

SECRET

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: Officer designations should be used in the "TO" column. Under each comment a line should be drawn across sheet and each comment numbered to correspond with the number in the "TO" column. Each officer should initial (check mark is sufficient) before further routing. This Routing and Record Sheet should be returned to Registry.

FROM: NO. *DPB-26226* DATE

TO	ROOM NO.	DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS	COMMENTS
		REC'D	FILED		
1. <i>STC</i>			<i>5 1953</i>	<i>RSB</i>	
2.					
3. <i>STC/SIB</i>		<i>MAY 5 1953</i>	<i>MAY 5 1953</i>	<i>RPR</i>	
4.				<i>NEW</i>	
5.					
6. <i>EE/PI</i>				<i>RSB</i>	
7. <i>Clinton</i>				<i>abm</i>	
8. <i>E. Wright</i>				<i>ea</i>	
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13. <i>STC</i>		<i>MAY 5 1953</i>		<i>RSB</i>	
14. INDEX					
15. <i>PI</i>					

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ABSTRACT INDEX
DATE 30 APR 1953

FORM NO. 57-10
FEB 1955

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHODS EXEMPTION 3B2B
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2000 2008

FOR COORDINATION WITH FBI



SECURITY INFORMATION - CONFIDENTIAL
United States Department of Justice
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Washington 25, D. C.

DFB 26226

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO
FILE No. 65-58841

April 24, 1953

RE: OTTO VERBER;
KURT L. PONGER, et al
ESPIONAGE - R and AU



Ponger advised that his first espionage activity began following a chance meeting in March or April, 1949, in Vienna, Austria, with an individual named Ladislav Schimek or Cimsek. The meeting occurred at a press conference and Schimek, who was of Czech origin, claimed to be a representative of a Czech magazine agency, not further identified. Ponger said they discussed Nazi and anti-Nazi activities in Austria, and Ponger said he had been in a concentration camp and later worked at Murnberg. Schimek appeared interested in Ponger's photographs and subsequently met Ponger periodically. During these meetings he would purchase photographs from Ponger. Ponger claims he has no knowledge of Schimek's residence or headquarters in Vienna.

In September or October, 1949, Schimek gave Ponger a current United States Forces Austria telephone directory and requested Ponger to clarify all abbreviations. Ponger was given six more such directories from which he worked out organizations, units, personnel and assignments. For this effort Ponger received five hundred or six hundred Austrian shillings and Schimek indicated that the information was of great current and future value to Czechoslovakia.

In the Fall of 1949, Schimek inquired of Ponger concerning someone who could write anti-American articles. Ponger suggested Verber and introduced him to Schimek. Ponger believes that various documents furnished by Hans Moses to Verber were to be used in the preparation of anti-American articles but he does not know if the articles were ever written.

In July, 1950, when Verber learned from Moses that Counter Intelligence Corps files named Ponger, his wife Vera, and Verber as Soviet agents, Ponger passed that information to Schimek and inquired if he were, in fact, a Soviet agent. Schimek replied, "Yes I am, and so are you." Up to this point all information from Moses was handed to Verber, to Ponger, to Schimek who indicated specific items of information he desired to obtain from Moses.

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Ponger admitted his presence in Salzburg, Austria, December 27, 28 and 29, 1950, and admitted handling the final recruitment of Moses after Verber had failed. Ponger gave Moses three hundred dollars and informed him of arrangements for a contact in the United States pursuant to written instructions received from Schinsk.

Ponger was never informed that Moses had met his Soviet contact in Washington, D. C., and that after Moses departed he lost interest in recruiting which he decided to leave to Verber.

Ponger named other Soviet contacts as Inge Spiller and one Ivanov. He claimed that the contacts were always initiated by his Soviet superiors following telephone calls.

Ponger advised that Walter Lauber, who was present in Salzburg with him in connection with a contact with Moses, was unaware of the purpose of the visit. He described Lauber as mentally unstable as a result of war wounds and, although he was considered as a possible recruit for Soviet espionage, was rejected because of his physical condition and because he was a member in the Communist Party in 1946 and 1947.

Ponger said that from 1948 to 1952, he had contacts with Willy Hosttl and Otto Wilhelm Krichbaum in Germany. The purpose of his meetings with Hosttl was to locate Adolph Krichbaum and to obtain information on neo-Nazi activities and his Soviet superiors. The purpose of his contacts with Krichbaum was to obtain information concerning the organization Galen. Ponger stated that neither Hosttl nor Krichbaum was aware of his intelligence activities but he feels that Krichbaum is possibly a Soviet plant.

Ponger said he met with Inge Spiller from February, 1951, to May, 1951, on Vienna streets. He first met with Ivanov in the woods of the Prater Section of Vienna, and later in an untenanted house in the Prater Area in the second district of Vienna in the Soviet Sector. Ponger said this was a one-family house similar to all the other houses in the woods: old and gray with a sloped roof, iron gate and gravel walk or driveway just off a tree-lined street in a wooded section far from the center of the city. Ponger was taken to the meeting only at night by Ivanov or an unidentified chauffeur driving a blue or green Skoda car. Ivanov initiated a system of secret drops in the base of an old tree as being of greater security than personal meetings but abandoned the idea after two practice runs. Ponger advised that Ivanov was disagreeable and was apparently superior to Schinsk. Ponger was also contacted by a Russian using the cover name "Charlie," who was introduced by Inge Spiller in February, 1952. He met "Charlie" in an

apartment on the third floor of an apartment house located on Brahasplatz in the second or third house on the left from Wiener Hauptstrasse, Vienna IV (Soviet). This apartment had the appearance of not being lived in. "Charlie" was a more sympathetic and tolerant principal. His last contact with "Charlie" was in September, 1952.

Ponger said that Dr. Wilhelm Grundorfer, who during his residence in the United States was known as William Green, and his wife, Cella, returned to Austria and are residing in the second district of Vienna on Bocklinstrasse. He said that Grundorfer was a member of the Communist Party of Austria and that he "used Grundorfer to get information for his reports for his superiors but Grundorfer was not aware of it."

Ponger said that Otto Kreilishain, a former United States citizen, returned to Austria in 1946, where he resumed his Austrian citizenship. Ponger said he used Kreilishain to get information concerning the "reaction of intellectuals" for his Soviet superiors. Ponger believes Kreilishain to be a member of the Communist Party of Austria and Ponger denies that Kreilishain was aware of the purpose for which he wanted the information.

Ponger advised that in connection with his journalistic endeavors his contact with the China Photo Service was arranged by Franz Weiskopf. He described Weiskopf as a well-known German-Jewish writer of Czech origin who held diplomatic posts in the United States, Sweden, Norway and China for the Czechoslovakian Communist Government. Ponger said Weiskopf was recalled from China and arrested.

Ponger denies recruiting anyone for Soviet espionage other than Verber and Koss. He denies ever being requested to procure specific information of a military nature of United States or Allied installations. He claims that he was informed that he was working for Soviet political intelligence.