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AMERICAN CONSULATE GENERAL

Berlin, Germany, June 15, 1933.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL.

SUBJECT:

Information to the effect that "Die Rote Fahne" is again appearing.

THE HONORABLE

THE SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON.

SIR:

I have the honor to inform the Department that I have been informed by one of my contacts in whom I have all confidence and who is particularly well informed with regard to matters connected with the former Communist party in Germany, that "Die Rote Fahne", the principal organ of the Communist party in Germany, is again appearing daily.

This newspaper had been suppressed already for some time prior to the elections on March 5 and its publication continues to be forbidden. According to my informant, it is now again appearing and recently as many as 300,000 copies a day are being printed. It is said not to be printed in the same place twice and is given undercover circulation. My informant offered to supply me every day with a copy if I desired it.

While

While I am inclined to doubt as to whether the distribution of the newspaper reaches the figure above mentioned, I think there is every ground to believe that it is again appearing and that a considerable number of copies are being distributed in spite of the vigilance of the Government and of National-Socialist organizations.

While there are evidences, in some respects increasing evidences, of dissatisfaction and discontent with the Government and with the party, and while the reappearance of the "Rote Fahne" has a certain significance, I do not believe for the present that any exaggerated or in any way too great importance should be given to this. As the Department is aware, in many respects the program of the National-Socialist party even in its modified form is as radical as any which had been proposed by the German Communist party.

While the moderating views of the leaders of the party have been in many respects and are being carried through, I have recently received information that the moderate attitude of the principal leaders of the party and the so-called Berlin group is not viewed with favor in certain parts of the country, particularly in the South. The more moderate leaders are being accused of forgetting that there is a revolution and that the work of the revolution has not been done. Among the three principal leaders of the party, Mr. Hitler, Mr. Goering and Dr. Goebbels, there is said to be a certain lack of unity, Mr. Hitler

and

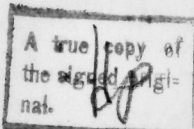


and Mr. Goering fairly definitely following a moderating course in which Dr. Goebbels does not seem inclined to follow them. In his recent speeches Dr. Goebbels has been constantly emphasizing that there has been and is a revolution and that the work of the revolution is not done and must in no sense be abandoned. I have also been informed that Dr. Goebbels is beginning to feel more and more that he is being isolated by Mr. Hitler and Mr. Goering.

As Dr. Goebbels through the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment is in absolute control of the press and of public opinion forming means in the country, he is in a very powerful position. While he, too, has not been so radical in his action in the last weeks, it seems pretty clear that he has not changed in any of his convictions. He has deeper prejudices, feelings and hates than either Mr. Hitler or Mr. Goering. The former can be persuaded by argument, but Dr. Goebbels is the type who does not change his convictions, but who only changes his actions when he finds he cannot carry through his original ideas. He has therefore up to now followed Mr. Hitler and Mr. Goering in a more moderate policy in both the anti-Semitic movement and in economic matters, but so far as his press is concerned, his fulminations are as radical as before.

Respectfully yours,

George S. Messersmith,  
American Consul General.



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