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Testimony of HANS FRANK
Taken at: Nuremberg, Germany
13 September 1945, Afternoon
By: Lt. Col. Thomas A. Hinkel,
IGD, OUSCC. Also present:
Siegfried Ramler, Interpreter
and Pvt. Clair Van Vleck,
Court Reporter.

COLONEL HINKEL TO THE INTERPRETER:

Q Do you solemnly swear that you will translate my questions from English into German, and the responses of the witness from German into English, to the best of your ability, so help you God?

A I do.

COLONEL HINKEL TO THE WITNESS THROUGH THE INTERPRETER:

Q What is your name?

A Hans Frank.

Q You have heretofore been interrogated?

A Yes.

Q At that time, you were placed under oath?

A Yes.

Q Do you realize 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.

Q At our last meeting, we were discussing your knowledge of the Maidonek concentration camp near Lublin. As I recall your statements, they were to the effect that the first time you knew of the existence of this camp was after Poland had been captured by the Russians and a report of the conditions thereof appeared in the foreign press. Is that correct?

A Yes. At that time I wrote the letter to the Obergruppenfuhrer Koppé and asked him about the camp. After a short time, the Governor, Dr. Wendler,

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came through and he told me what he knew about it. Then I stated officially that I did not know about the existence and about the running of the camp, that I knew nothing about it in the least. I have made that statement in a government conference which took place a few days later. All this has been written down in the protocol and I hope that these protocols have been found, together with my diary. Apart from that, all the members of the government at that time are witnesses, especially State Secretary Buhler, who at the same time was my deputy and chief of the government. The response that State Secretary Koppe gave me, after he had transmitted my request on to Berlin, he admitted there that a few executions had taken place in the camp. Apart from that, which was written in the letter, everything else had been propaganda from the foreign countries. This was the thing as it happened then.

Q When did this correspondence with Koppe take place?

A Immediately on the day when I received the reports from Chief Gassner. He brought me the reports that the Soviet Russians had spread out all over the world, either from the Foreign Office or from some reports from the Foreign Office, or from some reports from the foreign press.

Q What was the date that you received this letter from Koppe, to which you refer?

A At my best word, I cannot say that exactly. One would have to reconstruct it from the time when Lublin had fallen. The retreat took place at a very fast speed at that time. It only took four weeks to retreat behind Lublin. At this time the Russians had already advanced in the south and they only stopped shortly before Warsaw on the Weichsel. This only lasted for about a quarter of a year and then they penetrated through further.

Q Was it in 1943, or 1945; when was it?

A In the summer of 1944. At first, Lemberg had fallen, then they

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penetrated through in the north. I cannot say exactly what date.

Q How did Woppe come to write you? Was that in response to your letter?

A Yes.

Q How did you happen to write that letter?

A Because in the foreign press it said what had happened in Lublin.

Q Isn't it a fact, that you received a communication from Berlin with respect to Maidonek, and that, as a result of that communication, you wrote to Woppe?

A Koppe had turned to Berlin and Koppe had received the answer from Berlin. Apart from that, Press Chief Cassner turned to Berlin and he received a response from Berlin, too. I went to Reichsfuehrer SS Himmler, to the competent man, but he did not answer directly, but he let Koppe, his representative, answer.

Q What about other concentration camps besides Maidonek? What did you know about them?

A The SS did not construct any bigger concentration camps -- I am talking about all these years -- of the style of Dachau, because outside of the general government in Upper Silesia, they had a camp in Auschwitz.

Q Did you know about that camp?

A I knew that the camp there existed. One passed it on the train. It was a huge camp. One could always see the barbed wire when passing on the train, and this was always considered to be the central camp for the whole eastern territory.

Q Did you ever visit that camp?

A No.

Q Under whose control was it?

A It was in the Reich territory, under the SS.

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Q It was not in Governor General Poland?

A No; in the general government there were no huge camps such as Auschwitz. There were lots of small camps, but they were not concentration camps for prisoners. They were newly constructed. They were newly constructed camps, of which I have spoken about last time. At first, there were camps for the refugees. The refugees started in the summer of 1941, when the war against Russia began, started to go across the country, but this movement did never break off. These camps were arranged near the main stations and had a capacity for a few thousand people that stopped there for a short time and then were transported away again.

Q Weren't these camps later used as concentration camps?

A No. I know nothing about this and I don't believe it, because until the very last time the stream of refugees went on. The closer the Russians came, the more filled up were these camps.

Q What about Belsen. What do you know about that?

A I don't know about it. There was a camp there once, but that was only a temporary working camp. At that time trenches had been built there before the war with Russia started and fortifications had been built there along the border.

Q Was Belsen in the Governor General Poland?

A This place is divided; it is just on the border. One part belonged to Russia and one part belonged to the general government.

Q Did you ever visit Belsen?

A I was once in Belsen. This was in 1940.

Q Was it being used at that time as a concentration camp?

A At that time this trench was shown to me by the Wehrmacht. That was a big trench which was called a Panzer defense trench. I was there for one hour.

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Q Didn't you know that there was a concentration camp near Belsen?

A No, I did not know that.

Q This is the first time you have ever heard of it?

A It was impossible for me to know all these camps. I have only now mentioned a small fraction of these refugee camps.

Q I am not talking about refugee camps; I am talking about concentration camps, as you well know.

A I just wanted to explain how many camps there were. I already told you before that there were a number of small camps.

Q Yes; and there were probably boy scout camps and girl scout camps and girl reserve camps and a lot of other camps, but those are not the camps about which I am talking. I'm talking about concentration camps, and I want to know what you know about them.

A I am telling what I know about it.

Q Is it your statement that the only concentration camp, that you know of, in Governor General Poland, was at Maidonek and you didn't find that out until after the Russians captured it?

A It had been clear to me that concentration camps had been erected in the general government from time to time, but that they had any mentionable size, it always seemed improbable to me, because I was always told that the people from the general government should be sent to the concentration camp Auschwitz.

Q What were the names of these camps that were erected, and you were told were concentration camps?

A There was one right near Cracov.

Q What was the name of it?

A It had no real name.

Q What was it called?

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A It was just a camp. It was just called police camp.

Q Where else were there camps?

A There were perhaps five or six barracks and it was always told that this was here for the purpose to get together people who did not have any identification.

Q Did you visit the camp?

A It was not in the camp, but I often passed it. One could see it from the street.

Q Didn't you also often pass Maidonek?

A I don't know about that. One passes a lot of things.

Q Yes, especially Maidonek, when one travels around Governor General Poland.

A What do you mean by traveling around Poland? Of course, if I had been anywhere near Lublin at one time, it is possible that I passed it, but I cannot say with any certainty that I have.

Q Do you mean to say that you have never been to Lublin?

A That I didn't want to say.

Q You have been to Lublin, haven't you?

A Yes.

Q You have been there numerous times, haven't you?

A The last time I was there was 1943.

Q In the course of your travels to Lublin, if you turned your head to the right or left, you would have seen Maidonek, wouldn't you?

A I was in the town. I don't know that. It was outside the town.

Q You don't seem to know very much about what happened in Governor General Poland, do you?

A That is right.

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Q You were only there five and a half years. You were not there very long, were you?

A What has that got to do with it? This is no reason why I should know everything that happened in the country. It is quite impossible.

Q What were the names of these other camps, besides the one outside of Cracov?

A I couldn't specifically state the name of any other camp.

Q Just tell me what they were. We will find out the names. We know them already. We just want to see if you are lying.

A I have no idea. I want to tell the Colonel, if he knows it, he knows more than I do.

Q You know about those other camps that were built. You told me you did; five minutes ago you stated that you knew of the small camps that were built.

A I told you I knew generally, but I have never heard about any names.

Q Just tell me where they were.

A One can suppose that wherever there was a central station of the SS, that there was a camp there too.

Q Where were the central stations of the SS?

A In the main cities of the country of Poland; Warsaw, Lublin, Lemberg.

Q Where else?

A Radom; but I don't know whether there were camps in these SS stations.

Q What is your best guess as to whether there were camps in these SS stations?

A Because Auschwitz had such a huge size, I was always under the impression that more people were sent there.

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Q Never mind about Auschwitz. That isn't in Governor General Poland. Just talk about the parts of which you were in charge.

A I can only repeat what I said before.

Q Where else besides Warsaw, Lublin, Cracov and Radom were there SS stations?

A For instance, I do not know whether a concentration camp was in Radom.

Q Never mind about the concentration camps; just tell me where the SS stations were. We will find out about the concentration camps later.

A The SS stations were everywhere where there was an SS and a police leader.

Q Where were they?

A They were spread out all over the country. I have said that before. In every district, main city, there was an SS and a police leader.

Q How many were there? You know.

A Five.

Q Five?

A Cracov, Warsaw, Lublin, Radom, and Lemberg.

Q Those are the only ones there were?

A Those are the stations.

Q Which of those stations had camps in connection therewith?

A That I do not know.

Q You never made any inquiries?

A If one had inquired, one would not have received an answer. And I was always told that the competent concentration camp, for the general government, together with Silesia, was always Auschwitz.

Q By whom were you told that?

A The SS and police leader Kruger told me that.

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Q When did he tell you that?

A He told me when Auschwitz was developed, 1939 to 1940.

Q You never made any inquiries after 1940 about concentration camps?

A Not in the names.

Q You were not interested in them, were you?

A I was very interested in it.

Q Then why didn't you find out where they were?

A This is a different question, depending on how it was practiced. For instance, I always tried to release people, officials, that used to be Poles and had been arrested for any reason.

Q How did you go about that?

A Then I went to the police leader, or to the competent government authority directly, and I told him that these and these officials had been arrested, and we wanted to know why they had been arrested.

Q Did you ever find out?

A We were always told that they were members of the resistance movement. That was the main reason.

Q Did you ever get any of them out of jail?

A Oh, yes, we got them out.

Q From what jails did you get them?

A They mainly were always brought directly to Auschwitz and after hard fighting they were brought back from Auschwitz.

Q How many did you get out of Maidonek?

A I cannot remember. I cannot say that I ever got any officials out of Maidonek.

Q Did you ever try to get any out?

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A I can't say with certainty that I ever got anybody out of Maidonek, not I personally.

Q Did you ever try to get anybody?

A No. I have never received any official report that somebody had gone to Maidonek.

Q How about unofficial reports?

A I didn't receive any.

Q Didn't you have someone working for you in Governor General Poland

A I think that is quite unnecessary.

Q Never mind what you think is unnecessary. Just answer the questions as they are propounded.

A Certainly; I have had officials. That you know.

Q Yes, and you took a great deal of trouble to explain to me what a very small part of Poland you had to administer, didn't you?

A A small part of Poland?

Q Yes. You said that so much of it was incorporated into the German Reich, and so much of it was taken over by the Russians, and you had just a small part; isn't that right?

A I have not said it. I have only stated this was a fact. One can see that from every map.

Q Yes. How many square miles were in Governor General Poland?

A In the biggest time it was something like 140,000 square kilometers, as long as Galizien belonged to it.

Q You couldn't take a long trip in Governor General Poland, really, could you?

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A It has always been a night's journey from Cracov to Warsaw, and a night's journey from Cracov to Lemberg.

Q That is just about the length of Poland, isn't it?

A No. The distance from east to west was something like 600 kilometers, as far as from Munich to Berlin and from the southern part to the northern part, that was something like 800 kilometers.

Q How many people did you have working in your government?

A In the government, or in the whole general government?

Q In your government.

A That was in Cracov. There were comparatively few there. I think there were, perhaps, two to three thousand.

Q How about all over Governor General Poland?

A Most of the officials were not directly ordered by me.

Q How many officials did you have in the entire Governor General Poland?

A It was a very, very small figure. That is, directly under orders of me.

Q That is not my question. How many worked for the Governor General of Poland?

A Altogether perhaps 5,000 officials in the whole country, distributed through every district, about 400-500 to every district.

Q Did you know most of them personally?

A No, no.

Q How many did you know?

A Most of them I did not know. That is quite clear. I knew a few governors and a few city people and a few Kreis people.

Q Did you ever receive any reports from them that people living in

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their districts were being taken out and they never saw them again?

A The reports about the arrest through the police always came in.

Q Did it strike you that unusually large numbers were being arrested?

A That one could not say, no. I never had that impression. There were sometimes when, through the advance of the resistance movement, the whole picture became unclear.

Q What happened to those people who were arrested.

A Those people, who were arrested, were treated the same as people arrested everywhere. They had been examined for identification papers and it had been found out whether they were guilty or not.

Q How do you know that?

A That I do not know, but this is a general police practice.

Q Why do you say that? Why do you make a statement of fact like that and you don't really know?

A Good. I can say nothing to that.

Q These 5,000 people that you had working for your government, didn't any of them ever tell you anything that they observed in the course of their duties, or their travels?

A Please, those 5,000 people did not work for me in the government. They did not work for me; they were officials that were distributed all over the country.

Q Well, they were responsible to you, weren't they?

A Those were responsible to me that did not belong to the police or to the Wehrmacht, but those that were really my officials.

Q How many were there?

A There were perhaps 5,000.

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Q That is what I have asked you. Didn't those people ever tell you anything that they ever saw or observed in the course of their duties or their travels?

A Observed about the procedure of the police and the SS?

Q About anything.

A Not to me personally. The reports, naturally, came from below upward.

Q Yes. Didn't you finally get them?

A Oh, yes, the reports came.

Q As a matter of fact, you required these people to make such reports, didn't you?

A Every governor had to have one report once a month on the average.

Q Don't you think, that it is a little difficult to believe, that this concentration camp could have been outside Lublin, for as long as it was, and not one of your employees ever observed or ever reported it?

A The reports about concentration camps were not sent to the governors. I have already told the Colonel, that the concentration camps were a matter that was administered straight from the Reich.

Q I know, we have been through that a dozen times, but I still say that you had people who were working for you and reported to you, who traveled about and who saw this camp and told you about it.

A The Colonel may be convinced of that. I can only say that it is wrong.

Q Yes; you have been saying that all right.

A Yes; I have said it.

Q Even you concede that it is rather difficult to believe.

A Why? If the Colonel, as I told him before, gets a little more insight into the situation in Germany, then he would not shake his head like that. I'm

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surprised that he still has that opinion today after having been able to study the SS for four months.

Q What control did you exercise over the educational system in Governor General Poland?

A We had a main department, science and education, in the government.

Q What control did you exercise over the universities and colleges?

A We instituted a high school course during the years. The Fuehrer had forbidden the re-opening of the university in Warsaw and that applied to Cracov, too.

Q What other universities were in Poland?

A We had a university in Lemberg.

Q Was that open?

A We re-opened it in the form of high school courses.

Q So it wasn't a university any longer was it?

A It wasn't a university. This had been taken away. We got in there after the Bolsheviks had been there for two years, but the reopening of a real university the Fuehrer would have forbidden and so we had to deceive the Fuehrer.

Q How do you know the Fuehrer would have forbidden it?

A The Fuehrer had told me that in a letter, in a letter through the Reichsleiter Bormann, in the year 1940. The reason for that was because I was against a few university professors from Cracov having been arrested before I got to Cracov.

Q What did he say in this letter to which you have referred?

A This letter was very simple. "I hear about the plan that you intend to re-open universities or institutions similar to universities. This question has absolutely to be postponed until after the war and during the war an opening

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of any university cannot take place. We need people very urgently. We need it for administration, doctors, and animal doctors."

Q Did you protest to the Fuehrer regarding this order?

A Yes, but there was nothing to do.

Q In what form was your protest sent?

A In a conference I had with the Fuehrer in 1940, I told the Fuehrer that I thought it was necessary under every circumstance to open them, and that I repeated by writing and also in conferences with the Reich Education Ministry.

Q Did you ever send anything in writing to anybody about it?

A Yes.

Q To whom?

A These were the conferences with the Reich Education Ministry.

Q I am talking about writing now, not conferences.

A Oh, yes, I said it in writing. That went over the main department education and schooling. We had to be satisfied to open the high school courses, which had a very good effect. This is how people could pass examinations and enter the service.

Q What else did you close besides the universities?

A I did not close anything. I had to take over the situation, as I found it.

Q You mean they were all closed and you didn't open them; is that it?

A The situation was this: at the time when the universities were forbidden, it was also forbidden to open secondary schools and gymnasiums. The fight lasted for so long that even in the summer of 1944 that Adolf Hitler told me, I think it was through Reichsminister Lammers, it might also have been a letter of Reichsfuehrer Himmler, that he wished that all the gymnasiums or secondary

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schools should not be re-opened for the duration of the war. But we helped ourselves in this respect, that we had private teachings given in those secondary schools.

Q What about the art galleries? Were those re-opened?

A What art galleries do you mean? There was one here that was in Warsaw. There was a special delegate from the Reich there, State Secretary Muhlmann.

Q Was that art gallery ever under your jurisdiction?

A No.

Q Under whose jurisdiction was it?

A It was administered by the Reich delegate for the security of art properties. This was this State Secretary Muhlmann.

Q Under whose jurisdiction was he?

A I think he was connected with Goering.

Q What control did you exercise over the art gallery?

A I would prefer it, if you would not speak about galleries, but if you speak generally about art properties.

Q Let's talk about the Warsaw Art Gallery; then we will speak in general about art properties. What control did you exercise over the Warsaw Art Gallery?

A If it has been exercised by us, it was exercised by the Main Department for Art and Science.

Q Well, you know whether it was or not.

A I have to say we came into the country very late.

Q You came into the country six weeks late. The war was over the 18th of September and you were appointed the 26th of October.

A The 26th of October, and I entered Cracov on the 7th of November. The Colonel should not forget, it wasn't for some time until the administration was built up. I ask him to imagine what is really meant to build up an administration.

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Q All these other organizations were building up too. Yours wasn't the only one, you know. Let's get back to the Warsaw Art Gallery.

A All other organizations have been in the country before.

Q Let's go back to the Warsaw Art Gallery. Was it or was it not under your jurisdiction?

A What we have found in the gallery, after I had taken over the administration, that I could control and I could regulate. What happened before, I do not know.

Q Well, what did you find when you took it over?

A A few pictures certainly were there, a few paintings.

Q What else was there?

A Those things were collected in boxes and registered and a big book was published. A book has been distributed officially, a statement about the registered art objects, not only about Warsaw, but also about Cracov.

Q Wasn't most of the art removed from the Warsaw gallery?

A Not by us.

Q By whom?

A If anything had gone, the SS might have taken it away or the police or the Wehrmacht, the Luftwaffe. Anybody might have entered in this time. How should I know? What we have found out, has been registered.

Q How about the Cracov Art Gallery? Is your answer the same on that?

A There we could have saved most of the things that we found there.

Q Didn't you?

A Yes. The most important paintings, a Raphael, a Leonardo de Vinci, and so on, had been kept.

Q Kept by whom?

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A We have kept it under the state property of the general government.

Q How about other art galleries in Governor General Poland?

A The same system has been followed everywhere. One tried to get to the art objects, as quickly as possible after the war had finished, and safeguard them. There has been a list published about the paintings, officially, and those painting have been then distributed in the usual way. They have been used to beautify official buildings and so on, but not the very valuable ones. The most valuable ones have always been kept together and have been safeguarded.

Q Where were they kept and by whom were they safeguarded?

A There were different art storages constructed, that were subordinate, for the main part, to Muhlmann.

Q I am talking about the ones that were preserved by the General Governor of Poland.

A It has been kept in storages, in Cracov. There were big cellars full of those properties.

Q There were a lot of them hanging on the walls of your apartment too, weren't there?

A In the whole castle.

Q You took a lot of them when you left, too, didn't you?

A What do you mean? At the time the Americans came, I gave over to them the most valuable paintings that I officially took into storage.

Q What do you mean by storage?

A Safeguarded.

Q Yes, you took them to your own place, didn't you?

A No. I have had them in my official buildings.

Q Where were you captured?

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A In my official building.

Q Which official building was that?

A It was in Neuhaus, the service post of the General Government.

Q Wasn't that a personally-owned house?

A No.

Q Who owned it?

A That was a pension.

Q What do you mean by that?

A One could say it is a little hotel with about twelve rooms.

Q It wasn't then an official residence of the General Governor Poland until you took up residence in it, was it?

A That has been when I was a refugee, after Cracov had been cleared for some time. The paintings should not fall into the hands of the Bolsheviki.

Q I suppose that any house that you took up residence in, would then become an official house, wouldn't it?

A I don't understand it, wherever I live. It was not an official building if I moved in there with the last of my officials.

Q You just finished telling me that these paintings were captured at the same time you were and that they were in an official building.

A It was within the same building where all my authorities were lodged, too. I have nothing against it, if the Colonel wants to call this house an official residence.

Q I am not trying to call it anything. That is what you called it.

A Good, so that we are quite clear. I will call it, so we shall be quite clear, as the last service residence of the general government.

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Q I say the only reason it became, what you call the last service residence of the general government, is the fact that you took up residence there and until it happened it had no official status.

A It couldn't have that status because my residence was in Cracov.

Q Yes; that was just the point I was making. How much art did you have with you at the time you were captured?

A In this list of the safeguarded art objects, there were approximately ten or twenty objects. They were in the castle in Cracov. When I left the castle in Cracov, I had the Polish advising committee with me, and I showed the castle to these people. I told them, "Look here, gentlemen. Everything is here." I went through the rooms with them. I showed them everything. I showed them the cellar and with the Bolsheviks in front, right outside, the question was what should one do with the objects that had great value. Then it was told that we could take those objects along with us, so that in any case they should not fall into the hands of the Bolsheviks, but be delivered to the emigrated government of Poland.

Q By whom were you told this?

A That nobody had told me, but together we conferred there.

Q Who were those people to whom you refer?

A They were the members of the Polish advising committee.

Q What committee was that? The one that you appointed?

A This had existed for years.

Q Had you appointed the members thereof?

A They were representatives from different circles, from the church, from schools, and so on.

Q Had you appointed the members thereof?

A They had appointed themselves and we recognized them and we worked with them for years already.

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Q How much of this art did you take with you?

A Not with me; I traveled alone. They didn't go with me; they went on a different transport.

Q How much did you send to this new place, to which you were going, to take up residence?

A Herr von Palezieux knows, who was an art advisor. He carried out the thing. He had been in Neuhaus, too. He was there at the time those paintings were given over to the Americans.

Q How much were those paintings worth?

A He will know the number exactly. That one cannot estimate.

Q Just a guess.

A The Leonardo de Vinci painting is a nationally or an inter-nationally known painting of unestimable value and it was the main worry.

Q Why didn't you leave those paintings hanging in the Cracov Art Gallery instead of removing them to the castle?

A The art gallery was locked up. It wasn't open. It had another name. It wasn't called art gallery, but anyway, it is what we mean. This one Leonard de Vinci painting had to be defended by me, mostly because of the Reich. This was one of the reasons why I collected these paintings in the castle. The State Secretary Muhlmann wanted this painting for Goering. It had already been in Berlin once, then I had a very hard fight to get it back.

Q What argument did you use? That it belonged to you?

A That it is state property of the general government and that it is not private property. I think that Goering got the least of the paintings from the general government, even if he got one.

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Q Why didn't you re-open the art gallery in Cracov so everybody could enjoy it?

A Now I have to laugh. In the war, where soldiers are always passing with wide-open eyes -- I want to tell the Colonel something very openly. In Cracov there was one object of art which was internationally known, that was the famous Cracov altar, which comes from some church. This altar was of unestimable value. This altar had, on the will of the Fuehrer, been brought to Nuremberg, to the Germanic Museum, against my will. The Burgermeister Liebel of Nuremberg was at my place at Cracov and brought me the order of the Fuehrer. I tried to go against it, but the altar was packed. It was not in the castle, so that everybody had access to it. So the altar went away to Germany and so things have happened in reality. When Lemberg was captured, I was at that time not in Lemberg yet. Lemberg had not been given to me. There was already a representative of Goering in Lemberg and he took away drawings from Albrecht Duerer, so this is the thing in reality. This was the biggest fight I had to fight in this field in order to keep the things together.

Q How much do you think these paintings were worth that you saved, shall we say?

A Well, does the Colonel mean that I took those paintings for myself?

Q No; I don't mean anything. I am just trying to find out the value of them.

A The value is unestimable.

Q Would you say it was as much as 50,000,000 Reichsmarks?

A That one naturally cannot say. It might perhaps be too much. It depends what value the mark has. I am not an expert in art values. This painting, anyway, is quite unique. It is in every history. It was the highest valued object that Poland had to save.

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4 Q Do you remember offering any relics to the German Church in Cracov?

A No. I have put at their disposal an altar cover, or a priest's robe, just on loan.

Q Where did you get those?

A But only for a special feast opportunity and those garments are all here.

Q Where did you get those garments?

A They were somewhere up in the castle, in the old rooms. The castle has been built up further by me, but the third floor of the castle had already been built up as a museum by the Poles, and also on the ground floor.

Q You took things out of those museums and gave them to the German church, is that right?

A No.

Q What things did you give?

A This museum had only been newly constructed by us in this air-raid shelter downstairs.

Q Where did you get the objects to put in this museum?

A These objects I wanted to safeguard, so that they should not fall into the hands of these people. I know what has been taken away from the occupied territories in various ways. I have heard so much.

Q What do you know about that?

A What one hears.

Q What did you hear?

A Big shoppings from Mr. Goering and when Muhlmann came alone and told me he wanted to send a few pictures to Berlin, I said, "No, nothing doing."

Q What about Rosenberg, what did he take?

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A He had nothing to say in any matters. I did not let him in.

Q Wasn't Rosenberg commissioned by the Fuehrer to collect objects of art in the East?

A That was why I kept everything together.

Q You said you didn't let him in your territory, and I am trying to find out what you mean by that.

A He had no competence there at all.

Q How did it happen that you could keep him out, but you couldn't keep out anybody else?

A Muhlmann had the direct certificate from the Fuehrer.

Q Didn't Rosenberg have a direct certificate from the Fuehrer?

A Rosenberg never had an application or came to me in those matters. Once, before we started the administration, he took a few Jewish books out of the Jewish library in Frankfurt. He opened an institute in Frankfurt, but I considered these books as property of the general government and I always corresponded about these books so as not to let the matter fall asleep.

Q Did you ever get them back?

A The books? No, they should have been returned to me after the war.

Q What else did Rosenberg take besides the books?

A I could not say anything about that. From the general government, it has never been officially reported to me that Rosenberg had taken anything.

Q How about unofficially reported?

A No, nothing has been reported to me.

Q What was officially reported to you that Goering had taken?

A This was the thing from Lemberg, and Muhlmann started to be active as the representative of Goering, and when I noticed that, I maintained that all these art

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objects should be kept together. I think I was the only one that succeeded in keeping them together.

Q The way you did that was by putting them in your personal residence; is that right?

A No. We had a houseful of these objects in Cracov.

Q That is what I mean.

A There were cellars for it.

Q That is what I mean, the place where you lived.

A No. It was in the town in which I lived, yes.

Q And the castle in which you lived, too?

A The house I am speaking about now was not in the castle.

Q So, there were two places in which you stored this art?

A Naturally there were more. We had a castle near Warsaw. I think it was called Wilowka.

Q Were these storehouses, warehouses, or were they residences?

A They were storage places. Even in the castle they were all storages.

Q Did anybody live in them?

A No. They were cellars, huge cellars, and there we made partitions and all those paintings were there locked up, and the little things were stored in boxes and the plates and so on were all locked up, and when the war against Russia started in 1941 we took all the valuable objects from the upper rooms downstairs, so that we were sure that in case of air raids nothing would happen to the art objects. Downstairs there were walls up to seven meters thick.

Q Is it your statement that the only thing that Rosenberg took out of Governor General Poland, was these Jewish books taken to Frankfurt?

A Yes; as I said, because I would not have acceded to any request.

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Q Not even if he had an order signed by the Fuehrer?

A No. I would not have acceded it, but I would have tried to see the Fuehrer personally. Only Burgermeister Liebel, as I told you before, took this altar and even this would not have gotten out had I had it in the castle, because then I would have had more time. As it was, the SS took it straight away.

Q What were the differences between the legal rights of the Poles, the Jews and the Germans who lived in Governor General Poland?

A We left their own legislation to the Polish cities. They had their own courts. The Germans had their own laws, according to the laws of the Reich. For the Germans, there were German courts and for the Poles, there were Polish courts.

Q What about the Jews?

A The Jews had been treated as Polish citizens.

Q What was the difference between the legal rights of the Poles, the Jews, and the Germans?

A I don't know what the Colonel means.

Q You are a lawyer. You know what I mean.

A The legal rights?

Q You know that the Germans had more legal protection and legal rights than the Jews. You know also that the Germans had more legal rights and legal protection than the Poles.

A How? That is not clear to me, because the Germans had no more protection in the general government than they had in their own home. In their own home, as one knows, the State rights of the people living there were very small. The Germans had the duty to work, just like all others in the Reich, as well as in the general government. They had been put into the concentration camps in the general government just the same as in the Reich.

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Q Is it your statement that the legal rights and privileges of the Poles, the Jews, and the Germans were exactly the same in Governor General Poland?

A Everybody had the same rights that he had before, or those that had been modified owing to war.

Q What were the modifications to which you refer?

A For instance, we had no more Polish Parliament, no more Polish people's representation, but that did not exist in Germany anymore either.

Q At least there was a legal fiction that it did exist; isn't that right? That is, in Germany?

A That is the same, if I have to answer it, as things are happening in the occupied countries.

Q You received a salary from the Reichstag up to the time you were captured, so presumably there was a legal fiction of a German Parliament; is that not right?

A Of course, if you want to call it that way, there was a Parliament.

Q Not what I say; it is what you yourself have said, that you drew a salary from the Reichstag up until the time you were captured. Now, presumably, the body was in existence, otherwise you wouldn't have drawn the salary; isn't that right?

A The Colonel knows it. I told him about it at the first interrogation.

Q To go back to my question: is it your statement that the legal rights and privileges of the Poles, Jews, and Germans were the same in Governor General Poland?

A I have never said it. I never said it. I said that they were such as we found them, and as we had to modify them owing to the war, because the basic order was that the Polish Legislation remained as it was, insofar as it does not have to be altered owing to the war, or owing to the German legislation. This was the basic order.

Q My original question was: was there not a difference between the Poles

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and the Jews and Germans as to their legal rights and privileges in Governor General Poland; and then you said there was no difference. Now you come along and say there was no difference except for these modifications which occurred. So what is the answer? Was there any difference or was there not?

A Of course, there were these situations that came as a result of the happenings. For instance, we did not find any social insurance for the small workers in Poland. We had to start it.

Q I am not talking about that. Just answer my question: was there a difference between the three classes of people, or was there not, legally speaking?

A I am answering the question as I treated it before.

Q Your answer, from what I gather you have said, is that there was a difference brought about by modifications that were introduced during the course of the war?

A I wanted to bring an example right now. We had talked about the secondary schools before.

Q Go ahead.

A When we wanted to re-open the secondary schools there, the order from the Reich came along. Officially, there was a difference, because we could not send them to secondary schools and would have to send them to private schooling; while, for the German children, secondary schools could be opened officially. This was one of the most painful differences. In this sense, there were modifications.

Q Was there any cancellation of Polish citizenship?

A We could not do that. Who was a Pole, was a Pole.

Q Did you try to do it?

A No. Does the Colonel mean to declare a Polish citizen as a German?

Q No.

A There were really thousands of Poles that really belonged to Germany. They could make the application to be accepted as German citizens.

Q My question is this: was there any occasion, during the time that you were Governor General, that the citizenship of Poles was cancelled? That is, their Polish citizenship was cancelled by some order or directive or decree, either from you or from the Reich?

A The question is not clear to me. They were citizens of the old Polish government and we could not cancel that. It is very unclear what you mean. We could not cancel an oath belonging to a state.

Q What I mean is that when citizenship rights are cancelled, the usual result thereof, is that the person no longer receives the benefit of the laws, applied to those who have citizenship status?

A You mean declared as stateless people?

Q Yes.

A Stateless could only mean somebody, that was not a Polish citizen, and could not show the citizenship of any other nation and according to international rights he was stateless.

Q Were there not occasions when, by your order or that of the Reich, Poles of Polish birth and citizenship, had their citizenship cancelled, thereby rendering them stateless persons?

A That is out of the question. That is, according to my memory, impossible. Unless the Colonel could help me in this matter, I have to say it is impossible because this would be an act, which would be completely senseless.

Q I will discuss it with you at some other time. Apparently we don't seem to understand one another.

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A Perhaps the Colonel means the question that arose on the part of the Poland, which had been included into German territory. There, there were different classes of population. There were the real Poles and mixed Poles and so on. I think there were four different classes, but that didn't apply to the general government.

Q We will talk about it some other time. Were there ever any Poles tried before German courts in Governor General Poland?

A Naturally. The Poles came in front of the court.

Q I am talking about the situation where you said that the Germans in Poland had their courts, and the Poles in Poland had their courts. I am talking about the situation where Poles were tried before German courts.

A Certainly.

Q What were those situations?

A It was provided in an order that all things that constituted general state interest, such as high treason or treason of state, and heavy punishment cases, would be tried in the German courts.

Q Were there very many tried before those German courts?

A No; I don't think so.

Q How many would you say?

A That I can't say. I think within those five years it might have been a few thousand.

Q Were many of them ordered to be executed?

A Those cases were put in front of the court and it had been judged on, but the execution cases were far in the minority.

Q You are sure about that?

A I am sure about it. There you would have to ask Dr. Wille.

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Q Were these courts under your jurisdiction?

A Yes; it was a state court.

Q What procedure was followed? Was that based on German law, or German police regulations, or was it based on Polish law?

A The German court would use the German laws, naturally, modified by the decisions of the general government.

Q What do you mean as modified by the decisions of the general government?

A Whatever you find written in the orders, in the constitutional papers.

Q How many workers did you furnish Dr. Ley?

A Dr. Ley? He had nothing to do with it. He was a Party authority and he had no influence. We only dealt with state people, with the Reich Economical Minister.

Q Who was that?

A Selte was Reichs Works Minister and Funk was the Economical Minister. Sauckel was later nominated as the Reich Commissar for Works.

Q How many workers did you furnish Sauckel?

A Sauckel had come very late, comparatively. When Sauckel came along, he only asked for very few people. That I have said before. This was voluntary workers and we could fulfill that without any trouble.

Q How about Funk? How many workers did he want?

A Funk was generally in charge of everything that the industry in Germany needed. All together we delivered a number somewhere around 800,000.

Q You mean to Funk, Selte, and to Sauckel, all three together?

A To all different departments of the State.

Q As I remember your statement before, it was to the effect that 90% at least, this labor was voluntary; is that correct?

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A They were all voluntary. The few that wanted to try to force these people, we dealt with those very rapidly and we avoided this action. They wanted to start this method with us too, but we were able to avoid it.

Q Your statement is that there were no laborers obtained among Polish workers, for work in Germany, who did not volunteer for that job?

A Yes. Out of the general government, out of their own free will. You can see that from the numbers involved, because even before the war hundreds of thousands of workers went out of Poland every year. I have talked to the Colonel about it. We had our work offices all over the country and things ran comparatively very easy. We even carried it through that people should be able to come back for a furlough, to the general government. The mail situation was brought into order. Our main job was to care that those Poles in Germany should be treated decently. At first, this was very bad. At first, these Poles were looked upon as enemies. That we could notice right away because the number of the voluntary workers declined. Then we saw that they obtained priests, that the whole treatment became a more sensible one and then the people came into contact with the different firms and works, and the people there had their own interests to keep them. Towards the end everything became fine. You can see that from the many Poles who did not even want to return to Poland. There were 400,000 that did not want to return.

Q You told me that your first job in Poland was that of Governor General; is that correct?

A I became General Governor on the 26th of October.

Q What were you before that?

A Before that General Rundstedt was the commander of all Polish territories.

Q Weren't you on his staff as a civil administrator?

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A Yes, as civilian administrator.

Q How long did that job last?

A This work actually never materialized. I once visited Rundstedt near Warsaw. Then conferences were started in Berlin straight away for the distribution of the single territories. In that case then there was no real administration, no central office was formed, but all the Gauleiters, Kreiser, Koch, Foster, wanted to get to their country as soon as possible. It would have been impossible to administer all this territory alone. In this time it was, really, a military administration that actually had never come into power.

Q When were you appointed as civil administrator on von Rundstedt's staff?

A I don't know now. I think it happened in the beginning of October.

Q That will be all for the present.

APPROVED:

(Interrogator)

(Interpreter)

Clair Van Vlack
(Reporter)

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