

REPORT

As I previously mentioned in my personal history, I was re-assigned, towards the end of the war to the Innsbruck Gestapo Office. This office was dissolved on about 2 May 1945. Together with my wife who was on the staff of the Innsbruck Gestapo Office as a stenographer I left Innsbruck and went to St. Johann/Tirol where I stayed with my mother-in-law who is still living there. Kriminal-Obersekretar Otto ROHR and the latter's wife accompanied us on this trip. One day after our arrival at St. Johann, we obtained a motor vehicle and left the Tirol area, crossed the German border near Saehrang/Chiemgau and found quarters at the farm of Mrs. LENGAUER. We had not known this person until then. ROHR and his wife as well as I and my wife lived there under false identity. On 11 June 1945 ROHR surrendered in Rosenheim to the CIC, apparently he had lost his nerve. I believe that he gave the CIC office my correct identity and present whereabouts for the day after my wife and I were arrested while nothing happened to Frau ROHR. The CIC agent who arrested us and who made a search was extremely correct and courteous. At any rate we were agreeably surprised about such conduct. Subsequently we were taken to the prison in Rosenheim and subjected to a brief interrogation. On 16 June 1945 we were sent to Starnberg with a transport and transferred from there to Moosburg Internment Camp on the very same day. Here I was separated from my wife.

Conditions at the Moosburg Camp which at this time held about 8,000 internees were deplorable especially with regard to quarters and food. The internees were billeted 300-350 men in one barracks which partly lacked flooring as well as windows, not to speak of beds, tables or chairs. We were forced therefore to spend the nights lying on the naked floors; only one blanket was given per person. This condition prevailed until about the end of 1945 at which time it improved to such an extent that the internees were given material for the construction of beds and other necessities. Until about October 1945 the daily ration consisted of a 3 lb bread for every 7 to 10 men. The noon meal consisted of 3/4 quart pea soup (so called which did taste of peas but actually was little more than water. In the evening half a quart of Ersatz coffee was dispensed to the internees. The result of this nourishment was frightful. People became emaciated, and this was very visible, they had fits of weakness and fever and many of them were no longer able to appear for roll call where they had to stand up; these roll calls were even ordered during the middle of the night. The so called "Ghandi" ration introduced some time later was mainly responsible for the state of health of many internees. As a result of this poor nourishment my feet became swollen to such an extent that I was no longer able to put on shoes. When finally bleeding sores developed I was ordered to the camp hospital. Nourishment at the hospital was satisfactory and abundant in comparison to the general condition at the camp. After a period of a few weeks, my health was much improved. With respect to the general treatment at the Moosburg camp I could not complain. During interrogations by CIC agents I was always treated fairly. Other people I knew stated the opposite. Guard supervision was very strict. When American guards were replaced by Polish guards a number of men and also a woman were shot and seriously wounded for allegedly coming too close to the fence surrounding the camp. I saw with my own eyes a farmer's woman from Moosburg shot dead one Sunday for having entered their field bordering the camp.

In this connection I like to emphasize that I do not hold any grudge towards anyone in reminiscence of my camp internment. During my internment period I came to the conclusion that for security reasons it was absolutely necessary to intern a large number of people and that ~~excesses~~ ^{excesses} by subordinate elements could not be prevented during such emergencies.

About July 1946 I was transferred to the Kornwestheim Camp and in September 1946 to the camp in Ludwigsburg. The reason for this transfer I learned only when I arrived in Ludwigsburg. Here I found that I had been sent here as a war criminal and this camp was a camp for war criminals. Only three days after my arrival at Ludwigsburg i.e. 24 September 1946 I was ordered to report to the camp management. There I was received by a Captain, a member of the Luxembourg Army, who stated to me that I would be extradited to Luxembourg for war crimes allegedly committed there. After this interview I was taken out in front of the camp gate. Eight other internees who previously had been assigned to a number of German agencies in Luxembourg stood there with their face turned towards the wall.

In a prison transport we were shipped to Pirmasens. There we were confined in the police prison, were forced to undress and subsequently, naked as we were, we were locked up in a cold, empty cell. We were ordered to carry our garments and leave them in front of the cell door outside. No blankets were issued and likewise no food. The following morning we were shipped on in the direction of Luxembourg where we arrived around noon and we were thrown into a one man cell, 3 men to a cell.

On the following day I was summoned before the military examining judge who notified me in brief terms that I was extradited to Luxembourg for being charged with 11 murders. To my question regarding the identity of these murdered people I was told that I would learn about that at some later date. In this connection I would like to mention that all police men and judges who had been assigned to Luxembourg during the German occupation were extradited for murder and that civil servants or employees of other agencies were extradited for looting and that the dwarf state of Luxembourg with its 280,000 inhabitants held confined more than 200 so called war criminals. The majority of the arrestees were picked up in the internment camps of the three Western Zones in Germany. My personal opinion is that the occupation authorities were deceived since as already stated before, all policeman and judges were simply termed assassins and officials of other categories looters. As late as the end of 1948 the French authorities turned over to the Luxembourgers a German town mayor who was charged with looting. This man was a mayor of a small Luxembourg town during the years 1940-1944. At wars end the Luxembourgers found that a coin collection valued 200,000 DM and which was municipal property had disappeared. This was for them reason adequate enough to pick up the mayor, lock him up as a war criminal and treat him accordingly.

During my 4 year imprisonment in Luxembourg the treatment I received on the part of the prison staff was with few exceptions extremely contemptuous. For over two years I was kept locked up in a cell that was crawling with bed bugs and open to wind and rain. All complaints made found no attention. During the first weeks of my imprisonment I had Germans for company then we were separated and criminal elements of the worst type were locked up in my cell and these came and left constantly. There was exercise only when it didn't rain and even then ten minutes a day only. The rations were ~~monotonous~~ monotonous but adequate.

After imprisonment every "war criminal" had his picture taken which was then shown in all of the important Luxembourg newspapers. Citizens of Luxembourg who had any complaints were requested to report to the police or the courts. It may be mentioned here that after Luxembourg's occupation by the Americans, the government of Luxembourg published a law which provided for all persons who considered themselves victims of bodily or financial abuse by the German occupation authorities to apply for restitution. In my case a man from Vianden appeared on the scene and stated that on the occasion of his apprehension and arrest by me he had been beaten with a rubber truncheon to such an extent that he suffered a contortion of the vertebrae of the spine. The fact is however that this man who had been strongly suspected of having shot dead a German soldier from behind, in collusion with another Vianden citizen, received no more than a few slaps in the face and that the physical condition was not the result of his treatment by me but rather a decrepity of long standing. Doctor RAU from Reutlingen who was my counsel at the trial was able to submit positive proof derived from the court files in this case. A pension requested by this witness was not approved for lack of evidence in his favor. In spite of it the allegations of this individual were accepted as the truth. In view of the fact that only this man from Vianden and nobody else appeared in answer to the newspaper proclamation of the government and since this was not adequate for the court, the gendarmerie was requested to summon for re-interrogation all persons apprehended during my period of service in Luxembourg. Hence, 6 more persons appeared who stated under oath that they were beaten by me. These persons were on the average not enjoying any good reputation with the people of Luxembourg. Among the witnesses against me were no persons among the middle class or those belonging to the intellectual class. Even though I was able to disapprove the allegation credence was given to the statements of the witnesses and not to me. One of the witnesses for instance stated he had been beaten by a motor vehicle driver belonging to my office and that I had been the driver, another man stated that he knew me since 1940 and that he always saw me wearing the black SS uniform. The truth is that I never wore the SS uniform and that I only came to Luxembourg in 1944. On the basis of these charges trial against me and Gend-Meister Otto HELLBRUCK, who was the guard Commander in Vianden, was held about the end of 1948. HELLBRUCK was also charged with a number of crimes. About the beginning of 1949 HELLBRUCK was notified that the charges against him had been suspended. A few days later he was set free. I was told that I would be one of the accused in the forthcoming monster Gestapo trial and this was what actually happened. With reference to HELLBRUCK I may state that all former police agents provided they were not Gestapo agents were released after more or less extensive internment without benefit of trial. Although similar and even more serious crimes were charged to them or even proven against them.

I was not charged with homicide. Homicide constituted the fact that 11 arrestees failed to be released from camp. The majority of them were victims of air raids. In March 1950 the monster Gestapo trial took place. The District Attorney demanded penitentiary sentence in my case, forced labor for the other 8 accused and death sentence for two other men. On 4 August 1950 I was suddenly summoned before the District Attorney who notified me that I would be given a leave of absence to take effect immediately but that I would obligate myself to appear for reading of the finding in court. On the following day I was released (copy of my release order is attached hereto). In January 1951 I received a written request to appear for trial on 19 February 1951 in Luxembourg. I complied with the request. Already at noon time of the first day of trial the court was adjourned because one of the members thereof took ill of the flu. It was left to the discretion of the accused who at any rate were at liberty whether they wanted to appear for the next session or whether they wanted to stay away. I preferred the latter. A certificate issued by the Military Auditor is attached hereto.

I learned by hearsay that I had been sentenced to a term of five years in prison at a trial which took place in March 1951. So far I had not been sent the verdict, and it is most likely that I will never get it.

With regard to my family status I state as follows:

I married for the second time, that is, on 15 July 1944; my wife's name is Irene nee SCHONITZER. In July 1943 my first marriage was dissolved by decision of Landesgericht Berlin with both parties adjudged guilty. My first wife's name was Erna nee GEIST. I am told that she is married to a teacher and that she resides in the apartment formerly occupied by us in Berlin, SO 36, Bouchestr. 67a. Preceding our divorce we separated by mutual consent. My present wife is employed as a stenographer with Brown, Boveri & Co in Munich. My mother-in-law, Irene SCHONITZER, was divorced in 1938. Presently she lives in St. Johann/Tirol with her brother, Josef HILSCHER who is in business for himself. Neither my wife nor I entertain any relations with my wife's father. He used to be employed in the building department of the Tirol Land Government and is supposed to live somewhere in Vorarlberg. My mother-in-law has only one sister, her name is Frau Anna ECKER, widow of a druggist, who lives now in Attnang-Puchheim. I never made this lady's acquaintance. My wife corresponds with her off and on. My wife has one brother left alive. His name is Josef SCHONITZER and he is an architect living in Innsbruck, Josef-Poellstr. 25a. The only contact we have with him is also infrequent correspondence. Once or twice a year the latter visits Munich with his family for the purpose of visiting his parents-in-law. His father-in-law is Dr. Otto ZIEGLER, Oberregierungsrat, Munich, Henrik-Ibsenstr. 2. On these occasions - and not even always on these occasions - I happen to see my brother-in-law at the home of his parents-in-law.

I have one brother and three sisters. My brother Karl was a AAA soldier and became a Russian prisoner beginning of 1945. Since then he is missing in action. He was married. His wife lives in Sakrow near Potsdam. Since Sakrow is located in the Russian Zone of Germany I never had any contact with my sister-in-law. My oldest sister Pauline POCKERT became widowed in 1950. She lives in Berlin-Charlottenburg, Dahlmannstr. 23. She earns pin money by working as a charwoman at the Municipal Court in Charlottenburg, besides she draws a negligible widows pension. She has a daughter who is married to a post office clerk. The second sister Margarete BERNDT, is married to a nursery owner Willi BERNDT, has no children and lives in Klein-Glienicke near Potsdam. Klein-Glienicke is also in the Russian Zone. My third sister, Minna KOWALSKI, has been divorced for many years. She lives in the Russian Sector of Berlin, that is in the vicinity of the Schlesischen Bahnhof. I am not in possession of her present address. This sister has two children, namely, two girls; one of them is married to a farmer living in the Russian Zone and the other is single and lives with her mother. Both are employed by a Berlin laundry shop. The only contact ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~, that is, by correspondence is that with my eldest sister in Charlottenburg who informs me by writing occasionally about all family affairs over there. In September 1952 she visited us for two weeks.

From the time of my service with the Berlin Schutzpolizei I entertain friendly relations with Erwin KUHNKE, Polizeimeister, Berlin-Neukolln, Selchowerstr. 21/23 even at this ~~XXXX~~ time I still correspond with him. Of my former colleagues I still have contact with

1. Willi MULLER, Kriminalsekretar, Munich, Landsbergerstr. 1. We have personal contact with each other and meet occasionally either in Munich or Planegg. MULLER presently works as a painter and also draws a temporary settlement according to Articles 131, Basic Law.

2. Karl RAMLOW, Kriminalsekretar, Mannheim, Gontardstr. 1. RAMLOW also received a temporary settlement. I maintain correspondence with him.

3. Hans, JAUD, Kriminalassistent, Munich, Westendstr. 119/1. I see him rarely. He is presently working as a tailor.

I have no contact with any of my former superiors. I never had occasion to see or talk to them again. In conclusion I wish to state that my wife and I live a retired quiet life. Since my wife is compelled to work strenuously all day we are content to be left alone in the evening. We do not demand a large circle of friends or contact with any of our relatives. We are entirely self sufficient. That is another reason why we prefer staying at home to frequenting public places and taverns.

SIGNED: Otto Hantel