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"UNAVOIDABLE"
COUNTER INTELLIGENCE CORPS
OF DET. U.S.F.A.

Lead Upper Austria Sub Detachment
APO 28 U.S. Army

5177

9 March 1950
Lias Field Office (OI)
RB/2b
KOIS 4/11/54

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE:

SUBJECT: VdU (Verband der Unabhängigen) - Split in Rank
RE: Progress Report No. 1

1. Reference is made to LIT, this Sub Detachment, Case No. L/17527, Subject as above, dated 23 February 1950, wherein it was reported that a group of radical VdU functionaries was apparently attempting to gain control of the VdU. Reference LIT further reported that the VdU Landesobmann in Upper Austria, Gustaf A. [REDACTED] had dismissed several VdU functionaries in Upper Austria and had at a later date resigned his own position in the VdU. Pursuant to verbal instructions from the LIT, this Branch, this Agent contacted informant 6084 to obtain details of the meeting, which basic LIT reported, would be held in Vienna on 21 February 1950.

2. On 21 February 1950 this Agent interviewed informant 6084 concerning the meeting of the VdU functionaries held in Vienna on 21 February 1950, and to obtain information on further developments in the situation now existing in the VdU. Source stated in substance as follows:

a. Following the meeting of VdU functionaries held in [REDACTED] Upper Austria, on 20 February 1950 most of the information concerning results of the meeting was made available to the Austrian press. All Austrian newspapers published variations of this information with the exception of the Communist "Neue Zeit". The latter allegedly received orders from Vienna to withhold certain information concerning the situation that now exists in the VdU. The Communists apparently are withholding comment concerning the situation in hopes that the revolutionary movement in the VdU may prove in strength and perhaps eventually destroy it. In the event the VdU is not destroyed and continues to grow and become stronger, the Communists will probably use the "neo-Nazi tendencies" theme as propaganda in the Communist press and the Soviet Element will submit a proposal to the [REDACTED] Council that the VdU be

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(Verband der Unbeschäftigten) - Split in Tanks.

prohibited on these grounds. Bundesobmann Dr. Herbert WEISS,
Dr. Viktor REHMANN and REHMANN expected this development but
were unable to stop it.

b. A general meeting of the Federal Committee of
the VdU leaders was held in Vienna on 21 February 1950 to
discuss the present situation in the VdU. During this meeting
REHMANN stated that although he resigned his function in the
VdU on 21 February 1950, in his opinion and according to the
statute of the VdU, he is still Landesobmann of the VdU in
Upper Austria as the meeting held in Wels, Upper Austria on 20
February 1950 was not a bonafide meeting and therefore decisions
made in the meeting were not legal. REHMANN's statements were
accepted by the Committee and it agreed that the decisions
made during the meeting held in Wels were not legal. Consequently
REHMANN persuaded the Committee to uphold his previous action
in dismissing Alois WERB, Otto JOHANN, Oswald STREIBER (now
ERATNY and (now) BRUNN from the VdU. The Committee upheld his
action in this matter and these men were officially dismissed
from the organization. The Committee also decided that until
REHMANN again took over his position as Landesobmann of the VdU
in Upper Austria or a new Landesobmann was nominated, Nationalrat
Hans WALKER would vacate the position and REHMANN would
temporarily assume the Landesobmann duties. REHMANN also has
executive power in the VdU over all of Austria.

c. On 22 February 1950 REHMANN arrived in Linz,
Upper Austria, to assume the duties conferred upon him by the
Committee and also to attempt to place WEISS back in his
position as Landesobmann. REHMANN discovered that the radical
group in Linz, led by JOHANN, had had several meetings since
leaving of the Committee's decision and obviously was not in
favor of these decisions. REHMANN also discovered that it was
impossible to simply place WEISS in the position of VdU
Landesobmann in Upper Austria, as the majority of the VdU
members were decidedly against such a move. Although REHMANN
has built up the VdU in Upper Austria until it became the
stronghold of the party, the members feel that he is not radical
enough to take the VdU to the next level. REHMANN
was afraid to offend the members of the lower ranks. JOHANN,
JOHANN, ERATNY and (now) BRUNN, already a former high
ranking functionary of the VdU (now secretary) and his brother
JOHANN in his efforts to gain more members of the VdU, are
capable of exerting a strong influence over WEISS and REHMANN
the dismissal of JOHANN and REHMANN in this action on the
radical group was a mistake. It will mean the radical
movement in Upper Austria will be led by Landesobmann of
the VdU, the Nationalrat, and it is feared that JOHANN would
become the strong influence over the VdU in Upper Austria.

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