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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
MOROCCAN TRAVEL CONTROL DETACHMENT
AFHQ
APO 750 U.S. ARMY

Place: Arbaoua Section
Date: 20 June 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE:
SUBJECT: QUEZZANE ESPIONAGE RING
RE: Arrest of M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI ben LARBI, alias "ROUBIO"

On the night of 15-16 June 1944, these agents drove Capitaine MOREL, BSM, Souk el Arba, M. HARDY, chief of police at Quezzane, along with two Moroccan informants and a Goumier, to a point near the frontier opposite the douar Maafa which lies about 500 yards across the Loukkos River in Spanish territory. This armed party made its way to a small island in the middle of the Loukkos River (the frontier) where M. HARDY dispatched the two native informants to Maafa village to find M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI, alias ROUBIO, an intermediary of Otto WIEBMAN and BRAHIM EL QUEZZANI, to try and persuade him by ruse to accompany them back to the river for the clandestine exchange of some contraband cattle. At about 0130 hours 16 June 1944, M'FEDDEL came to the river bank and after some resistance was "persuaded" to cross the river where he was arrested. It is believed that the kidnapping was witnessed by no one except those involved in the plot.

M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI is the latest person to be arrested in the large espionage ring recently broken at Quezzane which is outlined below (See also Memo, Subject: Col, BUTZER, dated 20 April 1944 and if further details necessary, ask for "Affaire de Quezzane", 1944, at BST, or BSM, Rabat.)

On 27 February 1944, ABDALLAH ben AHMED ben AHMED, alias Abdallah DJEBBAR was expelled by the Spanish at Arbaoua. Questioning on previously received information revealed that he had long acted as liaison agent for his two children, LARBI ben ABDALLAH and Sherif MOHAMED ben ABDALLAH both of Tangiers, who are direct agents respectively for BRAHIM EL QUEZZANI and Otto WIEBMAN. ABDALLAH told of missions to Gochouane to contact German agents, Mohamed HASSI, LAYACHI ben Si AHMED, AHMED ben THAR, and others for BRAHIM EL QUEZZANI to find out if these persons had accomplished their missions to the French zone.

On information on this first arrest, AHMED ben LARBI ben MOHAMED was arrested at Quezzane. From his confession it was learned that he had once sent his brother-in-law, MOHAMED ben ABDESSELEM, alias DJEBBAR SMILLI, with a letter to intercede in the behalf of his brother, who is a prisoner of war in Germany.

When DJEBBAR learned of the arrest of his brother-in-law, he fled Quezzane into the Spanish zone. Later it was learned that he had used a mule belonging to the Fasha of Quezzane, who is known to have aided him in his escape.

After this escape, the BST arrested nine Moroccans of which the three following confessed to having contacted WIEBMAN and the said BRAHIM EL QUEZZANI:

1) LAOULA ben ABDESSELEM ben LAOULA of Quezzane

2) MOHAMED ben AHMED ben SELLEM of Quezzane

3) KACEM ben TAIEB MOHAMED CHAFFEL of Quezzane

In the meantime, the Fasha of Quezzane had asked the Fasha of EL HBAR to return his "stolen" mule. At Arbaoua, the Spanish expelled both the mule and MOHAMED ben ABDESSELEM, alias DJEBBAR SMILLI who had fled the French police.

DJEBBAR confessed to working with, and directly for WIEBMAN, clandestinely entering the French zone to carry back information on Arab political feeling and Allied troop movements.

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It was the custom of all the above mentioned German agents to stop at the house of M'FRUJEL ben LA'OUJ called ROUBIO of Saafa village on their way to and from the French zone.

ROUBIO confessed to accompanying German native agents to EL KHAR where he would help them sell the contraband that they had brought from the French zone carried for the purpose of cover in case of arrest and as part of the payment for their espionage services. ROUBIO would then go with them to Tangiers. There they would buy cloth to smuggle on their return trip.

Twice ROUBIO accompanied WESER and ABRECHTEN ben THAMI to visit WISSEMAN. WESER always paid him for these trips.

On one occasion the above mentioned LAHBI ben ABALLAH introduced ROUBIO to BRADIN el OUSMANI at Tangiers, who proposed to send his agents to pass into the French zone. BRADIN took ROUBIO aside and asked him to return alone without LAHBI. When ROUBIO revisited BRADIN, he was asked if LAHBI ben ABALLAH was really carrying out his missions to the French zone. ROUBIO who knew that LAHBI had never actually gone to the French zone and was giving false information to the Germans, nevertheless swore to BRADIN that LAHBI had carried out all of his assignments. For this information BRADIN paid ROUBIO 50 pascas. ROUBIO then went to LAHBI who in turn paid ROUBIO for not having told the truth.

ROUBIO will be questioned more extensively by the SGT before disposition.

AGENTS' NOTES:

As the French have asked that the kidnapping on Spanish soil of ROUBIO not be mentioned in a report, it is requested by these agents that this report not be passed to other French bureaus.

It is believed by the SGT that the American Legation at Tangiers will find that some of the above agents have been in their camp as well as the Germans, acting as double agents.

Robert G. Caldwell Jr.
SAC, Arbaoua Section
Nicholas A. Baision
Agent, C.I.C.

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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
 6761 DETACHMENT (PROV.)
 AFHQ U. S. ARMY

PLACE: ARBAOUA SECTION
 DATE: 25 JUNE 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE:

SUBJECT: FINAL DISPOSITION

RE: M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI ben LABBI, alias "ROUBIO"

This Agent was informed by the BST, Souk el Arba, that extensive questioning of the Subject, has revealed no further information other than that sent in on MEMO, dated 20 June 1944. Subject is being sent to BST, Casablanca for final disposition.

AGENT'S NOTES:

1. This Agent strongly suggests that the eventual disposition of "ROUBIO" be ascertained. Failure to do this may result in a recurrence of the ABENERRAHMAN ben SAAD affair, who, after it was established that Subject was a German agent, (See Memo, dated May 1943, Explosives and Radio Found in the Vicinity of Guezzane), was released by the French and was discovered by Agents of this organization to be working for the American Army at the Gages Air Base at Casablanca.

2. In lieu of punishing criminals, the French, often make use of their services in return for their freedom. (As exemplified by the use of the two Arab informants involved in the "ROUBIO" case, who, after having been caught carrying contraband, agreed to help in the capture of "ROUBIO" in return for their freedom.)

It is requested that this report should not be sent to the French.

Nicholas A. Matsios
 Agent, CIC

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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
 MOROCCAN TRAVEL CONTROL DETACHMENT
 AFHQ
 APO 759 U.S. ARMY

Place: Arbaoua Section

Date: 20 June 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE.

SUBJECT: OUEZZANE ESPIONAGE RING

RE: Arrest of M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI ben LARBI, alias "ROUBIO"

On the night of 15-16 June 1944, these Agents drove Capitaine MORERE, BSM, Souk el Arba, M.HARDY, chief of police at Ouezzane, along with two Moroccan informants and a Goumier, to a point near the frontier opposite the douar Maafa which lies about 500 yards across the Loukkos River in Spanish territory. This armed party made its way to a small island in the middle of the Loukkos River (the frontier) where M. HARDY dispatched the two native informants to Maafa village to find M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI, alias ROUBIO, an intermediary of Otto WIEDMANN and BRAHIM EL OUEZZANI, to try and persuade him by ruse to accompany them back to the river for the clandestine exchange of some contraband cattle. At about 0130 hours 16 June 1944, M'FEDDEL came to the river bank and after some resistance was 'persuaded' to cross the river where he was arrested. It is believed that the kidnapping was witnessed by no one except those involved in the plot.

M'FEDDEL ben LAYACHI is the latest person to be arrested in the large espionage ring recently broken at Ouezzane which is outlined below (See also Memo, Subject: Col. BUTZER. dated 26 April 1944, and if further details necessary, ask for "Affaire de Ouezzane", 1944, at BST, or BSM, Rabat.)

On 27 February 1944, ABDALLAH ben AHMED ben AHMED, alias Abdallah METSAR was expelled by the Spanish at Arbaoua. Questioning on previously received information revealed that he had long acted as liason agent for his two children, LARBI ben ABDALLAH and Sherif MOHAMED ben ABDALLAH both of Tangiers, who are direct agents respectively for BRAHIM el OUEZZANI and Otto WEIMANN. ABDALLAH told of missions to Chechahouene to contact German agents, Mohamed HAMSII, LARACHI ben Si AHMED, AHMED ben TAHAR, and others for BRAHIM el OUEZZANI to find out if these persons had accomplished their missions to the French zone.

On information on this first arrest, AHMED ben LARBI ben MOHAMED was arrested at Ouezzane. From his confession it was learned that he had once sent his brother-in-law, MOHAMED ben ABDESSLEM, alias DJEBHAR RMILI, with a letter to intercede in the behalf of his brother, who is a prisoner of war in Germany.

When DJEBHAR learned of the arrest of his brother-in-law, he fled Ouezzane into the Spanish zone. Later it was learned that he had used a mule belonging to the Pasha of Ouezzane, who is known to have aided him in his escape.

After this escape, the BST arrested nine Moroccans of which the three following confessed to having contacted WIEDMANN and the said BRAHIM el OUEZZANI.

- 1) LAOULA ben ABDESSLAM ben LAOULA of Ouezzane
- 2) MOHAMED ben AHMED ben SELLEM of Ouezzane
- 3) KACEM ben TAIEB MOHAMED CHAFFII of Ouezzane

In the meantime, The Pasha of Ouezzane had asked the Pasha of EL KSAR to return his "stolen" mule. At Arbaoua, the Spanish expelled both the mule and MOHAMED ben ABDESSLEM, alias DJEBAR RMILI who had fled the French police.

DJEBAR confessed to working with, and directly for WIEDMANN, clandestinely entering the French zone to carry back information on Arab political feeling and Allied troop movements.

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ROUBIO confessed to accompanying German native agents to EL KSAR where he would help them sell the contraband that they had brought from the French zone carried for the purpose of cover in case of arrest and as part of the payment for their espionage services. ROUBIO would then go with them to Tangiers. There they would buy cloth to smuggle on their return trip.

Twice ROUBIO accompanied DJEBAR and ABDESSLEM ben THANI to visit WIEDMANN. DJEBAR always paid him for those trips.

On one occasion the above mentioned LARSI ben ABDALLAH introduced ROUBIO to BRAHIM el OUEZZANI at Tangiers, who proposed to send him agents to pass into the French zone. BRAHIM took ROUBIO aside and asked him to return alone without LARSI. When ROUBIO revisited BRAHIM, he was asked if LARSI ben ABDALLAH was really carrying out his missions to the French zone. ROUBIO who knew that LARSI had never actually gone to the French zone and was giving false information to the Germans, nevertheless swore to BRAHIM that LARSI had carried out all of his assignments. For this information BRAHIM paid ROUBIO 80 pesetas. ROUBIO then went to LARSI who in turn paid ROUBIO for not having told the truth.

ROUBIO will be questioned more extensively by the BST before disposition.

AGENT'S NOTES:

As the French have asked that the kidnapping on Spanish soil of ROUBIO not be mentioned in a report, it is requested by these agents that this report not be passed to other French bureaus.

It is believed by the BST that the American legation at Tangiers will find that some the above agents have been in their employ as well as the Germans, acting as double agents.

Robert G. Caldwell Jr.

SAIC, Arbaoua Section

Nicholas A. Natsios

Agent, C.I.C.

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COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
6761 DETACHMENT (PROV.)
AFHQ U. S. ARMY

PLACE: Arbaoua Section
DATE: 25 June 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE.

SUBJECT: FINAL DISPOSITION

RE: M' FEDDEL ben LAYACHI ben LARBI, alias "ROUBIO"

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AGENT'S NOTES:

1. This Agent strongly suggests that the eventual disposition of "ROUBIO" be ascertained. Failure to do this may result in a recurrence of the ABDERRSAHAM ben SAAD affair, who, after it was established that Subject was a German agent, (See Memo, dated May 1943, Explosives and Radio Found in the Vicinity of Ouezzane), was released by the French and was discovered by Agents of this organization to be working for the American Army at the Cazes Air Base at Casablanca.

2. In lieu of punishing criminals, the French often make use of their services in return for their freedom. (As exemplified by the use of the two Arab informants involved in the "ROUBIO" case, who, after having been caught carrying contraband, agreed to help in the capture of "ROUBIO" in return for their freedom.)

It is requested that this report should not be sent to the French.

Nicholas A. Natsios
Agent, CIC

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