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INTERROGATION
OF DR. VERNER BEST, FORMER PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE GERMAN
REICH IN DENMARK, IN KASTELL
COPENHAGEN, 28 AUGUST 1945

Told that one would want to know more about the acts of terror in Denmark, the accused says that he had not known about these in detail, as he had already explained before. He was always by-passed by the German police. He was never told ahead of time about the objects of the counter-terror, neither in the cases of buildings nor when murder was involved. Up to these interrogations he had not heard anything about the Group "Peter" (Peter-Gruppe) and neither did he know who was the head of this group. The accused does not know anything about the counter-terror which was ordered in the fall of 1943, while Mildner was the commander of the security police (Sicherheitspolizei). The accused was well aware that the orders which Hitler gave in his presence on 30 Dec. 1943 were executed. But he does not know who relayed these orders nor by whom they were executed.

In regard to the conference at Hitler's on 30 December 1943, the accused expresses largely the same main points which agree with Pancke's, to wit that he protested against Hitler's proposition to shoot terrorists as well as non-terrorists without trials, because it would have an unfavorable reaction in a country like Denmark, where much faith was placed in trials. The accused does not remember that Hitler, who talked a lot, mentioned a performance of the activities in the proportion of 5 to 1 in regard to murder. Himmler and Kaltenbrunner agreed with Hitler, while the other ones present, of which the accused mentions the same ones as did Pancke, hardly expressed themselves. The foreign office was not represented, and consequently Sonnleithner did not participate in the conference.

After this conference the accused had a conversation with von Ribbentrop alone, to whom he explained the events. And Ribbentrop agreed with a protest against such measures, but there was nothing that one could do. They agreed that the accused was to keep von Ribbentrop ^{exactly} posted about the course of developments, which he did. The accused says that he received no orders from Hitler in regard to this action, the execution of which was entirely in the hands of the police, and he repeats that he was not consulted later either for advice on the objects, which might have been chosen for retaliation.

The accused repeats that he does not know anything about the group "Peter" (Peter-Gruppe) and asked, whether he has met Peter Schäffer, Schwerdt, Issel and Waldenburg he answers that the names of Schwerdt and Issel are known to him, and he also declares to have met them several times. So much as he remembers they belonged to the main Reichs Security Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt) Office VI, which means that they worked in the Foreign News Service (Auslands-Nachrichtendienst). Possibly they have had something to talk over with the accused, maybe that they should get money, and asked whether for example, they were in his home, he says that that could be, but then only in company with others, anyhow not by themselves. After some reflection the accused believes that he can recall now that Issel asked him once for money for news service (Nachrichtendienst) in the

fall of 1944 when an invasion of Denmark was expected. At that time the accused answered Issel that it would not be advisable that he should receive money through the accused, because the currency which the accused requested from the National Bank is especially marked so that it might be possible to trace it back to who was in possession of the money.

Having been confronted with a statement by Pancke, according to which the accused learned from him on the 12 September 1944 that the action against the Danish police was to take place, the accused still maintains that he had heard nothing about this action ahead of time, and, that consequently, the statements which Pancke had made were not correct.

Told that the participation of the accused in the conferences about objects of the counter-terror, for example in "Domus Medica", is also known to other parties, the accused maintains now as before that this is not correct, and that he does not remember the case of "Domus Medica" at all.

Asked, if he had talked with Bovensiepen about the possible liquidation of the mayor Fischer, the accused answers that he only learned today that there exists a Mayor Fischer, and that he absolutely had not talked about the case at all with Bovensiepen. On the contrary, during this conference with Bovensiepen about these things, he said in general that Bovensiepen should see to it that persons in important positions like Ministers, Members of Parliament, high officials, etc. should not be liquidated, because it would cause great excitement.

Confronted with the statement by Bovensiepen that in a certain case the accused had protested against a big action in one of the provincial (rural) cities, and that the accused had wired his protests to the Foreign Office and had given a copy of the wire to Bovensiepen, who on his part at that time wired the contents to Kaltenbrunner, but received the answer for the execution of this action, the accused declares that this case had not happened either, and that the statement of Bovensiepen is not correct.

Asked whether he knew in what manner the Reichs' Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt) was informed about the counter-terror the accused answers that all he saw were Bovensiepen's daily reports. And as much as he knows, some cases were marked in these reports, that anti-German persons had been found murdered or something like it.

About the financial situation the accused explains, that a budget for the delegation had been made up in the Foreign Office, and he had to go by it. He himself drew a monthly salary of barely 9,000 Kronen, and above this he had about 10,000 Kronen, about which he could dispose for purposes of representation or otherwise, for example: for relief. The accused was not obliged to account for this sum of about 10,000 Kronen, but all the other money, which was requested by him was under the control of the respective offices which spent it. Before the arrival of the accused an agreement with the National Bank had been reached about the so-called Kronen-Account IV (Kronen-Konto), and as far as he recalls, 6 million Reichsmark could be drawn yearly for purposes of the foreign office and 2 million Reichsmark could be drawn for other purposes. As the chief of the German representation the accused was formally responsible partly for the payments from

Kronen-Account (Kronen-Kronto) IV, partly for the payments from the account of the police-account, which was opened later. Naturally, he could not control the payments personally and paid the amounts which were requested by the several offices as mentioned above, in trust of a control on their part. However, upon further questioning he declares to have O. Kayed large, round sums for political purposes, several million per year, and within the frame of these allotments the accused could direct, for what purposes these sums were to be used, be it for the support of papers, clubs, or things like that. But the accused can not remember anymore without the books, for what purposes these sums were spent.