

1948/56

EIDESSTATTLICHE ERKLÄRUNG.

Ich, FRIEDRICH S T A H L, geboren am 14. Juni 1889 in Darmstadt, schwöre, sage aus und erkläre :

Mein letzter Dienstgrad war Generalleutnant. Meine Waffengattung war Infanterie. Ich bin Berufsoffizier. Während des Polenfeldzugs war ich Regimentskommandeur. Im Frankreichfeldzug war ich im Stab AOK 16 und von Juni 1941 bis Dezember 1942 war ich Divisionskommandeur der 714. Division auf dem Balkan. Von dort kam ich fuer einige Monate an die Ostfront, wo ich in einem rueckwaertigen Arnsgebiet taetig war, alsdann wurde ich Personalreferent im Wehrkreis I, Ostpreussen und dann war ich Kommandeur eines Sonderstabs, der sich mit der Ueberpruefung von organisatorischen Massnahmen beschaeftigte. Anfang November 1944 bis Februar 1945 General z.b.V. bei der Heeresgruppe "B" (MOBEL), Anfang April 1945 bis 9. Mai 1945 General der Wehrmachts-Ordnungstruppen im Bereich des Oberbefehlshabers West. Während des zweiten Weltkrieges habe ich die Spange zum Eisernen Kreuz I. und II. Klasse erhalten und ausserdem erhielt ich eine kroatische und ungarische Auszeichnung.

Während meiner Dienstzeit als Kommandeur der 714. Inf.Div. unterstand ich dem Hoeheren Kommando LXV, welches von dem General der Artillerie BADER gefuehrt wurde. Von Juni 1941 bis Mai 1942 lag ich in Serbien, besonders im Nordosten. Meine Aufgabe war, in den mir unterstellten Gebieten fuer Ruhe und Sicherheit zu sorgen. Meiner Erinnerung nach, waren die Vorgesetzten des Generals BADER erst der Feldmarschall LIST und spaeter der General der Pioniere KMENTZ. Auch während meiner Dienstzeit in Kroatien war mein Vorgesetzter immer General BADER als kommandierender General des Hoeheren Kommandos LXV.

Bezuglich den sogenannten Suesmassnahmen sage ich folgendes aus :

Von mir aus oder von den Herren meiner Division, waren solche Anordnungen niemals aus eigener Initiative gegeben worden. Die Befehle

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zur Durchfuehrung von Sühnemassnahmen kamen zu uns durch den regulären Dienstweg von General BADER. Auf meine wiederholten Proteste gegen diese Massnahmen wurde mir mitgeteilt, dass dies auf Befehl der 12. Armee bzw. des OKW geschehen ist. Damals wie heute hielt ich Sühnemassnahmen insbesondere mit festgesetzter Schlüsselszahl als unmenschlich und habe erst einmal aus diesen Gruenden dagegen Einspruch erhoben. Es war uns allen klar, dass solche Befehle auch die Haager Landkriegsrechte verletzen. Ausserdem hielt ich diese Art Massnahmen fuer taktisch und psychologisch sinnlos. Diese meine damalige Annahme wurde ja auch spaeterhin durch den tatsaechlichen Verlust des besetzten Balkanraumes, bewiesen. Trotz meiner wiederholten Einsprueche war ich natuerlich gezwungen diese Befehle durchzufuehren, denn es war mir klar, dass ich sonst wegen Befehlsverweigerung vor ein Kriegsgericht gestellt werden koennte, welches in einem solchen Fall natuerlich fuer mich die Todesstrafe erwirkt haette. Ich war immer der Auffassung, dass Sabotageakte des Feindes, Ueberfaelle auf die Truppe und Roheiten von Seiten des Feindes nur durch ein Kriegsgericht abgeurteilt werden duerften. Ich muss jedoch zugeben, dass waehrend meiner ganzen 38jaehrigen militaerischen Laufbahn, ich niemals in sogenannter Bandenbekaempfung ausgebildet wurde. Ich weiss auch, dass die meisten meiner Kollegen eine Ausbildung in der Bandenbekaempfung nicht erhielten. Es ist klar, dass aus diesen Gruenden wir der damaligen Situation des Bandenkampfes, militaerisch-taktisch gesehen, nicht gewachsen waren. Ich nehme an, dass die Sühnemassnahmen deshalb befohlen wurden, um einerseits fuer unsere Unkenntnis der Partisanenbekaempfung auszugleichen und andererseits als Abschreckung zu wirken. Die Durchfuehrung der Sühnemassnahmen in der Masse, in der sie von uns durchgefuehrt wurde, trug natuerlich dazu bei, auf die Dauer dem Feinde seine Kriegspotentiale zu berauben. Zum Schluss des Kapitels "Sühnemassnahmen" moechte ich noch sagen, dass wir alle unter Druck von oben standen, dass wir Befehle ausfuehren mussten und dass natuerlich durch diese Art Befehle die gewisse Begeisterung, die wir am Anfang fuer den Kampf hatten, vollkommen verschwand. Eigentlich war der ganze Fragekomplex der Sühnemassnahmen bestimmt fuer einen Offizier der alten Tradition etwas

ekelhaftes.

Sogenannte Kommunisten und Juden, die als Opfer fuer Suchmassnahmen vorgesehen waren, wurden uns gewoehnlich von den oertlichen Polizeichefs, Ortsaeltesten oder Buergermeistern benannt. Eine weitere Nachpruefung fand nicht statt, denn es konnte angenommen werden, dass diese Behoerdenstellen genuegend ueber die politische Einstellung der Opfer informiert waren. In Serbien, wo ich von Juni 1941 bis Mai 1942 war, gab es kaum einheitlich gefuehrte, gut bewaffnete oder durch Uniformen oder Abzeichen erkennliche Banden. Nur die Chetnicks hatten schwarze Uniformen oder schwarze Muetzen, doch stiessen wir mit diesen nur ganz selten zusammen. Als ich im Mai 1942 nach Kroatien kam, war die Situation ploetzlich ganz anders. Hier fanden wir gut trainierte, gut ausgeruestete, straff gefuehrte uniformierte militaerische Einheiten des Marschall TITO vor. Man konnte dort meines Erachtens, das erste Mal von richtigen Soldaten sprechen und deshalb nahmen wir den Feind auch sehr ernst.

Diese Aussage habe ich freiwillig gemacht, ohne jedwedes Versprechen auf Belohnung und ich war keinerlei Zwang oder Drohung ausgesetzt. Ich habe jede der 3 Seiten dieser Erklaerung sorgfaeltig durchgesehen und eigenhaendig gegengezeichnet, habe die notwendigen Korrekturen in meiner eigenen Handschrift vorgenommen und mit meinem Anfangsbuchstaben gegengezeichnet und erklare hiermit unter Eid, dass alle die von mir in dieser eidesstattlichen Erklaerung angegebenen Tatsachen nach meinem besten Wissen und Gewissen der vollen Wahrheit entsprechen.

Nuernberg, den 12. Mai 1947.

.....
 FRIEDRICH STAHL

Before me, WALTER H. RAPP, U.S. Civilian, AGO identification number D 416387, Director, Evidence Division, Office of Chief of Counsel for War Crimes appeared Friedrich STAHL, to me known, who in my presence signed the foregoing statement (Erklaerung) consisting of 3 pages in the German language and sworn that the same was true on the 12th of May 1947.

Nuremberg, 12. May 1947.

.....
 WALTER H. RAPP

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Interrogation e

v. 15.6.47.

Institut für Zeitgeschichte / ARCHIV

INTERROGATION OF
FRIEDRICH STAHL

INTERROGATION

Friedrich STAHL on 10 June 1947

by Mr. Rapp 10:30 o'clock

Stenographer: R. Namler

Institut f. Zeitgeschichte
München
ARCHIV
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- Q. What is your full name?
- A. Albert Gottfried Friedrich STAHL.
- Q. What was your last rank?
- A. Major general.
- Q. When and where were you born?
- A. On 14 June 1889 in DAMMSTADT.
- Q. Are you married?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Are you a regular army officer?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Do you have children?
- A. Three. I lost one son in the war; I have two other sons, aged 18 and 29 years. The one I lost in the war was an officer. One was injured in the war, and the third had been wounded four times at the age of 16; he is an apprentice.
- Q. Were you a party member?
- A. No.
- Q. Was your wife a party member or member of one of the affiliated organizations?
- A. My wife was a party member, since about 1935. We were just married, she is my second wife; I cannot say exactly when she joined, in any event she was already a party member in 1935.
- Q. What was your wife's maiden name?
- A. Her maiden name was SCHWABZ, she was born in WEISSENFELS, now she lives in GÖTTINGEN.

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- Q. Describe for us very briefly and precisely your assignments in the army beginning with 1 September 1939.
- A. I was regimental commander in POLAND, in FRANCE on the staff of AGE 16 (troop and vehicle movements), 1941/1942 division commander of the 714th division; 1943 I was seriously ill; then 1 1/2 months in the East behind the front lines, I had been sick until fall, then personnel-referent in Military District I, East Prussia; 1943 commander of the special staff (examination of organizational methods); then arrested by the Gestapo ---

INTERROGATION OF FRIEDRICH STAHL
CONTINUED

(page 2 of original cont'd)

Q. On what grounds?

A. As an acquaintance of GOERDELER I was implicated in the attempt of 20 July. Then in November I was on the staff of the Army group B, MOEL, in the west (likewise traffic matters) until I became ill again in February, and then again in April general of the Wehrmacht security troops (Ordnungstruppen) (again highway and rear area clearance) until the end. I was taken prisoner at BHER.

Q. What was the nature of your illness?

A. I had heart trouble.

Q. From when until when were you with the 714th division?

A. It was formed in May 1941 and then in the Balkans from June 1941 to December 1942.

Q. From what regiments was the 714th division formed?

A. From the I.R. 721 and the I.R. 741 (I.R. means Infantry Regiment.)

Q. Who was in command of the 704th Division?

A. General BOBOWSKI, later General JUPPE.

Q. Who was in command of the 717th division?

A. First, General HOFMANN.

Q. What is his first name?

A. I don't know.

Q. Who was in command of the 718th division?

A. --- ~~then~~ then HINGHORFER ? .

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Q. Did you see any of the previously mentioned men again in captivity?

A. No. -- However, Juppe was with me at GARMISEL.

Q. Within what larger units did your division fight?

A. Within a corps command (Korps Kommando).

Q. Who commanded it?

A. General RADER.

Q. To whom was the corps command subordinated?

A. In my opinion directly to the field army at SALONIKA.

Q. To the 18th Mountain Corps (Gebirgs-Korps)?

A. No, at first the corps command was subordinate to SALONIKA, which at the time was the 12th Army.

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INTERROGATION OF FRIEDRICH STAHL
CONTINUED

(page 3 of original, cont'd)

- Q. When, when you arrived in SERBIA, to whom were you subordinated then?
- A. General BADER.
- Q. Where was the 18th Mountain Corps?
- A. In my opinion about November/December 1941 in BELGRADE. I do not recall exactly whether - at any rate the corps command could hardly be subordinate to the Mountain Corps as such, since it was organized and ranked on a parallel level with the Mountain Corps, however, I do not know whether or not the Mountain Corps had then been given a more extended function within the framework of the military command (Militärbefehlshaber).
- Q. Who was BADER's superior?
- A. At first LIST, then KUNZE, and after the Mountain Corps arrived, General BOHRMS appeared occasionally.
- Q. Did you ever see BADER again?
- A. No. I understand he died.
- Q. Now, in connection with your capacity as commander of the 714th division, in which parts of YUGOSLAVIA did you fight mostly?
- A. I was in SERBIA from June 1941 to May 1942, and then until December in CROATIA.

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- Q. Where were you mostly in SERBIA?
- A. We had units in the BANAT, the southern front extended to TOBOLA.
- Q. You, therefore, were posted on the Bulgarian border?
- A. Yes, there I was in the region of BIKOTIN, ESCHUERIA (?) only.
- Q. And from there you went to CROATIA?
- A. Yes, there, my unit extended along the railroad which leads from BELGRADE to ZAGREB, then south of my unit, presumably, were the Italians. Three areas existed; then the northerly area was suddenly evacuated by the Italians so that a no-man's land was created into which TITO entered. This front extended approximately from WOLPASS (?) across JAICE (?) in the general direction of ZAGREB.

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- Q. You were, therefore, deployed in the western half of CROATIA?
- A. Yes, to the west of BOSNIA.
- Q. Now, while you were stationed in CROATIA, were you subordinate to the 13th Army?
- A. Before and after, I was always subordinate to the corps command. I do not know whether or not it constituted a regional command. (Militärbefehlshaber). I was always subordinate to the person of General BADER until maybe October 1942, when I left.
- Q. Did your division remain there after that?
- A. Afterwards, a corps command (Generalkommando) took over, namely, General LUEDERS.
- Q. Who was your successor in the division?
- A. General REICHERT.
- Q. Did you see General REICHERT again?
- A. I was a fellow prisoner of his; in 2 or 3 camps, I believe.
- Q. As prisoner of war of the Americans?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Josef REICHERT? About 55 years old?
- A. Yes, sir.
- Q. And where did he come from before taking over your division?
- A. As far as I know, he was in VIENNA.

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- Q. Now let us have a short description of the political and military situation at the time when you were in SERBIA up to May 1942.
- A. As long as there were enough troops there was absolute quiet, so that -
- Q. Until what time?
- A. Until the end of June 1941. Then suddenly ambushes upon railroads and troops began here and there without any noticeable system. Trains would hit mines, military vehicles would hit mines, troops were ambushed -
- Q. Who organized these activities? Were they organized by the NINAJLOWITSCH people?
- A. As far as I can recollect it was not quite possible to determine whether they were NINAJLOWITSCH people or whether they were forest bandits, customary in that part of the country, who live by ambush and unrest. When the war with RUSSIA started there was a lot of talk that agents were being dropped from the air to take charge of these uprisings.

INTERROGATION OF FRIEDRICH STAMM
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(page 5 of original, cont'd)

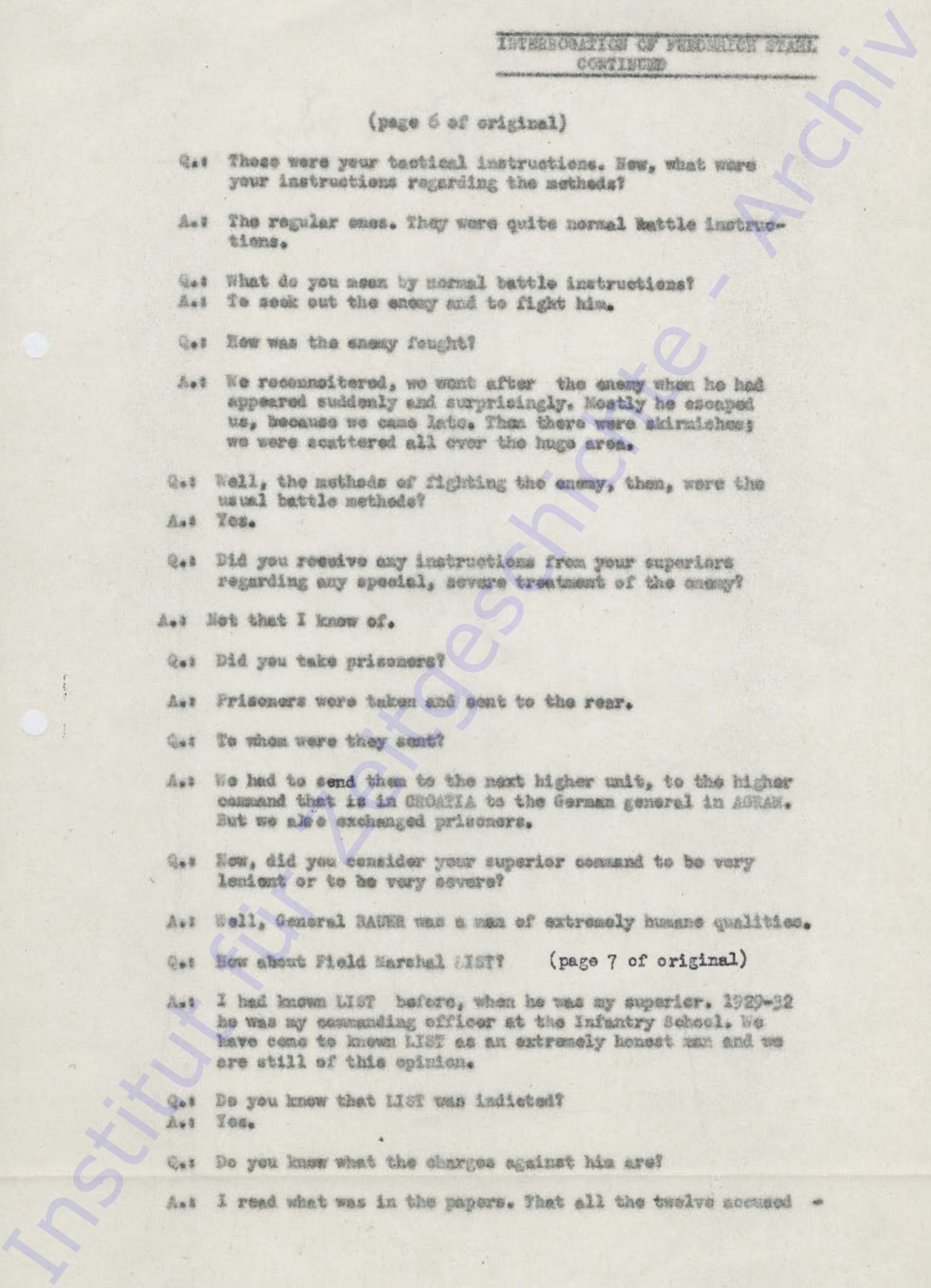
- Q. How did the situation continue to develop?
- A. We concentrated our efforts increasingly upon the railroads and the important highways, to keep intact the contact between BELGRADE and SALONIKA and to keep open the connections with the territory in which we ourselves were situated.
- Q. Were there any changes up to May 1942?
- A. The situation improved, then grew worse again. There was a continuous see-saw, so that one could not relax.
- Q. What orders did you receive to quell the uprisings?
- A. Well, above all, we were supposed to keep the highways open, to keep the railroads intact, to fight the enemy wherever he appeared.

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INTERROGATION OF FERDINAND STALL
CONTINUED

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- Q.: These were your tactical instructions. Now, what were your instructions regarding the methods?
- A.: The regular ones. They were quite normal battle instructions.
- Q.: What do you mean by normal battle instructions?
- A.: To seek out the enemy and to fight him.
- Q.: How was the enemy fought?
- A.: We reconnoitered, we went after the enemy when he had appeared suddenly and surprisingly. Mostly he escaped us, because we came late. Then there were skirmishes; we were scattered all over the huge area.
- Q.: Well, the methods of fighting the enemy, then, were the usual battle methods?
- A.: Yes.
- Q.: Did you receive any instructions from your superiors regarding any special, severe treatment of the enemy?
- A.: Not that I know of.
- Q.: Did you take prisoners?
- A.: Prisoners were taken and sent to the rear.
- Q.: To whom were they sent?
- A.: We had to send them to the next higher unit, to the higher command that is in CROATIA to the German general in AGRAD. But we also exchanged prisoners.
- Q.: Now, did you consider your superior command to be very lenient or to be very severe?
- A.: Well, General BAUER was a man of extremely humane qualities.
- Q.: How about Field Marshal LIST? (page 7 of original)
- A.: I had known LIST before, when he was my superior. 1929-32 he was my commanding officer at the Infantry School. We have come to know LIST as an extremely honest man and we are still of this opinion.
- Q.: Do you know that LIST was indicted?
- A.: Yes.
- Q.: Do you know what the charges against him are?
- A.: I read what was in the papers. That all the twelve accused -



INTERVIEW OF WITNESS NAME
CONTINUED

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- Q: Did these things seem familiar to you? In other words, were you acquainted with the kind of crime LIST is charged with, or is it new to you?
- A: Yes, I did not take part in the Balkan-campaign as such; I do not know in detail what happened there. During the time I was in it I can not remember that LIST should have ordered something that could in any way be held against him.
- Q: Did you then have official knowledge of it, or were you in such a position that you had very little to do with him?
- A: I was not directly under orders of the army, besides LIST was not there such longer. I did not get any direct orders from him.
- Q: Your view or your testimony concerning LIST therefore is an opinion you formed from hearsay? But you cannot testify on the basis of your own experience?
- A: My own experience goes only so far that I know him not to man and that I respect him as a gentleman.
- Q: But one could be deceived by people, too?
- A: As I said, LIST was for me - I had many superiors in my lifetime since I was a soldier for 35 years - he was held by us in very high esteem.
- Q: Now, how about Kluge's-KUNDE (Kneppel-KUNDE)?
- A: He took over in fall. I cannot form a honest and personal judgement about General KUNDE, because I was never under his orders before; thus, the opinion I formed of LIST as a fellow man, I cannot express about KUNDE, because I did not know him well enough personally, as I said before. He was in my area of command once, but I was not present. I did not see him at all during the whole time.

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- Q: How would you compare the abilities of LIST and KUNDE as tacticians, that is as soldiers?
- A: In comparing the two of them I would put LIST in the first place.
- Q: Are you religious?
- A: I do not reject the church and religion; I am no unthinking churchgoer, but I see in the Evangelical Church something I can have faith in.
- Q: What was LIST's position as far as the church is concerned?
- A: Very positive.

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICH STARL
CONTINUED

(page 8 of original, cont'd)

Q.: You said you could not recall extraordinary methods in the fight against the partisans during your tour of duty as a commander of the 714th division, nor that you got orders to apply special treatment to these people. What you have in mind is the regular way of fighting.

Now, to give you another chance, General STARL, to shed light on these things without your getting the impression that you were not given enough of a chance to have your say, I ask you the following: from the point of view of a regular army officer, was the fight against the partisans not different from the war on the western front? Or, do you think that scouting, skirmishes and all that are always the same whenever the enemy, may be that the difference consists in the initiative of the enemy only or in the methods?

A.: No, the method was - this enemy was different, because he was very deceitful; we suddenly faced problems which could at least qualify as surprises. Often we were attacked, shot at, quite a few of our men were killed and we could not tell how this came about. We, of course, felt very insecure.

Q.: Was it not then as well as now clear to you that the German army was the aggressor, invading a country and keeping it brutally occupied?

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A.: It did advance into Serbia, into Yugoslavia.

Q.: Thus, then, the population was morally justified?

A.: But on the other hand, we found that the population clung to us and held with us closely.

Q.: A rationalization. From what peoples did the partisans fill their ranks, from Chinese, from Americans?

A.: No. Why, I didn't get to associate with the partisans. But we were always on very pleasant terms with the people whom I met in the small towns and villages.

Q.: From what peoples did the partisans fill their ranks, were they natives?

A.: I have a feeling that even from Russia -

Q.: The leaders -

A.: Yes. The others were most likely Serbs, Croats, residents of the country.

Q.: And do you, General STARL, believe that that was not adulation, but rather a convincing friendship?

A.: Friendship is saying too much. I should like to say, however, that the people, in their way, did not show us any adulation. Their behavior was dignified. They didn't humble themselves before us. They were straightforward, proud. They behaved very correctly towards us; and I also had the feeling that the people themselves suffered through the partisans, since they turned

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICK STEARL
(CONTINUED)

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to us for help in many instances.

Q: Now we come to another chapter, to the famous retaliatory measures. How did your division behave as regards retaliatory measures. Have you ever heard the expression, retaliatory measures?

A: Yes.

Q: What did you do, who gave the orders and how were they carried out?

A: There were retaliatory measures - we received orders only from the Corps Command.

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Q: I should like to know what your division did with regard to retaliatory measures, how these were carried out, whether you executed any hostages?

A: No.

Q: Why do you tell me such lies, General? You must know perfectly well that I have proof in black and white that you shot hundreds of hostages.

A: Well, I do know it perfectly well, I can not recall our having shot hostages.

Q: Neither shot, nor hanged?

A: Some people - they were not hostages, were punished by court-martial.

Q: Well, now, General STEARL, I consider you to be a man of average intelligence. Why are we sitting opposite one another and wasting time, why, when you well know, quite as well as I, that you as Divisional Commander handed in to your superior officers daily reports, all of them are before me, every single one of them regarding the murdering and hanging of hostages. Why do you tell me of trials by court-martial?

A: Hostages? I can't imagine it.

Q: Do you want to imply that the shooting of hostages is a violation of the Hague Convention?

A: No, I don't want to imply that.

Q: I thought that the shooting of hostages is allowed?

A: Yes, but those are people to whom it is said, you are responsible for (our) safety.

Q: Why do you not seek protection under the Hague Convention?

A: Well, I take exception to the word "hostages." I cannot recall our having shot hostages.

Q: Of course, that makes the situation even worse, they were not hostages then. What was the ratio which you used for a wounded

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICH STAHL
CONTINUED

(page 10 of original, cont'd)

German soldier, 10 to 1, 20 to 1, 100 to 1, 75 to 17
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A.: I know that an order was once given, it should be 100 for one. On this occasion I called up General SAUER and told him it was impossible, I could not do that with my men, the effect would have been demoralizing. It did not happen in my district.

Q.: Now I should like to recapitulate: hostages were not shot, retaliatory measures were not carried out either?

A.: They were, but as stated through court martial procedure.

Q.: Why do you call it retaliatory measures if it was a question of court martial procedure? Then there is no need calling it retaliatory measures; in other words, General STAHL, a court martial procedure is a measure which was applied in every civilized army. The only thing I cannot understand is that according to your statement to-day, in the German army the words retaliatory measures were used in connection with the court martial procedure. In other words, when you want to get at a man through a court martial, then you do not need the words retaliatory measures; it is a reprisal, in other words, you have a man in your company in view, and the commander goes out saying: In retaliation for the assassination of the man, 25, 50, 75 will be shot. Then it is a retaliatory measure. In other words, when an army legal officer condemns a man, and you as supreme judicial authority confirm the judgment, then it is a court martial procedure.

I ask you for the last time: Yes or no, did your division render itself guilty, applying a certain key figure from 1 for 1 until 50 for one, and in some cases until 100 for 1? This is my question, you can only answer it with yes or no? -
I am waiting for your answer?

A.: Well, momentarily I cannot state any positive case.

Q.: I do not give you a positive case either. The reason is that then you would say I cannot remember that specific case any more. I am speaking generally. And you cannot possibly tell me

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that during these five years your memory has been so completely ruined when you are still able to remember all other details about SAUER, about the High Command etc. You cannot say that you have suddenly got a brain atrophy because I ask you: Yes or no, did your division, in the course of carrying out retaliatory measures in extrajudicial procedure render itself guilty of murdering or shooting of saboteurs, applying a key figure of one until, in several cases, of 100 for 1. This you can only answer with yes or no.

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICK STAHL
CONTINUED

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A.: The last figure, 100 for 1, is absolutely impossible.

Q.: I say: from 1 for 1 until 100 for 1. Is the answer yes or no?

A.: Yes.

Q.: My second question is: On which legal basis did you then believe to have the right to shoot or hang these people? Here I am going to help you: Did you believe this on basis of your knowledge of the international rules of land warfare or because you had orders?

A.: In the first place because I had orders, and secondly because the way in which our troops were treated, was such a unheard-of violation of everything that you could never understand that such orders were given.

Q.: Now, you said in connection with your previous answer that you admit that your men participated in extrajudicial procedure, but then you also said that the figure 100 for 1 was not applied. Assuming that this is consistent with facts, what is then your opinion: Were smaller retaliatory figures used by your division in single cases?

A.: In my opinion they did not exceed a one-figure number.

Q.: 9 for 1?

A.: Yes.

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Q.: That is a lie.

A.: No, that is no lie, I have no reasons to lie.

Q.: Yes, you have plenty of reasons to lie, for you are not under oath and then this is a matter of life and death for you. 1 to 9 is not at all the point. If it were a matter of 1 to 9 or so-called numbers of one digit, you would have never come to Ehrenberg, I assure you. I think you will have to correct your testimony somewhat.

A.: Well, as I said, I cannot recall it.

Q.: You are one of those who thinks that the number of victims mitigates the punishment; in other words, in your opinion it is a difference whether you liquidated 1 to 9 or 1 to 50. You forget that 1 to 1 is the only number permitted. Do you understand what I am trying to express?

A.: Yes.

Q.: Murder is murder, whether it is 9 or 50 makes no difference as far as the punishment is concerned.

A.: Yes, you asked me before whether I did that legally or by order, and I said by order and also legally insofar as---

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICK STARK
CONTINUED

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Q.: The other side committed crimes.

A.: Yes.

Q.: Do you mean morally or-----

A.: Morally.

Q.: I would like to give you another chance, General STARK: Is it not a fact that your division shot 50 people for the wounding of a member of your division?

A.: I do not recall that.

Q.: Follow-up question: Do you categorically deny that this ever happened?

A.: I cannot say, for something might have happened within my command of which I was not aware.

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Q.: Even though - I am convinced of this - you yourself read the daily reports of your I-A and also those which were passed on to the higher command?

A.: Yes.

Q.: Is it not a fact that it says in the 'Red Donkey' that the Fuehrer bears the responsibility?

A.: Correct, there is no doubt about that. Anything might have happened, but as I said, I cannot quite imagine that 50 people should have been liquidated for one wounded individual.

Q.: You cannot imagine that?

A.: No.

Q.: Well, I shall come back to the retaliatory measures in a few minutes.

Now to another form of reprisals. In this you distinguished yourself especially before your colleagues of the 717th and 704th divisions, you were very active burning down houses?

A.: I can recall that every place where people appeared with arms and ammunition---in some towns at some time or other, houses in which ammunition was found were immediately burned down.

Q.: But not in cases where, for example, an attempt was made on the German Army in the presence of members of your unit in the neighborhood of a village, when the entire village was then burned to the ground as a repressive or retaliatory measure?

A.: I cannot recall that.

Q.: Perhaps attempt is not the right word, perhaps you call it surprise attack, in other words, your unit did not participate in burning down villages or individual houses in villages, except when ammunition was found?

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICH STAHL
CONTINUED

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A.: I can only remember that I gave an order that those houses should be burned down where munitions or weapons were found.

Q.: General STAHL we have already discussed that. I ask you now about something other than the fact that houses and weapons were found. I ask whether you gave an order or whether your troops in absence of an order burned villages or houses in villages as reprisal or retaliation for attacks on German soldiers. That is my question, to which you can say yes or no?

A.: As you have presented it the answer must be yes.

Q.: I repeat my question, General; you can answer with yes or no. I give you the answer in accordance with your own presentation that it occurred only in cases where munitions or weapons were found. I ask you now whether it was also done in cases where no munitions had been found?

A.: Yes, I do not know whether the troops did this on their own authority. I cannot recall that I gave an order to carry out these reprisals. But I do not know whether anything else happened.

Q.: You mean in connection with the finding of weapons?

A.: Yes, the troops were so annoyed and at the boiling point that they blew their top, if one may say so. I will not deny that it could have been that way.

Q.: That is another matter, General STAHL, were you ever stationed in Banat during the time in which you were in Serbia?

A.: Not I personally, the Regiment 721.

Q.: Any other units?

A.: 721 and a Motor Company. It would be possible that a battery was there temporarily, but this is not positive; a tank unit was there at one time.

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Q.: You were in Tebula?

A.: Yes.

Q.: Now, that is the second type of crime. We spoke at first of people who were held as hostages in a certain code number, then of the burning of houses.

Now the third matter is this, how did your division act toward the Jewish population on order of higher Commands. We have here before us various things, which bear out the fact that a anti-Jewish action was carried out in the city of Tebula. These things were also reported through telegram to the various higher offices. What can you say about this anti-Jewish action?

INTERROGATION OF FERDINAND BRUNN
CONTINUED

(page 16 of original, cont'd)

A: That anything was done against Jews in Terebin?

Q: I do not speak of Terebin, I speak of the fact that in the vicinity of Terebin and in Soviet the 714 Infantry Division carried out a so-called anti-Jewish action, even in the vicinity of towns south west of-----

A: May I ask when this happened?

Q: Between January and 15 February 1942.

A: Yes, there belonged to me.

Q: It even says so here in the War Diary.

(Document is shown)

What can you say about the anti-Jewish action?---
It is all in the diary and I only want to see how good your memory is---

Did you issue orders to your troops, in accordance with orders which you had received from your superiors, to participate in or carry out the anti-Jewish action?

A: Well, if they were orders of higher authorities it is possible that these orders were passed on in their original form.

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Q: Did you have any qualms that such orders are a violation of the rights of humanity, of the Hague Convention?

A: I have objected to many of these cases and I have rung up General RAUKE. I always was told it was an order from above issued by SHITEL to carry out this and that. We had to stand for that.

Q: At the beginning you stated that RAUKE was a good man?

A: Yes he did not do that.

Q: You went to say that you rung up SHITEL for every small action, you went to LIT every 5 minutes etc..?

A: Of course SHITEL did not issue these orders in such a way telling us exactly what to do and how to do it but such orders came from above that I rung up RAUKE terrified at times and said how is that possible.

Q: Why were you terrified? You did not know that you would be held responsible one day in Nuremberg?

A: I did not know that.

Q: Then why were you terrified?

A: I did not wage war against the population but against the enemy.

Q: Well what would you say is the approximate number of victims in human life who were killed by your division from June 1941 till May 1942, in this sort of retaliation measures; e.g. shooting of

INTERROGATION OF FREDERICH STARK
CONTINUED

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hostages by reprisals etc. I would merely like to know if that corresponds with my number which is based upon your war diaries. Would you say 10, 100, 500, 1000, 5000, well approximately?

A.: These numbers you mentioned just now.....

Q.: General I only would like to know the approximate number. Does it go into 10, into 100, into 1000, into 10 000? I will tell you then when

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you have answered, how far you are away from the goal.

A.: You will not believe me if I tell you that I am completely surprised with the numbers you gave to me.

Q.: General we can talk about that later. Which figure could you give me as your calculation. If you do not like the word "calculation" we could also say approximation. What would you say approximately?

A.: Yes, round about a thousand.

Q.: That is a slight understatement. To finish our interrogation for to-day I would like to prove to you what sort of an excellent christian your friend LIST is, and all the gentlemen who have crossed this room have read this letter. so that you can convince yourself about the things we talked about, that a man who is not guilty has not been indicted. Here is a letter from Fieldmarshall LIST, dated 5 September.

(The document is presented)

That does not show Herr LIST in the same light you described him.

A.: I only can say here that he did this under pressure. I cannot imagine that LIST has made this.

Mr. RAPP: I would like you to make to-day's statement under oath. Will you please stand up, raise your right hand and repeat the following oath:

"I swear to God the Almighty and the Omnipotent that I have said the pure truth added nothing and not concealed any thing, so help me God."

(General STARK repeats the oath)

Mr. RAPP: Alright; that is all for to-day.

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35-45-30-10

Interrogation

v. 12. 6. 47

Institut für Zeitgeschichte - Archiv



Vernehmung des Generalleutnant Albert Gottfried
Friedrich STAHL

durch Mr. Walter H. RAPP
am 12. Juni 1947 von 11 - 12 Uhr
Stenographin: Lilly Daniel.

1. F. Sie sind Herr Albert Gottfried Friedrich STAHL?
A. Jawohl.
 2. F. Sie wurden gestern das letzte Mal von mir eidesstattlich vernommen?
A. Ja.
 3. F. Welches war Ihr letzter Dienstgrad?
A. Generalleutnant.
 4. F. Der Infanterie?
A. Nein, Panzerabwehr. Es gehörte zur Panzertruppe.
 5. F. In Falle einer Beförderung wären Sie zum General der Panzertruppen befördert worden?
A. Das ist anzunehmen, obwohl ich während des Krieges nicht zur Panzertruppe verwendet wurde. Man wurde in der Waffe befördert, wo man steckte.
 6. F. Wieviel Jahre haben Sie aktiv gedient?
A. Seit 1909. Es wären im Herbst 38 Jahre gewesen.
 7. F. Herr STAHL, ich habe aufgrund der beiden letzten Vernehmungen eine Erklärung aufgesetzt. Lesen Sie sich bitte diese Erklärung durch und berichtigen Sie evtl. Unklarheiten.
(STAHL nimmt kleinere Berichtigungen vor).
 8. F. Darf ich Sie jetzt auf diese Erklärung vereidigen.
(Sprechen Eidesformel).
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