

AGENT REPORT

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1. NAME OF SUBJECT OR TITLE OF INCIDENT

People's Opposition (VO), Formation of  
Propaganda Committees, Vienna I

2. DATE SUBMITTED

19 March 1953

3. CONTROL SYMBOL OR FILE NO.

XB42-4272

CIC# 1-33735

4. REPORT OF FINDINGS

The following information was submitted by a source during the period covered by this report:

The People's Opposition (Volksopposition - VO) which is the cover name under which the Communist Party of Austria (Kommunistische Partei Oesterreichs - KPOe) will campaign in the 1953 Austrian National elections, was officially formed in the course of a conference held on 29-30 November 1952 in the Sofiensaal, Vienna III (British), Markergasse 17. This conference was attended by representatives from every province in Austria and allegedly the representatives were chosen without regard to race, creed, or political orientation. The main report of the conference was delivered by Professor Doctor Josef Dobretzberger, titular head of the Communist-front organization, the Democratic Union (Demokratische Union - DU), who was elected president of the VO. In addition to presenting the VO platform, Dobretzberger accentuated the broad fields of opinion represented at the conference and called for the formation of VO committees to be formed on this same broad base throughout Austria. A resolution calling for the formation of these committees was passed in the course of the conference to stimulate interest in and win votes for the VO.

RE: AUSTRIA II PAVILION, AUSTRIA

MEMBER OF THE BOARD (0-2)  
CHAIRMAN OF THE  
DEMOCRATIC UNION AND THE PEOPLE'S  
OPPOSITION DIRECTORATE

Pursuant to this resolution, (Dr.) Helmut Rock, member of the DU, legal advisor (Rechtskonsulent), Vienna I (International), Kaerntnerstrasse 17, sent invitations to persons whom he deemed prepared to take part in the formation of a VO committee in Vienna I, to attend a meeting on 15 December 1952 in the Cafe Parkring, Vienna I, Weihenburgerstrasse 28. During this first session, the following persons were elected as chairmen:

ELECTED  
CHAIRMAN  
OF COMMITTEE  
TO STIMULATE  
INTEREST IN  
THE PEOPLES  
OPPOSITION  
VO

Elisabeth Hartharrer, kindergarten instructress, without party affiliation, member of the League of Democratic Women (Band Demokratische Frauen - BDF), Vienna I, Fleischmarkt 20/1/11/0.

Dr. Helmut Rock, member of the directing committee of the DU.

Imcard Riecker, member of the executive committee of the Socialist Workers Party (SAP), Vienna I, Singerstrasse 4/8, mistress to Dr. Erwin Schwarz, S.P., P.R. LISTED AS A SUSPECT MEMBER OF THE KPOe

Theo Kozel, confidential clerk (Prokurist) of the Unilever Joint Stock Company, member of the KPOe, Vienna III, Schrotgasse 3/15.

NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT

above persons were the only ones present at this meeting, they also voted themselves into the working committee (Arbeitsausschuss) and

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5. TYPED NAME AND ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL AGENT  
HOWARD G. PAVES, M., S/A CIC CS COPY  
430th CIC Sub-Det "C" (Vienna)

6. SIGNATURE OF SPECIAL AGENT  
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proceeded with plans for the future. It was decided to prepare a leaflet for distribution to the Vienna I populace, calling for their assistance and participation in behalf of the VO during the coming election. The committee agreed to hold weekly meetings and the next meeting was to be held on 22 December 1952 in the same place as the present meeting was held. (C-3)

At 1930 hours on 22 December 1952, the second meeting of the VO Committee for Vienna I took place in the Cafe Parkring. In the course of this meeting, the following persons were elected into the working committee of the VO for Vienna I:

<sup>DOB 18 APR 15</sup>  
(Engineer) Armin Fraudaann, KPOe member, plant engineer and chairman of SMV, Vienna I, (Soviet Mineral Oil Administration), Wipplingerstrasse 12.

Eduard Fischer, chairman (Abmann) of the Concentration Camp Inmates Union (KZ Verband - KPOe-front organization), Vienna I, Lichtenfelsgasse 7.

<sup>DOB 1 OCT 1899</sup>  
Alfred Schierhuber, KPOe member, member of the Central Managing Committee of Trade Union of Employees in Private Economy, Vienna I, Fleischmarkt 9. ATTENDED KPOe TRAINING SCHOOL IN MAUER B.

<sup>DOB 10 NOV 02</sup>  
Friedrich Jerabek, KPOe member, chairman of the Union of Pensioners in Vienna I (Rentnerverband - KPOe-front organization), Vienna I, Rudolfplatz 5.

<sup>DOB</sup>  
(Professor) Oscar Wagner, (political affiliation unknown), conductor and composer, Vienna I, Koellnerhofgasse 4/19. DIR VO DIRECT

(Engineer) Hans Tazzer, without party affiliation, USIA planning center employee, Vienna XII, Heidlinger Hauptstrasse 32/42.

The following persons were elected secretary and substitute respectively:

<sup>DOB</sup>  
Karl Fahrhauser, KPOe member, bookkeeper, plant councillor (Belehrat), Chairman of the USIA firm, "Letese".

<sup>DOB 26 SEPT 17</sup>  
Rud. Hill, KPOe member, district secretary of the Vienna I, KPO Vienna V (British), Gassergasse 2-8/1/5/18. (C-3)

The date of the pamphlet announcing the formation of the VO committee and calling the Vienna I population for support, was completed in

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the following form:

APPEAL

Since 1945, the Austrian nation has been working on the reconstruction of our country. It has endured privations and made the most difficult of sacrifices. However, in spite of all the promises of the Figl-Schaerf government and of the VdU—their feigned opposition—life is becoming more and more difficult for the millions of common people and the standard of living of the working population has become worse and worse. The number of those dissatisfied increases from month to month.

Therefore, representatives of various parties, communities of interests and individual persons have gathered and united with the purpose of forcing a change in the course of the government. They founded the election community called "Austrian People's Opposition" which gives to every dissatisfied person, independent of his world conception, vocation, profession, or party affiliation, the possibility to effect a change of Austrian politics in the coming elections.

In Vienna I also a committee of the Austrian People's Opposition has been founded. It is composed of people from all circles of the population and has the task to unite all people in opposition into one election community with the goal:

"Things must be changed in Austria!"

The undersigned members of the district committee of the People's Opposition appeal therefore, to the Vienna I population to work with all force for the success of the People's Opposition.

Come and help us

Talk to your relatives, neighbors and co-workers about the necessity for a real opposition!

Give money for the funds of election of the Austrian People's Opposition!

Every means of support will contribute towards success!

(List of names of the Vienna I VO Committee Members) (2-3)

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During this meeting, it was agreed to take copies of the appeal to various people in Vienna I in the course of the ensuing week for the purpose of obtaining signatures to this document. At the end of the week, the signatures obtained will be incorporated into the VO committee for Vienna I and the pamphlet printed. It was hoped in this manner to enlarge the VO committee to at least 60 members. Riecker was instructed to locate suitable permanent quarters for the VO committee by the next meeting which was scheduled to take place on 29 December 1952. (0-3)

In the course of the week 22-29 December 1952, the following additional signatures were collected by members of the VO committee in Vienna I:

Maria Reinegger, pensioner, Vienna I, Kumpfgasse 7  
Heinrich Fritsch, district councillor (Bezirksrat), Vienna I,  
Domgasse 4  
Alfred Rosenberg, type setter, without political affiliation,  
Vienna I, Fleischmarkt 20  
Engineer Richard Wagner, plant engineer, Vienna II (Soviet),  
Praterstrasse 23/18  
Alexandra Wagner, concert pianist, Vienna I, Koellnerhofgasse 4/19  
Analia Zimmel, without political affiliation, housewife, Vienna  
I, Fleischmarkt 20  
Josefine Grasl, KPOe member, housewife and welfare worker, Vienna  
I, Wipplingerstrasse 12  
Hans Pall, plant councillor (Betriebsrat) with the firm, "Vienna  
Alliance", Vienna XII (British), Flurschuetsstrasse 26/26  
Engineer Erwin Wachter, plant engineer, Vienna VII (American),  
Heubauquartel 54  
Josef Zimmel, without political affiliation, office assistant  
(Skoutist), Vienna I, Fleischmarkt 20

Each of the persons named above were added to the appeal translated above and 5,000 copies were printed in time for the VO committee meeting on 29 December 1952. In the interim, Riecker had managed to rent housing facilities for the VO committee at Vienna I, Kurrentgasse 12, where the committee set up headquarters. The room was subleased from the SAP. (0-3)

The VO committee meeting held on 29 December 1952 was the first held in the organization's new headquarters. The appeal was passed out to the committee members for their edification and the announcement was made that copies would be enclosed in publications distributed in Vienna I. These publications consisted primarily of the "Volksstimme", "Der Abend", "Die Union", and "Die Stimme der Frau", all KPOe-front newspapers or magazines. A copy of this appeal is attached to the first six copies of this

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report as Exhibit "1". It was also announced that a Vienna VO conference would take place on 30 December 1952 in the Vienna headquarters of the VO located at Vienna IV (Soviet), Schikanedergasse 12. The following items were on the agenda for this meeting:

1. Report concerning the committee movement of the VO
2. VO propaganda
3. VO committee organizations

Source was appointed to attend this meeting in behalf of Vienna I, and after further discussion on the relative merits of the new district headquarters and other minor items, the meeting was closed. (C-3)

The Vienna VO conference scheduled for 30 December 1952 was opened with 24 men and 4 women present. The meeting was opened at 1930 hours and the main speaker, Wolfgang Hammerschlag, was introduced. Hammerschlag announced that every district in Vienna had already established its election committee (VO). These committees were composed of 471 men and women, 30 per cent KPOs, 30 per cent connected organizations, and 40 per cent of persons without political affiliations. He also stated that there were over 100 such additional committees in Lower Austria. In connection with propaganda, Hammerschlag announced that pamphlets on the State treaty question and an election manual would be issued in the next week. Further, a series of placards are being prepared; the first, for the pensioners; the second, for the workers; the third, for women; and the fourth, listing the major aims of the VO. In addition, a booklet entitled "Austrian Corruption", and a leaflet designed to appear like a 100 Schilling note with the phrase on the reverse side, "What Did I Get in 1949 - and What Do I Get Now". Those present were urged to continue their work in establishing new VO committees in order to assure the success of the VO at the coming election. The meeting ended at 2130 hours. (C-3)

The next meeting of the VO committee was held in the VO headquarters for Vienna I, again at Vienna I, Kurrentgasse 12, on 5 January 1953. At this meeting it was announced that a fashion show would take place as a means of further announcing the founding of the VO committee in Vienna I. This show was to be sponsored by the BOF and would take place in the Gassenlokal, Vienna I, Reichsrathstrasse 1, on 13 January 1953. The announcements for the fashion show also noted that an advisory office for housewives was located at Vienna I, Kurrentgasse 12. The same announcement also stated that a ball would take place on 31 January 1953 in the Hotel Post, Vienna I, Fleischmarkt. Both of these affairs were to prepare and advertise for the VO. A copy of this pamphlet is attached to the original copy of this report as

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Exhibit "A". In the course of this meeting the question of election funds was also discussed. It was agreed to assess the original VO committee 70 schillings each for each month of the election campaign, retroactive to December 1952. Also, election stamps and coins were issued to each member with instructions to actively sell them to residents of Vienna I. (C-3)

A short meeting of the working committee took place on 12 January 1953 but no decisions were reached. In response to invitations issued by the district KPOs headquarters in the districts concerned, members of the working committee of election circle one (Wahlkreis I) met in the Belvedere-stockl Inn, Vienna IV, Favoritenstrasse 54, on 19 January 1953. Election circle one is composed of Vienna I, III, and IV. The purpose of this meeting was to choose candidates for the coming election to appear on the election list from Election District 1. Dr. Ludwig Suswinsky, KPOs Central Committee member, delivered the main speech based on the original VO program as announced by Dobretsberger during the VO convention. Then a list of candidates was read for the approval of those present. (Agent's Note: A complete list of VO candidates from all election circles will be made the subject of a separate report.) (C-3)

Between this meeting and the meeting announcing the complete election list for Vienna on 24 January 1953, progress made by the Vienna I VO committee was measured in terms of new subordinate VO committees and new names added to the original VO committee. The following persons were added to the Vienna I VO committee during this period:

Richard Mandl, dress manufacturer, Vienna I, Neutorgasse 13  
Maria Deim, housewife, Vienna I, Himmelstorgasse 9  
Anton Bernhuber, laborer, shop steward in the firm "Morawa,"  
Vienna II, Novaragasse 54.  
Frans Murko, member of the presidium of the Academic Liberty  
Fighters I, Vienna IV, Schikanedergasse 13/12  
Johann Schoenleitner, pensioner, Vienna I, Wallnerstrasse 4/4/4  
Dr. Richard Schmied, translator in the Ministry of Interior,  
Vienna XVIII, Schopenhauerstrasse 43/15  
Dipl. Ing. Willi Frank, secretary of ministerial department in  
the Energy Ministry, Vienna I, Rathausstrasse 8  
Eduard Ottlinger, insurance employe, substitute shop steward of  
the Staedtische Versicherung, Vienna XVIII, Naaffgasse 13/I/6  
Ing. Fritz Wachs, KPOs member, engineer in the Energy Ministry  
and professional consultant to SMV  
(Fnu) Berdl, member of the SMV, Vienna I, Judenplatz 11  
Johann Tyakus, tailor, member of the Czech minority in Austria,  
Vienna I, Singerstrasse 16/15

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Josef Poharillo, pensioner, Vienna I, Judengasse 8/9  
Chase Poharillo, housewife, Vienna I, Judengasse 8/9  
Ida Sachmorani, Vienna I  
Richard Muhr, warehouseman, member of the plant VO committee  
in OROP, Vienna XV, Wurmaergasse 42/12  
Director Josef Reinberger, transportation section employee, member  
of the VO committee in OROP, Vienna IX, Wilhelm Emergasse 28/19  
Hermine Worell, commercial employee, member of the VO committee  
in OROP, Vienna II, Lassingleitnerplatz 2/11  
Karl Heinrich Slonka, Gartenbau coffee house  
Klizabeth Valenta, occupation and address unknown  
Professor Erwin Scholz, Vienna I, Babensteig 3/18, composer  
Appolonia Neubock, housewife, Vienna I, Zelinkagasse 6 (C-3)

Three new VO committees were also formed with headquarters in the  
following locations:

Vienna I, Schauflegasse, Rakosch Inn.  
Vienna I, Reichratsstrasse 1, BV Nathan club room.  
Vienna I, Rennasse 13, Firm Holcott.

Advisors from the District Election Committee were sent to each of  
these new "area" (Gebiet) committees to aid in planning their activities  
which consisted of bringing new people into the voting community of the VO.  
(C-3)

On 24 January 1953, source attended a meeting in the Vienna I  
election circle headquarters of the VO in order to hear the results of the  
various election circle choices for VO candidates. Dr. Soswinsky again  
addressed those present and after reading the candidates for each election  
circle in Vienna, added the following statistics:

The candidates consist of 26 laborers, 19 employees, 12 public  
employees, 8 pensioners, 7 employed independently, 6 tradesmen, 1 farmer,  
and 1 woman employed in her own household. Thirteen of the candidates are  
women. Broken down according to party, 29 are from the KPOs, 30 are without  
party affiliation, and 21 are from other parties and organizations. Broken  
down according to position on the list by party; first place has 3 KPOs mem-  
bers, 1 SAP member, 2 without party affiliation, and 3 from other organiza-  
tions; second place has 1 DU member, 1 SPOs member, 2 without party affilia-  
tion, and 2 from the KPOs; third place is held by 1 DU member, 3 without  
party affiliation, 2 from the KPOs, and 1 member of the SPOs. (C-3)

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Dr. Rock gave the report concerning VO committees in Vienna. Rock stated that there were 23 district committees in Vienna with a total of 550 members. These members are composed of 47 per cent without party affiliation, 30 per cent KPOe members, and 23 per cent from other parties and organizations. In addition to the district level VO committees, there are 75 local and plant committees formed under the district level. There have also been 520 apartment meetings in Vienna. However, Dr. Rock pointed out that the small meetings composed of only five or six participants were to be considered even more important. The Ottakring (Vienna XVII (American) district leads Vienna with 220 meetings of this type. (C-3)

Agent's Note: While the above experience covers only one district, it is the opinion of the undersigned based on piecemeal reports from other districts of Vienna that the pattern could be applied to any district insofar as VO committee work is concerned.

Files of this Sub-Detachment contain the following information concerning personalities mentioned in this report:

Dr. Helmut Rock is listed as a member of the board of chairmen of the DU and the VO Directorate, as well as a KPOe member. (B-3)

Irmgard Riesker nee Strasser is listed as a suspected member of the KPOe and a member of the executive committee of the SAP. (C-3)

Engineer Armin Freudmann, born 18 April 1915, is listed as a KPOe member. (C-3)

Eduard Fischer, Vienna I, Lichtenfelsgasse 7, is a member of the League of Concentration Camp Inmates. (C-3)

Alfred Schierhuber, born 1 October 1899 in Vienna, Vienna I, Fleischmarkt 9/17, is a member of the KPOe who attended the training school in Mauerbach. (C-3)

Friedrich Otto Jerabek, born 10 November 1902, is a member of the KPOe. (C-3)

Professor Oskar Wagner, composer, is a member of the VO Directorate. (F-3)

Rudolf Hill, born 26 September 1917, Vienna V (British), Gassergasse was a subtenant of KPOe activist Dr. Friedrich Seid. (C-3)

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Erwin Wächter, born 20 September 1928, is listed as a KPOe member  
employed in Heusiedl a.d. Taya. (0-3)

Anton Bernhuber, born 29 November 1932, Vienna II, Lampirgasse 25/1a,  
is listed as a member of the POeF in Vienna II. (0-3)

Richard Wagner, born 14 March 1923, is listed as a KPOe member in  
Kapraz. (0-3)

Franz Marke, residing at Vienna IV, Schikanederergasse 13/12, is  
listed as a member of the youth group of the Executive Party in June 1949.  
(0-3)

Wilhelm Frank, born 19 May 1916 in Budapest, Vienna I, Rathausstrasse  
8/7, is listed as a member of the KPOe. (0-3)

Eduard Ottiner, born 10 June 1913, Vienna XVIII, Waaffrass 13/6  
is listed as a KPOe member. (0-3)

Josef Reinberger, born 25 February 1917 in Vienna, Vienna IX,  
Wilhelm Knerergasse 28/19, is listed as a KPOe member and a Globus Verlag  
employee. (0-3)

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6-4-14-27<sup>2</sup>

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