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Dulles and the SS

- From the U.S. National Security Archives -



The following is an excerpt from an article titled “The CIA” by Fred J. Cook in the American newspaper, *The Nation*.

It gives evidence from the nazi state archives that Allen Dulles, the prominent member of the American war-time spy agency OSS (Office for Strategic Services) and later leader of the CIA, was highly sympathetic to the nazi cause and sought a peace with the nazis while in Germany during 1943, hoping to ally with Hitler in an attempt to destroy the Soviet Union. Dulles, among other things, stated that he was “fed up” with Jews, insisted that Austria and Czechoslovakia were rightful “Great German” territory, proposed an alliance with the nazis against “Bolshevism and Pan-Slavism,” asserted that he did not reject nazism, showed respect for the “historical importance” of Hitler (while admitting that the American people would never allow him to remain in power) and claimed he could use the Vatican to change American public opinion towards a positive view of the nazis. This was a key U.S. intelligence agent with a direct phone line to the White House making these statements and proposals to nazi leaders, and during the heat of the war no less, when the Soviets were being bled by the millions and the Anglo-Americans refused to open a second front. Infamy of the highest order!

As for his actions postwar, **Wikipedia** gives a concise description of his well-known role in international affairs: “As head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the early Cold War, he oversaw the 1953 Iranian coup d’état, the 1954 Guatemalan coup d’état, the Lockheed U-2 aircraft program, the Project MKUltra mind control program and the Bay of Pigs Invasion.” It is no surprise that such a vile individual as that would have intended to ally with the nazis against the anti-fascist USSR.

What makes this article so compelling is that it is found in Section 61 of the *FBI Files on CIA Liaison*, a collection from the National Security Archives of the United States. It can be found **here**. Even more peculiar is the fact that the front of this specific article is stamped



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by the archives with a statement reading “ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS DECLASSIFIED DATE 05-05-2005 BY 60290.” It is not the newspaper article itself which is declassified, but “*all information contained herein.*” While the article’s author seems to express at least some doubts about the authenticity of the nazi state documents, this statement seems to wash away all doubt.

N. Ribar

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The officially favored version of Allen Dulles’ exploits in Switzerland in World War II goes like this: He was the very last American to slip legally across the French border in November, 1942, as German troops came pouring into Vichy France in swift reaction to the Allied invasion of North Africa. His assignment in Switzerland was to find out who in Germany might be opposed to the Hitler regime and whether they were working actively to overthrow it. In true master-spy tradition, he put out his feelers and soon the fish were swimming into his net; soon secret anti-Nazis were coming to him to funnel him vital information and to give him the most intimate details about the plot to do away with Hitler.

Some of this happened, but it isn’t all that happened. To understand the significance of developments in Berne, one needs to recall the background of the times. In January, 1943, just as Allen Dulles’ intelligence-gathering operation began to get going in full swing, Churchill and Roosevelt were meeting in Casablanca for the first of those Summit conferences that were to determine the conduct of the fighting and, more important, the conditions for ending it. It was at Casablanca that the two great Allied leaders proclaimed the doctrine of “unconditional surrender” and vowed to “spare no effort to bring Germany to her knees.”

Their proclamation came at a time when a witch’s brew was already boiling inside Germany. German military strategy long had been predicated on avoiding a war on two fronts. This had been a cardinal principle of Hitler himself until the seemingly endless succession of easy victories unbalanced his judgment and propelled him into war with the Soviet Union. The limitless void of Russia quickly began to engulf the Nazi war machine, and then, on top of the Eastern struggle, had come the Japanese stroke at Pearl Harbor, a blow that had



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surprised Hitler almost as much as it had the American fleet. This development had thrown the tremendous power and resources of America into the scales against the Axis powers, and soon both German generals and the more astute leaders of the SS saw that ultimate defeat was inevitable unless some compromise political settlement could be worked out with the Allies. A number of top-level conferences were devoted to this problem, both in the camp of the military and the camp of the SS.

In one of these secret conclaves in August, 1942, *SS-Brigadefuehrer* Walter Schellenberg, one of Heinrich Himmler's brightest protégés and one of the most dangerous of Nazi secret agents, proposed a bold solution to his boss. Himmler, the master of the secret police for whom Kurt von Schroeder had raised funds in the Ruhr, was a cautious man where his own neck was involved; but he was extremely ambitious, too—and so he listened to Schellenberg. Schellenberg argued that the war was lost unless a “political solution” could be arranged. Only Himmler, he contended, could achieve this. Only Himmler could intrigue to spread dissension among the Allies, to split them apart, to achieve the needed separate settlement with the West. Himmler hesitated, caution warring with ambition. The argument between him and Schellenberg lasted until 3:30 A.M., but Himmler finally agreed to try Schellenberg's idea.

The prize at stake was enormous. If he succeeded, Himmler could make himself master of all Germany. The ruthless SS chief was well aware, as William L. Shirer makes clear in *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*, that military cliques were plotting the assassination of Hitler. On occasion Himmler made a great pretense of activity and sent some of the more obvious bunglers before execution squads, but it seems certain he could have protected the *Fuehrer* much more efficiently than he did. It seems certain also that he gave the plotting generals loose rein, anticipating the situation that would develop if and when they succeeded in blowing up his revered leader. Himmler, with his iron grip on the machinery of the secret police, felt fully competent to deal with the generals; he feared no other rival in the Nazi party; and if, in foreign affairs, he could achieve Schellenberg's “political solution,” he could perpetuate the Nazi system with himself in Hitler's shoes.

Meet “Mr. Bull”

Such appear to be the compelling reasons that led Himmler and Schellenberg to send two



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SS agents to seek out Allen Dulles in Berne. The SS agents were a Dr. Schudekopf and Prince Maximilian Egon Hohenlohe. The Nazi version of these negotiations was contained in three documents written at the time, labeled “Top Secret,” and preserved in the files of Schellenberg’s dreaded Department VI of the SS Reich Security Office. Bob Edwards, a member of the British Parliament, cites these documents and quotes them fully in a pamphlet written this year, *A Study of a Master Spy (Allen Dulles)*. In studying his account, upon which the following section is based, it must be borne in mind that the documents represent an enemy version of the talks and must therefore be read with caution; nor should it be forgotten that in the shadow world of the secret agency, duplicity is a common coin and truth most difficult to determine.

Edwards, who fought with Loyalist forces in Spain during the civil war in the 1930s, has been general secretary of the Chemical Workers Union since 1947. He is a former member of the Liverpool City Council and has served in Parliament, elected with Labour and Co-operative backing, since 1955. He attracted considerable attention when he began protesting in the House of Commons about the activities of the Krupps in Bilbao and the danger of permitting the Germans to establish bases in Spain. As a result, “from absolutely reliable sources in Bonn,” he says, he received a number of documents, including the three dealing with Dulles and the SS.

The first of these documents is a brief covering letter, of which only one copy was made. It is dated April 30, 1943, and is from *SS-Hauptsturmfuehrer* Ahrens to Department VI, dealing with: “DULLES, Roosevelt’s special representative in Switzerland.” The second is a record of conversations between Dulles, referred to throughout the report as “Mr. Bull,” and Prince Hohenlohe, called “Herr Pauls.” The conversations took place in Switzerland in mid-February, 1943.

“Immediately on arrival,” according to the memorandum on the Dulles-Hohenlohe talks, “Herr Pauls” received a call from a “Mr. Roberts,” a Dulles aid and confidant. Roberts was anxious to arrange an immediate meeting with his chief, Allen Dulles. Hohenlohe stalled until he could check up on Dulles. From Spanish diplomats, from the Swiss and from representatives of some of the Nazi satellite states in the Balkans, Hohenlohe learned that Dulles operated on the very highest level, apparently with a direct pipeline into the White



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House, by-passing the State Department. This convinced the SS agent that he should, by all means, see “Mr. Bull.”

He was greeted, he reported, by “a tall, powerfully built, sporting type of about forty-five, with a healthy appearance, good teeth and a lively, unaffected and gracious manner. Assuredly a man of civic courage.” The conversation was cordial. Hohenlohe and Dulles quickly established that they had met before, in 1916 in Vienna and in the 1920s in New York. With these preliminaries out of the way the SS report of the talk between “Herr Pauls” and “Mr. Bull” continues:

Mr. Bull said... he was fed up with listening all the time to outdated politicians, *émigrés* and prejudiced Jews. In his view, a peace had to be made in Europe in the preservation of which all concerned would have a real interest. There must not again be a division into victor and vanquished, that is, contented and discontented; never again must nations like Germany be driven by want and injustice to desperate experiments and heroism. The German state must continue to exist, as a factor of order and progress; there could be no question of its partition or the separation of Austria. At the same time, however, the might of Prussia in the German state should be reduced to reasonable proportions, and the individual regions (*Gau*) should be given greater independence and a uniform measure of influence within the framework of Greater Germany. To the Czech question, Mr. Bull seemed to attach little importance; at the same time he felt it necessary to support a *cordon sanitaire* against Bolshevism and pan-Slavism through the eastward enlargement of Poland and the preservation of Rumania and a strong Hungary.

German Hegemony

If this view seems hardly in accord with the publicly avowed Roosevelt-Churchill program of “unconditional surrender” and bringing “Germany to her knees,” the rest of the Dulles philosophy, according to this SS report, seems to agree even less with the ideals for which thousands of Allied soldiers were at that moment dying. “Herr Pauls” reported that “Mr. Bull seemed quite to recognize” Germany’s claim to industrial leadership in Europe. “Of Russia he spoke with scant sympathy... Herr Pauls had the feeling that the Americans, including in this case Mr. Bull, would not hear of Bolshevism or Pan-Slavism in Central Europe, and, unlike the British, on no account wished to see the Russians at the Dardenelles



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or in the oil areas of Rumania or Asia Minor.” Indeed, as “Herr Pauls” noted later, “Mr. Bull” made no great secret, though he did not speak in detail, about “Anglo-American antagonisms.”

The conversation now took an abrupt turn. “Herr Pauls” made what he described as “a very sharp thrust on the Jewish question” and said he “sometimes actually felt the Americans were only going on with the war so as to be able to get rid of the Jews and send them back again. To this ‘Mr. Bull’ replied that in America things had not quite got to that point yet and that it was in general a question whether the Jews wanted to go back. Herr Pauls got the impression that America intended rather to send off the Jews to Africa.”

Discussing the reorganization of postwar Europe, “Mr. Bull” appeared to reject British ideas “*in toto.*” Hohenlohe reported:

He agreed more or less to a Europe organized politically and industrially on the basis of large territories, and considered that a Federal Greater Germany (similar to the United States), with an associated Danube Confederation, would be the best guarantee of order and progress in Central and Eastern Europe. *He does not reject National Socialism in its basic ideas and deeds so much as the “inwardly unbalanced, inferiority-complex-ridden Prussian militarism.”* (Italics added.)

Then Mr. Bull turned to the subject of National Socialism and the person of Adolf Hitler and declared that with all respect to the historical importance of Adolf Hitler and his work it was hardly conceivable that the Anglo-Saxons’ worked-up public opinion could accept Hitler as unchallenged master of Greater Germany. People had no confidence in the durability and dependability of agreements with him. And re-establishment of mutual confidence was the most essential thing after the war. Nevertheless, Herr Pauls did not get the impression that it was to be viewed as a dogma of American prejudice...

The conversation continued with Hohenlohe trying to get some inkling of Allied military intentions and with Dulles fending off his queries. The American agent did deliver, however, a pointed warning. He cited America’s “expanding production of aircraft, which will systematically be brought into action against the Axis powers.” Then:



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Mr. Bull is in close touch with the Vatican. He himself called Herr Pauls's attention to the importance of this connection, for the American Catholics also have a decisive word to say, and before the conversation ended he again repeated how greatly Germany's position in America would be strengthened if German bishops were to plead Germany's cause here. Even the Jews' hatred could not outweigh that. It had to be remembered, after all, that it had been the American Catholics who had forced the Jewish-American papers to stop their baiting of Franco Spain.

The third top-secret Nazi document deals with another talk between "Mr. Roberts," Dulles' right-hand man, and another SS agent, identified only as "Bauer." This took place in Geneva on Sunday, March 21, 1943. It was a long, rambling, inconclusive rehash of the war and its issues, but certain strong strands emerge in the SS report. "Bauer" quoted Roberts as saying "he [Roberts] did not like the Jews and it was distasteful to think that they were now able to adorn their six-pointed star with an additional wreath of martyrdom..." The coolness toward the British, the pro-German warmth was there. "Bauer" quoted Roberts:

America had no intention of going to war every twenty years and was now aiming at a prolonged settlement. in the planning of which she wished to take a decisive part and did not wish to leave that again to Britain, bearing in mind the bitter experience of the past. It would be nothing else but regrettable if Germany excluded herself from this settlement, for that country deserved every kind of admiration and meant a great deal more to him than any other countries.

How Much Truth?

The impact of these reports, read eighteen years later, can only be described as shocking. The picture that emerges is of a Dulles perfectly willing to throw the Austrians and the Czechs (whom the Allies then were publicly pledged to free) to the wolves; a Dulles who "does not reject National Socialism in its basic ideas and deeds," despite the smoking furnaces of the Nazi charnel houses; a Dulles who, blaming all on Prussian militarism, was looking forward to seeing a strong and resurgent Germany dominating all of Central Europe; a Dulles who was concerned primarily (as the Dulles of 1918 had been) with using Germany and Poland as buffers against Russia in the East; a Dulles who was concerned, as one would expect the Dulles of the 1920s to be, with keeping Russia out of the oil-rich Near



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East; a Dulles who seemed still to regard the British with a small “b,” who looked with equanimity (as the Dulles who had represented some of the mightiest German corporations might be expected to do) upon German industrial leadership of Europe —a Dulles who paid “respect to the historical importance of Adolf Hitler and his work,” who thought Hitler would have to go, but who did not make this seem like “a dogma of American prejudice.”

One finds oneself asking the shocked question: Was this the *real* Allen Dulles?

It is not easy to decide. Always, in anything that touches upon the double-dealing shadow world of the secret agent, one must have more than normal reservations. This picture of Dulles is the picture that emerges from SS reports, but perhaps SS agents, like a lot of other secret agents, might have been tempted to tell headquarters what they knew headquarters wanted to hear. Even if the SS reports were completely accurate, there is no guarantee that Dulles actually believed all that the reports attributed to him. He was trying to pick the minds of his SS callers, as they were trying to pick his, and in the brain-picking duel, any agent might be likely to cloak, to a degree at least, his real beliefs and intentions and to pretend to what he did not really feel. Was this what Dulles was doing? Was he being extremely cordial and agreeable to Hohenlohe merely in the hope of luring information out of him? Or were at least some of those sentiments he expressed really his own?

Whatever the truth, there is no imputation in these documents that Allen Dulles was anything but a patriot seeking to further what he conceived to be the best interests of his country. Not his motives, but his judgments, are called into question as one peruses these SS records.

In any case, the SS portrait must be assessed against some checkpoints — Dulles’ own known background and certain future developments, all of which seem to fall into a pattern. Dulles certainly played the master’s role in cloak-and-dagger activities in Europe. He remained the boss of the Berne nerve center of intelligence throughout the war, and he came out of the conflict with an overpowering reputation as America’s master spy. Under the circumstances, it is curious to find that the pattern of German rapprochement described in Hohenlohe’s report was repeated again and again in other secret dealings by American agents.



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For a “Soft” Peace

One of these negotiations took place in October, 1943, when Dr. Felix Kersten, a Finnish masseur who had won the confidence of Himmler himself, went to Sweden to confer with an unnamed American agent. They discussed “the danger from the East” and “a compromise peace.” Tentatively, they agreed on the restoration of Germany’s 1914 boundaries (this would have included France’s Alsace-Lorraine), the ending of the Hitler dictatorship, reduction of the German Army, control over German industry, and an American pledge to forget about an enlarged Poland. Still later, in the spring of 1944, another American feeler was put out by a secret agent in Yugoslavia, again for negotiations that would involve the possibility of uniting the Western Allies with Germany for the “struggle against Bolshevism.”

These repeated overtures would make it seem as if someone somewhere had some pretty determined ideas about a soft German peace and the building up of a strong postwar Germany to combat the Soviet menace. All of this occurred at a time when Russia ostensibly was our Ally and was locked in the fiercest of death grapples with Germany. If the Russians, who had their own spy system, were aware of these secret machinations — as they may well have been, for, according to the Germans, Hungarian agents had broken the code Dulles was using — the seemingly unreasonable Russian distrust of America would begin to seem less unreasonable. Such are the penalties of an intelligence operation that runs counter to the official policy of the nation employing it.

Whether Dulles himself had any responsibility for the persistent pro-German feelers is not established, but there is one further strong indication of his attitude toward Germany in one of his best-publicized exploits. Not long after his arrival in Berne, he received a call from an emissary connected with the military side of the crosshatch of plots involving the destruction of Hitler. His caller was Hans Bernd Gisevius, German vice consul in Zurich and a member of the *Abwehr*, the secret intelligence. Gisevius was a huge, 6-foot-4 German who had been connected with anti-Hitler plots in 1938 and 1939, before the outbreak of the war. He had close connections with some of Germany’s top military leaders, who had long been convinced that Hitler would have to be removed from the scene. From Dulles, Gisevius and his fellow plotters wanted just one assurance — that, if they killed Hitler, Washington would support them in setting up a new and presumably anti-Nazi government.



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The German conspirators did not just ask for Washington's backing; they held out a threat. If the Western democracies refused to grant Germany a decent peace, they warned, they would be compelled to turn to Soviet Russia for support. This, it would seem, was hardly the tone of men inspired by great ideals. As Shirer perceptively remarks: "One marvels at these German resistance leaders who were so insistent on getting a favorable peace settlement from the West and so hesitant in getting rid of Hitler until they got it. One would have thought that if they considered Nazism to be such a monstrous evil... they would have concentrated on trying to overthrow it regardless of how the West might treat their new regime." No such reflection appears to have occurred to Dulles. He was inclined to accept the demands of the plotters and urged Washington to back the bargain, to promise favorable terms of peace. In this he failed. Roosevelt insisted on "unconditional surrender."

In the light of what we now know, the wisdom of the deal proposed by Dulles appears to be highly dubious. One thing is certain: Himmler knew of the plots against Hitler and deliberately left enough of the plotters free to score the near-miss of the 1944 bomb explosion in Hitler's East Prussian headquarters. Himmler certainly had every intention of dominating the Germany that would have survived the loss of the *Fuehrer*, and there can be little doubt that, if he had been successful, the Nazi system would have been perpetuated. This, at least, the doctrine of "unconditional surrender" avoided. The complete crushing of Germany, the freeing of the wraiths in its concentration camps — total victory and its revelations — made any apologia for Nazism impossible.

Such an outcome could hardly have been achieved by the Allen Dulles who peeps out at us from the pages of SS reports or by the Allen Dulles who was ready, by his own admission, to deal with the military plotters.