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“Destroy as much as possible...”

Latvian collaborationist formations
on the territory of Belarus, 1942 – 1944

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2010

“DESTROY AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE...”

LATVIAN COLLABORATIONIST FORMATIONS
ON THE TERRITORY OF BELARUS, 1942-1944.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

EDITORIAL NOTE

During the years of World War II, the Nazis and their accomplices committed an enormous number of war crimes in the invaded territory of Byelorussia. Massacre of the Jews, destruction of hundreds Byelorussian villages and annihilation of their population, vast concentration camps where the Soviet prisoners of war and innocent civilians were dying – all these facts are evidence of genocide policy pursued by the invaders against the republic population. That policy can never be justified by any “military necessity measures». The invaders burned down and destroyed 209 among 270 cities and urban settlements, 9200 villages including 5295 villages during punitive operations on the territory of Byelorussia. 628 human settlements were burned down along with their population, and 186 villages had been never revived after the war. Considering only the region Vitebsk, 243 villages were burned down twice, 83 villages – three times and 22 villages – four times and over.¹ The loss of life proved to be really terrible: on the territory of Byelorussia the Nazis annihilated about 2 million and 200 thousand innocent civilians and prisoners of war.²

The atrocities shock by their scope. So, how did the Nazis succeed in realization of their misanthropic genocide plans? In the Soviet époque this question was suppressed since a blunt reply could disturb international peace in the country. The main cause is that collaborationist unions formed by the invaders from among the Soviets citizens figured prominently in realization of the Nazis’ genocide plans. The Russians, the Byelorussians, the Ukrainians, the Lithuanians, the Estonians and the Letts took part in such unions.

The Latvian collaborators were involved in the Nazis’ atrocities on the territory of Byelorussia in some way: *direct participation* – “Arais’ crew” («the Lettish Auxiliary Security Police” which had numbered about 1200 chastisers by the end of January, 1943) and over 20th Lettish police battalions (partly aggregated in 3 police regiments afterwards); *occasional participation* – the 15th Lettish division Waffen-SS; *indirect participation* – the borderers and Latgalian building battalions.

The Lettish emigrant memoirists and contemporary officious historians permanently emphasize in their works that the Lettish legionaries of

¹ See *Nazi genocide and scorchedearth policy in Byelorussia (1941 – 1945)*, Minsk, 1984; *Punitive actions in Byelorussia*/Prepared by Gerasimov, V.Y., Gayduk, S.M., Kulan, I.N., Minsk, 2008.

² *Population of Russia in XX century: Historical essays*, Moscow, 2001, V.2, p. 50.

Waffen-SS fought only against the Bolshevism on the foreground without being involved into atrocities which took place on the home front and in the front-line zone. However when considering the Lettish legion- SS as Word War II phenomenon, the local historiography tries not to draw attention to the fact that the German command also referred to it “closed security battalions” (police ones) which had taken part in punitive actions on the territory of Byelorussia, Russia, Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland integrating them gradually into the 15th and 19th divisions of Waffen-SS. In 1943-1944 years members of “Arais’s crew” also joined to the Lettish divisions of Waffen-SS infamous of holocaust and burning down Byelorussian villages.³

The very fact that the legion main body was formed from the police battalions which left a trail of blood in 1942-1943 in Byelorussia contradicts the official doctrine of “exclusively front nature” of the Lettish legion of SS. It should be noted that the circumstances of the legion forming and its main body staff were reflected some way in the Lettish historiography. It is stated that on the 24th of January, 1943, during his visit to the battle-front Reichsführer Himmler ordered to unite the Lettish police battalions 19 and 21 which were fighting in Leningrad region as a part of the 2nd motorized brigade of SS assigning them as “The Lettish volunteer legion of SS” under Hitler’s “verbal permission and order». Hitler’s written order appeared on the 10th of February, 1943.⁴ The Lettish volunteer brigade of SS forming part of the 1st (the 16th, 19th and the 21st were “closed security battalions») and of the 2nd (the 18th, the 24th and the 26th) regiments.⁵ It was that brigade that would be a core of the 19th volunteer division of SS (order on forming from the 7th of January, 1944).

Simultaneously volunteers were recruited and the 15th Lettish volunteer division of SS was mobilized. Three regiments of that division had been formed by mid-June of 1943. The activity of red partisans in Latgale (the Eastern Latvia) which had strong bonds with Byelorussian detachments at the interface of three Soviet republics (the Byelorussian SSR, the Lettish SSR and RSFSR) in the Eastern Latvia could endanger implementation of that mobilization by the German and the local collaborators that was one of the causes of deployment of a large-scale punitive action “Winter

³ See *Latvia under Nazism yoke: collection of archival documents*, Moscow, 2006, pp.311-328.

⁴ Bleiere D., Butulis I., Feldmanis I., Stranga A., Zunda A. *Latvija Otrajē pasaules karā (1939-1945)*, Riga, 2007, lpp.356.

⁵ Silgailis A. *Latviešu leģions*, Riga, 2006, lpp.47.

magic»(Winterzauber) in Byelorussia.⁶ Subsequently new contingents of the Lettish legion were under training in the front-line zone under supervision of instructors from among police battalions. It should be noted that all of the legionaries swore to Adolf Hitler.

The former high-ranking legionaries of SS (R.Bangerskis⁷, A.Silgailis and others) who fled to the West tended to "refine" the Lettish SS background and to glorify it by positioning as "national liberation" association, by exaggerating the valour of legionaries and by hiding of crimes and mass desertion stated in 1944-1945. The Lettish emigrants also tried to justify themselves in the eyes of contemporaries and descendants by describing the service of chastisers from police battalions in 1942-1944 purely as a struggle against "gunmen" (partisans) and naming the legal process of 1961 against nine members of the 18th police battalion guilty of annihilation of Slonim ghetto prisoners "savage act of Russian communist imperialists".⁸ This flood of lie is stingily reproached of "one-sided factual statement" even by Lettish historians.⁹ In particular, Doctor of Historical Sciences K. Kangeris working in the University of Stockholm had to make an "unpleasant confession" that "members of the Lettish police battalions became hirelings paid for the work done». In whole, he comes to a conclusion that "police battalions served as a sort of foreign legion which could be used everywhere and with any purposes by the German police command».¹⁰

However, such sober judgments are neglected in modern Latvia. A few time ago the ex-commander of shock platoon of the 19th division Waffen-SS, the author of Russophobic brochures and articles at present being a deputy of Sēma of Latvia Visvaldis Latsis presented the book "The Lettish legion in the light of truth" in which he justifies the Lettish officers who swore to Hitler yet in May of 1941 (!) having hope of quick war with "Kremlin's empire».¹¹ He meticulously quotes favourable western statements about legionaries as "fighters against the Bolsheviks». The book is

⁶ *Antinazi partisan in Latvia (1942-1945)*, Riga, 2008, p.90.

⁷ Bangerskis, R. *Mana mūža atmiņas*, Kopenhāgena, 1959.

⁸ See *Latviešu karavīrs Otrā pasaules kara laikā: Dokumentu un atmiņu krājums. II: Pirmās latviešu aizsardzības vienības Otrā pasaules karā* / Red. O.Freivalds, O.Caunītis, Vāsterls, 1972.

⁹ Kangeris, K. *Polīcijas struktūras Latvijā vācu okupācijas laikā (1941-1945) // Okupētā Latvija 20. gadsimta 40. gados (Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 16. seji.)*, Rīga, 2005, lpp. 279.

¹⁰ Kangeris, K. *Latviešu policijas bataljoni lielajās partizānu apkarošanas akcijās 1942. un 1943. gadā // Totalitārie okupācijas režīmi Latvijā 1940.-1964. gadā (Latvijas vēsturnieku komisijas raksti, 13. seji.)*, Rīga, 2004, lpp.333.

¹¹ Lācis, V. *Latviešu leģions patiesības gaismā*, Rīga, 2007, lpp.239.

meant to bring up the young generation although there is not a single word about crimes against women, children and old people!

Though, there is nothing to be surprised at if the deputy of the parliament of Latvia and an ardent fighter for "truth" in respect of "colour of the nation" had a hand in the atrocities in Byelorussia. Right after the German invaders intruded into Riga, Visvaldis Latsis enlisted in the 16th police battalion, then, in 1943, he passed company courses preparing instructors for 266-«E» battalion and was kept there for training the would be corporals from among the most outstanding ranks of the police battalions.¹² At the same place, in the farmstead "Suzhu-Muizha" in the suburbs of Riga members of "Arais's crew" also followed their courses. It means, Visvaldis Latsis had trained assassins of citizens of Byelorussia before he become the platoon commander and got to "Courland pot»

The most part of Lettish historians studying Word War II uphold the thesis that after the polices battalions had been incorporated into the corresponding regiments of the 15th and the 19th divisions war crimes could not take place without contesting a specific component of forming of the Lettish SS legion. However, according to archival documents, in the operation "Spring holiday" (Frölingsfest) that was being conducted from April, 11th till May, 4th, 1944 against partisans and innocent civilians of Ushachsk-Lepelsk region it was not only the 2nd and the 3rd police Tses-sis regiments which carried out the operations and punitive actions as a part of "Jeckeln's group" with the assistance of the 5th Lettish borderers regiment, but also the 15th Grenadier division Waffen-SS (the 1st Lettish division).

The book of documents presented to the reader's attention contains a great number of terrifying illustrations of atrocities committed by the Lettish collaborators in Byelorussia. Many documents fix unattractive facts of cruelty without revealing motives of crimes against humanity. Were they committed only by the command's order, due to consciousness of impunity and acquisitiveness? The Russophobic motives of annihilation Byelorussian village population are reflected in the report of the officer at large of "the Russian liberation army" (RLA) home front, lieutenant V. Baltinsh, represented to the RLA representative in Riga, colonel V. Pozdnyakov from May 26th, 1944. In that report he states: "In 1944 I came to Morochkovo village. It was burned down completely. In hut cellars the

¹² Ibid, lpp.119.

Lettish SS-men were settled. On the day I arrived they should be replaced by a new-come German unit, but I still got to talk in Lettish with a few Lettish SS-men. I asked one of them why there were unburied dead bodies of women, old men and children – hundreds of dead bodies and killed horses. Putrid smell was in the air. The reply was: "We killed them in order to exterminate as many Russians as possible".¹³

Besides the soldiers of the 15th division Waffen-SS or "Arais's crew" in the atrocities described above, police battalion members could be involved as at that time they wore both the ancient Lettish uniform and Wehrmacht and Waffen-SS uniform.¹⁴ Motivation of the atrocities stated in the report by V. Baltinsh coincides with the evidence of the 19th and 321st Lettish police battalions' ex-officer Alfred Vitinsh.¹⁵ In the transcript of interrogation dated December, 15th, 1945 he states that in the end of May, 1944, as he met captain Mezhgravis (the commander of the 321st Lettish police battalion) they happened to talk that there was nowhere to stay overnight. Mezhgravis told him know in response: "Yes, I executed this work in pursuance of the order of the general Jeckeln who had ordered to annihilate everything that was Russian in my way, I burned down over 200 settlements and villages, we also burned down children and old people since we had no time to mess about them, about 10 thousand were killed there, may be more, it is so hard to recall everything. I received the Iron Cross for it. I did it in 1943 and now there is nowhere to stay overnight». And then he added: "Here our battalions and units did a good job, the Russians will recollect the Baltic States. You should not pity them but annihilate the whole lot of them, the orders of Jeckeln are the order of Führer and we ought to protect their interests».

* * *

The collection presented to the reader's attention contains documents from the National achieves of the Republic of Belarus, the Central achieves of the Federal Security Service of Russia and the Central achieves of the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation most of which are

¹³ See *"Kill as Many Russians as Possible"*//The Source, 1998, N° 2, pp.74 -75 (publication with the details of the State War Achieves of Feiburg (Germany): BA-MA, MSg 149, Band 4, B1. 165 -166.

¹⁴ Lācis, V. *Op. Cit.* lpp.119.

¹⁵ The 3rd Tsesis police battalion which included the above mentioned 321st battalion annihilated terrorist forces which came to about 20000 persons according to its military registers ». Finally "terrorists had been mopped up" from all the closed off areas by mid-May».

published for the first time.

All of the documents are chronologized, each document has a title indicating its serial number in the collection, its type, author, target and contents. In case the document contains a considerable volume irrelevant to the collection topic, a part of the text is omitted and designated with a leadering.

The text of the documents to publish is transferred in conformity with contemporary orthography and punctuation rules, stylistic peculiarities of the documents are conserved. Failures of the text which do not have any semantic meaning (misprints and spelling errors) are corrected in the text without reserves.

Alexey LITVIN

Lettish Police (Schutzmannschaft)
Battalions In Belarus (1941 – 1944)

Lettish Police (Schutzmannschaft) Battalions In Belarus (1941 – 1944)

by Alexey LITVIN¹⁶

During the past war, Wehrmacht troops, SS forces, security police and SD, as well as different supporting occupation units and detachments comprised people of various ethnic origins, including Letts. Letts basically worked there as interpreters, non-commissioned officers and privates, and also as specialists: economic advisers, agents, interrogator etc. The later staffed the special subunit of the chief commander of Ostland SS and police (HSSPF) deployed at Minsk SD/ (In certain documents this subunit is mentioned as “Lettish squadron at SD). As evident from archive records, their main objective was to support struggle against the anti-fascist underground and partisan movement as well as to actively participate in actions aimed at extermination of Belorussia's Jewish population.

Thus, in the autumn of 1941, Obersturmführer Kraft together with his interpreter, Unterscharführer Eiche and 50 officers and soldiers of SS troops, of primarily Lettish origin, arrived at Borisov from Minsk with the aim of holocaust of the Borisov ghetto, where more than 9 thousand people were killed.¹⁷ In the summer of 1942, special mopping-up detachments under the command of SS Untersturmführer Amelung which consisted of Lettish volunteers and SS employees slaughtered Jewish population in Slonim district, where more than 18 thousand people were murdered¹⁸.

The way the Letts were employed in the Jewish extermination actions can be exemplified by the order on Jews extermination in Slutsk, dated the 5th of February, 1943, issued by Minsk SS obersturmbahnführer, security police and SD commander Eduard Strauch.

“February 8–9, 1943, in Slutsk, the local detachments will take measures on resettlement of the town Jewish residents. The action

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¹⁷ From the protocol of interrogation on 28.02.1947 of the former security director in Borisov and Egofa D.D.// *Memory: Historic and documentary chronicle of the town of Borisov and Borisov district*. Minsk, BelEN, 1997, p. 330 (in Belorussian).

¹⁸ Schoenberg, M., Schoenberg, G. *Zeugen Sagen. Aus Berichte und Dokumente über die Jdenverfolgung im Dritten Reich*, Berlin, 1988, s. 137-140.

will be participated by the detachment members listed below, as well as about 110 employees of the Lettish volunteer squadron. The action leadership is assigned to SS Obersturmführer Müller”...

“Ghetto security provision and guarding is assigned to the riot police. Account and evaluation of the property left in the ghetto is assigned to SS Hauptsturmführer Madecker. To that end, a detachment of 2 employees (Kruss, Buchner), 2 interpreters (Michelson, Natarov) and 10 Letts is entrusted to him. The Jews shall be delivered from the ghetto under command of SS Sturmbahnführer Graf. Six detachments are entrusted to him, each of them comprising one employee /of the local team/ and 9 Letts. The following detachment commanders are appointed: Krause, Nikol, Genert, Erig, Weler and Zeushel. The Jews shall be delivered to the place of resettlement in 6 trucks, each of them escorted by 4 Letts”.

“Two graves are available in the settlement area. A group of 10 people including both overhead personnel and privates works at each grave, rotating every 2 hours”...

“Security provision in the area of settlement is assigned to SS Untersturmführer Pierre with 10 Letts”.¹⁹

It should be mentioned that the employees of that squadron played their role in the disclosure of the Minsk anti-fascist underground network, in particular, of the Partisan Movement Council (TZSPD), of Minsk Underground City Committee of the Bolshevik Communist Party etc.

This paper is aimed at a brief overview of the data on the Lettish police and military forces activity on Belarus territory, as far as they can be gathered from the documents and state archive materials of the Republic of Belarus. Unfortunately, these data are odd and sporadic, so no unambiguous conclusions can be drawn from them. Therefore, the objective of this work was to name these forces and, if possible, to briefly characterize their activity in Belarus. The author also used the data from other archives he had worked with before. Since the topic had not been the subject of any special research, the data had been collected in conjunction with other problems. It goes without saying that this paper is by no means exhaustive, and the data concerning particular forces may require amendments in future.

¹⁹ See *Jews extermination in USSR during the Nazi occupation (1941 – 1944). Collection of Documents and materials*, Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, 1991, p. 261.

It should be noted that the information on the Lettish military and police forces are contained in materials from various holdings: in the holdings containing documents and materials of the Soviet guerrilla movement, of underground party bodies, in memoirs as well as in different holdings of occupation bodies, in German documents which were stored in archives during the war and were available as copies and microfilms after the war.

The data on the first Lettish police battalions date from early 1942. As obvious from a 10 days situation report by the rear commander of army group "Center", general Max von Schenkendorf, to the Wehrmacht Land Forces Headquarters dated December 1, 1942: "The 17th Lettish battalion is approaching, and they will be employed in Lepel". The battalion was under operational and disciplinary control of Supreme Commander of Russian SS and Police "Center" (HSSPF Rusland Mitte). Unfortunately, we failed to find any other information on the activity of this unit in Belarus in 1942. In spring 1943, Belorussian partisan got hold of the order issued by HSSPF of army group "South" and of Ukraine (No. 278/43), which makes it clear that, according to the decree by control headquarters (No. 880(456)/43 dated 25.04.1943), the 17th battalion was outfitted with police uniform and relocated to Ovruch, where it was merged with the 25th Lettish battalion. Mevs remained in the capacity of liaison officer for the new 25th battalion. Hauptman Schröder and his personnel were placed under the orders of the new battalion. According to the order, the staff was to be checked for loyalty immediately after the merger. All the people found unfit were to be sorted out and sent to Riga²⁰.

According to the data in our disposal,²¹ on Jule the 1st, 1942, there were four active Lettish police battalions in Belarus: the 18th, 24th, 26th and 266th "E", which were under disciplinary control of Ostland HSSPF, and under operational control of Belarus riot police. The battalions were deployed in Stoltbtsi, Stan'kovo, Begoml and Minsk. By the end of the year, one more Lettish police battalion (No 271) arrived at Gantsevichi from Latvia.

The 18th Lettish police battalion to the number of 395 people (22 commissioned officers and 75 non-commissioned officers) arrived to operational control of Belarus Riot Police commander from Riga in May, 1942.

²⁰ NARB (the National Archive of the Republic of Belarus), H. 3500, Inv. 2, Doc. 1393, Sheets 80-81.

²¹ This article based on the analysis of the data from the National Archive of the Republic of Belarus (hereinafter referred to as NARB), regional state archives of Belarus as well as of Belarus State Museum of the History of the Great Patriotic War in Minsk (Hereinafter referred to as BSMHGPW), of the author's personal archive and the literature published.

The position of the liaison officer in the battalion was occupied by defense police Hauptman Ersum.²² Battalion command was entrusted to hauptman Sichert. The battalion was deployed in Stolbtsi.

On the 15th-16th of May, 1942, the battalion along with the 603th guard regiment, the 347th, 468th and 913th guard battalions participated in a pacifying operation carried out against the partisan forces northward and north-eastward of village Shatsk in Rudenski district, under the code name of “Riga”. In a fight with the partisan detachment of N. M. Nikitin in urochishche Volchi Ostrov, 6 km northward of Shatsk, the castigators were defeated and had to stop the operation²³.

On the 6th of June, 1942, the battalion along with the units of Wehrmacht, Riot Police and Security Police took part in a combat operation against the partisans in triangle Uzda–Kopyl’–Stolbti. An SS detachment which comprised three commanders, six non-commissioned officers, six interpreters and eight privates) was attached to the battalion. Their task was to take prisoners and to interrogate them in order to get truer information about the partisans. It was in its turn subdivided into three minor SS detachments (A-1- the under command of CC hauptsturmführer doctor Kunz, A-2 – under command of obersturmführer Schlegel and A-3 under command of obersturmführer Wilke), which were attached to each squadron of the battalion.²⁴

In the summer of 1942, the battalion under command of major Ribenis participated in exterminating the ghetto in the town of Slonim in Baranovichi Region.²⁵ We can find in archives documents with testimonies of eye-witnesses of the events.²⁶ The slaughterers confiscated things of value and tore out golden teeth. Corporal Edgar Wulnis took pictures of the massacre and later sold the pictures five marks apiece. In interims, lieutenant Eglas boasted of his ability to shoot straight. He said cynically: “To shoot in the head from a distance of 30 meters is a cinch for me.”²⁷

²² Hauptmann der Schutzpolizei Erzum ist zur Einweisung dem lett. Schutzmannschaftbatl. 18 zugeteilt worden. Tagesbefehl No. 72/ 1942 Der Komandeur der Ordnungspolizei Weisrutehnen 21.05.1942.

²³ NARB, F. 3500, Inv. 3, P. 171, Sheet 15.

²⁴ Battle order of Belarus Security Police and SD, SS-Obersturmbannführer Strauch dated 05.06.1942// NARB, F. 4683, Inv. 3, D.969, Sheet 46-48; F.845, Inv.1, Doc. 206, Sheet 11115.

²⁵ Izvestia TsK KPSS, 1990, No.11, P.118.

²⁶ *The tragedy of the Jews of Belorussia in 1941-1944*, Minsk, 1995, pp.163-166; *The extermination of the Jews in USSR during the Nazi occupation (1941-1944)*/Compendium of documents and data. Jerusalem:Yad Vashem. The National Institute of Memory of Victims of Nazism and Heroes of Resistance. Jerusalem, 1991, pp.197-198.

²⁷ *Warfare on the enemy territory*, Release 1, Moscow, 1974, p.441.

On the 28th of August, 1942, Belarus Riot Police commander colonel Klepsch issued a commendation order for captain and battalion commander Fridrich Rubenis.

« 24. 07.1942, near estate Naliboki, in a fight with a superior gang, thanks to his remarkable resourcefulness and proper command of the battalion he was able to pulverize the opponent »²⁸.

The data that the battalion was under the orders of Belarus Riot Police commander also hold true for 1943. In a diurnal order of Belarus Riot Police commander, schutzmans Yanis Urbiks (died 22.02.1943 in Rudna) and Khrist Oga (died 05.03.1943 in Rudna) are included in the list of those who died a heroic death in anti-Bolshevik struggle. 13 employees of the battalion are mentioned as those who “died a heroic death in anti-Bolshevik struggle” by Belarus Riot Police commander in the orders discovered.

Many soldiers and commissioned officers were repeatedly rewarded. Thus, by Order № 13 by the Riot Police commander at Belarus SS and police commander dated the 15th of June 1943, senior lieutenant Yerik Zunde was rewarded with second degree silver Medal for Bravery for eastern nations, battalion commander, major of police Fridrich Rubenis, captain Fridrich-Robert Schwede, senior lieutenant Carl Skunt, Yagnis Bumbers, Oswald Lapinsch, Woldemar Zamielis, Franz Egleis, Carl Ridus, Yackob Palmans and over 50 other battalion employees were rewarded with second degree bronze Medal for Bravery. 10 people were rewarded with the “black” badge for wounds²⁹.

Early in June, 1942³⁰, the 24th Lettish Police battalion to the number of 433 men (16 commissioned officers and 78 non-commissioned officers) arrived from Liepaj to Stan'kovo near Minsk.³¹ The battalion was under command of defense police hauptman Wilhelm Borchardt. Early in Au-

²⁸ NARB, F.510, Inv.1, Doc.17, Sheet 45.

²⁹ NARB, F.389.Inv.1, Doc.1, Sheets 139-139; F.510, Inv.1,Doc..9, Sheets 45,102.

³⁰ As evident from the telegram of SS and police garrison Commander in Libava of Ostland HSSPF dated 30.05.1942, the forward team of the 24th police battalion counting 30 people under command of police masters Stein was sent. It was expected to arrive to Koydanovo about 02.06.1942 (See NARB,F.4683, Inv.3, Doc.98, Sheet 39)

³¹ . See Central State Historic Archive of Latvia (hereinafter referred to as CSHAL) F. P 83, Inv.1, Doc.190.

gust, he was killed. ³² The position of the liaison officer at the battalion was occupied by hauptman Markwart.

On the 14th of June, 1942, the battalion along with the 603th guard regiment was engaged in a punitive expedition under the code name of “Alexzndrov” against the partisans on N.M. Nikitin's detachment in Dzerzhinski district. N.M. Nikitin's detachment resisted 21 attacks of the castigators and inflicted significant losses on them. The report on the operation says:

*“After a vehement strife, the encampment was seized. The opponent to the number of 200 people were able to break our cordon...Our own losses are significant”.*³³

Late in August and in September, 1942, the battalion consisting of a group (regiment) under command of major Binz took part in combat operations against the partisans. The operations were assigned code names: “Swamp fever “North”” – near Krivitchi – Dolginovo, “Swamp fever “West”” – near Ivents-Stolbtsi, “Swamp fever “South-west”” near Baranovichi, Berozovo, Ivatsevich, Slonim and Lyakhovich. The circumstances of the hostilities the battalion was engaged in are to a certain degree conveyed by the hostilities diary of the 23rd German police battalion kept by Binz. During those operations the battalion was called “regiment” (and from the 7th of September also “Binz battle group”). The 24th Lettish police battalion entered that regiments (group) as a maneuver battalion. Here are some excerpts from the diary:

“September the 4th, 1942. 3-00.

“Battle noise is heard in the west”.

“3-12: a radiogram of the 24th Lettish battalion: “Heavy shooting in the area of operation”

“7-15: The 24th Lettish battalion notified about execution of a Jew”.

“8-30: distribution off the cars allotted to the regiment by the Wehrmacht, between the 24th Lettish and 3rd Lithuanian battalions”.

³² Tagesbefehl Kdo OrdnP of Belarus, dated 8.08.1942 r.

³³ Domorad, K.I *Party underground and partisan movement in Minsk region, 1941-1944*, Minsk, Navuka i Tekhnika, 1992. p.92; NARB, F.3500, Inv.4, Doc.186, Sheet 4; BelSE, Vol.1, pp.239, 240.

“9-55: a radiogram from the 3rd Lettish battalion: “The area of operation is still. Battle noise is heard at the area of the 24th Lettish battalion”.

“September the 5th, 1942, 7-30: “the staff doctor is going to village Novoy Dvor for exhumation of corpses. Letts were shot up by partisans there”.

“September the 8th, 1942, 4-30: having covered over 250 km, the battalion arrived to Slonim district and deployed in village Glovsevichi in order to participate in the final part of operation “Swamp fever “South-west”

“17-05. the 1st squadron of the battalion is fighting against a partisan detachment counting 200 people”.

And here is an entry dated September the 10th:

“On the night of the 9th/10th of September, 1942, an irksome clash with unidentified opponents took place southward of Zhirovichi. A short skirmish followed an unsuccessful counterparole. The opponent turned out to be the pioneer platoon of the 24th Lettish police battalion, who moved too far during reconnaissance and got lost on their way back. 3 people were wounded at the skirmish. One of them died later this day”.³⁴

Operation “Swamp fever “South-West” lasted until the 22th of September, 1942. The operation over, the 24th Lettish battalion was transported to Stoltbtsi by railway, whence they marched to village Naliboki.³⁵

On the 27th of June, 1942, the 26th Lettish battalion counting 392 people (18 commissioned officers, 68 non-commissioned officers) arrived to the area near Begoml’ – Pleshchnitsi. The battalion was created in Tukum. As evident from the reports of the gendarme office in Pleshchnitsi, the battalion was actively engaged in struggle against partisans in the first half of July, 1942.

³⁴ That was private first class Boitmanis. See Tagesbefehl Kdo, dated 25.10.1942. On the whole, judging by daily orders, 7 people were killed in the battalion over the period from June to September, 1942. 2 of them were officers (lieutenant Dzeguze and hauptman Borchardt)

³⁵ The diary of the 23rd German police battalion. The materials form the archive of Potsdam. NARB, F.4683, Inv.3, Doc.1000, Sheets 1-99.

“July 9th-10th, 1942, all the staff of the Lettish battalion supported by the gendarmerie undertook a major attack near Uskromy, Shchavsky Bor and Okraytsy. During the attack, the Letts razed village Shchavsky Bor to the ground. 30 inhabitants of the village moved to Begoml’. The partisan chief was shot. 8 people from the region of Okraitsi were imprisoned”.

“On 13.07 it was reported by the telephone of the frontier customs guard of Berezinski bridge that about 20 partisans were plundering village Karolino. The Lettish battalion immediately sent a detachment to the village. When the detachment arrived, the partisans had fled”.

“14.07. 1942, on the basis of the report of the 2nd Lettish platoon, an attack on village Ossovy was undertaken. Partisans to the number of 10 people had nearly fled towards Kamenka (Mstizh). The detachment stretched and was able to defeat the gang of 6 people. Three of them were shot, 2 arrested and on fled.”³⁶

The battalion remained in Belarus until November, 1942, continuously participating in anti-partisan actions.³⁷ Four people are distinguished in orders as those who died death of heroes³⁸ In November the 24th and 26th, 1942, Lettish battalions were lead out of the territory subject to the commander in Belarus. On this occasion, on the 15th of November, 1942, the Belarus Riot Police commander, colonel Klepsch issued a commendation order for the battalion units to oberlieutenant Vever and oberlieutenant Apperitz, as well as to German liaison officers: guard police hauptman Markwart and SS hauptsturmführer Wichmann³⁹.

The 266th “E”⁴⁰ Lettish police battalion is known to have been created in Riga (Bolderaya), and it was deployed in Minsk as per the information for the 1st of June, 1942. It numbered 682 people. Out of them: 54 commissioned officers and 222 non-commissioned officers. The command of the battalion was entrusted to SS Hauptsturmführer Wichmann. In August-September, 1942, the battalion was engaged in punitive operation

³⁶ NARB, F.391, Inv.2, Doc.10, Sheet 159.

³⁷ NARB, F.391, Inv.1, Doc.67, Sheet 8-11.

³⁸ Schutzmann – Woldemars Serzewitsch (27.09.1942 – Kopyl), Janis Kruhmisch (2.10.1942), Janis Trauzinsch (27.09.1942), Kazimirs Meirahns (3.10.1942- Woinilowsyzna)

³⁹ NARB, F. 389, Inv.1, Doc.1, Sheets 62-63

⁴⁰ NARB, F. 685, Inv.1, Doc.1, Sheets 107-108.

“Swamp fever” as reserve force. The operation was carried put under overall leadership of HSSPF Ostland SS-Obergruppenführer Jeckeln⁴¹ As evident from the order issued by the Guard Police colonel and Belarus Riot Service commander on the 1st of December 1942, No. 19:

*“As per the decree of the Riot service police commander in Ostland dated 15. X. 1942, the 1st and 2nd squadrons of the 266th E battalion are included into the 271th F police battalion, their previous name being cancelled. The 1st squadron of the 266th E police battalion is immediately renamed as the 2nd squadron of the 271st battalion, and the 2nd squadron of the 266E battalion – as the 3rd squadron of the 271st battalion. The forces of the 271st F battalion, temporarily remaining in Marienburg, will be united in one squadron and assigned the name of the 1st squadron of the 271th battalion.”*⁴²

As per the data for February, 1943, the battalion was deployed in Riga.⁴³

On the 7th of June, HSSPF of Latvia issued an order on redeployment of the 25th and 268th Lettish police battalions from Liepai to Brest-Litovsk. On the same date, Latvia SS and Police chief telegraphed to the Wehrmach commander that the 25th and 268th battalions may me immediately sent to Brest-Litovsk. It was also reported in the telegram that the battalions are only partially weaponed and equipped, and lack outfitting, especially footwear and field kitchen. Since the battalions are only partially outfitted, certain squadrons, depending on the situation, will have to go to Brest-Litovsk in civilian clothing .⁴⁴

In December (10 – 16), 1942, another anti-partisan action under the code name of “Hamburg” was carried out in Slonim Region. It was participated by the 271th Lettish battalion included in Binz group. One of the operation orders issued by Gottber during the operation says:

“In district Zhirovichi-Byten-Kossovo gangs totaling 2000 people. They encamp on the east coast of the river Rudnitsa. The gangs commit acts of sabotage on railway Baranovichi-Brest.

⁴¹ NARB, F. 4683, Inv 3, Doc.969. Sheets 68-70; 77-79.

⁴² NARB, F 397, Inv.1, Doc.1, Sheets 65, 67.

⁴³ NARB, F 3500, Inv.1, Doc.857, Sheet 20.

⁴⁴ NARB, F 4683, Inv.3, Doc.985, Sheets 47-50;51-52.

*The enemy shall be wiped out. Each gangster, Gypsy or Jew shall be treated as an enemy”.*⁴⁵

As evident from Security Police and SD report No. 38 dated January the 22th, 1943:

*“The operation is one of the most successful ones which have been so far carried out in Belarus. The data obtained by the reconnoiter detachment of Security Police and SD were so accurate enough to detect each encampment. 1676 partisans were killed in numerous actions. After that, 1510 people were shot on suspicion of liaisons with partisans. Abundant loot was taken. It included, in particular, 4 armored cars and 8 anti-tank rifles, as well as plenty of livestock and grain. Moreover, 2658 Jews and 30 Gypsies were killed in the settlements around the area of operation. On the German side, 7 people were killed and 18 wounded”*⁴⁶.

Once more, the 271th Lettish police battalion included in Binz group was engaged in operation “Fön- 1” carried out early in March, 1943, near Chudin-Bolshie Chuchevichi-Lyusino. On the 1st of March, 1943, the battalion seized village Voluta and encamped there, and at 15-30 on the 2nd of March they seized village Bolshie Chuchevichi.

On the 4th of March, 1943, the following message was received by Binz group from the 271th battalion:

“A clash with the opponent’s reconnaissance near village Utisa. Three horsed reconnoiterers killed. The loot taken: 2 rifles, 2 horses and 2 waggons. 22 people shot near forestry Lavitsa on suspicion to belonging to the gang. On the 5th of March, 1943, at 15-30, the battalion arrived to village Deniskovich and encamped there. Advance is possible by roads only. A clash with the opponent near village Yaskovich, 7 gangsters killed”.

On the 7th of March, operation “Fön- 1” was ended. As evident from the diary of the 23th German police battalions, its results were as fol-

⁴⁵ Ibid, A record dated 15.12.1942.

⁴⁶ *Crimes of Nazis occupants in Belarus. 1941- 1944.* Minsk, 1965, p. 71; NARB, F.4683, Inv. 3, Doc.960, Sheet 57-64; Doc. 929, Sheet 217.

lows: The opponents losses: 83 people killed, 22 people shot on suspicion of belonging to the gangs. The loot taken: 15 rifles, 7 carts, 15 000 rifle cartridges, 10 knives, 22 signal cartridges, 43 horses, 8 straps, 1 rotator. Destroyed or damaged: 1 cannon, 1 heavy machine gun, 6000 cartridges, 420 huts. Our own losses: 6 people including one German killed. One Ukrainian badly wounded. Requisition results: 968 beasts, 14717 kg of grain and 153 sheepskins confiscated.⁴⁷

By Order № 18 issued by Belarus Riot Police commander on the 18th of August 1943. 20 battalion employees were awarded with second degree bronze Medal for Bravery, and policemen Alexander Lgititsis and Pavils Yermaks received “black” badges for wounds.⁴⁸ Among the people mentioned as those who “died heroic deaths in anti-Bolshevik struggle” there are 6 officers of the 271th Lettish battalion.⁴⁹

As evident from the archive materials, the 25th Lettish battalion (14 commissioned officers, 63 non-commissioned officers and 366 privates) was transferred to the area near Zhitomir-Korosten'-Ovruch from the 1st of July, 1942. Beginning from the 17th of July, 1942, the battalion subunits were engaged in punitive operations against partisans in south Belarus (Yelchitsy, Skarodnoye⁵⁰, Yel'sk, Slovechno, Buynovichy).⁵¹ The battalion was headed by lieutenant colonel Plikaus (Plikausis). In November, 1942, the battalion took part in a punitive operation near Khoiniki-Bragin-Loyev, and in February, 1943 – in punitive operation “Hornung” in Minks, Pinsk and Polessk Regions.⁵² As mentioned above, in April, 1943, the battalion was merged with the 17 Lettish police battalion. We have not found any data on the 268th battalion presence in Belarus so far.

Certain fragmentary data on Lettish battalions active in Belarus are also to be found in partisans' documents of the war period. Thus, reconnoiter overview of the situation in Slonim Region compiled in August, 1943 sent from across the battle line by group “Koli” runs:

⁴⁷ NARB, F.4683, Inv.3, Doc.1000.

⁴⁸ NARB, F 389, Inv.1, Doc.1, Sheets 170-171; F.510, Inv.1, Doc.9, Sheet 190.

⁴⁹ Korporal – Adolf Schanius Graubis (7.02.1943 – Sluzk), Fridrich Irbe (24.03.1943), schutzmann – Anton Logis (28.04.1943), Janis Swidris (24.07.1943), feldfebel – Janis Makstenieks (24.04.1943), Janis Briedis (17.07.1943).

⁵⁰ The garrison in village Skorodone was commanded by senior lieutenant Vildmanis. NARB, F.3500, Inv.2, Doc.1393, Sheets 214-215.

⁵¹ CSHAL, F. P-83c, Inv.1, Doc.38, Sheets 1-254.

⁵² NARB, F.3500, Inv.2, Doc.1393, Sheet 215.

“Several battalions consisting of captive Ukrainians and Russians have been sent to support police stations; sometimes a squadron and even a platoon are attached to police stations for defense from partisans. In autumn 1942, there were also Lettish battalions here, especially fierce during raids, but they are not here any longer”.⁵³ (Underlined by us – A. L.)

There is an important document in the materials of Belarus Partisan Movement Headquarters (BPMH) – the final data of the Main Intelligence Directorate (MID) of the Workers and Peasant Red Army as per the 3rd of December, 1942, on the German police and gendarmerie units detected on the USSR territory occupied by Nazis. On the whole, MID had information on 13 brigades and divisions, 38 regiments, 144 battalions and 74 various units (individual squadrons, detachments, platoons etc). According documentary evidence alone, they totaled about 150 – 200 thousand people. In the general list of battalions, the 18th, 24th and 208th Lettish battalions are mentioned. The latter one is known from the document to have been deployed in Kartuz-Bereza. It consisted of 17 commissioned officers and 450 soldiers (the data as per the 7th of October, 1942).⁵⁴

Thus we can state with a degree of assuredness that the following units were in Belarus in 1942 at different points of time: the 17th, 18th, 24th, 25th, 26th, 208th (?), 266th “E”, 268th (?), 271st and 432nd (?) Lettish police battalions.

As evident from the materials available, the durations of the above units’ stays in Belarus differed. Some of them remained there in 1943. They deserved favor of SS-Reichsführer H. Himmler, and on his decree service distinction for Lettish battalions was introduced in July 1943. “I appreciate their hereto perfect conduct and assign them the service name of “Lettish police battalions”.⁵⁵ Besides, in 1943, new Lettish police battalions were involved in anti-partisan operations. Perhaps, the most illustrative in this regard is a large-scale operation against the partisans and civilians in Rosson-Osveya partisan area in the triangle of Sabezh-

⁵³ Report to the “Centre” by the commander of the reconnoiter detachment “Koli” dated the 2nd of August, 1943, NARB, F.3518, Inv.1, Doc.5, Sheet 28.

⁵⁴ NARB, F.3500, Inv.2, Doc.1396, Sheets 3-17.

⁵⁵ See Daily order by Belarus Police commander Klepsch dated 15th of July, 1943. NARB, F.389, Inv.1, Doc.1, Sheet 146.

Osveya--Polotsk (Drissnask, Osveya, Polotsk and Rosson districts) carried out in February-March, 1943, with the purpose of creating a 40 km wide "neutral zone" on Latvia-Belarus border under conventional name of Winterzauber (Winter magic). The operation was headed by the Supreme Commander of Ostland SS and Police, lieutenant general Jeckeln. Open hostilities were carried out from 14.02 to 20.03.1943. Ten police battalions were engaged in the operations, eight of them being Lettish: the 273th, 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th, 280th, 281st and 282th Lettish police battalions,⁵⁶ as well as the 2nd Lithuanian and 50th Ukrainian police battalions⁵⁷, motorized subunits of gendarmerie, liaisons and artillery and the 2nd special air group. On the north and south the operation area was besieged by subunits of the 201st guard and 391st training field divisions.⁵⁸ The operation lasted more than a month. The operation report⁵⁹ allows of thoroughly tracing the activity of virtually each subunit. Here are some excerpts from the report:

18.02.1943. The 1st platoon of the 4th squadron of the 277th Lettish battalion advanced towards village Zhernoseki, Sharvinishki, Khmelniki and Zelyanki in village Zhernoseki. Three inhabitants were arrested and then the villages were incinerated.

1942. the 1st squadron of the 232nd battalion and the 1st of the 277th battalion seized settlements Bandzeli, Mezhzhelevo, Pleski, Dubniki and Trishevo. No gangsters found. 204 people, 16 horses, 62 cows and 95 light beasts captured. The villages are incinerated by SD.

In the course of operation to the east of line Zarianka from the north to the west, the 178th and 279th battalions conquered brigandish villages Kolobovschina and Barsuki, and the 278th battalion seized Medvedevo and Vesnino. All the villages were incinerated... ". Altogether, 3500 local inhabitants were exterminated and burnt alive in the course of the op-

⁵⁶ CSHAL, F.P.-82c., Inv.1, Doc.4, Sheet 1.

⁵⁷ NARB, F.4683, Inv.3, Doc.1022b, Sheets 102-104.

⁵⁸ Lettish battalions were included into two operative "Einatzgruppen". The Schröder group (under command of SS-Brigadenführer and police major general Schröder) included the 273rd, 280th, 281st Lettish battalions, the 1st squadron of the Lettish defence battalions and Ukrainian defence battalion No. 50. The group of guard police colonel Knecht included the 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th and 282nd Lettish battalion and the 2nd squadron of the Lettish defence battalion, the 10th motorized gendarmerie platoon, the liaison platoon of Levinski, the anti-aircraft unit of Gatier. See NARB, F.4683, Inv.3, Doc.952, Sheets 208-209; *Military History magazin*, 1990, No. 6, pp. 32-33; *The trial of Nazis atrocities in the Latvian, Lithuanian and Estonian SSRs*. Riga, 1946, p. 21; *Nuremberg trial of the main German war criminals... Collection of materials in 7 volumes*. Moscow, 1957-1961, Vol.2, pp. 381-386.

⁵⁹ The report of the operation is stored in the holding of Latvia SS and police commander in Latvia State Historic Archive (CSHAL, F.P.-82, Inv.1, D. 4, Sheets 1-28).

eration, 2000 people were driven to Germany for forced labor and more than 1000 children were sent to Salaspils death camp (Latvia). During the operation, 158 settlements were plundered and incinerated, including the following villages which were burnt together with people: Ambrazevo, Anis'kovo, Buly, Zhernoseki, Kalyuty, Konstantinovo, Paporotnoye, Sokolovo and others. (The world-known Khatyn was annihilated two days after the operation was over – on the 22th of March, 1943). The method of minefield and roads clearance using the local population was applied during the operation.⁶⁰ Moreover, the castigated complained that "there is no local population at present for minefields clearance".⁶¹ The operation over, an appropriate order was issued by Ostland and Russia HSSPF "North" SS Obergruppenführer and police lieutenant general Jeckeln, according to which, the operation over, the 273rd,⁶² 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th⁶³ and the 282nd Lettish police battalions were placed under the order of Latvia Riot Service Police commanders and were sent: the 282nd – to Kralslau district, 277th – to Indra-Pustina-Asune district, 278th – to Skune-Voosloboda district, 279th – to Rozenov-Passiene district, 273rd – to Ludzen-Korsava district, 276th – to Abrene district and the 280th and 281st – to the points where they had been created to be disbanded by Riot Service Police commander. The 2nd Lettish and the 50th Ukrainian police battalions returned to Vilnius, while the 1st squadron of the 36th Estonian police battalion returned to Revel.⁶⁴ The partisans documents also mention the 251st Lettish

⁶⁰ The Hitlerites used various methods: they drove a crowd of people along a mined road or a minefield in front of themselves, they made people harrow road sections using horses (oxen, cows) or other people. There were numerous cases of deaths (injuries) of the local population during such operations.

⁶¹ Belorussia in the Great Patriotic War, The encyclopaedia, Minsk, BelSE, 1990, p. 221.

⁶² As evident from intelligence summary No. 17 dated the 19th of February, 1943: "According to the data obtained by the partisan brigade of Lisovski, 25.01.1943 a Lettish volunteer from the 273rd guard battalion came over to the partisans. The deserter testified that the battalion counted 600 people. They are equipped with 20 heavy machine guns and 40 manual machine guns, 1 battalion mortar and 2 squadron mortars. The battalion headquarters are located in Korsava. The commander is colonel Birzolis. He also testified that, the 266th guard battalion is serving in Riga, they also have there a school for training company officers for volunteer units" NARB, F.3500, Inv.1, Doc.857, Sheet 20.

⁶³ As per the report of brigade commander Romanov dated 21.03.1943, a prisoner of the 279th Lettish battalion which is fighting against the partisans near Osveya testified that the battalion consisted of 500-600 people. It does not enter any unit. They are primarily equipped with Soviet type weapons. The battalion has 5 heavy machine guns, 8 manual guns (one per platoon). Only officers starting from platoon commander have machine rifles. An anti-tank cannon is allotted depending on the character of the operation". Intelligence summary No.35 dated 23.03.1943. BPMH agency at the 1st Baltic front. NARB, F.3500, Inv.1, Doc.857.

⁶⁴ NARB, F. 4683, Inv.3, Doc. 1022B, Sheets 102-104.

volunteer battalion,⁶⁵ but this is probably either a mistake, or deliberate disinformation of the prisoners. On the 2nd of March, partisan Matvey Onufrievich Kulachenok voluntarily yielded himself prisoner in a combat against the Letts to the West of Osvey. There he was enrolled, and on the 7th of March he was sent to the position of Lisovski's brigade to determine the place of its deployment. There he was arrested. At the interrogation he confessed to have betrayed the information on the brigade position, its armament and staff.⁶⁶

The next large-scale operation against the partisans forces in Rosson-Osvey partisan area (Sebezh-Pustoshka, Pustoshka-Nevel'-Polotsk, Polotsk-Drissa, Drissa-Osveya-Sabezh) was the one under code name "Heinrich", which was carried out under overall leadership of the SS-Obreguppenführer von Bach-Selevski commissioned by Himmler for anti-partisan struggle. The operation was carried out from 3rd of October to 9th of November, 1943. The battle group of von Bach included the task forces of Jeckeln and von Gottberg. Jeckeln's task force included among other forces: the 313th and 316th Lettish police battalions – the area of Wider, Lettish police regiment "Riga" – the group of Gachtel, 283rd Lettish police battalion (719 people in 24 strong points), the forces of the local police service (600 people in 22 settlements), 1 Lettish motorized infantry platoon (1/78), 1 squadron of the 317th Lettish reserve battalion – the guard group of Schröder.⁶⁷

Lettish police units were engaged in combat operations against the partisans and the population of Belarus in 1944. As evident from the history of the 1st Drissnask partisan brigade, the second punitive against the partisan group began on the 6th of March, 1944. It was participated by three Lettish battalions (the 321st, 318th and 283rd), the local garrison and units of the 290th division, totaling over 5 thousand people. A captive policeman of the 321st police battalion testified that three Latgalian construction battalion and three police battalions (the 314th, 315th (PPS No.05654)⁶⁸ and

⁶⁵ See intelligence summary No.24 dated the 11th of March, 1943.: "From the 28th of February to the 6th of March, composite partisans brigades were engaged in last-ditch battle against the castigator detachments near Osveya and Krasnopol'ye. The prisoners testified that the 273rd, 278th, 281st and 251st Lettish volunteer battalions are fighting against the partisans. NARB, F3500, Inv.1, Doc.857, Sheet 33.

⁶⁶ Intelligence report No.35.NARB, F3500, Inv.1, Doc.857.

⁶⁷ Jeckeln's (HSSPF) order on the war footage of Jeckeln's group группы dated 25.X.1943. NARB, F.4683, Inv.3, Doc.1022, Sheets 90-92.

⁶⁸ NARB, F.3500, Inv.1, Doc.858, Sheet 177.

316th) had also arrived. The former were to repair highways and roads and to build defenses, while the police battalions were to defend the roads and to combat the partisans. It is mentioned in the history of 1st Drissena partisan brigade:

*“The 321 police Lettish battalion, as well as the 317th and 283rd battalions, was created in Latvia “aisargs” (Anti-soviet militants) and was sent for anti-partisan struggle. Being overt supporters of Nazi Germany, they butchered the partisans and civilians.”*⁶⁹

Without accepting battles, the brigade maneuvered to Osveya district, leaving a detachment named after Suworov in Drissnakoye for reconnaissance and minor diversions.⁷⁰

Operation “Spring Festival” (Frulingsfest) carried out from the 11th of April to the 4th of May, 1944 against the partisans of Ushachsko-Lepelsk partisan area was participated by the 15th Lettish division and the 2nd and 3rd Lettish police regiments and the 5th Lettish border regiment included in Jeckeln group⁷¹ We may adduce some evidence of the Lettish battalions activity as it remained in the historical memory of the Belorussians. Its very essence is conveyed by the following documentary evidence – the report of special commissions officer of the Russian Liberation Army (RLA) ancient W. Baltinsch to RLA representative in Riga Colonel V. Pozdnyakov dated 26th of May, 1944:

“In mid-December, 1943 I was in on a duty tour (with some colleagues) in Belorussia (former Vitebsk province), in villages Knyazevo (Krasnoye), Barsuki, Rozalino and some others. These villages had previously been occupied by German forces, who had been rather tolerant to the local population, but once Lettish SS units replaced them, gratuitous massacres began. The people had to flee into forests at nights, covering themselves with bed sheets by way of snow camouflage during shooting. There were many corpses of women and old people lying around the villages. The

⁶⁹ NARB, F.3500, Inv.2, Doc.5, Sheet 107.

⁷⁰ NARB, F.3500, Inv.4, Doc.28, Sheets 124-125.

⁷¹ The data about it are available in the draft letter of CC CPB (Central Committee of the Bolsheviks Communist Party) to I. Stalin, which was being prepared in June, 1944. See. NARB, F.3500, Inv.2, Doc.5, Sheet 107.

local inhabitants told me that it were Lettish SS forces that were to blame for the outrage”.

“On the 23rd of bApril, 1944, I was in village Morochkovo. It was burnt to ashes. The cellars were occupied by SS men. On the day of my arrival there, a German unit was to replace them, but still I managed to talk to some SS men (I don’t know their names) in Lettish. I asked one of them, why there are corpses of murdered women, old people and children, thousands of unburied corpses and dead horses. The air badly smelled of cospes. The answer was: “We killed them in order to exterminate as many Russians as possible”. After that, a sergeant led me to a burnt house. A few burnt corpses lay there half-buried. “We burnt them alive” he said. When the Lettish unit was withdrawing, they took a few Russian women and girls as concubines. They were supposed to wash the soldiers’ clothes, to fire ovens in bathhouses, to tidy up the rooms etc”.

“.. Early in May, we saw about three thousand bodies of shot peasants (primarily women and children) in a hollow near village Kobylniki. The survivors said that it were “people who understood Russian, wore scull on their caps and red-and-white flags on their left sleeves” that shot; they were Lettish SS. I don’t remember the name of the village where my attention was attracted by flies swarming over a wooden barrel. I looked into it and so there men’s heads which had been cut off. Some of them were with moustaches and beards. Around the village, we found many corpses of shot peasants. Having talked to the survivors we no longer doubted that the Lettish SS also worked here and showed their courage and fearlessness in massacres of defenseless people. Anything else they do seems insignificant compared with that atrocious barrel with the women who had been burnt alive in the house”.⁷²

A partisan document dated the 26th of June says that a soldier of the 546th Lettish police battalion tripped a mine at the old positions.⁷³ On the 10th of April, 1944, four deserters form the 325th Latgalian construction battalion went over to the partisans (PPS No. 11283). The battalion was

⁷² “To Kill as Many Russians as Possible”. A publication of PhD (Hist) S Kudriashov// Source, 1998, No. 2, pp.74-75.

⁷³ NARB. Inv.2, Doc. 37, Sheet 353.

created in January, 1944, and took military training until the 3rd of March. On the 3rd of March they arrived to village Polyudovichi (12 km south-eastward of Disna), where the battalion headquarters were located. The battalion comprised 7 squadrons totaling 500 people. The battalion commander as well as the squadrons and platoons commanders were German, the rest were Russians and Latvian Poles. Each squadron was equipped with 8 rifles and 1 machine rifle. An SS detachment counting 100 people of Lettish origin was attached to the battalion. They were equipped with 6 machine guns, with rifles and machine rifles. The battalion built defenses along the river West Dvina from Rubanovo to Petrovtsi (8-14 km eastward of Disna).⁷⁴

Partisans intelligence summary for 1944 say that the 22nd and 25th Lettish battalions arrived to Disna district in March, 1944. The prisoners of the 22nd battalion testified that the 22nd and 25th battalions had been created in April, 1943 in Bolderakh (10 km northward of Riga). Each battalion included 4 squadrons, and each squadron included 100-120 people. They are aged 18 – 40 years. Each squadron had 2 mortars, 4 heavy machine guns, as well as rifles and machine rifles. The 22nd battalion was commanded by Tylist Makar. The 22nd and 25th battalions carried out anti-partisan expeditions in March. According to the same source, the 116th and 118th Lettish police battalions were created in Bolderakh in April 1943. They operated at Nevel front sector; the prisoners does not know where they are at present. All the police battalions are commanded by general Bongerovski; his headquarters are located in Riga.”⁷⁵

According to the data of partisan brigade “Spartak” (Viley region, commanded by A.N.Ponomarev), a Lettish lieutenant from the 1st Lettish lieutenant was taken prisoner on the 2nd of May, 1944. He testified that the regiment consisted of 4 battalions, each of them counting 600-700 people. The regiment was deployed in Dvinsk and its environs. According to the data as per the 6th of May, 1944, the Lettish regiment and other units in Dvinsk were deployed as follows: in Braslav – 2000 people, in Slobodka – 1500, Ikazn’ – 1000 people, in Vidzy, Miory and Druya – three SS schools” .⁷⁶

According to the data of partisan brigade commander G. Grigoryev as pe 16.05.1944, the headquarters of the 3rd Lettish regiment are located

⁷⁴ NARB, F.3500, Inv.1, Doc.858, Sheet 169.

⁷⁵ NARB, F.3500, Inv.1, Doc.858, Sheet 183.

⁷⁶ NARB, F. 3500, Inv.1, Doc.858, Sheet 189.

in Yakubovo (2 km westward of Klyastitsa). The regiment is under command of Tylyaynberg. The regiment includes: the 317, 318 and 321 battalions. The regiment totals up to 660 people. The battalions are deployed: in Yuzefovo, Dernovichi (15 km and 3 km northeastward of Borkovichi).⁷⁷

Thus we can gather from the above, that the following Lettish units left their trace in Belarus: one Lettish division (the 15th), 3 Lettish police regiments (the 1st, 2nd and 3rd), 1 Lettish border regiment and 26 Lettish police battalions (Schutzmannschaft b-n) – the 15th, 17th, 18th, 24th, 25th, 26th, 208th, 231st, 266th E, 268th, 271th, 273th, 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th, 280th, 281st, 282nd, 313rd, 316th, 317th, 347th, 432nd, 546th and 860th as well as the 1st motorized infantry platoon.

The partisan reconnoiter document also contain evidence about Lettish garrisons and the garrisons in which Letts served. Thus, according to the document of partisan reconnaissance on the territory of Drissna district in Vitebsk region as per the 29th of April, 1944, there were 85 Letts in Voitovo garrison, 40 Letts in Zales'ye and 37 in Pyareki. In the garrison of village Strashniye there was a squadron of Germans and an unarmed team of Letts counting 100 people. At station Bigosovo there was a garrison of 100 people of Lettish and Ukrainian origins. The partisans pointed out low morale of the Letts and Ukrainians; they were at odds about gratuitous massacres of civilians.⁷⁸ As evident from intelligence summary No.6 dated 18.01.1944 of BPMH agency at the 1st Baltic front, according to the data of the commander of partisan brigade "Zheleznyak" I. Titkov, the opponent's garrisons were detected in the following settlements:

- "Dokshitsi – 700 people of German, Lettish, Lithuanian and Russian origins.
- Folvarok Yanovo – (6 km eastward of Dokshitsi) – 250 Letts.
- Glynnoye – (15 km eastward of Dokshitsi) – 80 Germans and Letts.
- Pustosel'ye – (19 km eastward of Dokshitsi) – the headquarters of the 546th battalion and up to 300 soldiers. They are of German, Lettish and Russian origins.⁷⁹

An interesting issue is the attitude of the German occupation generalship towards the Lettish (as well as Lithuanian and Estonian) policemen. Baltic police units obviously had privileges over the "Ukrainian" and "Be-

⁷⁷ Ibid, Sheet 189.

⁷⁸ NARB, F.3895, Inv.1, Doc.2, Sheets 165,167,186; F.3894, Inv.1, Doc.5, Sheet 98; F.3500, Inv.4, Doc.28, Sheet 33.

⁷⁹ NARB, F.3500, Inv.1, Doc.858, Sheet 23.

lorussian” ones. It was put forward straightly at a meeting in the General Commissariat of Belarus by Riot Police commander colonel Klepsch:

“5. The wages paid to the guard commands differed greatly

a) each Lithuanian and Lettish guard was paid for service on strange territory (i.e. outside Lithuania and Latvia) 3.80 Dm (DM – Deutschemark) daily, and the battalion commanders were paid 15.50 Dm. Each Belorussian and Ukrainian guard was paid 0.80 DM daily, each married guard – 1.80 DM, a commander of a Belorussian battalion – 5.50 DM and a commander of a Ukrainian battalion – 5.80 DM. The Letts and Lithuanians were paid in cash the same amount as Belorussians and Ukrainians. The remaining amount was paid to their families at home or were deposited on the guard’s saving book. The significant difference in the amounts paid to the guards of different ethnic origin, partially due to political reasons, have not yet been eliminated. A guard who has meals at his own expense when on single duty was paid extra 0.06 DM daily. Certain guards have not yet been paid for wearing civil clothes and underwear rather than the uniform”.

“If a Lettish or Lithuanian guard was killed with an enemy’s bullet, his relatives were monthly paid from 43 DM to 144 DM, depending on his rank and term of service; also, extra allowance was paid for the orphaned children. This allowance totaled 17-60 DM for Belorussian and Ukrainians (if the children were fully orphaned, the allowance was even larger). In case of a guard’s full or partial incapacity for service due to permanent injury caused by the opponent, money allowance varied: Letts and Lithuanians were paid 15 to 240 DM, Belorussians and Ukrainians – 7 to 100 DM. Single and married guards were paid different allowances”.

“b) Great work as carried out on cultural services, education and morale supporting among the guard commands by means of special radio programs, distribution of newspapers in Lettish, Lithuanian, Belorussian and Ukrainian, as well as of various propaganda materials. Improved nourishment and accommodation of the guard detachments is one of our top priority goals”.

“c) The families of guards from rural areas living in unsafe regions are resettled to safe regions by agreement with local regional commissars”.

“d) Starting in November, 1942, on the Führer’s order, medals for bravery and special merits”.

“e) According to the new provisions of the law issued by the Führer, the guards who have especially distinguished themselves, receive a land allotment for starting their own household; the first applications have already been received”.

“6. Unfortunately, this winter’s events at the front, adroitly used in the opponent’s propaganda, had an undesirable effect on the Ukrainian and Belorussian guard commands which resulted in abandonment of posts, violence against the German commander from their subordinates, treachery and secret deals with the partisans. At first such incidents, of different degrees of gravity, occurred among Ukrainian police battalions, and then they were partially caught up by Belorussian rural guard detachments. East Slavs are by nature extremely susceptible to any influence. Such attitude among the Ukrainians is primarily due to nostalgia and care about the welfare of their families on the territories occupied by the Soviet forces and on the territories just recently occupied by us. Most of these deserters as well as the Belorussians are sure to have succumbed to the opponent’s propaganda and joined the partisans. Among the factors conducive to such a state of affairs was poor discipline in guard subunits due to their continuous employment in physical work and regular military training they were thoroughly bored of. By now, all these issues have been settled by our counterpropaganda and by the countermeasures taken. By means of rearranging certain unfavorable Ukrainian guard battalions, relocating them and replacing the commanders and their assistants with German officers and junior police commanders we managed to properly eradicate such corruption symptoms among the guard detachments. Ukrainian as well as Lettish and Lithuanian guard subunits have so far had only one German police officer and 8 junior commanders of German origin, who did not have at their command enough local commanders, who were alien o the privates”.

“7. Anyway, the guards, regardless of their ethnic origins and opponent’s propaganda, were able to cope with their people themselves thanks to proper leadership. This is confirmed by the fact that mopping-up detachments and patrols of the guard

command participate in operations every day. During these operations the guards were able not only to properly fulfill the missions but also to partially make up for the lack of staff in the German Security Service in Belorussia; they prove their dedication to their duty by losses in killed and wounded in this petty war”.

“Over half a year (from October, 1942, to March, 1945), only 268 people were killed and 256 wounded in the guard detachments”.

“I hope that my speech has given you a brief outline of the activity and the current state of affairs with the guard detachments in Belorussia”.

*“No doubt, there is still much to be done to raise these forces to the appropriate level not only in terms of training and morale, but also to provide the guard detachments with weapons and equipment to render them up in arms and ready for any hostilities. You could also see what effort was made by the guard police and gendarmerie to convert these supporting forces into a relatively useful tool, although they had virtually no time for training due to continuous hostilities”.*⁸⁰

At the same time, Letts and Lithuanians complained to Kube about being abused by some Germans. Therefore, Kube sent a special letter to Gebietskommissars where he pointed out that such behavior was inadmissible:

“Dear Sirs Gebietskommissars!

“Concerning: the problems and misunderstanding when Lettish and Lithuanian commissioned officers and privates appear in German institutions”.

“As the Riot service police commander subordinated to Supreme Belarus SS and Police commander reports, there have been numerous cases arising from being unaware of the presence of the Lettish and Lithuanian forces and of their role in anti-Bolshevik struggle; as a result, the employees of these forces were abused in German establishments in an offensive form”.

⁸⁰ NARB, F. 4386, Inv. 1, Doc. 25, Sheets 196-209.

“Such precedents are only likely shatter the confidence of the employees of the battalions from the former Baltic states, who are ready to sacrifice their lives for the cause of preserving European cultural commonwealth, and to assault their honor and dignity”.

“Lettish and Lithuanian privates and officers shall be treated tactfully by German establishments”.

“Since there is no single uniform for German establishments, it is difficult to distinguish Lettish and Lithuanian policemen from Ukrainian and Belorussian policemen. The Lettish and sometimes also Lithuanian police battaion wear the uniform of teh German policemen but without tabs. Sometimes Lithuanian policemen also wear their former yellow military uniform with golden buttons with the state coat-of-arms (a horse rider) on them. But since the Belorussian and Ukrrainian policemen are partially outfitted or will be outfitted with the German police uniform, especially with 6 great-coats, it is recommended that the German establishments should require to produce to produce service record books in dubious cases”.

“You are kindly asking to never give rise to justifiable complaints due to such occasions”.

“In the name of Signed by Jungwirt.”⁸¹

The analysis of data at our disposal shows that the circumstances on the occupied territory compelled the Nazi generalship to attract local forces, including Letts, to police and guard service and partially to anti-partisan struggle.

A report of combat activity of the 125th partisan detachment for the period from January to November, 1942, says:

*“The punitive detachments of Lithuanians and Letts are morally sound, they withstand attacks on level with the Germans. They are armed much better (than whom ? BSA-?), and besides rifles and machine guns they have machine rifles, mortar batteries and artillery. During hostilities, they are allotted armored cars, reconnoiter aircrafts and sometimes bombardment aircrafts”.*⁸²

⁸¹ NARB, F. 391, Inv. 1, Doc. 1, Sheet 37.

⁸² NARB, F. 3500, Inv. 4, Doc. 245, Vol. 1, Sheets 10-11.

The Lettish police battalions that were active in Belarus at different points of time remained in the historical memory of the Belorussian as cruel castigators, many of whom spoke Russian and were especially violent against the Belorussians. From our point of view, it is necessary to further investigate the issues related to creation, structure and activity of the military units in Belarus, including the so called "East", "Baltic" and "Ost-Muslim" ones etc. The unbiased coverage of this problem is crucial to properly appreciating the true extent of the tragedy which befell nations during the past war.

DOCUMENTS

1. The operation of the 18th Lettish battalion

April the 30th, 1942

[...]

18. VI – Approximately at 23 p.m. partisans partly destroyed the bridge across the Sula River, 15 km to the North-west from Stolbtsy. The policemen took intermediate positions.

20. VI – About 40 armed partisans tried to break the intermediate position so as to blow up the bridge across the Sula River. During the battle the partisans fled in the direction of Rovopolye. The partisans killed one enemy with no own losses. The trophies: explosives 8 kg, 2 batteries, 2 push-down automatons, 2 devices, thermite bullets, clothes and water-proof cape-tents.

26. VI – The search around Negoreloye village showed: 18 citizens deserted to the partisans. For this act 9 their relatives were executed by shooting, 2 suspicious women were arrested and one person was passed to the SD since he knew where the partisan camp was located.

23. VI – After the search around Usta village 2 partisans were shot up.

26. VI – Having reinforced the 46th police battalion 1st company, they attacked the partisan camp located in 5 km to the southeast from Templin and destroyed it. In battle about 70 partisans broke through the police's defence line. The partisans' losses:

1 soldier and 1 Jewish doctor. With no own losses.

Trophies:

2 anti-aircraft guns, ammunition, bicycles, parachute, important documents, provision store, horse, cow. There were 300 partisans in the camp.

The Guard Police Captain Signature.

NARB, F.510, Inv. 1, Doc. 29, Sheets 68 – 85
Translated from German.

2. The order of Latvia Riot Police commander on sending the 24th Lettish police battalion to Belorussia

May the 28th, 1942

The forward command of the 24th police battalion counting 30 persons under command of a commissioned officer and escorted by an official of the housekeeping unit, sergeant-major [...] of the Guard Police in Libava, shall be sent by railway to Koydanovo, blue plan square 2346, about 25 km southward of Minsk.

The command shall come to Minsk Riot Police commander to obtain detailed instruction, with further deployment in Stan'kovo.

Five days ration should be taken.

Telegraph Minsk Riot Police commander about the command departure.

The battalion itself will presumably be dispatched on the 5th of June, 1942. The rear command totaling 35 people will stay. Detailed information, the train number etc will be sent further.

No signature.

*NARB, F.1440, Inv.3, Doc.981, Sheet. 61
Translated from German.*

3. The report of the riot service police commander to Latvia police

The city of Riga

May the 28, 1942

SS and police chief. Riot Service police Commander
Department V – № 2109/42, conf.

Concerning: dispatch of the 24th police battalion

1. The 24th police battalion is dispatched to Koydanovo on 4.6.1942 by railway, train № 178101 Transportation commander contacts the commander (officer) of station Libava and settles all dispatch details.

I appoint surveillant officer, guard police Hauptmann Borchert as the transportation commander.

The battalion is to be quartered in Stankovo, Belorussia.

The first command totaling one platoon under command of a German administrative official, i.e. sergeant-major (SB) shall be dispatched to Koydanovo on 28.5.1942.

Subsistence supply shall be taken for 5 days.

The 24th police battalion leaves a rear command in Libava for further delivery of horses.

I kindly ask the SS and police garrison commander (commandant) to make provisions for transport for further dispatch of horses and for appointing a sergeant-major (CB) as an attendant.

The pioneer platoon shall stay where it is and to be subjected to the 268th police battalion as fully battle-equipped, including the automobiles and horses, until the battalion returns.

The forward command and the battalion report to the commander/officer in charge of the riot service police in Minks on their arrival from discharge station, the and to get further instructions.

Inform me the date and time of dispatching the forward tam and battalion, as well as the expected time of arrival at Koydanovo, specifying the train number.

Should the loading date change, inform me promptly.

By order signed by Praefoke
SS Sturmbannführer

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 78, Sheets 12, 13
Translated from German.*

4. A radiogram from Libava SS and police garrison commander to Latvia SS and police chief, the riot police commander, on the dispatch of the 24th Lettish police battalion to Belorussia

May the 30th, 1942

29.5.42, the forward command of the 24th police battalion was dispatched from the Libava station at 23-35, as per the order.

The command manpower is as follows – 1 officer and 30 Lettish policemen under command of guard police meister Stein, Libava guard police department, as the transport officer.

Equipment and armament.

field, with guns.

The command is expected in Koydanovo on 2.6.1942

Signed by Dr Dietrich
SS Obersturmbannführer

NAR, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 981, Doc. 64

5. The order of the Belorussia security police and SD commander on carrying out an anti-partisan operation in the area of Uzda-Kopyl'-Stolbtsi

The city of Minsk

June the 5th, 1942

A large partisan unit is deployed in woodland, in the triangle of Uzda-Kopyl'-Stolbtsi. It shall be wiped out by the cooperation of Wehrmacht, riot police and security police units. To that end, Saturday, June the 6th, 1942, the operation is participated by 1 Wehrmacht battalion, 1 Lithuanian guard police battalion and 1 Lettish guard police battalion. Overall leadership is assigned to colonel

Müller.

I. The advance is started by the Wehrmacht battalion from Uzda southwestwards. The both guard battalions from Kopyl' and Stolbtsi advance forwards and surround the partisan units. The combat mission details are clarified by the battalion commanders.

II. The security police actively participate in the operation in accordance with the following instructions:

SS commands are attached to each Lithuanian and Lettish battalion. Such commands comprise SS commanders, six Non-commissioned officers and 8 privates.

The objective of such commands is to take and interrogate prisoners when advancing along with the battalion, or to interrogate the prisoners taken by other subunits in order to obtain the most accurate data possible on the deployment of the disposition of the partisans, their forces and armament. The data obtained shall be forwarded to the headquarters in Uzda via the shortest way, and the battalion commanders shall also be informed about them.

III. The first command, hereinafter referred to as command A, is subordinated to SS Hauptsturmführer, d-r Koonz.

The second command, hereinafter referred to as command B, is subordinated to SS Obersturmführer, d-r Heuser.

Command A is dispatched to Stolbtsi and is placed under the order of the 18th Lettish police battalion commander, Hauptmann Ziherte

Command B is dispatched to Kopyl and is placed under the order of the 3rd Lithuanian police battalion commander, hauptmann Jacob.

SS Obersturmführers Shlegel and Wilcke as well as Non-commissioned officers: Nuch, Frolik, Gramer, Schröder, Schefer, Lauterborn and Schramm and interpreters: RomaNovski, Veblovski, Michelzon, Gorchkov, Dankin and Jaeger, as well as 8 people from SS forces under command of SS Unterscharführer Lipe.

IV. The following command personnel and Non-commissioned officers are placed under the order of command B: SS Obersturmführers Maiwald and Burckhardt: Unterführers: Grampe, Zug, Müller, Stolzner, Joppen, Shmidt and Weller.

Interpreters: Sheerg, Heitman, Arajs, Petrovski, Eiche, Ameling, Skurbe, and also 8 people from SS troops under command of Unterscharführer Arlt.

V. Commands A and B break up into small commands, namely: Command A1 is headed by SS Hauptsturmführer, dr Koonz,

SS Unterführer Schefer and Lauberborn and interpreters Wilumzon, Michelzon and Gorchkov.

Command A2 is headed by SS Obersturmführer Schlegel, SS Unterführers Frolik and Schramm and interpreters RomaNovski and Veblovski.

SS troops: Gruppenscharführer Riepe, Kotz, Longl and Friebir,

Command A3 is headed by SS Obersturmführer Wilcke and Unterführers Kramer and Schröder. Interpreters: Dankin, Jaeger and SimaNovich.

SS troops: Hosen, Gaysse, Prowald and Hozenkamp.

Command B1 is headed by SS Obersturmführer dr Heuser and SS Unterführers Grampe and Weller. The interpreters are Armeling and Skurbe.

Command B2 is headed by SS obersturmführer Barkhard. SS Unterführers: Müller, Stolzner and Shmidl. Interpreters: Petrovski, Eiche and Grozovski.

SS troops: Unterscharführer Arlt, Wabhman Skrovanek and Auer.

Command B3 is headed by obersturmführer Meiwaldt and unterführers Joppen and Zug. The interpreters are Schiere, Heitman and Areys.

VI. Command A1 is placed under the orders of the battalion, with the command post in Stolbtsi.

Command B is placed under the orders of the battalion, with the command post in Kopyl. Each of commands A2, A3, B2 and B3 is attached

to each squadrons of the Lithuanian and Lettish police battalions. Commands are engaged in operation via the command chiefs upon agreement with the battalions commanders. It should be settled with the battalions commanders that the third squadron of each battalion without a command attached immediately dispatch the prisoners taken by them to commands A1 and B1.

VII. Armament. The weapons was distributed during the parade at 14.45, in accordance with the order by the commands chiefs. Each of commands A2, A3, B2 and B3 will be additionally allotted 2 manual machine rifles. Communication with the headquarters in Uzda is mainly achieved by radio. Command chiefs will be in charge of reports.

VIII. Personally I am in headquarters in Uzda. SS Obersturmführer Luthenhaus and Unterscharführer von Tol are placed under my order. The command chiefs will occasionally be informed on my location.

IX. Two commercial vehicles and two motor cars are provided for transportation. A motor car with 2 riot police air agitators are sent to Kopyl as a radio vehicles.

Motor cars are allotted to the chiefs of commands A and B. Foods are given as bag dinner for three days. Fuel supply for the vehicles is settled with the Wehrmacht and police headquarters.

X.[...]

XI. The advance starts Friday, June the 5th, 1942 at 15.00, from the points of deployment. The operation shall be ended as per the commander's order.

Signed by Strauch, SS Obersturmführe

**6. From the report of the SS and Byelorussian police head
to the superior head of the SS and police Ostland
on the struggle against the partisans**

The city of Minsk

June the 13th, 1942

[...] 7. Own forces

We succeed with great difficulty to get and use in the struggle against the partisans:

the 3rd Lithuanian police battalion, the 18th Lettish police battalion

the 24th Lettish police battalion and 4 (motorized) gendarmerie platoons.

We plan to get:

the 26th Lettish police battalion

1 (motorized) gendarmerie platoon

1 police communication company

These forces are insufficient. This is just a drop in the bucket. They could be considered only taking into account the entire expanding partisan activity as backup forces[...]

NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3. Doc. 967, Sheets 14 – 19

Translated from German.

**7. From the order of the order police commandant subordinated
to the SS and Byelorussia police chief on the death of the 24th
Lettish police battalion troopers**

The city of Minsk

June the 22nd, 1942

Day order

In struggle against the Bolshevism being faithful to their trust dead:

Lieutenant Dzeguze the 246th Lettish police battalion [...]

soldier	Vistius	-<<<- -<<<- -<<<-
---------	---------	-------------------

soldier	Celays	-<<<- -<<<- -<<<-
---------	--------	-------------------

von Neuburg

colonel of the guard police and the order police commandant

*NARB, F. 389, Inv. 1, Doc. 1, Sheet 15
Translated from German.*

8. The Letter of the Reich Commission Ostland officer Hentz to the Reich Minister of the occupied eastern regions Rosenberg about the Lettish police battalions expedition to Byelorussia for struggle against the partisans

The city of Riga

June the 20th, 1942

As I heard three battalions of the Lettish policemen have recently been sent to Ukraine. I have already emphasized time and again that in the general district of Byelorussia good governance could hardly be maintained since Wehrmacht and police required forces for the struggle against the expanding partisan activity. For example, one of the causes to be uncertain is that the cars are stopped and convoyed in Molodechno on the way to Minsk since certain cars are still captured by the partisans.

I ask to take measures without delay so as to place under orders the police battalions mobilized in the Baltic general districts for the struggle against partisans in Byelorussia in any circumstances.

The high SS and police superior head got the order from the SS-Reichsführer to restart sending the local police battalions to Ukraine to defend the important military enterprises. That is why he can't act according my instructions to use the Baltic police battalions in Byelorussia.

(The signature is illegible)

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, D. 990, Sheets 59 – 60
Translated from German.*

**9. From the report of the task force commander,
SS -Unterscharführer Arlt about sharing the Lettish and own
parties for the struggle against the partisans near Koydanovo
in July of 1942**

The city of Minsk

August the 3rd 1942

The work of the group members which stay in Minsk consists of mostly the same. Transport means with Jews regularly arrive in Minsk and we treat them. So, on Jun the 18th and the 19th, 1942, we trenched ditches on the settlement territory.

19.6. on the new cemetery, close to the commander's estate SS Scharführer Schredder dead of endemic typhus in the SS infirmary was buried. My group was reinforced with SD and took part in the guard of hoNour as a platoon.

26.6. The expected transport with the Jews arrived from Reich.

27.6. Almost all of our party members went to execute the operation in BaraNovichi. The results proved to be negative, as usual. During this action we mopped up the ghetto in Slonim. That day 4 000 Jews were inhumed.

30.6. We returned to Minsk. On the next days we arranged the equipment, cleared and adjusted the weapon.

2.7. We trenched ditches again to receive the transport with the Jews.

10.7. We and the Lettish party were used against the partisans in the wood near Koydanovo. We got to destroy the ammunition depot. Suddenly we were fired upon with a machine gun, one Lettish associate was killed. When we pursued the gang 4 persons were killed[...]

SS-Unterscharführer Arlt

NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 939, Sheet 152a.

A copy. Translated from German.

10. Report of the platoon commander of the 25th Lettish police battalion 2nd company cadet Peterson to the battalion commander Poikkauss on the participation of the detachment in the operation against the partisans in Belyaki and SkorodNoye villages

The town of Ovruch

August the 16th, 1942

On August the 1st, 1942, at 14:00 I got an order to march off to SkorodNoye from Yelsk along with my platoon to reinforce the gendarmerie being there an to participate in the action against the gangs.

As my task consisted only in the car escort without participation in battle, the gendarmerie provided me with one light machine rifle, 2 semi-automatic rifles and 3 000 cartridges.

I arrived at SkorodNoye on August the 12th, 1942, at 3:00. Here I was reinforced by 2 policemen of the Yelsk police platoon and 2 extra light machine rifles.

Oberlieutenant Maar, the cavalry squadron commander, briefed us on our task which consisted in search of the gendarmes killed during the bandit attack and, possibly, in a raid into bandit camp located there. At 3:30 we marched off from SkorodNoye and headed for Belyaki village in the following order: 1 gendarmery platoon,

1 heavy machine gun group of the Slovak division, Main group:

1 heavy machine gun group of the Slovak division, 1 heavy mortar platoon,

1 reinforced Lettish platoon, 1 S of the 2nd Lettish company platoon.

Reserve: the 25th Lettish battalion 3rd company. At the margin of the woods, 300 m to the southeast 1.101¹ of Oberlieutenant Maar and me saw smoke (approximately 800 m to the east of point 110). We realized that it could be only a bandit camp. We kept on advancing along the margin of the woods About 400 m to the south of point 110 at the edge (margin N to the east so as to surround the enemy). About 800 m to the south-east of point 110 the lead platoon was fired from 30 m with guns and ma-

¹ The map is not published, – Editorial.

chine guns that ensconced there in the earth-and-timber emplacements and on the trees. The German gendarmes had to retreat without shooting by Oberlieutenant Maar's order. A short fire break followed. Having taken an advantage of the break, the gang changed the position and was fired by the artillery [...], and Oberlieutenant Maar was killed. After that the bandits fled to the south-east. The Slovak Oberlieutenant assumed the command.

My task was to attack the gang by surrounding from the left towards the location across the river whereas Oberlieutenant was continuing the attack in the same direction.

I advanced supported by a heavy machine gun and a heavy mortar, the fire being directed to the margin of the woods 8 950 m from point 110. Having crossed the river I underwent strong gun and machine gun fire from the North-east and the east direction. I made the enemy cease firing replying to his fire (see scheme 3)². I used weapon emplacement 3 I captured to continue to attack the enemy and made the gang to retreat to the east and North-east through the forest I took under fire the retreating enemy

I gave order to 11 Lettishes to intercept the retreat by surrounding attack. But this plot failed due to misunderstanding.

Searching through the bandit camp we found living accommodations and weapon emplacements, as well as various provision remains. Results: 12 killed bandits, about 8-10 were carried away by the bandits and about 20 were wounded. Hence, there were about 50 persons in the camp.

Trophies: the trophies were as follows: 3 (German) machine guns belonging to the killed German soldiers. the gendarmes took 1 one heavy machine gun. the Slovaks took 17 pistols, 2 rifles were given to the Slovaks,

1 heavy machine gun with 5 full cartridge belts was given to the Lettishes.

The battle started at about 7:00 and ended at 8:50. At 9:10 we continued advancing to Belyaki, my platoon being at the head.

About 200 m to the south from Belyaki village we found 5 killed persons close to the road. They were 4 gendarmes and 1 Ukrainian policeman. The Germans killed by several shots were disrobed, beaten, disfigured; they were put on fallen trees repeatedly, so their spines were broken.

² The shemr is not published.

At 10:30 we returned to SkorodNoye where we arrived at 15:50. The quartering site was guarded by police points. Since on the killed Ukrainian policeman a Note was found in which the gang informed about an attack of the garrison and about annihilation of the cavalry squadron, lieutenant Dauernfeind required extra support forces.

On August, 12, 1942, at 23:00 the margin of the woods was lit up with a spotlight which was shot up by the bandits. After that they were firing our defensive and firing positions for 15 minutes. The gang used trench bombs. Then the required support forces arrived. After that the gang heard the approaching car Noise and escaped.

On August the 13th, at 8:00 we searched through the forest within a radius of about 3 km. 70 Lettishes, 35 Slovaks, 25 Germans and 15 Ukrainian policemen participated in the search. But it gave no results. At 14:00 we returned.

On August the 14th, 1942, 4 killed German gendarmes were buried in Yelsk. I participated in the funeral together with 4 policemen and laid a wreath on the grave.

On August the 15th, 1942 I returned to Ovruch along with my platoon with no losses according to the order so as to redeploy in Lelchitsy. I captured as trophies 1 Russian light automatic gun with 3 disks and 4 German trench guns.

Signed by cadet Peterson

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 1393, Sheets 4 – 8
Translated from German.*

11. From order N°13 of the Byelorussia order police commandant colonel Klepsh on mentioning F. Rubenis and the platoon commander E. Zunde of the 18th Lettish police battalion

The city of Minsk

August the 28th, 1942

[...]

14. Commendation.

The battalion captain and commander of the 18th Lettish police battalion Friedrich Rubenis on July the 24th, 1942, near the estate Naliboki succeeded in annihilation of the gang in battle which outnumbered us due to his resource and good command of the battalion.

I extend thanks to the courageous officer for his resource.

Commendation:

On July the 24th, 1942, in the battle with the gang near Naliboka estate the platoon lieutenant and the 18th Lettish police battalion commander Erik Zunde succeeded to go round the enemies, to attack them from the rear inflicting significant losses on them and to prevent the barrack attack in spite of sharp fire. I extend thanks to this officer for his courage.

Signed by Klepsh
police colonel and security service commandant

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc.17, Sheet 45
A copy. Translated from German.*

12. Operation order of the security police and SD of Byelorussia Commandant the SS-Obersturmführer Strauch on preparing for the operation “Marsh fever South-West»

The city of Minsk

September the 6th, 1942

Having finished the operation in Nalibokskaya Puscha the SS 1st infantry brigade and Bintz's and Barkhold's police regiments leave the previous operation area on September the 7th, 1942 and still during September the 7th, 1942 occupy new frontiers according to the order. New area of operations is restricted in the west by the common line Slonim-Masitovich-Olmanitsa – highway, about 5 km to the south-east of Nekhachevo – Koziki, from where the common line BorovischNoye Lake North shore – Island – Slonim.

In that area will be carried out the operation against partisans under code name “Marsh fever South-West». Combined units referred to as platoons thus far were renamed “groups” (Bintz's group and Barkhold's group).

Besides the units which participated in the operation so far one Ukrainian, one Lithuanian and one Lettish guard battalion are placed under orders.

These battalions are united in Shredder's group.

Before the night of the 7th of September, 1942, the units should occupy the following starting points:

a) the 1st SS infantry brigade (motorized).

Headquarters in Nekhachevo.

one regiment, headquarters in Svyataya Volya village.

one battalion in Vyado village.

one battalion in Koziki village.

one regiment, headquarters in Nekhachevo.

one battalion in Volya village.

one battalion group in Bilivichi village.

b) Bintz's group.

with headquarters, one battalion and the 11th and 12th motorized gendarmerie platoons in Tribushki village. One battalion in Buslach village. One battalion in Glotsevichi.

c) Barkhold's group

with headquarters and one battalion in Brachki village, one battalion in Dedin village, one battalion in Pukhovichi village.

d) Shredder's group

with headquarters, one battalion and the 7th motorized gendarmerie platoon in Logozva village.

one battalion in Savici village, one battalion in Berezovka village

According to the order of the SS and police superior head redeploy the security police and SD intelligence parties to the regiment headquarters location points.

The intelligence parties are redeployed as follows: The SS-Sturmabführer Kraus in Tribushki village.

The SS-Hauptsturmführer Liherbam in Svyataya Volya village, the SS-Obersturmführer's party Dr. Haizer in Nekhachevo village, the SS-Obersturmführer's party Luthenhaus in Logozva village. The parties indicated above should be deployed from the previous location sites to the assigned destinations.

The intelligence parties of Kraus and Wilcke leave groups of 9 persons led by an Unterführer in the previous distribution point. The left groups continue working with the trustees (agents) and conduct intelligence as far as possible. Register the intelligence results. Send the reports of especial importance to my deputy staying in Minsk.

The SS-Untersturmbannführer's party should stay in Slonim. The party of Untersturmbannführer Grawe should return to the intelligence group in Vileik. The party of SS-Hauptsturmführer Ture goes to Minsk and waits for further orders. The SS-Hauptsturmführer Fruehe returns to the Security police Department in Riga.

My tactical headquarters is transferred to Baranovichi on September the 8th, 1942.

The heads of the intelligence parties send the intelligence results to the command authority. However, they should work in close contact with regiment headquarters.

The SS-Obersturmbannführer Strauch

13. Journal N°1 of the SS superior head and police Ostland operations on the results of the operation “Marsh fever” (“Sumpffieber”) from August the 22th, to September the 21th, 1942

September the 21th, 1942

Started on August the 22nd, 1942

The control headquarters “Minsk “ was subordinated to the SS-Reichsführer command headquarters from August the 22nd, 1942.

The journal was kept from August the 22nd, 1942 to September the 21st, 1942 by the SS-Obersturmführer Birmayer.

By the SS-Reichsführer’s order the SS-troops, the order police and security police forces are executing the operation on mopping up the territory in the general district of Byelorussia under the code name “Sumpffieber” («Marsh fever»).

The objective: annihilation of so-called partisans and bandit gangs on the territory of Byelorussia.

General command:

The SS and “Ostland” police superior head, the SS-Obergruppenführer and the police general Jeckeln.

To carry out the operation under his orders are placed:

The SS-troops forces. The commander: The SS-Brigadeführer and the SS-troops General von Troenfeld.

The order police forces. The command: the SS-Oberführer and Schyman’s gendarmerie colonel, the head of the SS and the police of Byelorussia. The security police and SD forces. The commander: the SS-Brigadeführer and the police Major General Yost, the “Ostland” security police and SD commandant.

22.8.1942. The Pilot’s, Tsentralnaya St., Minsk

For consolidated guidance the control headquarters with the police communications company from Riga is formed (the headquarters of the SS superior head and the “Ostland” police is redeployed in Minsk). Arrival time: August the 22nd, 1942.

The SS-Obergruppenführer and the police general Jeckeln arrives at Minsk on the same day.

The command centre is located in the Pilot's home in Minsk, Tsen-tralnaya St. (769562)

At the afterNoon the talks with the subordinated commanders took place.

The enemy should be annihilated during mass operations. The first area of operations is the one located to the North of Minsk restricted in the east by a the rear line of a group of armies, and in the North by the line Glubokoye – Vitebsk, by the line Postavy -Molodcheno in the west and by the line Molodechno - Borisov in the south.

Intelligence on the location, number and armament of the gangs is imposed to the security police and SD.

Annihilation of the gangs is charged on the SS-troops and the police.

August the 23rd, 1942

Before the 23rd of August the SS and police troops were concentrated in the operation area:

The 1st SS- infantry brigade with its headquarters, communications company, medical company, gendarmery party (company), motorized rifle company, special chaser tank company (all of the units are motorized).

The SS 8th infantry regiment with its headquarters, communications platoon, motorized rifle platoon, engineer combat platoon (all of the sub-units are motorized), battalions I and II, companies 13 and 14, air defense battery (sub-units partly motorized), only cars for the 1st battalion. The total number of the troops is about 2300 commanders, underofficers and private soldiers.

From the order police provided by the SS and Byelorussian police head:

Bintz's police regiment with the 1st police battalion of the 23rd police regiment, the 3rd Lettish guard battalion, the 24th Lettish guard battalion, Barkhold's police regiment with the 1st police battalion of the 24th police regiment, the 18th and 26th Lettish battalions, the 15th Lettish guard battalion, the 2nd company of the Lettish guard battalion 266(E), gendarmery motorized platoons 6, 7, 11,12, 13, 19, 21.

Total number: about 3 570 officers, Non-commissioned officers and private soldiers.

From the security police and SD led by the "Ostland" security police and SD commandant.

32 commanders (officers), 244 Non-commissioned officers, 350 Lettish and 100 Russians.

The gangs: mostly in civvies, well-armed, having a sufficient of number automatic weapon (sub-machine guns) and of heavy weapon, ammunition and explosive means, divided into small and large detachments up to 500 persons, located in sheltered camps in woods which constantly change location, in hardly practical area from where they assault, blow up, commit acts of sabotage to destroy the front provision communications and to scare the civilian population.

August the 24th, 1942

The gang of about 150 – 400 persons whose camp was spotted about 20 km to the south-west of Lepel, far to the east from Domzheritskoye Lake should be surrounded and destroyed.

Barkhold's regiment and the SS 1st infantry brigade will be taken to the operation area on August, 24, and during the night should block the area and occupy the initial attack positions.

August the 25th, 1942

The units should occupy the initial positions by the morning of August the 25th. The SS 1st infantry brigade will advance from the east direction. Barkhold's regiment will block the line Mogilki – Postreshye – Kwecha – Domzheritsy – Nivki – Kovnitsy and prevents the enemy escape to the west.

Advancing to the starting points the 26th Lettish police battalion was already conducting small battles near Kvyatsy village.

2 attack groups of the SS 1st infantry brigade delegated against the camp mentioned above in the morning of the 25th of August did not locate the enemy.

Systematic area sweeping gave no results. That is why the SS-Obergruppenführer Jeckeln decided to continue blocking till 12:00 of August the 26th, and after that to advance the units to the south-west as per the intelligence data.

The SS 1st brigade is sent to Begoml.

The 24th police battalion 1st company is sent to Pleschenitsy from Barkhold's regiment.

The 26th Lettish police battalion should annihilate the bandit groups in the area Osovo-Nidal – Brod.

Those units included Bintz's regiment with the 23rd police battalion 1st company and the 3rd Lettish police battalion which took the initial attack positions against 3 bandit groups to the North of the Viliya in the area Kostika- Stakha and should start an attack of the woodland situated far to the south of the Viliya river at 5:00 of August the 26th.

The 24th Lettish police battalion and the gendarmerie motorized platoons 11 and 12 block the road Sosenska – Khotayevichi.

August the 26th, 1942

At dawn Bintz's regiment started a systematic attack of the camp.

In the evening the set task was executed and the line Olkovitsy – Bobrovo was reached.

During the area sweeping 18 centers of resistance, bunkers and camps were destroyed.

Individual battles with bandit groups which are dispersed.

The enemy lost 32 persons. We have no losses.

The 24th police battalion 1st company from Barkhold's regiment reached Pleschenitsy in the evening and located there.

The 26th Lettish police battalion (Barkhold's regiment) headed for Nidal and Brod villages.

Barkhold's regiment command center is located in Nidal village.

The 1st SS infantry brigade with its headquarters and brigade units arrived at Begoml (the remaining units will arrive on August the 27th).

Comments on the situation:

The struggle against the gangs is a hard task. The gangs dispose of effective intelligence and adroitly escape from large contractions.

And in the zone located to the North of Minsk not large bandit forces are said to be located but only small groups which being always astir the local population and impede movement [...] of their own troops by destroying the bridges.

It is difficult to redeploy the units in required number because of shortage of transport means, often to the distance of up to 100 km (difficult terrain, marsh, rough roads).

It is quite difficult to command since the available forces are not always provided with required communication facilities.

During the evening discussion of the situation the SS-Obergruppenführer and police general Jeckeln decided to carry out a new operation on the basis of the received data on the enemy.

During the 27th and 28th of August redeploy the forces and occupy the initial positions for concentrated attack of a large gang (800 – 1 000 persons) in the area Smolevichi – Yuryevo – Brodnaya Zhodino (to the south-west of Borisov). The attack is planned for August the 29th.

Redeploy the forces and occupy the starting points till August the 29th, to carry out the operation against the bandit groups in Nalibokskaya Puschcha (to the west of Minsk) planned supposedly for the 1st of September.

On August the 27th and the 28th, Barkhold's regiment with the 26th Lettish police battalion continue the struggle against the gangs in the area Brod – Makovy – Mstizh and with the 24th police battalion 1st company should destroy the bandit camp near Rudnya, Mordasy and Draki villages on August the 27th.

August the 27th, 1942

Barkhold's regiment with the 26th Lettish police battalion near Nikal and Brod villages, the 24th police battalion 1st company is advancing to Rudnya.

So far fights with the enemy did not take place.

Bintz's regiment is concentrated in the area Kraisk – Olkovitsy – Bobrovo is preparing to march off in the area to the North of Nalibokskaya Puschcha.

The 1st SS infantry brigade (motorized) is located in Begoml.

The 8th infantry regiment 2nd battalion is on the march to Logoisk.

There were no other incidents to report.

The SS 10th infantry regiment should stay in Borisov by the SS-Reichsführer's order at command of the SS 1st infantry brigade for the struggle against the gangs.

The commandant of Ostland Wehrmacht should provide for the operation "Sumpffieber" 3 highway convoys, 20 cars each.

August the 28th, 1942

When Barkhold's regiment was executing the operation in conjunction with the 24th police regiment 1st company near Rudnya and Mordasy small fights with the enemy took place.

3 bandits were shot up. The operation had not been finished by the evening.

1 bandit was shot up by the 26th Lettish police battalion in the area of Nidal-Brod. The operation was finished without considerable success.

The SS 1st infantry brigade is put at disposal to carry out the operation in the area Zhodino-Smolevichi-Yuryevo-Brodnya (to the south-west of Smolensk).

In the evening the brigade took the starting points.

There were no other incidents to report.

August the 29th, 1942

The SS 1st infantry brigade with the 18th Lettish police battalion attached blocked the area Zhodino-Brodnya-Sutoki-Smolevichi and swept it on August the 29th. 2 bandit camps and village Kormzha adopted for bandit defensive posts were destroyed with the population.

In the entire a great number of security suspects were arrested, 4 bandits were shot up in battle, trophies are insignificant.

The operation has not been completed yet.

During the operation carried out by Barkhold's regiment of the 24th police regiment 1st company around Rudnya and Mordasy villages considerable success was not achieved, and the operation was completed. 3 bandits were shot up. We have no losses.

Bintz's regiment is on the march to Molodechno.

August the 30th, 1942

During the operation to the south to Viliya (Bintz's regiment) not 32 but 62 bandits were annihilated, 5 bandits were arrested.

The trophies: 6 6 carriages with horses, 1 horse with saddle, 5 killed pigs, 5 cows, 2 magnetos, 6,6 kg of explosives, 8 Russian rifles, 162 Russian and 500 German rifle cartridges, 1 medicine bag with materials, 3 kits of German military uniform, 2 German great-coats, short fur-coats, coats, underclothes, maps, private papers, list.

The operation carried out by the SS 1st infantry brigade in the area Zhodino-Brodnya-Sutoki-Smolevichi on August the 30th, 1942 is completed.

Besides we captured: 1 mine, 2 rifles, 3 grenades, 17 trotyl blocks, 1 dagger, cartridges, printed matter.

Operational conference, August the 30th, 1942.

Situation: in the area to the south and to the south-west of Minsk the intelligence spotted 7 areas infected by the bandits (the intelligence division's report dated August the 29th, 1942).

During particular operations these areas should be mopped up, and

the bandits should be annihilated.

The planned attack is to be from the south to west, consequently the remaining gangs should be surrounded in the south border of Byelorussia.

Then we plan to annihilate definitively the correspondent forces attacking from the west to the east in close contact with the SS superior head's forces and the "Center" police of Russia.

After the intelligence division head's report on the situation commented by the SS –Brigadeführer and the police Major General Yost, the SS-Obergruppenführer Jeckeln accepted:

Executing the operation against the gang around Sineye Lake (to the south of Minsk) with the object to annihilate it.

Executing the operation against the gang in Nalibokskaya Puscha (to the west of Minsk) with the object to annihilate it.

Immediate annihilation of small gangs in the area between the Tsna and the Taina Rivers, to the North of Smolevichi.

August the 31st, 1942

The SS 1st infantry brigade is preparing to execute an operation around Sineye Lake.

The operation of the 26th Lettish battalion against the gangs in the area of Mostichka, Chemki and Milnitsa was successful.

Preparing of a large operation involving 1 SS infantry brigade, Bintz's regiment and Barkhold's regiment. The operation is directed against the gangs in Nalibokskaya Puscha.

There were no other incidents to report.

September the 1st, 1942

The operation against the gangs around Sineye Lake (to the south of Minsk) is finished by the SS 1st brigade with no considerable results.

Captured: 1 light machine rifle and some equipment items.

The operation against the gangs in the area of Mostichka, Chemki and Milnitsa villages (to the west of Borisov) executed by the 26th Lettish police battalion was also completed successfully.

There were no other incidents to report.

September the 2nd, 1942

On September the 2nd, 1942 the following telegram was sent:

Minsk, September the 2nd, 1942

The superior SS and "Ostland" police head
The control headquarters "Minsk"

Telegramm

The SS-Reichsführer command headquarters
The command center Hegewald.

The delivered orders for executing large operations against gangs were under the threat of failure from the very beginning since the 15th, 16th and 17th police regiments meant for those operations were sent to execute another mission by the SS-Reichsführer's command headquarters. The SS 1st infantry brigade is only 50% motorized and is placed under my orders only since August, 31st with the both regiments. As regards the other units, it concerns (save for 2 reserve battalions) only 2 Lettish and 2 carriage and infantry battalions.

That is why such forces were sufficient only for individual actions of blocking highly dangerous areas.

As per the SD's data the operations executed before concerned only the zones where numerous diversions on bridges and the ones directed against agricultural enterprises were committed. The results of the operations show that in this case we face a great number of mobile diversion groups which are not integrated into large gangs and avoid the battle.

From this date all the units including the local police battalions are provided with transport means due to provision of 100 lorries by "Ostland" Wehrmacht commandant.

As per the agreement with the Wehrmacht commandant his units continue to guard the railway lines while the SS superior head and police's forces will keep on struggling against the gangs on the entire territory of Byelorussia. The next operation against Nalibokskaya Puscha planned for September, 3 and 4, is being prepared by the SS 1st infantry division with expanded blockage of Bintz's and Barkhold's combined police regiments.

Then it is planned to annihilate quasi numerous and large gangs in the area of Baranovich and Slonim.

Thereupon I ask the SS-Reichsführer to decide if I should act as per my plan or according to the radiogram dated September, 9th, 1942 by my forces interacting with Wehrmacht only on the railway line guard.

To assure exchange of experience I reached the agreement with Obergruppenführer von Bach on our meeting in Mogilev today at 12:00.

I report in conclusion that the SS 1st infantry brigade, either the command or the subordinates, achieved a good success on this wide and swampy terrain.

Signed by Jeckeln
the SS- Obergruppenführer and the police general

The units are on march to the new battle area 55 km to the west of Minsk.

Till the evening Bintz's and Barkhold's regiments isolated the battle area in the west outskirts of Nalibokskaya Puscha. The SS 1st brigade with the 8th infantry regiment on the right and the SS 10th infantry regiment on the left occupied the starting points.

Mopping up the gangs should be carried out during September the 3rd and the 4th, 1942.

September the 3rd, 1942

Before during the operation in Nalibokskaya Puscha only individual short fights with the enemy had taken place. 15 bandits were shot up.

The operation will take 2 more days.

September the 4th, 1942

The operation against the gangs in Nalibokskaya Puscha is continuing, so far only individual short fights with the enemy take place. 5 abandoned bandit camps are spotted, 3 rifles and 3 carriages with kitchen utensils are captured.

The operation has not been completed yet.

On September the 2nd of 1942, the gendarmerie motorized patrol encountered a large gang hiding in the woods to the south of Slutsk, close to Mityavichi village. After the battle with Slutsk Gebietskommissar's gendarmerie forces and the 15th Lettish battalion 1st company³ which were sent from Kopyl on September the 3rd, 1942, the bandits left their positions having left 70 killed persons on the battle site.

³ Sic, probably the matter is the 15th Lettish police battalion.

September the 5th, 1942

The operation in Nalibokskaya Puscha was continuing and now is at the final stage.

It is found that most villagers in this area are in contact with the bandits collaborating with them. Some of them even joined to the gang. The gung units are not spotted since they are dispersed and hid in marsh and woods or hide themselves in the villages and farms like the inoffensive peasants. So as to suppress this area which has been known as a shelter and a pocket of resistance for 10 years, the SS- Obergruppenführer Jeckeln ordered to burn down the villages and farms mentioned above, to shoot up the security suspects and evacuate the whole area. The operation is continuing. It is widely supported by Reichs- and Gebietskommissar.

This is said in the text. Probably, it concerns the 15th police battalion

September the 6th, 1942

The operations in Nalibokskaya Puscha were ended in the evening of the 6th of September. To suppress the pockets of resistance all of the villages and farms in this area the villagers connected with the bandits were burned down and annihilated. 204 persons suspect of connection with the bandits were shot up. 1 217 persons were evacuated.

September the 7th and the 8th, 1942

The subordinated units were deployed to the south-west of Baranovichi.

The control headquarters will be transferred to Baranovichi on the 8th of September, 1942, arriving there at 14:00.

To the south of the line Slonim – Baranovichi and up to the line Nekhachevo – Telekhany gangs are spotted.

The main bandit camps are located to the south of Slonim in the settlements Kosovo, Bula, Rafalovka, Vilcha, Novaya, Chuchuki.

Each camp is said to number 300 – 400 persons, but these data are certain to be exaggerated.

However, diversions and attacks became more frequent in this area that threatens the train traffic of the railway line Brest-Baranovici and on highway VII to the east passing right across the center of the infected area.

The entire territory should be thoroughly mopped up.

Before September the 9th, 1942, all of the subordinated forces concentrated in the starting points.

Bintz's, Shredder's and Barkhold's regimental groups commanded by the head of the SS and the police of Byelorussia (3 battalions each) occupy the starting points in the North. In the south the starting points were occupied by the SS brigade with the SS 8th and 10th infantry regiments (2 battalions each).

First, In the course of individual operations the entrapping (blockade) territory outer line should be mopped up in close collaboration, then the gangs should be drove into the entrapping centre and annihilated.

September the 9th, 1942

Still on September the 8th, 1942, Bintz's group fought with two gangs 30 persons each and annihilated 19 bandits.

The trophies: 6 carriages, 7 horses, 3 bicycles, provision and ammunition.

On the 9th of September, 1942 at dawn Barkhold's group fought with a small gang near Gorodische village, the bandits tried to break to the North.

The site Kosovo borough located on the SS 1st motorized division's site was suddenly surrounded and 12 security suspects were arrested.

The gangs had left Kosovo before.

At the conference on September the 9th, 1942 held in Byelostok Ostland Wehrmacht commander Königsberg promised to support the operation "Sumpffieber – south-west " by blocking of the border opposite the territory of Byelorussia.

September the 10th, 1942

In Zapolye village, 5 km to the south of Kosovo the bandits burned down 22 houses. On the railway line, between Byten and Lesnaya a sabotage was committed.

To the south of the highway in the woods located to the west of Esiora - Bobrovskoye Lake, in course of individual operations 3 farms adopted for bandit defensive posts were burned down, 3 bandits were shot up.

The intelligence did not spot the enemy to the North of the highway.

September the 11th, 1942

All day armed conflicts with the bandits wearing military uniform and well-armed took place.

In the Moose contraction area (mousetrap), to the south of the line Slonim-Baranovich 66 bandits were shot up, several bandit defensive

posts were burned down in course of individual operations conducted to the south of Brest-Slutsk highway.

The weapon, ammunition and provision trophies were not considerable.

A battle with bandits wearing military uniform was conducted in the woodland between the highway and Vygonskoye Lake.

The territory is being swept.

The Noose contraction is continued with the object to drive the gangs to the centre and to completely annihilate them.

September the 12th, 1942

In the course of the fight with the bandits in military uniform to the North of Koziki village the enemy left 10 killed persons.

The following trophies are captured: 1 antitank gun, 1 lorry and 1 car, 21 bicycle, 12 carriages and 13 horses.

In the course of the intelligence one bandit was shot up.

The bandits' defensive post Krasnita (9 km to the south-west from Vygonskoye Lake) is burned down, 70 security suspects are shot up.

The SS 1st brigade is directed to mop up the woodland between the highway and Vygonskoye Lake.

There were no other incidents to report.

September the 13st, 1942

In the course of mopping of the woodland between the highway and Vygonskoye Lake the advancing concentrated forces were under fire time and again.

Apparently, the enemy sacrificed the heavy weapon so as to get possibility to disperse (break up) into small groups.

The operation will be continued.

Trophies captured: 1 antitank gun, 1 heavy machine gun, machine gun disks and cartridge, 31 horse and 37 carriages.

In the course of the Noose contraction to the south of the line Slonim – Baranovichi the units led by the head of SS and the police of Byelorussia keep on advancing occupying the initial starting points which are mostly reached. The advancing passed with no significant incidences.

In the course of chasing the gang 10 km to the North of Slonim in the direction to Lida the gendarmerie post took from the escaping bandits 1 antitank gun, 3 light machine rifles and ammunition.

In the morning of the 13th of September, 1942 a large gang attacked the SD party of the SS Hauptsturmführer Liebram who was performing an intelligence mission in the North part of the Oginskiy Channel (at Vygonskoye Lake). Consequently 6 SS-members were killed including the SS-Hauptsturmführer Liebram and 4 Lettish policemen.

September the 14th, 1942

The enemy did not get engaged in the battles but dispersed into small groups, frequently one by one and tried to break into impassable swampy terrain located to the south-east. Advancing of our units is complicated with lack of roads and marshy and wooded terrain and is extremely exhausting for the soldiers.

In the woodland between Brest-Slutsk highway, Vygotskoye Lake and Bobrovskoye Lake the advancing blocking units were fired upon by the enemy in some spots.

A large camp with killed cattle, bicycles and provisions was spotted in the wood, about 7 km to the south of Volk village, besides on September the 14th, 5 camps were spotted near the post located in 154,5 km to the east of Volk village. In the commander's dugout a radio set was spotted. According to the statement of the commander's (captain's) lover the commander ordered to occupy this camp on September the 11th, 1942, and to retreat to Prepyatskiye Bolota or to disperse into small groups in case of the enemy attack.

The enemy hid in impenetrable marshy and wooded country, shot from the distance of 3 meters and then escaped.

11 bandits were shot up in fight.

Captured: 1 radio set, 9 bicycles, important documents, 18 carriages and 11 horses.

Bobrovichi and Tupitsy located at Bobrovskoye Lake and known as bandit villages were burned down, 80 persons were shot up.

12 persons more were shot up for support of the bandits.

The units led by the head of SS and Byelorussia police with Barkhold and Schredder's group occupied new starting points in the course of the Noose contraction.

In Podosovtsy village 48 more persons collaborating with the bandits were shot up, 11 defensive posts were burned down.

The mopping up the area located to the south of the line Slonim-Baranovich will be continued.

On September the 12th, 1942, 350 Jews were shot up by SD.

September the 15th, 1942

The special operation executed by the SS 1st infantry (motorized) brigade in the area between Brest-Slutsk highway and Vygonskoye Lake is completed on September the 4th, 1942.

The SS 1st infantry (motorized) brigade occupies a new barrier line to execute a new operation in the area to the North of Ivatsevichi-Chemely highway and makes preparations for advancing to the North.

In the course of the Noose contraction the units led by the head of SS and Byelorussia police occupied new starting points.

no other incidents to report.

September the 16th, 1942

On September the 18th, 1942, in the course of the Noose contraction the units occupied new attack lines.

2 security suspects were shot up.

September the 17th, 1942

In the course of the further mopping up the area 21 bandits more were shot up, 5 farms used as bandit defensive posts were burned down.

September the 18th, 1942

The operation against the spotted bandit camp located to the North of Ivantsevichi and to the east of the Grivda River was started.

The execution of the operation is complicated because of a numerous number of road-blocks and felled-trees decelerating the advancing of the motorized subunits.

The SS 1st infantry (motorized) brigade and Schredder's police group had armed conflicts with the enemy which had escaped but then was surrounded.

12 bicycles, several radio sets and other property were captured.

5-6 bandits trying to break the blockade were shot up.

The operation will be continued on September the 19th, 1942.

September the 19th, 1942

In the course of the sweeping of the operation area on September the 19th, 1942, 81 armed bandits and 200 bandit accomplices were shot up.

The bandit village Zatishye (about 10 km to the south-west of Ivatsevichi) was destroyed.

The operation executed in the south part of mousetrap was completed in the evening, most surrounded enemy groups are annihilated.

September the 20th, 1942

During September the 20th, 1942, mopping up of the area restricted by the reference grid 02 in the North, by the Shara River in the east and south-east up to the highway, then along the highway up to Nekhachevo was completed by the SS 1st (motorized) infantry brigade.

Having completed the operation the brigade's units were distributed around the entire area.

On September, 20, the head of SS and of the police of Byelorussia with Bintz's, Shredder's and Barkhold's groups mopped up the occupied area restricted by the reference grid 02 in the south, 2 bandits were shot up.

Vygonischi village located to the south of Vygonskoye Lake was burned down in revenge for the attack of Liebram's SD party which had been disclosed to the bandits by the villagers.

According to the verbal order of Reichsführer the operation "Marsh fever" of September the 21st, 1942, will be completed.

For the further suppressing and mopping up of this territory the 1st infantry (motorized) brigade stays in the operation area Baranovichi-Slonim-Kosovo-Vygonskoye Lake.

The head of SS and of the police of Byelorussia was ordered to redeploy his units in other areas threatened by the bandits and to annihilate the bandits in the course of individual operations.

The control headquarters is recalled from Baranovichi and Minsk and all of the units of the superior head of SS and of Ostland police are redeployed to Riga.

In the course of a large operation against the gangs in Byelorussia from August the 25th, to September the 21st, 1942:

a) 49 bandit camps, bunkers and defensive posts were burned down and destroyed, as well as the villages located on the swampy terrain which served as a shelter for bandits

b) 389 armed bandits were shot up in the fight c) 1274 security suspects were shot up,

8350 Jews were annihilated,

e) 1217 persons were evacuated.

Captured:

3 antitank guns,
2 heavy machine guns,
1 light machine rifle,
1 radio set (receiver and transmitter), several receivers,
rifles and other firearms,
a great amount of explosives and ammunition, trench bombs, mine,
equipment and other stores, as well as
1 lorry and 1 car,
42 bicycles,
80 carriages,
62 horses,
5 cows and provision.
The operation was completed on September the 21th, 1942.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 932, Sheets 57 – 78
Translated from German.*

14. Report of the gendarmerie post in Begoml to the regional head of SS and gendarmerie of Borisov in Pleschenitsy on the fight of gendarmerie posts of Begoml and Pleschenitsy and the 26th Lettish police battalion with the partisans in the area of Zamostye and Osovy

The town of Begomil

September the 30th, 1942

Top secret!

On September the 28th, 1942, gendarmes of Begoml and Plesche and the 26th Lettish battalion and police soldiers marched jointly in Berete, Zamostye and Osovy. The march numbered 96 persons. During cordon-ing Osovy village at about 2 p.m. the bandits brought down fire against us from the distance of 200 m, we returned fire immediately. The gang in an unknown number came into position at the margin of the woods. We succeeded in reaching the margin of the woods, after that the bandits fled. We could not advance further because of swampy terrain.

The sister of policeman Tarasevich from Brod Metinskaya volost came on September, 29, and reported that 14 critically wounded bandits arrived by peasant carts in the evening of September, 28, and then went further to Okraitsy. We did not succeed to state if the bandits had further losses. There were no own losses.

The bandits erected a distillery at the margin of the woods which was still at work. It was blown up. Immediately after that in Osovy village 5 men including the village headmen were shot up. According to reliable information they collaborated with the bandits.

The gendarmery Meister and
and the post commander
The signature is illegible

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc.17, Sheet 64
A copy. Translated from German.*

15. Report by SS Obersturmführer Fletsch on the results of punitive operation "Swamp fever"

The city of Minsk

October the 6th, 1942

Concerning: operation "Swamp fever".

Throughout the period from 25.8.1942 to 21.9.1942, a large-scale punitive anti-partisan action was carried out in Belorussia. The following units were involved in it:

- a) the 1st brigade of SS forces;
- b) Binz' police regiment;
- c) Schröder's police regiment;
- d) Barkhold's police regiment;
- e) The 15th Lettish guard police regiment and [...] of the 26th Lettish guard police regiment as reserve force.
- f) the units of Belorussia Security police and SD commander reinforced by a special command from Germany.

The operation was carried out under overall leadership of SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln.

The large-scale operation comprised a series of minor action which were assigned special names:

1) Operation "Swamp fever "North" Troenfeldt". The operation was aimed at wiping out the gang counting 150-400 people deployed in marshland on Olkhova island, 3 km southward of lake Domzheritskoye (police map, red 233). The operation was carried out on 25.8.1942 r.

2) Operation "Swamp fever "North" Binz". The operation was aimed at extermination of three gangs deployed in woodland southward of Vilya, between Staki and Kostiki (police map, blue, 2217 and 2218). The operation started on 26.8.1942 by advance from the North. To prevent the opponent from retreating southwards, a fence line was set up along road Pleshchnitsi (blue 2246) – Kholatevichi (blue 2246) – Rilnya (Blue 2232 – Tokari (blue 2231) Starzinki (blue 2230) to Sosenki (blue 2229)

The operation over (31.8.1942), a partial operation was carried out between the rivers Tsna and Taina, in the area of Mostishche – Chemki – Mylnitsa (blue 2274) where about 200 gangsters are deployed.

1) Operation “Swamp fever “North” Troenfeldt III”.

On the area limited by villages Chiritsin (blue 2363) Terebel (blue 2375), Kovalevichi (blue 2375/76), Tolkachevici (blue 2375), Gua (blue 2374), Yacheyka (blue 2361), Osoka (blue 2362) and lake Sineye (2375) gangs were found to the number of about 150 people. The territory was cleared on 01.9.1942.

The battle groups joined the operation and cleared the territory of powerful partisan gangs found on the territory: towards Uzdy along road Shatsk (blue 2388), Loshcha (blue 2386), Uzda (blue 2372/85).

5) Operation “Swamp fever “South-west””

On the territory westward and southward of Baranovich (Blue 1778/80) restricted on the west with general line Slonim (blue 1775/85), Mozitovichi (1813), Ol'shanitsa (blue 1825), Nekhachevo (blue 1839), Koziki (blue 1854); a general line running thence to the Northern extremity of lake Bobrovitskoye (blue 1843/56), Ostrov (Island blue 1818), Derevnia (village Blue 1791) and Slonim, large gangs were found. Teeming with especially strong gangs was the area around Kosovo and its near neighborhood. The territory was cleared within the period from 8 to 21.9.1942 by surrounding the partisans and by mopping up the area.

On 21.9.1942, operation “Swamp fever” was over.

[Fletsch] SS Obersturmführer

*NARB, F.1440, Inv.3, Doc.1, Sheets 77, 79
A copy. Translated from German.*

16. A report of the gendarmerie post in Begoml' to the chief of SS gendarmerie on Borisovo district on carrying out operations against villages Svol'na and Domzheritsi

The settlement of Begoml'

October the 7th, 1942

Concerning: operative account.

On 5.10.1942, a joint operation was carried out against villages Svol'na and Domzheritsi by police, gendarmerie and the 546th battalion, 26th Lettish battalion and local police. The participants forces totaled 68 persons. When besieging village Domzheritsi in 15.30, about 400 m from the village, 3 gangsters were noticed in bushes. They made several shots; reprisal fire was opened on them and the gangsters retreated. During the pursuit of the gangsters, one of them was shot, however, another gangster carried away his weapons. The marshy and forested terrain obstructed the pursuit. When 2 groups had penetrated the forest by about 500 m, they came to a river about 30 m wide. Approximately 30 gangsters were crossing the river in a boat. On the opposite bank they improvised a defense. Traces of blood were found at the place of crossing, which meant that some of the gangsters were wounded. The mutual skirmish lasted about 15 minutes, and the Letts used a mortar.

In the course of interrogating the inhabitants of village Domazheritsi it was found out that most of the inhabitants are in contact with partisans and spend most of their time in the forest. A German rolling kitchen was found in a vacant house; the house was burnt. Some more houses burnt down as a result of the fire. No losses on our side.

*Bichl
Gendarmerie master and chief of the post*

17. The report of the commander of the 25th Lettish police battalion, oberlieutenan Plikauss on the results of operation “Zhuravel”

The town of Ovruch

October the 22th, 1942

The 1st group “South”.

Departure from Ovruch to village Kuzmichi on 8.10.1942. at 11.15. Arrival to Kuzmichi at 14.30. Forces: 9 commissioned officers, 11 Unterführers and 185 privates. 9. 10.42 – mopping up the forest southward of village Kuzmichi. No special incidents.

10.10.42 – mopping up the forest from village Kuzmichi towards Roschishche (see diagram № 1)⁴. Two gangster encampments deserted about a month ago were found. Also, a hootch still was found in the forest 400 m eastward of village Zhuki.

11.10.42 – mopping up the forest southward of village Roschische (see diagram № 1)⁵. 6 encampments deserted by the gangsters were found. 3 men and 5 women captured in the forest; 1 Russian rifle, 1 Russian handgun, ammunition and explosives were confiscated from them. The gangsters were given over to SD.

12.10.42 – mopping up the forest Northward of Koshchishche (see diagram № 1)⁶.

II group – “North” (the 3rd squadron).

Departure from Ovruch on 8.10.42. Joining the platoon in Yelsk and further advance towards Remezy. Arrival to Remezy at 11.00. Staff: 3 commissioned officers, 11 Unterführers and 57 privates. A fight with the gangsters took place in Remezy, but the results are not determined due to darkness.

9.10.42 – a gangster encampment was found when mopping up the forest towards Remezy-Zabolot’ye- Pavlovka. The gang disappeared promptly. Ammunition, livestock and construction materials for a winter encampment were confiscated. The livestock is given over to the in Yelsk.

⁴ The sheme is not published.

⁵ The sheme is not published.

⁶ The sheme is not published.

An unsuccessful clash with the gangsters took place on the way back. Gebietskomissar

10.10.42 – mopping up the forest near Remizy, an ammunition depot was found containing 5 000 Russian cartridges.

11.10.42. and 12.10.42 – mopping up the forest (see diagram № 1)⁷, no result.

12.10.42 at 17.30, joining group "South" in Koshchishche.

13.10.42 – the battalion returned to Yelsk. On the way back, the both sides of the road within a distance of 1 km were mopped up, but unsuccessfully.

14.10. and 15.10.42 – the battalion took rest in Yelsk.

Signed by Oberlieutenant Plikauss

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 1, Seets 61- 64
A copy. Translated from German.*

⁷ The sheme is not published.

18. The order of the SD and security police commander on a reconnaissance for partisans in the area of Pleshchnitsi – Glubokoye – Dokschtsi

November the 10th, 1942

1. Large gangs are reported in the area of Pleshchnitsi – Glubokoye – Dolginovo with their centers most likely to deploy within the Dvina turn, near Krasnoye – Lesniki.

SS and police supreme commander ordered to reconnoiter the area immediately for arranging operations against those gangs.

The reconnaissance group comprises:

SS Hauptstumführer Wilke – chief of the reconnaissance command

SS HauptScharführer Paugstadt

SS Obershcarführer Dobat

SS Sturmbannführer Feldmann

SS Scharführer Meiwald, the chauffer

SS Unterscharrführer Oliger, the chauffer

SS-mann Stabler, the chauffer

Lettish soldier Eglits, manual machine gunner

Grimmer

Borauskis

Lukahsov (Belorussian), a civil reconnoiterer (agent)

Dem'yanenko, a civil reconnoiterer (agent)

Zeile, an interpreter

Simanovich, an interpreter.

The reconnaissance command is deployed in Glubokoye.

2. The reconnaissance operation is aimed at: to find out the exact location of the gang, its manpower, guard and armament, as well as to reconnoiter the territory controlled by the gang in terms of the position of the population, to reconnoiter the terrain paying special attention to the accesses to the encampment, to drive ways, their condition and availability of bridges.

Communicate via the radio plant stationed in Glubokoye. Information shall be conveyed Afternoon.

3. Reconnaissance instructions:

During reconnaissance, use the data obtained from local civilians, policemen and confidants recruited.

The reconnaissance shall be carried out in secret lest the opponent's intelligence guess about the operation being planned. During the reconnaissance, by no means give any hints about the intended operation against the gangs.

4. The reconnaissance command shall return upon the appropriate order.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 969, Sheets 84, 86
Translated from German.*

19. From diurnal order № 8 of Belarus Riot Service Police commander colonel Klepsch on expressing commendation to the officership and staff of the 24th and 26th Lettish police battalions

The city of Minsk

November the 15th, 1942

9) Lettish guard battalion № 24 and 26.

Upon withdrawal of the 24th and 26th Lettish guard battalion from the territory subject to the Belorussian commander, I express my commendation to the units, especially to battalions commanders, Oberlieutenant Weweris and oberlieutenant Appertas as well as to German liaison officers, guard police Hauptmann Marquart and SS Hauptsturmführer Wihmann for high moral of the of units and for the skills they demonstrated in many actions.

I also wish a lot of soldier's happiness to the both Lettish guard battalions in future.

Signed by Klepsch, Colonel of police

*NARB, F. 389, Inv. 1, Doc. 1, Sheets 62–62, rev.
A copy. Translated from German.*

20. Battle order № 1 of SS Standartenführer Piefraider, chief of Ostland security police and SD control headquarters to SS Hauptshurmführer Wilke on intensifying reconnaissance activity near rivers Disna and Berezina

The city of Minsk

November the 17th, 1942

Operation: Glubokoye.

Location: Glubokoye.

Chief: SS Hauptsturmführer Wilcke.

Reconnaissance area: The previously specified reconnaissance area is expanded by the territory of Mior (2076), Disnensk (2080) and Pliss (2130) districts. Especially woodland Gorodets (2104/2105) and the district along the Belorussian border (the rear of army group “Centre”), between Disna and Berezina (2184).

Forces-in-being: 1:28.

Secondary forces:

SS Hauptsturmführer Kaufmann

SS Hauptsturmführer Engelmaier

SS obersturmführer Wirtig

6 people from the security police (SiPo)

6 chauffeurs.

33 Lettish policemen

1 commercial vehicle

2 cars

1 bus.

Piefraider
SS Standartenführer

*NARB, F. 1140, Inv. 3, Doc. 969, Sheet 91
A copy. Translated from German.*

21. From the political report of the officership of partisan brigade "For Soviet Belarus" to the central headquarters of partisan movement (CHPM) on the activity of the brigade from the 15th of October to the 1st of December, 1942

December the 5th, 1942

[...] 4. The operation against the Lettish battaions. On the 10th of February, reconnaissance data were received about the opponent being concentrated in the area of Shtyaune – Sar'ya – Drissa. The opponent might have aimed at attacking from the west in cooperation with the opponent's forces advancing from the east. On the 15th of February, a few Lettish battalions which had arrived from Zipule, Yasuna and presumably from Riga, supported by 5 airplanes, started their advance from the border of Shtyaune – Sar'ya – Drissa against the partisan brigades headed by Zakharov, Grebenkin, and Gerasimove, deployed eastward of the boundary. The brigades, running out of ammunition and lacking centralized command, failed to resist the onsurge of the opponent, superior in strength and properly organized. Clinging to each defensive line, the partisans were hurriedly retreating to the east. On the 25th of February, the opponent occupied Kokhanovich, on the 26th of February – Osveya, on the 28th of February – Zaytsevo.

On the 26th of February, Shtrakhov received an order to defeat the opponent's group along his line, operating together with Belorussians. By that time, a conference of Belorussian brigade commanders was summoned, with participation of Shtrakhov, who was elected to coordinate the activity of all brigades.

Shtrakhov created 3 groups:

1. Headed by brigade commander Gavrilov, with attached brigades of Boydin, Karnaushenko and Lisovski, one Lettish regiment, 5 detachments of Okhotin, with the mission of defending the sector of Kurashi – Dubrovo – Gorodilovich – Tserkovno, with a rear attack on Osveya, passing around Osveyskoye lake.

The brigade of Zakharov with the mission of defending the sector of Kurashi – Moskalenki.

The group of Veslova, to which the brigades of A. Romanov, P. Romanov, Gerasimov and Khomchenko were attached, with the mission of

defending the sector of Moskalenki – Zadezhye – Ostriy Konets and of attacking Kokhanovichi and Zaitsevo.

After defensive actions near Gorodilovich, an abortive assault of Kokhanovichi and the rear attack passing around Osveyskoye lake (due to lack of ammunition coupled by brooks and rivers flooding) – on the 7th of March, all the Kalinin brigades except for mine were withdrawn from the defense. I was ordered to replace them. Shtrakhov was dismissed from overall command. After that, the command of acting brigades was assigned to comrade Bardadyn.

The only reason why I'm describing the operation is the fact that I was also made responsible for it, along with Bardadyn and Shtrakhov, in the radiogram from comrade Ponomarenko. However, I did not exert much influence on the general course of the operation apart from directly performing the specific missions assigned to the brigade, since after the operation I carried out on the 10th-15th of February, certain atmosphere of discredit was created among the senior decision makers concerning centralized leadership, and also due to the fact that the commanders (Shtrakhov, later – Bardadyn) were provided.

On the 9th of March, 12 bombardment aircrafts Yu-87 was continuously bombing and wiping out the partisan defense line: Zadezh'ye – lake Strelkovskoye – lake Belaye and dozens of villages located along the river Svolna, an also eastward and southward of it, forest fringes, places of partisans deployment and concentration. My three detachments were simultaneously attacked by 10 bombers in the district of lake Belaye – lake Stradnoye. The opponent advanced from Kokhanovich, Zaytsevo, Velokoye Selo towards Lisno, Zadezhye – Morochkovo – Motorino – Milovidy. On the 10th of March, 8 bombardment aircrafts were bombing and sweeping the partisans areas for 8 hours. Over the two days of hostilities, the opponent forced the partisans to the eastern bank of the rivers Svolna and consolidated there. After 10 days of hostilities on the river Svolna boundary and on the territory occupied by the opponent, the brigades of A. Romanov, P. Romanov, Zakharov, Gerasimov, and Khomchenko and the Lettish detachment, under overall coordination of Bardadyn, – on the 21st of March, the opponent under cover three aircrafts Vokke-Wulf-190 started withdrawal towards Sebez, Osveya and Kokhanovichi. On the 22th of March, the opponent withdrew from the woodland southward of the river Svolna, and in the following days they withdrew from the whole Osveya district between the Lettish border and the river Svolna. The op-

ponent burnt down all the settlements and exterminated or brought to Germany all the people who remained there.

During the operation, it was determined on the basis of the reconnaissance data as well as the documents and prisoners taken by Sergeevski detachment that the following forces opposed us – one Estonian battalion (the number was not determined), the 251th Lithuanian and the 279th 266th, 277th, 289th, 278th, 265th and other Lettish volunteer battalions.

On the 31st of March, 2 of my detachments together with the Kalinin brigades carried out an operation aimed at undermining a large railroad bridge near village Sevkino, on road Sebezh – Idritsa. The bridge was exploded and 2 garrisons were wiped out. Loot was taken. Also, the detachment of Kotovski exploded an 8 m long railroad bridge in the same area. More details are provided in the combat report. [...]

NARB, F. 140,. Inv. 1,. Doc. 143, Sheets 7-11

22. Operative order of the Belorussia security police and SD commander Obersturmführer Strauch about the participation of the Lettish riot policemen and ordinary policemen in reconnaissance operations near Ivenets

The city of Minsk

December the 5th, 1942

1). Anti-gangsters operation "Tannenbaum" is planned by the SS police commander in the woodland westward of Ivenets.

To obtain more detailed reconnaissance information, a security police command is dispatched to Ivenets.

2). The command includes the following commissioned officers and privates:

Head: SS Hauptsturmführer Wilcke

SS Hauptsturmführer Kaufmann

SS Hauptsturmführer Engelmeier

SS Sturmscharrführer Schweller

SS Hauptscharrführer Wichmann

SS Scharrführer Zapf

SS Unterscharrführer Wiedler

SS Scharrführer Zapf Gusek

SS Scharrführer Hans

SS Oberscharrführer Zwicker

SS Sturmann Kirschei

SS Hauptscharrführer Zemke

SS Unterscharrführer Russell

SS Hauptscharrführer Weinhefer

Chauffeur Konechni

12 Lettish employees of the security police.

23 Lettish policemen.

The command's mission is reconnoitering in the area westward of Ivenets in order to determine the position, manpower, armament and equipment of the partisans encampments, as well as the territory and the roads, paying special attention to the condition of the bridges in the area.

The reconnaissance results shall be immediately forwarded here. Immediately after Gottberg's battle group has arrived, the command chief shall come in contact with the battle group and inform them on the reconnaissance results.

The duration of the operation is estimated till 20.12.42.

Vedder

*NARB, F. 3500, Inv.2, Doc. 960, Sheets 74-75
A copy. Translated from German.*

23. Combat order by Belorussian SS and police chief Gottberg on carrying out operation "Hamburg"

December the 7th, 1942

SD 7.XII-42.

Gottberg's battle group
(official use only)

Combat order concerning operation "Hamburg"

Maps: ⁸	Large sheet	336	1: 100 000	Bridges
	- " -	337	1: 100 000	Novogradok
	- " -	344	1: 100 000	Volkovyssk
	- " -	345	1: 100 000	Baranovichi
	special publication	Slonim	1: 300 000	

1. Enemy's disposition

Large partisans gangs are deployed in 8 encampments with strong forward defense near the bifurcation of the rivers Neman – Shchara, and within a small band on the western bank on the Shchara – Belitsa (1697-1:100 000 88 (20) – Slonim.

a) The commander of the enemy's forces has his own headquarters in Ruda-Yavorska (60/06), and a radio station.

b) Partisans' encampment № 1:

the encampment is deployed on hillock 145, 2 km southeastward of Ruda-Yavorska, approximately 1 km westward of hillock 145 and 1 km Northward of Ruda-Yavorksa.

⁸ Maps are not published.

Partisans' encampment № 2:

the encampment is deployed approximately 2.5 km Northeastwards of Dubrovshchina (54/08) and 1 km North-westward of Skoporovski Bor (56/12).

Partisans' encampment № 3:

in the woodland between Daborsk (48/05) and Lupachi (54/0..), on the western bank of the Shchara; the exact position is unknown, seemingly 1 km Northward of Slitse-Peskovka.

Partisans' encampment № 4:

the encampment is deployed in the woodland, approximately 2.5 km Northward of Volya-Krupitsa (58-02) in the vicinity of forestry Blotne – Korytsino - (62/02).

Partisans' encampment № 5:

The exact position of this encampment is unknown. It is deployed in a marshy forest approximately 2.5 – 3 km southeastward of Malaya Volya (55/03), about point 124.

Partisans' encampment № 6:

The encampment is deployed in the forest between Ruda-Lipichanska (66/02) and Pushcha Lipichanska, partially in the houses of these villages.

Partisans' encampment № 7:

The encampment is deployed in the woodland, approximately 3 km Northward of Rzhenshche (66/10). The exact position is unknown.

Partisans' encampment № 8:

The encampment is deployed between Gole (42/09) and the Shchara, approximately 1 km westward of Yedngachi (43/11).

b) Partisans gangs' armament.

The partisans gangs are differently armed. There are some rifles and probably machine rifles at the headquarters in Ruda-Yavorska; also on the south fringe of the "Pushcha Lipichanska" forest, along the line of Skoporovski Bor (55/12) – Dubrovshchina (55/08) there are some old tanks, obviously faulty. They are adapted for guarding and equipped with ma-

chine rifles. Encampment 2 has one cannon 7,5 cm, encampment 3 is said to possess a small combat and cannons of unknown caliber, and 2 cars. Encampment 8 near Gole is said to be but poorly armed. Nothing is known about the armament of the remaining encampments.

c) Partisans gangs' manpower.

Encampment 1:	about 500 people, basically Russian, very few Jews.
Encampment 2:	500 people, 100 out of them horsed.
Encampment 3:	About 500 people
Encampment 4:	About 100 people.
Encampment 5:	About 100 people.
Encampment 6:	number of people unknown, very many Jews
Encampment 7:	500 people, many Jews among them.
Encampment 8:	about 400 people, very many Jews among them

Besides, it should be noted that there are women and children in all the encampments which are included in the above manpower numbers, so the exact information about the actual combativity cannot be provided.

d) Guard: apart from the aforesaid tanks adapted for guarding, patrols are continuously moving around the territory and partially advance until Slonim. no information about their stations can be provided.

e) Heads:

The encampments are under command of colonel Borisov, he has no left arm. The commander of the encampment near Dubrovka is a certain

Bulak who is said to be extremely large-headed. The commander of the encampment near Gele is a certain Maxim, which is surely his nickname, as well as Bulak.

The commanders of other encampments have not been identified.

f) River crossing facilities:

The previously destroyed bridge over the Shchara near Vel'kaya Volya (58/02) has been restored by the gangsters. There are no other bridges over the Shchara in the area of the operation. Southward of the river Soroki (70/82) there is a ferry over the Neman, but a gangsters' guard is on duty on the other bank. The relief for the guard (about 100 gangsters) arrives from Goluby (67/94). Nothing is known about other river-crossing facilities.

g) The villages friendly to the gangsters:

The reconnoiterers name the following villages especially friendly to the gangsters: Vasilevichi (32/19), Porechetsi (34/19), Zasvor'ye (36/19), Ferad'ki (38/19), Komlevichi (38/19), Pavlovichi (39/16), Niz (40/16).

2) Mission.

The mission of the subunits under my command is to attack and wipe out the gangsters. Every gangster, Jew, Gipsy or suspicious person shall be treated as an enemy. All prisoners taken shall be immediately given over to SD.

3. Subordinate forces:

a) police regiment № 2 with 2 battalions and squadron of signalers № 221.

the following forces are subject to the former: the squadron of Lonin (see the preliminary order), a howitzer battery of Minsk with 2 cannons and 2 anti-aircraft guns, and the units of the 389th development battalion of the Wehrmacht in Slonim.

b) police battalion 1/23;

c) police battalion 1/24;

d) Lettish police battalion 15;

e) Ukrainian police battalion 115.

The following forces are subject to it: the squadron of Lied (see the preliminary order) 13th gendarme motorized squadron and units of the 23rd training battalion of Wermaht from the town of Lida

e) the 271th Lettish police battalion with 4 squadrons (regiment mortars).

4. Reconnaissance

Close reconnaissance shall be carried out upon agreement with the SD attached to each subunit.

5. Combat plan:

Upon surrounding the partisan gangs near the rivers Neman and Shchara with simultaneously mopping up the western bank of the Shchara, the advance is transferred to the river corner from the west.

6. Employment of the forces:

The forces are introduced into action at surrounding the opponent in the following sequence:

a) on the Northern bank of the Neman, the 115th Ukrainian police battalion is deployed with the squadron from town Lida (see the preliminary order) and the units of the development battalion of the Wehrmach in Lida, and the 13 motorized gendarmerie platoon subordinated to it.

the right boundary: Zabor'ye (68/83),

the left boundary: Peskovtsi (78/10).

The gangsters, Jews, Gypsies, and any suspicious persons shall be prevented from crossing the Neman and fleeing. The forces assigned to participate in the operation shall be reinforced in the westward direction. First of all, all river-crossing facilities shall be destroyed;

b) On the western bank of the river Shchara: the battalion on the 2nd police battalion with a subordinated squadron (see the preliminary order) and the units of the 389th battalion of the Wehrmacht in Slonim are deployed. The area occupied by the gangsters on the western bank of the river Shchara shall be surrounded in such a way as to reach the next line by the evening of 11.XII upon wiping put the 8th encampment. The next line is: the western bank of the river Shchara North-

ward of the point where the Bereza falls into the Shchara (46/09) – North – Pinskevichi (44/07) – North-western exit from Ostrov (46/02) – North-east, exit from Vil'ki (50/97) – western part of Maly Yezerki (50/95), Mekhovsk (52/93) – western fringe of Kuritovich (55/91) – road Kuritovich-Malkevichi (59/86) – Korole (62/85) – Shchara.

12.XII. upon extermination of the partisan gang and their encampment (encampment 3), the western bank of the Shchara shall be reached along the line: the point of the Bereza falling into Shchara (46/09) – Korole (62/85). The gangsters, Jews, Gypsies, and any suspicious persons shall be prevented from crossing the Shchara and fleeing. The forces assigned the mission shall be reinforced in the Northwestward direction.

c) On the district border in Belostok direction:

The following line shall have been seized by 12.XII.42: Korole (62/80) – Novoselki (62/80) – the confluence of the rives Shchara – Memel – the western bank of the river Memel – Zabor'ye (68/83). The gangsters, Jews, Gypsies, and any suspicious persons shall be prevented from crossing the Neman or the Shchara and fleeing.

d) Zone of attack 1/23:

The right boundary: The southern bank of the river Neman; the left boundary: Oshenovka (78/33) – Pogiri (76/24) – Northwestern exit form Porzechki (72/16) – Tserkov Nakrishki (70/13) – Turova Gora (68/09) – North: Strodoly (68/05) – via the forest (68/02) from the North--ast to south-west – town Gretski (66/97) – the southern bank of the Sokol –Gora (66/94) – the southern exit form Stukaly (67/90) – town Obsokh P (66/86).

e) Zone of attack of Lettish police batalion 271.

The right boundary – the same as the left boundary as per item 6 d

The left boundary – Novoselnya (68/38) – Vedrovichi (68/33), Savichi (66/27) – Lyudichi (65/17), Teofilin (64/08) – Novoselki (64/05) – Utorki (64/3), road junction, Northward of town Rapna (64/95) – Luza Gora (65/85).

The 4th squadron shall be deployed so as to able to act within zone of attack 1/24.

f) Zone of attack 1/24:

The right boundary – the same as the left boundary as per item 6 c).

The left boundary: Zatozhi (54/39) – the southern part of Rabotna (56/32) – road junction (56/24) – the Northern fringe of Lozhki (58/16) – the Northern fringe of Tartak (60/06) – 500 m Northward of Moskae (62/96) – the Northern fringe of mountain Shestitsi (63/80) – town Silishche (64/87), the southern fringe of the bend of the river Neman (64/85).

g) Zone of attack of the 15th Lettish police battalion. The right boundary – the same as the left one as per item 6 d.

The left boundary: the Northern fringe of village (40/32) – Shestaki (44/28) – Maskovtse (49/20), Dubrovshchina (55/08) – Krupitse Volya (58/02) – Shchara (35/).

h) The zone of attack of the right battalion of the 2nd police regiment. The right boundary is the same as the left boundary, 6 g.

The left boundary: the right bank of the river Shchara. The artillery shall be positioned so as to be able to act in the zone of attack of Lettish police battalion № 15 as well.

7. Afternoon targets:

a) by the evening of the 11th, the advancing forces shall reach the following general line: the bridge over the Neman (86/18) – Nisitivitsi (86/20) – road Nisitivitsi – Pogiri (76/24) – Nortsevich (74/27) – Kurpesh (72/28) – Miklashi (66/32) – Kulikovshchizna (64/31) – Ragotna (56/32) – road from Ragotna southwards via Dovglastovichi (46/32) – Prud (43/31) – Pironim (41/27) – Feradishchara.

b) At the evening of the 12.XII-42, the advancing forces shall break forwards mopping up forest areas and villages and reach the next line: the southern bank of the Neman at the level of the western edge of the island southward of Motsivich (76/06) – Karasoshki (75/07) – Dubrovka (75/10) – the eastern bank of Vyazovka – the exit from Khvinevich (70/16) – Vyatski (63/21) – the western exit from Khirichi (66/20) – the western fringe of Vyazovichi (63/21) – the road from Vyazovichi- via Medvishovichi- Drabovich (53/18) – Solovizh (49/26) – Barkhuti (47/09) – Shchara.

The prefects and other suitable persons shall be used for finding out the people friendly to the gangsters and other suspicious people and

exterminate them, as well as Jews and Gypsies. Certain subunits of Gottberg's battle group moving along the rout towards the line (evening 12.XII) have a right to severely punish the persons and villages friendly to the enemy.

8. Confiscation of agricultural products

a) Sonderführer (K) Prekwinkel is placed under orders of Gottberg's battle group headquarters.

b) On Sonterführer is appointed to the headquarters of each battalion.

c) Missions for a) and b):

1. Guard and full confiscation of all the agricultural products in the zone of attack.

2. Proposals to the commanders concerning the villages and persons to be exterminated.

d) The loot taken after operation "Hamburg" shall be transferred to district commissars upon satisfying the demands of the units engaged in the action.

e) Local police forces shall be engaged in guarding the convoys made up by the Sonderführers (see the preliminary order).

9. Communication facilities:

Each battalion is provided with one movable radio station to stay in contact with the headquarters of Gottberg's battle group; Gottberg also possesses a police radio station in Baranovichi (identification:), as well as telegraph.

The movable radio station are distributed and delivered to the sub-units as follows:

a) police battalion 1/23 obtains movable radio station 2, which will be prepared for shipment at goods station in Minsk at 6.00 8.XII.1942.

b) Police battalion 1/24 uses the Wehrmacht radio station already at their disposal.

c) c The Lithuanian police battalion № 15 obtains a movable radio station to be shipped by railway to Novoselnya with battalion 1/25, where it shall be transferred to the 15th battalion.

d) The 115th police battalion obtains radio station 1 which has so far been used by the 18th Lettish battalion. The radio station will be shipped by railroad to Lida and thence to Zheludok under its own power.

e) Lettish police battalion № 271 is allotted a Wehrmacht radio station. The radio station will be ready for shipment to Novoyel'nya at 6.00 8.XII.42 at the goods station in Minsk. In Novoyel'nya, it will be transferred to the 271th battalion.

e) Placed under orders of police battalion № 2 is the 211th signaling squadron.

g) Police battalion 1/24 gives over their backpack transmitter to Ukrainian battalion № 15 for the period of operation.

h)

The identification and frequency will be reported in a separate programs schedule.

The cipher key lists attached shall be observed when telegraphing important tactical data. If necessary, use the Wehrmacht mail and telegraph networks.

10. The operation is named "Hamburg".

11. Light signals:

green – "Here I am"

red – "The enemy is advancing"

12. Dressing stations: their guard shall be appointed by local officers. The ambulance is in Baranovichi, the hospitals are in Slonim and Lida.

13. Data communication: morning report – 8.00 a.m evening report – 19.00 a.m.

Any special incidents shall be reported immediately. The copies of the operation orders shall be transmitted to the battle group.

14. Password:

Password for the operation “Hamburg” – “Kiev”.

15. The command post of Gottberg’s battle group is deployed in Baranovichi.

Signed by Gottberg

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 960, Sheets 57–64
Translated from German.*

**24. From the report of the SS and police chief
in Borisov district on the activity f
rom the 1st of June to the 30th on September, 1942**

Pleshchnitsi

December the 10th, 1942

Over the past months, the gangsters have intensified their activity without any restraint. The local population are depressed due to the intensified gangster's activity, since they expect to be massacred by the gangsters. First of all, the people feel uncertain in remote villages, since it is there that the gangsters appear most often. They come to those villages not only at night, but also in daylight, and confiscate livestock, foodstuffs and clothes from the people. Many cars which moved in a motor convoy were subjected to fire by the gangsters. Incidents of roads explosions and of bridges being burnt down interrupt the process of supplying the German forces. Creation of regular Belorussian self-defense is impeded; since no one ventures to start self-defense for fear of the gangsters' retaliation. Even in district centers certain degree of neurosis is perceived due to the partisans' activity in the near neighborhood.

The people were not even comforted by the 26th Lettish battalion's arrival to Begoml'. When the Lettish battalion was in action, the gangsters grouped into large units. Active shooting with tracer bullets takes place at night.

After the retreat of the Lettish battalion in August, the gangsters have appeared in remote settlements even more frequently. Burglaries of policemen's quarters have taken place repeatedly. The village prefects and policemen are shot, others are threatened with being shot. [...]

On 28.9.1942, a joint operation was carried out by the gendarmerie of the gendarmerie office in Pleshchnitsi and Begoml' and by Lettish battalion and the local police in village Vereten, Ossovy and Zamostoch'ye. The participants totaled 96 people. When surrounding village Ossovy, the gangsters opened fire on the gendarmerie and police from a distance of 200 m, after which reprisal fire was opened. The gang occupied a position on the fringe of the forest. By a sudden advance followed by a 20 minute

long fight we managed to seize the forest fringe and to flee the gangsters, 5 of whom were killed.

It was additionally found out that 14 more gangsters were wounded, some of them badly [...].

NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3,. Doc. 953, Sheets 197 – 201

25. From reconnaissance report № 28 of Belorussian partisan movement headquarters about the deployment of the military subunits and institutions in Minsk

The city of Riga

December the 12th, 1942

[...]Reconnaissance data for Minsk.

The new reconnaissance data obtained as per the 1st of November of this year show that the Germans have concentrated a lot of punitive agencies and military units in Minsk, acting furiously against Soviet citizens and partisans. They accommodated here a lot of large military storage depot for supplying the German army, and try their best to means shall be provided for restoration and operation of the town industry.

Deployment of the military units, Gestapo and other institutions.

1) Gestapo – 600-700 people, basically Letts and Estonians, deployed in the campus, on the premises of the National Economy College named after Kuybyshev [...]

Chief of the Belorussian
Partisan Movement Headquartrs -
brigade commissar

(P. Kalinin)

Unconventional unit of the reconnaissance department -
Senior lieutenant of the state security service

(Livanov)

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 1247, Sheets 47 – 53,
A copy.*

26. The report of the Ostland security police and SD to Reichskommissar of town Loze about the preliminary results of Punitive operation “Hamburg”

December the 15th, 1942

Concerning: The report from Belorussia.

From 11.12.1942, in the area southward Slonim, an anti-partisan operation under code name Hamburg has been in progress, as per the plan. The encampments detected by SD were partially found and exterminated. The opponent made up a stout resistance everywhere. The opponents' losses have so far totaled 561 in killed, 250 out of them were armed.

The loot taken: 1 armored car, a commercial vehicle, a lot of weapons and ammunition as well as wagons.

SS Standartenfuhre

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 969, Sheet 151
A copy. Translated from German.*

**27. The report of the Ostland security police and SD
to Reichskommissar of town Loze about the preliminary
results of Punitive operation "Hamburg"**

The city of Riga

December the 18th, 1942

Concerning: The report from Belorussia.

Further report concerning operation "Hamburg".

The opponent's losses have so far totaled 1 308 people in killed. Our own losses: 7 police sergeant-majors killed, 6 sergeant-majors and 6 privates of the local police wounded.

Loot taken: 2 armored cars, 2 cannons with a caliber equal to 7.62 cm, 3 cannons with a caliber of 4.7 cm (anti-tank) as well as a lot of rifles and machine weapons, ammunition, grain and livestock.

The final mopping up of the area and extermination of the gangster encampments detected by SD and of the most encampments discovered is coming to an end. Despite adverse weather conditions, rain and snowstorms, the troops demonstrated integrity and excellent military skills.

SS Standartenführer

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 952, Sheet 152
A copy. Translated from German.*

28. From the report by the officership of the 125th partisan detachment named after I. V. Stalin belonging to the brigade named after I.V. Stalin, of Baranovichi Region, for January-November 1942

[Not earlier than January the 14th, 1943]

The punitive detachments of Lithuanians and Letts are morally sound, they withstand attacks on level with the Germans. They are armed much better and in addition to rifles and machine rifles they also have machine guns, mortar batteries, artillery; for the period of hostilities they are also allotted tankettes or armored cars, reconnaissance air force, and sometimes bombardment aircrafts

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 4, Doc. 299, Sheets 10, rev -11
An uncertified copy.*

29. Combat order № 1 of Ostland and "Russia – Sever" senior SS and police chief, SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln for carrying out operation "Winter magic" ("Winterzauber")

February the 7th, 1943

1. The persons in chief (the commanders) of groups 8.2.43 take over their groups.

Due to decommissioning of the 2nd and 16th police battalions, the groups shall be created anew.

Group of Schröder:

the 273rd, 280th and 281st police battalions. Subordinated: 1 air defense battery of Kersten, 2 cannons with a caliber equal to 2 cm, transported on horse sledge teams.

Group of Knecht:

Police battalions: the 276th, 277th, 278th and 279th. Subordinate: 1 air defence battery of Gartke (2 cannons with a caliber equal to 2 cm, transported on horse sledge teams).

2. Groups up to 9.2.43 are concentrated in the following spots:

Group of Schröder:

in the area of Indra-Pedruya (police square 2049) – eastern Lettish border.

The 273rd police battalion is transferred to Indra by the railroad with the control headquarters.

Advance from Karsava (police square 2557, red) 4.2.43.

The air defence battery of Kersten is transferred (dispatched) to Indra by the control headquarters.

The transfer of the 280th and 281st police battalions is arranged by department 1c upon agreement with SS Brigadeführer Schröder. The reconnaissance of the quartering area is arranged by Schröder's group.

The command post of group 8.2.43 is located in Indra.

Group of Knecht:

The 279th police battalion and the air defense battery of Gartke are dispatched to the area of Pustina-Asune-Bunstreva by the Runo control headquarters.

The command post of the group is in Asune from 8.2.43.

3. Operating reserves:

The 1(232) Wehrmacht squadron of the 232nd Wehrmacht battalion, the commander is oberlieutenant Artel. Dispatched to Bukmitsa by the control headquarters.

The SS and police squadron is immediately dispatched to Dagna by department 1c from station Kraslau [Kraslava] by the control headquarters; by train with cars.

Half-battery of artillery division 1 is coming up with the control headquarters.

4. Arrival of all headquarters and units to their new dispositions shall be immediately reported by radio to the control headquarters.

The frontier customs guard provides the groups for the units engaged with attendants well acquainted with the country. Besides, attendants across the Lettish-Russian border shall be found in advance. Such attendant shall be agreed with and involved in the operation only before the units occupy the initial boundaries.

All the units engaged in the operation in the districts threatened by the gangsters shall guard themselves with outguards and any appearing gangs shall be wiped out. Major actions shall be avoided across the border.

The Runo control headquarters and Malnava (police square 2558, red) from 8.2.43 in Dagda is reached via the Runo commutator via the Wehrmacht commutator in Rozitten [Rezekne].

A special order will be issued on data transmission paths.

5. The Latvia riot service police commander shall inform the police battalions (except for the 273th and 279th). The units as well as the 273th and 279th police battalions shall be informed by the Runo control headquarters.

6. The security police and SD commander creates his own command post in the Runo control headquarters in Dagda, and from 8.2.43

he takes over the operative commands under his commandment.

At the same time, an OKW platoon for close communication and direction finding is placed under his order; the commander, lieutenant Fischer being currently in Mal'nava. Also, an Estonian police squadron totaling about 1 commander and 150 juniors are immediately dispatched to Kraslau [Kraslava] to the SD riot police commander.

Signed by Jeckeln, SS
Gruppenführer and police general

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 110, Sheets 1 – 3
Translated from German.*

30. The order of Commander of the Security Police and Security Service (SD) in Belarus SS Obersturmbannführer Strauch for participation of the Latvian SS brigade in the Jews' liquidation in the city of Sluck

The city of Minsk

February the 5th, 1943

Our Service is to deport the Jews residing in the city of Slutsk on February the 8th and the 9th, 1943. The deportation shall to be conducted by the officials listed below together with approx. 110 solders from the Latvian legion.

The operation shall be controlled by SS-Obersturmführer Muller.

The participants are to gather for the departure on February the 7th, 1943 at 11.15 in the downstairs corridor of the office building so that to get off by 11.30. Lunch at 10.30.

The convoy will be led by SS Sturmbannführer Breder. The department officers, NCO and solders who will be participating in the operation:

Departments I-II

SS Obersturmführer Kaul and Merbah,
SS Hauptsturmführers Madeker and Schneider,
SS Untersturmführers Wertholz, Muller, Yunker, Shmidt, Wiehert,
SS Sturmscharführer Krause, Zemann,
SS Scharführer Krūze,
Rittwachtmeister Altmann,
SS Rottenführers Nicol, Geiger, Gruner, Schtressinger, Egger, Fischer,
SS Oberscharführer Gennert,
SS solder Kraft,
Wachtmeisters Kranke, Mischke.

Department III

SS Hauptsturmführers Schlegel, Friedrich, SS Untersturmführer Eckk,
SS Hauptscharführer von der Goltz, SS Rottenführer Schramm, Interpreters Yulik and Krovetz.

The Place of Liquidation

There will be two ditches in the place of liquidation. The actions near each ditch shall be conducted by one group composed of 10 officers and soldiers who are to shift each two hours: 8-10 h, 10-12 h, 12-14 h, 14-16 h.

Ditch 1.

The first group

SS-Sturmabführer Breder (the leader),
SS Obersturmführer Kaul and Merbah,
SS Hauptsturmführer Schneider,
SS Untersturmführers Wertholz, Müller, Yunker,
SS Sturmscharführer Fritz
SS Rottenführers Geiger and Gruner.

The second group

SS Hauptsturmführer Schlegel,
SS Oberscharführers Burger, Sekinger, Brandmeyer,
SS Hauptscharführer Huettner,
SS Oberscharführer Weller,
SS Unterscharführer von Toll,
SS Scharführer Rechshauser,
Tsugwachtmeister Eksner,
SS Unterscharführer Hörner.

Ditch 2.

First group

SS Obersturmführer Müller, SS
Untersturmführer Eck,
SS Hauptsturmführer Friedrich,
Wachtmeister Kranke,
SS Hauptscharführer von der Goltz,
SS Rottenführers Schramm, Schtressinger, Egger, Zemann, Fischer.

The second group

SS Obersturmführer Osvald
SS Hauptscharführer Rühbe,
SS Untersturmführer Shmidt
SS Hauptscharführer Kreimann
SS Oberscharführers SchuthGersberger, Pokler
SS Unterscharführer Stratmann
SS Oberscharführer Kramer
SS Unterscharführer Getmann.

The place of liquidation shall be guarded by SS Untersturmführer Pierre assisted by 10 Latvians. The liability for motor transport during preparation in Minsk, on the road to Slutsk and while convoying the Jews from the ghetto to the place of liquidation shall be borne by SS Untersturmführer Wiehert. Wiehert is also in charge of ammunition delivery. The men responsible for distribution of rounds in the place of liquidation are SS solder Kraft and Rottwachtmeister Altmann.

Department IV

SS Obersturmführer Muller,
SS Sturmscharführer Fritz,
SS Hauptscharführer Frigg,
SS Oberscharführers Buchner, Kramer, Burger, Sekinger, Getmann,
SS Unterscharführers von Toll, Rechshauser, Horner,
SS Obersturmführer Osvald,
SS Oberscharführers Rumchevitz, Brandmeyer,
SS Unterscharführer Stratmann,
Interpreters Zissas, Sokolovsky, Natarov, Ayzupe, Gorshkov, Michel-son;
Maintenance personnel: Bunte, Zantz, Tomsons, Siepels, Mechak, Renis, Eglītis, Kubulins, Auschkane, Wickens.

Department V

SS Hauptscharführers Kreimann, Zeuschel, Kutner
SS Oberscharführers Weller, Gersberger, Schuth, Pokler

SS Hauptscharführer Ruhbe,
Interpreter Kraskovsky, auxiliary personnel Ozols and Plauks.

Actions in the city of Slutsk

G h e t t o:

Cordon and custodial guard of the ghetto are the responsibility of the Security Police. SS Hauptsturmführer Madeker assisted by two officials (Krúze and Buchner) and two interpreters (Michelson and Katarov) is to collect the Jews' salvage.

SS Sturmbannführer Graff is to gather the Jews in the ghetto. He will be supported by 6 brigades composed of 1 SS-official and 8 Latvians. The brigades will be headed by Krause, Nicol, Gennert, Ehrig, Schweller, Zeuschel. The Jews are to be transferred to the place of liquidation on six trucks convoyed by four Latvians. SS Obersturmführer Kaul is in charge of accommodation and feeding of officers and soldiers.

The special operation shall involve all the officers and soldiers from our Service except for the officers and soldiers who are to stay in Minsk.

SS Sturmbannführer Bonendorf, SS Obersturmführer Heuser, SS Hauptsturmführer Hartmann, SS Obersturmführer Vedder, SS Sturmscharführer Much, SS Oberscharführer Edel, SS Hauptscharführer Eug, SS Unterscharführer Koch, SS Oberscharführer Fridle, SS Scharführer Wincer, SS Scharführer Rud, SS Wachtmeister Rudiger, SS Oberscharführer Kunenberg, SS Oberscharführer Knet. Interpreters: Eiche, Gzille, Shiro and Bonifart. SS Unterscharführer Wolf is also to stay to take responsibilities for the Jews in the local office building. The staff of the telegraph and telephone offices as well as kitchen personnel remains the same.

The officers, NCO and soldiers from affiliated services which are not listed in Slutsk are under the command of Hauptscharführer Wilke. The return of officers and soldiers which are not participate in the operation "Hornung", will be announced in Slutsk.

Schtrauh
SS Oberscharführers

31. Operation order № 2 of the “SS”, “ Ostland” police, “Rossiya-Sever” superior, “SS” general Jeckeln about the preparation of reprisal raid “Winter magic”

The city of Riga

February the 6th, 1943

Enemy situation:

Rositsa settlement is occupied by enemy. Aniskovo, Folvarkovo, Vaznovo, Mushino and Morozy villages are supposedly occupied by enemy. By intelligence accounts the former Stalin line bunkers in Rositsa area are occupied by enemy. Pustelniki, Lipovka regions and near-border Latvian village Pizany serves as an initial point for enemy actions. Korolevo, Uragovo, Zenkovo settlements are controlled by enemy. Base point is located in Kohanovichi.

Gangs have control over the whole territory between Ovseya and Kraslava – Drissa railway. Separate gangs are armed with mortars and anti-tank guns.

In the result of attack in Lipovka – Rositsa – Mushino – Kaluty – Samborovo areas gangs and their supporters are destroyed.

Subunit structure:

Knecht group – 276th, 277^{-h}, 278th, 279th police battalions, Gatiye, air defence unit.

Schröder group- 273rd, 280th, 281st police battalions, Kersten air defence unit.

Semi- squadron of gun battalion (2 guns).

Ridel communications platoon (wehrmacht).

Levinsky communications platoon

“SS” police company.

50th Ukrainian police battalion.

Special air group of (1 FV 189, 2 FI 156, 1 FV 58). Knecht group starts an attack from waiting area along Asunitsa river to the East. Right flank – eastward Vorontsovo, left flank – eastward Sarjanki.

Schröder group starts attack from waiting area towards Dunaburg – Polotsk railway between Ustje and Bigosovo settlements. As a consequence of current situation both Knecht and Schröder groups of east

flang must connect in Mushino area to prevent the enemy step-back eastward.

Reserve force ("SS" police company and semi – squadron) follows the Knecht group on the Pustelniki – Mushino way to Kalyuta. 50th police battalion together with borderguards (command in Dagda) guard Latvian – Russian border from Dunaburg – Polotsk railway southwards and Northwards to prevent enemy infiltration westwards.

During the operation heightened alert for wehrmacht subdivisions, located along Indra-Drissa railway is announced. Schröder group headquarters maintain communication with commanders of guarded areas. Special airgroup makes air observation of Lipovka – Rositsa – Kohanovi-chi – Ovseya territory and bombs enemy defensive posts.

A separate order will announced about "SD" tactical commands usage.

Jeckeln
SS I and police general

*NARB, F. 1440. Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheets 12-13
A copy. Translation from German.*

32. Code telegrams № 7413, 7414, 7507, 7512 about atrocities and plunder of executioners in the city of Drissa, Ushchelepsy and Rassonsky regions of Belorussia⁹

ATT: Commander-General
of the Main Intelligence Commandate
of the Red Army

February the 16th, 1943

ATT: Commandate.

Atrocity of Police and the Germans in the City of Drissa

At the end of January 1943 partisans skulked into the village Sadkovshchina and collective farm "Proletarii" but were smelled out. The Germans followed their trail and came into the huts attended by the partisans. Then the Germans arrested the inhabitants and convoyed them into the Police for interrogation.

In 2-3 days the owners of the huts were shot dead; the soldiers skinned the Peter's face alive, cut Vladimir's face to ribbons and took out his brains. All the inhabitants – from the 9-month old babies to the elderly – were shot dead; after the shooting the bodies were collected in one place and burnt.

The Germans shot dead and burnt 78 civilians and 18 farms in Ushchelepsy region. The village Cherepet was turned into ashes; 83 civilians were shot dead, 40 men were burnt, the others managed to cheat death. The village Pavlovo was burnt down. The men who participated in raids retreated to Idritsa and railway station Dretun suffering heavy losses. During retreat the executioners pillaged the countryside taking bread, food, cattle and cattle fodder. The fascists shot 83 civilians in the village Velie (Rassonsky region) after interrogation.

"Yuzhin"

*Central archive of Ministry of Defence of Russian Federation
(here and after CAMD RF)*

F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc.1, Sheets 401-404

⁹ The single text in four fragments. – Editorial.

33. Special Order for Conductance of Reprisal Raid by the Combat Group headed by Knecht

February the 19th, 1943

Under the order of the Runo Headquarters' Operational Command the military operation was undertaken on February the 19th and the 20th, 1943 on the territory from the line of Saryanka to the east within the range of 3-4 km.

The operation was meant for destruction of neighbouring countryside and forest search.

The 227th police battalion together with an attached company searches the forest to the North from the line of Saryanka. The 278th battalion searches the forest to the North and south from the settlement of Voznovo.

The SS-police company and the 3rd company of the 227th battalion come under command of the Commander of the SS-police company for searching the forest to the east from the line of Saryanka on the leg between Poporotnovo and Sokolovo within the range of 3-4 km.

The 278th battalion searches the forest to the east from Aniskovo between the settlements Sharnoseli and Voznovo within the range of 3-4 km.

The 3rd company of the 227th battalion stands by.

The reports on combat operations are to be submitted Afternoon.

Illegible signature

*NARB, F. 1140, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 15
A copy. Translation from German*

34. Code telegram № 8029 about situation in Latvia border territories

ATT: Commander-General of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

February the 19th, 1943

There is not the faintest chance to pass through Latvia. The Germans and Latvian police sweep the villages crossing their path, kill the elderly, woman, children, burn the countryside [...]

“The Moon”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc. 1, Sheet 801

**35. Code telegram № 8375 about the methods of replenishment
and use of Nazi occupant auxiliary forces in Latvia**

ATT: Commander-General of the Main Intelligence Command
of the Red Army

February the 20th, 1943

ATT: Commandate.

Latvia has carried out mobilization of male citizens under the age of 50 years old; some of them were transferred to Germany, the others – for anti-partisan operations and the rest – in order to make up of the German garrison stuff.

“Vladimir”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc. 2, Sheet 267

36. Operation Order № 2 to the Combat Group headed by Bert for destruction of villages Kolbovshchina, Barsuki, Medvedevo and Vesnino

February the 21st, 1943

Enemy situation estimate:

Kolbovshchina and the forestland to the North of the burnt-down Saryanka are occupied by partisans (the quantity is not known). Partisans are armed with heavy machine guns, sub-machine guns, riffles and mine throwers. They are likely to have two main guns in the neighbor of Kolbovshchina. The watch station equipped with the gun is located on the hill, 800 m to the south of Saryanka.

Kolbovshchina is reportedly fortified; the buildings are provided with firing ports. Barsuki, Medvedevo and Vesnino are also occupied by partisans. Mortar gunners and the group of partisans in the number of 200 are billeted in the village Medvedevo. According to prisoners, the wounded (93 men) are quartered in the same village.

The regiment headed by Kotovsky is stationed in Medvedovo, true information about the size is missing, one company approx. Partisans are well-armed.

Operations order: The group headed by Knecht is to occupy all listed above settlements, kill partisans and burn down the houses. The cattle and agricultural products are not subject to destruction.

Units: 278th battalion and the 1st company of the 227th battalion, 279th battalion and combat air defense unit headed by Gatier, 276th battalion (standby), 277th battalion (standby) are to guard the line of Saryanka.

The group headed by Knecht is to be supported by the 273rd battalion of the group headed by Anton together with the combat air defense unit headed by Kersten who are to move along the road Mushino-Gromovka-Sulino in the line of Korniyaki-Mikolenki and to prevent the partisans from retreat in the south-east direction.

No signature

37. Statement of the combat actions of the 278th Latvian police battalion during operation "Winter wonder" (Winterzauber) from February the 16th, 1943 to February the 20th, 1943

February the 21st, 1943

16.II

From 1.00 – Route march to the starting position on the wood line to the south of village Sunitsi. Task: conduct an attack straight along the river Saryanka (left localization) to the crossroads in Mushino; search the area until joining the 179th¹⁰ police battalion and perform the mission. Due to uninformed management, poor road conditions and absence of a bridge across the river Asunitsa the attack appointed for 6.00 was delayed for 20 minutes approx. The forest was searched with great difficulty due to snow-break and deep snow slush. All in all after 7.00 the troops got out of the forest near the village Kalyuti. In several minutes the vanguard came under machine-gun and automatic fire. However the village was occupied before the stabilization of resistance. Some partisans run away across the river Saryanka to the east. Two of them were shot. 80 people from the village were captured and transferred to the Security Service (SD). House-checks in the village, requisition of the cattle and household stuff were tasked to SD not to disturb the further movement (attack) towards Folvarkovo. But it was still obstructed since the partisans who had escaped from the village Kaluti settled in the forest on the other side of the river Saryanka and kept the road to Folvarkovo under fire. As soon as the 277th police battalion vanguard approached, they stopped firing the road. Somewhere around 9.30 the the 277th police battalion occupied Folvarkovo. The settlement had been considerably destroyed by fire so the village resisted by single rifle shots only. Here 10 partisans tried to cross the river Saryanka to escape in the eastern direction but six of them were shot on the other side of the river by the machine gun.

After a short check of the settlement and arrest of 20 inhabitants and before the arrival of the SD, the battalion cadre strength initiated an attack on the village Rakshni from one side while one company put an

¹⁰ An error. It seems to be the 279th police battalion. – Editorial.

attack across Limovka-Poltarkovo-Zimbarovo to the height of 145.1 on the road Rositsa-Mushino

The village Rakshni gave in without a struggle. Around 60 men and confiscated cattle were transferred to the SD.

While advancing through the village Limovka and further, the company killed around 100 partisans and their allies and burnt down the village because that time the SD was performing its mission in another settlement. Since the task (mission) for the day was accomplished, the battalion quartered in the villages Mushino and Rakshni. Next night they heard single partisan rifle and machinegun shots in the forests located on the other side of the river Saryanka.

17.II.

At 9.00 one company together with the 277th battalion received a task to search the forest located on the other side of the river Saryanka, opposite to the village Rakshni, and to kill the partisans sitting in Kolbovshchina. But the company came under heavy automatic and machine-gun fire from the forestland surrounding the village from the west and North and had to retreat. One policeman was shot through the head.

18.II.

Under the order of group HQ both forest plots to the south and North of Voznevo were searched for further intelligence of the forestland on the other side of the river Saryanka. Two men alleged to be inhabitants of the village Dekhtyarevo were captured in the south forest plot and transferred to the SD.

19.II.

The police team composed of 30 men was put at the SD disposal. Nothing else can be added.

20.II.

The search of the forestland on the other side of the river Saryanka continued.

The 278th police battalion checked (searched) the forestland located to the east from the village Kaluti starting from the line Zharnoseki-Selyanki; 20 men alleged to be inhabitants of the village Zharnoseki were captured

and transferred to the SD. At the southern forest border they found a dead drunk man and a body of a woman at the age of around fifty. Besides they came across approximately 75 German artillery projectiles and two rusty Russian tank destroyers without wheels. They traced many skid runner tracks and cattle trails in the same place that testifies to the fact that partisans' camp had been located there.

The drunk man was transferred to the SD; the woman's corps was burnt.

Artillery projectiles were sorted out by the expert. The ones found fit for use were delivered to Mushino; the unfit ones were detonated under the order of the group command.

Müller
Hauptmann of the Security Police and Communication Officer

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 110. Sheets 46 – 47
A copy. Translation from German.*

38. Statement of the combat actions of the 278th Latvian police battalion during operation “Winter wonder” (Winterzauber) from February the 16th, 1943 to February the 20th, 1943

ATT: Commander-General of the Main Intelligence Commanderate of the Red Army

February the 21st, 1943

[...] On February the 14th and the 15th the enemy numbering up to two thousands accumulated forces which were located in Latvia at the railway station Bigosovo and in the city of Drissa.

The cadre strength is composed of Latvians in the number of up to one thousand men; 1 battalion is composed of Latvians only, except for Germans for one company. The second one consist of Latvians and volunteers.

Have one company mortar per platoon, 3 guns per battalion and three aircrafts.

№ 11 “The Sky”

*CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24224, Doc. 2, Sheet 308.
A copy. Translation from German*

39. Operation Order № 3 to the 277th and 278th Latvian police battalions of the combat group headed by Bert for conductance of intelligence

February the 23rd, 1943 г.

1) The 277th battalion conducts intelligence along the road Mushino-Gromovka-Kornyaki in the direction of Narubki-Vydritskoye to the crossroads to Plebanovo. It needs to be ascertained if the road fits for skid runners and horse wagons and if the settlements within the range of 2 km from the road are occupied by partisans. The group headed by Anton reported that settlements Gromovka, Zhulino, Kornyaki and Moskalki are free of partisans.

2) The 278th battalion conducts intelligence on the territory Moskaliki-Rubani-Vyselki. It needs to be ascertained if the forestland located to the North from the road Moskalki-Narubki-Vydritskoye is occupied by partisans.

Intelligence shall be conducted in close cooperation with the SD.

Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1140, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet. 20
A copy. Translation from German.*

**40. Operation Order № 6 issued by Senior Commander of SS and Police “Ostland” and “Russia – North”
SS-Obergruppenfuhrer Jeckeln on the object
of reprisal raid “Winterzauber”**

February the 23rd, 1943

Enemy position: the territory by 4-5 km to the east of Saryanka is free from partisans. Farther to the east partisans control the territory.

Kokhanovichi with adjacent localities including Osveya are the defense centers of partisans. By the beginning of operation “Winterzauber” the localities along the road Pustelniki-Osveya-Seleschino, Korolyovo, Zenkovo, Uragovo and Kochany were minor defense centers of partisans. The main partisan forces were located in defense centers Gorodilovichi, Dubravy, Borisovo, Mikulno, Buyevo, Leschina and Byki. During the operation it is necessary to neutralize defense centers. According to residents the road Osveya-Strelki-Zadezhye is mine studded.

Subunits:

Schroder’s Group: № 273, 280 and 281 Guard Squadrons, № 20 Motorized Troops of Gendarmerie, Air Defense Fighting Unit of Kersten (two 2 cm cannons), Riedel’s Communications Platoon.

Knecht’s Group: № 276, 277, 278 and 279 Guard Squadrons, № 10 Motorized Troops of Gendarmerie, Air Defense Fighting Unit of Gatye (two 2 cm cannons), Levinski’s Communications Platoon.

Isserschedt’s Group: № 2 Guard Squadron, № 1 SS Police Troop, № 1 Air Defense Fighting Unit (two 2 cm cannons).

№ 1 Artillery Battalion,

№ 33 Police Signal Troop,

№ 50 Ukrainian Guard Squadron,

№ 2 Special Task Air Group (I Fokke – Wolf – 189,

I Fiesiler-156, I Fokke-Wolf-58).

X-Day.

On X-Day Schroder’s Group advances to the attack starting point by rail Indra – Drissa along the road Drissa – Kokhanovichi.

The group advances along the road and occupies Kokhanovichi. After that the group leaves one squadron in Kokhanovichi in support and con-

tinues advancing along the road Kokhanovichi – Osetki – Osveya to Osetki. Here the group adjoins Knecht's Group. The group occupies defense centers in the line of Kokhanovichi – Osetki and prevents the partisans from dropping back to the east and to the south. On the night of X-day heightened alert is imposed.

Knecht's group advances along the road Gromovka – Beryozovka – Kolbovschina – Khmelniki in the direction of the east. The target of advance is the line Osetki-Vishnarovo – Dedino to be reached by the group before dark. Attention shall be paid to extra protection of the direction to the east.

Attack area: right wing line Mikolenki – Osetki, left wing Buchanovo – Dobreniki – Dedino

Isserschtedt's Group: advances from the eastern part of the forest 1700 m to the east of Pustelniki on both sides of the road Pustelniki – Osveya. Left wing advances through Korolyovo – Zenkovo – Koshany to the east to occupy Osveya in the end. Special attention shall be paid to maintaining direction to the east. Schroder's group on the X+1 day at 6.00 advances in the North-East direction along the road Kokhanovichi – Zaytsevo – Strelki and occupies Zaytsevo and Strelki. No 1 squadron stays for protecting the territory around Kokhanovichi.

Knecht's group on the X+1 day at 7.00 together with Schroder's group advances from the line Osetki – Dedino in the direction of the North-East. The right wing of the group reaches the road Strelki – Sedezh by 1 km to the North of Strelki. The left wing reaches the road Zaitsevo – Osveya which is 3.5 km to the North of the road junction to Strelki. From here the group advances farther along the road Osveya – Lisno. The right wing occupies the western bank of the Zvonetsk lake. The left wing occupies localities Mozalevichi, Budy along the road Strelki – Zenkovo. Here the groups adjoin Isserschtedt's Group.

Isserschtedt's group advances along the road Osveya – Lisno in the eastern direction up to the roads crossing on the south bank of the Osveya lake and from there supports advancement of Knecht's group. After adjoining Knecht's group one troop stays for protecting Osveya. The command position of the group is Osveya. No 1 Artillery Battalion tactically supports Isserschdet's group. Battalion march from Skaune protects customs service subdivision of Skaune district.

Special Task Air Group performs air raid support for all groups and detects advancement of partisan groups. Bombing excludes the use of

flame bombs. The first attack is performed between 8.00 and 9.00 in the district of Kokhanovichi, the second attack is performed between 11.00 and 12.00 in the district of Vishnarovo and Osveya.

After the attack is over the signal is given by three red signal rockets. Localities to the east of the road Sebezsh – Kokhanovichi must be destroyed to hinder advancement of partisans from large forest areas.

Schroder's group searches the territory of Chervontsy – Moskalki – Isnikovo – Bysovo – Strikhino

Knecht's group searches the territory from Velikoye Selo and the road Sebezsh – Strelki along the road Osveya – Abrasyevo.

Isserschedt's group searches the territory between the roads Osveya – Mushino and Osveya – Dedino Belyany and Skripchino are planned as defense centers and shall not be destroyed. Communication between the groups is performed with the help of radio. Runo's Command Position as of 24.2.43 in Rositsa.

Illegible signature

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3. Doc. 1020, P. 21 – 24
A copy. Translation from German.*

41. Code telegram № 8870 regarding extension of reprisal raid in Drissensk and Osveya regions of the Republic of Belarus

ATT: the head of General of the Main Intelligence Commandate
of the Red Army Petrov

February the 23rd, 1943

In Drissensk and Osveya regions reprisal raids take place against partisans in quantity of 3 thousand people including No 273 Volunteer Latvian Battalion formed in Riga [...]

Advancement was performed from three directions from station Bigosovo, from Latvia and Drissa. Adjoined in Sarem. Supported by three aircrafts. On the way all villages are burnt out and all residents are exterminated.

«Petya»

CAMD RF, F. 23. Inv. 24224, Doc. 2. Sheet 420

**42. Code telegram № 9026 regarding the measures of occupants
on closing of passage for residents through the section
of railway Drissa – Borkovichi**

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

February the 24th, 1943

Passage through railway Drissa-Borkovichi is closed. The Order has been issued to execute for passage as well as for appearance of persons living on one side of the road on the other side with any kinds of documents.

«Otets»

CAMD RF, F. 23. Inv. 24225, Doc. 1, Sheet 438

43. Code telegram № 9221 regarding the methods of reprisal raid performance in Drissensk region

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Command
of the Red Army
Commander

February the 25th, 1943

All residents living nearby the railway are moved out by the Germans closer to the town of Drissa. The Germans and police are robbing the residents of villages closer to railway, burning out whole villages, executing civilians.

№ 4 “Otets»

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc. 1, Sheet 441

**44. Code telegram № 9116 regarding combat operations
and burning out of villages in Drissensk region.**

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

February the 25th, 1943

For 10 days partisans have been fighting against the Latvians and the Germans in Drissensk region. On the way they burn out all villages together with residents, they have burnt out Rositsk and Sashyansk village Soviets.

«Dukat»

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24224, D. 2, Sheet. 690

**45. Code telegram № 9390 regarding location of the third troop
of 273rd Latvian Police Battalion in Polischino village
and location of battalion headquarters in Ludza (Latvia)**

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

February the 26th, 1943

[...] The third troop of № 273 Battalion is located in Polikhino and the
headquarters and troop of Latvian volunteers are in Lyutsin [Ludza].

“V”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24223. Doc.1. Sheet 1103

46. Operation Order № 5 to № 276, 277 and 278 Latvian Police Battalions of combat group Berta to start searching areas to the west of the road Sebezh – Strelki up to the road Osveya – Abrasyevo

February the 27th, 1943

In addition to my Operation Order № 4 dated 24.2.43 – on 27 and 28.2.43 start searching areas to the west of the road Sebezh – Strelki up to the road Osveya – Abrasyevo:

- a) № 277 Battalion advances to the Osveya lake in between the roads Osveya – Abrasyevo on the west and Sebezh – Budy – Strelki on the east.
- b) № 276 Battalion advances between the coordinates 08 and 06 in between the roads Osveya – Abrasyevo on the west and Sebezh-Budy-Strelki.
- c) № 278 Battalion advances between the coordinates 02 and 06 in between the roads Osveya – Abrasyevo on the west and Sebezh-Budy-Strelki on the east.

Localities Velikoye Selo, Kiseli, Budy, Belyany and Skripchino are planned as defense centers and shall not be destroyed.

The searching operation in the above said areas shall be performed in close cooperation with SD task forces.

Special orders will follow.

By order

Guard Police Major

Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 29
A copy. Translation from German.*

47. Operation Order № 6 to 276th, 277th, 278th and 279th Latvian Police Battalions of combat group Berta on regular searching in back area

February the 27th, 1943

On Runo's order the group reached the line along the road Drissa-Kokhanovichy – Strelki directly up to the eastern part of Velikoye Selo. Center 140.7 with well fortified defense centers was taken under our control. Break-through of the enemy parts in the western direction is impossible.

№ 279 Battalion protects Velikoye Selo to the North and to the east including crossing of roads to the east of Velikoye Selo. No 277 Battalion is in charge of protecting center 140.7 and the southern and western directions from Velikoye Selo.

№ 276 Battalion protects the territory by 1 km to the North of Kiseli.

№ 278 Battalion protects Strelki.

All available forces are searching back areas. During searching the area attention shall be paid to the territory to the west of Saryanka where gangs and allies of bandits are hiding in forest areas in total quantity of up to 100-150 people. A part of these gangs has been exterminated and the operation still continues. Therefore it appears that the territory has not been completely searched. Officer couriers and battalion commanding officers are charged with personal supervision of thorough searching in back areas in order to free the territory from bandits.

Guard Police Colonel
Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet. 30
A copy. Translation from German.*

48. Code telegram № 9699 regarding extension of major operation against partisans

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

February the 28th, 1943

As of 27.2 the enemy in quantity of up to 2500 persons, mostly the Latvians, supported by two aircrafts, automatic cannon as well as artillery and mine throwers since 16.2 has started attack against partisans in two directions from Drissa and Polischino

At the moment Osveya, Kokhanovich and a number of other localities are occupied.

On their way everything is burnt out and residents are exterminated. The target is to exterminated partisans and therefore secure railway Drissa-Polotsk.

«V.»

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24223, Doc. 1, Sheet 1106.

**49. Code telegram № 9777 regarding implementation
of the tactic of "burnt-over land" by punishers**

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

February the 28th, 1943

By February the 26th the enemy has occupied the following villages: Kokhanovichi, Dvintsovo, Kamenka, Vyshnarovo, Dedino. Thousands of residents are escaping; two aircrafts by contour flying are attacking escapees. The enemy burns masses of people alive regardless of their age.

№ 16 "The Sky"

CAMO RF. F. 23, Inv. 24224, Doc. 2, Sheet 314

50. Operation Order № 7 to 276th, 277th, 278th and 279th Latvian Police Battalions of combat group Berta on protecting the new occupied territories

March the 1st, 1943

On the night of March the 1st, 1943 bandits attacked Kokhanovich.

To facilitate tasks given to Schroder's group on Runo's order the group is assigned with a new area. Schroder's group occupies the area along the railway line Indra-Drissa up to Pushtavya. Knecht's group occupies the area from Pushtavya to the crossing of roads on the southern bank of the Osveya lake (center 140). Knecht's group protects Strelki instead of Schroder's group. 276th Battalion occupies the new area between Strelki and Pushtavya. Due to alteration of the occupied areas it is necessary to establish communication with Schroder's group.

278th Battalion occupies the area between crossing of roads on the southern bank of the lake to Strelki. For 278th Battalion augmentation it is adjoined with one troop of 277th Battalion.

277th Battalion less one troop and 279th Battalion stay at the previously occupied areas. 276th and 278th Battalions immediately report their advancements to the occupied areas.

Distribution: 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th Battalions SS Hauptschurturmfuhrer Kaufmann, Schroder's group.

Guard Police Colonel Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 31
A copy. Translation from German.*

**51. Operation Order № 8 to 276th, 278th and 279th Latvian Police
Battalions of combat group Berta on patrolling the roads
Gizelevo – Velikoye Selo, Sebezkh-Strelki-Kokhanovich**

March the 1st, 1943

On the road Osveya-Pustelniki by 3 km to the west of Osveya on 28.2.43 around 8.00 the mine actuation was noticed. According to preliminary data the mine was laid on the night of from 27 to 28.2.43.

On Runo's order it is required to send armed patrols on the roads in order to protect them against bandits. The roads Velikoye Selo-Sebezkh-Kokhanovich shall be protected by convoy with involvement of local civil population.

279th Battalion patrols the road Gizelevo-Velikoye Selo, 278th and 276th Battalions patrol the roads Sebezkh-Strelki-Kokhanovich within their sphere of action and occupied areas.

At the interface of adjoining areas patrolling is performed as agreed.

Guard Police Colonel
Illegible signature

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 32
A copy. Translation from German.*

52. Operation Order № 10 on the results of reprisal raid

March the 2nd, 1943

Strictly Confidential

Attention of 276th, 278th Battalions, SS Hauptschurturmfuhrer Kaufmann.

On Runo's order Schroder's and Knecht's groups on 3.4 and 5.1.43 attacked by forces of up to battalion the defense centers serving for bandits as encampment and extension sites.

All villages were burnt out, residents were evacuated, assistants to bandits and those suspected in contacts with bandits were executed.

During the operation only one troop could be charged with the protection of defense centers.

276th and 278th Battalions took part in the operation. The operation was performed in close cooperation with security police and SD.

Guard Police Colonel
Illegible signature

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 34
A copy. Translation from German.*

53. Operation Order № 11 to No 277th and 279th Latvian Police Battalions on their combat tasks in the course of reprisal raid in the area of Gorodilovichi locality

March the 2nd, 1943

Enemy position: localities Gorodilovichi and Tserkovno as well as high point 192.4 to the North-east of the road junction Osveya-Lisno-Sebezh-Strelki are occupied by partisans. On high point 192.4 there is a heavy mortar subdivision. The number of partisans on high point and in localities Gorodilovichi and Tserkovno reaches 200 people. According to air raid support data anti-tank artillery is located in Gorodilovichi. According to data obtained from the captives the partisans lack ammunition supplies. Among partisans there are many people who were conscripted by force therefore combat effectiveness of partisans is not high. The operation task is to exterminate partisans in localities and on high point. Localities are burnt out, partisans and those suspected in partisan activity are executed. Residents are evacuated, farm products are taken out. Operations are performed jointly with SD task forces.

Gorodilovichi locality is occupied by 279th Battalion. Air Defense Fighting Unit of Gatye attacks jointly with the battalion and supports operation with its fire.

277th Battalion supports 279th Battalion with its fire at occupation of high points 179.4 and 192.4. The beginning of the attack takes place after the completion of air preparation. It is specified by two red signal rockets.

Guard Police Colonel
Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 35
A copy. Translation from German.*

**54. Code telegram № 10436 regarding the operations performed
by 277th Latvian Police Battalion**

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

March the 04th, 1943

277th Latvian Battalion which came from Karsovo [Karsava] attacks
partisans in Oliveysk region.¹¹

“The Horseman ”

CAMO RF. F. 23, Inv. 24224. Doc. 2, Sheet 532

¹¹ It must be Osveysk region. – Editorial.

55. Code telegram № 10570 regarding the situation in frontier zone

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

March the 4th, 1943

At the moment it is impossible to go through Latvia since German armed anti-partisan forces consisting of the Latvians are advancing from Latvia. The situation is serious. Crossing over will take place at the earliest opportunity.

№ 45 "The Moon"

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24224, Doc. 2, Sheet 806

56. Operation Order № 13 to subdivisions of Isserschdet's and Knecht's combat groups, No. 211 and No. 279 Latvian Police Battalions on preparation and tasks for the performance of reprisal raid in the area of lakes Beloye and Osveya

March the 5th, 1943

Strictly Confidential.

On 6.3.43 Knecht's and Isserschdet's groups surround the gangs in the area of lakes Beloye and Osveya. Reports say that very well fortified defense centers of the bandits are located in the area of Ozborye-Kostrovo. The road Strelki-Sebezh to the North of Kostrovo shall be mine studded. From the waiting area Isserschdet's group starts advancing at 6.30 in the direction of Sidorenki-Gareliny-Broshki-Proryty, Shatilovo-Vasilevschina and occupies these localities.

Knecht's group together with No 279th and 277th Battalions from center 140.7 starts advancing at 5.30 and occupies the following localities: Orekhovo, Ozborye, Kostrovo. During advancement it is necessary to foresee the possibility of bandits infiltration through combat units. Bandits crossing over the lake will be prevented by machine-gun fire.

Disposition of subdivisions.

277th Battalion less 1 troop and 279th Battalion are located on high points along the road Osveya-Listo with its front to the North. The right wing is at Gorodilovichi high point, the left wing is near center 140.7. The dividing line passes through center 192.4 (for 279th Battalion), center 179.7 (for 277th Battalion). On 6.3 at 5.30 277th and 279th Battalions start advancement from the waiting area. Upon completion of air operations (8.30) 277th Battalion occupies Ozborye, 279th Battalion occupies Kostrovo. After that battalions keep advancing in the direction of IgnaliNo, Krasovo as follows. The right wing of 277th Battalion goes by the channel of Degtyaryovka, the left wing rests in Kostrovo. The right wing of 279th Battalion adjoins the wing of 277th Battalion, the left wing goes along the road to Sebezh. The beginning of the attack specified by three green signal rockets. Upon reaching the attack target the units and subdivisions are accommodated in Velikoye Selo.

Localities in the subdivisions' attack area are burnt out. Evacuation of population, cattle and other farm products is performed by police and SD task forces jointly with the groups subdivisions.

7th Special Task Air Group in the course of combat operations performs air raid support and fire support of the attacking groups. The first attack targets at 8.30 are Ozborye and Kostrovo. The second targets at 11.30 are Osveytsy and Krasovo.

Communication between the groups and Ruro operational command headquarters shall be performed via radio.

Guard Police Colonel
Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheets 38-39
A copy. Translation from German.*

57. From the internal memorandum of the responsible organizer of the underground regional committee of CP (B) of Vitebsk K.P. Bozhenok to the head of the Belarusian head of the partisan movement P.Z. Kalinin about the composition of the punitive operation against partisans in the regions of Drissen and Osveysk of the Vitebsk area in February of 1943

March the 6th, 1943

[...]

Perfidious enemy felt many times the force of partisans, that's why he was afraid to advance. [...], and 11.2 1943 they were in the offensive from Latvia, Bigosovo station, against partisans of the by forces of specially selected armed forces, by 75% consisting of the Latvians and volunteers-betrayers conscripted by the Germans and specially trained in Riga for 3 months to fight against partisans. The remaining 25% are the Germans. Altogether this block includes up to 5000 people. Advanced through localities in Latvia, Rosina, Kalyuty, Aniskovo, Voznovo, Sardyki. On its way the enemy burnt everything and exterminated everyone. This enemy block is one of the most mean-spirited and imputed and leaves nothing and no one alive on its way [...].

*NARB, F. 4p, Inv. 33a, Doc. 250, Sheet 64
A copy.*

58. Operation order № 14 battle groups of Issershtedt, Knecht and Shredder on preparation and tasks for counterinsurgency operation executing in Lisno-Milovidy-Bojka district

March the 7th, 1943

Confidential!

According to the intelligence data, the chief opposing force are located on both banks of the river Svol'na in Lisno-Milovidy-Bojka district. The territory southward of Lisno is mine-studded and prepared to defense. From the settlements the Milovidy, where there are the staff and the major storehouses, are strongly defended. In the western area of marshy wood land there are the nests of bandits with mixed armament. The territory in Mikuty – Ardavskaya – Kurashi is strongly guarded. According to the data there is a major staff here.

During the operation all the bandit camps must be annihilated. Burn down the settlements and farms located in the forests. Use the settlements in the river Svol'na valley for our units needs. Shoot the bandits. The population and the livestock must be evacuated by task forces of police and SD in collaboration with the units of Wehrmacht.

The units:

Shredder's group:

Kersten's air defense unit, Ridel's communications platoon, the 273th, 280th, 281th police Lettish battalions, the 1st squadron of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion.

Knecht's group:

The SS police squadron, Gat'e's air defense unit, Levinskij's communications platoon, the 276th, the 277th, the 278th, 279th police battalions, the 1st squadron of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion.

Issershtedt's group:

The 10th and the 20th gendarmerie motorized platoons, Odenvald's air defense unit, the 2nd squadron of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion, the 50th Ukrainian police battalion, artillery half-battery, the 33th police communications squadron, the 7th special air group.

Shredder's group from the standby area starts the attack in north direction from Tarulenki-Zadezh'e line. On the same day the group reaches Vakhovschina-Mosal'schina-Ostrovshchina line.

Knecht's group: starts the attack along both sides of Osveya-Lisno road in east direction.

Group reserves:

The SS police squadron, the 1st squadron of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion. On the day of attack the group reserves stand in point 140.7 district .

Gate's air defense unit supports the actions of the 276th and 278th battalions and then moves to Lisno.

The artillery half-battery supports the actions of Knecht's group with fire from 192,4 altitude district. After position change the half-battery from the Dubrov district keeps attacking the Ardavskaya – Kurashi-Yarshi – Mikuty district by fire. Then the battery moves to the Dubrov district. Issershtedt's group provides cover of the battery. For indication of the front line of our units during attack, two groups with illuminating flares are allocated .

The special air group attacks the enemy with bombs and on-board armament. First go the settlements Beloye and Zayel'nitsy. Then – Zaluch'e, Malashkovo, Dubnoe, Kobyl'nitsa, Mel'nitsa.

During the operation the bands must be prevented from going out of the woodlands westward of the river Svol'na. When the day's missions are reached the battalions and other units quarter in Malkovo-Zaluch'e district. The group staff with the group reserves is located in Lisno. All must be in increased alert. During the attack Shredder's group reaches the Vlasovka-Migulino road.

Guard police colonel
Illegible signature.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1020, Sheet 42- 44
A copy. Translated from German.*

59. The report of medical officer A. Vorob'yev of Osveya's partisan brigade in the name of M.V. Frunze to the secretaries of Bolshevik Communist Party underground regional committee in Vitebsk I.A. Stulov and Y.A. Zhilyanin on situation in Drissa-Polotsk-Osveya district as a result of invaders punitive operation

March the 7nd, 1943

From the 15th of February, 1943, the enemy in number exceeding two regiments, including Latvian and Lithuanian volunteers, using all types of armament, up to aircrafts, are executing an attack from Drissa, Bigosovo, Latvia side, robbing and killing the civilians, burning the settlements on their way. During 20 days more than 150 settlements were burnt, thousands of the civilians were shot up and burnt, including old people, women and children.

In this period, 7 Kaliningrad and 5 Byelorussian partisan brigades, using advantage positions, maneuver and surprise attacks, made good execution to the enemy. Our poor ammunition reserves made us allow the enemy to approach literally by 50-60 m and shoot him at close range. But the enemy systematically remains using the garrisons, located in Latvia (resting, beaten German forces). Nothing besides our running out ammunition reserves, made us often weaken our accurate destroying fire, and step by step with fighting we are forced to move away to new lines of defense.

Today our forces, confident of crushing defeat of nazi invaders and of their disposal, without ammunition are organizing defence along the west wood line eastward of the Polotsk-Osveya highway. The forest behind us is overcrowded with families of civilians, refugees, who are in run from cruel massacre of Hitlerite cruds.

Our 10-15 days heartfelt crying to com. Kalinin, Ejdinov, Ponomarenko to give us the ammunition keep falling on deaf ears.

Give us ammunition!.. Cartridges ... cartridges ! Russian, German, Canadian. Trench bombs, squadron, battalion , mines. Propelling cartridges for squadron, battalion mines. Necessarily more 45 mm and 75 mm artillery shells, bandaging material.

Repeat our reports one more time, for com. Ejdinov, Ponomarenko , Voroshilov. They must order to send the ammunition right now, because tomorrow its absence will spell a disaster for thousands of partisans and tens of thousands of civilians. Send the ammunition to Rovnoye Polye and Selyavsheno. The weather is fine so the operation is safe for the pilots.

Yours sincerely, brigade medical officer Zakharova – Vorob'yev

*NARB, F. 1336, Inv. 1, Doc. 1, Sheet 23
A verified copy.*

60. Code telegram № 11268 on enemy attack, position of partisans and civilians.

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Command
of the Red Army
Commander

March the 8th, 1943

From the 15th of February the enemy in number exceeding two regiments is executing an attack from Drissa, Bigosovo, Latvia, Dretun' and Sebez side. In 20 days more than 150 settlements were burnt, thousands of the civilians were shot up. In this period 12 partisan brigades made good execution to the enemy, but our running out ammunition reserves made us move away to new lines of defense.

"The Needle"

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24227. Doc. 2, Sheet 98.

**61. From intelligence summary № 24 of Partisan Movement
Central Staff (PMCS) office at Kalinin's front on partisan
and Lettish police battalions battles.**

March the 11th, 1943

Top secret.

From the 28th of February till the 6th of March consolidated partisan brigades were conducting slogging combats with punitive forces in Osveya, Krasnopol'e district. The prisoners testified that the 273th, the 278th, the 281th and the 251th volunteer Lettish battalions fight against partisans. On the 6th of March after 7 hours of fight, the enemy in number of 1 500 people supported by the artillery and 2 aircrafts occupied villages [V. and N.Luba...no], Kostrovo, Ignalino (10-15 km north-eastward of Osveya). Combats continue.

Deputy representative of PMCS
at Kalinin's front
Lieutenant Colonel [Shelymagin13]

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 1, Doc. 857, Sheet 30
Unverified copy.*

**62. From intelligence summary № 27 of Partisan Movement
Central Staff (PMCS) office at Kalinin's front on partisan
and Lettish police battalions battles**

March the 14th, 1943

Top secret.

From the report of the head of the 2nd Staff section Captain c. Inushko dated 12.3 from the documents of the killed it is found that in Osveya district the 273th and the 278th volunteer Lettish battalions and the 280th police battalion, deployed in Kraslav, fight against partisans The castigators forces are supported by German units up to 1 000 persons [...]

Deputy representative of PMCS
at Kalinin's front
Lieutenant Colonel [Shelymagin]

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 1, Doc. 857, Sheet 33
Unverified copy.*

63. Letter of General Commissariat of Byelorussia to district commissariats on interaction of German chain of authorities with Lettish and Lithuanian police

The city of Minsk

March the 14th, 1943

According to report of foreign police commander subordinated to the SS and Byelorussia police chief, the events have taken place again. (Some rest upon ignorance as to the existence of Latvian or Lithuanian forces and their position in struggle against Bolshevism). They led to the fact that the participants of these forces were humiliated in abusive form by German authorities.

These cases are suited to meet with honour the fighting participants of battalions from former Baltic states, who at the hazard of their lives, are fighting to support the European cultural community, instead of and in order to kill the enthusiasm of this participation. Lithuanian and Latvian soldiers and officers must be treated respectfully by German authorities.

In view of the fact that there is no uniform dress, for the German authorities it is hard to distinguish Lithuanian and Latvian policemen from Ukrainian and Byelorussian ones. Latvian and some Lithuanian policemen of front battalions wear the uniform of German police without buttonholes, as to the Lithuanians they wear their old yellowish military uniform with gold buttons the state emblem (horseman image). As in part both Byelorussian and Ukrainian policemen wore or even still wear separate parts of German police (especially uniform jackets), it is recommended that the German authorities in case of uncertainty provide the service record books.

There is an ask for the future to solve still existing justified problems in connection with the incidents mentioned.

Under the instruction
Signed by Yungvirt

*NARB, F. 391, Inv. 1, Doc. 1, Sheet 37,
F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 57, Sheet 163
Translated from German.*

64. Code telegram № 12581 on the situation in Osveya and Drissa areas, participation in fights of the 251st Lithuanian and the 277th Lettish police battalions supported by the aviation

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

March the 15th, 1943

The enemies advancing is not stopped, they occupied Motorino, Milovidy, Dobroplessy and Reuty.

The 251st Lithuanian and the 277th Lettish battalions participate in fights supported by 12 planes. We were driven into the woods, it was impossible to work. Osveya and Drissa areas were burned down almost completely.

"The Needle"

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24227, Doc. 2. Sheet 205

**65. From intelligence summary report № 31 of the GMCH
representation office on Kalinin front on the punitive
expedition targets**

March the 18th, 1944

Top secret

[...]

By the statement of the brigade commander comrade Romanov dated March the 17th, the captive Letts from the volunteer acting against the partisans in Osveya area stated that the punitive expedition of Letts has a task to mop up the frontier of 30 km depth and to complete the operation by March the 25th.

[...]

GMCH representative deputy
on Kalinin front lieutenant colonel (Shelymagin15)

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv.1, Doc. 857, Sheet 37
An uncertified copy.*

66. Code telegram № 13198 on the forces posture in the frontier zone, actions of the a punitive expedition members and refugee itinerary

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

March the 18th, 1943

The partisan units acting on the frontier of Latvia are moved by the chastisers. The chastisers stoped on the territory from village Lisno and down the stream of river Svol'na. On the way from Latvia they making savagenesses towards the civils, burning villages, killing people.

Those who are saved hiding from the shootings in Rassovski region. The connection with Latvia is complicated.

“Yuzhin”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc. 1. Sheet 408

67. Operation order № 13 of superior head of SS and the “Ostland” and “Russia – North” police and SS Obergruppenführer Jeckeln to the battle groups of Knecht and Shredder on their participation in additional actions to block the partisans in Osveya-Sebezh districts

March the 7th, 1943

1. Position of the enemy:

The bands in the territory of combat operations broke away in east and south directions. The territory to the east of Latvian border between Osveya and Lisno lakes, as well as southwardly along the railroads and Rozenov-Sebezh is filled with the bandit forces. From this territory attacks and acts of sabotage on the railroad and Rozenov-Idritsa highway happen all the time. So it can be noted that this territory is entirely under the bandits control. No big camps with staff headquarters in the same number as in Svol'no district were found, though to the south of Sebezh there are small camps and strong points. According to the intelligence data the bandits had planned a major attack from the concentration area to Sebezh. The fact that it failed to be done, should be charged to execution of operation “Wintertsauber ».

2. The following territory is mopped up from the bandits and their accomplices: the district, adjoining the Latvian border in the west, line Zaozer'e (west margin of the Lisno lake), Bajdakovo – north margin of the Osveya lake – southward Ponizovka – Beloye ozero in the north – Sebezh lake in the east – Rozenov-Sebezh road in the north. No shooting up was registered during the operation execution. All prisoners were delivered to the task forces, security police and SD. The population evacuation, removal of livestock and other agricultural goods were performed by task forces together with SD and security police and Wehrmacht units. Burning of the settlements was executed only by SD and security police together with the group battalions. The settlements were subject to burning only if it was a combat necessity. All the separate farms, located in wood lands and first of all serving as strong points for the bandits were burnt. Only officer can give an order on burning. The settlements along the Tserkovo-Sebezh highway remained untouched, because they were out of our units actions.

3. The units:

Shredder's group: Kersten's air defense unit, Ridel's communications platoon, the 273th, 280th, 281th Lettish police battalions, the 3rd squadron of the 2nd Lithuanian battalion, the 3rd squadron of the 50th Ukrainian police battalion.

Knecht's group: The SS police squadron, the 10th gendarmerie motorized platoons, Gat's air defense unit, Levinskij's communications platoon, the 276th, the 277th, the 278th and the 279th Lettish police battalions, staff headquarters, the 1st and the 2nd squadrons of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion, the 1st squadron of the 50th Ukrainian police battalion, bridge erection unit.

Direct subordination: The 20th gendarmerie motorized platoon, the 33th police communications squadron, the 2nd special air group, the 7th squadron of the 282th Lettish police battalion.

The groups of Knecht and Shredder on 23.3.43 by 5.45 o'clock move to the following concentration areas and make preparations for attack in north direction : Line Pripesh- Bajdakovo- north margin of Osveya lake – Pofino – Novosel'tsy. Knecht's group occupies right wing, Shredder's group occupies the left wing. The attack starts at 6.00.

The border of the right wing runs along the west margin of Osveya lake – Lisno lake – Necheritskoe lake – Ozer'yavskoe lake – Beloe Ozero – Sebezhskoe lake. The border of the right wing is 500 m westward Kashirino – Ponizovka – Lettish-Russian border. The lateral boundary for the both groups is a line from point 50 (directly southward of Osveya) – river Vydritsa – east margin of V – Opmydritskoe lake – Orshaniki – Sesulka – Bron'ya – point 40 on the road 1 km westward of Potoshen'ye – point 167.7 (500 m north-westward of Barlovo) – Potoshen'ye – Potoshen'ye road – Purgalu – point 154.1 (directly westward of Kuznino).

All the wood lands must be searched. The battle wagon trains follow the combat groups. By 23.3. the groups reach the following line: Gorelye mosty – Gorodok- Komaru – Bukatina -Sesulka – Kozly – Shramy.

By 24.3. the groups reach the following line: Mironovo – Golyshovo – Katrino – Gonulyevo – Rutchevo – Sutoki – Tishkovo.

The departure is at 5.00.

By 25.3. the groups reach the following line: Sebezh-Rozenov road.

The departure is at 6.00.

5. The 282th police battalion on 23.3 early in the morning occupies the area at Latvian-Russian border near the Migeli (eastward of Rozenovo) up to the west margin of Sebezh to prevent infiltration of bandits and their accomplices from group action area northwards. Protection at rest is placed between the strong points along the railroad line. First of all protection of roads passing through the south part of the wood lands must be protected. All the persons slipped away from the operation area must be seized and brought to SD and security police brigade. 26.3. All the battalions concentrate in Vasil'kovo, where their quartering point is located, pending further orders.

To prevent infiltration of bandits and their accomplices in east direction the soil road between Voron and Sebezh lake starting from 5.00 goes under protection of the 2nd battalion of the 9th police regiment[...]

7. Border custom guards at Latvian border from Skaune up to Rozenov from 23.3.43 is in increased alert in order to prevent Latvian border crossing by the bandits and their accomplices.

the 20th gendarmerie platoon remains under the orders of the SS-Gruppenführer and the police general Jeckeln.

the 2nd special air group waits for a special order.

10. the 33th communications squadron provides communication between Shredder's group, Knecht's group and the 282th police battalion.

the 33th communications squadron establishes communication from Skaune in south-east direction through Ponizovka- Potino – Milevschina – Osveitsa up to intersection of roads to Velikoye Selo – Sebezh 1,5 km south-eastward of Ignalino.

Knecht's group connects to that line and extends it by its own forces up to the group staff headquarters.

Location of Runo staff headquarters for 21.3.43 is in Skaune.

Operation order of groups *rpynn* up to 22.3 are delivered to the staff of operational command by couriers.

Jeckeln SS
Gruppenführer and police general

**68. Code telegram № 13570 on participation of the 266th “E”
and the 279th of Lettish police battalions in punitive
expedition**

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

March the 20th, 1943

The enemy did not advanced, but did not drop back. Except the above mentioned battalions the 279th and the 266th E Lettish volunteer battalions also take part in the struggle.

«V.»

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24223, Doc. 1. Sheet 1120

**69. Code telegram № 13851 on participation of the 266th “E»,
the 271th and 279th Lettish police battalions in punitive
expedition and beginning of mobilization to SS Lettish legion**

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army

March the 21st, 1943

To the chief.

Except the above mentioned battalions the 279th, the 266th and the 279th Lettish battalions see actions. Mobilization of men is performed in Latvia, they are formed in legions, 700 people in each. Some of them are already near Leningrad [...].

“The Needle”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24227, Doc. 2, Sheet 212

**70. Code telegram No 14213 on mobilization in SS Lettish legion
and arrival to Sebezhs of Lettish police forces of volunteers
for struggle against the Byelorussian partisans**

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Command
of the Red Army

March the 24th, 1943

House-to-house mobilization is performed in Latvia, therefore legalization is impossible. Lettish volunteers, sent to Byelorussia to take part in struggle against the partisans, came to Sebezhs in number of 600 persons.

“Boat”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24227, Doc. 2, Sheet 813

71. Afternoon reports of Bert's and Iltis's battle groups Command on participation of the 276th, the 277th, the 278th and 279th Lettish police battalions in punitive operation "Winter magic" in a period from the 16th of February to the 25th of March, 1943

1. Position of the enemy: The district mentioned in the order is occupied. Caught bandits and their accomplices are liquidated. No new bands are uncovered.

2. Our own position:

a) Forces used: the 276th, the 277th, the 278th, the 279th police battalions, the 10th gendarmerie motorized platoon, air defense platoon of General Headquarters reserve. The air defense platoon did not see actions.

b) The results: 15 bandits were killed in action. SD reported on executions.

c) The trophies: Currently there is no information on captured weapon and equipment. CD reported on captured livestock and confiscated agricultural goods

3. The garrisons: The staff of the 12 gendarmerie motorized platoon and air defense platoon is located in vill. Kalgoti.

The 278th police battalion is located in vill. Rakshni. The 279th police battalion is located in vill. Mozitsi. There were no reports on location of the 276th and the 277th police battalions.

4. The losses: Currently there were no reports on the losses.

5. Losses in weapon, equipment and ammunition expenditures:

The 276th police battalion needs 2 kg of antiscabious ointment and 500 packs of anti-lice powder. (20 people from received replacement have the itch and a lot of people are lice-ridden). Ammunition and food-stuffs are supplied from the point in Ausun.

Note: Radiocommunication with the battalions is extremely poor.

Guard police colonel
Illegible signature.

Bert's group
17.2.43

Afternoon report

1. Position of the enemy:

On the night of 17.2.43 from the forest north-eastward of Mushino the bandits attacked it by fire. Some machine-gun bursts and fire from mortar launchers on Mushino and Rakshni were performed from the forests, located eastward of vill. Zaryanki.

2. Our own position

- a) Forces used: no change.
- b) The results: Except for 15 bandits, killed in action, mentioned in the report dated 16.2.1943, 12 people more were killed in action.
- c) The trophies: there is no report.

3. Staff, the 10th gendarmerie motorized platoon and air defense platoon are located in vill. Kalyuti.

The 276th police battalion is located in Rositse.

The 277th police battalion is located in Mushino.

The 278th police battalion is located in Rakshni.

The 279th police battalion is located in Rositse.

4. The losses: one policeman from the 279th battalion was lightly wounded. One policeman was badly wounded during night patrolling. 2 policemen from the 278th police battalion are considered to be missing starting from 16.2.43.

5. Ammunition expenditure is moderate.

6. The 276th and 279th police battalions urgently need kerosene and candles, as well as batteries for pocket torches. As for the uniform, each battalion needs 150 pcs. of trousers, because the received ones worn out badly. To repair the uniform the 276th, the 277th, the 278th and the 279th police battalions need mending cotton and yarn.

Supplement to the Afternoon report:

- a) in the course of reconnaissance the 278th police battalion found that

Kolbovschina, Barsuli, Medvedevo and woods westward and northward of Kolbovschina are occupied by a band 80-100 persons strong.

The reconnaissance group was attacked by fire from machine guns and automatic weapons. Westward of Kolbovschina also there are ambushes of the enemy with machine rifles.

The village Barsuki was attacked by mortar fire of the enemy. The reconnaissance group of the 277th police battalion was attacked by fire on Kolbovschina-Berezovka road.

In different points return fire was brought down on the enemy. Judging by trails of blood left the enemy suffered losses.

Number of enemy losses is unknown.

Our own losses: One man was killed by a headshot. The heavy machine gun, which on the night of 17.2.43 fired on vill. Rakshni, was installed on the skirts of the wood eastward of vill. Voznovo. The operation against the bandit nest is planned. It will be executed as soon as new reconnaissance data will be received.

Bert's group
18.02.43

Afternoon report

On 17.2.43 in 23.20 the bandits fired two times on vill. Mushino from the cannon, located in Kolbovschina. The same fire was performed on 18.2.43 in 5.30. Starting from 17.2.43 two policemen from the 276th police battalion are considered as missing, they did not return to their unit.

Ammunition expenditure: The 278th police battalion spent 800 russian machine gun and rifle cartridges. There are no data from other units.

Only 2/3 of available radiostations are in working order, as a result radiocommunication is overloaded.

Bert's group
19.02.43

Runo's telegram

Afternoon report

On 18.2.1943 platoon of the 2nd squadron of the 277th police battalion performed reconnaissance near vill. Zelyanka (4 km eastward of vill. Kalyuti). 1 km southward of the place the enemy's post was found. The enemy dropped back after fire attack.

At attack of vill. Kolbovschina by fire, return fire from automatic weapon and artillery was opened from there.

According to the words of captive bandit, in vill. Medvedevo there are 200 bandits and 90 wounded men. The bandits are weaponed with machine guns and rifles. On 15.2.43 they received a wagon train, consisting of 20 sledges with ammunition.

Sanitary assistant, carrying a wounded man, was attacked by fire by the bandits near the vill. Shandaryevo.

On 18.2.43 the platoon of the 4th squadron of the 277th police battalion occupied Zharnoseki, Zharnovki, Khmel'niki and Zelyanki. Except for 3 captured people, the above mentioned villages were left by the dwellers. They were burnt. In dugout, 1 km southward of Kalyuti, 1 man was found and arrested. He was brought to SD.

In action near Shandoryevo 2 men were killed, 3 machine rifles were captured.

The 279th police battalion used up 1 100 russian rifle cartridges.

Bert's group
20.02.43

Runo's telegram, 16.00

Afternoon report

On 19.2.43 in the woods, 2 km north-eastward of the vill. Mushino, there was an active attack group, consisting of a pursuit group and a diversionary platoon. In the woods there is 70-80 cm of snow. The woods are searched slowly and extremely intensely. 150 m from the north end of the wood the pursuit group was attacked by fire from 2 machine guns and machine rifles. After short fire-fight the north end of the wood was occupied. After a time heavy machine-gun fire was opened from Kolbovschina and mortar fire from vill. Zelyanki. We answered by return fire from three light machine guns. Soon the fire from Kolbovschina stopped, and it continued from Zelyanki for a long time.

Approximately 1200 m northward of Mushino-Medvedevo road 2 russian trench bombs and 5 russian cartridges were found, as well as trails of blood.

On the way back the diversionary platoon found a wounded policeman from Ryubetsal's unit, who was wounded facing with the bandits several days ago and was considered to be missing. He was taken to Ryubetsal's unit.

At Affenbrot's area the villages Vandzeli, Krivoselovo and Nezhelevo were cleaned from the dwellers and burnt by SD. There were no resistance, 2 men were shot in attempting to escape. 169 people, 50 heavy beasts, 12 horses and 75 light beasts were captured and brought to SD.

Among these 169 people there are approximately 80 people, in all appearances, native of Latvia, who have close relatives there and in Lettish police battalions and as authorized persons did the guests a valuable favour. By agreement with SD these persons must be separated from the others and brought to Indra for the check.

By agreement with SD on 19.2.1943 Drossel's group executed cleaning of the villages Shilovo, Pleski, Dubniki and Tershevo. The bandits were not found, there were few dwellers. Approximately 35 people were brought to SD, 4 horses, 12 heavy beasts and 20 sheep were captured.

On 19.2.43 Vadelmajster's group searched several areas of the woods. In the woods southward of the village Voznovo 2 people without weapon

from the village Degtyaryevo were arrested and brought to SD. In the north part of the woods 2 broken cannons of unknown origination and 60 german artillery shells were found.

The group has the same forces, the following are subordinated again: Fryulingssturm and Dauerpaufl. In attempting to escape 2 people were shot, 206 people brought to SD. 5 horses, 54 heavy beasts were captured. The trophies: 2 russian trench bombs, 2 antitank destroyers, 210 german cartridges and shells.

The transport for delivery of the trophies to Runo was requested.

21.2.1943

Runo's telegram

Afternoon report

On 20.2.1943 the wood officer searched the woods to the east of Kalyuti-Anisekovo, from Zelyanki-Zharnoseki line in the east to the west. Southward of the vill. Zharnoseki he met 18 people, allegedly dwellers of the vill. Zharnoseki and reported on them to SD officers being there.

In the woods, north-eastward of the vill. Voznovo, traces of sledge teams and beasts were found. Furthermore, a drunk man and a 30 years old woman body were found there. They are taken to SD.

Fryulingssturm and Zeidenshpinner's platoon cleaned the area of woods eastward of Zaryanka, between Poporotovo and Sokolove 3-4 km inward. No bands were found.

On 19.2.43 Drossel searched the area of woods between Latvian-Russian border on Rositsa-Lipovka road and the rivers Berezovka and Azunise. The villages Torshevo, Dubniki, Shilovo and Peski were cleaned without resistance. In one house a box of russian machine gun cartridges was found. 30 dwellers were brought to SD.

On 20.2.1943 Drossel searched the woods in north-westerly direction from the vill. Kozlovo-Buli-Zaborovtsy-Borki, and came across with a band 35 people strong (men, women, children). After a short fight 14 bandits were killed. Among the killed one woman in men's clothes was found. One man was partly dressed in russian military uniform, all appearances he was the band leader. A lot of documents were captured, among them there is an order stating that the headman of the village Buli by 5.2.43 must deliver a great amount of food-stuffs and fodder. One 53 years old bandit and a 13 years old boy were brought to SD. Other members of the band fled. The pursuit is continued. 14 people were killed in action. 21 people were brought to SD.

The capture: A box of russian machine gun cartridges, a rifle with 4 cartridges, 12 heavy beasts and 24 light beasts.

The trophies: 1 200 german machine rifle cartridges, 15 trench bombs were transferred to SD.

23.02.43

Afternoon report

In addition to my radio report dated 22.2.43 on operation against Kolbovschina-Barsuki-Medvedevo, I inform you that:

Kolbovschina and Barsuki were occupied by the 278th and 279th battalions without resistance. Gat's battle group "Falcons" really supported the battalions advance. Both villages were cleaned both from the bandits and from all the population together with the beasts.

Attack of Medvedevo starts at 9.00. Soon after the vill. Barsuki the 278th battalion was attacked by fire, from three sides, from heavy machine guns and rifles.

Approximately 50 bandits in the woods southward of Medvedevo, had to drop back in the face of the 278th attacking battalion. In Medvedevo approximately 80-100 bandits showed resistance, until they came under threat of surrounding from the left. At 10.00 Medvedevo was occupied. The units of the 278th battalion immediately start attack of Voznino and occupied the village almost without resistance. Medvedevo had a strong defense: At west and south margins of the villages there were big bunkers, properly camouflaged shooting nest with communication trenches. In Medvedevo there also were no dwellers and heavy beasts. Only a few light beasts were found.

When attack of Medvedevo started the attackers in a short time were fired three times from light weapon from the west direction opposite to the vill. Barsuli and near vill. Kolbovschina.

At attempt to bury the body of Unterführer from the 279th battalion the mine, tied to it by the bandits exploded, as a result 1 man is badly wounded and 1 man is lightly wounded. One more mine actuated on the skirts of the wood westward of the vill. Kolbovschina, as a result one Lettish officer is badly wounded.

The 277th squadron [the squadron of the 277th battalion], attached to the 278th battalion, at approaching to the woods, approximately 1 km north-westward of the vill. Savkeli, was attacked by fire from this village. After the fire-fight the squadron noticed approximately 100-200 people on 50 sledges leaving the village in direction of the vill. Buchanovo. It was impossible to catch the bandits because they were at long distance.

At 12.00 the operation was finished, all the villages were burnt. The villages Kolbovschina-Barsuki-Medvedevo-Vesnino-Savkeli were occupied.

The trophies of the 278th battalion: 2 russian rifles, 5 german rifles, 3 russian disks for light machine gun.

The trophies of the 279th battalion: 2 horses, one sledge, 1 light trench mortar, a bag with ammunition.

Our own losses:

The 279th battalion – 1 man is lightly wounded,

The 278th battalion : 4 men were killed, 2 men are hardly wounded, including the lieutenant.

Veldreum's battalion (one eye is plucked out by mine).

Battalion ... 10 lightly wounded.

The 279th battalion : 2 men are hardly wounded and 1 man is lightly wounded.

Total losses: 4 men were killed, 4 men are hardly wounded and 12 men are lightly wounded.

Supplement: On 21.2.43 the village Lipovka was burnt.

Berta
24.2.1943

Registr. № 43/43, secr.
Runo staff headquarters

Afternoon report

Knecht's group is located in Mushino.
the 276th, 277th and 279th battalions are also deployed in Mushino.
The 278th battalions stays in the same point of deployment.
Levinskij's communications squadron and "Falcon" unit.
Gat'e's "Falcons" are deployed in Mushino.

Guard police colonel

24.02.43

Runo's radiogram

**Results of the first stage
of operation "Winterzauber" («Winter magic»)**

a) 45

b) 323 SD

c) 241 SD

d) 7 horses, 64 heavy beats, 119 light beasts. (SD were confiscated by agreement with agricultural leaders).

e) Dubniki, Krivosyelovo, Bandeli, Meshalovo, Shilovo, Peski, Borki, Andyny, Shakalyevo, Lipovka, Zambrorovo, Voznovo, Vuly, Zaborovtsy, Tribisy, Zibaryevo, Lipovka, Kamenka, Zalyanu, Kolbovschina, Kalyuty, Aniskovo, Barsuki, Medvedevo, south-eastern Beryezovka, Vesnino and Savkeli. The abovementioned villages were occupied during operation and were mostly burnt.

The troops are deployed in the villages Rositsa, Kalyuty, Sokolovo Degtyaryevo Aniskovo, Fol'varkovo, Voznovo, Rakshni, Sar'ya and Mushino.

The trophies: 11 rifles, 1 gun, 2 trench bombs, 2 totally broken cannons, 210 artillery shells, 1 box of russian rifle cartridges, 3 machine gun disks, 1 light trench mortar. 1 sledge is captured.

Our own losses: 4 killed, 5 hardly and 18 lightly wounded.

Bert's

25.2.1943

Afternoon report

No bandits were found in searched area. According to evidence of the population, the major part of the bandits escaped before the attack start. 1 km in north-eastward of Medvedevo the 276th battalion was attacked by heavy machine gun and rifle fire from Budanovo district and Barkovo localities. At 6.00 Barkovo was occupied due to aggressive two-sided wing enveloping attacks. The bandits showed hot resistance but in fear of surrounding fled to the north-east. About 10.00 o'clock Zakhar'yevskoe was occupied without resistance. During advance on Bobreniki the 276th battalion was attacked by a heavy fire stopped right after deployment of our anti-air defense weapons. About 11.00 Bobreniki were occupied. During attack of Dedino the enemy inflicted a sudden blow on the wing on Abratino. In fear of surrounding the bandits fled to the north-east. The following villages were searched: Davidenki (burnt), Shavroki, Salino and Vishnarovo. Near Vishnarovo two bandits were killed in actions. Judging by trails of blood found in machine-gun nests, the enemy also suffered other losses.

The trophies: One horse.

Forces: staff, air defense battery, the 10th gendarmerie motorized platoon, the 275th and the 279th battalions are deployed in the vill. Vishnarovo. The 276th battalion is deployed in Dedino-Abrativo and Osotki.

The losses: The 279th battalion: 1 man is hardly wounded and 1 man is lightly wounded.

The air defense battery captured 100 trench bombs, 55 burning grenades.

The 279th battalion : 8 000 russian machine gun and rifle cartridges, 1 trench bomb and 30 rocket cartridges.

Currently the data on trophies from other battalions are not received.

Illegible signature.

Bert's radiogram

Location of Runo
26.2.1943

Supplement to the Afternoon report

dated 25.2.1943

The following villages were partly burnt by the battalion: Bushanovo, Barkovo, Sukhorukovskoe, Drobiniki, Rubani, Salino. At entry the following villages were already burnt: Luni, Paseki, Mikolenki.

The vill. Vishnarovo remains to serve as a strong point. The villages Denino¹⁶ and Osetki were burnt after taking away of beasts and food-stuff. According to the dwellers the most part of the population and beasts was removed by the bandits. Only the old and ill people were left, they were taken to SD. Altogether, 36 people were executed.

Actions with the enemy were performed by: The 276th battalion, about actions of which it was already reported, the air defense battery of Gatë, attacking the vill. Drobniki by fire, one squadron, machine gun group and 1 platoon.

A lot of artillery shells were found in Salino.

On the night of 26.2.43 from the woodlands eastward of Vishnarovo red emergency flare were intensively fired.

Illegible signature.

26.02.43

Bert's group

Afternoon report

On the second day of the attack no bands were found in the occupied territory. All the settlements were occupied for a heavy resistance.

The following villages were burnt by SD: Shluki, Zherebtsovo, Zatljschina, Demidovo, Dubrovo, Osetki, Popalushevo, Kurashi, Chernovoe and 6 farms.

204 bandit accomplices were shot up.

The beasts were found only in Demidovo, Dubrovo and Velikoye Selo. The beasts were taken away by the agricultural leaders. In most villages no population, beasts and food-stuffs were found.

The Afternoon set task was executed.

The capture: 1 horse, 7 cows and approximately 10 light beasts. The staff of the 277th and the 279th battalions, the air defense battery of Gat'e are deployed in vill. Velikoye Selo, the 276th and the 278th battalions – in vill. Kiseli. The air defense battery attacked by fire the vill. Zalejschina and then set several houses on fire.

The enemy's mortar and artillery fire prevented the advance of the 277th battalion.

BERTA

Operations department

Bert's group

Location

27.02.43

Afternoon report

On 27.2.1943 about 6.00 the 3rd squadron of the 276th battalion moving from the vill. Velikoye Selo to Bydu, was attacked by fire from the east by approximately 280 bandits. The bandits strengthened at a height of 192.4 4 km north-eastward of the vill. Velikoye Selo and occupied the vill. Tserkovo. 2 squadrons of the 279th battalion, 1 squadron of the 277th battalion and Gat'e's air defense battery were sent for support immediately. The bandits were dropped back in the course of violent fighting. They fled to the east taking the wounded. One bandit was captured and brought to SD. The village Tserkovo was occupied and burnt.

During interrogation of the prisoner it is found that in this case it is question of a band, consisting of forcibly mobilized persons, lived 15 km north-westward of Tserkovo.

The band 200 strong was defeated. Tserkovo was burnt.

The trophies: 1 english short rifle, 1 antitank rifle, 1 russian rifle, 1 trench bomb, 1 mine.

SD's capture. 61 cows, 30 sheep, 4 foals, 6 hoes.

The losses: 1 man is lightly wounded in the 279th battalion.

SD burnt the following villages: Dedino, Markovo, Ragelevo, Mozalyevschina, Radkovo and Bartoshi.

The shot dead: 108 people in Mozalyevschina, 45 people in Budy, 96 people in Tserkovo. SD arrested 92 people for evacuation

The enemy was attacked throughout the entire front enveloping the wings and dropped back to the north-east. The villages Tserkovo and Gorodilovichi were burnt.

3 killed bandits and blood stains of the killed or wounded bandits were found in the houses.

One bandit was captured and brought to SD.

BERTA

Bert's group
28.02.43

Afternoon report

Supplement to the report dated 27.2.43. Half-box of mines was captured. During search in Alubum staff rooms WaldMeister found records with Stalin's speech at grand meeting, devoted to anniversary of Soviet Socialist Republic dated 25.11.1936. They were transferred to SD.

The trophies: 4 000 russian rifle cartridges, 20 russian mines for trench mortar of 5.2 cm calibre were captured by Drossel.

Zeidenshpinner captured a lot of rifle cartridges and other ammunition.

Berta

Iltise's group

The 1st of March, 1943**Afternoon report**

On 28.2.1943 the 276th battalion searched the area: West border – Osveya-Abrazhevo road, east border – Sebezhe-Budy-Strelki road. In Baglovo 2 survived houses were burnt. In Galkovschina 2 men, 2 cows and light beasts were captured and transferred to SD.

No population was found in the searched area.

The 278th battalion searched the villages Seripchina and Belanu, where it captured 122 people and several light beasts and transferred them to SD. The villages Markovo, Bartoshi and Safajchino have been burnt already. The villages Dambovka and Polyanu shown in the map no longer exist. Between the villages Kiseli and Strelkami the units of the 278th battalion were repairing the bridge, which will be ready approximately by 2.3.1943. A deficiency in clamps, bolts and nuts delays the construction.

The 277th battalion searched the territory southward of Osveya – Velikoye Selo road. No bands were found. SD burnt the village Kalkovschina. SD shot up 45 bandit accomplices and 25 people were evacuated.

On 1.2.1943 about 13.00 the enemy was noticed moving eastward of the vill. Velikoye Selo. Velikoye Selo was attacked by machine gun and trench mortar fire at long range. The enemy stopped its movement at 16.50.

The occupied territory was searched in the rear. 124 people, heavy and light beasts were brought to SD: 15 cows, 40 sheep, 30 centners of grain.

The staff, the 10th gendarmerie motorized platoon, Gat's air defense unit and the 279th battalion are deployed in the vill. Velikoye Selo. The 276th battalion is on the move to Strelki, the 276th battalion is deployed in the vill. Kiseli, the 4th squadron of 277th battalion is on the move to Budy.

No trained miners. Lettish senior lieutenant Turks should be sent here from Dunaburg (Daugavpils) to train the miners.

Iltis

Iltis
The 2nd of March, 1943

Afternoon report

The vill. Velikoye Selo were repeatedly attacked by the enemy from the trench mortars and machine guns, as a result 2 persons from the 279th battalion and one man from the 277th battalion were wounded, one horse is killed. The enemy occupied the vill. Tserkovo and 192.4 height. On 1.3.43 about 15.00, Sebezh-Strelki road, 2 km southward of intersection Osveya-Lisino was attacked by enemy's fire from 170.4 height. At that the courier horse was killed. Early in the morning the 276th battalion was fired from rifles, machine guns and trench mortars approximately 1 km eastward of the vill. Selischye. The enemy attacked by trench mortar fire the vill. Strelki and the 276th battalion at entering vill. Selische. At entering vill. Strelki was burnt by the 281st battalion. By reconnaissance of the 278th battalion it is found that the vill. Yaroshi is occupied by the bands. The battalion reconnaissance group was attacked by fire from cannons, trench mortars and machine guns from Yaroshi, the battalion suffered no losses. The bands dropped back to the east. Aircrafts for bomb attack of Yaroshi were requested. The 277th and 279th battalions erect defence positions on the margin of the vill. Velikoye Selo. On 2.3.43 construction of bridge on road Strelki-Kiseli temporarily stopped, because the construction site was attacked by heavy machine gun fire of the enemy from Borisovo cemetery. Counter-measures are taken. According to words of the dwellers, after fight near Medvedevo on 22.2.43 the enemy transported 5 dead and 5 wounded people through Velikoye selo to the hospital in vill. Milovidu.

SD captured 3 cows, 80 sheep and 150 kg of grain, hidden in-floor.

The staff, the 10th gendarmerie motorized platoon, Gate's air defense unit and the 277th and the 279th battalions (in action of 4th squadron of 277th battalion) are deployed in vill. Velikoye Selo.

The 276th battalion is located in vill. Strelki, the 276th battalion (without the 1st squadron) – in vill. Kiseli. The 1st squadron of the 276th battalion and the 4th squadron of the 277th battalion are located in vill. Budy.

In the 277th battalion 1 man is lightly wounded and in the 279th battalion 2 men are lightly wounded.

There is no local population for mine fields clearing. Between 13.00 and 14.00 5 fires from cannons were performed on vill. Kiseli, no damage.

About 10.00, approximately 1 km southward of crossing near vill. Velikoye Selo, the field patrol of the 278th battalion detected 10 bandits on sledges moving to 161.0 height. A platoon with two heavy machine guns and mortar was thrown against the bandits after which they dropped back to Demidovo taken the killed and the wounded.

Iltis

The 3rd of March, 1943

Afternoon message

3.3 In 1943, at 7.30 the 279th battalion started attacking the village of Gorodilovichi by enveloping it from the right flank and took the village at about 11.00. The enemy maintained resistance mainly from the east and north-east of Gorodilovichi and fired small arms, machine guns and mortars from Nizhneye Lyubashino village. One of the aircrafts bombed the 192.4 high point occupied by the massed enemy force. After bombing the high point, the fire by the air defense battery commenced. 7 accessories of the bandits were shot in Gorodilovichi. Gorodilovichi destroyed, the attack proceeded northward, invading the village of Nizhneye Lyubashino where one killed bandit was found. The bandits used sledges to escape north-eastward, into the forest. From the battalion command center one could see about 150 bandits on 30 sledges retreating through Bory village to the forest area northward and south-eastward of Gorodilovichi. The group headquarters was mortared. As far as known, the enemy suffered casualties.

The 278th battalion reports: On 2.3.43, the Kiseli-Streki road as well as Kiseli village and the bridge construction site near Strelki village was covered with enemy's machine-guns and small arms fire from the sunrise till night. By the afternoon, the enemy had fired Kiseli village with incendiary projectiles and burned down one barrack of ours, with no other damage inflicted. On 23.1943, the 276th battalion was being covered with enemy's machine-gun and small arms fire all day long from the high points around Selishche. Incendiary bullets set two houses on fire. At about 10.00, the enemy made 12 gunshots (of 75-mm caliber) and approximately 15.30 mortar shots at Strelki village. Almost all shots proved to be ineffective. To make the bandits cease firing Strelki village from the high points near Selishche, was struck against at 15.00 and the enemy was driven away. The high point near Selishchi was occupied by the reinforced outguard. After dark the bridge construction near Strelki village was resumed and kept on till 24.00. The guard equipment team that was called for failed to come on 3.3.43. Activity of the Gautier battery is limited due to snow drifts and is impossible beyond the roads.

Gorodilovichi, Nizhneye Lyubashino and several surviving houses inwere burnt down. One bandit was killed and 7 accessories of the bandits were shot, 3 sledges were carried off.

Casualties of the 279th battalion are: 4 persons have been lightly wounded, 2 persons have been badly wounded, 2 persons from company 2 have missed in action, including senior police lieutenant Zarinyy.

Iltis

The 4th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

On 4.3.43 at 11.00, the 277th battalion together with the attached 1st company of the 279th battalion attacked Velikoye Selo, Plyushchi, Nishcha and Dubrovo. No people proved to be in the villages. Having been partially burnt down, the villages were destroyed. The battalion was caught into the severe mortar and antitank gun fire from the forest area (boot-shaped) and to the south-east therefrom. The pilots bombed the enemy's line in the forest in front of the battalion's attack sector, though the targets were marked with houses on fire and the targets are likely to be different as the bombs were dropped far from the attack targets. During the aviation attack on 3.3.43, the bandits on 14 sledges escaped Selezhevo, the east edge of the Zvonezh lake. Bombing finished, they came back on 60 loaded sledges and mounted 2 medium machine guns to the north-east from Zelevo village. A new aviation attack of Zelevo village on 4.3.43 is required.

While the 276th battalion was conducting the reconnaissance near Mikulili village on 4.3.43, the east edge of the forest and the high point to the north of Nikulino suffered intensive small-arms, machine-gun and mortar fire by the enemy. The 276th battalion did not advance further on as the villages to the east from Strelki strong point had been already burnt down by the Marder's group. There are no other settlements withing the area neighbouring the forest zone. The bridge construction on the Strelki-Kisely road is in progress. The bridge on the Osveya-Strelki has been partially constructed. On Runo's order, the 1st company of the 276th battalion was attached to the 273th battalion to defend the flank.

One bandit (on the tree) was killed, one sledge was destroyed with the mortar.

Casualties of the battalions are: the 277th battalion – 1 person killed, the 276th battalion – 1 person lightly wounded, the 279th battalion – 2 persons lightly wounded. The enemy's casualties are probable with some degree of certainty, however none were found.

Iltis

Iltis

1.3.1943

Afternoon message

The 278th battalion reports that at 13.25 about 40 bandits on 7 sledges escaped towards the forest to the north-west from Yaroshi village upon approaching of the German aircrafts. As the aircrafts attacked for the second time, 22 bandits more escaped towards the forest as well, firing with a white signal rocket. At 10.15 31 bandits from the forest to the north-east of Selezhevo divided into groups of 4-7 and arranged trenches along the western and southern edges of the village. An intensive movements of the bandits could be seen between Yaroshi and Selezhevo. A reconnaissance platoon that had been sent to Dubrovo-Demidovo encountered the enemy near [...] and was fired from 2 mortars from the forest corner to the north-east of Demidovo village. On their way back, the reconnaissance platoon was fired from rifles and mortars from the hills to the north-east of Selezhevo and from the village. The enemy dug in on the hill near Demidovo. At about 24.00, 15 bandits attempted to attack the outguard at the distance of approximately 1 km to the north of Buda. After the return machine-gun and rifle fire, the bandits retreated. At dawn, trails of blood and German cartridges were found.

In addition to the reconnaissance summary dated 4.3.43, the 276th battalion reports that on attempting to disengage from the bandits, two groups of the latter counterthrust, which was repelled.

The outguard to the south from Selishche village can see bandits moving actively on sledges. The bridge on the Strelki-Kiseli village was restored with the use of expedient means.

Illegible signature.

Ittis

The 4th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

The bandits' zone enclosed between the Osveyskoye lake and the Beloye lake has been cleared off bandits and their accessories.

The 279th battalion encountered the enemy's resistance at the western edge of Tserkovno, item 179.7 and item 142.8, and in the forest to the east of Kostrovo.

On assuming the offensive, the 277th battalion was immediately fired with mortars and automatic weapons from the forest to the east of Gorodilovichi. On further northward advance, the enemy's firing intensified. The battalion suffered firing from field guns and antitank guns. The right flank of the attacking 2nd company failed to advance for a long time due to the enemy's heavy fire, and succeeded in accomplishing the task assigned only together with the 1st company platoon, in spite of the severe firing by the enemy, 4 persons wounded. Throughout the entire period of attack of the northern edge of Lyubavno village, the battalion experienced the severe fire from the artillery flank and enemy's mortars mounted in the eastern forest area, as well as small-arms, machine-gun and mortar fire. Despite we were lacking heavy weapons, the northward attack continued due to courage and endurance.

The first target of the attack – Ozborye-Kostrovo and Kaplyar – was reached at 10.00. The bandits retreated into the large forest area to the north of the Beloye lake. The villages were cleared off bandits and burnt down.

40 persons suspected of being members of bandits units were carried off in a small forest near Ozborye village and handed over to the SD.

The second target of the attack was reached at 13.00. Ignali-no-Osveytsy and Krasovo villages were burnt down as well. About 25 suspects were arrested and handed over to the SD in these settlements.

The 279th battalion handed over 7 suspects to the SD. Enemy's casualties have not been determined, however blood stains were found here and there. The bridge at the distance of 1 km from Strelki village was restored and is now passable for the motor transport of under 3.5 tonnes. The area around the Osveya and the Beloye lake was cleared off the bands. 1 captive bandit and 72 persons suspected of being members of bandits units were handed over to the SD.

Casualties of the 279th battalion are: 1 person badly wounded (a leg torn off with a mortar projectile), 1 person lightly wounded and 1 person injured with a fractured leg. Casualties of the 277th battalion are: 4 persons wounded, 1 killed teamster, one killed horse and one wounded horse.

Iltis

Iltis-Runo

07.03.1943

Afternoon message

In addition to the report dated 6.3.43, the 277th battalion reports that villages of Oreshevo, Chernoki, Baidakovo were captured and burnt down in addition to those listed in the yesterday message. In the morning on 6.3.43, the guard of the 276th battalion found and disarmed 2 mines, one found as far as 200 m to the north, the other one – 60 m to the south of the site, to the north of Strelki village. The first mine is a normal mine weighing 2.2 kg, the other mine weighs 0.2 kg of the charge and is improvised.

The 10th motorized gendarmerie platoon has been forwarded to Strelki village. The SS and the special police company and one company of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion have arrived at Velikoye Selo.

Locations remain unchanged. Besides, the SS and the special police company and the 1st company of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion have been cantoned in Velikoye Selo, the 1st platoon of the 4th company of the 277th battalion is located in Osvey.

Iltis

Ilitis Radio telegram Runo

The 8th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

In the first half of today, the 1st company of the 276th battalion, on its withdrawal from the original position on the high point to the west of Gorodilovichi village came under severe small-arms and machine-gun fire of the enemy from the forest, at the distance of about 1 km to the east and southeast of Gorodilovichi village. The fire was suppressed, and bands retreated back into the forest.

On 8.3.1943 at about 5.30, the combat wagon train of the 276th battalion encountered newly-laid mines on the Sebezh-Strelki road. One mine had been laid behind the bridge restored by the 278th battalion, at the distance of about 2 km to the north of Strelki village, on the left side of the carriageway. While the ammunition-carrying sledges were riding along, the mine exploded, the sledges damaged and ammunition exploded. The other mine had been laid about 25 m behind the said bridge and was found in the right track. The mine was not destroyed and the location was marked. The mines had been laid after the withdrawal of the battalion that had come along this road not long ago. They had been laid in both tracks and covered with snow.

On 7.3.43 from 10.00 till 17.00, the SD got at its command 2 platoons and the machine-gun unit of the 279th battalion for the purpose of clearing Ostrov and Suekeli villages. The villages were burnt down.

The headquarters, Gautier air defense battery, the 1st company of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion, the 277th and 279th battalion are accommodated in Velikoye Selo, the 276th battalion in Budy village, the 278th battalion in Kiseli village, the SS and police company in Osvey, one platoon of the 4th company of the 277th battalion are accommodated in Osvey as well. The Isserstadt group has been informed about the mine.

Ilitis

Ilitis

The 9th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

Excluding Melnitsa, all the tasks assigned have been accomplished. Melnitsa will be occupied tomorrow, as possibility of its capturing at nighttime is doubtful.

At 13.30 the enemy maintained resistance firing from the automatic weapons, from the forest between Gorodilovichi and Velikoye Selo. The bandits were conducting firing attacks from the forest along the Velikoye Selo-Lisno road during the whole day before dark. At the road fork to the east from Zagryaznenskaya village, the SD team following the leading company of the 276th battation encountered 2 mines. 3 persons were badly wounded and 2 persons were lightly wounded by the explosion.

Enemy's casualties have not been determined.

The bands are retreating into the forest while maintaining the resistance.

Kobylnitsa, Belaya, Zvolnitsa and Meleshkovo have been burnt. Zagryaznaya village exists no longer either. It is unknown yet whether Dubnoye village has been burned, as the platoon of the 276th battalion that was sent thereto for this purpose, has not come back yet. One bandit was arrested and handed over to the SD. 47 accessories of the bandits were arrested and handed over to the SD.

3 seldges, 6 cows and 2 calves were carried off.

The headquarters, Gautier air defense battery, SS and police company, the 1st company of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion, the 277th and 278th battalions are accommodated in Lisno, the 276th and 279th battalions – in Zaluchye.

The 276th battalion casualties – 1 person badly wounded and 3 persons lightly wounded. The 276th battalion casualties – 1 person badly wounded (both legs are torn off with a mine).

Ilitis

Iltis

The 10th of March, 1943**Afternoon message**

As a result of dynamic actions of the aviation, most bandits have retreated further to the east. According to the data available by the moment, there is no well-organized defense of bandits' camps. The 277th and 278th, as well as the 279th battalions overcame the enemy's resistance over and over again. Bands comprising of up to 40 persons were dealt with. The bands adhered to the previous strategy: To retreat while conducting containing combats. It can be said for sure that some bandits have still survived in vast combed forest areas who may have escaped the battalions skillfully. In a number of places the bandits arranged tree abatis and it took a lot of time to eliminate them. When escaping eastwards, 40 bandits were intercepted and 1 bandit was killed near Markuchi village. Villages of Yazubrina, Ardavskaya and Mikuty were burnt down. Ardavskaya village had already been partially destroyed by the aviation. New-made graves with killed bandits were found on the bandits' cemetery near Dobrolesy village. The telephone cable connecting Velikoye Selo and Lisno was cut through in many points.

The 277th battalion has accomplished the daytime task. I watched the 278th battalion fighting with small groups of the bandits at the approximate distance of 2 km to the west of Milovidovo. The battalion is supposed to have accomplished the daytime task. After having occupied Mikuta village, the 278th battalion stopped advancing after dark due to exhaustion of the soldiers. The battalion was ordered to resume accomplishing the combat task on 13.3.43. The 276th battalion has accomplished the daytime task to the east of Yaroshi village. On the left flank, the 277th battalion has established the communication with the Schroeder's group.

Iltis

Iltis

The 11th Of March, 1943

Afternoon message

In addition to the afternoon message made on 10.3.43, the SS and the police company report that 13-15 bandits were fleeing eastwards, to the forest area, in front of the leading column of the company, at the distance of about 1 km to the north from Milovidy village, on 10.3.43. The leading column started shooting at the bandits with small arms and sub-machine guns and pursuing them, nevertheless the bandits managed to escape.

On 10.3.43 at about 15.00, Kurashi village was occupied by the 276th battalion with almost no resistance maintained, and burnt down by SD. The battalion carried off 39 suspects, including women and children.

After having accomplished the daytime task on 10.3.43, the 277th battalion occupied the pre-determined strong points in the Svolna lowland and equipped an all-around defence. The communication with the Schroeder's group was repaired. The 278th battalion was ordered to resume the attack at daybreak and accomplish the daytime task within the day according to the order. The order says that the 278th battalion advances farther while maintaining the contact with the 276th battalion. The 277th and 279th battalions were ordered to cut off enemy's escape routes ahead of the 276th and 278th battalions.

On 10.3.43 the 1st company of the 276th battalion reached Mikoshono village, starting from Kurashi II village through Yaroshi village. The communication with the headquarters and other companies was damaged due to terrain irregularities. On 11.3.43 the company arrived at Mikoshino from Mikoshino through Zarkinshchina (the communication with the Schroeder's group was repaired here), through Shchuny. The headquarters and the remaining 276th battalion are on the march in Milovidy village. On the night of 11.3.43, the 276th battalion bivouaced near Mikoshino village. The delayed arrival was caused by the swampy ground and numerous tree abates, as well as by snow drifts and lost orientation.

In addition to the afternoon message dated 10.3.43: radio receivers rather than radio stations were meant. The following was salvaged on 15 carried-off sledges: food, household appliances, 15 explosive gaging capsules, 3 machine-gun disks, 6 full magazines for light machine guns, 2 boxes of Russian rifle cartridges, 13 anti-personal mines, 1 anti-tank

mine, 1 grenade, 4 kg of explosives, 8 saws, 8 axes, 3 shovels, 10 explosive cartridges (200 g each), 15 cows, 8 sledges.

In addition to 15 horses that were carried off earlier, 15 sledges with various armament were carried off, as well as the German chow wagon, 2 radio receivers, 1 German carbine, 1 Nagant revolver, 2 full magazines for light machine guns, 60 automatic cartridges, machine-gun cartridges.

75 persons more were carried from the forest camp and handed over to the SD in addition to 116 persons who had been carried off earlier.

The 276th battalion, headquarters and 4 companies are accommodated in Milovidy village.

Iltis

Itlis group

Runo

The 12th of March, 1043**Afternoon message**

On 11.3.43, the 3rd company of the 277th battalion, which is accommodated in Milovidy, was found by the bandits from the forest to the east from the village, one policeman and 3 horses from the teams lightly wounded. One bandit tried to cross the Svolna river, near Gniltsey village, and to escape eastwards, but was killed. The Russian rifle of his was carried off. The bandit wore civilian clothes and had a military uniform with him.

At about 16.30 of 11.3.43, Milovidy village was fired with machine guns from the forest to the east from Svolna village.

With return fire launched, the machine gun could no longer be heard.

During combing measures a lot of abandoned camps were found and destroyed, especially near Mikuty village. Newly-built bakehouse and blacksmiths shop were found in the village. No supplies were found. The entire village with the said constructions was burnt down.

The daytime task the comb the locality has been accomplished. The 279th battalion captured 15 persons who were handed over to SD. The 278th battalion carried off 5 persons.

Salvage: 1 Russian rifle, 8 horses, 5 sledges, medium machine gun tube, 24 granades, 1 box of explosives, 16 cows, 10 bags of grain, horses and the cattle were handed over to SD. 3 cows were used as meat. The headquarters, SS and police company, the 1st company of the 2nd Lithuanian battalion, the 278th battalion exclusive of the 2nd and 4th companies are accommodated in Lisno, the 2nd and 4th companies of the 278th battalion – in Zaluchi village, the 276th battalion – in Milovidy village, the 1st company of the 277th battalion – in Milovidy as well, the 1st company of the 277th battalion – in Dobropasy village, the headquarters and 3 platoons of the 277th battalions – in Charnoki village, 2 platoons of the 277th battalion – in Reity and Chernoki villages.

Our casualties: 2 persons are lightly wounded, 1 horse is killed and 3 horses are wounded.

In addition: At about 7.39 of 12.3.43, one policeman from the 277th battalion who accompanied the wounded policeman from the 3rd com-

pany of the 277th battalion from Milovidy village to Chernoki village was shot at, 1.5 km to the southwest from Dobroplesy and to the west from Svolna village. The policeman was wounded, the horse was killed.

Iltis

Iltis

The 13th March, 1943

Afternoon message

The 277th battalion continued combing the locality in the Svolna village lowland. At about 10.30, a deserter bandit came to the 2nd combattalion 277th battalion. When interrogated in the SD, he said that the bandit camp of 60 persons was lying 2 km to the southeast from Dobroplesy village, by the Dennitsa river. By the group's order, one company and SS team with the said deserter started for the place and attacked the camp from all sides. Most bandits had left the camp by that time. 6 bandits were killed in the combat, one woman bandit was captured and handed over to the SD, 2 horses were carried off and 2 horses were killed.

There are no losses for our part.

Supplement to the message dated 13.3.43.

The 278th batallion detected encampment with civilians and one horse team, at the height 168.9, in the district of vil. Zagryznaya. The people and the horse team were sent to SD. 2 howitzer barrels and one antitank destroyer barrel, as well as bulk of artillery shells were found in village Kobylnitsa. By all appearances, ordnance artificer shops were located in village Kobylnitsa. The detected barrels were destructed on 14.3.43.

Iltis

Iltis Radar
Radiogram to Runo

The 14th of March, 1943.

Afternoon message

At the order, the SS groups and police troop were mopping up the area between Lisno and the Beloye lake on 14.3.43. Several camorra encampments were detected there and burnt. Belaya, Malinki, Voltsy and Dubnoye villages, which are located to the North from the Beloye lake, and which had been partially burnt and abandoned, are completely destroyed now. Encampment 279, when mopping-up the specified zone to the West of Otradnoye village on 13.3.43, came up against 70 bodies. According to the information provided by the captured, what is probably meant here is the runaway inhabitants who were shot from the planes and by the bandits.

33 inhabited dugouts to the south of Rakuta village were destroyed by the encampment 276. One bandit was killed in the battle. 285 people were sent to the SD.

The daily mission was accomplished. See the morning message of 14.3.43, 7.30 a.m. for further information.

121 cows, 63 horses, 15 sleds, 2 full gun magazines were taken.

One lightly wounded person from the encampment 277 was reported in the morning message dated 14.3.43

Iltis

Il'tise's Group

The 15th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

Since Milovidy -- as it was already noted -- had repeatedly received fire, the 1st troop of the 277th battalion together with SD conducted campaign against two bunkers 17 belonging to Latvian bandits and located to the west of Svolna. Before noon, Milovidy received fire attack by the bandits, at this, one Corporal from the 276th encampment was gravely wounded.

In the morning, the sled train of the 279th encampment was attacked by the bandits on the Lisno-Osveya road. According to the data, received up to this moment, 5 soldiers, 1 carrier and 5 horses were killed. One injured is transported to Osveya, and one person with minor injury is transported to Lisno. After the message on attack had been received, one troop of the 278th battalion was directed there. The troop has not got back yet.

The campaign is planned for the 16.3.1943.

a) against bandits in the forest range to the north of the road Lisno-Osveya, to the west of Beloye lake.

b) against bandits' bunkers in the square 9204,

c) the 1st troop of the 277th battalion and the SD unit are heading against bandits' encampment in the square 9204, 1 troop of the 276th battalion -- against vil. Zvalno -- to bury the deceased policemen from the 279th battalion.

Several bandits' barrels were deactivated by senior lieutenant Turks in villages Melnitsa and Lisno. One antitank destroyer barrel with shells was buried, 2 howitzer barrels were delivered to Osveya. Artillery shells were deactivated.

Losses: 277th battalion -- 2 soldiers received minor injuries and one [...], 276th battalion -- 1 person is killed. 279th battalion: 5 soldiers and 1 squad member were killed, 2 soldiers received minor injuries, 2 squad members were reported missing, 5 horses were killed, 4 horses are missing.

Il'tis

The 16th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

In addition to the message reporting the bandits' attack on sled train, the 279th battalion reports that three sleds on road Lisno-Osveja, to the south of vil. Zayelnitsy, have been fired by 40-50 bandits from a medium machine gun and automatic weapons, at about 11.00. The fire attack continued for 20 minutes. The security escort team opened reprisal fire. No data concerning the enemy's losses were found. Own losses equaled to 6 persons killed. These were 6 soldiers, including one seriously injured soldier, who failed to crawl to village Great Village a little way and, having lost his strength, shot himself, not to fall into the bandits' hands. One soldier has been delivered live to Velikoye Selo, 2 wagon men were missing, three sleds with load were not found. 5 killed soldiers were undressed by bandits, their heads were shot through with explosive bullets.

No enemy forces were detected by the 278th battalion at mopping-up of the forest to the west and north of the Beloye lake. One security suspect was captured near vil. Dubnoye by the fodder unit of the staff headquarters of the group. 278th battalion was directed against the gang, which was attacking the sled train, to large forests to the west, to the east and to the north of the Beloye lake.

One platoon was assigned to patrol road Lisno-Osveya, according to the order from Runo, in coordination with Issershtedt's group, from the evening of 15.3.43.

No reports concerning the campaign against bandits' bunkers in the square 9204, conducted by the 276th, 277th and 279th squadrons, were delivered yet.

108 persons were captured and transferred to SD, 11 persons were shot when attempting escape, 8 wood camps were destroyed. Captured: 37 cows, 11 horses, 10 sleds. A campaign against bandits' bunkers to the south of vil. Lonnitsy, 1 km to the west of point 121.4 was conducted. Contingent used: The 1st troop of the 277th squadron, the 1st of the 279th squadron and the 3rd troop of the 276th battalion. The bunkers were attacked from the north and the south. The bunkers were settled down in well protected district and consisted of 6 premises – each for 40 men. The bunkers were deeply dug into the earth and provided with communica-

tion trenches between them. The bunkers were burnt. Bombing of the bunkers from aircrafts was noneffective.

The 276th battalion with the 3rd troop combated with the gang of 30-50 persons, at 1.5 km to the north-east from vil. Vurlevo. Campaign against this gang was carried out, in its course 5 bandits were killed, including one lieutenant in Russian uniform. Judging by documents, it is referred to a demolition platoon leader. Judging on numerous trails of blood, the bandits had considerable losses.

Own losses: one person in the 277th battalion has minor injury.

Group headquarters, SS and police troop, the 1st Lithuanian battalion, 2nd squadron of anti-aircraft guns of Gate, the 3rd and the 4th troops of the 276th battalion are settled down in Lisno. The headquarters, the 1st and 3rd troops of the 276th battalion are located in vil. Zaluchi, the 276th battalion – in vil. Milovidy, the 1st troop of the 277th battalion is located in the same place, the 1st troop of the 277th battalion is settled down in vil. Dobroplesy, the headquarters and 3 platoons of the 277th battalion are located in vil. Chernoki, 2 platoons of the 277th battalion are located in vil. Rekty, 1 platoon of the 277th battalion – in Osveya, 1 platoon of the 277th battalion – in vil. Velikoye Selo, the headquarters, the 1st and the 3rd troops of the 279th battalion are located in vil. Melnitsa, the 2nd troop – in vil. Gniltsey.

Iltis

The 17th of March, 1943.

Afternoon message

In addition to the morning message, the 278th battalion reports that on 17.3.43, at appr. 4.00 a.m. the deportee security patrol was fired by the bandits on the road Lisno-Velikoye Selo, approximately in 4 km to the west of Lisno. The quantity of bandits was not identified. One bandit was killed. Apparently, the person in question was a commander as he was keeping a map, as well as records and a diary. At repeated mopping-up of the forest between Lisno and Velikoye Selo, carried out by the SS and police troop, and a platoon of the 278th battalion, the enemy was not detected. The seized man was transferred to SD. A part of approximately 60 corpses found during the 1st mopping-up were buried, some of them were burnt. Undamaged wood camps are burnt, the SS and police troop of special function with the 1st troop of the 278th battalion are assigned to comb up the wood between vil. Lisno and Beloye lake. Other divisions of the 278th battalion perform patrolling on road Lisno-Osveya. Booty: one Russian automatic gun with magazine, a pistol with a holster, 1 Russian grenade, a tablet containing a diary with records dated 17.7.42, passwords, the Russian order for the special mission, a book with officers' addresses, 2 photos, guerrilla songs, Russian operative card of the area Osveya-Sebezh with marks, a blank German card for visiting German establishments of Wehrmacht. All materials are transferred to SD.

Losses: 1 person in the 279th battalion had minor injury.

Iltis

Ittis.

The 18th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

17.3.43, the whole day long the fortified center of Milovidy was subjected to shelling and automatic bombardment from the side of the bandits, thus one policeman was lightly wounded. The 3rd troop of the 277th battalion opened reprisal fire and fired the bandits, who had went out of the forest to the south of vil. Milovidy. The bandits went back to forest. The bandits' losses were not identified. During the cross-fire 2 Corporals were wounded. At night to 18.3.43, the 278th battalion occupied switch positions in the forest, on the road Lisno-Velikoye Selo, and to the north and west from the Beloye lake. A man and a boy were seized in the forest by the patrol and then transferred to SD. One man was shot when attempting escape. In the forest to the west of the Beloye lake, refugees were captured – a man, 5 women and 5 children, – and also transferred to the SD. In the first half of day of 18.3.43 the police command when crossing the Beloye lake was shot from rifles from the wood on the north-east from vil. Lisno in the eastern direction. The troop of the 278th battalion was sent to the forest. Because of repeated bombardment of vil. Milovidy, the 2nd troop of the 276th battalion was directed for mopping-up the forest between vil. Anzelevka (incl.) to Milovidy (incl.), along the east bank of the river Zvolna. Minor collisions with the gangs which hastily depart back. During this action, communication with Schroder's group was established. In the forest, to the east from vil. Milovidy, houses used by gangs for refuge, were burnt. Then mopping-up of vil. Bor-levo was continued. The remaining houses were burnt, and dugouts were blown up. The 2nd troop of the 276th battalion was directed for mopping-up of the large forest to the east of vil. Milovidy. The 3rd troop of the 277th battalions combats with separate bandits to the south of vil. Milovidy. The 2nd troop of the 278th battalion is mopping-up the woody district to the north-east from Lisno, to the west of the Beloye lake. The other parts of the 278th battalion are used for patrolling the road Lisno-Velikoye Selo. The 279th battalion has once again mopped-up the forest in area Ladigovo-Arlavsky. 14.8.43 the group headquarters was visited by the expert in mines, senior police lieutenant Turke, who trained the personnel of the headquarters and divisions on the subject of different types of mines, their action and ways of mine clearing.

Till now Turke has neutralised 2 tank mine and one antipersonnel mine. Besides, passes to Lisno and Milovidy were made.

One person was killed when attempting escape. Two horses were captured and transferred to SD.

The 278th battalion found leaflets with the text near the place of detection of the body of the Soviet commander killed on 17.3.43: "Is something happening in Germany?". The leaflet contains exaggerated description of destruction of German cities by teammates' aircrafts.

From two troops of the 278th battalion directed on 18.3.43 to investigate the area of forest to the east of the Lisno lake, one platoon was shot by the bandits from vil. Yambritsa. One of three bandits was killed by reprisal fire, and two others escaped in the direction of vil. Takuny.

The houses remaining in village Yambritsa, were burnt.

To the west of height 179.7 the camp, abandoned by the bandits, was burnt.

Booty: 1 Russian rifle and 1 manual grenade.

The 279th battalion at repeated mopping-up of the forest in the area Lakdigovo-Arlavsky, did not detect the enemy, 1 man arrested and transferred to SD.

Booty: 10 horses and 20 cows are transferred to SD. The forest encampment is destroyed.

Ilitis

Iltis Radar Telegram to Runo

18.3.43

Supplement to the afternoon message

From two troops of the 278th battalion directed on 18.3.43 to investigate the area of forest to the east of the Lisno lake, one platoon was shot by 3 bandits from vil. Yambritsa. The platoon opened reprisal fire, one bandit was killed and two others escaped in the direction of vil. Ba-kun. The remaining part of vil. Yambritsa was burnt.

To the west of height 179.7 the abandoned bandits' camp was burnt, booty is taken: 1 Russian rifle and 1 Russian manual grenade.

The 279th battalion, at repeated mopping-up of forest range near Ladigovo, did not detect the enemy. One person is arrested and transferred to SD. Booty: 10 horses, 20 cows are transferred to SD. One forest camp was destroyed.

Iltis

Iltis Radar
Radiogram to Runo

19.3.1943

Afternoon message

At dawn of 19.3.43 there was a fight between enemy patrol and field sentry of the 276th battalion. The bandits receded in northeast direction. 2 persons in the 276th battalion were lightly wounded. No data concerning the enemy's losses were found.

The 276th, 277th, 279th battalions are used for blocking of the river Svolny. Divisions of the 278th battalion patrol road Lisno-Velikoye Selo. The troops free from fighting missions are engaged in military preparation.

Iltis

Iltis

20.3.1943

Afternoon message

19.3.43 forest range near Mikuty was repeatedly mopped-up by the 1st troop of the 279th battalion. The fortified bandits' camp was detected and destroyed. The enemy was not detected.

The 276th, 277th, 279th battalions are used for blocking of the river Svolny. In the morning, the 1st company of the 278th battalion was directed to vil. Melnitsa because of the fire attack on the village.

Divisions of the 278th battalion patrol road Lisno-Velikoye Selo . The troops free from fighting missions are engaged in combat preparation.

Booty: 12 sleds loaded with grain.

The 10th motorized gendarmerie platoon, headquarters and the 3rd troop of the 2nd Lithuanian battalion, headquarters and the 1st troop of the 50th Ukrainian battalion, sub-divisions of the 3 troop of the 50th Ukrainian battalion, the 3rd technical help platoon of the construction troop were sent to Velikoye Selo.

Losses of the 279th batallion: 1 killed, 2 badly wounded and 2 lightly wounded.

Iltis

Iltis

The 21st of March, 1943**Afternoon message**

Retreating of the 276th battalion and the 1st troop of the 277th battalion from vil. Milovidy to new apartments was carried out without collision with the enemy. Milovidy were burnt by rear command, and the bridge over the Svolna river was destroyed.

The 276th battalion is redirected from vil. Milovidy into vil. Zalvehi and Lisno. The 277th and 279th battalions are used for blocking the river Svolna. Divisions of the 278th battalion patrol road Lisno-Velikoye Selo. Group headquarters, SS and the police troop, the 1st troop of the 2nd Lithuanian battalion, antiaircraft battalion of Gate, the 2nd troop of the 276th battalion are settled down in Lisno. The headquarters and 2 troops of the 276th battalion are settled down in vil. Chernoki. The 278th battalion is settled down in the forest near vil. Zaluchye. The 279th battalion – in vil. Melnitsa, the 1st troop of the 279th battalion – in vil. Gniltys, headquarters and 2 companies of the 277th battalion – in vil. Chernoki, 1 troop of the 277th battalion is settled down in vil. Rekty, the second company of the same battalion – in vil. Dobroplesy, the 10th motorised gendarmerie platoon, headquarters and 2 companies of the 2nd Lithuanian battalion, headquarters and 1 troop of the 50th Ukrainian battalion, the 2nd platoon of technical help of the construction troop are settled down in vil. Velikoye Selo.

Losses: In 276th battalion, the battalion doctor Iozef Vabris (gaupman of shuts-police) was wounded.

Iltis

Iltis

The 22nd of March, 1943

Afternoon message

There were no hindrances at separating from the enemy forces. Villages Gniltsey, Dobroplesy, Chernoki, Renty, Lisno, Zaluchye were burnt, the bridge over the Svolna and boats were destroyed. During the fires, explosions in houses were heard from time to time. When entering Denisenki village the 277th battalion was shot from the automatic guns from the forest, to the north of the village. The battalion opened the reprisal fire and was mopping-up the forest. No data concerning the enemy's losses were found.

One person in the 4th troop of the 211th battalion was killed. At 6.00a. m., the security escort team of the communication troop, the 1st platoon of the 1st troop of the 2nd Lithuanian battalion went over mines, in approximately 3 km from the cross, near vil. Velikoye Selo. 1 person killed, 2 persons badly wounded and 2 persons lightly wounded. 50-60 citizens of vil. Gurlevo were sent to SD, the cattle were taken by Wehrmacht requisition troop.

Iltis

Iltis

The 23rd of March, 1943

Afternoon message

The 279th battalion neutralized the enemy opposition on the Berezvitsa lake, 8 runaway bandits are shot. Vil. Lipnik and 11 forest camps were burnt. 70 persons were arrested and transferred to SD. The 276th and 277th battalions did not detect the enemy. No messages received from the 211th battalion. Because of deep snow and marshy and forested terrain, the forest mopping-up is very inconvenient and takes much time. New enemy's trenches were found in vil. Bondary, mainly – in its northern part.

The 276th, 278th and 279th battalions accomplished their daily missions.

6 bandits were shot.

16 horses, 13 cows, 18 sheep were captured and transferred to SD or Wehrmacht requisition troop.

The group headquarters and reserve are settled down in vil. Bondari, the 276th battalion – in vil. Komary and Shevelevo. The 278th battalion is located in vil. Bakatino and Peskuny, the 279th battalion – in vil. Glembochitsa.

Iltis

Iltis' Group

The 24th of March, 1943

Afternoon message

The enemy was not detected. The destroyed bridges on road Osveja-Sebez were restored by bridge maintenance crew. most villages are inhabited.

The group headquarters and reserve are settled down in vil. Bondari, the 276th battalion – in vil. Zastarinya, the 1st troop of the 276th battalion is located under village Natrievo, the 277th battalion is located in vil. Shaty and Mironevo, the 278th battalion – in Barlevo, the 279th battalion – in Litvinovo.

As it is estimated, the requisition troop has captured 24 horses, 82 cows, 19 sheep. Besides, 43 persons were captured.

Iltis

The 25th of March, 1934

Afternoon message

The enemy was not detected. The daily mission was accomplished. The group headquarters and reserve are settled down in Sebezh, the 276th battalion with the headquarters, the 1st, 3rd and 4th troops in vil. Gaseevo and Avseykovo, the 3rd troop in Avseykovo. The 277th battalion is settled down in Peschanka suburba and in Klevin, SS and police troop – in Peschanka, the 278th battalion – in vil. Lagany and Pergalina. The 279th battalion – in vil. Takhevichi and Shaty.

**Afternoon message
from 16.2 till 24.3.1943 (incl.)**

77 bandits were killed in action.
9 bandits were captured.
875 persons of bandits and their allies were shot dead.
1 389 persons captured were transferred to SD.
Losses: 18 persons were killed.
23 persons were seriously injured.
53 persons were lightly injured.
2 carrier men were killed.
2 persons reported missing in cation.

Il'tis
The colonel of Security Police (KaPo)

**72. Code telegram № 14513 concerning formation of
“shadow zone” in Belorussian-Latvian border zone**

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Command
of the Red Army

March the 25th, 1943

As a result of the military advance undertaken by Germans and Latvians in February and March from the direction of Kokhanovichi and Osveya, hundreds civilians were shot and burnt. [...]

Reaching the villages: Milovidy, Motorino, Marochkovo, Leshnya, Yuzefovo and Byki, they burnt all constructions on their way.

On March, 23rd having taken away the cattle and foodstuff, having mined the roads and settlements, having poisoned reservoirs and wells – they departed to Osveya and Kokhanovichi.

№ 84 “Jan”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24227, Doc. 2, Sheet 721

**73. Code telegram № 14665 concerning villages distruction
abord the rosd Drissa-Sebez**

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army
Commander

March the 26th, 1943
The 25th of March

All the villages aboard the big road Drissa-Sabez, until the river Svolna, wee burnt by punitive expedition, people was shooted and burnt; some of them escaped and hid in the woods. The punitive expedition fell back and stpoed near the big road Drissa-Sabez.

“Yuzhin”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc. 1, Sheet 410

74. The order of the SS superior head and the police "Ostland" and "Russia – North», the SS-Obergruppenführer Jeckeln on termination of the operation "Winter magic" on March, 31st, 1943

May the 30th, 1943

1) The operation "Winter magic" will be terminated on March the 31st, 1943.

2) The security police and the SD's control headquarters will be disbanded on March the 31st, 1943. The question on returning of the crew will be decided by the security police head at their discretion.

3) Send as soon as possible by rail from Ludzen [Ludza]:

a) The SS and the police company. There it is dismissed immediately. The officers and private soldiers return to their units. The guard police Hauptman Ziem reports me on the company dismission.

b) The 280th Lettish police battalion and the 281st police battalion return to where they were formed, to Bolderaa [Bolderaya] and Riga. There they are dismissed by the order police commandant.

c) The 2nd Lettish battalion is sent to Vilno. The battalion is placed under the orders of the order police commandant and is subordinated to the commander of the order police of Lithuania to patrol the boarder with Byelorussia.

d) The 50th Ukrainian police battalion is sent to Vilno and is placed under the orders of the Ostland order police and is subordinated to the commander of the order police of Lithuania to patrol the facilities.

e) The 36th Estonian police battalion company is sent to Revel and placed under the orders of the commander of the order police of Estonia.

The control headquarters or Rono's annihilation party inform on the rakes numbers.

The 282nd guard battalion is separated into an individual battalion on March, 31st, 1943. Telephone in advance.

The 273rd, 276th, 277th, 278th, 279th and 282nd Lettish battalions are placed again under the orders of the Ostland order police and will be subordinated to the commander of the order police of Lithuania. They are sent to the following areas:

the 282nd police battalion goes to Kraslau [Krâslava].

The 277th police battalion goes to Indra-Pustina-Asune.

the 278th police battalion goes to Skune-Vetssloboda.

the 279th police battalion goes to Rosenov [Rezekne]-Pussine.

the 273rd police battalion goes to Ludzen [Ludza]-Karsava.

the 276th police battalion goes to Abrene [Pytalovo].

The battalions are sent to new sites by the commander of the order police of Latvia.

In the first place, the battalions are occupied with military, weapons and battle training and, in the second place, they are used to patrol the boarder.

The headquarters of Knecht and Schredder`s groups are disbanded from April, 2nd, 1943, 12.00. They return to Riga. The disbandment is realized by the guard police lieutenant colonel Lossau (Schredder`s group) and by the guard police major Oberwider (Knecht`s group) on April the 6th, 1943 at the latest.

Dismiss the driver immediately if the battalion doesn't need them any longer when they were moving to new cantonment areas. It is necessary to take care of appropriate payment for their work.

8) The 2nd aviation group of special function 7 is returning to Riga from 31.3.1943. Available ammunition should be delivered to warehouse in Dunaburg[Daugavpils]. It should be reported on the phone, in advance.

9) The strong point of supplying Rozitten [Rezekne] is liquidated on 1.4.1943 . The liquidation is to be performed within 8 days. The storages located in Drisse – if the resources are not required by battalions remaining in the border area, – should be moved directly to Riga. The strong point of supplying shall also receive special instructions.

10) Runo control headquarters is liquidated from 3.4.1943 and sent back to Riga by the railway. For liquidation of current affairs and for the control over transportation to Riga and Vilno by railway, and also for export of equipment, armament and ammunition, a liquidating command is left in Malve (commander – ober-lieutenant of security police Ulenbroh, secretary Bendorf) preliminarily – till 10.4.1943.

I should be reported on termination of the liquidation before 11.4.1943.

The gendarmerie troop (headquarters security) from 5.4.1943 is again given in command of the police commander of Latvian order service.

Colonel Nakhtayl remains attached to the higher chief of SS and police "Russia – North" in Riga for a short time.

Ober-gruppenfuhrer of SS and general of police

NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1022, Sheets 102-104

75. From the list of the military units, subordinated to the higher chief of SS and police “Russia – Center” and Belarus for the 1st of April, 1943

The 31st of March, 1943

Name of the unit	Home station or command post	Subordination	
		combat	tactical
1	2	3	4
[...] II. On the territory of chief of SS and police of Belorussia			
[...] 1 st the 18 th Latvian police battalion	Gantsevichi	To the police commander of Belorussian order service	
The 277 th Latvian police battalion	Slutsk		[...]

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 917, Sheets 248-253
Translated from German.*

76. The report of the chief of security police and SD in Latvia about operative conditions from the 1st of March till the 31st of March, 1943

The city of Riga

The 1st of April, 1943

The forces are distributed on various establishments of command instance. As the payment was made at the expense of ground budgetary funds till the end of March, now it is planned to pay all Latvian criminal and political police

from the budgetary funds of the Reich from 1.4.1943. Preliminary preparation to this subject is coming to its end.

2. Police divisions

The aggregate number of Latvian security battalions now equals to	– 1176 men.
Among them – those acting at the front and in struggle against the guerrilla	– 158 men.
Those recalled to Belarus in the order of the commander of security police, the Gestapo and SD to Minsk	– 229 men.
Recalled to peripheral divisions (branches) in Dunaburg [Daugavpils], Libau [Liepaya], Mitau [Yelgava] and Volmar [Valmiera]	– 62 men.
Assigned to criminal department	– 1 men.
Total – 450 men.	

From the quantity remaining after deduction	– 726 men.
Of the ill, the leave men and general prisoners	– 290 men.
Combat-ready	– 436 men.

From this number (quantity) it is necessary to assign the security police commander and the safety commander for protection of establishments and building objects; and also for the expanded police prison and supervisory-labour camp Salaspils.¹⁸ Taking into account the high density of the camp population, it is necessary to strengthen the guard team up to 160 men.

The fourth Latvian courses of police safety school in Furstenberg, which started on 8.12.42, had to be finished ahead of schedule because of urgent fighting necessity. 65 men of 77 members belonged to Latvian security department. 12 men are employed in the Latvian criminal and political police.

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 110, Sheet 68
Translated from German.*

77. From the operations diary of the higher chief of SS and police “Russia – North”, ober-gruppenfuhrer of SS and the general of police, Ekkeln about campaign “Winter magic”

not earlier than the 2nd of April, 1943

4.2.1943

4.2.1943 the head chief of SS and police of Russia “North”, ober-gruppenfuhrer of SS and the general of police had the meeting, which resulted in issuing of the order on formation of 2 operative (combat) groups for struggle against gangs on Latvian-Russian border and, in particular:

Schreder’s group (the commander of group – brigadengruppenfuhrer of SS and police major general – Schreder) and

Knekht’s group (commander of the group – colonel of security police – Knekht).

Knekht’s group consists of:

staff-group,

10th platoon (motor.) of gendarmerie,

communications platoon Levinsky,

anti-aircraft squadron Hatgs,

The 276th Latvian police battalion,

the 277th -»--»--»--

the 278th -»--»--»--

the 279th -»--»--»--

To participate in operation, the Latvian battalions are re-located:

The 276th Police battalion – into Pustina area and further to the east

the 277th -»--»--»-- into area between Pustina, Azunya and

Pizany,

the 278th -»--»--»-- into area between Azunya and Pizany,

The 279th Latvian police battalion – into the area limited by Rekevitsa – Feterovichichi – Vorsovo in the southwest.

6.2.1943

General preparation to combat campaign.

7.2.1943

The forward team of the group headquarters, consisting from sub-headquarters and the 10th (motor.) gendarmerie platoon has entered into Azuny.

8.2.1943

The group commander, the chief of operations division and aide-de-camps left to Dunaburg [Daugavpils].

9.2.1943

Owing to snow drifts and motor damages the forward team got stuck in Dunaburg. Set off again on 10.2.43.

10.2.1943

All headquarters of the group gathered in the settlement of Dagda, in the headquarters of the centre "Runo". Owing to heavy snow drifts the further way to Azuny was not continued that day. Questions of delivery of missing equipment were discussed in Dagda, in headquarters centre "Runo".

11.2.1943

All staff of the group left to Azuny and arrived there at midday. The school in Azuny was chosen for headquarters.

12.2.1943

Preparation of operative (combat) orders, checking of weapon, equipment and regimentals adjustment.

Police battalions appeared to be provided with the weapons, equipment and regimentals so poorly that it took a week to improve the situation.

The commandant of field commandant's office in Djunaburg [Daugavpils] allocated 6 medium machine guns for the course operation.

13.2.1943

As motor vehicles became impractical because of deep snow, it became necessary to provide all battalions and divisions, participating in campaign, with the sled teams.

14.2.1943

Preparation to combat operations.

15.2.1943

Meeting of groups commanders in the headquarters centre “Runo”. Receiving the order on the date and time of starting the campaign. After that the group staff relocated to Vorsovo. Issuance of the order on the date and time of the starting of the campaign to officers of communication and battalions.

16.3.1943

Campaign carrying out according to battle-order № 1 dated 14.2 1943, operations division, № 22/43, secr., (Appendix, p.7).

Battalions and the antiaircraft battery are heading to initial positions. Advance action was appointed on 6.00. Because of deep snow and impassability, the advance actions were delayed for 40-60 minutes.

The group staff together with the 4th troop of the 278th Latvian police battalion involved as a reserve of staff, promoted into the strip of advance actions of the 278th Latvian police battalion.

The 278th battalion, group staff and reserve of a group staff, at approach to the forest located to the north of village Kalyuti, got under fierce rifle-machine-gun fire from northern suburb of the mentioned village. Bandits with a machine gun settled down in entrenchments. After short fight the Kalyuti village was occupied. The bandits left to the forest to the east from vil. Kalyuti. Suspicious inhabitants of vil. Kalyuti were transferred to SD. The village was partially burnt. During the further advancement, the 278th Latvian police battalion encountered resistance of bandits in vil. Folvarkovo. 3 bandits were shot. At 16.00 the 278th battalion accomplished the task assigned for that day.

The 277th Latvian police battalion, because of deep snow, reached initial positions only at 6.15. Then – attack. At 7.15 – Paprokha was passed. At 8.30 – successful fight with bandits to the west of vil. Sokolovo, 10 bandits and 20 suspects were shot. At 9.20 – a transient fight with bandits to the north of vil. Aniskovo, in which the bandits left 3 persons killed. Sharply to the south from vil. Vaznovo, 2 bandits with the Soviet insignia of distinctions were shot in fight. The assigned day mission was executed at 11.00.

The 276th Latvian police battalion started advance actions from starting positions at the appointed time. 2 bandits were shot near Rozitsa village.

The 279th Latvian police battalion started advance actions with the 40 minutes delay. Bunkers of the former Stalin line of defense, settling

down in the strip of advance actions, have appeared deserted. Now, the case is earth-and-timber emplacements, in general. During operations of 16.2.1943, 15 bandits were shot in combat actions, in total. SD specially informed the headquarters centre "Runo" about military executions over suspects. During the advance actions, radio communication with battalions and in the diverse direction was not maintained, as radio stations on the march were not adapted for operation. Such position affected very adversely. Requisitions of cattle, agricultural production and goods, because of absence of agricultural leaders, presented great difficulties.

17.2.1943

On the night of 17.2.1943 the bandits, using mortars and machine guns, fired the place of the 277th Latvian police battalion in Mushino from the forest, located to the north-east of vil. Mushino; and vil. Rakashni – from the forest range to the east from Zaryanki.

One company each of the 277th and the 278th battalions were directed to investigate vil. Kolobovshina, Barsuki and Medvedevo. In these villages bandits (the quantity is not known) were detected. Reconnaissance-patrols were fired from machine guns and automatic guns to the west of vil. Kolbovshiny and Barsuki (arrows on trees). Reconnaissance-patrols opened reprisal fire. Judging on the detected trails of blood, the enemy had in loss.

1 policeman from the 278th Latvian police battalion was killed by a shot in his head. A campaign against this bandit nest is planned as soon as more detailed reconnaissance data are obtained.

18.2.1943

On the night of 18.2.1943 2 artillery volleys were made to village Mushino from the area of vil. Kolbovshiny.

18.2.1943. the 1st platoon of the 2nd troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion performed reconnaissance near vil. Zelyanki, 4 km to the east of vil. Kalyuti. 1 km to the south of village, a bandits' post was established, which was destroyed by the fire delivered on it. After that the platoon was shot from vil. Kolbovshiny from machine guns and weapons.

According to the inhabitants, there are a lot of bandits armed with machine guns in vil. Kolbovshina. 15.2.1943 20 sled teams of an ammunition were delivered to bandits. The platoon of the 4th troop of the 277th Latvian

police battalion advanced to vil. Zharnoseki, Sharvonochki, Gelmniki and Zelyanki. Excepting 3 arrested inhabitants, villages have appeared deserted. All villages were burnt.

19.2.1943

Mopping-up and evacuation campaign. See battle-order dated 18.2.1943, Operations divisions, № 31/43, secr., (Appendix, p.).

19.2.1943 in the forest, in 2 km to the north-east from vil. Mushino the protecting action was performed, in which the 1st troop of the 232nd Latvian police battalion and the 1st company of the 277th Latvian police battalions were involved. As the snow layer in the forest was 70 – 80 sm, mopping-up was very slowly, tiresome and hard. The 1st troop of the 232nd battalion was shot with 2 machine guns and several automatic guns from the distance of approximately about 150 m from the forest northern edge. After short cross-firing, the troop reached the forest northern edge, then it undergone heavy machine-gun firing from vil. Kolobobshina and mortar bombardment from the direction of vil. Zelyanka. The troop opened reprisal fire from 3 light machine rifles. On the way back the troop detected a wounded policeman from the 273rd Latvian police battalion. This policeman had been considered dead for already two days.

Villages Bandzeli, Krivoseltsevo, Mezhelevo, Shilovo, Pleski, Dubniki and Trishevo were burnt by SD. No bandits were detected in the specified villages. 204 persons, 16 horses, 62 cows and 95 heads of small cattle were taken away.

The 278th battalion mopped-up the forest sites to the north and south from vil. Vaznovo; 2 people were arrested without the weapon and were transferred to SD. Besides, 2 faulty gun carriages of anti-tank tools and 60 German-type shells were found. The shells were destroyed by sergeant-major of German Wehrmacht.

20.02.1943

Assault operation from vil. Zaryanki to the east, see the order of group dated 19.2.1943, operations section № 30/43, (Appendix, p. 7), 21 and also mopping-up and evacuation action, see the order of group dated 19.2.43, operations section, № 37/43, secr. see., (Appendix, p...).22

The 278th Latvian police battalion mopped-up the forest range to the east from vil. Kalyuty – Aniskovo. At this, 18 persons were captured and transferred to SD.

The police troop of SS subordinate to group of 20.2.1943 and 1 troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion mopped-up the forest site to the east of vil. Zaryanki, between vil. Poporotnogo and Sokolovo, however, no bandits were found in the forest.

The 276th Latvian police battalion mopped-up the district between vil. Rozitsa, Lipovka, Tirshchevna, Dubniki, Shilovo and Peskki, but no gangs were found. A box with Russian machine-gun cartridges was found in one house. Then the 276th battalion mopped-up the forest in the north-west direction from vil. Kozlove Buli, Zaborovtsy, Borki, where the gang of 35 persons, including women and children, was found. During short fight, 14 bandits, including 1 woman in men's wear and 1 person in semi-military Russian regimentals, were shot.

21.2.1943

Preparation to operation of 22.2.43 in the area of vil. Kolbovshina, Barsuki, Medvedev Vesnino. All division commanders and officers of communication gathered for meeting at the group commander. According to the order of emergency response centre "Puno", vil Lipovka, known as a starting point for bandits' operations, was burnt.

22.2.1943

Continuation of operations to the east of line of Zarjanka, see the combat Order № 2 dated 21.2.1943, the operations section, № 43/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 11)

At 8.00 attacks on bandit villages Kolbovshchina, Barsuki and Medvedevo were started from the north and west directions. Kolbovshina and Barsuki were occupied by the 278th and 279th Latvian police battalions without resistance. Antiaircraft Gate battery supported advancement of attacking battalions.

At 9.00 Medvedevo village was attacked The 278th Latvian police battalion encountered strong resistance of the enemy in the village. Approximately 50 bandits left the village and escaped into the small forest to the south of village Medvedevo while approximately 80 – 100 bandits were maintaining resistance. When the attack has stopped, the group commander sent a reserve troop of the 276th Latvian police battalion round about the village on the right side, and approximately in 15 minutes – one more troop of the same battalion was sent round about the village, also from the right side. After that, the bandits ran from the village to the east-

ern direction. At about 10.00 Medvedevo was occupied. Divisions of the 278th Latvian police battalion continued attack on vil. Vesnino which was occupied without serious resistance.

Medvedevo village was heavily protected. On western and southern suburbs, two big bunkers were located. Besides, there were a lot of well disguised machine-gun nests with communication trenches. At the beginning of attack on Medvedevo, three light gun salvos were issued on the approaching enemy.

At attempt to bury the body of unter-Fuhrer of the 273rd police battalion, who was killed before, a trip activated mine, set by bandits, exploded. As a result of explosion, 1 policeman was seriously injured. At explosion of one more mine on the edge of the forest, located to the west of village Kolbovshiny, 1 officer was seriously injured.

A troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion subordinate to the 278th Latvian police battalion, when approaching a bush, at approximately 1 km to the north-west from vil. Savkali, got under fierce fire of the enemy. After the fire was ceased, the troop observed approximately 50 sled teams and about 100 bandits leaving village Savkali for the direction of vil. Buchanovo. The bandits were hard to capture, because of considerable remoteness.

At 12.00 the operation was over. All the occupied villages were burnt. Absence of aircrafts and radio communication, as well as insufficient military preparation of policemen affected the course of operation rather negatively.

During operation 4 policemen were killed, 4 – were heavily wounded and 12 were lightly wounded. No data concerning the bandits' losses were found.

On the cemetery in village Medvedevo a tomb was found. It had inscription in Russian: "Were slain in battles against German invaders on 21.1.1943».

23.2.1943

By order of emergency response centre "Runo" all portable radio sets which had been in battalions, were returned back. In other respects there were no serious accidents.

24.2.1943

Preparation and reconnaissance for operation of 25.2 and 26.2.43 in the area to the east of Zarjanka in the northeast direction to vil. Velikoye

Selo. See battle-order № 3 dated 23.2.43, Operations section, № 154/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 15).

25.2.1943

Advancing on line Kosharovichi – Zaytsevo – Strelki – crossroad is directly at vil. Velikoye Selo. See battle-order № 4 dated 24.2.1943, Operations section, № 54/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 15).

No bandits were detected in the mopped-up area. According to local residents, the most part of bandits escaped before advancing. Approximately in 1 km to the north-east of vil. Medvedevo from vil. Buchanovo and Barkovki the 276th Latvian police battalion was met by strong rifle-machine-gun fire of the enemy. Village Barkovka was occupied at 8.00. The bandits, who had rendered strong resistance, ran to northeast direction, avoiding entrapment. The village Suhorukovskaya was occupied at about 10.00 without resistance. At advancement for vil. Bobreniki, the 276th Latvian police battalion was met by strong fire of the enemy which was suppressed by the fire of antiaircraft guns. At about 11.00 Bobreniki village was conquered. At approaching village Dedino, the attacking forces were met by sudden rifle-machine-gun fire of their enemy from the flank. Voiding entrapment, the bandits receded in northeast direction. The 279th Latvian police

battalion shot 2 bandits when conquering village Visharovo. Numerous trails of blood indicate that the bandits suffered bad losses. The 276th battalion lost one policeman heavily wounded and 1 policeman lightly wounded. All battalions executed their daily missions.

36 persons suspected of bandit activity were shot by SD.

Villages Bushanovo, Sukhorukovskye, Brobiniki, Rubany, Sulino are burnt.

26.2.1943

On the second day of advance actions on the previously occupied territory, the bandits were not found. Villages Shlyki, Zhekrebtsovo, Zatloushina. Popelushevo, Kurasokhi, Demidovo, Dubrov, Chervony and 6 farms were occupied without serious resistance. The headquarters, the 10th (motor.) gendarmerie platoon and antiaircraft squadron near village Shlyki were fired from mortars. 204 bandits' allies were shot by SD.

All villages and farms listed above were burnt. The battalions executed their daily missions.

27.2.1943

27.2.1943, at about 8.00, the 3rd troop of the 276th Latvian police battalion passing from vil/ Great Village to vil. Budy, was attacked by approximately 200 bandits from the eastern direction. The bandits' dug-in at the height 192,4,4 and occupied vil. Tserkovno. 2 troops of the 279th Latvian police battalion and 1 troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion, and anti-aircraft Gate battery were sent for reinforcement. After fierce fighting the bandits were thrown back. They escaped to eastern direction, having taken their wounded. 1 bandit was captured and transferred to SD. Villages Tserkovno and Gorodilovichi were burnt. During interrogation of the captured bandit, it was cleared that members of the attacked gang are natives of the area approximately in 15 km to the north-west of Tserkovno. Booty taken: 1 English carbine, 1 anti-tank gun, 1 Russian rifle and 1 manual grenade. The 279th Latvian police battalion lost 1st policeman wounded. The bandits left three men dead. In vil. Tserkovno, in some houses trails of blood were detected, they obviously were left by wounded or killed bandits.

28.2.1943

Mopping-up of the area to the west of highway Sebezh – Strelki, see combat-order № 5 dated 27.2.1943, operations section № 55/43, secr. and № 6, operations section № 56/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 17).26

At search of the premises, the 278th Latvian police battalion found a record album with Stalin's speech on the 8th emergency session at the Supreme Soviet of the USSR dated 28.11.1936. The Album was transferred to SD.

The 276th police battalion mopped-up the area: The western border of Osveya – Abrachvo – eastern border highway Sebezh – Budy – Strelki. Two more undamaged houses were burnt in vil. Daglevo. 2 men were arrested in vil. Galkovshina and transferred to SD.

The 276th Latvian police battalion mopped-up villages Zoripchino and Belany. 122 persons were arrested and transferred to SD.

The 277th Latvian police battalion mopped-up the area to the south from highway Osveya – Velikoye Selo. No bandits were detected in this area. Village Kalkovshina was burnt. 45 bandits' allies were shot by SD.

1.3.1943

New redistribution of sites of the group, see battle-order № 7 dated 1.3.1943, operations section, № 57/43, secr. and strengthening of field

sentries near vil. Velikoye Selo, see battle-order № 9 dated 1.3.43, (Appendix, p. 26).

2.3.1943

The whole day long, Village Velikoye Selo was exposed to bombardment from mortars and medium machine guns from the bandits' side. At this, 2 policemen from the 279th battalion and 1 policeman from the 277th battalion were lightly wounded, one horse was killed. Village Tserkovno and height 192,4 were occupied by the bandits. At about 15.00, a courier's horse was killed by rifle-machine-gun fire from height 179,4 on road Sebezha – Strelki. The 277th and the 279th police battalions opened reprisal fire on bandits and returned to village Velikoye Selo, where they improvised defence. Early in the morning, approximately in 1 km to the east of vil. Selishe, the 276th Latvian police battalion was fired by bandits from machine guns and mortars.

The reconnaissance carried out by the 278th police battalion revealed that vil. Yaroshi was occupied by gangs. Reconnaissance team of the battalion from vil. Yaroshi was fired from machine guns, tools and mortars.

According to inhabitants, in the course of action in vil. Medvedevo on 22.2.1943 bandits lost 5 people killed and 5 people wounded. The wounded were delivered to hospital in vil. Milovidy via vil. Velikoye Selo.

Field sentry of the 278th Latvian police battalion, at about 10.00, in approximately 1 km from the crossroad, near vil. Velikoye Selo, detected 10 bandits on sleds heading towards height 161,0. 1 platoon with two medium machine guns and a mortar was immediately directed on prosecution. The bandits, having taken the killed and the wounded, receded to the direction of vil. Demodovo.

3.3.1943

Attacking against the villages located to the east of strong points line, see battle-order № 10 dated 2.3.43 operations section, № 62/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 27).²⁸

Approach to Gorodilovichi, see battle-order № 11 dated 2.3. 43 , operations section № 63/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 28).

At 7.30 the 279th Latvian police battalion attacked Gorodilovichi and at about 11.00 occupied the village. Mainly, the enemy offered resistance from the forest to the east and to the north-east from Gorodilovichi and from vil. Nizhniy Labaz. German aircraft bombarded height 192,4.

In vil. Gorodilovichy 7 bandits' allies were shot. Continuing approach to the north, the 279th Latvian police battalion occupied vil. Nizhnie Pubasny, one bandit is shot. Bandits on sled teams escaped to forest range in the northeast direction. From command point of a battalion it was possible to observe retreat of approximately 150 bandits on 30 sled teams through vil. Gory to the north-east and east. Major bandits' forces are settled down in the forest to the south-east from vil. Gorodilovichy. From this point the group headquarters was fired from mortars. As it could be observed, the bandits suffered losses.

The 278th battalion reports that in first half of the day the bandits fired vil. Kiseli by incendiary bullets, location of battalion platoon is burnt.

All day long up to dark the 176th battalion was exposed to rifle-machine-gun bombardment, from height of Selishche, as a result, 2 houses were set in fire. At about 12.00 the enemy issued 12 artillery salvos from the tool of calibre 7,5, and approximately 15-20 mortar salvos to village Strelki. To prevent bombardment of village Strelki from heights near vil. Gorodishe, advance action to Selishe was started at 15.00. During this approach the bandits were driven away. The height in front of vil. Selishe is occupied by the fortified field sentry.

Losses of the 279th Latvian police battalion made 2 persons seriously wounded and 4 persons lightly wounded.

No data concerning the enemy's losses were found.

4.3.1943

Advance action to vil. Velikoye Pole, Plyushik, Nishcha and Dubrovo, see battle-order № 12 dated 3.3.1943, operations section, № 66/43, secr., (Appendix, p...).

The 277th Latvian police battalion with the subordinated divisions: 4.3.1943, at 11.00, the 1st troop of the 279th Latvian police battalion occupied deserted villages Velikoye Pole, Nishcha and Dubrovo without resistance. The villages which had already been partially burnt, were completely destroyed.

The battalion has undergone fierce bombardment from machine guns, mortars and anti-tank tools from the forest range (in the shape of a boot) and from the south-east from it.

The directed aircrafts did not find the enemy's positions, though the approaching divisions indicated the targets for pilots by setting the houses in fire. The bombs were dropped far from the indicated target, probably,

onto other objects. According to the reconnaissance data, during the air attack on 3.3.1943 on village Zheleznovo and eastern coast of the Zvonets lake, the bandits left village on 14 sleds. When the attack was finished, the bandits came back to village on 60 sled teams and set 2 medium machine guns on positions. The demand for a new air attack was issued.

In the course of reconnaissance carried out by the 276th Latvian battalion it was found out that the eastern edge of the forest against vil. Mikolino and the height to the north of Mikolino were occupied by the bandits with medium machine guns and mortars.

The 276th Latvian police battalion did not move further, as the settlements located to the east of the strong point, had already been burnt by Marder's group.

In the course of action 1 bandit was shot and 1 sled team was destroyed by mortar fire. It is possible to tell with confidence that the enemy suffered bad losses.

The 277th Latvian police battalion lost 1 policeman killed, the 276th battalion lost 1 policeman lightly wounded and the 279th battalion lost 2 policemen lightly wounded.

5.3.1943

The 278th Latvian police battalion reports that at 12.25, during the air attack, approximately 40 bandits on 7 sled teams escaped to the forest located to the north-east from vil. Yaroshi. During the second attack, 22 more bandits ran and – during the escape – gave a signal with white rocket.

Further the battalion informs that at 10-15 31 bandits went out of the forest on the north-east from vil. Zelovo, and, having distributed themselves in groups of 4-7 people, started constructing defensive reinforcements on the western and southern suburbs of the village.

The bandits are actively moving between villages Yaroshi and Zelovo. The reconnaissance patrol as a part of the 1st platoon directed to the area of vil. Demidovo – Dubrovny, came under enemy's attack near vil. Demidovo and was fired from mortars from the forest corner, approximately in 600 m to the north-east from vil. Kurashi 2. Mortar fire was suppressed. At their way back, the reconnaissance patrol came under mortar-machine-gun bombardment from the height to the north from vil. Zelovo and from the village. The platoon anchored at the height. At approximately 24.00, 15 bandits tried to attack the field sentry,

located approximately in 1 km to the north of vil. Budy, using automatic machines and rifles, but they had to recede. At dawn, trails of blood and German cartridges were found.

6.3.1943

Attacking the gangs between the Beloye lake and the Osveyskoye lake, see battle-order № 13 dated 5.3.1943, operations section, № 67/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 32).

6.3.43 the territory between the Osveyskoye lake and the Beloye was cleared from bandits and their helpers.

The 279th Latvian police battalion encountered resistance of the enemy on the western suburb of vil. Tserkovno and from the forest to the east of vil. Kostrovo.

The 277th Latvian police battalion during the advance action was met by fire from the automatic weapon and mortars, from the wood located to the east of vil. Gorodilovichi. At further advancement of the battalion to the northern direction, the enemy's resistance became fiercer. The battalion was fired from cannons and anti-tank guns.

The 2nd troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion moving ahead on the right flank was stopped for long time by strong fire of the enemy. With the help the 1st troop only, the 2nd troop successfully came off the enemy, despite fierce bombardment; at this, 4 policemen were wounded. All the time during advance action to the northern suburb of vil. Lubasno, the battalion constantly got under strong flank fire of the enemy, sent from the forest, located to the east of the village, by mortars, anti-tank guns and the automatic weapon. Despite the lack of heavy weapons, the battalion, due to persistence and courage, executed the order on advancing to the northern direction.

The first target of attack – Ozborye – Kostrovo and Kaplyar was been reached at 10.00. The bandits have receded into forest range located to the north of the Beloye lake.

The settlements appeared deserted and were set in fire.

Not far from vil. Ozborye 40 suspects were captured in a small forest and transferred to SD.

The 2nd target of attack was reached at approximately 13.00. Villages Osveya, Ignalino and Krasovo were burnt. Approximately 25 suspects were transferred to SD. The enemy's losses were not estimated, but trails of blood were found in many places. One bandit is captured.

The 277th Latvian police battalion lost 4 policemen wounded, 1 driver was killed. 1 horse was killed and 1 was wounded.

6.3.1943, at dawn, road patrol of the 278th Latvian police battalion, found 2 mines, approximately 200 m to the north of the bridge, to the north of vil. Strelki.

7.3.1943

10 (motor.) gendarmerie platoon is subordinated to Issershtedt's group. from 7.3.1943, the SS police troop of special function and 1 troop of the 2nd Lithuanian police battalion are subordinated to the group. In other respects there were no serious accidents.

8.3.1943

8.3.43, in the first half of day, the 1st company of the 276th Latvian police battalion, while retreating from initial positions at the height, on the west from vil. Gorodilovichi, came under strong rifle-machine-gun firing from the forest site, located at the distance of about 1 km to the east and south-east of the height. The enemy's fire was suppressed. The bandits retreated to the forest again. At about 5.30, on the highway Sebez – Strelki, sled train of the 276th Latvian police battalion came over newly laid mines. One mine was laid behind the auxiliary bridge constructed by the 278th Latvian police battalion, in approximately 2 km to the north of vil. Strelki, on the left side of the road. When the sleds with ammunition were passing by, the mine blew up, as a result, the sleds and ammunition were damaged.

The second mine was also laid behind the bridge on the right side of the road. This mine was later neutralized by Issershtedt's group. As it was found out, both mines were laid shortly after the 276th Latvian police battalion had passed this road. The mines were put into a track and covered with snow. Two platoons and 1 group of medium machine guns of the 279th Latvian police battalion were assigned to SD for mopping-up and burning villages Ostrov, Petino and Sukoli.

9.3.1943

Advancing to the east to Svolnya. See battle-order № 14 dated 7.3.1943, Operations section, № 69/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 34).

The 278th and 279th Latvian police battalions occupied the starting positions for advancing to both sides of the highway Osveya – Lisenko, on southern coast of the Osveyskoye lake. Except for Melnitsa, the daily mis-

sions were accomplished. Because of twilight, Melnitsa was conquered by the 278th Latvian police battalion at dawn of 10.3.1943.

The 277th and 279th Latvian police battalions served as a reserve for attacking battalions.

The enemy offered resistance, using the automatic weapon, from the forest to the east of vil. Gorodilovichi and Velikoye Pole, and also from the forest edge on highway Velikoye Selo – Lisno.

The battalions attack was supported by artillery semi-squadron, which bombarded the forest edges on both side of the highway. On the road fork to the east of vil. Zagryaznaya 1 SD troop tripped a mine. As a result, 3 persons badly wounded and 2 persons lightly wounded. No data concerning the enemy's losses were found. The bandits worked their way back to the forest. Settlements Kobyl'nitsa, Zael'nitsa and Maleshkovno were burnt. 1 bandit was arrested. 47 bandits' helpers are transferred to SD. The 276th Latvian police battalion lost 1 policeman seriously wounded and 3 policemen lightly wounded.

1 policeman in the 278th Latvian police battalion was seriously wounded.

10.3.1943

The 276th, 277th, 278th and 279th Latvian police battalions, according to the order, started advancing to the south. As a result of active actions of our aviation, most part of the bandits left further to the east. No organized resistance of the bandits on defensive positions were observed.

The 277th, 278th and 279th police battalions had to overcome weak resistance of the separated bandits' forces. The gangs still adhere to their delay battle tactics and escape tactics.

In many places blockages were arranged by the gangs. Near vil. Makuty, a gang of 40 people receding to the east was intercepted, in the course of action 1 bandit was shot.

Villages Izubritsa, Ardavsky and Makuty were burnt. The village Ardavskaya, as a result of attack of our aviation, was already partially destroyed. A bandits' cemetery with fresh tombs was found near vil. Bobro-plesny. At night, telephone cable on the highway Velikoye Selo – Lisno was cut by bandits in many places. The 277th and 279th police battalions accomplished their daily missions. The 278th police battalion, after occupation of vil. Makuty, stopped advancement because of weariness of the policemen and approaching of darkness.

The 276th failed to accomplish the assigned daily mission and has broken a camp to the east of vil. Yaroshi. The head of the gang was shot in battle.

6 camps of the bandits and their helpers were destroyed. 116 helpers were transferred to SD. The 278th police battalion, because of the imprudence, lost 1 policeman killed. Booty taken: Cannon gun carriage, 1 limber, 10 shells of caliber 7.5, German field-kitchen, 2 radio receivers, 1 German carbine, 1 pistol, 2 Russian holders with cartridges. According to the additional report, the 279th police battalion lost one policeman killed.

The SS police troop which during attack, on 10.3.1943, moved forward at the head of the group staff and group reserve, approximately in 1 km to the north of vil. Milovidy encountered a gang of 12-15 the people which escaped into thick forest. The troop immediately opened rifle-machine-gun fire on bandits, however, despite the organized prosecution, the bandits managed to escape.

11.3.1943

The 276th Latvian police battalion which spent night from the 10 to 11.3.1943, having settled down in the forest, continued advancing actions at dawn and reached the target. Because of marshy terrain, many blockages and meter-thick snow cover of 10.3.1943, the battalion lost orientation and failed to accomplish the assigned daily mission.

At dawn 11.3.43, the 278th police battalion continued advancing actions, which were interrupted the day before and 11.3.43 reached the target assigned for 10.3.43, without enemy's resistance.

12.3.1943

Mopping-up the wood to the west of Svolna, see battle-order № 16 dated 11.3.1943, operations section. № 71/43, secr., (Appendix, p. 46).

The 3rd troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion in vil. Milovidy was fired by bandits from the forest located to the east of the village, as a result, 1 policeman was lightly wounded 3 horses. The troop immediately opened reciprocal fire then the bandits receded to the east via Svolna. Near vil. Gniltsey 1 armed bandit was shot when attempting runaway. 12.3.43, in the second half of the day, village Milovidy was fired once again by machine gun from the forest located to the east of the village. The fire was

suppressed. 12.3.43 all battalions continued mopping-up of the territory occupied on 11.3.43. Many bandits' camps, in particular – those located round village Makuty, were destroyed.

Newly constructed bakery and smithy were found in vil. Makuty and destroyed. The troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion accompanying the wounded policeman to vil. Chernoki, was fired by the bandits approximately in 1.5 km to the south-west from vil. Dobroplesy, to the west of vil. Svolna. One policeman from the accompanying troop was easily wounded, one horse was killed. The battalion responsible for this site was ordered to mop-up the area.

13.3.1943

At dawn, the 277th Latvian police battalion, settling down in vil. Milovidy, received machine-gun bombardment from the forest located in the eastern part of the village. The battalion opened reciprocal fire and made the machine gun stop. Clearing of the terrain, occupied on 11.3.43, was continued and the detected forest camps were destroyed.

The 278th Latvian police battalion in the area of vil. Zagryaznaya, near height 168.9 found and destroyed the bandits' camp. 2 howitzer barrels and one antitank destroyer barrel, as well as a great number of shells were found in village Kobylnitsa. The cannon barrels and shells were crippled. Obviously, there were artillery workshops in village Kobylnitsa.

The 21th Latvian police battalion continued mopping-up the district in valley of the river Svolna. At 10.30 one bandit ran to the 2nd troop of the 277th police battalion. During interrogation he told that the gangster camp of 60 persons is settled down in the forest, 2 km to the south-east from vil. Dobroplesy. At 15.30 one troop of the 277th police battalion and SD troop were directed to destroy the camp. The forest site has been surrounded, but most part of the bandits escaped in the meantime. In the course of action, 6 gangsters were killed and 1 woman-guerrilla was taken prisoner. There are no losses for our part.

14.3.1943

14.3.1943 the SS police troop was directed for mopping-up the district between Lisno – the Belaye lake. Many bandits' camps were detected, burnt or destroyed. The villages located to the north of the Belaye lake: Mylanki, Belaya and Dubnoye which were partially burnt before, are completely destroyed now.

The 279th Latvian police battalion at mopping-up the district to the west from vil. Stradnoye encountered 70 corpses. According to the information provided by the captured, what is probably meant here is the runaway inhabitants who were shot from the planes or killed by the bandits. 14.3.1943, at dawn, the gangsters opened machine-gun fire from the forest site located to the east of vil. Dobroplesy. The 2nd troop of the 277th police battalion attacked the bandits from different directions, after that the bandits ran. No data concerning the enemy's losses were found. 1 policeman of the 277th battalion was slightly wounded.

15.3.1943

After vil. Milovidy it was repeatedly fired by the enemy from the eastern direction, 15.3.1943 at dawn a troop

Was sent against 3 inhabited bunkers and one camp bunker occupied by the Latvian bandits, settling down to the east of Svolna, to the south of the stream of Lonnitsa, one troop of the 277th Latvian police battalion and SD troop were directed. At approach to bunkers the troop was met by heavy rifle-machine-gun and automatic fire. Besides, the bandits employed riflemen on trees. According to the troop commander it was impossible to conquer these bunkers by directed forces. In the course of the action 10 bandits were shot with fire from machine guns. At disengaging from the enemy 2 policemen of the troop were wounded.

At midday village Milovidy was again fired by the bandits, one corporal from the 276th police battalion was mortally wounded.

At the same time 15.3.1943 on highway Lisno – Osveja, near vil. Zayelnitsa, approximately 50 bandits attacked a bypassing sled column of the 279th Latvian police battalion under protection of 1 corporal and 7 policemen. As a result of the attack 5 soldiers, 1 driver and 5 horses were killed. 1 wounded arrived to Osveja and one – to Lisno. 2 soldiers and 2 drivers were reported missing. The senior lieutenant of police Turke, directed by the group to Lisni as the expert-miner, started train the policemen to perform mine detection and mine clearing. Senior lieutenant Turke neutralized artillery shells which had been found in the forest.

16.3.1943

In addition to the message dated 15.3.1943 about the bandits attack on sled column of the 279th police battalion, the following details were indicated:

The bandits opened rifle-machine-gun and automatic fire on the sled column, which lasted for approximately 20 minutes. One more policeman, seriously injured in fight, crept towards vil. Veklikoe Selo, but when he lost his strength, he committed suicide, not to fall into the bandits' hands alive. Thus, the number of the killed persons equals to 6. One soldier arrived to Velikoye Selo in sled train. Three loaded sleds were captured by the bandits. The killed soldiers were undressed by the bandits, the regimentals were taken away.

The 278th Latvian police battalion directed for mopping-up of the forest range to the north of the Beloye lake, did not detect the enemy.

1 company of 277th Police Battalion and 3 companies of 276th police battalion were sent to destroy the bunkers located south of Lonnitsi village, about 1km east of post 121.4. The bunkers were attacked by enveloping from north and south. The bunkers located in a well-camouflaged wooded hollow included 6 living quarters buried deep in the ground space, each intended approximately for 40 people, were interconnected by dugout passages. The bunkers were burnt. Air fleet participated in attack on the bunkers, but since they were well hidden, they failed to find the target. In course of the battle 5 bandits were shot, including 1 lieutenant dressed in Russian military uniform. Judging by the obtained documents, he was the commander of the raiding platoOp. Going by the numerous traces of blood, the gorillas must have suffered severe losses. 1 policeman of the 277th Police Battalion was lightly wounded.

17.3.1943.

By the order of the "Runo" operational headquarters a permanent patrol service was set up on Lisno-Osveya highway by one platoOp.

Patrol sent by 278th Police Battalion on 17.3.43 ran into a gang at dawn approximately 4 km to the West of Lisno. The gang's force has not been established. The patrol killed the gang's chief, with whom they found a map with indications and a diary. The findings were submitted to SD. The SS Polizei company and the 1st company of the 278th Latvian Police Battalion on 17.3.1943 were sent to sweep a wooded area between the village Lisno and lake Beloye. The enemy was not found.

All the other battalions were engaged in combat training.

During the day the Milovidy strong point was repeatedly attacked by the bandits with machine guns and trench mortars. 1 person was lightly wounded.

3rd company 277th Police Battalion returned fire to the bandits coming out of the woods south of the village Milovidy. During the shooting 2 Unterscharführers were slightly injured. Bandits retreated into the woods. Their losses were not estimated.

In the nights of March the 16th –the 17th and the 17th-the 18th 1943 the 278th Latvian Police Battalion set up an ambush on the Lisno – Velikoe Selo highway, as well as north and west of Lake Beloye. One bandit was shot when escaping.

18.3.1943

At noon, when passing across the lake Beloye, the police team was fired upon by bandits from the woods north-east of the village Lisno. The 2nd company of 278th Police Battalion was immediately sent on a reconnaissance and sweeping mission.

Due to the repeated firing on the village Milovidy on March the 18th 1943 2 companies of 276th Police Battalion were sent to search the forest strip between villages Avlasevka and Milovidy along the eastern bank of Svolna. There were a few minor armed clashes with the enemy. In the woods east of the village Milovidy some wooden huts were burned, which had sheltered the bandits. The area sweeping was extended to the village Borlevo. All remaining houses in Borlevo were burned down. In addition, the dugouts with firing ports were destroyed. Another company of 276th Police Battalion was sent to search the woods to the east of Milovidy. The 1st company of 277th Latvian Battalion was sent to fight the gangs south of the Milovidy village.

2 companies of the 278th Latvian Police Battalion swept the wooded area north-east of the village Lisno.

Out of the companies sent by 278th Police Battalion for reconnaissance to the wood east of Lake Lisno, one platoon was fired at by three bandits from the village Izubritsy. The platoon returned fire, 1 bandit was shot.

The other two bandits escaped in the direction of Takuny village. The remaining houses in Izubritsa were burned down. An abandoned bandit camp west of high ground 179.7 was burned down.

279th Latvian Police Battalion was once again aimed sent to search the area of Ladigovo – Ardavskaya.

Oberleutnant Turk found and neutralized 2 anti-tank mines and 1 anti-personnel mine. Air defense slits were destroyed in villages Lisano, Mills, and Kobylnitsa.

During the partial operation on March the 18th, 1943, 1 bandit was shot in escape.

3 soldiers of 277th Police Battalion were lightly wounded.

19.3.1943

At dawn on March the 19th, 1943, a hit-and-run battle took place between a bandit scouting patrol and sentry guard of 276th Police Battalion. Bandits retreated towards northeast. 2 soldiers of the battalion were lightly wounded. The enemy's losses were not established.

Battalions free from guarding duty were engaged in combat training.

20.3.1943

The wooded area around the village Maquity was once more searched by a company of 279th Police BattaliOp. A fortified bandit camp was found and destroyed.

No enemy was found.

At dawn of March th 20th, 1943, the bandits attacked village Melnitsa with mortar fire. 279th Police Battalion opened fierce machine-gun fire and silenced the mortars.

The 1st company of 278th Police Battalion from Lisino village was thrown in for reinforcement.

Units free from battlefield mission were engaged in combat training. No other incidents occurred.

21.3.1943

Regrouping and seizing initial lines, see Operation Order № 17 dated March the 20th, 1943, Operations Division № 76/43, Confidential, (Annex, p. 48).

276th Latvian Police Battalion and 1st company of 277th Latvian Police Battalion following the order took a new location, with no contact with the enemy. The Milovidy village was burned down by the rear-based group, which was left behind, the bridge over the Svolna River was destroyed.

No other incidents occurred.

The other battalions were engaged in combat and tactical training.

22.3.1943

Disengagement of the battalions and units from the enemy was carried out without major interference. Villages Dobroplesy, Chernoki,

Royty, Lisno, Zaluchye were burned down by the troops after they were abandoned. Bridge over Svolna near Lisno was destroyed. Loud explosion were heard repeatedly when the houses were burning.

One policeman of the 4th company from 277th battalion of killed.

A t down, the accompanying team of the recovering communications platoon, 1st company, 2nd Lithuanian Battalion tripped a mine approximately 2km away from the intersection of highways near Velikoe Selo, resulting in 1 person killed, 2 heavily wounded and 2 lightly wounded.

23.3.1943

Mop-up of the area east of the Latvian border, between Lake Osveysky – Lake Lisno in the south and the railway line Rosenov – Sebez in the north, see the Operation Order № 18 dated March the 20th, 1943, Operations Division, № 77/43, Confidential (Annex, p. 53).

The battalions and units dispatched the mission and reached the set targets.

279th Police Battalion had a small-scale armed clash with the bandits on Lake Berezvitsa. 8 fleeing bandits were shot. The other battalions found no enemy. Village Lipnyagi and 11 wood camps were burned. Searching the woods was an extremely troublesome and time-consuming task due to the deep snow, swampy ground and thickets.

Trenches newly built by bandits in village Bonari were destroyed. Daily missions were accomplished.

24.3.1943

At the designated time battalions occupied the jump-off ground. The enemy was not found. On the Osveya – Sebez highway the attached unit of emergency technical assistance rebuilt 3 bridges. Daily missions were accomplished.

25.3.1943

Following the orders, battalions continued to advance and to accomplish their daily missions. No enemy was found.

26.3.1943

No significant incidents.

The Special SS Police Company and the 10th (motor.) platoon of gen-

darmes were placed under command of the 11th Battalion of the 9th Police Regiment.

27.3.1943

No significant incidents.

282th Battalion was assigned to the Group.

28.3.1943

New area of attack, see Operation Order № 19 dated 26.3.1943 g., Operations Division № 82/43, Confidential, (Annex, page 60)36

Battalions reached the new area of operation without contact with the enemy.

29.3.1943

Mop-up of the area confined by the Latvian border in the west, by the road Rosenow – Sebej in the south, in the east – by the River Issa till Kopina and then by road Kopina – Mosul, in the north – by the line of Ustinovo – Kozlovo – Bolshiye Yazvintsy. See Operation Order № 20 dated March th 26th, 1943, Operations Division, № 83/43, Confidentially, (Annex, page 59).

Battalions at the scheduled time began to advance. No enemy was found. Village Lubievo known as a bandit stronghold was burned down. According to the locals, approximately 560 bandits were still in the village Plonty on March the 29th, 1943, but later moved on to the north.

Daily missions were accomplished despite the challenging road conditions.

30.3.1943

On the night of March th 30th, 1943, the bandits repeatedly tried to break through the guard posts under cover of machine guns. Machine-gun fire was suppressed by posts of 279th Police BattaliOp.

Latvian medical Unterscharführer was seriously wounded by machine-gun fire used on the right boundary of the obstacle area of the Armenian Battalion (Wehrmacht), during takeover of initial positions in village Zarovka. Battle strips of the 279th Latvian Police Battalion north of Lyukhovo were partly covered by Wehrmacht forces.

The same went for settlements Lyukhovo and Glinischi. In the vicinity of the village Lyukhovo the advancing line of 279th Latvian Police Battalion,

in spite of the signals with rockets and voice in German, was fired upon by Wehrmacht posts, which made further sweeping of the area impossible.

3rd company of 279th Police Battalion had 2 casualties. The Wehrmacht General, who commanded the barrier line, was informed about the incident through the liaison officer. With further sweep the advancing lines of 279th Police Battalion came under a heavy bombardment by the Armenian Wehrmacht BattaliOp.

31.3.1943

The Group was stationed in Latvia in the area of Yaski, Linea, Yarkuty, Paudise, Calvi and Dolgea.

2.4.1943

Deactivation of the Group's Headquarters. Group Headquarters deactivation team remains in Ludzena [Ludza] until April the 6th, 1943, inclusive.

Operation results for the period from February the 16th to March the 31th, 1943

a) bandits killed in battle	– 77
b) bandits captured	– 9
c) bandits and their accomplices subjected to special handling	– 875
d) handed over to SD	– 1389
Own losses:	
Casualties (including teamsters)	– 22
Heavily wounded	– 24
Lightly wounded	– 53
Went missing: 2 teamsters	

*Central State History Archive in Leningrad,
NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 967, Sheets 67-98
A copy. Translated from German.*

78. Coded telegram № 17179 on Belarusian population captured by SS gunmen and sent to forced labor in Germany and sold into slavery to Latvian landowners.

ATT:to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army
Commander

April the 8th, 1943

Population, taken captive during the invasion of Germans into the partisan area, is partly sent to Germany, and the remaining people are sold to landowners in Latvia for 2 marks a person.

“Sturm”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24224, Doc. 2, Sheet 827

**79. Message from the occupied eastern territories № 49
of the Chief of Security Police and SD on the results
of counterinsurgency operations in January-March 1943
in Reichskommissariat "Ostland"**

The city of Berlin

April the 9th, 1943

Bandit activity in the eastern border districts of Latvia – Lithuania in the end of January of 1943 has increased to the extent that many residents of these areas moved inland.

Only after [we held] a well-prepared major operation against the gangs conducted under the command of SS Obergruppenführer Eckeln in mid-February, the number of bandit attacks declined.

Besides Security Police teams, Operation Winterzauber ("Winter Magic") involved several Latvian Police Battalions, Ukrainian Police Battalion, Motorized Gendarmerie, air defence units and aircrafts. In early March, the area of Lipovka – Rositsa- Mushino – Shambory – Bigosovo and Ustye have been cleared of bandits and a 15 km wide "dead" zone was created on the Russian border.

Our own losses till date:

Police: 4 killed

1 heavily wounded

4 lightly wounded

2 missing.

Guard Battalion: 3 killed

1 wounded.

Enemy losses: 137 bandits killed in battle, 1,807 bandits and their accomplices executed, 51 bandits arrested. Over 2,000 people who had not been implicated in bandit activities, were evacuated from the seized villages and sent to Salaspis camp near Riga.

Trophies: seized 527 heads of cattle and 55 horses.

Weapons seized: 2 anti-tank guns, machine guns, rifles, several boxes of machine-gun and rifle bullets, 207 hand grenades and 1 storage of explosives, 3 ammunition storages. 83 villages occupied by bandits were blown up and burned.

Another operation against gangs was executed in the area of Rozitten [Rezekne]. Here the agents discovered armed bandits, led by paratroopers and Soviet officers.

As evidenced by 4 arrested bandits, in the summer of 1942 these groups blasted a train with ammunition at the railway section between Rositten and Sebezh. It was further established that a Latvian railway employee regularly informed the bandits of the type of trains en route and time of their departure. Bandit groups intended to wait for better weather to sabotage the railway and motorized military convoys.

In the area of Krubnishka, Skrutsa, Broyzovka, Libau, Prayli and Yaychmayka a major operation was carried out involving a Wehrmacht company approximately 235 persons strong, and Latvian Police in order to clear the area of the bandits. During the operation 52 bandits were arrested, weapons, ammunition, explosives and Russian money seized.

Interrogation of arrested persons revealed that 3 of Latvian Police involved in the operation warned the bandits of the upcoming operation against them.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 952, Sheets 124 – 125
A copy. Translated from German.*

**80. Coded telegram № 18030, 18033 on benefits for families
of Latvian collaborators, who joined military or equivalent
service**

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commanderate
of the Red Army
Commander

April the 12th, 1943

Mobilization of men born in years 1919 to 1925 inclusive was carried out in Latvia. Allowance is given to Latvians who went as volunteers to military zones, in the army, police, defense department, air defense, the Red Cross and others units, as well as their families.

Continued in № 4.

To the Commander.

№ 4.

Continued.

The allowance is given to the wife and children of the volunteers, children under 16, and if they are students – until the age of 19, inclusive. Second group allowance is provided to parents and family members who were dependent on the volunteers. Allowance is from 20 to 30 marks, depending on how much the householder was earning.

“Yuzhin”

CAMD RF, F. 23, Inv. 24225, Doc. 1, Sheets 413, 414

81. From the list of military units reporting to the Supreme Chief of the SS and Police "Russia – Center" and Belarus as of May the 1st, 1943

ATT: to the head officer of General
of the Main Intelligence Commandate
of the Red Army
Commander

April the 31st, 1943

Units	Garrison or head-quarters (only for the forces assigned to a settlement or those keeping guard)	Subordination	
		combat	operational
1	2	3	4
[...] И. In the territory of the Belarus SS and Police Commander			
[...] 18-th Latvian Police Battalion	Gantsevichi	Belarus Police Commander	
271- th Latvian Police Battalion	Urechye		[...]

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 917, Sheets. 254-260
Translated from German.*

82. Order of the Belarus Security Police and SD Commander on participation of Belarus Security Police and SD units in Operation "Cottbus"

The city of Minsk

May the 17th, 1943

a) On the bandit status, the objective, forces utilized, our intentions and implementation, see the order of von Gottberg Battle Group of May the 15th, 1943.

b) Command of the Security Police and SD, including Einsatzgruppe 9, is carried out by me. The following persons are assigned under my command: SS Sonderführer – Arnis, SS Scharführer – Höfer, Peygot P radio apparatus with Oberscharführer SS Galov, driver Apenis.

c) Participants in Operation "Cottbus" from the department of the Belarus Security Police and SD Commander:

Command Group I

Chief – SS Sturmbannführer Fridrics, subordinates: SS Hauptsturmführer Stiller,

SS Oberscharführer Peskov and driver Schindler.

SD-T Squad

Chief – SS Untersturmführer Schaupeter.

Force j provided by a division in Glubokoye.

SD TT Squad

Chief – SS Untersturmführer Hinterkuber,

Force j, provided by a division in Vileika.

(page 133)

SD III Squad

Chief – Untersturmführer Grus, Oberscharführer Kramer, Rottenführer Novak, interpreter Klimov, driver Kiritis, driver Dressmann

Latvian platoon of Vileika division is placed under orders of Command Group I for requisition of food, etc. Vileika division is in charge of delivery.

Command Group I is assigned to the Einsatzgruppe of Colonel Klump.

SS Squads I and II are assigned to the units of SS Guards, SD III Squad is assigned to 102 Police Guard BattaliOp.

On 18.5.1943 the Command Group reports to the command post of Klupm's Einsatzgruppe in Parafyanovo.

Command Group II

Chief: Hauptsturmführer Wilke,

Subordinates: SS Sturmführer Eckardt,

Interpreter Budlevsky, driver Felderevnya.

Command Group SD IV

SquadChief: Untersturmführer SS Kuun, SS Hauptsturmführer Kreimann, SS Hauptsturmführer Weller, Interpreter Raikin, interpreter Viksne.

Command Group SD V

Head: SS Untersturmführer Amman,

Forces j are provided by Logoisk reconnaissance team.

Command Group SD VI

Chief: SS Hauptsturmführer Schneider, SS Hauptsturmführer Wedekind, SS Oberscharführer Müller, interpreter Geile, interpreter Grigens

Latvian volunteers platoon of Minsk company (Feldwebel Rose) in amount of 1/ 27 persons is placed under orders of Command Group II for food requisition and mobilization of the populatiOp. Delivery by truck.

Command Group II is assigned to Dirlewanger's Einsatzgruppe.

SD IV Squad is assigned to the 118 Police Guard Battalion, SD VI Squad is assigned to 15 Police Guard BattaliOp.

Command Group II reports to the command post Dirlewanger's Einsatzgruppe in Lahojak on May the 18th.

The report II D provides a truck for delivery of SD Squads IV-VI.

In the course of the operation transfer of these squads is carried out battalions to which they are assigned, and regulated by an agreement with them.

d) Einsatzgruppe 9 force used

SD 9 Squads in quantity as per the Operation Order of Einsatzgruppe 9 of May the 16th, 1943 are assigned to the 2nd and 13th Police Regiments participating in Operation with their Wehrmacht subordinate units.

e) Mission

During the operation, the SD Squads dispatch the tasks of the Security Police and SD. They obtain data for future battle operations by interrogation of local residents, prisoners and deserters. The results are immediately reported to the Chief of Einsatzgruppenes and Battalions Commanders. The Chief of SD Squad in agreement with the Battalion Commander decides on the need for reprisals against the populatiOp. In controversial cases a decision by the Command Group Chief is required.

f) Communication and reports

Radio equipment available to the Einsatzgruppenes and Battalions must be used for transmission of important messages. The prisoners of particular importance, such as agents, radio operators, are to be sent in the report IV17 in Minsk along with the seized materials, if reasonably possible.

g) Insignia, signaling, passwords

See. Operation Order for Operation Cottbus dated May the 15th, 1943.

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv 3, D. 969, Sheets 224 – 227
Translated from German.*

**83. From the Memorandum Report of M.S.Prudnikov,
Commander of Partisan Brigade “Neulovimiye”
 (“The Elusive”) on activities undertaken by the Nazi
occupationists in the territory of Latvia, Lithuania and
Western Belarus in February-March 1943**

May the 26th, 1943

In 1942, in Latvia and Lithuania the Germans were spreading provocative rumors that “for the work eisergs and shaulists for the Germans the entire population in these republics will be destroyed if the Red Army comes (i.e. by the Red Army), so there is no other way but to take up arms and follow the Germans against the Bolsheviks. When the provocation failed, the Germans began propaganda among the people saying that they know for a fact that the population of Latvia and Lithuania will be destroyed by the Red Army for killing the Jews. The Germans carried out this campaign through shaulist and eiserg organizations and the so-called “national self-help” organized by the Germans.

In Riga there are headquarters of the “Latvian National Self-help”, which is recruiting for volunteer corps, the so-called people's army. The headquarters are staffed by German officers, Gestapo employees and officers of the former Latvian army. This staff includes former Latvian Colonels Aigailis [Silgalys] and Weis [Weiss], former head of the Latvian fascists Tselmin [Tselminyp]. This work is actively supported by the “Union of Latvian Youth” created by them, and headed by Maspee, captain of the former Latvian army. All the directives come from the governing bodies in Berlin through the Gestapo officials, officers, and national self-help headquarters. These fascist organizations create volunteer corps from eisergs of wealthy residents and part of the peasantry, who succumbed to Nazi propaganda. Organized parties are assigned to German troops, part of which goes to the front to fight the partisans, and the main part guards the border and reinforces the farm garrisons along the border.

The Nazis are not confining themselves to those measures, and intend to go for an obvious deception of Latvian and Lithuanian people by organizing the Latvian and Lithuanian national self-help. The Germans plan to elect a national government by general elections and to create a Lithua-

nian and Latvian army directly under their supervision, and control them in their own interests against the Red Army.

The Germans announced mobilization in the territory of Latvia, Lithuania and Western Belorussia, and part of the population was served summons. For example, in Lithuania in Gayduchinsk district 300 summonses to appear at the recruiting station were served. Only 12 people showed up, who had been certain that they were unfit for military service, some were without arms and with other disabilities.

The population of military age (born in 1919, 20, 21) is escaping into the woods. The Germans hunt them down, while the police secretly assist the captured persons in escape, since they themselves are against mobilization. To facilitate their provocation operations the Germans used the forays by the Latvian squads of Zakharov, Gerasimov and Romanov, who during November-December 1942 were making raids on villages and farms, taking grain, cattle and other property. Seeing such attitude of the partisans, the Latvians living on border strip went to the Germans to join volunteer corps and protect the border from partisans, and fight against them. Of this group of people, from February to March 1943, three Latvians Battalion participated in the expedition against partisans from the border areas of Latvia to Osveya, Drissen and Sebezh areas, and burned down almost all the villages by the Latvian border. The Latvians who took part in this expedition say: "We came to avenge the partisans for robbing our people".

In Belarus, the main headquarters of the Belarusian National Self-help is located in Minsk. In the end of April 1942, the Germans raised a question regarding organization of the Belarusian Self-defense Corps. Captain of the royal army Semyon Vasilievich Lazarev was appointed Commissioner of the corps at the age of 53. All instructions on this matter were given directly from Berlin to a certain Nazi spy doctor Ermachenko, who regularly visited Berlin, Germany, and at their direction together with Lazarev was responsible for the organization and manning three-month *Unterscharführer* courses. The courses were manned by former officers of the royal and Polish armies.

Schools were open and functioning: in Minsk, in Glubokoye, Roslavl, Pastavy, Novo-Vileiki and Lebedevo of Molodechensk district. Schools operated for three months. Most of the students were released after school to their homes, because in organization of the corps only one Battalion No 49 was formed due to fear of trusting Belarusians with weapons. The

Battalion was stationed in Minsk with a mission to defend the city and fight the partisans.

In order to subjugate the population in the occupied areas of Belarus, the Germans are spreading counter-revolutionary literature and leaflets about our government and the NKVD calling to join the so-called People's Army and fight the partisans. They organize meetings and public gatherings with agent provocateurs, who allegedly are paratroopers dropped into the rear by the Red Army, and who voluntarily came to the Germans. They are used to provoke the Soviet regime, talk of hunger and unbearable conditions in the rear of the Red Army, the Red Army being unarmed, starving and thousands yielding themselves prisoners. Despite all this manipulation, the Nazis have not achieved any significant results. The so-called People's Army was joined only by a number of anti-Soviet criminal elements not more than 5-10%. [...]

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 4, Doc. 25, Sheets 70 – 71
A certified copy.*

84. From the Order № 13 of the Commander of the Belarus Police Service Colonel Klepsh on decoration of police officers

The city of Minsk

June the 15th, 1943

11. Commander in Chief of the SS and Police of Belarus has granted decorations to the following officers:

a) Decorations granted:

Medals of Bravery for Eastern Peoples in silver, II Class:
Senior Lieutenant of Police Erik Zunde 18 Lat. Bat.

b) Eastern Peoples' Medals of Bravery in "bronze", II Class:
[...]

Police Major Friedrich Rubenis 18 Lat. Bat.
Police Captain Friedrich Robert Schwede 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Karl Skunt 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Yanis Bumbers 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Osvald Lapinsh 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Woldemar Zamielis 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Franz Egleis 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Karl Reedus 18 Lat. Bat.
Senior Police Lieutenant Jacob Palmbaus 18 Lat. Bat.
Police Lieutenant Janis Goba 18 Lat. Bat.
Assistant Officer Martin Bruns 18 Lat. Bat.
Assistant Officer Willie Janson 18 Lat. Bat.
Assistant Officer Mattis Schebnis 18 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Edwin Meldernis 18 Lat. Bat.
Vize-Feldwebel Edward Voitkevic 18 Lat. Bat.
Vize-Feldwebel Stanislaus Jakushonoks 18 Lat. Bat.
Vize-Feldwebel Žanis Janson 18 Lat. Bat.
Vize-Feldwebel Oswald Buchgols 18 Lat. Bat.
Vize-Feldwebel Andreas Dums 18 Lat. Bat.
Vize-Feldwebel Janis Swenn 18 Lat. Bat.

Vize-Feldwebel Woldemar Jaunozols 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Otto Kurats 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Jaseps Leikumus 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Mattis Putz 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Albert Spiss 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Isidor Bogomols 18 Lat. Bat.
Police Vize-Korporal Ernst Wilnis 18 Lat. Bat.
Police Vize-Korporal Arnold Latzis 18 Lat. Bat.
Police Vize-Korporal Jaseps Zlamets 18 Lat. Bat.
Police Vize-Korporal Isidors Bogomols 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Edward Belzinsh 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Peter Belzinsh 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Andreis Plavinskis 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Jazeps Kantans 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Robert Gantish 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Albert Wetters 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Edward Daudzvardis 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Peter Erts 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Oscar Juozus 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Edward Andrelewskis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Machulans 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Namniks 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Alfons Bartushevichs 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Willis Purvinyns 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Robert Steins 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Paeglitis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Reingold Adamsons 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Atvaze 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Elmar Balodis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Robert Mezgailis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Jacob Melkerts 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Osip Lipinsh 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Arthur Droshmanis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Arnold Berzinsh 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Stephan Maklers 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Wilumsins 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Woldemar Bušs 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Michael Raiers 18 Lat. Bat.

Policeman Olgerts Jaunozols 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Gailis 18 Lat. Bat.
Hauptsturmführer Fritz Avotinsh 271 Lat. Bat.
Hauptsturmführer Siegfried Kruminsch 271 Lat. Bat.
Senior Lieutenant Walter Spunde 271 Lat. Bat.
Senior Lieutenant Herman Rosentals 271 Lat. Bat.
Senior Lieutenant Petr Jabs 271 Lat. Bat.
Senior Lieutenant Adolf Pukkshtenis 271 Lat. Bat.
Senior Lieutenant Andrei Leimanis 271 Lat. Bat.
Assistant Officer Peter Brenzis 271 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Arwed Ambats 271 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Willie Kiselevs 271 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Albert Neilands 271 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Alexander Lose 271 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Oscar Plesums 271 Lat. Bat.
Feldwebel Anton Eglitis 271 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Willie Kashmers 271 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Karl Laikrist 271 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Alexander Tutins 271 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Peter Preztniks 271 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Oscar Pukutis 271 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Christian Vanadzinš 271 Lat. Bat. Policeman Peteris
Peteris Viulis 271 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Jacobs Putra 271 Lat. Bat.
[...]

d) Decorated with "Black Badge" for being wounded in battle (Verwundetenazeichen):

Senior Lieutenant Edward Riduss 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Robert Gatinyp 18 Lat. Bat.
Unter-Korporal Arvids Grinvalds 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Zeltmatis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Woizehs Lochmelis Lat. Bat.
Policeman Victor Baklane 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Janis Dvinskis 18 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Robert Vainovskiys 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Ernst Vilnis 18 Lat. Bat.
Korporal Edward Rudzišs 18 Lat. Bat.

Senior Lieutenant Herman Rosentals 271 Lat. Bat.
Policeman Karlis Brede 271 Lat. Bat.

Signed
Klepsh, Security Police Colonel.

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 9. Sheets, 102 – 102 rev., 45 – 45 rev.
Copy. Translated from German.*

85. Order of the Battle Staff of the Commander of Belarus Security Police and SD on creation of SD Squads for Operation "Gunter"

The city of Minsk

June the 29th, 1943

1) The Squads:

SS Hauptsturmführer Wilcke with interpreter Krasovsky, SS Sturm-scharführer Zeuschel and radio-car are placed under the orders of the Korzeman battle group staff.

a) assigned to von Goltz Regiment:

SS Untersturmführer Kuun, Rottenführer SS Novak, interpreter Gorshkov and 4 Latvians from Latvian SS-Freiwilligen-LegiOp.

b) assigned to 2nd Police Regiment:

SS Untersturmführer Mack, Oberscharführer SS Schodle, interpreter Michelson and 4 Latvians from Latvian SS-Freiwilligen-LegiOp.

c) assigned to Dirlewanger's Sonderkommando: Untersturmführer Amman with 4 persons from Logoysk squad.

SS Untersturmführer Kuun reports his arrival to von Goltz Regiment in Radoshkovichi before 9.00 on 1.7.1943.

Untersturmführer Mack during the day of 1.7.1943 reports his arrival to his battle unit in Pleschinitzy.

Untersturmführer Amman immediately reports to SS Obersturmbannführer Dr. Dirlewanger upon his arrival to Logoysk.

After the operation the squads independently return to Minsk. SS Untersturmführer Amman with his squad returns to Logoysk.

2) Procurement:

The squads procure themselves with dry rations for 5 days.

3) Transport administration provides the following for the period from July the 1st to July 4th, 1943:

A car with driver Dresman for SS Hauptsturmführer Wilcke.

1 car and one truck with drivers Schmidt and Sobolev for SS Untersturmführer Mack.

1 car and one truck with drivers Zeck and Ruhbe for SS Untersturmführer Kuun.

SS Untersturmführer Amman uses his own vehicles and is requesting transport in Dirlewanger's Sonderkommando.

By order
Illegible signature.
SS Oversturmführer

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv 3, D. 969, Sheets 258 – 259
Translated from German.*

**86. From the Oder № 14 of the Commander of the Belarus Police
Service Colonel Klepsh on decoration of police officers**

July the 1st, 1943

[...]

10). SS Commander in Chief and head of Belarus Police granted "Black Badge" for being wounded in battle granted the following decorations to the police officers below:

[...]

Korporal of Security Police Willie Kaschmers 271st Lat. Bat.

Policeman Andrejanovs Polikarp 271st Lat. Bat.

[...]

Signed
Klepsh, Security Police Colonel.

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1, Doc. 9, Sheets. 120 – 120 rev.
Copy. Translated from German.*

**87. Propagandist article in Latvian newspaper “Tevia”,
about the second anniversary of punitive forces
that formed the basis for the apparatus of the Latvian
Auxiliary SD Security Police**

July the 3rd 1943

“2 YEARS IN THE BATTLE FOR THE PEOPLE'S SECURITY”

”Decorations and Promotions in Latvian Security Department”

On the first day after expulsion of the Bolshevik gangs from Riga – July the 1st, 1941, Latvian Security Police began to take shape. On Riga Liberation Memorial Day the Latvian Department of the Latvian Security Police and Security Service celebrated its second anniversary.

Numerous units are fighting against the Bolsheviks at the front, and those who are currently stationed in Riga have gathered for a celebration parade.

Battle-seasoned warriors greeted the Commander of the Latvian Security Police and Security Service SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange, who accompanied by the Chief of Latvian Security Department Major B. Arajs reviewed the troops and watched the orderly parade of young men. SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange congratulated the fighters of the Security Department in the 2nd anniversary. He said that first of all we should remember the brave comrades in arms who died at the front fighting against the bolshevist enemy. These warriors, faithful to their oaths, gave their lives as a pledge of victory over Bolshevism and, at the same time, for a happy future of their homeland. When the Commander called to honor the memory of the fallen, all the officers raised their hands in greeting, the orchestra played the song of a faithful fellow soldier. Major Arajs addressed his brave fighters. Among other things he said: “Two years have passed in fierce battles at different sectors of the front. Peasants, workers, students and pupils have grown to be soldiers who bravely stood against Bolshevism – the destroyer of European culture. Chests of many are decorated with badges of honor and heroism. Many of those with whom we fought never came back from the East, but their graves so far from home, will remain forever a symbol of Latvian heroism.

We were the first who wore the gray uniform and together with German soldiers rose up against the great enemy. In this work, we could not be stopped even by the greatest enemies of the people – the Bolshevik provocateurs, who were hiding behind the mask of patriotism. We have accepted the best of Latvian young men in our midst. Our people are proud of their sons, who took up arms without fear. This friendship in arms with the German soldiers will remain unfailing forever.

Then the soldiers of the Security Police in this holiday were addressed by the head of the Latvian Security Police and Security Service, SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange. He praised the young men, who grew from the partisans and volunteer fighters into heroic and exemplary soldiers. The German army liberated the Latvian land from the danger of Bolshevism and for 2 years we were able to enjoy safe live. Latvian young men stood up next to the German soldiers to strike the final death blow to Bolshevism, which would mark a new era in the life of European people.

At the end of the address, which the warriors of the Security Department received with great enthusiasm for further battles, SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange awarded new military ranks to many officers, assistant officers and soldiers for their exemplary performance of tasks and heroism. The awarding took place at the end.

Caption under the first photograph:

“The Commander of the Latvian Security Police and Security Service SS Sturmbannführer Dr. Lange is pinning a Military Merit Cross with swords on the Chief of Latvian Security Department Major Arajs”.

Caption under the second photograph:

“Warriors of the Latvian Security Department in the ceremonial line-up.”

*FSB of the Russia. Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv. 11, Doc. 13, Sheets 50-54
Translation from a Latvian.
Newspaper clipping.*

88. From the report of Osveya underground Regional Committee of Lenin Communist Youth Association of Belarus (RK LKSMB) to the underground Vitebsk LKSMB on participation of the Latvian police in reprisal raid in village Muhvetitsa of the Senkovsky s/s Osveysky District, Vitebsk Region

July the 6th, 1943

During the reporting period, the partisan brigade did not undertake any significant battle operations [...]

From the Latvian side, the Germans and the Latvian police repeatedly tried to break into the partisan district to rob the local people of their last belongings whenever they could. They would burst into a settlement, which was burned down during the reprisal raid, and dig up the huts and dugouts built by the people to live in. They would take away the remnants of clothing, bread, steal the cows and horses. The local people ran off, and those who got into the hands of the fascists were killed or sent to hard labor in Latvia.

Under the cover of the night the broke into the village of Mukvetitsa of the Senkovsky village council and seized the family of Marinsky, the wife was slashed with a knife on the spot and shot. The husband and 15-year-old son were tied to each other by the hands of the special chain and driven to Latvia. Comrade. Marinsky himself escaped from Latvia with partisans leaving there his son, whom the Nazis took to Kurland. [...] He tells about the horrible living conditions of the people who were forced by the fascists away from Belarus land. The work from dawn till dusk, live in cramped filthy premises, at best, and many dwell under the open sky. The daily meal consists of one "brick" of bad, whole oat bread and a liter of gruel; the people are weakened by mass beatings with sticks. There are daily deaths from beatings and exhaustion. Such is the picture of the fascist "Paradise" [...]

Secretary of Osveya
RK LKSMB /Khvezhenko/

**89. Order of the Battle Staff of the Commander of Belarus
Security Police and SD on commissioning SD Squad
to the city of Novogrudok for special operations**

July the 8th, 1943

1) Following the orders of the Commander Hauptsturmführer Wilcke the squad is commissioned to Novogrudok on July the 9th, 1943 for special operation. The operation starts at 8.30.

The SD Squad includes

SS Hauptsturmführer Wilcke

SS Oberscharführer Schuster

SS Rottenführer Novak

Interpreter Raikov and 30 Letts from the Latvian company.

SS Hauptsturmführer Wilcke must report to the office of the Security Police and SD in Baranavichy to receive the details of the mission for the squad in Novogrudok

2) Transport crew to provide Wilcke with 2 cars and 1 truck.

The end of the operation will be established by Hauptsturmführer Wilcke.

SS Obersturmführer Müller

NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, D. 969, Sheet 274

90. From the Order № 15 by the Commander of Belarus Police Service Colonel Klepsh on announcement of the order by SS Reichsführer Himmler on the grant of official name “Latvian Political Battalions” “for the excellent conduct”

The city of Minsk

July the 15th, 1943

[...]

18. Service distinction of Latvian Security Battalions.

SS Reichsführer ordered as follows:

To all Latvian Security Battalions: “Taking into consideration their excellent conduct as of today, I am assigning to all Latvian Battalions an official name “Latvian Police Battalions”.

Signed Himmler.

Latvian Police Battalions retained their previous battalion numbers.

On behalf of

Signed Flade

[...]

Police Colonel Klepsh

NARB, F. 389, Inv. 1, Doc. 1, Sheet 146 rev.

A copy. Translated from German.

91. From the report on partisan battle operations against the reprisal raids of the enemy

Not before August [1943]

Top Secret

Operation of partisans in Baranovich region against the enemy reprisal raid July-August 1943

On 13.7.1943, the enemy up to 5 thousand strong with artillery and tanks from the areas of Rubiaževičy, Columns, Peace, executed an offensive on the partisans deployed in Ivenets Forest and by the end of the day 15.7.43, from Miry direction reached the southern bank of the Nema River.

Having started the offensive on 10.7.43 from the east and south-east, on 15.7.43 the enemy simultaneously launched an offensive from the south-west and west directions of Novogrudok and Lida against partisans stationed in the area of Ivenets and western Nalibokskaya Forest. By 18.7.43, the enemy's right column reached the south bank of the River Neman near Lubča and the left column got to the western bank of river Berezina near Zabrze (26 km east of Iŭe)

16.7.43 the enemy began crossing over the River Neman near Jere-mic (13 km north of Miry) and in the area of Kors (28 km north of the Novogrudok).

Partisans Brigades named after Zhukov under command of Moskalev, which were defending the crossing of the River Neman, broke off repeated attempts of the enemy units to cross the river during 16.7.43. The enemy, having lost more than 50 soldiers and officers in killed, 1 mortar with the crew and 2 whippet tanks, was forced to withdraw to their initial position.

From 17 to 24.7.43 the enemy regrouped, and launched battle action routing the brunt of attack from the areas of Volozhiny, Ivianie.

On 24.7.43 comrade Chernyshov reported that Ivenets-Nalibokskaya Forest was blocked, after which radio contact with him and comrade Sidorov was lost.

In order to establish communication with comrades Chernyshev and Sidorov, the Belarus Headquarters of Partisan Movement (BSHPD) in-

structed comrades Shupenia and Gapeev, by sending communications scouts, to establish a connection and report on the situation in Ivenets-Nalibokskaya Forest.

Pursuant to the order, on 21.8.43, comrades Gapeev and Shupenia reported that communication with com. Chernyshev had been established.

On 8.8, 1943, a few enemy units reached the central part of Ivenets Forest (district Pechische)

Partisan Brigades of Gribanov, Gulevich, Moskalev, Kovalev, Sinichkin and independant units of Zhurenko, Denisenko, Pridanilov, Zaitsev, Roshchin and Baikov launched bold assaults on the rear and the flanks of enemy units and stopped their further progress.

All enemy's attempts of further progress were resisted by the partisans. Having suffered heavy losses in manpower and machinery, the enemy was forced to stop the expeditiOp.

The following enemy units were engaged in the expedition against the 4,300 partisans of Ivenets-Nalibokskaya Forest: First SS Infantry Brigade under the command of Major-General of Police von Gottberg, Second SS Infantry Regiment, 30-th Police Regiment, a group of four separate battalions under the command of SS Obersturmführer Dirlewanger, a group of three separate SS battalions under the command of Kerner, 15,57,116,118 Ukrainian battalions, a battalion of Lithuanians, Latvian battalion, gendarme group of Kraikembom, policemen from towns and villages, the special squad of General Kube, in the total number to 52,000 people.

During the fighting from 13.7 to 8.8, 1943, the partisans caused the following losses to the enemy in manpower and machinery: 3 thousand soldiers, officers and policemen in killed and wounded; 55 trucks, 5 cars, 2 tanks, 2 armored cars burned down and blown up. Trophies seized: 19 machine guns, 2 mortars, a lot of rifles and ammunition; 29 German soldiers taken prisoner.

Partisans' losses: 129 casualties, 52 wounded and 24 missing.

Losses in arms and equipment: 5 guns, 11 machine guns, 56 rifles, 2 cars.

The German expedition, which sought to destroy the partisans in the area of Ivenets-Nalibokskaya Forest was a total failure.

All partisan brigades and units came out of battle completely intact and fully combat-ready.

The partisans have shown resilience in the battle, courage and skillful maneuvering actiOp.

The Germans, enraged by their unsuccessful attempts against partisans, vented their anger on the local population.

During the period of expedition the German invaders were burned more than 150 settlements, murdered and deported to Germany thousands of civilians.

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 3, Doc. 130, Sheets 33, 35 – 36
Uncertified copy.*

92. From the Order № 18 by the Commander of Belarus Police Service Colonel Klepsh on decoration of policeman

The city of Minsk

August the 30th, 1943

[...]

10. Awards:

The Chief Commander SS and Police “Center” of Russia and Belarus has awarded the below listed police officers the following signs insignia:

a) Eastern Peoples Badge of merit for bravery II Class in “bronze”:

Kompaniefeldwebel Julius Sprogis 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Vize-Feldwebel Johann Stumbris 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Vize-Feldwebel Arthur Atvars 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Vize-Feldwebel Woldemar Tisinsh 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Vize-Feldwebel Willie Apalups 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Vize-Feldwebel Olgerts Zilinš 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Isidor Greze 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Janis Samaritis 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Juris Utkins 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Karl Maurans 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Albert Gard 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Anton Laper 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Unter-Korporal Peter Grelis 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Alois Bremzis 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Josef Paulins 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Edward Saranevich 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Josef Lavrens 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Stanislaus Laimanis 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Silvester Sturinš 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Vize-Feldwebel Janis Barviks 271 Latvian Police Battalion

b) Decorated with "Black Badge" for being wounded in battle:
Policeman Alexander Lizitis 271 Latvian Police Battalion
Policeman Pavils Jermake 271 Latvian Police Battalion

By order
Signed Kurt
Police Major

*NARB, F. 510, Inv. 1. Doc. 9, Sheets. 102 – 102 rev, 45 – 45 rev.
A copy. Translated from German.*

**93. Order of SS Obergruppenfuhrer Eckeln, the Chief
Commander of SS and Police "Ostland" and Russian North,
on combat readiness of operation group**

The city of Riga

October the 25th, 1943

Top Secret!

I) In the area of Polotsk (133) – Krasnopole (43 km south-west of Nevel) – Pustoshka (20) – Idriza (17) – Sebez (29) operation is conducted under the command of (the chief) of the partisan fighting units.

II) The battle group of Bach is formed for this purpose. It consists of the Eckeln's operation groups and von Gottberg's operation group.

1) Eckeln's operation group includes:

- a) Operating reserve of the Operation Group: 11 Division of 207th
Artillery Regiment 1 tank company
1 air defense squad
1 ant-tank squad
Special SS Police Company
Emergency technical assistance company of Oppolzer
Special emergency technical assistance platoon of Kirn

b) Other combat units:

- 2nd Special Aviagroup 7
- 3rd Special Aviagroup 7
- 33rd Signal company

2) Wider's segment.

- 26th SS Police Regiment
- 313th and 316th Latvian Police Battalions
- 8th Police Tank Company
- Special emergency technical assistance platoon of Krampe
- anti-tank platoons
- Wehrmach anti-aircraft platoons

3) Moeller's segment.

9th SS Police Regiment286th, 288th, 289th Estonian Police Battalions

3 anti-tank platoons

3 Wehrmach anti-aircraft platoons

4) Gahtel's Group.

16th SS Police RegimentIV Police Battalion under 16th SS Police Regiment

Latvian Police Regiment Riga

anti-aircraft platoons

Wehrmach anti-aircraft platoons

5) Schroeder's Guard Group:

283rd Lattish Police Battalion (719 men in 24 strongpoints).

Forces of district police (separate) service (600 men in 22 strongpoints).

1 company of the 21st reserve Grenadier Regiment (190 men in 6 strongpoints).

Customs and Border Guard.

1 Latvian Motorcycle Platoon (1/78).

1 company of the 317th Latvian Reserve Battalion (7/175).

[...]

IV) Each group is given special operational squads of the Security Police and SD Commander, as well as the squads of Food and Agriculture Department and the General Commissioner for the use of manpower.

V) The initial position area for Eckeln's Operation Group is the area south of the railway line Sebej – Idriza – Pustoshka. The main forces of the group are deployed on both sides of Idriza.

Areas of initial positions are as follows:

1) Wilder's Group:

Boundaries: in the north – railway track

in the east – Lake Ostrovno – Kozlov (inclusive) – Grabelzy (inclusive).

in the south – Grabelzy – Rudnia

in the west – Rudnia – Gelenchino (see attached map).

- 2) Moeller's Group: Boundaries: in the north – railway track
in the east – Kozly (exclusive) – Luziki (inclusive) – Grabelzy (exclusive), (see attached map).
- 3) Gahtel's Group:
Boundaries: in the north – railway track
in the east – Pyshovo (inclusive) – Tabakove (inclusive)
in the south – Tabakove – Luziki
in the west – Luziki (exclusive) – Kozly (inclusive)
(see attached map).
- 4) Moving out to initial positions must be done in the manner closest to real combat situation.
- 5) Immediately report arrival at the initial positions to operational groups.

VI) Command posts.

- a) Battle Group of von Bach in Sebezh (28), presumably from 29.10.43
- b) Eckeln's Operational Group in Idriza (17), presumably from 29.10.43
- c) Von Gottberg's Operational Group – in Polotsk (133).
- d) Wider's segment.
Battle command post in Rudnia (28) or in the village 8 km north-east of Rudnya, on the road to Pustoshka.
- e) Moeller's segment.
Battle command post in Idriza (17).
- f) Gahtel's segment.
Battle command post in the village 10 km east of Idriza, south of the railway line.
- i) Schroeder's security sector.

Battle command post in Dagda (2010 blue). There will be a special order on the communications.

There will be a special order on the use of aviation in combat.

Battle reports are to be sent to the military command post in Idriza

Eckeln
SS Obergruppenfuhrer and Police General

*NARB, F. 1440, Inv. 3, Doc. 1022 v, Sheets 90 – 92
A copy. Translated from German.*

**94. From intelligence report № 6 of BSHPD branch at the 1st
Baltic Front on the deployment of the occupants
in Dokshitsy district, Vitebsk region.**

January the 18th, 1944

According to the commander of a partisan brigade comrade Titkov on January the 15th, 1944, the enemy garrisons are stationed in the following points:

Dokshitsy-700 people by nationality – the Germans, Latvians, Lithuanians

Russians. Armament: 7-75 mm, 4 – 37 mm guns, regimental mortars – 2, battalion mortars – 6

Farm Janovo (6 km east of Dokshitsy) – 250 Latvian, 2 – 75 mm guns
Glinnoe (15 km east of Dokshitsy) – 80 Germans and Latvians

Pustosele (19 km east of Dokshitsy) – headquarters of 546 battalion and up to 300 soldiers: Germans, Latvians, Russian. 1-75 gun, 2 battalion mortars.

Representative BSHPD at the 1st Baltic Front
member of the Military Council of the front. Signed (I. Ryzhikov)

Acting Chief of Intelligence Department, Major. Signed (Teshenko)

NARB, F. 1450, Inv.1, Doc. 858, Sheets 20-25
An original.

**95. From intelligence report № 31 of the Central Headquarters
of Partisan Movement (CSHPD) representation
at the 1st Baltic Front on the movement of the enemy
from the Klyastitsy area**

March the 23rd, 1944

[...]

According to comrades Grigoryev⁴⁴ and Kuharenko⁴⁵ on 15.3.1944 the enemy force of 4 battalions launched an offensive from direction of Klyastitsy against the partisans, and by the end of 19.3.1944 took Slo-boda, Leszno and Zadezhe (18-22 km west of Klyastitsy). Fighting continues. From the captured enemy and was established that there are 315th and 317th the Latvian battalions against partisans operating from Klyastitsy. They came from Latvia on 12.3.1944 to Borovuha to fight the partisans (Data on the remaining battalions needs to be verified).[...]

Representative BSHPD at the 1st Baltic Front
member of the Military Council of the front. Signed /I. Ryzhikov/

Acting Chief of Intelligence Department
Major. Signed /Teshenko/

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 1, Doc. 858, Sheets 139
An original.*

**96. From intelligence report № 29 (146) of the Belarus
Headquarters of partisan movement.**

April the 10th, 1944

Enemy fight against partisans

On 15.3 the enemy with up to four battalions, including the 315th and 317th Latvian Battalions that arrived on 12.3 from Latvia, launched the offensive against partisans from the side of Klyastitsy (46 km NW of Polotsk) in the western direction and by the end of 19.3 took Sloboda, Leszno, Zadezhe (18 22 km west of Klyastitsy). Simultaneously, 209.3 units of 102 pp (24 pd) with forces of up to 1 battalion attacked from the side of Drissa in NE direction, but was driven back

On 19.3 the enemy continued the offensive against partisans in Ušačy zone from Polotsk side in the SE direction and from Lepel and Kamen side in NW direction. In the area of Kamen, Lepel 601 Security Regiment of 201 Security Division is operating against partisan. Its units took up defense 4 – 8 km northeast of Kamen at the border of Makarovshina, Ladena, Novoselki.

According to the data as of 1.4 death squads made up of Germans, Latvians and the police are fighting in the district of the Naroch (NW Vileika) against the partisans [...]

Deputy Chief of Belarus headquarters of partisan movement /Ganenko/

Chief of Intelligence Department
Colonel /Anisimov/

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 7, Sheets 241 – 251
An original.*

**97. From intelligence report № 32 (149) of the Belarus
Headquarters of partisan movement.**

April the 18th, 1944

Confidential

[...] Renegade units

Through a additional data as of 28.3 it was established that Latvian battalions 315th and 317th (see our int. report 29/146) are part of the 3rd Latvian Regiment, which arrived on 10.3. of Dvinsk to Borovuha[...]

Deputy Chief of Belarus partisan movement headquarters /Ganenko/

Chief of Intelligence Department Colonel /S. Anisimov /

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 7, Sheets 263-266
An original.*

**98. From intelligence report № 37 (154) of the Belarus
Headquarters of partisan movement.**

April the 29th, 1944

Confidential

[...]Renegade units

On 18.4, on stations Zagatse, Prazaroki, Ziabki the 15th Latvian SS Division was unloaded numbering up to 3100 people, who arrived from Polotsk [a] At the same time arrived 390 vehicles, 15 tanks and several self-propelled guns, belonging, probably, to this division.

Conclusion: The 15 SS Division arrived in the area of Prazaroki most likely to participate in operations against partisans of Ushachy zone

[...]

Deputy Chief of Belarus headquarters of partisan movement /Ganenko/

Chief of Intelligence Department Colonel

/S. Anisimov /

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 7, Sheets 296 -302
An original.*

**99. From operations report № 12 of Operations Group BSHPD
at 3-Belarus Front on enemy actions against partisans
in Ushachy zone**

April the 30th, 1944

Top Secret.

The enemy continued attacks on partisan brigades of Ushachy zone. According to a report from Colonel Sadchikov of 26.4.44 the following units operate against partisans of Ušačy: from the direction of Polotsk – Vetrino – units of 252th Infantry Division and 4th railroad pioneering regiment, from the direction of Conception – Prazaroki – Ziabki – 15th Division of the “People's Army” manned by the Latvian and Estonians, and units whose number was not established consisting of Czechs and Austrians, up to 2,500 men strong: from the direction of Podsvile – Krulevshizna – Berезино – Pyshno the brigade of “President Ostrovsky”, units of Kaminsky Brigade, 12th regiment of SS and Field Gendarmerie Regiment.

Head of Belarus headquarters of partisan movement
Operations Group at the 3rd Belarus Front
Lieutenant Colonel. Signed (A.Arkhangel'sky)

Senior Assistant Chief of Operations Group,
Captain. Signed (Nikolaev)

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 9, Sheet 288
An original.*

**100. From the intelligence report № 41 (158) of the Belarus
Headquarters of partisan movement**

May the 13th, 1944

Confidential!

[...] Renegade and police forces

[...]From interrogation of prisoners and documents obtained by partisans on April 22nd near Kabylniki (30 km northeast of Diena) it was established that 315th Latvian Battalion staff of patrol and inspection service 05654 was stationed in Kabylniki.

Based on the testimony of prisoners dated April 26th a Latvian regiment of unknown number is stationed in the area of Zadezhe – Kokhanovich (35 km NW of Diena), it consists of 317th, 318th and 321st Latvian battalions [...]

Deputy Chief of Belarus headquarters of partisan movement /Ganenko/

Chief of Intelligence Department Colonel

/S. Anisimov /

NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 7, Shetts 317-324

An original.

101. Report of the officer-at-large of the Russian Liberation Army (ROA) Staff Lieutenant V. Baltinsh to ROA representative in Riga, Colonel V. Pozdnyakov on the atrocities of the Latvian SS units in Vitebsk region

May the 26th, 1944

Mr. Colonel, after my personal report to you on the atrocities of Latvian and Estonian SS in Germany-occupied Russian territory, and your Adjutant, Lieutenant Ivan Guryanov being sent to my apartment for more information on this issue and location of the below villages on the military field map, for the avoidance of inaccuracies I take the liberty of submit to you this written report.

In mid-December, 1943 I was in on a duty tour (with some colleagues) in Belorussia (former Vitebsk province), in villages Knyazevo (Krasnoye), Barsuki, Rozalino and some others. These villages had previously been occupied by German forces, who had been rather tolerant to the local population, but once Lettish SS units replaced them, gratuitous massacres began. The people had to flee into forests at nights, covering themselves with bed sheets by way of snow camouflage during shooting. There were many corpses of women and old people lying around the villages. The local inhabitants told me that it were Lettish SS forces that were to blame for the outrage.

On the 23rd of April, 1944, I was in village Morochkovo. It was burnt to ashes. The cellars were occupied by SS men. On the day of my arrival there, a German unit was to replace them, but still I managed to talk to some SS men (I don't know their names) in Lettish. I asked one of them, why there are corpses of murdered women, old people and children, thousands of unburied corpses and dead horses. The air badly smelled of corpses. The answer was: "We killed them in order to exterminate as many Russians as possible".

After that, a sergeant led me to a burnt house. A few burnt corpses lay there half-buried. "We burnt them alive" he said."

When the Lettish unit was withdrawing, they took a few Russian women and girls as concubines. They were supposed to wash the soldiers' clothes, to fire ovens in bathhouses, to tidy up the rooms etc.

After this unit left, which was not larger than a company, I with a few other people dug up the straw and the ashes in the burnt hut and took

out the half-burnt corpses. There were 7 of them, all female and all had wire tied to one leg, which was nailed to a doorpost by the other end. We removed the wire from the stiffed charred legs, dug the graves and buried the seven wretches, after reading the Lord's Prayer and sinning "Memory Eternal".

A German lieutenant walked towards us. He got some boards, nails, ordered several soldiers to help us. We made seven Orthodox crosses, put them up on the graves, writing on each: "Unknown Russian woman who was burnt alive by the enemies of the Russian people – the Latvian SS".

The next day we crossed a small river, and found near it a few surviving wooden huts and people. The people were frightened at the sight of us, but we were able to quickly appease them. We showed them seven fresh crosses and told about what we had seen and done. The farmers wept bitterly and told us what they had endured during the stay of the Latvian SS in the area.

In early May, near the village Kobyliniki in one of the ravines we witnessed approximately three thousand bodies of executed peasants, mostly women and children. The surviving residents told us that the shootings were done by "the people who understood Russian, wore a skull on their caps and red-white-red flags on the left sleeve" – the Latvian SS.

I do not recall the name of the village, where my attention was caught by a cloud of flies circling over a wooden barrel. When I looked into the barrel, I saw mail heads. Some had mustaches and beards. Around the village we found a lot of peasant corpses. After talking with survivors, we had no doubts that the Latvian SS had also been here and showed their courage and fearlessness in the massacre of defenseless people.

All their other doings seem insignificant in comparison with that horrible barrel and women burned alive in the hut.

Similar facts committed by Estonian SS were discovered in the former Pskov province.

Not surprisingly, the entire male population took to the woods to become partisans, and put up if only a secret resistance to such troops, not being able to cope with them any other way. Thus, these units gave rise to partisan warfare.

Unfortunately, I know neither the names nor the numbers of unit which engaged in the atrocities.

Furthermore, we must not ignore the brutality of so-called "Belarusian police". The latter appeared in the villages, usually on the pretext of

finding weapons with the civilian population, forced the farmers to show places where they hid their belongings and food in the ground (clothing, linens, dishes, etc.) to preserve them amidst military operations and fires for the rainy day. When, under pain of death, the peasants showed the hidden belongings, the police picked the best for themselves and killed the peasants on the spot. The collected goods were quickly loaded on carts and the police would vanish as quickly as they had appeared.

Sir, in presenting the above report at your disposal, I hope that measured will be taken to protect the Russian population from the recurrence of the described atrocities.

Lieutenant V. Baltinsh

//Source, Moscow, 1998, No. 2, p. 74-75.

102. From the intelligence report № 48 (165) of the Belarus Headquarters of partisan movement

June the 4th, 1944

Confidential

[...] Renegade and police forces

According to the data of May the 16th, Staff of the 3rd Latvian Regiment is dislocated in Yakubovo (2 km west of Klyastitsy), which reports to headquarters of the Security Service in Riga. The Regiment includes 317, 318, 321 units 600 persons in total. The commander of the Regiment – Tilyaynberg [...]

Deputy Chief of Belarus headquarters of partisan movement /Ganenko/

Chief of Intelligence Department Colonel /S. Anisimov /

*NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 2, Doc. 7, Shetts 365 – 372
An original.*

103. From the history of the 1st Drissen Partisan Brigade of the Vitebsk region on participation of the 283rd, 318th and 321st Latvian Police Battalions and 314th, 315th, 316th Latgalian Construction Battalions in the reprisal raids in Drissen and Osveya areas in February-April 1944

March the 6th, 1944. The second expedition against our bush is already on three sides – south, west and east. This expedition involved 3rd Latvian police battalions, local garrisons and again units of the 290th Division, over 5,000 strong. Without accepting battle, the Brigade maneuvered towards Osveya district, and stayed in Shupa's camps, having left one squad of Suvorov Drissen area for reconnaissance and small-scale sabotage.

The expedition cleared the forest by March the 18th, driving the civilian population from the woods, gathering the residents of several villages in one village, and restoring garrisons in villages Zadezhe, Morochkovo, Sloboda, Dolgoe, Yuzefovo, Freyzovo, Rozulino, Barsuki, Yasnaya Polyana, and took our camp, where the 321st Latvian Police Battalion was stationed. The prisoner from the 321st battalion taken in this expedition said that the 3 police battalions arrived here along with 321st, 318th, 283rd and 3rd latgalian construction battalion, while the 315th, 314th, 316th battalions were to repair highways and roads, and build fortifications. The mission of the police battalions was protection of these works and fighting the partisans. These posts complicated our operations in the West, having almost closed the passage to the railway. The post stationed in our camps was the biggest obstruction.

Bolshak Polotsk – Idriza also became heavily guarded, which was why in March sabotage activities declined significantly.

104. From the history of the partisan brigade named after K.K. Rokosovskiy of Vileyka region on the fight with Lettish punitive battalions on the Svolna River in February, 1943

September the 5th, 1944

2. Fights with the Lettish punitive battalions

On February the 10th, the intelligence data on the enemy concentration in the area Shtaume [Shtyaune]-Sarya-Drissa started arriving. Probably, the enemy was intended to inflict a blow from the West collaborating with the enemy attacking from the East. On February the 15th, several Lettish battalions which arrived from Zilupi, Asuna, perhaps, from Riga supported by 5 planes attacked from the frontier Shtaume [Shtyaune]-Sarya-Drissa Zakharov's, Grebenyuk's, Gerasimov's partisan brigades situated to the east from this frontier. The brigades lacking the ammunition and having no headquarters could not withstand the pressure of the organized enemy's superior forces and upholding each defensive line retreated to the east hurriedly. On February the 25th, the enemy occupied Kokhanovichi, on February the 26th, - Osveya, on February the 28th - Zaitseve.

On February the 26th Shtrazov got the order to defeat the enemy forces along his line in association with the Byelorussians. By that time on the initiative of comrade Mozhaiskiy a session of brigade commanders with participation of Shtrazov was assembled where Shtrazov was elected for coordination of brigades actions.

Shtrazov formed 3 dispositions of forces:

1. The one led by the brigade commander Gavrilov attached to Boidin's, Karnaushenko's, Lisovskiy's brigades with a Lettish regiment, 5 detachments of Ohotin intended to defend the area Kurash - Dubrovo - Gorodilvichi - Tseresovo and to attack the enemy's rear area to Osveya passing to Osveiskoye Lake.

2. Zakharov's brigade intended to defend the area Kurashi - Moskalenki.

3. Veselov's disposition of forces to which A. Romanov's, P. Romanov's, Khomchenko's intended to target the area Moskalenki-Zadezhi-Ostry Konets and to attack Kokhanovichi and Zaitsevo.

At that time the following radiogram came. "Attn: Romanov and Bardadyn. It is necessary to deprive the enemy of his advantage of acting by his attacking forces in an orderly manner against the partisan brigades and units which are not interconnected. Comrades Romanov, Bardadyn, Shazov are charged to command the combined operations against the punitive expeditions. Романова, Бардадына, Шазова. This does not mean that the brigades will combine or obligatory defensive action will take place. It is necessary to maneuver saving the forces and the weapons. 1.3.43. Ponomarenko".

The partisans assaulted Kokhanovichi and Osveya rounding Osveyskoye Lake. But this plot was not realized since spring came and rivers and lakes overflowed all over. The partisans were working knee-deep in water striving to go into action swimming the water barriers, dragging out the heavy artillery and carrying it on their shoulders but they did not attain their aim. Having damaged the enemy, eliminated the garrison in Gai village, they still had to retreat.

On March the 7th, the Kalinin brigades were redeployed to carry out another task. Only Byelorussian brigades were acting against the chastisers. Bardadyn had arrived by that time.

On March the 9, 12 bombers U-87 had been bombing and fired upon the partisan defence line for six hours: Zadezhye - Strelkovskoye Beloye Lake, scores of villages situated on Svolna River, as well as to the east and to the west of it, woods margins, points of partisan distribution and gathering. 3 my units Белое - оз. were simultaneously attacked by ten bomber in the area Beloye - Otradnoye Lake. The enemy attacked from Kokhanovichi, Zaitsevo, Velikoye villages in the direction Lisno-Zadezhye-Morochkovo-Motorino-Midiviny. On March, 10, 8 enemy bombers had been bombing and firing upon partisan areas for one hour. During two battle days the enemy dislodged the partisans to the Svolna River eastern shore and fortified their positions on that frontier.

Slogging 10 day battles began at the turn of the river Svolna. The enemy repeatedly tried to penetrate further and break the partisan defense. The partisans were wearing the enemy down by counterstrikes, raids on posts in Milovidy, Dobrsch, Plessy, Lisno and shelling, trying to buy some

time until the final crossroads, when the enemy sled trains would not be able to move on the ground showing from under the melted snow. Meanwhile, the enemy had sole control over the territory cleared of partisan. Not a single partisan was to be found in the enemy rear. Until recently, the brigades operated blindly. Neither the scope of enemy forces, nor their purpose, nor organization were known.

During the fighting on Svolna, the brigade command raised the question of abandoning "the war in the dark", the need to capture enemy prisoners for information, and deploy troops in the rear of the enemy. The first to execute this mission was the unit im. Sergeya. Having received the order, the detachment went around Lake Lisno to the rear of the enemy and on March 15 destroyed the enemy convoy on Ašvieja - Lisno highway. All Germans were killed, trophies taken, 2 prisoners captured and a lot of documents seized.

Partisan Komarov recalls this ambush:

- *"Convoy on the left! - the words raced through the line. - Get down! - the order came. All went down. Minutes dragged in waiting".*

"The observer reports:

- *"Out of the woods came six wagons, heavily loaded. One-two persons on each".*

- *"Not too many. This is nothing! - One of the fighters grumbled".*

"And here's more wagons, German soldiers are walking next to them - the observer reports".

"First wagons drew up with the ambush".

- *"Don't shoot these ones! Let's wait for the rear! - Ordered the Commissar of the detachment Senior Lieutenant Kryuchkov".*

"Already the second group has drawn up to the convoy ambush. A hundred eyes watching them. Some fifty barrels of loaded weapons aimed at the heads of the Green Uniforms and you could see that not one rifle was aimed at the German officer who was riding a horse".

- *"Tra-ta-ta-ta! - Machine guns and all other weapons chattered at once".*

- *"Forward! Attack! - Commanded platoon commander Lysov".*

– “Forward! - reiterated platoon commanders Kiselev and Postnikov”.

– “Hoorah! – flew across the line. After our Commander we ran to the stalling convoy. A German officer was lying face down in the mud, his weapon which he threw put was lying aside. Other Germans in various poses were lying on the ground, some were shot in the chest, some with shattered skull. The wounded still tried to resist, but they were crushed immediately. Lysov broke his SVT butt (Titov’s self-loading rifle) over a fascist’s head. Two of the Germans who had escaped the first bullets threw their arms and ran toward the woods. Commander of the 2nd Platoon Postnikov and fighter Suvorov rushed after them. Soon they returned with removed with uniforms and ammunition taken from the Germans. Soldier of the 3rd Platoon Biryulya was busy with the wagon train: he adjusted the horses harnesses, put the goods from dead horses on other wagons and sent them into the woods. He collected guns, and hung 4 rifles on his back. Took them off only when we retreated to a safer place. Having taken the trophies and cut the telephone line, the detachment disappeared in the wood”.

“We moved slowly, had to help the horses. Everybody was excited. The guard tried to share his impressions, report our operation”.

After that a detachment named after Lenin was thrown into the rear of the enemy, Zakharov followed their lead.

From interrogation of the prisoners and the documents the purpose of the expedition emerged: to clear partisans from the territory adjacent to the Latvian border till the line of Polotsk - Sebej and turn it into a “desert zone”.

Against us operated 10th-12th Latvian battalions, including one Estonian, Lithuanian 251th, 279th, 266th, 277th, 289th, 278th, 265th and others Latvian battalions. Sending troops to the rear of Latvian battalions changed the situation radically.

After 10-day battles at the line of the river Svolna and in the enemy’s rear the squads of A. Romanov, P. Romanov, Zakharov, Gerasimov, Khomchenko, Latvian Regiment on March 21 the enemy covered by 3 Focke-Wulf 190 aircrafts began retreat in the direction of Sebej – Ašvieja,

Kokhanovich. On 22 the enemy cleared the woods to the west of the River Svolna, and in the next few days, cleared the entire Osveys area. The enemy burned all settlements between the Latvian border and the river Svolna, and murdered or deported to Germany all the the remaining residents. [...]

Commander of the Partisan Brigade
Signed (A.V.Romanov)

Commissar of the Partisan Brigade
(Sh.N.Nimagaev)

Chief of Staff of the Partisan Brigade
Signed (V.N.Dormenev)

NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 4, Doc. 31, Sheets 144 – 147
An original.

105. From the history of IV Partisan Brigade named after Stalin in Baranovichi region, on the counter-fight with 18th Latvian Police Battalion near the village Pechische of Ivenets district on August the 9th, 1942

September the 5th, 1944

[...]

4. On August the 9th, 1942 a detachment up to 200 partisans strong under command of Commissar Zhukovets,¹² detachment of commander Smirnov,¹³ and Chief of Staff Gulevich¹⁴ had an encounter in a forest near the village Pechische of Ivenets area.

A death squad of Latvian and Lithuanians (No. 18) in amount of 500 men, arrived in the village Pechische and took to the woods toward the camp.

The detachment knew the enemy's intention, and since the morning of August The 9th, 1942 was in full combat readiness, and sent one company for an ambush in the area of forest warden Lyambovich. At 11 o'clock, reconnaissance crew and a battle outpost of the death squad of up to 50 people ran into our ambush and engaged in a fight. A detachment was set on alert to help the ambush and immediately went into offensive. Lithuanians and Latvians, unable to withstand the onslaught of partisans, fled in the direction of the village Pechische, abandoning their entrenching tools. The partisans pursued the enemy up to 2 km, ran after them and destroying the last on the move.

After the above battle the detachment took some rest, leaving one company in an ambush. At 18 pm the death squad of Lithuanians and Latvians up to 500 men strong with battalion and company mortars resumed the fight, and took an offensive against an ambush. The ambush was unable to absorb the offensive of enemy which outnumbered them by dozens of times, retreated with battle to the second, more advantageous line and held the death squad until the arrival of detachment. The detachment was without sufficient ammunition, and moved back to the camp, setting up an ambush after an ambush on suitable lines. Near the camp the unit

¹² Zhukovets, I.A. Commissar of the 125th Stalin partisan unit of the Stalin brigade.

¹³ Smirnov, S.P. Commander of the 125th Stalin partisan unit of the Stalin brigade.

¹⁴ Gulevich, P.I. Chief of the 125th Stalin partisan unit of the Stalin brigade headquarters.

consolidated its arms, and took up defensive positions benefiting from a good location. Having allowed drunken Latvians and Lithuanians who were advancing with “Hurray” shouts, approach the detachment opened fire from all weapons. The enemy began to retreat with heavy losses. Their retreat became more of a flight. Results of the battle: the enemy attack was defeated, and the unit’s base was preserved. The enemy lost 84¹⁵ German soldiers and officers in casualties only. The unit’s Commissar Captain Zhukovets died a heroic death in battle, adjutant Vasin. 3¹⁶ persons are wounded. The partisans displayed courage and heroism in this fight. [...]

The commander of the Stalin partisan brigade
signature (Gulevich)

The commissioner of the Stalin partisan brigade
signature (Murashov)

The executive officer of the Stalin partisan brigade
signature (Karpov)

NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 4, Doc. 299, Sheet 16
An original

¹⁵ Another document says: “killed-Lithuanianand Lettish soldiers-90 persons” (NARB, F. 1450, Inv. 1, Doc. 245, V. 1, Sheet 508).

¹⁶ Another document says: “Lightly wonded 6 persons” (Idem).

106. Crime sheet against the chastiser Ludwig Hagendorf

Approved by the chief of the counterintelligence directorate
"SMERSH" of the 3rd Baltic front.

Lieutenant General
(Belkin)

October the 21st, 1944

Crime sheet

on investigative case № 224 concerning
Ludwig Ludvigovich HAGENDORF
of crime envisaged by art.1 of the Decree
of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR
dated the 19th of April, 1943
by the counterintelligence.

The "SMERSH" of the 3rd Baltic front,
on October the 13th, 1944
Ludwig Ludvigovich HAGENDORF
was arrested for punitive activity.

The crime investigation stated that:

Serving in the Red Army HAGENDORF during the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from the Baltic states in 1941 deserted from the unit and stayed on the territory temporarily occupied by the Nazi troops in the town of Tsisis.

(S, 14 rev, 15, 19).

In January of 1943 HAGENDORF volunteered in the German punitive organization – the Tsisis district police and then, in February of 1943 was enlisted in the punitive volunteer battalion of Riga attached to the SD where he got a special training.

(S, 9, 17 rev, 23 rev).

In February of 1943 this battalion and the other battalions commanded by the SD headquarters departed for Drissa and Osveya regions

to carry out a punitive expedition against the Byelorussian partisans, to annihilate the Soviet citizens and to destroy the Soviet towns and villages.

From February till April of 1943 the punitive battalions including HAGENDORF burned down and annihilated more than 200 settlements in the indicated areas and atrociously annihilated the innocent Soviet citizens living there including women, old people and children.

As a member of the battalion detachment HAGENDORF personally participated four times in battles against the Soviet partisans, in destruction of 60 settlements and in atrocious annihilation of the innocent Soviet citizens living there by burning and shooting them.

(S, 10, 17 rev, 18, 19, 20, 24)

Having returned from the punitive expeditions HAGENDORF served in the German punitive organization – the Tsis district police until the liberation of Cesis by the Red Army from the invaders. (LD 18).

HAGENDORF pled guilty to the charge, and is exposed by the evidence of the witness Imants Ludwigovich HAGENDORF

(S, 19-20, 22, 23-24).

Based on the above –

HAGENDORF Ludwig Ludwigovich, born in 1895 in the city of Mitau [Jelgava], Latvian SSR, Latvian, citizen of USSR, non-partisan, finished 4 years of primary school, comes from workers family, an officer, former Lieutenant of the Red Army, resided in the town of Cesis.

CHARGES

during withdrawal of the Red Army from the Baltic, deserted from the military unit and remained to live in German-occupied territory. Volunteered to serve in the German reprisal unit that actively participated as a bandit in brutal extermination of Soviet patriots and destruction of towns and villages, i.e. a crime under Clause 1 of the Decree of the USSR Supreme Council Presidium dated 19th of April, 1943.

By virtue of cl. 208 Code of Criminal Procedure of RSFSR, the investigation case on HAGENDORF's charges shall be forwarded to the Military Prosecutor of the 3rd Baltic Front, to bring the accused before the military tribunal.

Composed the 26th of October, 1944 in acting unit of the Army.

HEAD OF THE DIVISION OF THE INVESTIGATION
DEPARTMENT UNDER SPECIAL DEPARTMENT UCR.
"SMERSH" 3rd BALTIC FRONT -MAJOR-[...]

ENDORSED by "SMERSH" 3 BALTIC FRONT –
LIEUTENANT COLONEL -[...]

NOTE: 1. The accused HAGENDORF Ludwig Ludwigovich was arrested on Oct. the 13rd, 1944 and detained in Field prison UCR "SMERSH" of the 3rd Baltic Front

1. There is no material evidence in the case.
2. Documents of the accused HAGENDORF have been entered on file in a separate package.

HEAD OF THE INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT DIVISION
under UCR. "SMERSH" 3rd BALTIC FRONT -MAJOR -[...]

FSB of the Russia, Central Archive, F. 100, Inv. 11, Doc. 1, Sheets 39-40
A certified copy.

**107. Protocol of interrogation of Tālivaldis Ozols,
former Platoon Commander in Sonderkommando Arajs**

December the 9th 1944,

I, Deputy Chief of the Investigations Division of the Counterintelligence Department "SMERSH" of 67 Army, Captain P [...], through interpreter C [...], who has been given a warning as per Cl. 95 of the RSFSR Criminal Code regarding accurate translation from Latvian to Russian and vice versa, have questioned the detainee.

Ozols Tālivaldis Georgievich, born 1916 in Riga, Latvian nationality, comes from a family of workers, non-partisan, a widower, social status – an officer, education – graduated from high school in Riga; according to him has no criminal record. Place of service: Kirov Regional Industrial Works, Draftsman (Riga). Home address: Riga Str. Tallinn, 90, flat 1.

The detainee has been informed on his liability for failure to give truthful testimony, and for giving false testimony under Cl. 92 and Cl. 95 of the RSFSR Criminal Code and advised of the content of these articles.

(T. OZOLS)

Question: – Who are your parents and where they are?

Answer: – My father's name is Georgy OZOLS, lives in Riga, but I don't know his exact location, my mother seems to know where he lives. I have not been living with my father since 1935. My mother is OZOLS Berta, was born in 1886, she is Rigan, and lives together with me in an apartment and depends on me.

Question: – What did your father do before Soviet system in Latvia?

Answer: – Since 1926 till 1928 my father had been serving in Latvian police in Riga as a police officer. At first he served in prefecture and then in the 7th police department. He ceased to serve since 1928 until 1931 when he entered the police service again and continued servicing in the 4th police department as a police-officer before 1940 until Soviet system came in Riga.

Question: – Why did you list yourself as a worker's son?

Answer: – As far as I remember my father used to be a worker in a factory that is why I said that I came from workers' family.

Question: – Where did you live and what have you been doing during temporary occupation of Latvian SSR by German invaders?

Answer: – Since July 3rd till September the 15th 1941 I lived in my home in Riga and didn't serve. On September the 15th 1941 I received a notice from Schutzmann police located in Riga Annas str. saying that the police are inviting me as a Latvian Army officer to come to talk about entering to the police service. I decided to join the police, but I didn't go the Schutzmanns, I came to the 8th police department where I was told that there were no vacant positions for me as an officer. So then I decided to join the Rigan river police, where I entered, but as there had not been any positions suitable for me, I decided to serve as a common policeman. Soon, in about couple of weeks I was promoted to the senior policeman there, servicing in this position between October of 1941 and March 1942, whereafter I rejoined the Latvian SD police headed by major ARAIS. Where I, being an officer, was recruited as troop commander and have been servicing in SD in this position till February 1944.

Question: – Where was Latvian SD police located?

Answer: – At first Latvian SD police located in Riga at the address 19 Voldemarskaya str., then it moved to 99 Baron Krishyan str.

Question: – So, did you volunteer to join the Police?

Answer: – Yes I did, I entered the SD police as a volunteer in Germans times in 1941, served in SB team under major ARAIS as a troop commander holding a rank of lieutenant.

Question: – What did major Arajs's SD team do, where did you serve as an officer and hold a position of a troop commander?

Answer: – Latvian SD police under the command of major Arajs, where I served as a troop commander, were engaged in counter-insurgency and directly assisted to the Germans to establish a fascist regime in Latvia. Our SD police were arresting party and Soviet officials who had failed to leave Latvia during occupation by Germans military forces in 1941. In addition our SD team has arrested antiGermans noncombat population, participated together with Germans in mass execution of political prisoners and finally was engaged in extirpation of Jews. That is mainly our Latvian SD police headed by major Arajs have been engaged in. I missed to add that alongside with counter-insurgency I mentioned before, we kept guard, in particular we were guarding different Germans state institutions including so called Gestapo, guarded Germans camps with Russian soldier, e.g. Salaspils camp, etc. Being a troop commander of machine-gun company of major Arajs SD team, I together with my troop didn't participate in SD's counter-insurgency but kept guard outside these institutions only.

Question: – Do you know Bikerenetsky [Bikernieki] forest in Riga?

Answer: – Yes, I know Bikernetsky forest well, as I was born in Riga and was often in that forest.

Question: – While in the service of the Germans in SD Police, did you ever go into that forest?

Answer: – In April of 1942, that is 1 month after I joined SD squad, Major Arajs, and I with my platoon went a few times to Bikernetsky forest where I served on guard duty.

Question: – Who were you guarding there in the forest?

Answer: – I set up a few posts there under orders of the Germans, when the Germans brought prisoners in the Bikernitsky forest.

Question: – For what purpose did the Germans bring prisoners there?

Answer: – There in the Bikernitsky forest the Germans executed both political prisoners and civilians.

Question: – You have testified above that not only the Germans were executing Soviet people, but so did your SD squad of Major Arajs. Why are you not talking about it?

Answer: – I know of 3 persons from our team who shot civilians in Bikernitsky forest, they are Eglitis Alfred – Corporal, Tobias, his name I do not know, and ARDENS Arnold.

Question: – Do you know GULBIS Roberts Villisovich, a police on your SD squad?

Answer: – I knew GULBIS Roberts Villisovich, he served in SD Police as a policeman, but I do not remember, in which platoon he was.

Question: – Did you meet him in Bikernitsky forest, when civilians were executed there?

Answer: – Yes I did, but I do not know for what purpose Gulbis came there.

Question: – Stop concealing your death squad activities from the investigation! We demand that you take the path of honest confession and speak of your crimes!

Answer: – I will give truthful testimony and tell you all about the crimes I committed, since it would be useless for me to continue during this interrogation hiding the atrocities committed by me against the Soviet people, and I can only aggravate my already difficult situation.

Question: – Tell us about your crimes.

Answer: – I took up the path of vindictive actions against the Soviet people in 1941, shortly after the Germans seized Riga, the capital of the Latvian SSR, and as I testified above, in September of 1941 I voluntary joined the Germans in the Police Service, but before March 1942, my service in the police was limited to guard service, because I joined the SD police under command of Major Arajs in March of 1942. And from that moment on I began executing orders of their superiors, which involved punitive actions against the Soviet people. I will try to tell about the crimes I committed consistently, starting from March 1942 until the last moment of my service in SD police.

In April of 1942, 5 or 6 times I went with my platoon to Bikernitsky forest, where I participated in extermination of civilians, mostly Jews. During April of that same year, during the trips made in Bikernitsky forest by me alone, no less than 7,000 people were shot. The elderly, women, teenagers and

even women with babies were brought for execution. People were taken to execution from Riga prison, as well as from the ghetto, where only Jews were kept. In the early morning I with my platoon went Bikernetsky forest and assigned my policemen to their posts, so that people who were brought by other teams for execution, would not be able to escape.

I also assigned two police especially to calculate how many people were brought for execution to the Bikernetsky forest, and delivered this information to Obersturmführer KRAUSE, who was a high-ranked officer of the German SD Police. In addition, my participation in the massacre of civilians in Bikernetsky forest in April of 1942 consisted in sending my police officer directly to the site of shooting. We dumped the corpses into pits and covered them up with soil, and when people were brought for execution to the Bikernetsky forest, I with my policemen unloaded civilians from the vehicles. The rest of the time in April of 1942, I and my policemen were involved in mass executions of civilians in Bikernetsky forest only twice. And as in April, my involvement in the shootings consisted in what I have mentioned above. During the two times in May when I took part in extermination of Soviet citizens 1,500 people were shot, 300 of them were Soviet citizens brought for execution from the mental hospital. Among them were the elderly, women and small children. During May 1942, except for the two cases when I was involved in the shootings, as I said above, I as the platoon commander ensured security of German SD Police, and kept guard in front of the Gestapo building. In June of 1942, during the first half of the month I continued to guard German public institutions, including the Secret Police, after which I was commissioned as an SD police officer along with my policemen to Minsk to fight the Soviet partisans. I remember that we went hunting the partisans on June the 27th, the 28th and the 29th of 1942, but our raids yielded no results, and we failed to capture any Soviet partisans.

On June the 30th, 1942, my policemen and I dug pits, where civilians were dumped after executions. The location of those

pits was about 2 kilometers uphill outside the town of Slonim. On that day I with my policemen delivered to the execution more than 3000 civilians, all of whom were ethnic Jews, and many women with infants among them.

Question: – Did you shoot infants as well?

Answer: – I carried out the orders of the Germans and infants were executed too.

Question: – Where the infants taken from their mothers before shooting or shot together with the latter?

Answer: – The majority of women were shot with their babies, and then buried underground.

Question: – Were there instances when you buried people who were still alive after the shooting?

Answer: – Yes, such instances were numerous; the Germans ordered us to bury them and so we did.

Question: – Why did you shoot women with babies?

Answer: – I admit that people we killed were absolutely innocent, but by the order of the German authorities people of Jewish nationality were to be exterminated, and I followed the orders of the Germans and I admit this grave crime.

Question: – From where did you take those people for execution?

Answer: – I and my policemen in the quantity, if I am not mistaken, of about 25 people took the Jews from the ghetto in the town of Slonim for execution of those 3,000 people. Yes, I remember that before going to Slonim, I commissioned several policemen – three, I think, to perform the execution, while I myself was delivering those civilians under armed escort to the shootings. I participated in extermination of Jewish population in the town of Slonim only during one day, June the 20th, 1942, and then a Latvian Schutzmann Battalion arrived there for the same purpose, which engaged in extermination of the civilian population during the entire month. But I was relocated to Minsk with my squad.

In July 1942, I with the policemen were first keeping security, and then in the same month participated 4 or 5 times in extermination of civilians; more than 10 000 people were slaughtered. For execution we took people out of Minsk ghetto, they were all Jews brought by the Germans from

abroad, and the last group, which we delivered to the site of the shooting were Jews brought specially by the Germans from Austria. My policemen participated personally in extermination of these civilians.

Question: – Where were those Jews executed?

Answer: – Over 10,000 of those Jews I have already told you about were shot outside the city of Minsk, about 4.5 miles away, on a mountain in the woods. If you go there, I would be able to show you the exact place where we slaughtered the Jewish population. In the city of Minsk, during extermination of the Jews I was reporting at first to Oberleutnant TURKS-KRUMAYS, then he was replaced by Lt. EVERT, who I was an assistant to.

Question: – Were there children among the people you shot?

Answer: – There were teenagers of different ages, including many women with babies in their hands.

Question: – Were the babies shot too?

Answer: – Yes, babies were shot the same as adults, and as I have already indicated above, women with their children were placed at the pre-dug pits and killed with their children.

Question: – Did the people say anything before execution?

Answer: – Men mostly kept silence, and the women were screaming and crying and begged not to shoot them. As for the children, they stood at the pits with their mothers and raised a strong cry, and wept, as they understood they were going to be shot.

Question: – Of those 10,000 citizens you shot, were there any who were dumped into the pit while still alive?

Answer: – Of the total number of people executed by us in Minsk, as I have testified, of more than 10,000 civilians there were also those who remained alive after being shot.

Question: – Were they shot dead?

Answer: – The Germans forbade us to shoot and people were dumped into the pit and buried alive.

Question: – What other atrocities had you committed over peaceful populace?

Answer: – On July 28th, 29th and 30th 1942 I with my troopers cordoned off ghetto in Minsk, other brigades captured all Jews

hiding themselves in cold cellars, basements and in other places and we managed to capture over 5.000 persons within three days. All of them were delivered to the execution place where previous persons were shot. On July 31st 1942, I make reservation here as day possibly was not quite accurately defined, we were replaced by other Latvian chastisers who arrived from Germany after they had taken SD courses where they were trained. I with my troopers left for Baranovichi with two special purpose vehicles where we also exterminated peaceful populace.

Question: – What was the kind of special purpose vehicles?

Answer: – I have to admit that these were the vehicles where people were killed and these vehicles were called "gas chambers".

Question: – Go on with your evidences.

Answer: – Having arrived to Baranovichi I once on August 1st or 2nd, can't remember exactly, took part in peaceful populace extermination with the help of the so-called "gas chambers". The number of the killed citizens exceeded 1.000 persons, but due to the remoteness of the events I cannot remember the exact number of tortured citizens.

Execution of this bloodcurdling act over the civilians was implemented as follows. There were two brigades of us, I and my brigade accepted the arrested who were delivered from the station. We also were located in the country not far from the railway. The arriving people were loaded to the "gas chambers" and were transported to another brigade which was located approximately two kilometers away from us in the forest. When the "gas chamber" staffed with people arrived to the other brigade it was parked there, started operation and gas was released by a special tape which was installed under the vehicle, within, maybe 18 minutes, people inside the car were killed, then the corps were thrown away from the "gas chamber" and the vehicle again returned to our place, where we loaded the next lot of people. I have to say that when peaceful people were delivered to me, the Nazi selected from them experts, builders, tailors and others professionals to commit this wild massacre with them. The people were told that they would allegedly go by cars

to the city where they were going to be used according to their professions; others were told that they are going for agricultural works. Thus the people whom I loaded to the “gas chambers” were sure they would get a job. To one “gas chamber” I loaded 80 person and 60 persons to the other. I have to say that I did not go to the brigade who directly killed the people in “gas chambers”; my part in these acts of atrocity over peaceful populace was in the actions described by me above.

On August 3rd or 4th 1942, I do not remember exactly the day, following instruction of German officers from SD I went to two large Polish cities without “gas chambers” but with my brigade of troopers from SD. I remember that one city was Novgorodok¹⁷, and I do not remember the second. Target of my mission was peaceful populace extermination. Around 600 persons were shot in these Polish cities, besides I was charged personally for these shoots execution and I’d got an order from the Head of Baranovichi SD Untersturmführer Amelung (German).

Question: – Did you execute shooting of peaceful citizens in the same way as the previous ones?

Answer: – No, these 600 citizens were shot in a slightly different way than the former ones. The difference was that if the previous shootings were executed when a person before the shooting was placed at the edge of the pit, in this case pits were dug in a way that there was a passage from one side via this passage people came directly to the bottom of the pit, my troopers stood at the edge of the pit at the surface and shot peaceful people from there. We brought by 8-10 persons to the passage in a time and, as a rule, there was one trooper per one person who was to be shot.

Question: – May be there were some survivals from those 600 persons shot by you?

Answer: – I confess that there were some still alive Soviet people among these 600 who were shot.

Question: – What had you done with them?

¹⁷ It must be Novogrudok. – Editorial.

Answer: – They were not shot in, they were left in the pit and were immediately buried in earth.

Question: – Did you bury them when they were still alive?

Answer: – Yes, that's right and I plead myself guilty in this deed.

Question: – What other atrocities had you committed over Soviet people?

Answer: – After extermination of 600 peaceful citizens in two Polish cities mentioned by me above, on August the 12th-13th of 1942 I with my brigade of troopers got a mission to leave for the Polish city Khanzevichi 53 and to head there the Latvian punitive organ SD and I did so. I stayed in Khanzevichi until November 1942. When I arrived in the city, the Head of the local police of SD (German) offered me to immediately organize for the raid to capture those who escaped from the Ghetto, but as far as I with my troopers participated in shootings and had no any rest, we were provided with a short time rest and I didn't participate in raid to capture people from Ghetto, however I was offered to construct a gibbet which was estimated for hanging of 18 civilians simultaneously, but I would like to explain that neither me, nor my troopers participated in the actions personally, the execution was done by the local German police SD, whereas I with my people were guarding the gibbet. In August 1942 I with my troopers left Khanzevichi¹⁸ for Lenino, approximately 100 km away from Khanzevichi. 500 civilians were exterminated there, mainly Jews. People from the local Gestapo were shot there. German police of SD directly executed the shootings; I with my troopers provided for the people delivery to the shooting place and arranged troopers in chain for guarding before the shootings. The shooting was executed in a field. At the moment of the shooting the pits had already been arranged. These 500 persons were completely undressed before shooting, there were elderly persons, women and small children. After shooting of this part of Soviet people we got a rest and then were sent for raid to capture Soviet partisans, but we failed to capture

¹⁸ It must be Belorussian place Gantsevichi.-Editorial.

any. Soon I with my brigade, with German police SD and with a brigade of Byelorussian Schutzmannschaften went to a Polish city which name I do not remember to shoot civilians there. The city was located approximately 16 km away from Khanzevichi. We arrived in the morning. By the time the local German punitive organs had already shot 300 Soviet civilians thus we had not to shoot civilians there.

Having returned back I participated twice with my SD brigade in operations against Soviet partisans in the area of Khanzevichi but we failed to capture any.

At the beginning of November 1942 I with my SD brigade left by the instruction of the German Command I left for a landed estate where according to the Germans information partisans operated and were going to fire that estate when a troop of German soldiers was there. Having arrived to the estate we combed the forest and a troop of German soldiers was saved. However we failed to capture partisans. In December 1942 I went back to Riga and in spite of my nomination as platoon officer to SD brigade of the major Arajs, thanks to disorder of my right leg I didn't participate in mass shootings of peaceful populace at that time. In November 1943 I'd got a mission to Vydritsa where as a part of the third police squadron SD I was to leave to the front line in the area of the lake Yasno, but I returned back because of my illness and in February 1944 I as a head of escort convoy I transported 350 Soviet women to Germany. Having arrived in Germany in Ravensbrück I delivered all Soviet women to death camp and I with my brigade returned back to Riga and I had not been in service with the punitive organ since then, I quitted and lived at my relatives and acquaintances until the red Army came. This is the criminal activity which I had in the period of my voluntary service in the police SD either in the territory of Latvia or in other cities occupied by the Germans.

Question: – Were you a member of any nationalistic organizations in Latvia?

Answer: – In 1943 in Riga I joined a sport society. I've been member to no other organizations.

Answers to the questions were recorded from my words correctly and interrogation protocol was read to me in the Latvian language understandable by me via translator and I endorse the same:

(T. OZOLS)

Translator [...]

Interrogated by:

Deputy of the Investigation Department Head "SMERSH" of the 67th
Army captain [...]

TRUE: [...]

FSB of Russia, Central Archive F. 100, Inv. 11, Doc. 13, Sheets. 1-9
A copy.

108. Interrogation Protocol of former SD officer Albert Konrads

From December the 25th, 1944

A copy

Question: – What missions were you charged with after graduation of Firstenberg school of SD in Germany?

Answer: – I graduated from the Firstenberg school of SD at the end of June 1942. After the graduation act we were summoned by the School Head TRUMLER. He informed us that we had to realize practically in the security service the training that we had got in the school. Then he instructed us about nature of our future work. On July 3rd of the same year I left Firstenberg for Riga together with the Latvians who graduated from the school.

On having arrived to Riga I was informed that I was nominated to Minsk for special missions' execution of the SD police command. I arrived in Minsk at the end of July 1942 with a group of SD officers which amounted to 120 persons under leadership of SD lieutenant OZOLS at the disposal of the Byelorussia security police head, lieutenant colonel STRAUCH. I stayed in Minsk until September 1943 and executed missions of SD related to the punitive activities in Byelorussia.

Question: – Give us detailed testimonies on your punitive activities in Byelorussia.

Answer: – On the second day after my arrival to Minsk I was sent to Ghetto to deliver Jews to the execution place located 15 km from the city along Smolenskoe highway. At that period the Germans executed wholesale slaughter of the Jews. Among the Jews there were a lot of people brought from Germany and temporarily located in Minsk Ghetto.

I personally was attached to two Germans from the SD police, sergeants SCHMIEDEL and GENERTS. They both were from Germany, storm-troopers, member of the National and Socialist Party of Germany. I executed "actions" related to Ghetto with these storm-troopers. We took Jews from apartments, delivered them on total families to a square in Ghetto and then

transported them by trucks to the execution place in the forest. We shot them in mass quantities. I remember the cases when we found feeble old men or completely sick people in the apartments. We shot them in place directly in their beds. Other members of families including women, children and elderly persons were delivered to the square loaded them onto trucks by force and sent to the forest for shooting.

On the way we beat people which were carried for shooting. I personally clubbed them and SCHMIEDEL and GENERTS whipped them.

My participation in the massacre of the Jews in Minsk lasted for more than a month. Then there was a break in my "work". Around November 1942 Jews from France, Romania, Poland, Germany, Austria and other States of Europe started to arrive in Minsk. They were brought by whole trains. There were women, children and elderly persons among them. Only professionals and craftsmen were transported from the trains to the Ghetto. Other Jews were uploaded onto trucks by force and were transported to the said forest for shooting.

By the time the Germans delivered a special gas chamber to the place of execution which was an ordinary truck with metal body. People locked in the truck were killed by exhaust gas, the truck was not moving at the engine was running at idle speed. I personally participated in Jews' loading from the trains onto trucks and convoyed them to the gas chamber location and forced them inside the chamber. Many of them refused to enter the chamber and we forced them inside. I clubbed them and the Germans whipped them. Having filled the gas chamber with 50-60 persons among which there were women, children and elderly persons were hermetically sealed the door and started the engine. Exhaust gasses penetrated inside the chamber body and people inside died within 10-15 minutes. We threw off their corps into trenches prepared in advance with the help of a special group formed from the arrested persons. Trenches filled with corps were earthed and the arrested persons attracted for the job were shot.

This massacre of Jews lasted around two months until severe frosts came.

I also participated in mass shooting of Soviet people of various nationalities in spring and summer 1943. In spring 1943 when partisans killed a Gestapo officer and in summer when regional commissar of Byelorussia KUGE was killed. In both cases we shot several hundreds persons arrested, mainly, for the anti-German activity, partisans and Jews from Ghetto.

Question: – What other punitive activity had you executed in Minsk?

Answer: – In 1942-1943 I was sent to punitive missions against partisans in between massacres of the Jews in Minsk. For such mission I went to Slutsk, Lugaïsk and other settlements which names I do not remember. Besides I participated in “actions” related to the Jews murder from Slutsk Ghetto. I delivered the Jews from their apartments to the local square I had done in Minsk, uploaded them onto trucks by which they were delivered to place of mass shooting. Under my active participation several thousands Jews were killed in Slutsk. Then Slutsk Ghetto was fired by us.

I also participated several times in combat operations against partisans and from their side there were killed and wounded persons.

Question: – What intelligence and counterintelligence missions had you executed in Minsk?

Answer: – I had no intelligence and counterintelligence missions for SD. I cannot speak Russian which is necessary for such missions.

Question: – Did you participate in robberies and embezzlement of valuables owned by your victims?

Answer: – Yes I participated. I robbed property of the Jews when I delivered them for execution. I took suits, money, gold, watches and other valuables which then sold and guzzled away the gain.

Question: – Name active participants of punitive missions against partisans and persons participating in mass extermination of Jews in Byelorussia.

Answer: – On December the 22nd-23rd of this year I gave 64 names of active castigators in Byelorussia who had been trained in the SD school together with me in Germany. Besides I remember the following names of active castigators operating in the territory of Byelorussia:

– YANSON, lives in Riga, Latvian, the USSR Nationality, 35 years old, above average stature, slim, face is oblongish, fair hair. He used to serve as a senior lieutenant in Army under bourgeois Government in Latvia. He had been sent to Minsk before I was sent. He was active in the struggle against partisans as an intelligence officer. He penetrated into a partisan regiment following SD instruction before my arrival and stayed there for four months. SD command managed to implement several successful captures of partisans based on his information. At the beginning of 1943 YANSON was arrested as he raped one German woman and was imprisoned in Riga. He was released soon, and worked in the General Staff SD in Riga as a translator from German. Later he was again arrested on a similar case and worked as a translator in Riga Central Prison. At the end of September 1944 he was disenrolled to the Latvian legion SS as communications officer. I have not met him any more.

– IKNERS, lives in Riga, 25 years old, Latvian, USSR National, a student of Agricultural or Judicial Faculty of The Latvian University.

His description: middle height, slim, oval shaped face, black hair.

He had been sent to Minsk before I was sent. He worked as a translator from German in the 4th political department of SD in Minsk. Participated in the punitive missions against partisans. He returned to Riga in summer 1943 and worked as a translator in then General Staff of SD in Riga. For the last time I saw him in July 1944.

– EIKHE, lives in Riga, Latvian, the USSR Nationality, 26 years old, middle height, slim, face is oblongish, black hair, wears spectacles. He had been sent to Minsk before I was sent. Worked as a translator in the 4th political department of SD. For the active punitive activity against partisans he was awarded with "Cross of Iron". Later he was charged with a special mission in special group aimed for the struggle against guerilla movement in Byelorussia which was a part of the 4th de-

partment of SD. In May 1944 I saw him traveling by suburban train in the direction of Kemerī.

Vladimir IVANOVSKY, lives in Riga, 24 years old, Russian, USSR National, lived in 159 Svoboda str. (information is not accurate).

His description: tall, slim, face is oblongish, fair hair. He worked as a translator in Minsk, was active in arrest of persons suspected by the Germans in contacts with partisans. He returned to Riga in autumn 1943 and was enrolled into SD guard squadron. For the last time I saw him at the end of July 1944 In Riga.

Question: – What were you doing in Riga after your arrival from Minsk?

Answer: – Having returned to Riga in September 1943 I completed missions related to the guarding and watchman service of SD facilities located in Remer Street No. 5 and issued passes for visitors. In February 1944 I was sent to Sujumuiju in 20 km away from Riga where I took part in drill ceremony. By instruction of SD I several times participated in forests combing in Zemgala region of Yaunelgavsky district where guerrilla movement was well developed.

In June I returned to Riga where continued to work in guarding and watchman service and implemented patrol duty in the city. I was in special reserve of a troop which acted in the event of necessity in emergency. I several times left for the Moskovsky outer settlement of the city where arrests of people evacuated from the USSR were implemented. The arrested were delivered to the General Staff of SD. In September 1944 I was moved to the Latvian legion SS. I stayed in the city during our backtrack from Riga in October.

Question: – What missions did you have from SD when you stayed in Riga after the Germans desertion?

Answer: – I had no missions from SD for the case of the Germans escape from Riga.

Question: – All through the investigation you are trying to limit your activity in SD organs by participation in punitive missions. However, you had been trained in SD special school where

you were trained in intelligence and counterintelligence operations. Give detailed testimonies about this activity to the investigation.

Answer: – That’s right, I graduated from the intelligence SD school in 1942 in Germany where I was trained in intelligence and counterintelligence activity against the Soviet Union. However, my authorities used me exclusively as a chastiser.

I have to acknowledge that if I were charged with intelligence or counterintelligence mission either in the territory of the Soviet Union occupied by the Germans or inside the Soviet Union I would not have refused from the missions and would have done whatever I could for their active realization.

Question: – The investigation considers your answer to be an attempt to conceal your espionage activities against the USSR as well as your contacts related thereto. We demand true testimonies.

Answer: – I repeat I had not been involved into espionage activities.

Interrogation protocol was read to me aloud by the investigator in translation into Latvian, recorded from my words correctly and I endorse the same.

N. KONRADS

INTERROGATED BY: HEAD OF THE INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT MD NKGB RIGA AREA

Senior lieutenant of the State Security [...]

REFERENCE NOTE: The protocol original is kept in [...]

TRUE: SENIOR DETECTOR OF THE 2ND DIVISION OF THE 4TH DEPARTMENT MGB LATVIAN USSR Captain [...]

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv. 11, Doc. 13, Sheets 10-14
A copy.*

109. From the interrogation protocol of I. Ruis on Jews murder in Minsk

April the 30th, 1945

Ruis Joseph, born 1894 in Prbets, Tsaim region(Austria), Austrian, peasant origin,
Served in criminal police,
Education: 10 classes
Lives in Vienna, 4th region,
6-12 Nellegasse street.

The interrogation was implemented under assistance of a translator from German Sviderskaya whi was notified about responsibility for inaccurate translation.

Signature: (Sviderskaya)

Question: – From what had you been working in police?

Answer: – I joined criminal police in 1919.

Question: – What position did you occupy?

Answer: – Inspector on burglary and larceny investigations.

Question: – Where did you work?

Answer: – Until 1942 I worked in Vienna, starting from may 1942 I was nominated for work in the occupied regions of the Soviet Union.

Question: – Who nominated you for work in the occupied regions of the Soviet Union?

Answer: – On May 6th-7th 1942 I with 10 other officers of Vienna criminal police was summoned to the Government Director of the criminal police of Vienna Standartenführer Kanhest, [...]

Question: – What other work had you completed for the police?

Answer: – Once I had to participate in operations related to the Jews extermination.

Question: – Give us the details.

Answer: – Extermination of the Jewish populace was entrusted to the 4-B Department, a part of Gestapo but due to the mass nature of the act several persons from all police departments were at-

tracted to help the 4-B department as it consisted of not more than 20 officers. I personally had to participate in the Jews extermination once. It was around in the evening of July 1st 1942. I and six other officers of our department were ordered to arrive for a briefing provided by one of the officers from the 4-B Department in the building of the police. When we arrived we found there 30-35 police officers. Besides there were 40 Latvians who served in SS troops voluntarily. We were addressed by the Head of the 4-B Department Obersturmführer, senior lieutenant Litkengus, I do not know his name. He explained to us that we were to participate in pits' guarding and of access roads to same where the Jews would be earthed. Around 10 we arrived to the pits which had already been dug I do not know by whom. I and my people were instructed to take posts near the pits located in the forest from the right side from the highway leading via Minsk to Smolensk. The pits were located approximately in 2-3 km away from Minsk. I and persons who were with me were ordered not to allow any outsider to the pits. Soon after our dislocation two big covered trucks arrived. They were very big. Their bodies were of cubic form. As soon as these trucks arrived to the pits, their rear doors were opened and dead Jews started to fall out from the trucks. There were around 60-70 persons in each truck, there were women, men and children.

[...]

Answer: – From talks with the officers of the 4-B Department, with Karl Buhner, in particular, I got to know that 5-6 thousand of Jews were exterminated during my staying in Minsk.

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv.1, Doc. 66, Sheets 307-321
An original.*

110. Interrogation protocol of the former officer of 19th and 321st Latvian police battalion Alfred Vitinysh

The city of Riga, Latvian SSR, December the 15th, 1945

I, an officer of the operations group of NKVD NKGB of the Soviet Union, captain [...] today interrogated the following person as a witness:

Alfred Yanovich VITINYSH, born in 1896, in Latvian Republic, Tukumsky district, literate, non-party, married, USSR nationality, clear record, used to be a captain of Latvian army, in the period of the german occupation lived in the territory of Latvian SSR and from February 1942 was forced to join German army to general service department under police battalion SS as the battalion head for general service. Lived in Riga, 42-19 Mirnaya Street, Latvian by nationality.

A. VITINYSH [signature]

Was notified about responsibility for giving false testimony according to Article 95 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR.

A. VITINYSH [signature]

Question: – In what language would you give testimonies?

Answer: – I, VITINYSH will give the testimony in Russian.

Question: – Did you serve in German army in the period of Latvian SSR territory occupation?

Answer: – Yes, I Alfred VITINYSH had to sincerely declare that in the period of Latvia occupation by Germans I was forced to join the German guarding police battalion SS No. 19 where I acted as the head of the general service department starting from

February 1942 until December 1944.

Question: – To whom from the upper German command was the 19th police battalion SS subordinated?

Answer: – Before I tell the investigation about subordination and command of the police battalion by the upper German authorities I have to inform, as a former officer of the German army about initial foundation of the battalion, on the missions and actions of the same in the occupied Soviet territories.

I, as a former officer of the 19th battalion of the German army knew from personal orders issued by the Supreme command of SS and police for the Eastern and Northern lands of Russia general JECKELN on the creation of police battalions of SS, punitive squadrons and missions which initially had the task to establish the so-called "order" in the Soviet regions zones occupied by the Germans.

As far as I remember first orders of the general JECKELN were issued in November 1941. I cannot recollect number of the orders now but they were received one by one downward to battalions, troops and groups.

In the result of orders issued by the general JECKELN police punitive battalions of SS were created and JECKELN put the following tasks for the battalions:

a) Extermination of the Jews in Baltic area and in other Soviet regions occupied by the Germans;

b) Mass extermination of the peaceful Soviet populace which stayed in the Soviet territories occupied by the Germans;

c) Extermination of Russian war prisoners by creation of unbearable conditions for the same in concentration camps;

d). Mass forced use of the delivered peaceful populace from Soviet areas occupied by the Germans for the construction of defense lines and facilities.

e) Destruction of peaceful villages and settlements in the Soviet regions occupied by the Germans;

- f) Mortification of psychiatric patients of hospitals and clinics;
- g) Removal to Germany of industrial enterprises, robbery of peaceful populace in cities or villages.

I have to repeat that respective orders were issued on all of foregoing items by the General JECKELN as the Supreme Command of SS and police for the Eastern and Northern lands of Russia and they were implemented by his subordinated officers.

To certify the above I will try to give specific facts of the general JECKELN implementation.

At the end 1942 according to the general JECKELN order Ghetto covering the streets Vitebskaya, Latgalskaya– Evreiskaya, Latsas, Gornaya, Dvinskaya, Moskvkaya in Riga was disintegrated. .

The Ghetto was quite free before his order, however after JECKELN order the regime there was quite tough. Ghetto guarding was imposed on punitive battalions of SS on No. 19 in particular.

There were some cases when castigators started to shoot the Jews without any grounds and killed the same.

Such event happened in December 1942 when policemen from battalion No. 19 under command of captain MICHELSON shot 180 men, women and children directly in the buildings. The cases of shooting directly in Ghetto happened almost every day. Such Jews extermination was encouraged by the German command as the Germans did not take the Jews as people.

Gradual extermination of the Jews collected in Ghetto on the above mentioned address continued almost every day in 1942, 1943-44, every day 10-15 persons were shot.

Besides the so-called “minor” extermination of the Jews, as the Germans called it, large actions of the Jewish population in Riga were organized.

Thus in the camp “Ghetto” which I have mentioned above from 80.000 persons collected there more than 45.000 persons were shot in 1943.

Shooting of the said number of the Jewish population was executed in the forest Rumbul located in 15 km away from Riga behind the factor "red Guadrata" and in the forest Bikernieki located along Lubanovsky highway 10-12 km away from Riga.

I do not remember the date of the Jewish population execution, but it happened around December 1942 and in spring 1943.

The remained Jewish population was also gradually exterminated and there were 3.000 persons in the Ghetto by the end of 1943 from the total number of 80.000.

Question: – Who directly participated in the acts against the Jewish population?

Answer: – As far as I know shootings of the Jewish population were executed by special commands SD and Gestapo created by the order of JECKELN, these commands executed mass shootings of the Jewish population and had punitive missions aimed at the extermination of Soviet partisans.

Punitive role of police battalions No 18 and 19 which were created in Riga shall not be diminished as well. They also robbed and shot population of Jewish Ghetto as I have mentioned before, but did not participate in mass operations.

Question: – Characterize police battalions of SS created by the order of JECKELN.

Answer: – As far as I know personally two police battalions SS were created in Riga by the order of JECKELN No. 18 and 19. These battalions were formed from rabid enemies of the Soviet power, participants of terror organization "Perkonk-rust", military fascist organization "Aizsargi", declassified elements, former bandits, thieves, recidivists, etc, mainly they were volunteers which were provided with the right by the German command to rob, kill, rape women and they bore no responsibility for their crimes. Thus for example, Policemen of the 19th battalion when "guarding" the Ghetto could freely enter premises of the Jewish population, beat the people, robbed, killed and raped. This was happening in 1942-43 and I saw this personally. It was useless to complaint about such dissoluteness and outrage if anyone complained such person was killed later. I do not know names of shot Jews.

I also know that mass shootings of the Jewish population were executed in Dvinsk, Sabel of Talsinsky district, in Kuldiga of Latvian SSR but I do not know what number of people was shot and where.

Question: – Tell us what do you know about mass extermination by Germans of peaceful populace in occupied territories.

Answer: – Being on the march with my battalion No 321 I personally saw German acts of atrocity and mass extermination of the Russian peaceful populace, destruction entire movable and immovable property. The following will serve as definite facts:

When the battalion passed the route from Drissa to Sebezh I personally saw how entire several hundred villages and settlements of peaceful populace were destructed completely. This burning took place in 1943-44. As far as I know settlement were burned out with the population, with men, women and children, part of the population was overtaken to Germany for work. Around 350 settlements forming the strip of 50 km in width and of 150 km in length were destructed in the places that I had passed. I will not be able to name these settlements, as I do not know the area, but mainly the fires were located along the River Svolna and in its area. I remember the village Motorino, there used to be 50 houses and it was burned to the ground.

Question: – Who is the specific originator of peaceful villages destruction and of the population in such extent?

Answer: – The specific originator of peaceful villages and population extermination between Drissa and Sebezh is the Supreme Head of the SS police general JECKELN on whose order the police punitive battalions No 15, 16, 18 were created as well as the battalion under command of the captain of German army MEZGRAVIS¹⁹ after formation they were sent for punitive missions by general JECKELN. The above battalions executed acts mentioned by me, viz.: burning of 350 villages, they also burned over 8.000-10.000 of peaceful people of the villages, mainly children and elderly persons. I had a talk with captain

¹⁹ Commander of the 321st Lettish police battalion. – Editorial.

MEZGRAVIS nearby Drissa and told that there is no place to stay for a night, everything is destroyed and burned and the captain MEZGRAVIS responded:

"Yes, it was me to complete this "job", I implemented order of general JECKELN who ordered to destroy everything Russian in our way, I burned over 200 villages and settlements, we also burned elderly persons and children as we had not time to deal with them, there are 10 thousand of them maybe more, can't remember. I've got "Cross of Iron" for that. I burned them and did it in 1943 and now on the way back we have no place to stay in fir a rest".

In conclusion of our talk and discussion MEZGRAVIS added:

"Our battalions and troops had done not a bad job, the Russians will remember the Baltic for a long time. They shall not be taken mercy on, they shall be exterminated entirely, orders of JECKELN are the orders of the Fuhrer and we shall protect their interests".

In the same talk that we had had at the end of May 1944, MEZGRAVIS also informed me that over 20 thousand of healthy labor force formed from peaceful people of Sebez and Drissa regions as well as from other regions were departed by the order of JECKELN for forced works in Germany, those who did not want to go were either shot or burned in fire.

Question: – Where is captain MEZGRAVIS now?

Answer: – Can't say, it seems to me that he was captured by the Red Army under Trono, he is possibly in camps now.

Question: – Give us a more detailed characteristics of MEZGRAVIS.

Answer: – MEZGRAVIS is in the rank of captain, was awarded with the "Cross of Iron", Latvian by Nationality, was born in Latvia, tall, stout, coarse features, last time he served in the 1st police regiment under command of the lieutenant colonel MEYA and was heading 3rd punitive police battalion, 38-39 years old.

Question: – What can you say about other battalions and troops acting by order of JECKELN?

Answer: – As I have indicated above I know that police and SS battalions No 15, 16 and 17 participated in punitive missions as well as special terror groups "HUNTERS" or as they were called

“YAHTCOMMAND” by the German command YAHT-COMMAND were specially involved in shootings of peaceful populace and were subordinated to SD police.

I can not say how many JECKELN's commands were sent down to Drissu and Sebezh to carry out coups.

But they were not involved in actions there and I do not know the exact numbers of these commands.

Question: – What do you know about atrocities committed by the Germans against the Red Army war prisoners?

Answer: – I, VITINSH, know that in the city of Riga and outside there were several camps for the Red Army war prisoners: These camps were used for mass tortures, executions and exterminations of the war prisoners by back-breaking work and starvation.

Also, I personally know that in 1942-43 up to 15000 prisoners were kept in the camp for the Red Army war prisoners located in Riga, Pernavas Street (former quarters of the 5th Latvian regiment), every day up to 25-30 people were taken away due to tortures, back-breaking work and starvation.

Personally in my eyes (since my house was located right in front of the camp) the SD guard commands almost every day shot the Prisoners who could not move and beat them, they loaded half-dead people onto the trucks to take them outside the city. This happened in December-January 1942-43.

Also, I could observe that the war prisoners were not given any food and they roamed around the camp, grubbed in the cesspits, peeled bark off the trees, picked up the leaves and ate this stuff. Such unbearable conditions were set up at this camp, as it seemed that by order of General JECKELN the SD police had taken such measures that led to mass killing of the Red Army war prisoners.

According to my own calculations and observations, 1600 men were tortured to death only in December 1942 and January 1943.

Certainly, the German command and personally General JECKELN and his subordinates were aware of the conditions the Russian war prisoners were kept in, but no measures to improve the situation were taken.

The Red Army war prisoners were forced to carry out heavy works such as: unloading of military equipment and materials at the railway stations, building of highways, repair and refurbishment of railway tracks and construction of military reinforcements around Riga.

I am also aware that the concentration camps for the Russian war prisoners were in Salaspilse about 18-20 kilometers away from the city of Riga, where the war prisoners were kept in similar conditions, however I can not give the certain facts.

I heard that the Red Army war prisoners had eaten all bark off the trees in Salaspilse.

Question: – What do you know about killing of the mental hospital patients?

Answer: – In October 1942, near my house on Avgustinskaya 21 street I incidentally met a girl, who was looking for a room, during our talk she told me that when she had been treated at the mental hospital in Riga after which she was released as a quite healthy person she witnessed (in summer of 1942) that more than 250 heavily sick people were killed. This slaughter was committed by the SD police in the city of Riga by poisoning and adding powerful toxic substances to their tea or coffee. This killing of the metal hospital patients sparked off great condemnation and disapproval among the population of Riga.

Question: – What do you know about the equipment that was moved out of the industrial enterprises to Germany (by order) according to General JECKELN's orders.

Answer: – I know that the following factories were moved out of Riga by General JECKELN's orders:
"VEF" factory with all equipment and workforce was moved out to Germany.

Railway carriage plant with all equipment, workforce and engineers and technicians was moved out as well.

Being on the territory of Latvian SSR during German occupation I personally witnessed how the Germans blew up and destroyed all dairy plants located in Kurzema. This happened in 1944. I personally know that the Germans destroyed about 15 such dairy plants despite that fact that they in no way were military facilities.

Moreover, I was an eyewitness how all large and small cattle were taken away from the population living in Kurland to be sent away and processed in Germany.

The Germans took away several thousand heads of cattle, however I can not give the exact number.

Record of evidence on the basis of my words has been written down correctly, I have read the text personally and it has been read for me twice.

A.VITINSH (signature)

Interrogated by:

O/groupe of NKVD-NKGB official

USSR-Captaine[...]

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F N-18313, V. 2, Sheets 119-206
An original.*

**111. Special message on completed investigatory case for
the group of punishers from the detached unit under
command of the German Army Major Arajs coordinated by SD**

NKO

COUNTERINTELLIGENCE SERVICE "SMERSH"
OF THE 3RD BALTIC FRONT LINE.

March the 10th, 1945

№ 4/1727

Top secret

TO THE HEAD OF COUNTERINTELLIGENCE
HEADQUARTERS "SMERSH" –
STATE SECURITY COMMISSIONER
OF THE 2ND RANK

com. ABAKUMOV

In January – February 1945 the Counterintelligence Service "SMERSH" of the 3rd Baltic Front Line detained the group of officers of the punitive detached unit under so called "Latvian security police – SD" headed by the German Army Major ARAJS:

Mirvald Andreevich LAVINISH,
Alexander Albertovich VANAGS,
Peter Ivanovich STANKEVICH,
Imants Teodorovich GAILIS,
Visvaldis Gerbertovich GRINTZEVICH,
Peter Frantzovich BUTLERS,
Khariton Теодорович LOCKMANIS,
Vladislav Stanislavovich BALALAIKA,
Zigfrid Ivanovich VICKELIS

The carried out case investigation has revealed that:

since the first days of occupation of the Latvian SSR capital by the fascist troops the German punitive forces started killing the Soviet Union citizens in great numbers. At the beginning of July 1941 the concentration camp and ghettos were set up, which were the places for blood purging of the innocent soviet citizens.

Over three year's realization of such a fascist punitive policy, the German aggressors and their supporters among the anti-soviet elements only in the district of Riga killed more than 300 hundred thousand Soviet people.

Especially for making arrests and executions the occupation authorities set up a punitive detached unit under so called Latvian security police "SD", this detached unit was under command of the German Army Major ARAJS, who was well known of his cruelty in bloodpurging the soviet citizens:

The ARAJS's detached unit created on the voluntary basis amounted up to 3000 men. This detached unit was divided into squadrons and carried out the following punitive actions:

- Arresting of the anti-fascist activists all over the territory of the Latvian SSR;
- Mass executions of the soviet citizens;
- Punitive raids against the partisans;
- Guarding of the concentration camps and ghettos.

ARAJS's detached unit was also the base for formation of the enemy's counterintelligence forces.

Most of the persons who served in this detached unit had been sent to the Furstenberg SD school (Germany). After completion of this school they carried out the punitive actions as the official SD officers.

The officers of ARAJS's detached unit were first outfitted in the uniform of the former Latvian Army and wore an armband displaying the

skull and cross-bones and inscriptions of the security police, then they wore the German uniform of the SS troops.

Practically the punitive activities of the accused persons under the present case were as follows:

Accused LAVINISH being hostile to the Soviet authorities, in the first days of German occupation of RIGA voluntarily joined the ARAJS's detached unit under command of SD.

Being a member of this detached unit LAVINISH directly participated in atrocities committed by the German-fascist invaders against the peaceful soviet citizens.

From July to December 1941 on a regular basis LAVINISH jointly with other punishers executed the Jewish population including women and children and old people in the Bickernieksky forest of Riga as well as he specially moved out for executions to the city of Libava, Talei borough and to the station Tzarnikovo [Tzarnikava]. He took part in shooting of more than 10 thousand people.

Moreover, LAVINISH made arrests of the Soviet citizens in Riga during these arrests he was involved in robberies.

Accused VANAGS being hostile to the Soviet authorities, after German occupation of RIGA in July 1941, at the moment of ARAJS's detached unit formation under command of SD voluntarily joined it and directly participated in atrocities committed by the German-fascist invaders against the peaceful soviet citizens.

Being a member of this detached unit on a regular basis VANAGS participated in mass executions of the soviet citizens in the Bickernieksky forest near Riga Specially as a member of ARAJS's he moved out to the city of Libava, where he made arrests and then for two days he was shooting the arrested soviet citizens.

For his participations in executions VAGNAS used to be awarded with valuables taken way from the executed people.

As the investigation revealed LAVINISH and VAGNAS jointly with other punishers executed [...] 6 500 soviet citizens in the Bickernieksky forest near Riga.

In July 1941 accused STANKEVICH being the head of a paramilitary aerodrome construction in the city of [...] betrayed his Motherland – de-

served his post and crossed the front line to join the enemy. He arrived in Riga occupied by the German troops at that: and in August of the same year he voluntarily joined the river police.

Being a police officer, STANKEVICH jointly with the punishers of ARAJS's detached unit under command of SD for two times – from November the 30th to December the 7th, 1941 participated in mass executions of the soviet citizens in the Rumbulsky forest, where, as it was revealed by the investigation, 38 thousand people were executed over the occupation period.

While conveying the prisoners to the places of execution STANKEVICH robbed them.

In February 1942 being hostile to the Soviet authorities GAILIS voluntarily joined the ARAJS's detached unit under command of SD.

As a member of this detached unit GAILIS moved out to take part in the punitive actions against the soviet partisans to the towns of Veliky Lucki, Baranovich, Slutsk, Vileiki and Minsk, during these raids he participated in 3 combats against the partisans, he was shooting at them with his rifle, as result there were casualties among the partisans.

Moreover, GAILIS served as a guard of the Salaspilsky concentration camp with the soviet citizens imprisoned in it.

Being in the city of Riga, after it was freed by the Red Army troops, GAILIS disguised his acts of crime and managed to get a position in the Milisia.

In July 1942 while living on the occupied territory in the city of Valmiera accused GRINTZEVICH voluntarily joined the ARAJS's detached unit under command of SD and completed a 3 month course at the Furstenberg counterintelligence SD school.

Having completed the school as a member of the second squadron of the ARAJS's detached unit the accused person served as a guard at the Salaspilsky concentration camp and conveyed the imprisoned soviet citizens to perform hard works.

From March to April 1943 GRINTZEVICH participated in the punitive raids against the partisans in the area of Osveya borough, during these raids he took part in combats of the partisans.

From July to August 1943 GRINTZEVICH jointly with other punishers participated in detention of 45 families being in touch with the partisans at the Audrini settlement of Ilkutsky district and conveyed them

to the Salaspilsky concentration camp. Moreover, he also participated in man-hunts and ambushes set for the partisans, the result of this work with his participation was capture of the three partisans.

In November and December 1943 GRINTZEVICH participated in the combats against the Red Army at the Nevelsky section of the Soviet-German front line, where he was wounded.

Up to September 1944, the accused person served in the SS troops and stayed at the front line.

Staying on the territory freed by the Red Army he changed his birth year from 1924 to 1927 to disguise his acts of crime.

In 1941 having joined the anti-revolution military – fascist organization "Aitzsargi" and then the police of Korsovsky region accused BALALAIKA served as a guard of different military sites of the German Army as well as of the ghettos for the Jews who were then arrested.

In February 1942, BALALAIKA joined the ARAJS's detached unit under command of SD, completed the Furstenberg counterintelligence SD school.

Moreover, in March 1943 for one and a half month BALALAIKA participated in the punitive raids against the partisans in the district of Osveya borough and in November – December 1943 he took part in combats with the Red Army troops at the Nevelsky section of the Soviet-German front line.

In February 1942 having joined voluntarily the ARAJS's punitive detached unit under command of SD, accused BUTLERS completed the Furstenberg counterintelligence SD school.

After completion of the school he was enlisted as an official officer of the Valmiersky SD department.

Being a SD officer BUTLERS was in charge of a search card index for the communists, soviet activists and other anti-fascist people.

Moreover, the accused person convoyed the prisoners to perform hard works and served as a guard at the Salaspilsky concentration camp.

When living in the city of Riga accused LOCKMANIS was called on for interrogation to the police where he squealed on 2 soviet activists.

In April 1942 LOCKMANIS joined voluntarily the police battalion where he served as a guard then he was sent to be trained at the Branden-

burg regiment of the Germany Army which prepared staff for acts of sabotage and terrorism in the rear area of the Red Army.

In May 1942 having joined voluntarily the ARAJS's punitive detached unit under command of SD, LOCKMANIS served as a guard of the Salaspilsky concentration camp and of the Jewish ghetto in the Umprova's estate [Umpravmuizha].

As a result of unbearable conditions and mass executions introduced by the camp administration and guards, 101 100 soviet citizens were killed there over the occupation period.

Moreover, from March and August 1943 accused LOCKMANIS served in the SS legion.

In July 1942 while living on the territory occupied by the Germans accused VICKELIS voluntarily joined the ARAJS's detached unit under command of SD, where he served as a guard of the Germany Army's military sites, then he was sent to be trained at the Furstenberg counterintelligence SD school, he finished the school in November 1942.

Moreover, in November 1943 VICKELIS served at so called Latvian SS legion After Riga was freed by the Red Army troops VICKELIS disguised his acts of crime and managed to join the Komsomol and worked as a school Komsomol leader till his arrest.

All accused persons completely pleaded guilty for committed crimes.

The case is completed and submitted to the Military Tribunal.

I will inform on the results of court examination additionally.

HEAD OF COUNTERINTELLIGENCE
SERVICE "SMERSH" OF THE 3RD BALTIC FRONT
LINE- LIEUTENANT GENERAL
(BELKIN)

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv. 11, Doc. 1, Sheets 219-224
An authenticated copy.*

112. Abstract of Indriks Kruminy's interrogation record

August the 9th, 1945

Indriks Martinovich KRUMINY born in
1921, native and resident of Riga.

Question: – What documents did you get after completion of the school and where were you sent to work?

Answer: – After completion of the school I did not receive any documents. On July the 10th, 1942 along with other persons in number of 120 men from the Furstenberg SD school I arrived in Riga and came to the ARAJS's headquarters at that time located on Krishyan Baron 99 street, where I received and ID confirming that I serve in the SD regiment.

This ID was signed by the head of Latvian SD –doctor Lange After 10 days of rest some of those, who finished the SD school, were sent to work at the SD departments and the others went to serve in the 5th squadron. I also was enrolled in this squadron that was headed by lieutenant Karlis OZOLS and On July the 20th, 1942 I moved out to the city of Minsk to take part in the punitive raids against the partisans on the territory of Belorussia.

Question: – Tell us about the punitive actions carried out by your squadron?

Answer: – On July the 24th, 1942 we arrived in Minsk and for the first two days we were accepting the camp located 20 kilometers away from Minsk, this camp imprisoned the Jews from Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Romania and other countries. On July the 26th-the 27th, 1942 I took part in extirpation being confined in the Minsk ghetto.

Question: – Will you tell us about this in detail?

Answer: – On July the 26th or the 27th, 1942, about 4 o'clock in the morning we drove up to the Minsk ghetto located within the city. Apart from our squadron under command of lieutenant OZOLS there were a SD squadron under command of lieu-

tenant SCAMBERG and about 50 Germans – SD officers. The ghetto territory was divided into two parts, each of which was enclosed with barbed wire. There was a road in the middle. We came to one of the ghetto part with an area of about 4 sq. km, some people were put to guard the ghetto the others started to get all the population out of their houses including women, children and old people to the market square located inside the ghetto.

We pushed the people assembled in groups into the motor vehicles – “gas chambers”, there were about 5 such gas chambers, I personally took part in getting the people out of their houses and pushed the Jews into the gas chamber motor vehicles. Having been loaded the gas chamber motor vehicles drove to the forest and came back for the new groups of the people without a break.

There was a big panic going on in the ghetto, the Jews were being shot dead and robbed just for fun. There was a case when a group of the Germans attached a grenade onto the back of one Jew and ran away and the Jew was burst to pieces. The shot people were also thrown into the “gas chambers”.

On this day the operation lasted till the sunset and about 10 thousand soviet citizens were killed.

The killed people were taken 20 km away from Minks to the forest where they were thrown into previously dug out pits 2 meters deep, 2 meters wide and 30 meters long.

On the second day the operation continued. Moreover, almost all the Jews in this part of the ghetto were killed and taken away by noon, only the specialists and their families were spared. After that, we moved to the second part of the ghetto located nearby right across the road and started doing what we had done before.

On the same day about 10 thousand were also killed in the gas chambers.

On the second day like on the first day I participated in getting out the people of their rooms and helped push them into the gas chamber motor vehicles.

By the evening the operation was halted, however about 2/3 of the population were still alive.

Question: – Where were the killed people taken to?

Answer: – The killed soviet citizens loaded into the gas chamber motor vehicles were taken to the forest 20-30 away from Minsk. I personally was at that place later after the operation in a day or two. At that time I within the group of punishers of about 30 men was taking the prisoners of Minsk jail to dig up the pits. By that time based on my calculations there were about 20 dug pits with the slain and shot people. The prisoners, who I guarded, dug out 4 more big pits that were intended for the killed people.

Question: – Did robberies take place in the Minsk ghetto during these punitive actions and in what way did you participate in them?

Answer: – Yes, robberies were taking place when the people were forced out of their flats. I personally took watches and gold rings, gold coins, later I sold out these things and spent the money with the friends on alcohol.

Question: – Tell us about other similar operations?

Answer: – Apart from the case I described above I also know about four operations carried out with my direct involvement when the soviet citizens were killed in the gas chambers.

At the beginning of August, 1942 a German officer was killed in the district of summer Red Army barracks in the outskirts of Minsk. By order of the SD head in Belorussia (I do not remember his surname) a part of lieutenant OZOLS's squadron and the SD officers –Germans went to this district and surrounded the area. About 500 people were detained, they were taken to prison, where they were undressed and loaded into the gas chambers, after that the dead bodies were taken to the pits prepared in the forest. The reason they were taken to prison was to hide their killing in the gas chambers. I personally participated in arrests and getting them into the trucks to drive to prison.

Later the SD officers, who had convoyed the arrested people to prison, told me about the fact that they had been killed in the gas chambers, I do not remember the names of these officers.

For the second time, at the end of August, 1942 I participated in arrests of a thousand residents of Minsk somewhere in the

district of streetcar depot. This also was done as revenge of a German officer's murder. The people were killed in the same way as for the first time in other words the arrested people were taken to prison where they got undressed and then pushed into the gas chambers to be taken to the forest.

At the end of September, 1942 I and other 30 punishers under command of a German captain, whose surname I don not remember either, from the area of Baranovichi where we were operating against the partisans, were called back to Minsk to rest for three days. During this time I and other 20 men along with a representative of the commandant's office went to the Minsk ghetto, where, according to the report weapons were being stored in one of the houses. In the basement we discovered 2 or 3 Russian rifles. There was a hospital or an orphan asylum in the house with the basement because there were many children. We put all the residents of this house including the kids, who were hiding in the basement, into the gas chamber, where they were stifled by gas. The people killed in the gas chamber were taken to the forest.

On July 1943 I returned to Minsk from Riga, where I was on vocation and soon I within a group of 30 men out of whom I remember MICHELSON, ZELDIS, DUBROV-SKIS under command of a German staff sergeant went out to a village, which name I do not remember either, where according to the reports the partisans were hiding. We went their on one or two trucks, though I do not remember exactly, in addition there were one car driven by OZOLIN and one "gas chamber" vehicle. Having arrived at the village that was located about 50-60 km away from Minks we searched for the partisans though we did not find any. We asked the village warden -where the partisans were. He said that they do not inform him where they go. Then the village warden was arrested and by indication of an agent, I do not know his surname, we also arrested six partisans' families, all these people were put into the gas chamber vehicle. At that time a pregnant woman, who was just about time to give a birth to a baby came out and asked for help. In pretence, that

we were going to take her to the hospital this woman was also put into the gas chamber.

All these soviet citizens were gassed to death in a similar way. After that we went to the forest to dig the killed people in the available pits.

I do not know any other cases when the soviet people were killed with the use gas chamber vehicles, due to the fact that I personally did not participate in such action any more.

Question: – Tell us how is the gas chamber vehicle set up?

Answer: – Gas chamber vehicle is a German cargo truck with a closed cargo body. The internal walls and ceilings are coated with galvanized steel sheets, the double leaf doors are galvanized with rubber gaskets in the slots preventing inflow of fresh air. A pierced tube of 1-1.5 inch in diameter is laid inside the body, when necessary this tube is connected with the outside tube. Above the pierced tubes there is a covering made of wood strips which prevents closing of the tubes when people are being loaded. 60-100 people can be loaded into the body, in this case all of them had to stand. After that the door is closed and the internal tube is connected to the outside one and the engine gets started. Gas coming from the engine through the pipe is used for killing the people. If the outside tube is not connected to the internal one this gas chamber vehicle can be used as an ordinary cargo truck.

Question: – You mentioned above that with the punitive detached unit you went to Belorussia to carry out the punitive raids against the partisans. How did you personally participate in these operations?

Answer: – On the last days of August, 1942 I with other punishers of our detached unit under command of lieutenant OZOLS went to the area of Rudnya settlement located 70 km away from Minsk, where we jointly with the 18th police battalion and the German SS detached unit were raiding against the partisans for two weeks. As far as I remember only the 18th police battalion was engaged in combats with the partisans. Personally, I was not engaged in combats with the partisans.

From Rudnya we returned to Minsk, in a couple of days from there we left for the area between Baranovichi and Slutsk to carry out the punitive actions against the partisans, there we stayed on till the end of September and or beginning of October, 1942. I can not name the residential settlements where we stopped at since I do not remember their names.

While staying in this area we continuously were raiding the forests and regularly clashed with the partisans.

The first one of these raids was carried out the punitive detached unit beyond the channel Telekhani, where the partisans' base was located according to the reports, I did not take part in this operation because I went to Baranovochi to get petroleum.

Soon after this event I within a group of 9 men under command of a German captain, I do not know his surname, was sent to establish communication with the German SS detached unit. Moreover, according to the information submitted by some man we knew that the partisans were hiding in a forest barrack. Having come to this barrack we searched it but found no partisans and then blew it up.

Having met the German SS detached unit we set off to the dislocation point searching the mowers' huts on the way. In one of these huts we found cartridge rounds after that we set fire to all of them.

In some time I with other punishers of our platoon and several SS soldiers were sent to one of the farms to arrest the partisans' families. The farm consisted of 4 houses. When we surrounded it and started searching it we could not find any inhabitants apparently they ran into the forest. In one of the houses we found cartridge rounds and triton after that we burnt down all the houses and on the way back we were shooting at the straw stacks located at the forest border, as a result they were also burnt down.

The following large scale operation against the partisans was carried out at the end of September, 1942 near one of the villages located not far from the village Bul, where our headquar-

ters were based at that time. Our detached unit and SD unit took part in this operation. The pointed village was surrounded, however we could not find any partisans there. After that all the village inhabitants were rounded up on the square and one of the punishers who knew the Russian language said that the inhabitants would give up the partisans' families. As a result 3 or 4 partisans' families were identified, whom we put into [...]20 [...] Corporal TZCIRULIS. In connection with this we went back in a group of two platoons to that district where we found the corpse of killed corporal TZCIRULIS however there were no partisans there at that time.

At the end of November and beginning of December, 1942, I with the SD platoon and the 18th police battalion, gendarme battalion and other German punitive units went to the area of Puzichinsky forest, where according to the reports the partisans' camp with man force of up to two thousand men was located. We surrounded this forest, when doing so the patrols of the 18th battalion detained a partisan who was brought for integration to Major ERTZUMS. Being a SD officer I was present at this interrogation. They managed to get information from the partisan as a result he was badly tortured during this intoragation. First he was beaten, then the gun powder was rubbed into his hair and fire was set to it, after that a star was burnt out on his chest and then he was hung. The LUSIS brothers were taking active part in these tortures.

Question: – How did you act as the SD representative and how were you involved in tortures of the partisan?

Answer: – Activities of the police battalion were controlled by the SD, that is why the commander of SD platoon– lieutenant OZOLS took me with him and we were present at the partisan's interrogation as the SD representatives. Personally I did not take part in torturing of the partisan and was just an eyewitness of these atrocities.

Question: – Continue with evidence.

Answer: – In the morning we began searching the forest as a result we

²⁰ Sheet № 6 is lost. – Editorial.

found out that all the partisans stealthily got through the surrounding circle leaving only their cattle behind them.

Approximately on December the 20th the biggest punitive operation started off in the Slutsky forest, from our side approximately a division was taking part. The operation continued till the middle of January 1943. During clashes with the partisans the both sides encountered losses it should be noted that there were many cold casualties.

As far as I remember three partisans were caught at the battle line where I was however I do not know the number of killed people.

Upon completion of this operation we went for the same purpose to the Pinsky swamps. During this punitive operation at the Pinsky swamps the partisans fight back hard and as a result the Germans had to apply air force. About 400 partisans were captured upon completion of the battles. Our SD platoon and one squadron of the 18th police battalion were assigned to convey these partisans to the city of Baranovichi. We brought the partisans by railway to Baranovichi handed them over to the camp guards and returned to Khazanovichi settlement.

In March, 1943 our SD platoon under command of newly appointed commander – lieutenant TURBIS went to Minsk to the headquarters of OZOLS's squadron where I stayed till September, 1943.

Question: – Tell us if the residential settlements were burnt during these punitive operations against the partisans?

Answer: – Yes, as far as I remember three residential settlements were burnt down near Slutsk including one settlement that was burnt by our platoon jointly with the police battalion.

Question: – Did you personally take part in these burnings?

Answer: – Yes, I did. I set fire to three houses, however there were no people during elimination of these villages as all the people ran into the forests.

Question: – What did you do when you were staying in Minsk?

Answer: – Upon arrival in Minsk I was sent to guard the SS working

camp located in the outskirts of Minsk where the political, war prisoners as well as the Jews were kept. My responsibility was to guard the camp and sometimes I convoyed the prisoners to carry out different works.

Question: – Tell us about tortures of the soviet citizens and how were you involved in them?

Answer: – There were about two thousand prisoners at the camp who were badly tortured in different ways, especially the camp warden— a German (I do not remember his surname) distinguished himself in this atrocities. The prisoners were regularly beaten and baited with dogs. For example almost every day and especially on Saturdays the camp warden lined up all the prisoners and then ordered them to get back to the barracks for 3-5 minutes. The doors were narrow and 2 thousand prisoners could not get into it within this time. Then two dogs were released and set on those prisoners who could not get into the barrack. There were cases when the dogs bit some prisoners to half-death.

Quite often the camp warden being drunk shot through the barrack window if the prisoners were talking.

All the camp service men convoying the prisoners to work had rubber sticks to beat the prisoners who sabotaged at work.

Personally I beat only one Jewish prisoner with a stick because he was trying to talk the other prisoners into escape during work, this information was leaked to me by a gypsy man whose surname I do not remember. there were no other cases when I beat the prisoners.

Question: – Till what time did you work as a guard of this camp?

Answer: – I worked as a guard at this camp till June 1943 after I went to see my relatives on holydays in Riga. I came back to Minsk on July 1943, since then I worked as a guard till September 1943. In addition, upon return to Minsk in July I participated in killing of the partisans' families in the gas chamber vehicles, I told about this in detail above.

In September 1945 our whole detached unit under command of lieutenant OZOLS was called back to Riga.

Question: – In connection with what was your detached unit called back?

Answer: – At this period there was an order of the Latvian SD head LANGE on return of the punitive units back to Riga.

Upon arrival in Riga we settled in the headquarters building of Major ARAJS's on Krishiyan Baron 99 Street. After that I guarded a military garage on Lapchesh Street up to January 1944 and then I guarded the political prisoners working at the cement factory.

In March 1944 I was sent with the 5th squadron of the 4th SD battalion to the military service at the estate Suzhu-Muizha in Allazhskaya region.

Question: – What kind of training did you have there?

Answer: – At the estate Suzhu-Muizha passed military training such as: march drilling, weapon material part and training shootings. In the same month within the 5th squadron I convoyed the imprisoned soviet citizens from the central prison to Lille (France) Mainly detained soviet partisans and парашютистов. We transported the prisoners by a train consisting of 20 rail cars.

Having handed over the prisoners to the camp of TODT organization where they had to work at the construction of defense facilities, in two days we went to Paris for sightseeing. In April 1944 we came back to the estate Suzhu-Muizha where we continued our military training till the end of May 1944.

During this time I took part in capturing the military absentees in the forest of Smardovsky region as a result of these operations we arrested 3 persons At the end of May 1944 being a member of the platoon under command of lieutenant KALINOVSKY I was sent to the city of Libava [Liepau] to serve at the SD department.

Question: – What did your service at the SD include in Libava?

Answer: – While working at the SD in Libava (Tomas 19 street) I served as a guard of the SD building, prison, released and sometimes personally convoyed the arrested persons to interrogations. Moreover, jointly with the SD officers I arrested the soviet citizens. About 15 people were arrested with my involvement in Basu region. Also, I convoyed the arrested soviet citizens from Vindava [Ventspilsa] to Libava prison twice.

Question: – Approximately On October the 15th, 1944 I moved to Germany.

Question: – Why did you go to Germany?

Answer: – In connection with advance of the Red Army a lot of SD officers came to Libava at that time. With my squadron I went on a steamship to Gotenhafen and from there by train to Danzig (Gdansk) on the way we also convoyed a group of arrested soviet citizens who we left at the Danzig camp. From Danzig we arrived in Konitz (Polish corridor) from there in a week our squadron was included in the 15th SS division that was located near Sofenzald, I was enrolled in the 12th squadron of the 4th battalion of the 32nd regiment and where I was trained till January the 7th, 1945.

Question: – Where were you sent to after January the 17th?

Answer: – On January the 21th, 1945 I within a group of two thousand men on a steamship came to Libava to be enrolled in the 19th SS division.

INTERROGATORS: HEAD OF 4TH DEPARTMENT
OF COUNTERINTELLIGENCE SERVICE “SMERSH”
OF THE BALTIC MILITARY COMMAND
Lieutenant Colonel -[...]

SENIOR INVESTIGATOR
OF COUNTERINTELLIGENCE SERVICE “SMERSH”
OF THE BALTIC MILITARY COMMAND
captain -[...]

CORRECT: OFFICER OF 3 DEPARTMENT
OF MAIN COUNTERINTELLIGENCE SERVICE “SMERSH” [...]

Interrogation report is in CV [...]

Note: The original is in the investigatory case, archive No.0441669.

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv.11, Doc.13, Sheets 15-24
An authenticated copy.*

**113. Interrogation report of highly ranked employee of the civil occupation administration of “General Latvian district”
Arnold Khartmanis**

Arnold Adolfovich KHARTMANIS, born in 1905, native of Penkusky district of Elgavsky region of Latvian SSR, 6/II, Latvian, citizen of USSR, higher education, economist, 25/VI-45, convicted Under article 58-4 of CC of RSFSR for 10 years, currently under arrest.

Dated December the 24th, 1945

Warned for giving false evidence as per Article 95 of the Criminal Code of RSFSR.

Question: – Where did you live during German occupation on the territory of Latvian SSR?

Answer: – During the whole period of Germany occupation of the territory of Latvian SSR I permanently lived in Riga.

Question: – What did you do during the period of German occupation?

Answer: – Since the beginning of occupation I worked as the deputy head and later as the head of Latvian economic administration. Over last half year prior to expulsion of the German invaders I held the position of trade and industry director at the Latvian General Economic Administration.

Question: – Who is responsible for the facts of the German atrocities described by you?

Answer: – The General officers of the German SS forces and police namely General STALECKER and lieutenant general obergruppenfuhrer ECKELN are responsible for the facts of atrocities committed against the soviet people.

Question: – When did ECKELN become the head of police in the Baltic republics?

Answer: – Approximately since 1942.

Question: – What do you know about JECKELN's activities?

Answer: – In order to better understand the importance of JECKELN's activities as the chief of the German police I want to stop at the structure of the German police authorities.

The German police is divided into 4 subdivisions:

- 1) Civil order police,
- 2) Criminal police,
- 3) Gestapo (secret state police),
- 4) SD (security service).

Doctor LANGE and his deputy KIRSTE were the heads of Gestapo and SD in Latvia. I do not know the surnames of the heads in charge of civil order and criminal police. JECKELN was the head of the 4 police subdivisions not only in Latvia but also in Lithuania, Estonia and Belorussia.

JECKELN was also in charge of all operations associated with killing of peaceful people and partisan formations in these republics.

Question: – Continue giving your evidences on JECKELN's hostile activities against the Soviet Union.

Answer: – Apart from his responsibility as the head of police authorities JECKELN was also the head of Military command comprising SS and Ostland forces. All mobilization orders were issued by JECKELN. He also was responsible for prosecution of Latvians who avoided and deserted from the German Army.

As it is known the 15th and 19th SS divisions created by JECKELN from the Latvians were actively fighting against The Red Army.

The German SS forces formed from the Latvians performed the double functions: The SS police involved in the punitive police activities and so called SS military staff located and operating in the territory Ostland reported to JECKELN

I also know that JECKELN directly was involved in operation against the soviet partisans near the Osweisky lake.

Question: – Tell us about this in detail?

Answer: – At the end of 1942 and at the beginning of 1943 during conversation with a well known betrayer colonel WEIS, the latter told the following in the presence of director of the General

administration – ZAGERS (general director in charge of economy in Latvia):

At the end of 1942 the Germans with the help of German and Ukrainian police battalions as well as with involvement of well known ARAJS's punitive detached unit carried out large-scale operations against the soviet partisans near the Osweisky lake and in Belorussia. WEIS took part himself in this operation and was in command of the Latvian police battalion. JECK-ELN and general Shreder were the supreme commanders in this operation.

During above mentioned conversation colonel VEIS told me and ZAGERS that during the battles his battalion directly took part in the combats with the partisans.

Major ARAJS's punitive detached unit and German SS forces applied repressions against the soviet civil population living near the Osweisky lake, in this case WEIS told the horrible atrocities committed against the peaceful, innocent people, they were burnt alive, some of the people were taken to the Salaspilsky concentration camp. The husbands were separated from their wives then all of them were sent to Germany to work as slaves, the children were taken away from the parents and part of them were distributed among the population of Latvia, however the children were such in bad state that most of them died of various diseases.

This was about all I remember from WEIS's story.

[...]

Correctly written down from my words , read by me in understandable Russian language, for what I undersign. (Hartmanis)

Interrogation was held from 10 to 17 hours and from 20 to 24 hours.

Interrogated: Commander
of investigative department NKGB of Latvian SSR – major[...]

FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F N-18313, V. 2, Sheets 327-334
An original document.

114. Autographic evidence of the accused Ansis Damburs

Copy.

Translation from Latvian.

I, DAMBUR Ansis, was born on September, 4 1923 in Slempeš usedba (farmstead) of Ternejas volost (district), Valmieru apriņķis (county). There was also a sister RUTA, who was born on 3rd of November, 1929.

My father – Yanis from Estonia, worked in Maysakulas at railway sawmill.

My mother – Martha – was ill with lungs tuberculosis and died in 1932.

After mother's death I moved for Latvian Ternejas volost, "Peltes" usedba to my grandmother. The same year I started to attend school. I went to basic school of Ternejas volost. At school I studied on grandmother's money. Since I was ten, I grazed cattle during the summer. Being a shepherd, I could help my grandmother financially. After graduating from Pendinsky 4-year school, I changed for Ruensky 6 -year school, which I graduated from in spring 1939. In 1939 I entered a craft school, mechanical department, in Valka. Grandmother helped me and I earned money at railway unloading and loading the goods. When I studied in Valskaya craft school, farther gave me money for books.

When Latvia joined the Soviet Union in 1940, I continued my education in craft school in Valka. I wasn't a member of any organization, either before or during the Soviet system.

After the the Red Army step-back in 1941 I continued to study in the last 3rd form of craft school in Valka. During German occupation grandmother's financial standing became worse, she earned only for herself. I earned only several marks, and sometimes even a mark per evening, with those money I continued to study, but it was very difficult. I didn't get help from my farther anymore. He, being a soviet activist, as I found out later, and a party candidate since 1941, was in concentration camp in Pernova [Pyarnu]. Because of a financial position and a political convictions (since childhood I grew up among people – big owners

and their supporters who have imparted in me the hatred to the Soviet power and communism) and also for all the school time I was brought up in anti-communistic spirit which became stronger after May the 15th, 1934.

On March the 12th, 1942 I voluntarily took service with “SD” security police.

In several days we went by train from Riga to German city, Firstenberg, to security police school. We arrived to Firstenberg on March, 24 and stayed there till July the 8th. Teachers of that school were officers of German police. They taught us German policemen duties and criminal capture. We got acquainted with German court, with racial theory and Jewish Problem in Europe. Also we learned Hitlerite political system and its purpose, and received drilling and shooting skills.

After graduating from the school, on 8th of July we arrived to Riga, Kr. Baron street, 99. Here we were formed into one company and separate commands and sent to “SD” security service in different Latvian regions. Our company was sent to Minsk, under “SD” responsibility as a guard company.

We arrived to Minsk on July the 23rd 1942 and stayed there till September the 24th 1943. Here we performed guard service within German “SD” in Minsk “SD” residence which was about 12 km from the city. We were located in working “SS” (paramilitary forces in Germany), where we guarded about a hundred of Jews, and also participated in Russian partisan capture in Byelorussian woods. We carried out security service at mass shootings and suffocation of people, guarded the places of actions from possible attacks from the outside.

During killing of people each soldier could take active part in crimes. Nobody was ordered to shoot.

I can remember the following soldiers who participated in crimes in Minsk:

MARKOV Voldemar – lived in Riga, 22 years old.

ZITARS Zhanis – from Riga, 45 years old.

KONRADs Albert – from Ventsplis, 23 years old.

GRIMZE Theodore, I don't know where he lived, about 30 years old.

SAUKITENS Albert – from Yelgavsko uezd, 37 years old.

PURINYSH Vasilij – from Gulbene.

PURINYSH was an especial sadist, he jumped into the pit and by means of bayonet broke golden teeth out of arrested people's mouths.

According to the other people's words I know the following soldiers who participated in shooting in other places: RAYBACIS, MURNIEKS, KYUZE, VEY-HERTS, KITSE, CIELENS. All these soldiers were the members of the 3rd security police battalion, I don't remember the company.

Besides PURINYSH there was also BAUSKIS, who lived in Ekabpils or Krustpils, he was about 32 years old. He also plundered killed people.

On September the 24th 1943 we returned to Riga from Minsk and settled on Kr. Baron street, 99. Here our company was disbanded. I was assigned to guard platoon of "SD" and was sent to Riga cement plant, where I guarded the arrested, who worked at factory. We stayed there from October 1943 till 1944. On 1.11.1944, I was in 4th training company in "Cu-zhi" in Riga uezd. Our training lasted 15 days, we were taught soldiery, shooting and learned different samples of German and Russian guns; after training we had a 15 day vacation and spent it at my grandmother in Ternejas volost. I returned to "Suzhi" on 1st of June, 1944, which I left, together with soldier

RUNDANTS Vilgelm, for "SD" service in Abrensk uezd. At nights we were on duty at the telephone, and during the daytime registered the arrested.

In Abren I stayed till June the 17th, 1944, when German army started to step back, I returned to Riga in battalion on Kalnu street. Here I performed a guarding service and was a member of battle group, which was responsible for keeping down the revolts of political prisoners in different

Riga camps and suburbs during air attacks, and also for capturing thieves and criminals.

I was in Riga, on Kalnu str. till September the 20th 1944, then I left for Kurlyandia Gramzdas of Libavskiy volost, where I guarded "SD" property and documents which were evacuated from Riga. In Gramzda we stayed till the 5th of October, then one group left for Saldus to guard the arrested. We left Saldus on October the 12th and went to Libava. When we learnt that all Latvian involved in "SD" would be sent to Germany, I deserted from "SD" the same day and entered "SS-Yagdferband", where my desertion was incorporate. The second day "SS-Yagdferband" command left Libava for Kuldigsky uezd Kabelskaya volost. Here SS-Yagdferband settled in Grauzdini, Gildarty, Dravas usadbas, I was in Yan-kovy, Ozoly, Vytolinyp, Rizvenieky, Liepiny and other usadbas in Kabelskaya volost.

"SS-Yagdferband" commander was German major PEHOV, but from April 1943 he was replaced by Boris Yankov. "SS-Yagdferband" purpose was to burst bridges, railways, communications, storehouses with military materials in the area of the Red Army, to attack enemy bands and to spy. There were about 200 people in "SS-Yagdferband", besides each volost of Kurlyandia had about 15-20 people organizations. "SS-Yagdferband" was controlled by capitan YANKOV Boris, he was about 35 years old, of medium height, lived in Riga, was radiotelegraphist at trade steamship. His deputy senior lieutenant SILARAYS, was high, slim, lived in Riga, he was shot by a group of soldiers in 1944 on December the 24th or the 25th in Dantsig.

[...]

On May the 9th, 1945 our platoon was in Kuldigsky uezd Kuldigskaya volost in "Leklini" farm. Here, after capitulation, we had an order from YANKAVS – to keep the guns, not to capitulate, to enter forest at full munitions and wait for the further instructions.

[...]

13. V. 1946.

A. DOMBURS.

Translated the interpreter: investigative department

NOTE: The copy of autographic evidence is in investigative case file № 295.

CORRECT: SENIOR AUTHORIZED OPERATIONS OFFICER
OF 2ND DEPARTMENT OF 4TH SUBDIVISION MNS
(Ministry of national security) of LATVIAN SSR – captain [...]

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv.11, Sheets 25-26
A copy. Translation from Latvian.*

**115. An extract from the protocol of interrogation of
“Arajs command” member Rodion Zasters**

Interrogation started on March the 4th, 1947 at 10 hours 10 minutes.

Interrogation ended on March, the 4th, 1947 at 16 hours 20 minutes.

I, investigation supervisor of 2nd investigative department, MNS of Latvian SSR, lieutenant [...] interrogated the accused

ZASTERS Rodion Avgustovich,
Born in 1923, in Riga – Yauntsiems,
with no fixed abode, non-party, Latvian,
USSR citizen, with primary education,
a driver by profession, without special
occupation, single, from workers bound to
military service from 1941 till 1945, lived on
the occupied by Germans territory, no record
of conviction.

Signature of the accused Zasters Rodion Avgustovic

Translator [...] is warned about section 95 of penal code.

Question: – Give your background before the Great Patriotic war of Soviet Union with fascist Germany.

Answer: – I was born in 1923 in a family of workers in Riga in outskirts of Yauntsiems. My father ZASTERS Avgust worked as labourer at different places, died in 193 [unlegible]. My mother ZASTERS Olga was a housewife. In 1938 I graduated elementary 6-year school in Yauntsiems, and started to work in Yauntsiems sawing and paper factory “Milmanis” as a worker, where I worked till the beginning of the Great Patriotic war.

Question: – How and when you entered major Arays’s command within “SD” German police?

Answer: – After leaving “Self-defence” I started working on factory “Malmanis” and worked there till February 1942. At that time the youth was gathered to be sent to Germany for passing a la-

bour service in the so-called "Arbeitsdienst" organization (work service). In order to avoid passing a labour service I, Zasters, learnt in advance that the people were gathered to auxiliary "SD" police in Riga and in February 1942 I addressed to the place of the police residence on Voldemars street, 19; I wished to enter on service voluntarily. I was accepted, passed at the same place medical commission, and was enlisted in one of "SD" security police companies as unranked soldier.

Question: – Tell about the structural division of a major Arajs command.

Answer: – I do not know the details of structural division of Arajs command.

In general, Arajs's command consisted of battalions, companies and groups.

Question: – Tell to the inquest about the practical activities in major command.

Answer: – In February, 1942 having entered a voluntary punitive group of "Arajs command", after approximately 5 days, I was sent to Furstenberg, Germany to "SD" security police school. There were 300 people besides me.

I went to this school during March, April, May and June in 1942, after graduation I was sent to the disposal of security police in Riga, where I was till August 1942 and as a member of "SD" company was sent to Minsk (BSSR).

In two-three days after my arrival to Minsk our detached unit started to perform mass killing of Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality, who were driven to "Ghetto".

We destroyed Jews by special machines "gas chamber" vehicles, in which a group of people was put and poisoned with gas. During five days we killed in such a way more than 3000 people of different ages. I personally participated as a guard and was in 150 meters from that death machine to prevent the escape of anybody, who were brought to that place.

I did it for the first two days, the rest of the days I was in 17 km from Minsk where "gas chamber vehicles" brought gased peo-

ple to the ditch, where I served as a guard to prevent the access of strangers to this territory.

Approximately in a week I took part in shooting of 500 soviet citizens of Jewish nationality again; the shooting was in the same area where gased with machines "gas chamber vehicles" people were earthed; during this shooting I was in guard of shooting place with initial task; then I took part in fight against Byelorussian Soviet partisans in Pinsky swamps area, where I took part in fights directly, which caused killed and injured partisans and captives, who were passed to commandants office.

In Minsk, besides the above –mentioned, I guarded local commandants office of security police. In December 1942 our "SD" detached unit was recalled to Riga, joined in "Arajs command" battalion and guarded place of residence of "SD" police supervisory personnel on Ausekl street till March; then we were sent to guard service in concentration camp located in Riga suburb "Salaspils" to guard Soviet political prisoners. In the beginning of April 1943 I was sent to Pskov area within "SD" detached unit, where I took part in big operations against the Soviet partisans for several times till June; and during one of such operations our platoon captured three Soviet partisans, all in all our company captured five partisans, who were passed to German commandants office and I'm not aware of their destiny. In Pskov area and in Byelorussia, settlements were burnt away, but our company wasn't engaged in it and I don't know who did it.

In June after my return to Riga from Pskov, in a week approximately, our detached unit, including me was sent to occupied by Germans territory of Latvian SSR to Shtyaune area, bordering with Byelorussian SSR, where till August 1943 we guarded the frontier region in order to prevent the sally of Soviet partisans to Latvian SSR territory; there killed, injured and captured partisans at that fights.

In August 1943 our detached unit, located in Shtyaune, was redeployed by railway to Nevel area to front line in view of the breakthrough of German defensive line by the Red Army

commands. I was on front line till December 1943. Break-through of German defensive line was bogged down by additional subdivisions, after that a new defensive line was occupied. In December 1943 I was sent from forefront in Nevel area to Riga, where I was treated in hospital because of the injury of little finger which happened during the building of dug-out bunker.

I was in hospital till the beginning of March 1944, after that I was on vacation, then I was sent to the 15th "SS" division, where I received military drilling in Zushu-muizha place till August 1944; after that we were sent to Poland in Zofenwald area, where I took part in fights against the attacking commands of the Red Army in Flat place till February 1945, when I was captured by the Red Army.

Question: – What drillings did you get in school of "SD" security police in Firstenberg?

Answer: – During four months, when I was in school of "SD" security police in Firstenberg, me, ZASTERS, among the rest members of "Arajs command" studied the structures of German police authorities, criminal case, and secret police service.

Lessons of racial theory and German history were taught to us in that school. I received drilling and studied material equipment of a gun (rifle, machinegun, mortar, submachine gun and pistol). Ultimately, in Firstenberg security police school we, the participants of "Arajs command", were prepared for assignment into "SD" special parties, concerning the fights with partisans on occupied by Germans territory; and as a consequence that happened. After graduating a Firstenberg school I, within a separate detached unit, after spending some time in Riga was sent to Minsk; I executed punitive actions, as I have already said to the inquest.

Question: – It isn't the truth, you studied sabotage-terroristic affair in Firstenberg school, why do you conceal it?

Answer: – I don't conceal. I tell the truth. In "SD" security police school in Firstenberg I was prepared to forthcoming punitive forces;

simultaneously at the end of my study in school, lectures on secret police service, on structure of German police authorities were read to us, no sabotage-terroristic affair was taught.

Question: – List the names of those, who studied with you in “SD” security police in Firstenberg.

Answer: – I know the following people, who studied in “SD” security police school in Firstenberg:

1) LOUSIS Harald, I don't know where he is from and in what area he lives in. He joined in Arajs command in 1942, he was sent to Firstenberg school together with me and studied there during March, April, May, June – till July, then LOUSIS stayed in Riga on duty of intelligence police. Later on, LOUSIS was together with me in one detached unit of Arajs command in occupied by the Germans territories of Pskov region and on the Latvian border in Shtyaune area, where punitive actions against Soviet partisans were held.

His appearance: about 25 years old, tall, of solid constitution, dark haired. I don't know where he is.

2) LAPINYSH, I don't know the name, about 40 years old, he was a commander of a group in the rank of corporal in “SD” security police I didn't see him after graduation and don't know where he is.

3) TSAUNE Yanis, about 20 years old, I don't know where he is from and what he did after graduation, I didn't see him.

4) PUTNS Artur or Arvid, I don't know where he is from, he is about 21 year old. After graduation the school in Firstenberg together with me, he left to Minsk, where participated in Jew holocaust and in fights against Soviet partisans. I don't know where he is and what he does.

5) KULE Arture, I don't know where he is from, he is about 20 year old. After graduation the school in Firstenberg, he

left to Minsk, where participated in Jew holocaust and in fights against Soviet partisans. I don't know where he is now.

6) YURYURIS Yuris, lives in Riga, Yauntsiems region, about 42 years old ; after graduation the school in Firstenberg, he left to Minsk, where participated in Jew holocaust and in fight against Soviet partisans; he was killed there.

7) MARKOVS Oskare, I don't know where he is from, he is about 28 year old. After graduation the school in Firstenberg, he left to Minsk, where participated in Jew holocaust and in fights against Soviet partisans. In 1944 I saw him in Zushu Muizha area, where he received military training; I don't know what happened to him and where he is now.

8) LINDE George, I don't know where he is from, he is about 24 year old. After graduation "SD" school in Firstenberg, he left to Minsk, where participated in Jew holocaust and in fights against Soviet partisans. In 1944 he received military training in Zushu Muizha area; I don't know where he is now.

9) STRAZDS Arnolds, He is from Libava, about 28 years old; he was a commander of a group in rank of corporal. After graduation the school in Firstenberg, he left to Minsk, where participated in Jew holocaust and in fights against Soviet partisans. I don't know what he does and where he is now.

10) GRUNSHTEINS Arvids, I don't know where he is from, he is about 28 year old. He was a colour sergeant in Firstenberg school. He left in Pskov and Shtyaune regions, where participated in the fight against Soviet partisans, guarded the concentration camp "Salaspils", located in Riga suburbs. In last period of German occupation he carried out a military service in 15th "SS" legion division and participated in fights against the Red Army. I don't know where he is now.

11) ZARINYN Elmars, I don't know where he is from, he is about 22 year old. I don't know what he did after graduation Firstenberg school I didn't meet him.

Besides the above-listed people, whom I was in Firstenberg school with, I know more [...] of the names. Thus, I know LATŠIS, about 25 years old, the platoon commander in lieutenantancy, Tyurbis, about 35 years old company commander in senior lieutenantancy. UPNIEKS, about 45 years old, company commander in the rank of captain. PAURINIEKS, about 28 years old, platoon commander in sergeancy, LIELAIS, about 26 years old, in corporalcy. DUBRO Yazeps, about 20 years old, unranked, KINS, about 21 year old, unranked.

The answers from my words are written correctly in protocol of interrogation.

Protocol was read to me aloud in native Latvian language, wherein I sign. ZASTERS.

Interrogated: Senior investigation supervisor
of 2nd investigative department MNS of LATVIAN SSR – lieutenant -[...]

Material is located in CV file. № C-206 volume 19 page 483

Correct: Senior authorized operations officer .
Departure 2-E 2nd Chief executive department
of MNS of USSR – major [...]

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv.11, Doc. 13, Sheets 37-43
A certified copy.*

116. An extract from the protocol of interrogation of accused Stankevichs Petr Antonovich, born in 1923

Dated 2nd August, 1949

Answer: – I joined the 18th police battalion voluntarily in January and was in service there till June or till July 1943.

Question: – Tell about your practice during the service in the 18th police battalion.

Answer: – Till April 1942 I was in Riga, where I received military training at the end of 1942 I, within the battalion, left to Minsk and settled in 9 km from Minsk in some barracks. At the same time, when I left Riga, 3rd platoon commander of 2nd company, lieutenant Ridus made me his orderly and I was on that service till I left the battalion.

Being in Minsk, I, within the police battalion, during 1942 and 1943 repeatedly participated in the punitive operations, in fight against Soviet partisans and peaceful Soviet citizens.

Question: – List the places, where you participated in the punitive operations?

Answer: – At the end of May, 1942 as a part of two companies III and I companies I left on combing-out a wood in Pajdanovo area. [...]

In July 1942 as a member of a battalion I was relocated in a place of Gantsevichi that is in 50-60 km from Minsk. We were in this place approximately till October, 1942. During that time I had to participate in punitive operations against the Soviet partisans for several times. In particular, at the beginning of August, 1942 our battalion enveloped Deniskovichi village where kept under arrest about 50 Soviet citizens. There, at the same place all of them were interrogated by special "SD" group, four of them were shot in the presence of Deniskovichi village inhabitants for intercommunication with the Soviet partisans.

In the same August 1942, approximately in 12 km from the place of Gantsevichi, being a member of a battalion, I participated in combing-out a wood with the purpose to capture the Soviet partisans, but nobody was found.

At the end of August or at the beginning of September 1942 in Liboki when I was in 2nd company, I was hemmed about and during about 10-12 hours fought against the Soviet partisans we managed to escape only due to the 4th company coming to our help. During the fight many of Soviet partisans were killed and about 3 persons were captured and sent to Minsk [...]

In October, 1942 our battalion was relocated to Slonim region that is approximately in 40 km from town Baranovichi; we were in that place approximately till December, 1942. During that time I also participated in punitive operations for several times; I remember two of such cases.

The first case was in Ostrov village, I do not remember what month it was, after combing-out a wood we captured 3 Soviet partisans.

For the second time I participated in combing-out a wood, which is about in 8-10 km from Ostrov village, but no Soviet partisans were captured. Besides, as I have just remembered, after our combing-out Ostrov village in 1942 (I don't remember its name) no soviet partisan and village inhabitant was found.

Then the command of our battalion gave order to drive all the captured peaceful Soviet citizens, who had been hiding in woods in 1 km from the village, into 2 big sheds; and we did so. In total there was more than 100 people, including children, old men and women – all of them were burnt down in those sheds.

After vocation in January 1943 I returned to a place of Stoltsy, which is about 80-100 kilometres from Baranovichi. I was in places of Stoltsy as a member of 18th battalion for a month.

Then in March or April, 1943 I returned to Riga as a member of battalion.

After my arrival to Riga I got military training for three months, then at the end of July or in August all our battalion joined to the 15th “SS” division of German army and was sent to front line in Volkov town [...]

I know the following policemen of 18th police battalion:

1. Rubin
2. Zalitis Yanis
3. Rudzats – Rudzish Andrej
4. Gruzdiysh
5. Zunds
6. Lapinysh Ivan Petrovich
7. Shteinbach Albert
8. Svenis Yanis
9. Balodis Alfred
10. Kraslinysh Arture
11. Kyulinskis
12. Latsis Yansens
13. Leone Alfons
14. Ridus Petr Antonovich, born in 1904

The Extract is true.

Senior authorized operations officer of 2nd department of 4th subdivision
MNS of Latvian SSR,
Senior lieutenant [...]

Note:

The original of protocol is in investigative department №12444
on charge of the accused Stankevich Petr Antonovich

*FSB of Russia, Central Archive,
F. 100, Inv. 11, Doc. 13, Sheets 44-54
A certified copy.*

117. The protocol of interrogation of an “Arajs Command” member Edgars-Teodora Mihelson

THE PROTOCOL OF INTERROGATION

I, Senior authorized operations officer of 2nd department of 4th subdivision MNS of Latvian SSR captain [...] interrogated the arrested

MICHELSON Edgars-Teodor Ernestovich,
born in 1918, in Gorky town, Latvian, citizen
of USSR, 6/II, before arrest lived in Kandava
town, Padomju street, 59, Riga, January, 26,
1952.

Interrogation started at 10. 00.

The interpreter of 4th subdivision MNS of Latvian SSR, lieutenant [...] is waned of responsibility for wrong interpretation, section 95 of RSFSR penal code.

[signature]

Question: – Tell in detail about the participation in killing the Soviet citizens of the Jewish nationality in “gas chamber vehicles” in Minsk.

Answer: – In the summer of 1943 I, being in Minsk as a member of a company of OZOLS senior lieutenant Karlis once participated killing of the Soviet citizens of Jewish nationality by means of a special machine “dushegubka». Everybody from OZOLS Karlis company, being in “Arajs command”, participated in this killing, except for the several people who guarded company posts. Except us – members of “Arajs command”, Germans and local policemen of Minsk participated in killing of Jewish population. Killing of the Jewish population occurred in a following way: All Jews from Minsk ghetto were gathered in that ghetto, then the Germans chose young, healthy Jews and separated them from the others. The other old men, women and children

were told they would be transported by cars for work and after that, about 50 people, standing, were put in "gas chamber vehicles». There were many of "gas chamber" vehicles, but I don't remember how many exactly. After that, "gas chamber vehicles" left ghetto and went 5-6 km from Minsk towards the prepared pits; the dead Jews were thrown into those pits from "gas chamber vehicles". After that "gas chamber" vehicles came back to ghetto for a new doomed to death group of people. That proceeded all day long.

In total, not less than 200 persons of old men, women and children of the Jewish nationality were killed. This figure, concerning the quantity of killed people is not exact; many of Jews were killed, but I'm not know how many exactly. My participation in killing of the Jewish population in Minsk with the help of "gas chamber vehicles" was following: being armed by a rifle, at first, I guarded the Jews in ghetto, then when "gas chamber vehicles" came I was near those "gas chamber" vehicles and saw after the Jew putting into the machines, guarded them in order to prevent their escape, though they didn't know that they would be killed. Besides, I went to houses of the Jewish ghetto to make sure that there was nobody in these houses, i.e. to control that nobody ran away from killing.

I explain that the Jews sat down in "gas chamber vehicles" by themselves, obeying the orders of the Germans. The Jews didn't know that they were driven to death, because they were told they would be taken to work. Corpses of the gased Jews were thrown into pits from "gas chamber vehicles», as far as I know according to the other people's words, it was done by those, who participated in this action and supposedly by arrested and being in "SD" and by Jews themselves, chosen for this purpose.

Killing of the Jewish population in Minsk with the help of "gas chamber vehicles" took place for one full day, in the summer of 1943, I do not remember month and date.

Question: – PRUSIS Edmund Radvilovich participate in this action together with you?

Answer: – Yes, PRUSIS Edmund Radvilovich participated together with me in killing of the Jewish population in Minsk with the

help of “gas chamber vehicles», but I almost don’t remember what he did: whether he was inside ghetto or guarded those place where the corpses of killed Jews were thrown into the pit; but the fact remains, PRUSIS E. R. as well as me, as well as others was a member of OZOLS lieutenant Karlis company and participated in that punitive action.

Question: – Did you participate in shooting of the Soviet citizens in Minsk?

Answer: – I didn’t participate in shooting of the Soviet citizens.

Question: – Did you guard the place of shooting?

Answer: – No, I didn’t.

Question: – Name the people who, together with you, participated in killing of the Soviet citizens of the Jewish nationality with the help “gas chamber vehicles” in the summer of 1943 in Minsk.

Answer: – Together with me the following people participated in killing of the Soviet citizens of the Jewish nationality with the help “gas chamber vehicles” in the summer 1943 in Minsk:

1. The lieutenant of OZOLS Karlis, was the commander of a company of a punitive “SD” Arajs command, distributed all the participants of a company on posts. During the killing of citizens of the Jewish nationality by means of special machines “gas chamber vehicles», he checked the line of duty on posts. When I kept guard during the organisation of killing of the Jews in Minsk ghetto, OZOLS lieutenant came to me to check the discipline on a post. I don’t know what he did on other posts, as I didn’t see it.

2. EZERGAILIS, I don’t remember his name and patronymic, about 30-33 years old, sergeant, he was a commander of the 1st or 2nd platoons of OZOLS lieutenant Karlis company. During mass killing of citizens of the Jewish nationality in Minsk in the summer of 1943, he gave orders to soldiers of a platoon and arranged them on posts to guard ghetto, and also he was in a security all time while lining the citizens of the Jewish nationality in ghetto yard, and then appointed soldiers of the platoon to check apartments in order to make sure that there was nobody there.

3. KONRADS, I don't remember his name and patronymic, he's of 23 years old, during mass killing of citizens of the Jewish nationality in Minsk in the summer of 1943, together with me, he guarded Minsk ghetto. After all the citizens of the Jewish nationality have been lined up, KONRADS checked apartments in order to make sure that there was nobody there.

4. PLESHANS, I don't remember his name and patronymic, born in 1921-1943 approximately, unranked soldier, during the mass killing of the Jewish population in Minsk in the summer 1943, together with me, he was on post inside ghetto, armed with rifle. I don't know what else he did at that time.

5. RUDANS, I don't remember his name and patronymic, born in 1913-1915 approximately, the corporal, was the commander of 1st department of 2nd platoon of OZOLS lieutenant Karlis company; he was armed with German machine gun, during mass killing of citizens of the Jewish nationality with the help of "gas chamber vehicles" in Minsk in summer 1943; he participated in that case, but I don't remember now, what duties he performed.

I don't remember the names of other people who participated in killing of the Jewish population in Minsk with the help of "gas chamber vehicles" in summer 1943, except for PRUSIS Edmund about whom I have already told

Question: – Name participants of "SD" Arajs punitive command from OZODS lieutenant K. Company, who did not take part in killing of the Jewish population in Minsk with the help of "gas chamber vehicles" in summer 1943.

Answer: – I do not remember the names of these people. I should explain that our company, being under command of OZOLS lieutenant, consisted of 4 platoons, each platoon consisted approximately of 20-25 people. 3 platoons participated in killing of the Jewish population in Minsk with the help of "gas chamber vehicles" in summer, 1943 one platoon drew security duty not connected with this action.

Question: – In what platoon of OZOLS Karlis company were you and PRUSIS Edmund on service?

Answer: – PRUSIS Edmund and I were on service in 2nd platoon of OZOLS Karlis company. Sergeant EZERGAILIS was the commander of platoon, about whom I have mentioned before.

The end of interrogation 26.1.52 at 13.00.

The protocol of interrogation from my words is written down correctly, read to me with the interpreter on my native language, for what I undersign.

[Signature]

Interrogated: senior authorized operations officer of 2d department of 4th subdivision, MNS of Latvian SSR captain [...]

Translated: [...]

Correct: Senior authorized operations officer of 2nd department of 4th subdivision MNS of Latvian SSR captain [...]

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