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INTERROGATION OF THE FORMER GERMAN GENERAL OF THE POLICE IN DENMARK. GÜNTHER PANCKE.

in the Kastell, Copenhagen, 24 August 1945

The subject declared about the Schalburg-Corps, that it was organized on his arrival in Denmark on 1 November 1943, and he did not have an knowledge of the Corps, before his arrival. As we found out, the Corps was organized with the specific object, according to German interpretation, to recruit volunteers, and to train them for service in the regiment "Denmark", whereby we remarked, that the recruiting was carried out by Germanic authorities and the reserve command. The administration of the Corps, finance as well, was subordinated to the Reich-Plenipotentiary, however, when an organized battalion was formed, it was subordinated to the subject. The conditions in the Corps were generally unclear, for instance, no court action was taken for common crimes and misdemeanour against members of the Corps, because neither the Danes nor the Germans wanted to have anything to do with them, and there also was no proper welfare regulation for the families of members of the Corps. Therefore, the subject and Dr. Best together saw to it that the Corps was subordinated in this respect to the Waffen SS. At the instigation of the subject and Dr. Best, the Schalburg men were transferred from the Free Mason's Lodge to Ringstedt, to get them out of Copenhagen, where they only caused trouble, in the subject's opinion. And in Ringstedt, it was strictly forbidden to the Corps to occupy themselves with anything else but their military training. The Battalion in Ringstedt was only subordinated to the subject. However, Martinsen stayed in Copenhagen with his staff, which was subordinated to Best. Asked whether the Corps did not have other purposes than the training of volunteers, the subject answered none as far as the German side was concerned, that is to say, the Corps was, however, to fight together with the Germans in the event of an invasion, and perhaps was to be committed in case of an actual communist rising in Denmark. However, the use of the Corps against the Danish population or the Danish authorities or such was excluded. However, it is known to the subject, that the Corps itself wished, as we found out from Martinsen, to form the basis for the Danish military forces, once the war was over.

Asked whether the Schalburg Corps actually was committed in actions of any kind, the subject declared, that groups in SS uniform were used as guards of roads and by-ways in Koge, Ringstedt and Naestved and also as guards of railroads, but for nothing else. However, a short time, immediately after the 19th September 1944, the Corps itself assumed the police rights in Ringstedt.

In the summer of 1944, the subject received information through espionage agents, according to which plans were hatched in the circle of Martinsen (the subject does not know the names of the people concerned) to provoke the Germans by terrorist acts against the Germans, to take a more severe course of action against the population. The subject presented these reports to Martinsen, but Martinsen denied with complete determination, that such plans were being made, and the subject said specifically to Martinsen, that such action of the Schalburg-Corps would have not other consequences, than simply the confinement of the Corps.

The subject suspects the Corps for sabotage, but could never find proof for

any specific case. The subject talked only once in the fall of 1943 to Captain Sommer, and has nothing to do with him while Sommer belonged to the Air Force. After he had again separated from the air force, he looked the subject up again in the spring of 1945 to try to get a new job.

The subject declared about the financial matters of the Schalburg-Corps that the organized units were paid in the customary manner by the armed forces. As far as he knows, however, they also received subsidies from Dr. Best for food. Otherwise, the expenses of the Corps were taken care of by Dr. Best, and the subject does not know, what amounts were received by the Corps.

The subject and Dr. Best agreed that the Corps did not have any great importance, and that instead of being useful only caused additional work. In agreement with the subject, Best informed the Corps that the large subsidies would cease, after which the Corps was reduced, and even dissolved.

Attached to the Schalburg Corps was an information department whose mission was to gather political information, to procure illegal newspapers, etc. This department was under the command of Erik V. Petersen, and the subject has no connection with the department, except that he received information from there.

The subject declared about the HIPO-Corps (Auxiliary police), that he needed necessarily Danes for the support of the German police after the 19th of September 1944, partly because the German police was not large enough to perform the work, and partly because it had no command of the Danish language. The subject had considered the reinstitution of a Danish police as can be gathered among others from his conferences with Director Svenningsen in the foreign ministry. After one third of the police of the cities were deported to Germany, he counted that the remaining police would take up their duties. Since this was not the case, he decided, to admit Danes from the service of the Schalburg Corps into the German police, and this at once to the telephone service and radio cars, so that communications would function, and gradually Danes were employed in all departments of the German police. The subject left the actual organization of the HIPO to Erik V. Petersen, who according to his own statement, had good relations to the underground police, and told him that person, who had not been convicted, were to be employed. HIPO developed gradually, since the subject did not dispose of sufficient funds at one time to employ larger units, and he estimated the strength of the Corps between 3 and 400 men during the last stage. He had given the order that no HIPO men should appear alone, instead they should be under the command of the German police at every action, regardless whether they belonged to the ordinary police, the criminal police or the security police. However, he realizes, that this was not done, and that HIPO, despite his protests to Erik V. Petersen and others, again and again appeared alone. Partly through Director Svenningsen, partly through Dr. Best, various complaints about the conduct of the HIPO were presented to him according to which they were supposed to have carried out terror acts. Subject had the cases investigated, perhaps altogether about 20; however, the results presented to him showed always that the complaints were not justified, in any case the conditions were not as serious as they had been described, and he considered the continuation of the HIPO to be necessary.

HIPO was, as mentioned before, under his and not under Bovensiepen's command. Bovensiepen often complained about that and demanded the command of the HIPO. Subject did not dare to turn it over to him because he was afraid that he'd then lose control completely. He adds that in March 1945, he ordered the elimination of the HIPO, from radio-cars, and their complete disarmament as long as they were not under orders.

A small detachment - subject does not know how many men - was detailed for duty with Bovensiepen.

HIPO was not employed for counter-terror acts; certainly not on subject's orders and not at all as far as he knows. It is also not known to him that HIPO detachments have committed murder though he learned later that the terror-acts committed immediately after Erik V. Petersen was killed, were carried out by HIPO-Groups. When subject learned of this, he prohibited definitely the repetition of such acts but no investigation of the responsible people was initiated. Subject states that it would have been very difficult to carry out such an investigation.

HIPO was not stationed anywhere else but in Copenhagen and if they operated anywhere else, subject did not know about it beforehand. The one or two interpreters who worked for the various German police posts in the provinces, were members of the HIPO-Corps, but they were employed only as interpreters.

The pay of the HIPO-Corps was handled by subject - with means made available to him by the Deputy of the Reich. They were paid at the same rate, according to rank, as the German police.

Questioned as to whom the police agents were responsible, subject declares that the agents proper were under Bovensiepen's command, although subject had his own little detachment under Captain Mayer. This detachment was not to be concerned with political information but with purely de facto conditions of interest to the police, for example, checking people for weapons, etc, during strikes and mass meetings.

Questioned as to what subject knows about tortures applied by the German police or by the auxiliary police, he states that nobody was tortured, as far as he knows. By that he does not mean to imply that slapping was not done. From the illegal press and from rumors he learned that people supposedly were tortured but not one single actual case has come to his knowledge. He says that he talked with thousands of relatives of prisoners, and not one of them has complained to him about tortures. In one case subject learned from some private acquaintances that an acquaintance of theirs had been arrested by the SD, probably in Jütland; it was a certain Frants Lassen who had landed as a British parachutist agent. Subject had this case reported to him, in order to make sure about the prisoner's treatment, and no evidence of incorrect treatment could be found. When told that the files would hardly show what kind of tortures were applied and that this investigation would have warranted an examination of the prisoner, subject replies that this idea did not occur to him. He had asked Bovensiepen whether any tortures had been applied. Bovensiepen has answered that this was not the case, perhaps slapping had been applied and perhaps convicts had been put in solitary confinement or dark cells, other-

wise nothing had been done, and Bovensiepen stated that this was sufficient to extract an admission of guilt from the Danes. Subject does also not know anything about general orders issued by the Reich Security Main Office, as to laborers to be applied in certain cases, as alleged by Bovensiepen. As for tortures presumably applied by the HIPO under subject's command, he notes that the HIPO was not authorized to interrogate anybody, and therefore had no opportunity to apply torture.

Asked who was responsible for the conditions in the prisons, subject states that the commander of the Security Police was responsible; that is Bovensiepen. Confronted with the statement of Bovensiepen that the ordinary police (ORFO) was responsible for the prisons. Subject replies that the ORFO was responsible only for guard duty, and not anything else. Subject also thinks that it was at Bovensiepen's discretion to what an extent doctors were allowed to see the prisoners - since these, as he states, prisoners belonged to Bovensiepen.

When asked whether he does not think that he, as the highest police authority in Denmark is responsible for what happens all over. Subject states that this, in his opinion, is not the case. His first duty was to obey orders given to him; he had given himself up so he could give account for these orders but he does not think that according to German law he had in any way made himself guilty of a punishable act. He does not know whether he committed any punishable act according to international law, for example, by carrying out the order for counter-terror and murder as a reprisal measure. He personally never had an occasion to study the respective international regulations. He believes that he could rely on his superiors who must have studied and cleared this question, that they would not have asked of him any acts contrary to international law. Informed of the fact that the German police as well as the HIPO has applied tortures in Denmark on a large scale, subject repeats that he did not know about it and did not want to believe it.

Questioned as to what role he had played in disarming and deporting the Danish police, subject states that the question of the position of the police had been discussed all summer long in 1944, because subject as well as particularly General von Hanneken were of the opinion that in case of an invasion the Danish police would desert as a whole to the invading army. Furthermore, the opinion existed that the police collaborated with the resistance movement, and this applied also to the commanders of the police in the opinion of the subject. The Danish police was generally believed to be unreliable in its relations to the occupying power. The more subject and General von Hanneken discussed this problem, the more necessary it seemed to them to act against the police before it was too late. Even if the police did not directly refuse to reduce the did/police force by about 2 to 3000 men demanded by the Germans in case it not want to take charge of guards against sabotage or part of such guard, one was still under the impression that the police would not really comply with their reduction in strength or at least would not loyally effect it. Subject states that it was impossible to check whether or not discharged policemen found shelter in other organizations, with the customs office, the State Railroad, etc. Subject and the General von Hanneken agreed that the Danish police which was well equipped as far as personnel and equipment goes would contribute a

considerable danger in the case of an invasion. Following their experiences in Paris and in other places they deemed the elimination of such a danger in anticipation of an invasion advisable. In disarming the police, they counted also on the possibility that the personnel of the resistance-movement would be provoked to come into the open and could also be effectively subdued before a possible invasion. Subject states that he as well as General von Hannecken actually believed in a British invasion and that it would come in the course of September. The result of the negotiations was that subject was to secure for himself an authorization for the disarmament of the police. Beginning of September, subject sent Gaurock, his adjutant, to Berlin who was to propose the plan to Himmler by teletype. This was done in order to keep the plan a complete secret. Adjutant returned on 12 September with Himmler's written authorization for the disarmament and the letter of Himmler also stated that Hitler had also given his approval. That means, the action was decided upon without direct conferences between subject and Himmler or Hitler. Himmler had consulted about this matter with Kaltenbrunner. Until it was decided on 12 September to act, subject had discussed the matter here only with General von Hannecken. Asked whether Best had not known about the action, subject replies that he as well as Best have heretofore stated that Best did not know anything about this action. However as he is now being asked directly, he'd like to state that he had informed Best of it on 12 September. One day he had received the authorization. Asked what the attitude of Best was with regard to the action, subject states that Best agreed that the measure had become necessary but was very worried about its execution in view of the consequences for the political developments in Denmark. Since Best had not been consulted beforehand, he declared that he did not want to have anything to do with the measure but wanted to be left entirely out of it, and he meant to play this roll before the Danish authorities as well as before the Foreign Office. He believed that he would strengthen his authority later on by declaring that he had not participated in the action. Therefore, no details regarding the measure were discussed between them and Best did not learn the time or any other further details regarding the execution of the measure. Subject says he does not really believe that Best went on the trip to Jütland just at that time in order to be absent - in any case he had not known the day of the action at the time of his departure.

Subject prepared the action in as much secrecy as possible and completed his plans so that the action could take place on the 19th. Bovensiepen had not known about it before the decision of the 12th was received, but was then taken into confidence.

On 17 September subject travelled to Jütland. He presented the plan to General von Hannecken and discussed with him to what an extent the troops were to participate. He received an order for General Richter, who at a certain pass word, was to precede the action. The pass word was "seagall".

Until late in the night of 13 September nobody from the police except Bovensiepen was familiar with the plan.

Asked whether subject had also suggested to intern the chiefs of the departments simultaneously with the action against the police, he replies that nobody had ever talked about that.

Confronted with the fact that the disarmament of the police as subject had intended whereby only 2 to 2500 men were to be eliminated from the larger cities - counting about 1800 in Copenhagen and about 500 in the provinces - did not necessitate the deportation of these men to Germany, subject states that he did not see any possibilities for quartering them in Denmark, and that furthermore his aim was to segregate them from their Danish surroundings as soon as possible. He had not been informed where they were to be shipped in Germany. He knew only that they were to be taken on board ship and were to go to Lübeck. Partly to keep the matter secret, nothing had been said about it. Kaltenbrunner was to take care of it all, and in this connection subject remarks that Admiral Wurembach also did not know for which purpose the ship was to be used. Subject had figured that the police would be interned somewhere in Southern Schleswig or near Hamburg in an area where it was relatively easy for them to receive extra rations.

Subject realized that only a small part of the Danish police was to be affected by this action. He assumed that only 1/3 would be on duty. But he figured that the remaining members would be so shocked by this action that they would keep away from further collaboration with the resistance movement. As mentioned above, he planned to have the remaining policemen return to duty.

Asked whether the honorably interned police officials had been under the suspicion of cooperation with the resistance movement, he replied that they were and that he personally believed that they did cooperate with the resistance movement - with the execution of the Department - Chief Bivind Larsen though Bovensiepen reported to him that this latter belonged to it, too.

Asked whether he was informed of the conditions under which the Police was interned in Germany subject states that he learned from Best, the Red Cross, as well as from other sources that the Police was interned under bad conditions and he has often requested Dr. Kaltenbrunner and Dr. Müller in the Reich Main Security Office by telephone as well as by letter to see to it that the police was quartered under better conditions. Asked whether it had been attempted for political reasons to release some of the interned Police Officials to Denmark, subject answers that the return of a few was attempted, whose attitude toward the occupation forces was considered entirely loyal, but as far as he knows it was not successful because the men involved did not want to leave their comrades.

The Border Police was interned by requests of the armed forces as subject explains. An order of the resistance movement to the border police was found according to which the traffic across the Danish/German border was to be blocked by means of explosions and otherwise in case of an invasion, and they wanted to prevent this by means of internment.

Asked again if subject knows anything about the financial arrangements of the German Police, he repeats that the ordinary police was paid by the armed forces without his intercession and that he did not know how much money the Security Police spent. This money was, as explained, paid by the Reich Deputy according to directives from Berlin. When informed that the Security Police had requested some 50 million Kronen in the 1½ years of its activity, subject states that in his opinion part of this money must have been spent outside of Denmark.

Asked how subject had considered the chances of a German Victory in the course of time, he answers that he personally had believed in the possibility of a German victory until the crossing of the Rhine by the Allies. He had taken no part in the negotiations for surrender.