

INTERROGATION  
OF THE FORMER GERMAN GENERAL OF THE POLICE IN DENMARK  
GUNTHER PANCKE, IN THE KASTELL  
KOPENHAGEN, 23 AUG 1945.

The subject further explained about his conferences with Himmler and Kaltenbrunner and that before his taking office in Denmark, Himmler had said, at first he should orient himself by conferences with the members of the occupation forces already present. After about a month, he then could report to Himmler, and could present his suggestions for the future course. He used the first month for conferences with BEST and MILDNER, and all three agreed, that the situation in Denmark was not exciting, not even where sabotage was concerned. The subject on his part would have been satisfied, if the sabotage would not have increased, and the subject in the first month did not give the order for stricter actions on the part of the police. In addition, Himmler believed, that the subject, who was born in Hamburg, would be able because of his north-German viewpoint to handle the Danes, and to get things going so that despite of the 29 August the biggest possible results could be achieved in the future.

Beginning of December, between the 1st and the 10th, probably on the 9th, the subject then had a conference with Himmler in Posen, and explained his opinion over the Danish conditions. Already then, Himmler had apparently received a different viewpoint of the situation. In any case, he now reproached the subject, that he had done nothing in the past to prevent sabotage, and he also said about MILDNER, that he was weak and not energetic enough and was doing nothing to keep order and because of that Mildner would now be transferred. During this conference, he received from Himmler the order for the introduction of stricter measures and use of counter sabotage, and murder of intellectual and others, for instance financial supporters, who stood behind the sabotage. As it was explained further by the subject, this different standpoint of Himmler was caused by Danish volunteers, especially ARENTOFT complained to Himmler about it, that the volunteers on furlough and their families could not live in peace because of the population. ARENTOFT talked especially against the subject and Dr. Best. The subject then returned to Copenhagen, and informed Dr. Best and Dr. Mildner about Himmler's new orders. All three agreed, to attempt an arrangement of the conditions without the use of counter terror. After that they intended to speak again about the cause with Himmler, von Ribbentrop and Kaltenbrunner. However this conference did not take place, because Dr. Best as well as the subject were called to a higher conference on 30 Dec 1943. Until then, the subject had not given the order for actions of counter terror.

On the 30 Dec 1943, the subject and Dr. Best were in the Fuhrer Headquarters for a conference, the following being present among others: HITLER, HIMMLER, KALTENBRUNNER, GENERAL VON HANNEKEN, KEITEL, JODL, SCHMUNDT; this checks with the diary of Dr. Best on the 30 Dec 1943; a copy of that diary is available. It is believed, that a representative of the foreign office was also present, whose name the subject cannot remember, also he does not remember whether he made any utterances during the occasion.

Already at the start of the conferences, HITLER was in a very bad mood, and was apparently informed about conditions in Denmark in a very exaggerated manner. Dr. Best reported first and declared, that the situation in Denmark in his opinion were extraordinarily favorable despite the events of 29th Aug, that the deliveries continued, and that the administration by the departmental chiefs

were satisfactory. He therefore had to advise with certainty against stricter actions, which had been used up to now, because one could expect that a decrease of deliveries, above all he advised against counter terror. He requested the jurisdiction for himself over the Danish saboteurs, so that they could be punished according to law and regulations. Then the subject reported, agreeing absolutely with Dr. Best. He also spoke very strongly against counter terror and retaliating murder, and we believed with safety that the work up to now of the German security police, as it had been carried out during the last three months, was sufficient to curb sabotage. Namely, it was made possible by Danish trustees to infiltrate fairly well into the resistance movement, so that one could expect, to be able to remove the leaders of the resistance movement, in the near future.

Hitler was very much against the proposals of the subject and Dr. Best, and he said, that court action against the saboteurs was positively out of the question. It was known, that people removed in such a manner were made into heroes everywhere, for instance in Germany Andreas Hofer and Schlageter, and that would also be the case in Denmark. Hitler said emphatically: "My order stands. It is so in Kopenhagen, that a German soldier cannot walk in the street without being pushed around, snubbed or otherwise molested by the Danish population." The subject remarked to that, that Hitler, as it is known to him, had pictures taken by a photographer, apparently an aircorps Lieutenant, of various localities, which interested, Kopenhagen among others; it is said, that unfriendly remarks were made to this Lieutenant in the streets, while he was taking pictures in Kopenhagen. Against saboteurs, one can only act in such a manner, that one kills them without further ado; preferable in the act or during arrest, and both of them received strict orders from Hitler himself, to start with retaliatory murders. The subject replied however, that the shooting during the arrest were very difficult and dangerous as well, because one could not know naturally at the time of the arrest, whether the person concerned actually was a saboteur. Hitler demanded retaliatory murders in the ratio of at least 5-1, so that for each German, 5 Danes were to be murdered.

General Von Hanneken reported then, supported the subject and Dr. Best, and declared, that from the military standpoint as well, he also could be satisfied with the situation in Denmark. He could get for the defense installation as many volunteer workers, as he wanted, and the deliveries also were taken care of as desired. Furthermore, General Keitel also participated in the conference, but only with the suggestion to decrease the food ration in Denmark, so that they would not be higher than in Germany. Against this as well, the three representatives from Denmark resisted. Thus, the result of the conference was, that the subject was dismissed with the final order from Hitler for retaliatory murders.

After this conference, the subject had a conversation with Himmler alone, who remarked, that he now had heard from the Führer himself, how he was to act, and one could count it now, that the subject would carry out the order. Apparently he had not followed Himmler's orders up to now. The subject knows, that Best also conferred with Ribbentrop after this conference, however he does not remember the result.

After their return to Denmark, the subject and Dr. Best conferred repeatedly

about the affair, and contrary to Hitler's order, they started court action against various saboteurs; but the subject naturally transmitted Hitler's order to the commander at that time of the security police in Denmark, and in the future one acted accordingly, however not with retaliatory murders in ratio of 5-1, but 1-1.

The subject repeated this order to Bovensiepen, when he came to Denmark on 5 or 6 Jan 1944. Asked, whether he thusly made the decision about individual counter sabotage actions or retaliatory murders in the future, the subject answered, that he only gave this general order, and that he only agreed in individual cases, which objects were to be sabotaged. He remembers to have agreed in the case of "TIVOLI" and of the "ODINSTURM IN ODENSE". He never sanctioned the murder of persons in advance. However, the subject received reports daily about the events during the night, and thus he gave his consent afterwards, without declaring himself in agreement beforehand. He had, as he said, not enough knowledge about the various objects, to be able to make the decision.

The ratio 1-1 is neither kept up with sabotage nor with retaliatory murders, this would have been impossible anyhow. In the monthly reports however he had to put sabotage and murders as well as counter sabotage and retaliatory murders, and so that it would be approximately correct, sabotage was frequently described as counter sabotage, and all Danes, killed in combat, as retaliatory murders. The reports were sent in code, since the affair naturally had to be kept secret, and said in the case of counter sabotage or retaliatory murders. No German interests affected. The result of his conference with Hitler was thus, that he followed the order in a certain sense, although he personally was against it, and he added, that all important Germans in Denmark, among them Best and Bovensiepen were very strongly against this course.

The subject declared as his opinion, that the measures were ordered with full consideration by the highest German authorities, and were necessary in the opinion of these circles, to safeguard the Germans, stationed in Denmark and those Danes, working for Germany; therefore the subject was necessitated to issue the order.

The subject confirms, what is also said in Best's diary, that he, Best and Bovensiepen conferred very frequently and sometimes daily, also about the problems mentioned. Asked, whether Best agreed, when various objects were discussed, and tried to prevent various actions, the subject replied, that he agreed sometimes, at other times he protested. Bovensiepen made reports about the objects, and if bigger objects were in question, he also made suggestions. Whether the objects in all cases were selected by Bovensiepen himself, or in some cases by his subordinates, the subject does not know; he remarks however, that he was under strong pressure of the military, partly from General von Hanneken, although he at first was against counter terror, and later partly to an increased extent from Generaloberst Lindemann. When soldiers were shot or other military objects were affected, the subject was asked immediately for his measures, and what the military could report to the supreme command in this respect. The subject had to reply satisfactorily and also act.

The subject repeats, that he did not select the objects either for counter



sabotage or retaliatory murders, because he only was there such a short time and did not know the objects at first; but later he also did not make any suggestion with exception of the ODINSTURM in case, that once objects of this size might be needed; and as he already explained, he agreed to the sabotage in "TIVOLI". Lists of objects were repeatedly discussed by the subject, Best and Bovensiepen, however he mostly found out, which objects were selected, only later, as he already explained. Asked, whether he knew, whether Best made any positive suggestions, on the contrary Best frequently raised objections, when Bovensiepen made various suggestions in the presence of Best and the subject. Asked whether he knows, whether Best suggested "TUBORG", he replied, that this was not known to him, and that prior to the sabotage, "TUBORG", was not discussed in his presence, he knows however, that Best and Bovensiepen frequently discussed various objects, when the subject was not present. With "TUBORG", at first he did not know whether it was sabotage or counter sabotage.

It is not known to the subject, whether many co-operators, Germans, who were have several years, and Danes and he had very good dues in Copenhagen and in the province, to be able to select the correct objects. He further explained, that Bovensiepen thus had a free hand in this respect, in any case if he did not go so far, that he caused by his actions strikes or violences. If the subject realized, that Bovensiepen went too far, he kept him back. The subject declared about Best, that he was very retarding. Asked, whether he had the impression, that Bovensiepen favored counter terror, the subject answered, that Bovensiepen had less scruples than he or Best, and after all it was his job, to combat sabotage, and sabotage and resistance movement was his enemies. However he cannot say whether Bovensiepen did it with pleasure. Asked, whether Bovensiepen drank a lot, he confessed, that Bovensiepen drank quite a bit off duty, that is in the evening and during the night.

About the Peter-Group", the subject explained, that this "Peter", Peter Schaffer came to Denmark with several Germans at the beginning of Jan 1944 known to him to carry out counter terror; he was sent by Kaltenbrunner. However, the subject had no direct connections with the group, except that he once spoke with Peter, namely after the sabotage of ODINSTURM. However, he knew how they worked, and that they received their orders from Bovensiepen. It was further known to him, that several Danes were later accepted into the group, and namely because the group was to include Danish speaking members. For the terror acts committed by the group were to appear as having been executed by Danish groups for instance Communists, and in any case, it was to be kept secret, that this terror was done by Germans.

Asked, who had the right of prosecution toward the Danes in the country, the subject declared, that the accusations were made by Bovensiepen, but more frequently by the subject. Generally, the case was discussed by the subject and Best, and one agreed about possible court action, but then it was left up to Bovensiepen, to find the persons and to prosecute. Actually, the subject had no influence on the verdict, but to make the verdict legal, he had to confirm the verdict. In case of a request for clemency, the subject had to recommend or not, and the clemency question was decided by the plenipotentiary.

The subject declared about the hostage question, that he and Best discussed the suggestion, whether one could not take the course, to postpone the execution

of those condemned to death, and announce, that the execution would not take place at all if the sabotage stopped. During the conference of Dec 30, the both presented this suggestion to Hitler, but he refused all questions about hostages in any form. He added, that he was against the taking of hostages in any other manner than the one mentioned, and he added, that if one has taken hostages for a certain purpose, one has to shoot them also, if the purpose was not fulfilled, and according to his experiences, one does not get any results with hostages. Since then, the question of Denmark was not discussed with him at all. With the placing of hostages in the front in trains, these hostages were of course in the danger to be blown up with the train; but even with the danger of air attack on the train, they were not threatened with shooting.