

# OFFICIAL DISPATCH

VIA: AIR  
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DISPATCH NO. MAVA-5377

**SECRET**  
CLASSIFICATION

TO : Chief, Foreign Division M

DATE: 28 April 1950

FROM : Chief of Mission, Vienna, 10

Attention: [ ]

SUBJECT: GENERAL - Operational

SPECIFIC - Karl FORNER

Refs. : Vien 3844; Full 461; MAV-W-2159

1. [ ] has extracted from Austrian police files the following information on Karl FORNER, alias Leon BERDT, Leo HUBER, Heinz FORNER;

- a. In October 1949, the Austrian police learned that FORNER maintained liaison between Dr. Wilhelm HOETTL and Count Adam RUDNITZKY. RUDNITZKY, who lives in the Hotel Volderwaldhof, Hall, near Innsbruck, is a former colonel in the Polish Army and an adherent of the Anders group; he is now employed by the French intelligence service. RUDNITZKY sent to HOETTL intelligence reports designed for American consumption, which FORNER stole and forwarded to an unknown person in Vienna.
- b. FORNER was involved in the kidnapping on 28 April 1946 of Colonel DIAKOV, a former career officer who had an official position in Austria before the war. DIAKOV, who was living at the time with a woman called HOETZENDORF in Vienna IV, was called by telephone to a café in Vienna I, Judenplatz, where he was met by FORNER and an unidentified man. FORNER was called away, allegedly to answer a telephone call, and several Soviets abducted DIAKOV; they showed no interest in FORNER, who was subsequently cleared of complicity in the kidnapping.
- c. FORNER met the Italian Consul TRACCHIERI (the official Austrian list of diplomatic personnel in Vienna gives Dr. Alfredo TRINCHIERI as head of the consular section of the Italian Legation in Vienna) in the Café Tomaselli in Salzburg in October 1949; the meeting was also attended by a Dr. HOLLAS, residing in Schwechatbrunn, Linzerstrasse 34, and Mrs. Santa TSARNOFF, born 2 June 1923. The meeting allegedly concerned the procurement of Austrian citizenship papers for Mrs. TSARNOFF, Austrian representative of an import-export

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firm named Intercambio con Germania, or something similar, which serves as a business cover for Italian military intelligence.

- d. FORMER has been reported to visit the Madressa Gesellschaft fuer individuelle Propaganda u. Maschinelle Adressierung, a public stenography and mailing service, Vienna I, Milchgasse 1, which is allegedly a place of contact for Soviet agents.
- e. FORMER is a close friend of Gergolf ULLRICH, Reforent of the Salzburg Security Directorate. After the arrest of FORMER on 26 March 1950 in Vienna on a charge involving false identification cards, ULLRICH met in Wels with Wilhelm KRECHLER, chief of the Public Safety Section of the Ministry of the Interior, and Bruno HATTENCH, chief of the Salzburg Security Directorate, to discuss the FORMER case.

2. [ ] claims that FORMER and [ ] are looked upon as step-brothers, since [ ] who was an orphan, was raised by FORMER's parents.

3. [ ] also claims to have seen a letter written by [ ] to Franz ROBERTSBERGER, chief of the Security Directorate in Linz, which was received by the police in Linz on 15 March 1950 and which requested that FORMER should not be molested in any way. The letter was prompted by ROBERTSBERGER's intention to arrest FORMER on the basis that he was engaged as a private citizen in furnishing intelligence to the Soviet, French, and possibly other intelligence services. FORMER, who has been reported by [ ] as a security threat, was discovered by CIC to be the subsource of one of their police informants in Salzburg; CIC was notified of FORMER's dubious background.

4. We have been unable to determine whether the curious position of the French Element with respect to non-release of FORMER was due to his employment with the French or because the French were unable to defer to American wishes after previously wishing to turn FORMER and his colleagues over to the Soviets (para.3, Pull-461). [ ] recently questioned Maj. Parkhurst Hough, CIC, Vienna, who said that this matter was still a mystery and that either alternative was possible.

5. [ ] will attempt to check on the validity of the allegations concerning [ ] in paras. 2 and 3 above.

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Harlsruhe

Comment:

1. With reference to paras 2 and 3, MAVA-5377. During [ ] meeting with [ ] on 21 April 1950, [ ] again brought up the FORNER case on his own initiative. As the conversation proceeded, [ ] strongly denied, without having been questioned by [ ] that he was implicated in any of FORNER's activities and that he could not understand why FORNER had claimed to be working for him in his statement to Kurt FRISCH, EPOo chief of police in the 1st Bezirk.
2. In checking on FORNER's statement that he had received identity cards from the Salzburg Police Directorate, [ ] learned that FORNER had presented a letter apparently signed by [ ] (a forgery according to [ ] to a subordinate official in the Salzburg Police Directorate who had issued several identity cards to FORNER on the strength of the forged letter without checking either with his superiors or with [ ]).
3. [ ] stated also that the Austrian police had been suspicious of FORNER ever since the DIKOV case, which occurred in April 1948, and had believed him to be probably an agent provocateur for the RIS. In February 1948, FORNER had offered to work for [ ] and [ ] had refused his offer in very explicit terms. At this time, [ ] had asked FORNER about his reported arrest or detention by the Americans. FORNER angrily denied the rumors and submitted a written report, or showed documents to [ ] which convinced the latter that FORNER was not working for the Soviets but for the Americans and possibly the French.
4. According to [ ] he had no personal interest in FORNER or his eventual fate. He had never met FORNER until after the DIKOV case. [ ] felt that the Western Allies had blundered in not making more of an issue of FRISCH's action in informing the Soviet element without, at the same time, informing the Western Allies regarding FORNER's arrest. The Ministry of the Interior would like to have had its hand strengthened, by such action on the part of the Western Allies, in its planned attempts to remove FRISCH.
5. [ ] was unable to ask [ ] questions regarding [ ] allegations in para 3, MAVA-5377. [ ] had seemed somewhat concerned about the FORNER case, but his concern may derive, as he has stated, from the fact that FORNER publicly mentioned him as having cooperated with him in intelligence matters and issuance of ID cards for agents, and the improper conduct of FRISCH. [ ] mentioned that

after FORMER's arrest and revelations, HELMER had informed [ ] that it might be advisable to transfer him from Vienna as it was possible that the Soviets would take action against him. [ ] gave the impression, however, that HELMER was not overly serious about this proposition, which now is apparently quite dead.

6. During [ ] meeting with [ ] on 2 May 1950, [ ] stated that FORMER is still in jail in the International District, which is now under American control. Apparently, the American element is making no further effort to transfer him.

HFD

[ ]