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SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

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BIERS, Wesley P.
Cpl. RA 13166063

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The following Counterintelligence Information (Phase II) was obtained from files available to this office.

BIERS, Wesley P., Cpl. RA 13166063, age 22, Caucasian, Box 136, Kimberly, West Virginia, was captured by Chinese Communist Forces (CCF) On 23 April 1951, in the Central Sector of Korea, approximately 10 miles north of the 38th parallel. SUBJECT serving as an Assistant Squad Leader in "L" Company, 19th Regiment, 24th Infantry Division. His organization had been overrun by CCF at the time of his capture. BIERS was repatriated to UN control on 6 September 1953.

BIERS was imprisoned at Camp #1 until 4 August 1953, at which time he was transferred to a special compound near CCF Supreme Camp Headquarters near Pyoktong, Korea. This was a result of his petition for non-repatriation. Following an alleged exposure of subversive activities directed against the CCF plans for non-repatriate PsW, BIERS, Pfc. Bobby DeGraw, 14319329, and Pfc. Wilburn C. Watson, 14299345 were turned over to UN control.

Shortly after arrival at Camp #1, BIERS began to actively participate in communist discussions sponsored by the CCF camp officials. In March 1952 he was appointed a Squad Leader by the Chinese and held this position until May 1952. In this capacity he presented questions for discussion in squad study group meetings, required by the Chinese and observed, and reported attitudes of PsW to the Chinese.

In April 1952 BIERS was selected by the Chinese for membership in the Company Club, and became Chairman of the Research Section of the Club's Daily Life Committee. He held this position until August 1953.

The Company Club was a Chinese sponsored organization and controlled by them. It directed and planned the daily activities of the PsW. It had as it's officers only those regarded by the Chinese as dependable. The Research Department made studies of reference material supplied by the Chinese and submitted it's results to study groups and writers of pro-communist articles.

BIERS was an alternate delegate to the Camp #1 Camps Club and in the latter part of 1952 and early 1953 acted as Chairman of that group, in the absence of Pfc. Bobby De Graw, the Chairman.

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Security Information

BIERS, Wesley P.
Cpl., RA 13166063

9 November 1953

On 23 June 1953 BIERs, among other PSW, signed a letter mailed to Mrs. Florence Gowgill, 6159 Archer Avenue, Argo, Illinois. This letter expressed gratitude for her activities as reported in the New York "Daily Worker" of 16 and 19 October 1952, and in connection with the "Save Our Sons' Committee".

From April to August 1953, BIERs was Chairman of the Advanced Study Group of Camp #1. This was comprised of approximately six(6) of the leading pro-communists in the Camp. Its function was to prepare, under the guidance of the Chinese, lectures and material for radio broadcasts, as well as programs for study groups at company level. It occupied the highest echelon in the Pro-Communist element.

During his confinement BIERs constantly applied himself to studies of Communism. He wrote pro-communist articles for publication in the Camp newspaper and for Company radio broadcast purposes. One of these was directed at Vishinsky and encouraged him in arguments he was then presenting in the UN Assembly. Another was in protest of the United States Government treatment of repatriates at Valley Forge Hospital. Others were directed to his family and were also of general pro-communist nature.

In early August 1953 BIERs was transferred to CCF Supreme Camp Headquarters to undergo intensive indoctrination in preparation for facing the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission as a voluntary non-repatriate. He received such instruction until toward the end of August and then was normally repatriated to UN control.

BIERS spent his free time in reading and study, swimming, and in conversation with Chinese personnel concerning improvement in daily living conditions, as well as obtaining answers to "particular questions".

BIERS claims that from August 1951 he and Pfc. Bobby DeGraw planned to sabotage the Chinese indoctrination program. Partial success is claimed by virtue of influencing several PSW not to accept non-repatriation and creating confusion in the minds of PSW as to the desirability of the Communist life.

BIERS believes that Communism would not be successful in the United States because the people are "basically selfish" and would not accept the regimentation and state ownership in Communism. Americans are religious and Communism is opposed to religion. Communism takes away all individual freedom and BIERs "prefers" to do his "own thinking". Had BIERs desired Communism he "would have stayed with the Chinese".

2

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Security Information

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Security Information

BIERS, Wesley P.
Cpl., RA 13166063

9 November 1953

Squad and Platoon Leaders were selected by Chinese from among PsW, at a collecting point approximately 10 miles behind the MLR. In general these PsW retained their positions until August 1951, and were selected without any apparent reason. In August 1951 the leadership personnel was shuffled about and those who had not proved cooperative were replaced with those who had demonstrated a cooperative attitude toward the Chinese. PsW leaders did not "take rollcall", but were required to report absences of PsW.

Indoctrination of PsW began shortly after capture and was conducted by previously captured PsW, identified as "Workers" (Yun So Yen). PsW were, thereafter, continually exposed to accusations against the United States for causing the Korean conflict and its capitalistic policy. The theory and principles of Communism were presented to contrast favorably with the democratic way of life.

Indoctrination was accomplished through lectures, still and motion pictures, discussion and study groups (volunteer and required), publications and radio broadcasts. All indoctrination was directed by Chinese personnel but presented by both Chinese and PsW.

Publications offered for study included: London and New York "Daily Worker"; "National Guardian"; "Shanghai News"; "China Daily News Release"; "Peoples China"; "Peoples World". The works of Stalin, and Marx were also utilized. A camp wide newspaper "For Truth and Peace" and company wall newspapers which were written, edited and published by PsW were also instruments of propaganda and indoctrination. The "Daily Worker", "National Guardian", "Peoples World", and the "Peoples China" often carried photographs of PsW engaging in daily activities. These photographs were taken by Chinese photographers. SUBJECTS were always taken that would reflect the greatest credit to the Chinese.

Certain PsW who evidenced sincere acceptance of Communism, or who were believed especially susceptible to indoctrination were given special training and indoctrination and assigned to positions of responsibility. BIERER was such a person.

Each camp had a Chinese controlled organization known as the "Peace Committee". It was established in July 1951, disbanded temporarily in March 1952 and reorganized with essentially the same PsW leadership, in July 1952 as the Camp Club. This was finally disbanded in July 1953. It was under the direction of the Central Peace Committee located at Pyoktong, Korea.

The function of the Peace Committee and/or Camp Committee was to plan and control the activities of the PsW through Company Clubs, and

3
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
Security Information

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Security Information

BIERS, Wesley P.
Cpl. RA 13166063

9 November 1953

according to the desires of the Chinese. The PsW leaders were selected by the Chinese and through rigged elections obtained office. The organization also prepared and circulated the "Peace Petitions" and disseminated other pro-communist propaganda to the PsW.

Both Chinese and PsW used the terms "Progressive" and "Reactionary" extensively, though at times loosely. "Progressive" meant one who by attitude and/or actions did, or appeared to, cooperate or collaborate with the Chinese. A "Reactionary" was one who took the opposite position. There were varying degrees of progressiveness and reactionarism.

Leading "Progressives" received benefits and considerations from the Chinese not extended to the other PsW. These included: freedom of movement about the camp; better medical attention; relief from some work details and physical training; parties at which intoxicants were provided; extra cigarettes and candy; permitted absence from rollcall; no punishment for infractions of minor camp rules and regulations. PsW Thomas Peasner and George Davidson were known to have received monetary rewards for making wire recordings.

All PsW were interrogated at least once by CCF interrogators and were photographed. They were not fingerprinted. The interrogation was basic and was supplemented by Personal History Statement prepared by each PsW. Certain PsW who were believed, or known, to have been connected with intelligence activities, personnel assignments, military police or amphibious units were given additional interrogation. "Reactionaries" who were discovered in, or planning, an escape were intensively interrogated. Other "Reactionaries" who were suspected of subversive activity, or guilty of such activity, were interrogated. Frequently these PsW were placed in solitary confinement, mistreated and threatened with non-repatriation. Confessions were usually obtained and read publicly to assembled PsW.

Quite frequently leading "Progressives" would be absent from Camp for periods of from one to fourteen days. These absences were generally for further indoctrination. Occasionally the Chinese would announce that such a man was absent because of need for medical attention.

Approximately twenty four (24) Americans, one (1) Turkish, and three hundred thirty six (336) South Koreans unrepatriated PsW are to receive training in revolutionary tactics and additional indoctrination in China. In 6 to 8 years the American PsW are to covertly enter the United States to become underground activists for the Communist Party.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Security Information

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

Security Information

BIERS, Wesley P.

9 November 1953

Cpl. RA 13166063

Pfc. Richard D. Drennan, RA 16343346, 5th Army, states that BIER5 influenced PsW toward communism through talking in favor of it and had said "it(communism) was a good thing to be a part of". He frequently had voluntary contact with camp officials. He appeared to have leanings toward communism or other foreign ideology and volunteered for non-repatriation.

(F-6)

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Security Information