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GAS53 319 (16 Dec 53) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Cryptographic Device of Dr. Oskar Vierling (W 009)

25 JAN 1954

Headquarters, Army Security Agency, Washington 25, D. C.

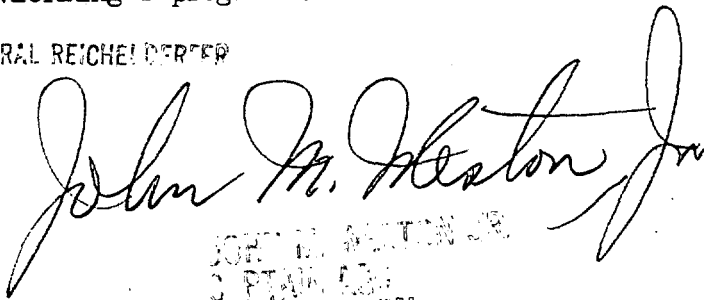
TO: Chief, Army Security Agency, Europe, APO 757, c/o Postmaster,
New York, New York

1. NSA is desirous of purchasing subject device and will provide the necessary funds. Desire you ascertain whether device is for sale and if the price is the same as previously quoted.

2. Transistors requested in basic letter are closely controlled items and although it is a subject of considerable interest to this Agency and NSA, research in this field as far as field units are concerned, is ordinarily restricted.

3. In order to justify the procurement of transistors for Dr. Vierling, it will be necessary that this headquarters be provided with detailed information concerning the nature of his experiments. If the transistors are provided, it is expected that this headquarters will be kept informed of Dr. Vierling's progress.

BY COMMAND OF MAJOR GENERAL REICHEL DERTER



JOHN M. WESTON JR.
CAPTAIN USAF
ASST ADJ GEN

1 Incl
w/d

Declassified and approved for release by NSA on 06-03-2014 pursuant to E.O. 13526

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LOG NUMBER 52-1-109

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~~TOP SECRET~~~~SECURITY INFORMATION~~

SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED

~~NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN DISSEM~~

12 October 1953

SUBJECT: Cryptographic Device of Dr Oskar Vierling
(W-005)

TO: Chief
Army Security Agency
Department of the Army
Washington 25, D. C.

1. Reference is made Par 3, letter this headquarters (W-002), dated 29 September 1953, subject as above.
2. Forwarded for your information and retention are the inclosed photographs of the Vierling Schluesselscheibe, as made from a machine borrowed for the purpose from the firm of Heinrich Gertsch A.G. of Zurich/Affoltern. Gertsch was visited by a NSA representative temporarily with this headquarters, who was in Zurich on an official visit to Edgar Gretner A. G. The visit to Gertsch was coordinated with the Assistant Army Attache in Switzerland.
3. All matters related to the Vierling device are handled for Gertsch by a Dr. Cappus, a commercial representative of the firm, and a reserve colonel in the Swiss Army. Dr. Cappus, although neither an engineer nor a cryptographic specialist, appeared to be well briefed on the whole matter of the Vierling equipment, and, incidentally, well acquainted with the Atheneum Stiftung. He stated that Atheneum had wanted him to handle their commercial interests in Switzerland, when they first organized but that he had declined because of the pressure of other business. He intimated that he was not completely convinced of the commercial possibilities of Atheneum developed equipment.
4. Dr. Cappus disclosed that the Vierling device had been submitted to the Swiss Army for any possible interest, through Colonel Leutwyler, chief of the Swiss Kriegstechnische Abteilung. Cappus thought that the Swiss

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authorities believed the device to be adequate for low level troop use, but since they had adopted the Gretner cipher teleprinter as standard equipment for the Army, they had no further interest in additional low-level devices. His firm was thus free to manufacture and sell the Schluesselscheibe to any interested party.

5. An additional item of information was furnished by Cappus who said that the Swiss government had at one time contemplated hiring Vierling to conduct a cryptographic research project at the Gertsch plant in Zurich. The project was abandoned because of insufficient funds; the government being unwilling to request the Swiss Parliament for a special appropriation. Vierling, himself, has never mentioned this proposed project.

6. The present status of patent rights on the device is not clear. Dr. Cappus claims that his firm has all Swiss rights, but he knew that Liebknecht and Huettenhain had picked up the German rights. He is presently checking this matter, since he realizes that any possible sale of the device or manufacturing rights would be made more difficult by conflicts over patent rights. Cappus stated, as had Vierling, that Hagelin was negotiating for complete rights to the device, again with the question of German patent complicating the issue. Cappus claims that the only real barrier to the sale is the question of the price.

7. A sample model will be purchased in the next few weeks and forwarded to your headquarters.

H. C. JOHNSON
Colonel, Infantry
Chief

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