

OFFICE OF US CHIEF OF COUNSEL
APO 403, US ARMY
INTERROGATION DIVISION

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Brief of
Interrogation of Erich von BACH-ZELEWSKI

by

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BACH-ZELEWSKI furnished additional names of SS Wehrmacht generals who had been in charge of anti-partisan activities in various places. The SS generals were Count Bassowitz, Roesener, Kammerhofer, and Meisner. The Wehrmacht generals were Randulic, Bremer, Schenkendorf, Kitzinger, and Hartsman.

BACH-ZELEWSKI repeated again that no clear order had ever been issued either to higher commanders or by higher commanders to subordinate echelons as to what "revenge action" should be taken against civilian populations in areas where partisan activities occurred. He stated that all military commanders were ordered to fight partisans (OKH order for the Army and Himmler order for the SS) and the order was to the effect that counter-action had to be taken immediately after the partisan incident had occurred.

BACH-ZELEWSKI gave a number of instances of excesses committed against civilians as a result of partisan activities. These were:

- 1) In the Syrmion region of Russia, the men, women, and children of a village were killed by the 1st Cossack Division of which General von Panwitz was the commander.
- 2) The Freikorps Rodianoff had exterminated a whole village in the Fripet Marshes.
- 3) A German brigade composed of convicted criminals destroyed a village near Margolif as a "revenge action".
- 4) BACH-ZELEWSKI, himself, ordered the village of Margolif to be burned down after it had been captured by storm from a partisan group.
- 5) Two villages near Tolatsh were burned by Latvian soldiers under German commanders and all of the Latvians were shot.
- 6) The German cavalry brigade under Fogelion was employed against Russian cavalry. The Russian cavalry was mixed in with partisans and it was reported to Bach-Zelowski that the civilian population in the area (the Fripet Marshes) had been shot by members of the brigade.

Bach-Zelowski stated that in all of central Russia there were only two regiments of German Police and that the remainder of the police units was composed of natives (Russians, Latvians, etc) under German officers.