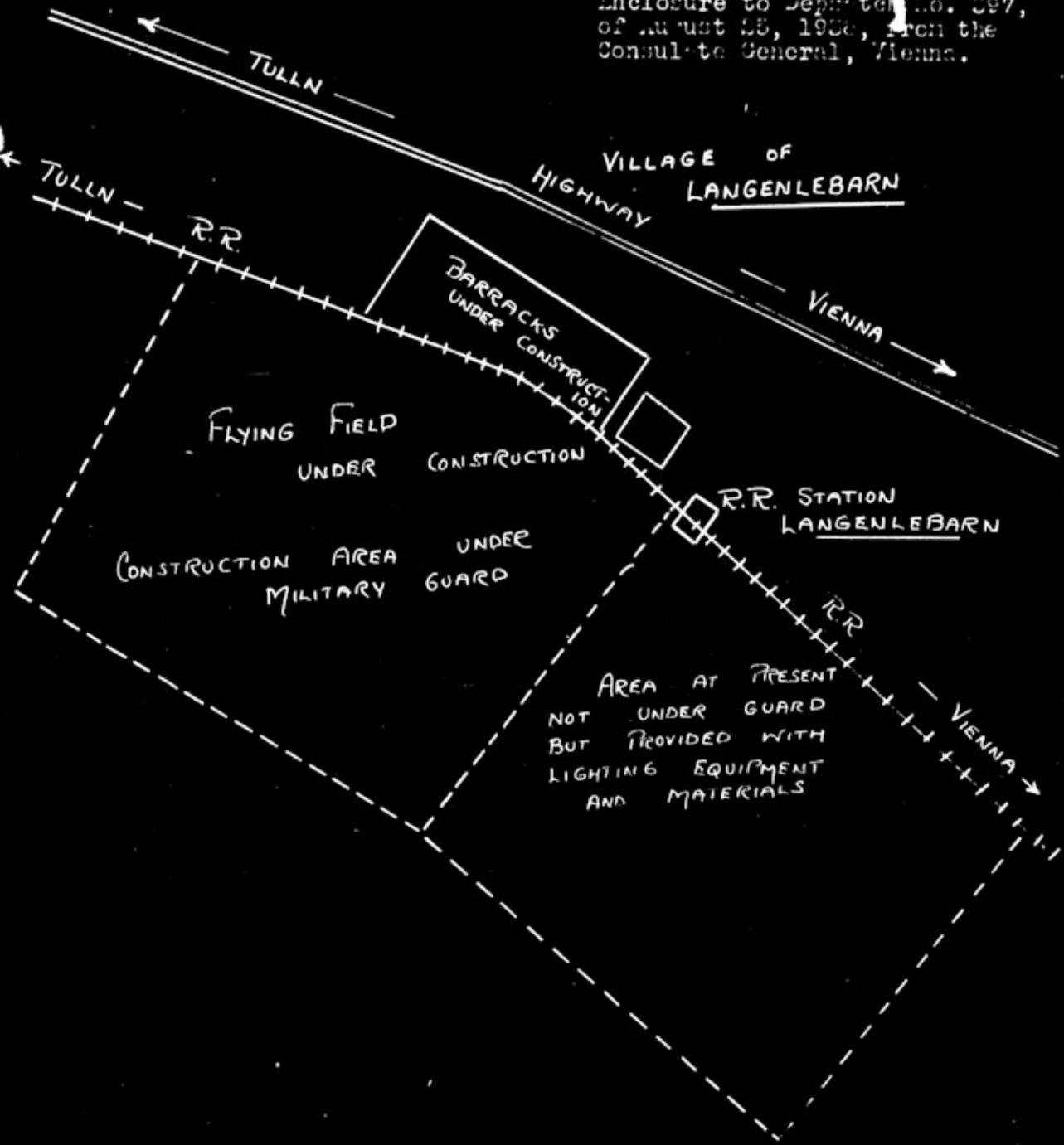
Inclosure:  
Map.

JCW/lcw  
820.

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Enclosure to Depar tel No. 397,  
of August 23, 1936, from the  
Consul to General, Vienna.



To the Division for Commercial  
Affairs, Department of State

cc  
1209

No. 33.

THE FOREIGN SERVICE  
OF THE  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

American Consulate General,  
Vienna, April 22, 1941.

Subject: RUMORS CONCERNING RELATIONS BETWEEN  
GERMANY AND THE U.S.S.R.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

COMMERCIAL AFFAIRS  
Department of State

MAY 1 1941

761.52/942

*M. J. [unclear]*

Leland B. Morris, Esquire,  
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.,  
American Embassy,  
Berlin.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to Report No. 30,  
sent by this office to the Embassy on April 7, 1941,  
under the title of "Survey of Public Opinion.

Vienna Consular District. March 1941." Reference  
is made, in particular, to page 9 of the enclosure  
to the above-mentioned report, on which a few  
remarks were made concerning rumors in circulation

in

Confidential File

in Vienna in regard to the relations between  
Germany and Russia.

Additional rumors on this same subject, which  
have since been heard by this Consulate General,  
are embodied in the enclosure to this report.

Respectfully yours,

Harry E. Carlson  
American Consul.

Enclosure:  
Memorandum entitled:  
"Rumors Concerning Relations  
Between Germany and the  
U.S.S.R."

File No. 710.  
HEC/nj.

Original to Embassy, Berlin.  
Copy to Division for Commercial  
Affairs, Department of State.  
File copy.

Enclosure No. 1 to Report No. 33,  
dated April 22, 1941, entitled:  
"Rumors Concerning Relations  
Between Germany and the U.S.S.R.",  
from the Vienna Consulate General  
to the Embassy at Berlin.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM.

Title: RUMORS CONCERNING RELATIONS BETWEEN  
GERMANY AND THE U.S.S.R.

The reports in circulation in Vienna some weeks ago concerning the evacuation of the civil population from certain areas in German occupied Poland, especially in the vicinity of Lublin and Radom, now appear to be based on actual facts. Evacuation has, it is understood, taken place not only with regard to the civil population of the area in question, but also of all civil administrative authorities as well, so that there are only military authorities left in the district at present. A number of the high German civil administrative officers formerly assigned to Poland are now, it is said, residing in Vienna, where they are being held en disponibilité while awaiting instructions.

It has been heard on a number of occasions that the state of relations between Germany and the U.S.S.R. has, in the last months, assumed a certain tenseness, and that on several occasions they were almost at the breaking point. The above mentioned evacuation of German occupied Poland was completed, it is said, on or about April 6, 1941, and at the time it was understood that there would be a German advance

*Strictly Confidential*

advance into Russia by way of Poland in the period between April 10th to 15th. These plans were, however, apparently interrupted by the unexpected turn of developments in the Balkan States, which necessitated the diverting of a certain number of troops into that area. It is now understood, however, that the original plans for the advance into Russia have merely been postponed. A postponement of one month is being mentioned. There are, thus, people in Vienna who are of the opinion that there will be an advance into Russia on the part of Germany in the last half of the month of May. Other sources mention June 15th as the date which has been set for this offensive.

At the same time, it is being said that large numbers of German troops are being assembled in the Polish area. In this connection, mention is made of from sixty to eighty army divisions.

Other rumors in circulation go so far as to state that the German advance will be directed, in the first place, against Southern Russia, and that plans have been drawn up for penetration into Russia as far as the Caucasus mountains. At the same time, an advance is also said to be scheduled in the direction of Moscow. According to the rumors in circulation, the Germans hope thereby not only to acquire control of the fertile grain areas and the

oil

*Strictly Confidential*

oil fields of Southern Russia, but they also propose to attack Communism at its source and to do away entirely with the Communist régime in Russia. As an indirect objective, the freeing of the Baltic States from Russian serfdom is also being mentioned.

The rumors go still further and include statements to the effect that in this advance against Russia the Germans will call upon the Finns and even the Swedes for assistance.

The culminating point of the rumors lies, however, in assertions to the effect that the German plans for the advance into Russia call for the completion of this entire military operation in the short space of four weeks.

According to the stories in circulation in Vienna on the foregoing subject, the back ground for the foregoing planned military action against Russia is entirely economic in nature. It is being said that German supplies of vital army necessities are rapidly reaching a catastrophically low level, and that Germany's only means of getting out of its difficulties in this regard is by undertaking the alleged incursion into Russia. This assertion coincides with a statement said to have been made recently in a private conversation by an army officer while in Vienna, to the effect that the situation in Germany was very bad, and that the

only

*Strictly Confidential*

only means for its improvement was that of a military action against the Soviet Union.

All that has been said above is based purely on rumors and hearsay. The only points that stand out and can probably be accepted as actual facts are (1) the evacuation of the civil population and civil administrative authorities from certain areas in German occupied Poland, and (2) the sending of units of the German army into this area. In addition, mention may also be made thereof, that all Russian deliveries to Germany have apparently ceased. These deliveries included such vitally important commodities as flour, oil, coal and meat, and it may, therefore, not be out of the question that Germany might resort to drastic means to get into its own hands the actual sources of production of these commodities.

It is also rumored that Russian emigrants now in Germany are being organized and given special courses of instruction on Russia. Included in these courses are such subjects as: "mistakes made by the Czarist Government in respect to the treatment of various national groups." It is said that an organization has already been formed with the name of "National Socialist Party of Russia" (N.S.P.R.), under the guidance of the National Socialist Party of Germany. It is even asserted that printed programs under the above heading, have already appeared.

*Heavily Classified*

This movement is presumably a revival of an organization based along similar lines, which was fostered in Germany before the pact with Russia in August 1939.