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OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
ART LOOTING INVESTIGATION UNIT
APO 413
U.S. ARMY

DETAILED INTERROGATION REPORT NO. 7

15 September 1945

SUBJECT: GISELA LIMBERGER

THEODORE ROUSSEAU, JR.
Lieutenant, USNR

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AND 750065

By DAF NARS, Date 22 MAY 1975

I. INTRODUCTION

Gisela LIMBERGER was interrogated at the OSS Special Interrogation Center in Alt Aussee, Austria from 20 June to 15 September 1945. The major portion of her testimony has been included in Consolidated Interrogation Report No. 2, THE GOERING COLLECTION as one of its most important sources. This report is intended to give a more detailed account of her duties in the GOERING organization and to determine as far as possible the extent of her responsibilities in the formation of the collection.

II. PERSONAL

Gisela LIMBERGER was born on the 30th of August 1893 at Merzig on the Saar, the daughter of Richard LIMBERGER and Hermine DAHLMANN. She attended school in Cassel, Neu-Ruppin and Brandenburg on the Havel where she graduated with a teacher's certificate in 1914. She was employed as a secretary by the "German State Bureau for Anglo-German Relations" in Berlin from 1921 to 1925, and in London from 1925 to 1930. In 1932 she was appointed librarian in the Prussian State Library in Berlin. In 1935 she was transferred to the Prussian State Ministry and shortly after this assigned to the GOERING Stabsamt which was a part of that organization because GOERING was Prussian State Minister. She was never a member of the Nazi Party because this was not necessary for those who worked for GOERING. Fraulein LIMBERGER has one sister, by profession a Doctor, who emigrated to London shortly before the war. Her brother was a colonel in the German army whose family resided in Prague.

III. GOERING'S SECRETARY

Fraulein LIMBERGER worked for GOERING's Stabsamt as a state employee. She was never paid a personal salary by the Reichsmarschall. She was his personal secretary only in that she handled his confidential and private business. During the early years of her work for GOERING she was chiefly occupied with matters related to the art collection, GOERING's confidential secretary in that time being Frau GRUNDMANN KORNATSKI. However, Fraulein LIMBERGER was in no sense an art historian. She had never studied history of art, nor taken any interest in the subject before she was assigned to the job by GOERING. As a result of this activities with regard to the collection were limited purely to administrative matters such as listing, recording entries, arrangement of exhibitions, etc. She never had anything to do directly with the choice of objects or their acquisition.

Fraulein LIMBERGER's service with the Stabsamt can be divided into two distinct periods. The first from 1935 to 1942, when she assisted Frau GRUNDMANN KORNATSKI and worked almost exclusively on the collection and the library; the second after the death of Frau GRUNDMANN KORNATSKI in autumn 1942, when she took over all the duties of GOERING's confidential secretary in addition to what she was doing before. She says that GOERING never took her into his confidence as completely as he had Frau GRUNDMANN KORNATSKI. Immediately after the latter's death he made an attempt to do so and she seems to have worked very closely with him. At this time she was treated as a member of the family and lived for a time with GOERING's sisters. However, she says that already in 1943 GOERING began to withdraw into himself. This tendency increased as the course of the war went against Germany and at the end he shut himself off completely from all those who previously surrounded him.

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There follows a list of Fraulein LIMBERGER's duties in Abteilung II of the Stabsamt translated literally from one which she drew up herself.

A. Period 1935 to autumn 1942.

1. Administration of the Reichsmarschall's personal archives, documents, personal correspondence, family affairs.
2. Administration of the library, arrangement of books, card files, etc.
3. Collection and cataloguing of newspapers and periodicals.
4. Collection and compilation of lists of works of art bought during the war.
5. Reception and examination of correspondence concerning works of art offered to GOERING and answering such correspondence according to instruction.
6. Arrangement of the exhibition and storage of works of art in GOERING's Berlin residence and Carinhall according to instructions.
7. Listing of paintings, furniture and tapestries in preparation for a new arrangement in Berlin and Carinhall.
8. Supervision of condition and care of works of art, and reporting of any changes.
9. Storage of works of art in anti aircraft shelters. (This was taken over by HOFER in February 1944.)
10. Occasional attendance at auctions for the purpose of noting prices and bidding to a limit set by GOERING.

B. Autumn 1942 to Spring 1945. In addition to duties listed above:

1. GOERING's personal and confidential secretary.
2. Reading of daily correspondence and presentation of personal matters.
3. Answering private correspondence according to instructions.
4. Financial; reception of bills, and paying thereof according to instructions, administration of bank accounts.

Note: In February 1944 GOERING assigned the administration of the collection to HOFER. Fraulein LIMBERGER retained control only of financial matters.

IV. CONCLUSION

The interrogation of Fraulein LIMBERGER has shown that she was essentially a functionary of the German State and that the work which she did for GOERING was carried out strictly within these limits. She

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has made an excellent impression on her interrogators. Though reserved at first she answered all questions without hesitation and as she became more familiar with the purpose of the investigation she volunteered important information. Her story has been consistent throughout. She has never changed it and her statements have frequently been confirmed by documentary evidence or the testimony of other witnesses.

It is clear that she had no personal responsibility whatever in the formation of the GOERING Collection. Her role was limited to the performance of her duties as GOERING's secretary and as such was purely administrative. The evidence shows that on the rare occasions when she did exercise her influence it tended to be for the good. It was because of her intervention that GOERING did not accept the loot from Monte Cassino as had been intended by HOFER, and it was she who finally persuaded GOERING to make a complete listing of the objects taken from the Einsatzstab Rosenberg.

Fraulein LIMBERGER has never given the impression of being a Nazi. She is loyal to her former chief but this feeling is inspired by a normal gratitude for his kindness to her and also to some extent by the strong personal influence which GOERING unquestionably exercised upon those who worked in close contact with him. Although she has never spontaneously attacked him, she does not hesitate to recognize his faults. However, when she does this it is as the logical result of the evidence against him, not because it now appears the political thing to do.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Fraulein LIMBERGER has made a very real contribution to the solution of many of the problems presented by this investigation. However, the information which is supplied about the GOERING Collection is only a minor part of what she knows about the Reichsmarschall's other activities. She is without doubt one of the most important sources which can be drawn upon in building up a case against him. It is the recommendation of this unit that she be held as a voluntary witness pending the trial of GOERING.

T. R. Jr.

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