

INTERROGATION
OF THE FORMER GERMAN GENERAL OF THE POLICE IN DENMARK -
GUENTHER PANCKE, IN THE KASTELL
COPENHAGEN, 14 AUGUST 1945.

It was pointed out to the subject that it was not his duty to make statements and that at an eventual indictment his statements could be used against him.

The defendant declares that he was born in 1899, has had military training and had already been an officer during the first world war. Between the two wars he lived for seven years as a farmer in South America. Afterwards he returned and after some years of activity in the industrial field he entered the SS in 1930. He was active in it until he joined the police without previous police training in 1940. He immediately became HOFHERER POLIZEIFUEHRER (Superior Police Commander) in BRAUNSCHWEIG.

The subject came to Denmark on 1 November 1943 and learned from HIMMLER before his departure that he would be superior commander of the police there also. His relationship to the military general and the Reich Plenipotentiary was so, that all three of them should be on the same level. This meant that none of them could give orders to the other and that each received his orders from his immediate superior in Germany, the subject from the Reich Security Main Office, HIMMLER. It was intended, that the three leaders, having equal rights, should enter into negotiations on the principle matters and should attempt to reach an agreement. However, if one of them was of the opinion that something should be undertaken, one of the other two could not prevent the execution of the action in question, but had to address a protest to his superiors in Germany and it depended hereafter on the actual facts, whether such a protest arrived early enough in order to have a delaying effect on the intended action; this, of course, applied in the event that the Foreign Office or the Supreme Command wanted to interfere with the Reich Security Main Office in the case of actions taken by the subject.

The subject was instructed by HIMMLER only about purely formal matters relative to the armed forces and to the Reich Plenipotentiary while he was oriented on the conditions in Denmark, as seen from Berlin, by the chief of the Reich Security Main Office, Dr KALTENBRUNNER. KALTENBRUNNER explained that until the disarmament of the army and the resignation of the government in August 1943 the Danish police as a whole had concerned itself with sabotage and other anti-German actions. After 29 August 1943, however, the Danish police did not want that and this was the direct cause for organizing a German police proper in this country. Already in September or perhaps somewhat earlier, a number of officials of the security police had arrived in Denmark. He estimates that in the course of fall or at his arrival 300 to 400 security or criminal policemen under the leadership of Dr MILDNER were here and at the time of the transfer of the subject, additional 2 battalions of constabularies (ORPO) have been sent over here, altogether 1200 to 1300 men. The subject had been given the assignment to establish or restore order and peace in the country, and that should take place as far as possible through negotiations and collaboration with the Danish police and other Danish authorities.

Thus, the subject was commander in chief of the German police. This referred to the constabularies as well as to the security police and it was to be understood that he could issue orders to both the constabulary police and the security police, i.e. first Dr MILDNER and later BOVENSIEPEN, had direct connections with the Reich Security Main Office and could not only present there orders of the subject and criticize same with the purpose to disregard them, but he could also receive direct orders for execution, by circumventing the subject. When the commander of the security police received such orders directly, the subject was to obtain a copy for acknowledgement and he could also raise objections on his part to BERLIN against the execution of these orders. He had to take the risk, however, that the orders had already been executed before his protest arrived. The commander of the security police, however, received regularly his direct orders from Berlin, either orally, by telephone or by courier and in such cases the order became known to the subject usually through coincidence only, before its execution. Therefore, he had frequently no opportunity to form an opinion on such orders. In fact, in reality it depended very much on the personal connections of the subject and of the commander of the security police, to what degree the subject participated in the work of the security police.

When asked whether direct orders were issued from Berlin in regard to actions in Denmark, for example through SKORZENI, the subject replies that he at any rate does not know about it. With regard to SKORZENI, the subject states that he paid a visit here once and that he welcomed him at Dr BEST. But the subject does not know, why he was here and particularly he does not know whether he was here on official business or had issued orders during his stay or prepared any actions.

In the same way as Dr MILDNER and later BOVENSIEPEN were commanders of the security police, so were first General von HEIMBURG and later Col LORGE commanders of the constabularies (ORPO) and the work of the subject as chief in command consisted of conferences with both these commanders on work planned in both departments.

As to the relations with the Danish authorities, the position of the subject was such that he conferred directly with the supreme Danish police authorities in general only about technical facts, and otherwise with the authorities in cooperation with Dr BEST. However, he conferred in individual affairs directly with other authorities, When Dr BEST was not present, for instance at the time of the deportation of the police in September 1944.

With regard to the economical conditions of the German police in Denmark the subject declares that the constabularies were subordinated in this respect to the armed forces and the subject could, according to existing regulations, draw money from the armed forces. For the security police, the money was transmitted by the Reich Security Main Office. The security police requisitioned the money through Dr BEST as far as is known to the subject. However, the financial structure of the security police is not known to the subject any closer as he was neither to authorize funds for the security police, nor did he have later the right or occasion to examine the use of these funds.