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Statement on Rudolf K. Kommer.

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Statement on Rudolf K. Kommer

Hotel Ambassador

New York City N. Y.

by Erika Mann.

I have known Mr. Kommer for more than fifteen years. He has always been a somewhat "mysterious existence" in so far as he always has lived like a very rich man, without anyone knowing just ~~where~~ where the money came from. He was and is one of the closest friends of Max Reinhardt, the great German producer and also acted as his (unpaid) agent. At the same time he was one of the intimates of Otto H. Kahn and I believe that at that time (fifteen years ago) Kommer's unexplained fortune came from Kahn, whose financial advisor he was. Today Mr. Kommer ~~is~~ is the administrator of Mrs. von Hofmannsthal's (Astor) fortune. I guess that the rather luxurious style in which he lives may be explained by this particular job of his.

During the last war Mr. Kommer was not a "German agent", - is so far as he was not paid for what he calls his "German Kultur-Propaganda" in this country. He had not to register as an agent either. However, it remains true that he has been most active on behalf of the Reich, but also that he never tries to hide this embarrassing truth. He doesn't try to hide his knowing the "Princess Hohenlohe", either. He has known her for a long time, having met her, when she was still a half-Jewish girl from Hungary, ~~named~~ - Steffi Richter. When I resented the fact that he was still seeing the Nazi-Princess occasionally he explained to me that he had been using her in order to get Max Reinhardt's library out of Salzburg, - and besides, - he added, - one ought to see some Nazi, - once in a while, - one might get informations out of him, or her.

Mr. Kommer's best friends today are British. For many years he has been intimately connected with Duff Cooper whose small son comes to visit him at Christmas and Easter, - with Lord Beaverbrook and numerous other British Government representatives. He tries to help our cause, whenever and wherever he can. When I went to England last summer he gave me lots of useful letters and quite some valuable advice, - the kind of advice that was bound to harm Hitler and please the British. He has done his utmost to save the lives of many European Anti-Nazis. He is extremely pro-British and apt to get into arguments with anyone who doesn't wholeheartedly wish for a British victory. The naivety with which, at the same time, he likes to tell stories about his German "Kultur"-activity in 1914 has something rather surprising. And not rarely have I run into people who, because of this naivety which they do not believe to be genuine and because of his "mysterious" prosperity suspect him to be a great Nazi-

spy. They argue that noone could be of greater use to the Germans but Mr. Kommer, -precisely because of his excellent connection with leading Englishmen and that he is clever enough to openly display both, his former activities, and his present Nazi-acquaintances (though he doesn't have many), lest people might find out behind his back.

Although I admit that there is something convincing in such consideration I personally do not believe it to be correct. On the contrary : I am rather convinced that Mr. Kommer who has been living in England and America ever since the first world war is a sincere and militant believer in the democratic, - the anglo-saxon democratic way of life and that he is doing his very best to help defend it.

Socially he is what many people would call a "snob" . It may be that too fond of seeing Princesses at his table as to chase them away, even if they happen to be Nazis. But never would he go as far in his snobism as to permit subversive activities near him, let alone as to commit them himself.

Mr. Kommer is a Jew and crazily devoted to his home-town Chernowitz. He never signs his name, -Rudolf K. Kommer, - without adding "from Czernowitz" which, after all, is not a very snobbish thing to do and certainly not a ~~HHHHH~~ Nazi-thing, - Czernowitz being a Polish -Galicish , extremely Jewish place.

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