

NODATE

PERSONAL HISTORY:

I was born in Mitten, Lkr. Lindau on 25 February 1896; the son of Ludwig and Agathe STRAEBERGER. My father was a customs official. I attended public school and professional school. I served 3 years apprenticeship as an artisan. During the first World War I served in the Army as an artillery soldier.

Family: In 1920 I married Anna Pirrong, a native of Homburg/Saar. She was the daughter of a railroad worker and died of cancer on 6 March 1940. My daughter Ruth STRAEBERGER was born on 23 October 1922 in Munich and is employed by the Bavarian State Ministry of Economy as a secretary since 1941. Among all my relatives there are no Nazis, on the other hand several members of my family were persecuted by the regime.

Financial Assets: None. In 1944 I lost everything I had as a result of an air raid.

Career: On 1 April 1919 I enlisted at the Police School in Munich. On 15 June 1919 I became a policeman and a professional police agent with the Munich Police Corps. In 1925 I was assigned to the Bavarian Border Police in Lindau where I remained until 1929. In 1930 I passed the test for criminal police duty with the highest grade and immediately after I was transferred to Munich Criminal Police Headquarters where I remained until March 1933. I was attached to a great number of departments, my last duty having been with the burglary section.

In March 1933 I was forcibly assigned to the Political Division. All attempts, that is my own and those of my former superiors, to remain on duty with the Burglary Section failed because of the obstinate attitude of the new head of the Political Division whose name was HEYDRICH. When the Bavarian Political Police was organized I was assigned to it in 1933 and by virtue of the nationalization of the German Police I automatically was transferred to the Secret State Police in 1937. I was assigned to a number of departments in the Gestapo. My last assignment until the collapse of Germany 1945 was with the Protective Service (Security measures for prominent persons). My last rank was that of Criminal Inspector.

With regard to my membership in the Secret State Police (Gestapo) I wish to say the following:

My assignment to the Political Division and my subsequent transfer to the Secret State Police was subject to compulsion. I was very much displeased and unhappy about this assignment. The reason for my unhappiness was as follows:

1. I was a Criminalist wholeheartedly, that is I was concerned with the prosecution of ordinary crimes only and I had an absolute aversion against everything that had any smattering of politics.
2. I knew nothing about politics and I could not understand the reason why an opponent of National Socialism should be a bad character. I suffered personally when I was called upon to deal with these people and I did everything I could to carry out my official duties to the best advantage of the persecuted people. It is for this reason that I held denouncers in special disregard.

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I do not consider myself responsible for my membership in the Secret State Police for I did everything in my power to prevent my assignment to it. If I was not successful in preventing this assignment I do not consider myself liable. I could not cope with the regime. If the intention of a person as it prevails in each case is made the guiding element for adjudging a case then the circumstances of my membership in the Secret State Police certainly cannot be interpreted in my disfavor. My continued service in the Secret State Police can likewise not be taken as a criminal act.

From the very first day the officials were exposed to constant threats and they lived in fear of the unscrupulous character and brutality of HEYDRICH.

All the older professional police officials were under surveillance of the SD, I was even subjected to mail surveillance. The political division of the Munich Police Headquarters was taken over into the Bavarian Political Police under HEYDRICH. None of the police officials were consulted and all requests for transfer back into the regular police were rejected. Since, nevertheless, there was a considerable lack of personnel, HEYDRICH selected from a record submitted to him the professionally best qualified police officials for employment in the Political Police. His selection was made on their merits, diligence, test grades, age, etc., I was one of those affected and was summarily drafted; HEYDRICH did not tolerate any opposition. In this connection I would like to bring to your attention an extract from the defense pleas made by the attorney MERKEL before the International Military Tribunal in Nurnberg.

"The Government Employees had no other recourse by law and were compelled to follow the order of transfer. In case of refusal the Government Employee would be confronted with serious disadvantages and was likely to incur charges of breach of office. He would have lost his job and his rights and he would also be subject to internment in a concentration camp because his refusal to obey orders would have been interpreted as motivated by political reasons. It was practically impossible to be released from duty by the Gestapo, exception being of course the general reasons like death, disease, dismissal for other failures. The Gestapo considered the entire police force as its own instrument and practically a part of the Army as well and its personnel were subject to the military tribunal. It was even forbidden for personnel to enlist in the Army for front line duty."

When national socialism came into being in 1933 more than in all other fields of public life it took charge of the police apparatus and the police officials who were selected from the political division had only two alternatives: either to howl with the wolfs or go down in defeat. I was therefore always in a spot.

My attitude towards National Socialism:

1. Party: Until 1937 I never was a member of a political party, however as a Bavarian my leanings were towards the Bayerische Volkspartei. On 3 May 1937, following a general movement of coercion I became a member of the NSDAP. At that time our personnel manager made it known that all police officers would shortly be called to account if they had not by then become members of the party. This announcement was followed by the order that all non-Nazi Party members were to request membership therein immediately. In order to avoid further difficulties, I applied for membership in the beginning of 1938 and was retroactively accepted as a member as of 3 May 1937. I performed no duties for the Party and was therefore designated as a Card Bearing Member only. In view of my real attitude

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toward National Socialism I kept my wife and daughter away from the Party and its formations.

2. Reichsbund Deutscher Beamter: The Reichsbund was a professional organization without political aims. Since even before 1933 I was a member of the Police Official Professional Organization, I had no qualms about entering the newly established fraternity of German policemen when this organization became the successor to the formerly mentioned organization. Membership therefore was automatic at any rate.

3. Reichskolonialbund: I did not enter the Reichskolonialbund on my own initiative but rather became a member thereof as a result of very intensive and repeated propaganda activities carried out at my place of duty. In recruiting membership the minor fee of 25 pfennig a month and the good cause was held out as an inducement.

4. REICHSLUFTSCHUTZBUND: Membership in the Air Raid Guard Organization was made a compulsory obligation especially regarding members of the Police Force. Any delay in entering this organization would have incurred difficulties, finally there would have been no alternative but to become a member thereof.

5. N.S.V.: (Nationalist Socialist Welfare Organization) I did not become a member of this organization for political reasons. Primarily I joined it for charity sake and also because of continuous pressure on the part of my superiors. As a member of the Police Force there was no way to refrain from membership in this organization. I never attached any political significance in my becoming a member of any of these Nationalist Socialist formations. On the other hand I refused to have anything to do with

the SS

and especially the SS classification of personnel. Until the end of the war in 1945 I was able to prevent my being accepted as a member of the SS and receiving SS rank by means of numerous pretenses, untrue statements, and other pretext. Even if necessarily I became a member of the party and the aforementioned formations thereof, my attitude toward the SS remained hostile to such an extent that I used means which if discovered would have positively led to my dismissal, interment in a concentration camp and possibly even execution. Among other things I stated falsely that I had submitted requests for membership in the SS. Since it took a long time to trace papers, it was never found out that this was not so. When requested to renew my application I delayed so long until the collapse of Germany finally put an end to this matter. I expected the end to come much earlier than it did. Next to the police force in Germany there existed in my opinion only the Wehrmacht as a State Force called upon to exercise power and therefore I was categorically opposed to all Nationalist Socialist organizations but especially so to the SS and SA.

I believe to be entitled to the claim that not one single person could be found who could point his finger at me as a former National Socialist provided of course he was honest and sincere. All my friends and relatives knew that I always was severely critical - even to an extent where I endangered my own safety - of all injustices committed, the corrupt political machine, the fanatical plans

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of conquest, total war, ruthless elimination of any opposition, the constant and unlawful "immunity" granted to the old guard Nazis, the new type of justice, the unlimited thirst of the party for power over everything, etc. In this connection I shall submit sworn statements at a later date.

I was assigned to the Gestapo Branch Office Pilsen, Czechoslovakia in March 1939 and remained there until December 1939. Due to failing health I was confined to office duty only.

On 20 June 1945 I was interned by the Americans. On 15 February 1947 I was extradited to Czechoslovakia. As far as I could learn from the list of the interrogations, my extradition was motivated by the allegation that I had taken an active part in the mass arrest of hostages which was carried out in Pilsen on 1 September 1939. I was able to show proof that in this connection I was merely entrusted with the keeping of index files and that I was not concerned with locating these people nor that I was engaged in carrying out any executive measures. As a result I was merely sentenced to five years forced labor. On 2 May 1947 the People's Court of Pilsen sentenced me to this term after having found - according to Paragraph 2 of the Law of Retribution - that I was a member of the Nationalist Socialist Organization. The sentence read: "that I had unlawfully entered the country and that I had thereby endangered the life of the Republic". I may assume that adequate knowledge has been acquired in the meantime about what constitutes Czech justice and I shall forgo therefore to go into it any further. I was unable to obtain a copy of the indictment and sentence. Only in 1950, on my plea to give me credit for the period of my internment by the Americans was I released from confinement. On 7 July 1950 I was escorted to the border and expelled to Bavaria.

Regarding my professional activities I state as follows: At no time ~~EVERY~~ did I take a personal political interest in the outcome of an investigation of a case. Everything I was entrusted with was handled by me in a perfectly objective manner, as I saw it with compliance of my duty as a police official. I venture to say that only few officials who were members of the Gestapo fulfilled their duties with the same degree of sincerity. From ample experience I learned that the majority of denunciations made resulted from personal spite, envy, egotism, etc. Denunciations made by the SD and Nazi Party members showed a considerable lack of objective judgment and truth. For this reason I took advantage of every opportunity to make myself the invincible champion of the accused persons and kept up a bitter struggle against such denouncers. Since I returned from internment from Czechoslovakia only a short time ago I can merely recount a few cases, I am in a position however to mention a great deal of similar ones for which I am able to obtain proof.

1. About 1934 I was ordered to take a chaplain from Tuntzenhausen to Freising to participate in a major operation (Raiding the seminary schools on the Donberg) In the raid a number of stage props were found in the attic, among them was a Soviet flag, used weapons, etc. I was told by an SS Officer that the latter wanted to have these articles photographed with him and the chaplain in the picture. The picture was to be a distortion of facts and was to be exploited in the newspapers as I was told by this SS Officer. The chaplain raised a protest and rightly so. I supported him to such an extent that the idea was dropped and no picture taken. I am certain that Rev. LAMPL, H. Geistl, Rst in Tuntzenhausen will recall this incident since I myself escorted the chaplain back to that town and since further discussion of it took place there.

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2. About 1936 I was ordered by OERHNER, Adjutant of WERNER, Gauleiter of Bavaria to investigate the background of GEHRLERER who was the religious editor of a newspaper in Alttetting. This investigation was supposed to lead to GEHRLERER's arrest and internment in a concentration camp. GEHRLERER was supposed to have composed a brochure directed against Hitler and Wagner. DAF Chief of Alttetting was mentioned as having made the denunciation and as a person who knew all about his background. The latter whose name I can no longer recall was a native of Bayern and resident of the Gold Party Insigula. When I questioned him his statements were very much confused and it appeared that he was interested in GEHRLERER's immediate arrest only. It became very doubtful if anything substantial was true in his denunciation. During this investigation I had occasion to see a copy of the brochure and noticed that word "Oetereich" was wrongly spelled "Oetreich". Since the denouncer was a native of Saxony and since he continuously referred me to OERHNER when I asked him tricky questions I became suspicious that GEHRLERER was to be the target of a frameup. I made the DAF Chief write the brochure a few times on the typewriter and he misspelled the word "Oetereich" everytime. After a lengthy interrogation he finally confessed that he had written the brochure himself. He refused to give further explanations and requested me to have OERHNER questioned. There was no doubt that some Nazi, possibly the Kreisleiter, had persuaded OERHNER to carry out this frameup in order to do away with GEHRLERER. The arrest of this Golden Party Insigula resident was not tolerated by the Gestapo. I was told to refer the case to the Treumstein State Attorney's Office and the to the Gauleitung. The case was not brought to trial since the DAF Chief committed suicide. Nothing happened to GEHRLERER whose fate was in the balance at that time and it is possible that even today he knows nothing of this incident.

Erstmal Rat a. D. WEISS, Karl, Hirtenburgerstr. 110/11, formerly Gestapo Branch Office Chief maybe summoned as a witness in this case. The files may be presumed to be kept at the State's Attorney's Office in Treumstein.

3. Martin HAUBER, business man, Memloh, Halmgrabenstr. 21/7, escaped in 1938 to Switzerland after being sought for some currency violation. In Switzerland he carried on negotiations which were to lead to an attempt on the life of Adolf Hitler. In 1940 HAUBER was expelled to Germany and on his return I was given the mission to handle the case of HAUBER since my special field at that time was, among others, attempted assassinations. The Gestapo was in possession of some elements of definite guilt but the decisive evidence for the man's conviction was a sworn statement of Heinrich JURKOVIC, a citizen of Agren, who testified under oath before the People's Court in Memloh in HAUBER's and my presence that HAUBER himself had told him of his intentions and preparations to assassinate Hitler and that he had no doubts about the truth of his statement. On the strength of this story there was no question in view of the standards of justice existing at that time, that an immediate death sentence would be in the offing. I would like to know how who among the Gestapo officials would have questioned this sworn statement and the "habermasch" and who would have had the determination to void this sworn statement? When this witness made a statement under oath some doubts arose in my mind about the veracity of this story and after later deliberation I had JURKOVIC who already was on the way back to Agren returned to Memloh. I was able to prove that JURKOVIC committed perjury. His statement why he did so was of special interest. He said: "I was of the opinion you people wanted to get rid of HAUBER, I thought you people wanted to get statements of this kind." This is how far things had gone on the other side of the German border. People thought anyone in Germany could be disposed of by means of some perjured testimony. JURKOVIC, who was an agent in the

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intelligence service was turned over to a court for trial, indicted and sentenced for perjury for two years in the penitentiary. Attached hereto is a sworn statement by HAUSER.

4. During the investigations carried out against those persons who allegedly participated in the attempt on Hitler's life on 20 July 1944, among others August MUMER, Cavalry Major retired, was to be arrested. Some inquiry led to the information that MUMER could be found at the house of his school classmate Bruno MAYER in Charwittelesh near Jochen. When I arrived at this address, MUMER had disappeared. MUMER was unable to cope with the situation he told me without any fuss that they had been warned. This statement justified by an immediate arrest since it proved that he was part of the conspiracy. However, since I found him to be a severe war casualty I made believe I did not hear what he said and put the required answers in his mouth. This would enable me to at least excuse a delay in his arrest or even prevent it. I had a great deal of trouble in handling the case this way but MAYER was saved nevertheless. I did this because I felt that MAYER himself was not involved in the attempt and that he would be subjected to untold suffering if he were arrested in this connection. In my mind it was not a crime deserving such a severe punishment, if he really had given refuge to his school classmate. If my handling of this case had become known I would have lost everything and it is clear that I incurred a great risk. A statement of MAYER is attached hereto.

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