

INTERROGATION

of the former Plenipotentiary of the German Reich  
in Denmark, Dr. Werner Best, in the Castle  
Copenhagen, 8 August 1945

Regarding the Free Corps Denmark, the Komparent says that the Corps had been activated here in the country by the time he arrived, and that in reality he has had nothing to do with the Corps itself, also nothing to do with the Corps' later development or its transition into other units. He has talked with 1/Lt Kryssing a few times, and Kryssing complained of his absence from the Corps. According to the opinion of the Komparent it was unwise politically to attach the Corps to a definite political party, even if it were National Socialistic, since a Danish Corps of volunteers would have to meet with the approval of the whole population to have any actual importance. This was in harmony with his complete conviction that a closer tie should be formed between the great masses of Denmark and Germany. For this purpose he carried on negotiations with General Görtz before August in the summer of 1943 regarding the possibility of a closer relation between the Danish and the German army (Militär), or example Danish officers were to be given an opportunity to attend German officers' schools and so forth, in order that they might profit from the experiences of the Germans during the war, and he even went so far as to suggest their barracks and camps in Germany be placed at the disposal of a training program for Danish soldiers.

Regarding the formation of the Schalburg-Corps the Komparent explained that in the German inner circle with Hitler and Himmler at its head a movement for the further development of the cooperating labor forces of the teutonic countries was striven for. Himmler was especially interested. According to an order by Hitler, Himmler was to lead this development and in this connection the Germanic Leader Office Leitstelle was formed with Boysen as leader. Boysen was a Sturmabannführer, and was wounded, so he had to transfer to the administration. The direction of the Germanic Leitstelle in Himmler's hands was naturally neither to the liking of the Foreign Office, nor of the Komparent; since it was believed impossible to deprive him of the power, the decision was to strive for the greatest possible actual influence; and for this reason the Komparent took part in the negotiations for the formation of the Schalburg-Corps here in the country. In the formation of this Corps it was expressly agreed that the Corps should be a recruiting office for the Free Corps, and according to the agreement it should have no other purpose except that naturally this should be propagandised in Denmark. From the beginning on, the later leader of the Corps, Martinsen, took part in the negotiations, supported even at that early time by Popp-Madsen among others. According to the actual situation and especially in connection with the organizations (Verbände) which had been formed. The Corps was under the SS in all its activities. The Germanic Leitstelle itself had control of the civil administration, if they were placed under arms, however, they came under the command of General Pancke. The Germanic Leitstelle, as was mentioned was under the SS and directly led by Obergruppenführer Berger. The Komparent tried, however, to make his political influence felt, and a continual conflict of interests was present as to who was to control, Berger from Berlin or the Komparent here. As it resulted, the Komparent

could not gain his point and Martinsen succeeded in causing Boysen's removal, by petition in Berlin without the knowledge of the Komparent, and against his wish.

The Komparent wished that the Schalburg personnel be sent to the front as quickly as possible after training; it soon appeared, however, already in the fall of 1943, that Martinsen did not wish to send these people out of the country. He openly intended to keep them for a war at home and in spite of the energetic attempts of the Komparent to have the personnel sent out of the country, by far the greater part continued to remain here.

The Komparent was unable to decide where the Corps was to be stationed; he always tried, however, to have it sent away from Copenhagen where as he had discovered, it only caused unrest and worked counter to his political interests. At his instigation the Corps left the Freemasons' Lodge, although Pancke protested against it a long time and asserted it would be a loss of prestige if the wishes of the Danes were consulted in the quartering of the Corps. However, when the Komparent was aware of it, the Free Masons' Lodge succeeded in finding use for the police bureaus.

The Komparent had no influence on the use of the activated Corps, and on the question whether he was aware that it would be used for Schalburgtage, he answered that his knowledge in this connection concerned only the illegal press and the radio. He asked Martinsen expressively whether he had been concerned with the counter-terror; Martinsen denied this, however, and the Komparent could not determine whether it was the case or not.

Payments to the Schalburg-Corps as to the other German bureaus should take place through the Komparent, he himself did not actually affirm how much should be paid. On account of his position he was handicapped in his protest because he would risk having as a consequence of too much resistance to the payment of large sums, that this part of the administration would also be taken from him and placed under the SS so that the SS could get at the National Bank directly.

Regarding Captain Sommer, the Komparent explained that this man was introduced to him as the assistant of Martinsen in the Schalburg-Corps. Sommer impressed him as a calmer and more reliable person than Martinsen, whom he described as the typical mercenary. He was not averse to believing that Martinsen could take part in the counter-terror, however, he did not wish to believe this of Sommer; the strong accusations against Sommer in this respect came to him therefore as a surprise. The Komparent had no influence over Sommer's leaving the Schalburg-Corps and forming his own Corps, and the Komparent had nothing at all to do with Sommer's Corps, since it was under the Luftwaffe and was used by the Luftwaffe as a guard service. The Komparent was once asked by General Holle whether he had anything against the dissolution of the Corps, to which the Komparent answered only that he had no interest at all in the Corps.

The Komparent is aware that Martinsen formed a department for intelligence

in the Schalburg-Corps; the Komparent, however, had absolutely nothing to do with it excepting the fact that Martinsen informed him of it. He is also aware that the Intelligence Service later went over to Pancke, then as before without the Komparent having any influence in the matter.

With the marine guards the Komparent had no connection either. They formed no Corps, to be best of the Komparent's knowledge, but were enlisted singly, and this was done by the various Marine units.

Regarding the O.T., the Komparent explained that it belonged to the Wehrmacht, closely connected with the Ministry for Armament, and the Komparent really had no connection either with enlistments or with workers. In order to be able to control the organization somewhat in purely administrative measures, he succeeded in having the Chief of the O.T. in Denmark, Martinsen, placed in personal union with the Komparent as department chief, so that he would negotiate with the Danish authorities as technical department chief in the name of the Komparent.

The Komparent had no influence on or for the workers, occupied in work, here in the country on the fortifications for various forms; he tried, however, to carry out a policy in this sphere as in the others whereby the wages and prices could generally be held down, since he believed this was to Denmark's interest as well as Germany's. This was very difficult, however, since the various Wehrmacht bureaus did not agree on the execution of the various projects and held out to the firms the prospect of high commissions, whereby the latter were in a position to offer the workers higher wages than the Komparent wished. The leaders of the Wehrmacht and the O.T. were unified with the Komparent in the desire to hold down wages, but actually it was impossible to control the various bureaus.

Regarding the HIPO, the Komparent explained that he was not sure when this institution was formed and was not acquainted with its actual composition. On its origination he strongly stressed the fact to Pancke that he had to protest against the creation of an actual Danish police force under the SS, and that he would only discuss the enlistment of persons singly as assistants of the German Police. He emphasized in any case that the HIPO should not be allowed to form by itself, that is to say without German supervision in every case. He was aware, among other things, by the shooting-up of his own car, that the HIPO nevertheless made patrols without German supervision, and he protested vigorously against it. The Komparent had no influence on the HIPO's various actions, and he was no more informed than was mentioned earlier by representations of the Foreign Office, and by the illegal press and radio.