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Testimony of Hans Frank, taken at Nurnberg, Germany, from 2:40 pm to 5:20 pm, 10 September 1945, by Thomas S. Hinkel, Lt. Col., IGD, OUSCC. Also present: Jesse F. Landrum, Capt., AGD, Court Reporter, and Mr. Bernard Reyman, Interpreter.

COL. HINKEL TO THE INTERPRETER:

Q Do you solemnly swear that you will translate from English into German the questions which I ask the witness, and translate from German into English the answers given by the witness, to the best of your ability?

A I do, so help me God.

TO THE WITNESS THROUGH THE INTERPRETER:

Q What is your name?

A Hans Frank.

Q You have heretofore been interrogated?

A Yes, I have.

Q And at that time you were placed under oath?

A Yes, I was.

Q You understand that you are still under oath and that you have promised to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

A Yes, so help me God.

Q At our last session, I requested you to make a general statement on the relations between you and Poles who were non-Jewish, that is, all the people who lived in the Polish area

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who were not Jews, and you had made a statement and I want to ask you now if there is anything to add?

A May I say that my General Governorship--my function as General Governor--started in October, 1939, and continued up to the time when the Russians occupied the whole territory. During those five years, the relation with regard to the Poles were continually developing and what I told you in this regard the last time does not exhaust, not by far, the whole problem of my relations to and with the Poles. In order to answer exhaustively such a question, I would have to make a very lengthy speech of several hours. But I presume that the Colonel don't mean this.

Q No, no.

A Of course, it is not as if what I said last time were all I could say in the matter.

Q I just wanted to give you an opportunity to make a brief statement regarding those relationships and I didn't mean to have you make a speech about it. What was your principal duty as Governor General?

A I had to assume and to take over the civil government of Poland, without economy; essentially, it should be emphasized that the authority in the departments of Himmler, Goering, Speer, and Dornpiller (Minister for Transportation), the corresponding four departments were beyond my authority. I, personally, was

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endeavoring to enlarge my competence, but in the course of the years I have not succeeded in this.

Q Well, my question is, "What was your principal duty?"

A My principal duty was in a country completely liquidated by war to establish an administration. The administration placed under my authority was in charge of the following departments: first place, in the administration, the division was the following--under the Governor General were governors and/each governor of the district there was a Kreishauptman, a title coined by me, and under the authority of the Kreishauptman was the Polish voit (a Polish word) and each Polish voit had 10 to 20 communities under his administration. That was according to the number of the population, and all the Polish voits of one district formed, so to speak, the staff of the Kreishauptman. The task of the Polish voits was to apply beneath them the orders coming from above and to transmit the claims from below to authorities above. That was the inner administration.

For the cities, there was instead of a Kreishauptman, a Stadthauptman and under the Stadthauptman there was a Polish Burgermeister. Also, I had the seat of my general government in Cracovia, and each governor in his turn had his own administration. That is what I call the backbone of the administration; and then comes the Departments of Education, of Finance, Agriculture, Health. There were about 12 or 13 departments in all. And

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besides this administration, as outlined by me, there were in the country the following administrations which were entirely independent of and from me: the most important there were was the Police and the SS. It had been said officially that the Chief of the Police was under my authority; but that was simply a personal way of emphasizing his rank was not above mine; and subsequently, by an order of the Fuehrer (which was published in a general order), the Police was entirely removed from my jurisdiction to such an extent that it had its own Statssecretary, which Statssecretary received his orders directly from Himmler.

Q Did he receive any orders from you?

A When I would give an order, such an order could only be executed with the authorization of Himmler.

Q Did you ever give any orders that were not executed?

A Repeatedly.

Q What kind of orders were those?

A It was a lasting fight.

Q What kind of orders did you give that were not executed?

A My orders, in the first place, with regard to the general treatment of the Polish population, I always wanted an amnesty for those people who had been arrested.

Q What particular treatment are you referring to, now?

A I was particularly displeased when time and again I

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was told that arrests had been made in the country. May I add the following? May I suggest that if I were permitted to give you, before I enter into details, a further outline of the inner administration so that the information I give you will be clearer.

Q Yes, go ahead.

A To mark the complete separation and distinction of the Police and the SS from my administration, no member of the Police Force or SS was a member of my administration; whereas, all the officials of all departments under the order of the Governor General were being paid out of my treasury, while the personnel of the Police and SS were being paid directly from and by the cash of Himmler and Berlin. So that I had not even any disciplinary authority over the Police as any Chief is supposed to have. Any attempt to manage the Police had to go in the shape of a request, not in the form of an order. On the top of all this, the Chief of Police was not only a direct representative of Himmler as Chief Commissar of the General Police, but also "Für die Festigung des Volkstums," and besides, in the question of the Jews, this system was quite impossible and I had continually to envisage my resignation as I was in continual conflict. I wish only to say that my fight with or against the Police and the SS was known throughout the whole country. It was only the Polish immigrant-government in London which did not see the picture as it was; whereas, the native

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Poles at home, with whom I collaborated, they saw the things as they were. It is only after three years of struggle that the heads of the Police, Krieger, was finally recalled. This recall of Krieger was, to a certain extent, a triumph for me as it was a symbolical proof that my policy had got the upper hand; so that the successor to Krieger, Koppe, was a rather decent person. It is evident that the reports sent by Krieger to Himmler at Berlin, and Himmler being my enemy, are for me today the most glamorous justification because in those reports I was depicted as a regular formalist, as a weakling, as a man who was not in good standing with the Poles and who did not carry out the very policy for which Himmler stood.

Q How do you know that?

A In my continual visits to Berlin this was told me by Minister Lammers and in one of the few interviews I had personally with Hitler--it was in 1943 in the presence of Bormann--Hitler himself made reference to those reports by and from Himmler. This conference probably took place sometime in May, 1943. I again offered to resign, saying that I could not keep on in that manner. Buehler is well aware of these facts and I wish you could give him a hearing.

Q Getting back to what happened, who was in charge of the economic aspect of Polish life?

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A The economic life in Poland was in three directions: in the first place, all matters of agriculture were taken care of by the agricultural representative of my government; secondly, departments non-agricultural and non-important from the war point of view, were attended to by the head of the department, also within my government. But while the most important part of the economy was continued by the Chief of the 4-year plan, Hermann Goering, or by and from the Minister for Armament, Goering even had the right to issue orders, which had legal force in the regular government, without consulting me.

Q Did he ever do that?

A This is printed in the legal publications.

Q Did he ever issue any such orders?

A Unfortunately, more than once. The worst of it was regarding the furnishing of foodstuff in the first two years of the war. Thus, once he asked for 500,000 tons of cereal (corn) from the general government.

Q Did you furnish it?

A I did not furnish it. I had a very grave conflict with him. Goering said he didn't care whether anybody starves in Europe, the German people ought not to starve. I furnished only a part which went to the Wehrmacht. From that time on, Goering called me "King Stanislas."

Q Isn't it a fact, however, that you did have charge of

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the food supplies of the Poles?

A This was my duty.

Q And isn't it a further fact that you, in your capacity as Governor General, ordered the shipment from Poland of large amounts of food?

A That was only--it was not actually delivered--what the German Wehrmacht within Poland consumed.

Q Not only consumed, but also there was foodstuff shipped, isn't that true?

A Surely we did, but in exchange we received from Germany sugar, oil, machinery.

Q But, isn't it a further fact that such a large amount of foodstuff was shipped from Poland that the amount of food then available to the public was insufficient?

A Why, for God's sake, I had started but received from the Reich 600,000 tons of corn for Poland. Every year we made an agreement with the Reich, as Poland was outside of German custom union--again, here, Goering intervened and he simply did not accept the venture as far as the Luftwaffe was concerned.

Q Let us get back to the food question. Isn't it a fact that there were shipped from Poland large quantities of foodstuff?

A Of course, there were such, but there never were so big as Goering wanted them; and in exchange we always received

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some other commodities.

Q Well, isn't it a further fact that so much food was shipped from Poland that there was insufficient food to feed the population?

A The border line between Germany and the General Government were drawn so poorly from the point of view of the General Government that we could not get a single ton of coal in the whole General Government.

Q Let us get back to my question. Isn't it a fact--

A So that, for instance, the whole city of Warsaw had no hinterland at all and it actually had only one territory which was the territory of Lublin.

Q But isn't it a fact--

A That is why it became impossible in the first years to get sufficient foodstuff for the population.

Q Isn't it a fact, however, that large quantities of food were shipped out of the Government General of Poland as compared to the other parts of Poland, to such an extent that there was insufficient food for the Polish people?

A It was so, without a doubt in the first years; but I repeat again, that an essential part of it was the consumption by the Wehrmacht. While it was officially said and stated "export for the Reich," actually it was consumed within the General Government. I want to recall to the Colonel that the

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General Government had only one peaceful year and that was the year 1940; other years, Poland had become a territory through which passed the troops, and in a continual state of war.

Q Do you recall receiving an order from Goering regarding the exploitation of Polish natural resources?

A This order was somewhere from December, 1939, and thereupon, I went to see Adolph Hitler and I told him it can't go on. Goering wanted, at that time, that we break off every second railway line of the double railway lines.

Q What did you do, in response to this order that was received from Goering, besides complain to the Fuehrer?

A We didn't carry it out.

Q You didn't? You didn't do anything at all?

A We didn't do anything and what he did do, he did it with his own personnel.

Q What did the Fuehrer tell you when you complained to him about this order?

A Hitler sided absolutely with me. He said it was madness.

Q Was the order ever withdrawn?

A I don't know whether it was formally withdrawn.

Q Isn't it a fact that Poland was exploited?

A I should remind you that I came into the country in November, 1939. At that time, there was a delegate of the OKW, Buhrman, and he was especially in charge of transportation of

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the most precious machinery to Germany; and as soon as I took up my duties as Governor General, I received from all the governors a complaint to the effect that the situation was getting impossible. Things reached a climax where we in the General Government had not a single ton of copper because all the copper had been taken away. The machinery from Polish factories had been, much before my arrival, carried off by Buhrman.

Q What about the natural resources? Let us forget about machinery.

A Anything which was available at all or any other commodities had been carried away totally to Germany and that is why when I arrived I immediately asked for those 600,000 tons of corn which I have just mentioned.

Q Did you get it; did you pay it back?

A If I had not received it, there would have been a catastrophe.

Q Did you pay it back?

A I can't remember.

Q What about the Polish forests?

A May I add anything with regard to foodstuffs?

Q Yes.

A It is generally considered that those commodities which had been furnished--delivered--had been so by the General

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Government. As a matter of fact, the General Government kept on protesting and opposing against all this looting. I cannot use a different word although we speak of Germans. If I had not fought against it with all my power, the most gruesome catastrophe would have taken place in 1940. The Gauleiter Koch, for several weeks, day in and day out, carried out from Poland whatever he could lay his hands on.

Q That may be.

A I eventually managed to stop it.

Q What about the Polish forests? Weren't they cut down and shipped to Germany as lumber?

A The Polish forests were under our own authority and, according to an early plan, utilized in the very normal way. In our administration, the question of wood played a minor part, since the great forests were not within the province of the General Government, the great forests within the Reich.

Q Is it your testimony that those orders issued by Goering in connection with the 4-year plan, were not executed by you?

A Some plans I did execute; there were some reasonable plans.

Q Which ones, for example?

A One of these orders of Goering's was the rebuilding of the factories for purposes of armament. That was before the

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Minister of Armaments, Speer, was appointed; at that time, Goering was alone in charge of it. Goering was the man I feared the most on account of his enormous needs.

Q What other orders of Goering's did you consider reasonable?

A The rebuilding of navigation on the Vistula. Of course, the question is not what Goering asked me to do in favor of the Poles; the question is, what were the needs of Goering from Poland--that's the question.

Q The question is, you stated that some of the orders that Goering issued as head of the 4-year plan were executed by you because you thought they were reasonable. I am trying to find out which orders you thought were reasonable.

A That was the general scheme of the rebuilding of the armament industry within the General Government--those were very important propositions.

Q Which were unreasonable and therefore not carried out by you?

A They were the whole system of exploitation which you are aware of.

Q Do you mean to say that every time Goering made a requirement of you that meant the use of Polish labor or raw materials, you considered it exploitation and therefore refused

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to carry it out?

A Well, if such a request were made within reasonable limits, then it was sensible.

Q I am just trying to find out what you consider reasonable and unreasonable?

A The most unreasonable request from Goering was in the Summer of 1942; he asked of me 560,000 tons of corn. If we had carried it out, we would have broken down. Eventually, we didn't pay much attention to such orders of Goering.

Q How many thousands of workers did you supply to the German Reich from Poland?

A When you speak of Poland, you, of course, mean the Government General?

Q Yes, the Government General of Poland.

Q Within those 5 years, some 500,000 Poles and some 200,000 Ukrainians.

Q How did you recruit those workers?

A Those workers were reported to the Labor Office and were sent as volunteers.

Q What do you mean "volunteers?"

A It was my hardest fight always to obtain these volunteer workers.

Q What do you mean by "volunteers?"

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A By volunteer workers I mean those who followed an appeal, reported voluntarily to the Labor Office, stating that they were willing to work for or in Germany.

Q Isn't it a fact that you used to receive a quota of the number of workers that were desired from you on a regular basis?

A When Saukel became Reichs Commissar for Labor, the number of workers furnished by the General Government was already so high that he was satisfied with a very small quota of say 50,000 laborers a year. Why, that could be obtained without any further ado.

Q You mean to say that all the Polish labor that came from the Governor General of Poland into Germany came voluntarily?

A Absolutely, so far as they came from the Labor Office under my authority.

Q Well, where else did they come from?

A Well, but the Luftwaffe was in the country, the SS was in the country, and I had to fight for years to oppose any violent measures in this respect. And to give an instance, the Police once surrounded a movie and was going to deport all the people coming out from it. Well, I was fighting with the utmost energy against such methods. I myself saw those trains with volunteers for Germany and I spoke to them. I sometimes gave them gifts and saw them off to Germany. I also obtained in

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the Reich a report on the treatment of Poles which, at the beginning, was rather harsh. Well, the Poles had to wear a patch with the letter "P" on it and only in 1943 did I obtain that this "P" be removed. I had to negotiate for some 18 months to obtain the permission to send Catholic priests for the Polish laborers which priests had been forbidden by Himmler. In places where Poles worked, they dared to put inscriptions on the churches "No Admittance For Poles," and such cases of sheer madness I have continued to fight against. Well, we saw the kindness of the Church and also of the German people who didn't attach any importance to the official stuff; the Poles were well-treated by the German peasants, and they wrote accordingly to their families at home, and that drew again other Poles to Germany. There are also hundreds of thousands of Poles I had received within my General Government, some 800,000 Poles which had been sent from the Polish territory within the Reich, and it is from those Poles that I could recruit a labor force. Not exclusively from those, but also from those. But this was an additional charge for a small General Government since I didn't receive any additional foodstuff. Those Poles were sent back under gruesome conditions and we had to set up our own sanitary establishments and equipment to take care of them.

Q Did you have any trouble from the Polish underground?

A That underground movement started, actually, not within

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the General Government, but within the territories next to the Reich.

Q It moved over into the Government General, didn't it, and weren't there hostages executed for activities on the part of people in the underground?

A I am referring to the execution of hostages. It was a continual fight between the movement and the Police. We had no arms, the Government General had no arms.

Q You knew that the shooting of hostages was going on, didn't you?

A Executions took place on the strength of sentences of the courts.

Q Do you mean to say that the only people killed in Poland by the Police or by your representatives were those who had been condemned by a court of law?

A Of course, I wish to say that those courts which were under my orders had to give death sentences in certain cases where they found it correct. There were the courts belonging to and under the authority of the General Government and, then there were the courts of the Police. Each capital sentence had to be approved by me, while the death sentence was to be submitted to me and I had created a commission of grace, composed of 5 members.

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Q What about those people who did not have the benefit of a trial? You know about those, too, don't you?

A I had alas! to learn of such executions.

Q What did you learn about them?

A In the course of the 3 or 4 years I received news that some riots occurring at certain places: certain people who offered resistance had to be shot. When I would ask for particulars (I used to ask for particulars for every case which came to my knowledge), I received a report stating forth in particular under what conditions the fighting had been going on, etc., and those reports from the Police I had them confirmed by the special authorities in my government.

Q What about those people who weren't shot in the course of a riot?

A When such was the case and it came to my knowledge, I required always an exemplary punishment of the guilty one and an investigation of the whole case.

Q What about Maidanek?

A What?

Q You know what I mean. What about Maidanek, the concentration camp?

A I gave an explanation the last time. What had taken place at Maidanek I had heard that only from the foreign press.

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Q You are sure about that?

A Maidanek was occupied by the Russians in the Summer last and they had set down the conditions of the camp and made them known to the press of the world; and one day I received a visit of the Chief of Police who told me, "Here's the whole affair of Maidanek." I saw immediately the SS Gruppenfuehrer, Koppe, and told him what monstrous news I had received about happenings at Maidanek and I instructed him to proceed immediately to make an investigation.

Q You mean to try to tell me that you didn't know Maidanek, that it existed, prior to the time of this press report?

A Absolutely nothing. This I wish to say and that I did say under oath the last time.

Q Didn't your assistants, those who were acting for you in the vicinity of Maidanek, didn't they know about it?

A No. There had been a whole number of entirely closed-out camps--not only camps for Jews, but camps of all descriptions: camps for POWs, which is the same as in Germany--the whole Government General was sprinkled with such camps.

Q Did you ever ask anybody what was in those camps?

A Well, I did ask and I was told those were camps for prisoners of war, camps for Germans returning from the Reich, etc., and access to those camps was severely prohibited to me

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or the civilian population.

Q Do you mean to say that hundreds of thousands of people lived near Maidanek and they never noticed them go in it, did they, to tell you about them?

A Were there hundreds of thousands passed through it?

Q Hundreds of thousands.

A I swear by God Almighty.

Q And you never knew about that: nobody ever told you?

A Never.

Q And you were the one back in 1933 who had heard about Dachau?

A Yes, of course.

Q And you knew what a concentration camp was, didn't you?

A I wish to say that Dachau, at that time, in comparison with what you say Maidanek was, and what the Press said, was a paradise.

Q And what you know it was.

A If I had known it at that time and if I had kept silent a single day, I would have been the biggest criminal that ever existed on God's earth.

Q You know a man by the name of Schmidt, who used to be the Chief Training Leader of the Party?

A Yes, yes.

Q Isn't it a fact that Schmidt told you about Maidanek?

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A Never.

Q And if there is information that he did, that information is wrong, isn't it?

A It is false.

Q Never heard from anybody about it, did you?

A I wish I had heard of it.

Q Do you know a Dr. Zorner?

A I neither understand why the thing had been kept so secret. They probably didn't do it only in Maidanek; they probably did it somewhere else in Germany, too--it certainly goes back to a great central plan which those gentlemen had with Hitler. When I was still at Mondorf, Ribbentrop told me when he heard what had been going on in Maidanek, he went to see Hitler and asked him if it was true and Hitler told him, "It is no business of yours; that is something which concerns only me and Himmler."

Q Do you know a Dr. Zorner?

A He was Governor of Lublin.

Q Yes. Do you know a Dr. Wendler?

A No.

Q Dr. Zorner worked for you, didn't he?

A He was a governor in Lublin. He had the most difficult job of any of them because in Lublin there was Globoznik

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who was the confidential man of Himmler, an SS Gruppenfuehrer.

Q Dr. Zorner knew what was going on at Maidanek.

A Zorner had never told me anything about it. I only knew that he had greatest struggle or fight with Globocznik who was the very prototype of the SS; and Dr. Zorner was recalled to the Reich and was replaced by Wendler. You asked about Wendler; yes, I knew Wendler.

Q Didn't Zorner and Wendler tell Schmidt about what was going on at that camp?

A Schmidt?

Q Yes, the Chief Training Leader of the Party?

A Never, never.

Q Didn't Schmidt tell you what they had told him?

A Never. The last time I saw Schmidt was about three or four years ago, I don't know exactly when.

Q You never heard anything at all about Maidanek?

A No, never.

Q And you were never curious as to what was going on there?

A Anyone who says I do know, I want to be confronted with him and cross-examined with him. How can you imagine that I could know such a thing, whereas I had been waging for years a fight against them. I now realize why Hitler and Himmler never accepted my resignation, because they wanted just to put

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this over onto me.

Q Wasn't it your duty to know about these places?

A As General Governor, it was not my duty to know it; as a human being, it was.

Q Weren't you responsible as Governor General for the welfare of the people you governed?

A Yes, inasmuch as it was within my possibilities.

Q Yes, and wasn't it within your possibilities to ascertain what was going on in those camps?

A I have said repeatedly that such possibility simply did not exist.

Q A camp like Maidanek was there for four years and you never knew anything about it, although you were the Governor General? Hard to believe, isn't it?

A Yes, I admit it, and one can only comprehend it if one has lived in Germany. The Reichsstatthalter von Epp had no idea what was going on at Dachau in the last years?

Q Or at least that's what he says?

A No, no, I can not say it myself. Before putting such a question, you must time and again consider the power of the SS.

Q We will adjourn now and resume at some future time.

APPROVED: _____
Interrogator

J. Landrum
Court Reporter

Interpreter

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