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Interrogation of WISLICENY, Dieter

By..... Lt.Col,S.W.Brookhart

Time 15 November 1945 AM & PM

In response to a request made during the previous session, Wisliceny submitted a statement of "My estimate of number of Jews affected by measures of RSHA since autumn 1941, excluding Jews in the Russian territory", including a table as follows:

Poland	3,500,000	
Germany	180,000	
Hungary	500,000	+
Slovakia	52,000	(1942)
	14,000	(1944) +
Bohemia and Moravia	200,000	
Greece	60,000	+
Bulgaria	3,000	+
Croatia	3,000	+
Italy	14,000	
Denmark, Norway	6,000	?
France	220,000	?
Holland	40,000	
Belgium	20,000	

Grand Total: 4,817,000

Numbers marked with plus (+) signs are positively known by witness as being from his own knowledge. Witness states that he does not know how many of these people had remained alive as a number of them were put to work in the concentration camps. (See later testimony for estimates on this).

The above figures were first determined in the course of conferences with Dr. Kastner who was working on two reports for the Jewish World Congress, and Kastner asked witness to check the figures and witness further checked with Eichmann and his men. These figures were kept top secret and were worked on by only Eichmann and his deputy Guenther in Amt IV A 4. Kaltenbrunner saw them as a matter of course. Periodical reports were prepared for Himmler and all went through Kaltenbrunner and were signed by him. The regular procedure was for Eichmann or Guenther to prepare a draft which was signed by one or both of them and sent to Mueller in Amt IV for approval. Mueller initialled the draft as approved by him, returned it to Eichmann who then had the final report typed in two copies which went to Kaltenbrunner. Kaltenbrunner signed both copies, one copy was forwarded to Himmler, the second one returned to Eichmann's office and with the original draft. It often happened that Kaltenbrunner re-edited these reports and they had to be rewritten. The reports were kept in a prescribed form and Kaltenbrunner signed under the final words "Your Obedient". The subject for these reports

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would be, for example, "The Jewish Question in Hungary". The reports were fairly short, two to three typewritten pages, as Himmler had ordered telegraphic style and would not read longer reports. Generally, the reports concerned the whole Jewish problem throughout Germany.

Wisliceny received his assignment to Slovakia in August 1940. His job consisted of assisting the Slovakian Government, particularly Minister of Interior, in the Jewish question. Witness worked especially with Augustin Moravcek, President of the Central Economic Department, which had been specially created to solve the Jewish problem "in a legal way". This department was directly under Prime Minister Tuka. The two main tasks of the department were Aryanization and preparation of the laws for the economic, social, etc. control of the Jews. Witness had no influence on the Aryanization Program except in cases where applicants for former Jewish enterprises were of German race but were Slovakian citizens. Witness discussed these applicants with Moravcek on behalf of the German Ambassador to Slovakia. Witness described the local political fouds in the Slovakian Government and the internal controversies by leaders seeking to enrich themselves from confiscated Jewish properties. The first Jewish law in Slovakia had been passed in 1939 before Wisliceny's arrival. During 1940 and 1941, regulations and decrees controlling the economic and professional activity of Jews were added. By the end of 1941, all laws, regulations and decrees concerning Jews were codified.

While witness was on special assignments in Greece and Hungary, he still maintained his original position in Bratislava and repeatedly visited there. In September 1944, he was replaced by the Commander of Security Police in Bratislava and sent to Vienna where he remained till January 1945. His chief there was Obersturmbaumführer Krumey, but witness stated this was only a formal command after his open conflict with Eichmann had commenced. This conflict originated from witness's refusal to receive on the Hungarian-German border a group of Jews, including many women, which had been forced to march the 200 kilometers from Budapest to Vienna (an action previously opposed by the witness). The Jews were to work on fortifications south of Vienna. Witness was removed at once by Eichmann, who informed him through Regierungsrat Hunsche that his refusal would be reported to Himmler and if he continued to be obstinate, he would be sent to a concentration camp. Later on Eichmann weakened this threat because of their long acquaintanceship but finally reported witness and Hauptsturmführer Abramcic to Mueller and said he had no more use for these two. Witness reported end of January 1945 to Mueller in Berlin and requested to be relieved from the SD. Mueller refused and offered witness Sub-Section IV B2C. This section handled Slovakian questions, not Jewish. The group within the department had the following set up: Gruppe Obersturmbaumführer Lischka; Section Chief Wolf; Sub-Section Chief Schonoseiffen. Witness got the special assignment to process the documents on the Slovakian insurrection and started his work on 28 January 1945 in a camp near Trebnitz, Berlin, to which the section had been evacuated. He studied the interrogation reports of the Slovakian insurrection leaders and the files on the American-British Mission to Slovakia.

The assignment was interrupted 3 February 1945 because the Russians were only 17 kilometers from Trebnitz. All documents were destroyed by burning. The section was moved to Hof in Bavaria.

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Everything in RSHA at this time was confused which became almost complete when on 3 February 1945 the Gestapo Headquarters in Prinz Albrecht Strasse 8 were partly destroyed during air raids.

Witness went to Hof but found no installation or documents and went AWOL to Vienna and about the end of February reported back to Berlin where no one had observed his absence. Mueller ordered witness to report to Eichmann who sent him to Vienna with Krumei.

At that time, preparations were made for a visit by Count Bernadott from Sweden to take place at the beginning of April. As there were only 14,000 Jewish inmates, 3,000 additional Hungarian Jews were to be brought from the camp in Vienna. Witness was to accompany the transport and prepare for the visit. The transport, however, was never made as the rail connection was out of order. 2 April witness left Vienna with his mother and went to Bavaria. 8 April he radioed from Regensburg to Prague that he would not come and also telephoned to Thesskeiny. He learned that Eichmann had been in Thesskeiny on 8 April. Witness thereafter stayed in Munich and on 3 May turned himself over to the American MPs.

Wisliceny stated that about March or April 1942, Hitler issued an order that all Jews were to be exterminated. Himmler gave an order at the same time which to a certain degree limited the Hitler order as Himmler said Jews were only to be valued as laborers and all women, children, old people and others, not able bodied, were to be exterminated. The lowest age acceptable for labor purposes was 12 to 13 years. The determination as to who would be executed and who would be used for labor was made in closed camps under the direction of the inspectors of concentration camps.

The so-called "annihilation camps" were Auschwitz (code name "Camp A"), Maidanek (Camp M), and a number of others in the immediate vicinity of Lublin. Witness could not state the number of victims sent to the different camps in this area as the destination for transports was always "Lublin".

Camp "T" was, as far as witness remembers, also an annihilation camp belonging to the Lublin set up. Later on, certainly since 1943-44, all extermination activities were mainly concentrated in Auschwitz.

"Normal" concentration camps were, for instance, Mauthausen, Dachau, and Buchenwald.

Because of witness's special assignment to Jewish matters, he only knew about the extermination of Jews and not what happened to other people.

In March or April 1942, witness was ordered by Eichmann to demand from the Slovak Government delivery of 15,000 to 20,000 single Jews for labor in armament industries. This contingent was to be credited to the Slovakian Government's regular quota of workers. The Slovakian Government on its own accord had offered to furnish Jewish workers to German armament production. Seventeen thousand Jews were sent by railroad transports, destination marked Auschwitz and Lublin. Auschwitz was at that time in the process of con-

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struction and these Jewish workers were not exterminated but were employed as workers in the construction of the camps. Witness says that even two years later, letters still were received in Slovakia from this first contingent of 17,000.

In May 1942, the Slovakian Government asked Wisliceny as a representative of RSHA if the families of these 17,000 could be transferred to Reich proper as no arrangements had been made for transfer of money from the workers now in Poland and the Slovakian Government had to provide for these families. Eichmann was at that time in Bratislava and accompanied by the witness, visited the Minister of Interior MACH and Prime Minister TUKA. Eichmann declared he was prepared to take the families to Poland. He assured MACH and TUKA that the families would be settled in villages in the vicinity of Lublin which had been evacuated by the Poles. He made the same assurance to the German Ambassador Ludin. Eichmann, however, left witness in doubt about what was going to happen to the families. Witness up to that time had visited Berlin very seldom and did not have any knowledge of the extermination camps. During May and June 1942, between 32,000 and 33,000 Jews, members of families of the 17,000 workers, were sent to Auschwitz and Lublin by the Slovakian Government.

In July 1942, TUKA summoned witness to get an explanation of what had happened to the Jewish families. He was specially interested in the fate of Baptized Jews and requested that they should be given the opportunity to exercise their religion. TUKA also requested that the Slovakian Commission be given permission to travel to Lublin area in order to ascertain conditions. TUKA's action was initiated by Papal Nuncius Monsignore Burzio. TUKA's wishes were transmitted to the German Ambassador in a verbal note. The Ambassador ordered Wisliceny to travel to Berlin to inform Eichmann of the wish of the Slovakian Government and request that the wish be granted.

Witness arrived in Berlin end of July or beginning of August 1942, and had a long discussion with Eichmann. Witness supported strongly the Slovakian idea and explained that Germany's international prestige would suffer if it was not granted. Witness referred to statements by the Pope and the Papal State Secretary Maglione, statements which partly had been made in public, partly to the Slovakian Ambassador at the Vatican. Witness also referred to the fact that President Dr. TISO of Slovakia was a Catholic Priest. He furthermore stressed that Slovakian Government had only agreed to the deporting of Jews after having obtained promises of humane treatment by the Germans.

Eichmann answered that a visit by a Slovakian Commission was out of the question. When witness asked why, Eichmann, after long hesitation, informed him of the Hitler Order that all Jews were to be exterminated.

When witness asked Eichmann who was going to assume the responsibility, Eichmann showed witness the Order signed by Himmler, marked "Geheime Reichssache" (Top Secret) and a "Schnellbrief" (Immediate Action). Witness recalls the text was about as follows: "The Fuehrer has decided that the final disposition of the Jewish Question is to begin at once (code word 'final disposition' stood for biological extermination of Jews). I (Himmler) designate

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the Chief of the Security Police and SD and the inspectors of concentration camps to execute this order. Excluded from disposition are the Jews needed for the labor program in the concentration camps".

"Details about the execution of this Order are to be agreed upon by the Chief of the Security Police and SD and the inspectors of concentration camps."

"About the execution of this Order, I am to be continuously informed".

Witness saw Himmler's unmistakable signature on this document. He remarked that Himmler's signature is such that once seen it is never forgotten. Witness believes the document was dated end of April or beginning of May. Eichmann had the original order which was addressed to the Chief of the Security Police and SD and to the Chiefs of WVHA to whom inspectors of concentration camps were subordinated.

The document had a red border which meant it was an urgent document for speedy action.

Witness was impressed by the fact that into Eichmann's hands had been given the power to exterminate millions of people in whatever way he found best. Wisliceny made the remark "God forbid that our enemies ever would do the same to the German people". Eichmann answered: "Don't be sentimental, this is a Fuehrer Order".

So far as witness knows, the 33,000 Jews were exterminated in Auschwitz as soon as they arrived there, with the exception of a small number who were found able bodied. Eichmann said verbally: "The Slovaks won't be able to see their Jews because they are not alive".

Witness stated that after Heydrich's death, Kaltenbrunner and under him, Mueller and Eichmann, were responsible for the execution of this order as it never was withdrawn.

Eichmann then ordered witness to return to Bratislava and stall off the Slovakian Government and at the same time exercise pressure for delivery of the remaining 25,000 or 30,000 Jews in Slovakia. Witness made up his mind not to execute the latter order if it was possible. At that time several thousand Jews were in collecting camps designated for shipment. Since witness was to give a positive answer, the Slovakian Government held up further transport. Witness stated that undoubtedly they would have been delivered if strong pressure had been exercised on behalf of the German Government, but after a lengthy interview with the German Ambassador LUDIN, they both decided not to do it.

In August or early September 1942, witness was approached by the Joint Distribution Committee through an intermediary, a Jew by the name of Karl Hochberg. This man was known to the witness, having done statistical work for him. He worked in the Jewish Central Program of Slovakia (Judenzentrale). Witness had discussed Jewish problems with Hochberg on previous occasions and

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had told Hochberg that if it depended upon him, further transport would be prevented. Hochberg told Wisliceny that if an understanding could be achieved between the Jewish agencies and the German agencies handling Jews, any amount would be available. To this, witness answered that his attitude did not depend on money. Hochberg acted on behalf of a certain ROTT - Zuerich. Witness assumed that ROTT in reality was either Nathan SCHWALD or Sally MEYER (or Maier) whose name witness learned later in connection with Himmler's negotiations with Jewish agencies in 1944. Approximately 25,000 Jews remaining in Slovakia lived there until the Slovakian insurrection in September 1944, when Eichmann ordered their shipment to Auschwitz for extermination. Eichmann or his Deputy GUENTHER sent Hauptsturmbannfuhrer BRUNNER to Slovakia to be in charge of this action. BRUNNER had formerly been in Paris and was known as one of Eichmann's most brutal and obedient tools. At that time, Wisliceny was in Hungary with Eichmann. He asked to be assigned to the job of solving the Slovakian Jewish question, but Eichmann refused as he suspected witness of having helped some prominent Jews flee into Rumania in August 1944. Dr. KASTNER, representative of Joint Distribution Committee in Budapest, tried hard through witness to make Eichmann change his decision, but to no avail.

In September 1942, Hochberg gave witness \$20,000 in US dollar notes. Witness first refused to take the money and said his opinions were not for sale and that his income was adequate. At that time, it came from three different sources: a. Salary from SD; b. per diem; c. 5,000 Slovak Kronen (equivalent of RM 500) from the Ambassador for representation purposes. Witness earned more than RM 1,200 monthly which was a very high income in Slovakia where prices were extremely cheap.

Wisliceny promised Hochberg to attempt to influence Eichmann and then reported to Eichmann that the Joint Distribution Committee was ready to put at his disposal any amount if a reasonable agreement could be reached. Witness said that Hochberg had mentioned \$3,000,000 as being available. He added that he had received \$20,000 and had declared this amount should be used as help for Theresienstadt. Wisliceny asked Eichmann for decision on disposition of this amount and if and how to continue discussions with the Joint Distribution Committee. No answer to this report was received but early in November 1942, witness was summoned to Berlin where he saw Eichmann. Eichmann told him that extracts of the report had been submitted to Himmler. Witness was shown an order from Himmler signed by Adjutant SUCHANECK; the \$20,000 were to be delivered to Berlin immediately; attempt should be made to fool the Jews to pay more money. If successful, Wisliceny was later to be relieved from Bratislava. The \$20,000 were brought from Bratislava by special courier in November 1942 and turned over to WVHA. Upon return, Wisliceny told Hochberg that the negotiations were very difficult and at a dead-lock and that he could not accept further amounts. However, witness stressed to Hochberg that his personal attitude was unchanged.

Before witness's departure from Berlin, Eichmann warned him strongly against any further negotiations and said that if anything went wrong, he would have no qualms to let him fall.

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Wisliceny said the percentage of Jews found to be able bodied was 20% or at the most, 25%. He had learned this fact through overhearing a conversation between Eichmann and Hoess, Commander of the Auschwitz Camp. The conversation took place in Budapest in July 1944. Hoess said this figure was an average for all parts of occupied Europe. The conversation particularly concerned the percentage of able bodied Jews from Hungary. 500,000 Jews were to be evacuated from Hungary at that time. Of these, 460,000 were sent to Auschwitz. Eichmann declared that all 460,000 except 20 to 25%, were exterminated. Eichmann told witness that they were killed in gas chambers with carbon monoxide. Witness did not know when gas chambers were introduced, but knew for sure that they existed in 1942. Of the remaining 40,000 Hungarian Jews, about 30,000 were used as laborers on the Southeast wall, south of Vienna, starting in November 1944. They were subordinated to Gau Leadership Lower Danube, which controlled the construction. Some smaller complements of this group were sent to a concentration camp near Weizen in Ober Pfalz. Nine to ten thousand remained in Vienna under the control of KRUMEY. They worked in smaller labor camps in the vicinity of Vienna in agricultural and smaller industrial enterprises. This group was still in Vienna when the Russians entered and were on almost completely free footing. Witness quoted Eichmann: "These Jews are to be saved for the negotiations between Himmler's representative and the Joint Distribution Committee".

Witness agreed to draw up a new chart and elaborate on his estimate of Jews affected by measures of RSHA. Two charts drawn up by the witness on parts of the organization within Amt IV, marked Exhibits B and C, were explained by witness.

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In October or November 1944, witness visited Bratislava; he had obtained permission to do so by explaining that he now had to turn over his assignment as Chief of the Bureau of Security Police and was leaving the country.

While in Bratislava on a farewell call to the German Ambassador, witness learned that the Jews had been rounded up by German and Slovakian police and SS troops as well as regular troops when the German Army reoccupied the parts of Slovakia which had revolted.

BRUNNER was absolutely ruthless in his actions and despite attempts on part of witness to save at least some few Jews, among them a Mrs. Fleischmann, representative of the Joint Distribution Committee in Slovakia, BRUNNER refused and all Jews were sent to Auschwitz. Witness said that some few thousand Jews remained in hiding.

Wisliceny read the interrogation reports in Trebinitz during the last three days of January concerning the American-British Mission for Slovakia which had been captured. He remembered the name of the Chief of the British Mission as Captain Schner; the Chief of the American mission, he believed, was Brown. The only other name he remembered was an American Lieutenant Mican. He could not ascertain from the reports if the interrogations had taken place under stress, but he definitely remembered that the interrogation report signed by Brown carried the following sentence in English over Brown's signature: "Signed under duress and protest". Witness said he did not know

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how the interrogations had been carried out, but admitted that strong measures were often used by RSHA interrogators.

After the break down of the Slovakian insurrection, members of the American and British Mission had fled into the forests of Lower Tatra where they were taken prisoners and first brought to Bratislava. This was the end of November or beginning of December 1944. Commander Witiska sent a report to Himmler through RSHA. The prisoners were then sent to Mauthausen concentration camp for a special interrogation under Sturmbannfuhrer SCHOENSEIFFEN, which lasted for about one week. Witness was told, probably by SCHOENSEIFFEN, that the prisoners were shot. The last document in the fairly thick file of documents pertaining to the missions was a request written about middle of January 1945 from OKW, that the prisoners be turned over to the Army for imprisonment in regular PW camps. This request had not been answered, presumably because the functions of RSHA were completely in confusion.

When all documents were destroyed in Trobenitz on 3 February 1945, witness observed that SCHOENSEIFFEN picked out the files referring to the American-British missions, added some separate documents also marked American-British Mission and took them to Berlin together with other very important documents which were not destroyed.