

**DOCUMENT L-180: "The Stahlecker Report"**

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**PARTIAL TRANSLATION OF DOCUMENT L-180:** Report by Stahlecker on the activities of Einsatzgruppe A until October 15, 1941

Source: *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, Vol.VII. USGPO, Washington, 1946, pp. 978-996

**ACTION-Group A (Einsatzgruppe A)**  
Comprehensive Report up to 15 October 1941

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**[Note: full report runs to 134 pages]**

Action-Group A, after preparing their vehicles for action proceeded to their area of concentration as ordered on 23 June 1941, the second day of the campaign in the East. Army Group North consisting of the 16th and 18th Armies and Panzer-Group 4 had left the day before. Our task was to hurriedly establish personal contact with the commanders of the Armies and with the commander of the army of the rear area. It must be stressed from the beginning that co-operation with the Armed Forces was generally good, in some cases, for instance with Panzer-Group 4 under Col. Gen. Hoepfner, it was very close, almost cordial. Misunderstandings which cropped up with some authorities in the first days, were cleared up mainly through personal discussions.

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At the start of the Eastern Campaign it became obvious with regard to the *Security Police* that its special work had to be done not only in the rear areas, as was provided for in the original agreements, with the High Command of the Army, but also in the combat areas, and this for two reasons. On the one hand, the development of the rear area of the armies was delayed because of the quick advance and on the other hand, the undermining communist activities and the fight

against partisans was most effective within the area of actual fighting-especially when the Luga sector was reached.

To carry out the duties connected with security police, it was desirable to move into the larger towns together with the armed forces. We had our first experiences in this direction when a small advance detachment under my leadership entered Kowno together with the advance units of the Armed Forces on 25 June 1941. When the other larger towns, especially Libau, Mitau, Riga, Dorpat, Reval, and the larger suburbs of Leningrad were captured, a detachment of the Security Police was always with the first army units. Above all, communist functionaries and communist material had to be seized, and the armed forces themselves had to be secured against surprises inside the towns; the troops themselves were usually not able to take care of that because of their small numbers. For this purpose the Security Police immediately after capture formed volunteer detachments from reliable natives in all three Baltic provinces; they carried out their duties successfully under our command. For example, it may be mentioned that the armed forces suffered not inconsiderable losses through guerillas in Riga, on the left of the Daugava river; on the right bank of the Daugava river, however, after these volunteer detachments had been organized in Riga not a single soldier was injured, although these Latvian detachments suffered some killed and wounded in fighting with Russian stragglers.

Similarly, native anti-Semitic forces were induced to start pogroms against Jews during the first hours after capture, though this inducement proved to be very difficult. Following our orders, the Security Police was determined to solve the Jewish question with all possible means and most decisively. But it was desirable that the Security Police should not put in an immediate appearance, at least in the beginning, since the extraordinarily harsh measures were apt to stir even German circles. It had to be shown to the world that the native population itself took the first action by way of natural reaction against the suppression by Jews during several decades and against the terror exercised by the Communists during the preceding period. After reaching the Daugava river and therewith Riga, the Action-Group detached itself at first from the further advance of the Army-Group North, and concentrated its forces on the pacification of the Lithuanian and Latvian area, and later of the old-Russian area reached at Opotschka. The work in this connection took on many shapes. In view of the constant changes in German troops and the fluctuation within the German authorities, which was caused by the transfer of the rear-area of the Wehrmacht to the rear-area of the Armies, and later to the civil administration and to the Commander of the Armed Forces the personnel and thus the opinions of the German authorities changed far too often and far too quickly. In the Security Police this had to be avoided, which led us to adopt the policy of keeping the same commanders in the same locality as far as possible, thereby the Security Police gained a considerable advantage over all other comers, because it knew facts and people. As a matter of fact, they alone amongst all authorities may claim to have achieved a certain steadiness on the German side. The Lithuanians, Latvians, and the Estonians, who have a fine feeling for such matters, came soon to acknowledge this fact and acted accordingly. Under these circumstances the Security Police tried to guide political, economic, and cultural matters according to definite policies, and to advise the other German authorities on these subjects. In the political sphere particularly the several competent authorities followed different viewpoints. It was regrettable that the Ministry for Eastern Affairs had not given clear directions from the beginning, so that up to date and in spite of our efforts the situation in the Baltic provinces is not clear. The example of Estonia is significant for this fluctuation. In agreement with the RSHA the Action-Group brought with them the Estonian Dr. Mae as presumptive political adviser for the Estonians. In order to avoid a pernicious muddle,

as happened in Lithuania and Latvia, and in order to obtain the appointment of Dr. Mae or to avoid his removal, negotiations had to be carried out with, one after the other, the Army division capturing Reval, the Army Corps competent for Reval, the Garrison commander Reval, the Field Commandatura Reval, the 18. Army Group, North, the Commander of the Rear Army Area at the Army Group North, the General Commissioner and his deputy, and with the representative of the Ministry for Eastern Affairs. After the conquest of Lithuania and Latvia, the Action-Detachments 2 and 3 were separated from the Commander of the Rear-Area of the Armed Forces and were left in Lithuania and Latvia respectively for essential assignments. The Commanders of Action-Detachments 2 and 3 have been staying permanently in Kowno and Riga since the beginning of July. Contact was established also with the Reich Commissioner as soon as he was appointed and likewise with the General Commissioners, i. e. by the Action-Group and by the Action-Detachments. Co-operation with the Reich Commissioner depended on:

- a. a delay in the inquiry addressed to the RSHA as to how the interpolation (sc. of the Security Police) at the Reich Commissioner's should be effected, and
- b. on the negotiations of the Superior SS-and Police Fuehrer who on his own account had initiated negotiations with the Reich commissioner with regard to the interpolation of the police.

No initiative of our own was admissible therefore until the questions to a) and b) had been settled. It was intended to get in touch with the Reich Commissioner with regard to this question at a convenient moment. There are plenty of special occasions. When the advance of the Army Group North was halted in Esthonia and at Luga and when heavy fighting and strong Russian attacks against the centre and the right wing ensued, the Action-Group again teamed up with the armies, in particular the 4. Panzer Group, because the struggle against the partisans who now began to appear in great numbers, was and still is a job for the Security Police. The area to the North of Pleskau and between the Peipus- and Ilmen- lakes with far extending forest and swamps was really an ideal area for Russian partisan warfare. The difficulties of the terrain further impeded activities even for the smaller units. After the failure of purely military activities such as the placing of sentries and combing through the newly occupied territories with whole divisions, even the Armed Forces had to look out for new methods. The Action-Group undertook to search for new methods. Soon therefore the Armed Forces adopted the experiences of the Security Police and their methods of combatting the partisans. For details I refer to the numerous reports concerning the struggle against the partisans. The activities of the Security Police were rendered more difficult during the further course of the struggle against the partisans because the vehicles either could not be used or were to be preserved for the advance on Leningrad, which was always expected at that time. Special difficulties arose for the Command of the Action-Group at this time. Whilst the larger parts of the Security Police, in action in Lithuania and Latvia, were 700 km to the rear, the other parts were in action against the partisans behind the frontline, extending for nearly 600 km. For the transmission of signals we had only a wireless truck stationed in Riga, and one medium and one light wireless truck for this vast area. Even the use of army telephones failed over distances of more than 200 km. The Action-Group as a whole could be led only by personal contacts, although the ways and roads, including the army highways, were in an extremely bad state. Even on the army highway an hourly average speed of 10 km could not be exceeded. In spite of this, my own motorcar had to do 15.000 km during this time. Similar difficulties because of the vast areas arose for the Commanders of the Action-detachments, so that even messenger trips became a serious problem. For some time this situation became even more difficult, when the further attack against Leningrad no longer followed the great road from Pleskau via Lungau, but had to bend far to the West, so that the centre of the counter-attacks

against partisans was transferred to the forest and swamp areas East of the Peipus Lake and the areas to the West of the Tlmen Lake."

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During the process of capturing Esthonia the Action-Group Ia was transferred definitely to Estonia, except for the detachment with the 18th Army. The pacification of Estonia had to be considered as especially important because of the good racial composition of the population. After Action-Group B had transferred parts of White Ruthenia to Action Group A, Action-detachment Ib reinforced by parts of Action-detachment 2 and 3 took over this area. For the investment of Leningrad, the Security Police aside from the heavily increased activities against the partisans, received the further assignment to observe carefully the population which was slowly returning from the woods. As trench warfare developed around Leningrad, it was recommended to the armies to evacuate wholly a zone around Leningrad, a measure which had been carried out already whenever possible by the Security Police together with units of Armed SS and the uniformed police. In this area a network for information is being established which is to be as complete as possible. From the very beginning, the Security Police systematically collected information about Leningrad in all aspects. The 18th Army asked us to take over in addition military reconnaissance of Leningrad of resp. the area of the 8th Russian Army which was invested in the area around Oranienburg. \* \* \* This description of the overall situation showed and shows that the members of the Stapo (the Secret State Police)[should probably be Gestapo], Kripo and SD (Security Service) who are attached to the Action-Group, are active mainly in Lithouania, Latvia, Esthonia, Whitete-Ruthenia and to a smaller part in front of Leningrad. It shows further that the forces of the uniformed police and the Armed SS are active mainly in front of Leningrad, in order to take measures against the returning population and under their own officers. This is so much easier because the Action detachments in Lithouania, Latvia and Esthonia have at their disposal native police units, as described in encl. 1, and because so far 150 Latvian reinforcements have been sent to White-Ruthenia. The distribution of the leaders of Security Police and SD during the individual phases can be gathered from encl. 2, the advance and the activities of the Action-Group and the Action-detachments from encl. 3. It should be mentioned that the leaders of the Armed -SS and of the uniformed police who are reserves have declared their wish to stay on with the Security Police and the SD.

#### *A. The Baltic Area.*

##### *I. Organization Measures.*

1. *Formation of auxiliary police and of police.* In view of the extension of the area of operations and the great number of duties which had to be performed by the Security Police, it was intended from the very beginning to obtain the co-operation of the reliable population for the fight against vermin-that is mainly the Jews and Communists. Beyond our directing of the first spontaneous actions of self-cleansing, which will be reported elsewhere, care had to be taken that reliable people should be put to the cleansing job and that they were appointed auxiliary members of the Security Police. The difference of the situation in each part of the area of operations also had to be taken into account. In Lithouania activist and nationalist people formed themselves into so-called partisan-units at the beginning of the Eastern Campaign, in order to take active part in the fight against Bolshevism. According to their own report they suffered 4,000 casualties.

\* \* \* \* \*

2. *Reconstruction of prisons.* The prisons in the Baltic countries were found to be either empty or occupied by Jews or Communists who had been arrested by Self-Protection Units.

\* \* \*

Whenever the prisons were too small because of the large number of people who were to be arrested, provisional concentration camps were established. The construction of large concentration camps is in preparation. The schedules attached as encl. 6 show the present occupancy of the prisons.

## **II. *Cleansing and Securing the Area of Operations.***

### ***1. Instigation of self-cleansing actions.***

Considering that the population of the Baltic countries had suffered very heavily under the government of Bolshevism and Jewry while they were incorporated in the USSR, it was to be expected that after the liberation from that foreign government, they (i.e. the population themselves) would render harmless most of the enemies left behind after the retreat of the Red Army. It was the duty of the Security Police to set in motion these self-cleansing movements and to direct them into the correct channels in order to accomplish the purpose of the cleansing operations as quickly as possible. It was no less important in view of the future to establish the unshakable and provable fact that the liberated population themselves took the most severe measures against the Bolshevik and Jewish enemy quite on their own, so that the direction by German authorities could not be found out.

In Lithuania this was achieved for the first time by partisan activities in Kowno. To our surprise it was not easy at first to set in motion an extensive pogrom against Jews. Klimatis, the leader of the partisan unit, mentioned above, who was used for this purpose primarily, succeeded in starting a pogrom on the basis of advice given to him by a small advanced detachment acting in Kowno, and in such a way that no German order or German instigation was noticed from the outside. During the first pogrom in the night from 25. to 26.6 the Lithouanian partisans did away with more than 1,500 Jews, set fire to several Synagogues or destroyed them by other means and burned down a Jewish dwelling district consisting of about 60 houses. During the following nights about 2,300 Jews were made harmless in a similar way. In other parts of Lithuania similar actions followed the example of Kowno, though smaller and extending to the Communists who had been left behind.

These self-cleansing actions went smoothly because the Army authorities who had been informed showed understanding for this procedure. From the beginning it was obvious that only the first days after the occupation would offer the opportunity for carrying out pogroms. After the disarmament of the partisans the self-cleansing actions ceased necessarily.

It proved much more difficult to set in motion similar cleansing actions in *Latvia*. Essentially the reason was that the whole of the national stratum of leaders had been assassinated or destroyed by the Soviets, especially in Riga. It was possible though through similar influences on the Latvian auxiliary to set in motion a pogrom against Jews also in Riga. During this pogrom all synagogues were destroyed and about 400 Jews were killed. As the population of Riga quieted down quickly, further pogroms were not convenient.

So far as possible, both in Kowno and in Riga evidence by film and photo was established that the first spontaneous executions of Jews and Communists were carried out by Lithuania s and Latvians.

In *Estonia* by reason of the relatively small number of Jews no opportunity presented itself to instigate pogroms. The Estonian self-protection units made harmless only some individual Communists whom they hated especially, but generally they limited themselves to carrying out arrests.

## *2. Combating Communism.*

Everywhere in the area of operation counteractions against communism and Jewry took first place in the work of the Security Police.

The Soviet officials and the functionaries of the Communist Party had fled with the Soviet Army. In view of the experiences made during the Bolshevik oppression which lasted more than one year, the population of the Baltic countries realized that all remainders of Communism left behind after the retreat of the Red Army had to be removed. Such basic opinion facilitated essentially the work of the Security Police with regard to cleansing in this sphere, especially since active nationalist people cooperated in this cleansing, viz. in Lithuania the partisans, in Latvia and Estonia the self-protection units.

\* \* \* \* \*

### *b. Search for and Arrest of Communists.*

Aside from these searching activities, a systematic search was made for Communist functionaries, Red-Army soldiers, and persons more seriously suspect because of their activities for Communism and who had been left behind. In some places the Self-Protection Units themselves had rendered harmless the most infamous Communists already spontaneously. Using all available units of the Detachments and Self-Protection Formations, and with the help of the German uniformed police, large scale actions were carried out in the larger towns resulting in many arrests and search actions.

\* \* \* \* \*

## *3. Action against Jewry.*

From the beginning it was to be expected that the Jewish problem in the East could not be solved by pogroms alone. In accordance with the basic orders received, however, the cleansing activities of the Security Police had to aim at a complete annihilation of the Jews. Special detachments reinforced by selected units -in Lithuania partisan detachments, in Latvia units of the Latvian auxiliary police- therefore performed extensive executions both in the towns and in rural areas. The actions of the execution detachments were performed smoothly. When attaching Lithuanian and Latvian detachments to the execution squads, men were chosen whose relatives had been murdered or removed by the Russians.

Especially severe and extensive measures became necessary in Lithuania. In some places- especially in Kowno- the Jews had armed themselves and participated actively in franc-tireur war and committed arson. Besides these activities the Jews in Lithuania had collaborated most actively hand in glove with the Soviets.

The sum total of the Jews liquidated in Lithuania amounts to 71.105.

During the pogroms in Kowno 3.800 Jews were eliminated, in the smaller towns about 1.200 Jews.

In Latvia as well the Jews participated in acts of sabotage and arson after the invasion of the

German Armed Forces. In Duensburg so many fires were lighted by the Jews that a large part of the town was lost. The electric power station burnt down to a mere shell. The streets which were mainly inhabited by Jews remained unscathed.

In Latvia up to now 30.000 Jews were executed in all. 500 were made harmless by pogroms in Riga.

Most of the 4.500 Jews living in Esthonia at the beginning of the Eastern Campaign fled with the retreating Red Army. About 2.000 stayed behind. In Reval alone there lived about 1.000 Jews.

The arrest of all male Jews of over 16 years of age has been nearly finished. With the exception of the doctors and the Elders of the Jews who were appointed by the Special Commandos, they were executed by the Self-Protection Units under the control of the Special Detachment la. Jewesses in Pernau and Reval of the age groups from 16 to 60 who are fit for work were arrested and put to peat-cutting or other labor.

At present a camp is being constructed in Harku, in which all Esthonian Jews are to be assembled, so that Esthonia will be free of Jews within a short while.

After the carrying out of the first larger executions in Lithouania and Latvia it became soon apparent that an annihilation of the Jews without leaving any traces could not be carried out, at least not at the present moment. Since a large part of the trades in Lithouania and Latvia are in Jewish hands and others carried on nearly exclusively by Jews (especially those of glaziers, plumbers, stovebuilders, cobblers) many Jewish partisans are indispensable at present for repairing installations of vital importance for the reconstruction of towns destroyed and for work of military importance. Although the employers aim at replacing Jewish labor with Lithouanian or Latvian labor, it is not yet possible to displace all employed Jews especially not in the larger towns. In co-operation with the labor exchange offices, however, all Jews who are no longer fit for work are being arrested and shall be executed in small batches.

In this connection it may be mentioned that some authorities of the Civil Administration offered resistance, at times even a strong one, against the carrying out of larger executions. This resistance was answered by calling attention to the fact that it was a matter of carrying out basic orders.

Apart from organizing and carrying out measures of execution, the creation of *Ghettos* was begun in the larger towns at once during the first days of operations. This was especially urgent in Kowno because there were 30.000 Jews in a total population of 152.400. Therefore, at the end of the first pogrom a Jewish Committee was summoned who were informed that the German authorities so far had not seen any reason to interfere in the quarrels between Lithouanians and Jews. The sole basis for creating a normal situation would be to construct a Jewish Ghetto. Against remonstrations made by the Jewish Committee, it was declared that there was no other possibility to prevent further pogroms. On this the Jews at once declared themselves ready to do everything in their power to transfer their co-racials to the town district of Viriampol which was intended as a Jewish Ghetto and with the greatest possible speed. This own district lies in the triangle between the Mamel river and a tributary; it is connected with Kowno by one bridge only and can, therefore, easily be locked off.

In Riga the so-called "Moskau suburb" was designated as a Ghetto. This is the worst dwelling district of Riga, already now mostly inhabited by Jews. The transfer of the Jews into the Ghetto-district proved rather difficult because the Latvians dwelling in that district had to be evacuated and residential space in Riga is very crowded. 24,000 of the 28,000 Jews living in Riga have been transferred into the Ghetto so far. In treating the Ghetto, the Security Police restricted themselves to mere policing duties, while the establishment and administration of the Ghetto as

well as the regulation of the food supply for the inmates of the Ghetto were left to Civil Administration; the Labor Offices were left in charge of Jewish labor. In the other towns with a larger Jewish population Ghettos shall be established likewise.

*Marking of the Jews* by a yellow star, to be worn on the breast and the back which was ordered in the first instance by provisional orders of the Security Police, was carried out within a short time on the basis of regulations issued by the Commander of the Rear area and later by the Civil Administration. 10

The number of Jews executed up to the present may be seen in the schedule on encl. 8.

\* \* \* \* \*

Copies of the latest experience reports are attached as encl. 9. [This enclosure reveals the name of the Commander of the Action-Group: Dr. Stahlecker, SS-Brigade Commander and Major-General of the Police.]

*5. Other jobs of the Security Police.*

1. Occasionally the conditions prevailing in the lunatic asylums necessitated operations of the Security Police. Many institutions had been robbed by the retreating Russians of their whole food supply. Often the guard and nursing personnel had fled. The inmates of several institutions broke out and became a danger to the general security; therefore in Aglona (Lithouania), 544 lunatics ; in Mariampol (Lithouania), 109 lunatics and; in Magutowo (near Luga) 95 lunatics were liquidated.

Sometimes authorities of the Armed Forces asked us to clean out in a similar way other institutions which were wanted as billets. However, as interests of the Security Police did not require any intervention, it was left to the authorities of the Armed Forces, to take the necessary action with their own forces.

2. The Action-Commandos dealt to a large extent with the search for persons who had been deported and with the exhumation of people who had been murdered by the Russians. For reasons of propaganda the propaganda squadrons of the Armed Forces and sometimes of the foreign press were made to participate.

In Esthonia the exhumation of Esthonians murdered by the Russians was organized more extensively. In view of the extent of the work which had been done here, a central office was established in Reval, in order to organize searches for the whereabouts of removed and murdered persons, under the systematic guidance of the Security Police.

The extent of this work is shown by the fact that from Reval alone 30.000 men had been reported missing.

\* \* \* \* \*

*V. Work of the Police concerning Crime Detection.*

\* \* \* \* \*

In order to eliminate the most heavy cases of crime until preventive measures can be introduced, professional criminals are being taken into the care of the Action-detachments and executed whenever the case warrants such measures.

\* \* \* \* \*

Action-Group B liquidated so far 7.620. Jews in Borrisow.

\* \* \* \* \*

### III. *Report on the Situation*

\* \* \* \* \*

#### A. *The Situation in Lithuania.*

As the population did not receive any information with regard to their future fate, the national-minded part (sc. of the population) is still thinking of a future Lithouanian State of their own. No effort can be noticed to approach the Lithouanian people to the German peoples.

\* \* \* \* \*

The active anti-Semitism which flared up quickly after the German occupation did not falter. Lithouanians are voluntarily and untiringly at our disposal for all measures against Jews, sometimes they even execute such measures on their own.

\* \* \* \* \*

The faculties of Arts and Sciences should be closed altogether. There is some need though for the Medical faculty and some of the technical branches. More than 60% of the dentists were Jews; more than 60% of the other doctors as well. The disappearance of these brings about an extreme shortage of doctors which cannot be overcome even by bringing in doctors from the Reich.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### B. *The Situation in Latvia.*

In Courland the ordinance of the Naval Commander in Libau, Captain Dr. Kavelmacher of the German Navy had caused some unrest. This ordinance announced measures of reprisal against the population of Libau in case of attacks against German soldiers. It reads as follows: 'For each and every case of a known or unknown culprit firing on German soldiers, certain people of Libau shall be arrested and shot at once under Martial Law.' 'Similarly' runs the ordinance 'for each and every attempt of sabotage whether effective or not, part of the Latvian population living near the place of the act of sabotage shall be arrested and shot under Martial Law'. This ordinance was published in the Libau paper "Das Kur-laendische Wart". The Libau population is quite excited, as may be understood. The fear is abroad that further actions may be provoked by hostile people (Communist or Jewish).

\* \* \* \* \*

**[A list of 18 enclosures, only some of which are included in this document, is omitted here, excepting no.9]**

Map showing "Number of persons liquidated in the Baltic countries as per 25.10.1941."  
The following figures have been entered into the map:

District of Libau in area of Courland.. .....	<b>11.860</b>
District of Mitau in area of Semgslen .....	<b>3.576</b>
District of Riga town in area of.. .....	<b>6.378</b>
District of Riga town in area of Livland.. .....	<b>209</b>
District of Fellin .....	<b>1.158</b>
District of Dueanburg in area of Lettgslen.. .....	<b>9.845</b>
in area of Shcaulen .....	<b>42.145</b>
District of Kowno .....	<b>31.994</b>
in area of Wilna-land .....	<b>7.032</b>

Additionally pogrom

in Lithouania and Latvia about.. .....	<b>5.500</b>
border area Lithouania .....	<b>5.502</b>

*Enclosure 9: Report on Activities und Experience in Counteractions against Partisans. First Report:*

Action Group A of the Security Police and the Security Service. (Gen-) Staff . . . . 17.7.1941  
*Report on activities and Experiences in Counteractions against Partisans.*

When it was decided to extend the German operations to Leningrad and also to extend the activities of Action Group A to this town, I gave orders on 18 July 1941 to parts of Action Detachments 2 and 3 and to the Staff of the Group to advance to Novosselje, in order to prepare these activities and to be able to advance as early as possible into the area around Leningrad and into the city itself. The advance of the forces of Action Group A which were intended to be used for Leningrad, was effected in agreement with and on the express wish of Panzer-Group 4.

The detachment which was formed for action towards Leningrad was trained for operations in Leningrad during the first days after the advance to Novosselje. However, as an advance to Leningrad is not to be expected at the time planned previously, the parts of Action detachments 2 and 3 which were concentrated in Novosselje were used for extensive operations of cleansing and pacifying in the the area of Panzer-Group 4, in agreement with this Group. This is done mainly in the area limited by the connection- line between Pog-Gora-Novosselje-Osjerjewe.

In their operations it was intended to arrest in the first instance any remaining Communist functionaries, and other active Communists and Jews. As nearly all Jews and Communist functionaries had fled with the retreating Soviet forces, only 6 Jews and 10. Communists were arrested and executed."

\* \* \* \* \*

At the, start the following procedure was followed:

In villages, in the area where partisans had not been ascertained before, one behaved friendly towards the population. In view of the generally known shortage of bread one usually succeeded very quickly in finding one or several villagers who could be used as persons of confidence.

They were promised to get bread provided they would give information concerning partisans or if they would inform the nearest units of the German Army or Police of any partisans appearing in the future. The network of information, thus built up yielded much information for the Action-Group, thus enabling them to surround more narrowly the quarters of the partisans.

There was especially information concerning villagers who had given good or provisional shelter to partisans. On the basis of these reports a great many villages were combed out. After a village had been surrounded, all the inhabitants were forcibly shepherded into one square. The persons suspected on account of confidential information and other villagers were interrogated, and thus it was possible in most cases to find the people who helped the partisans. These were either shot off-hand or if further interrogations promised useful information, taken to headquarters. After the interrogation they were shot.

In order to get a deterring effect, the houses of these who helped the partisans were burned down on several occasions. The population which had congregated was told of the reasons for the punitive measures. At the same time they were threatened that the whole village would be burned down if partisans were helped once more and if partisans appearing in the village were not reported as quickly as possible.

The tactics, to put terror against terror, succeeded marvelously. From fear of reprisals, the peasants came a distance of 20 km and more to the headquarters of the detachment of Action Group A on foot or on horseback in order to bring news about partisans, news which was correct in most of the cases. During the cleansing operations which were made on account of these reports, 48 helpers of partisans, including 6 women, were shot so far.

In this connection a single case may be mentioned, which proves the correctness of the principle "terror against terror". In the village of Jachnowa it was ascertained on the basis of a report made by the peasant Jemeljanow and after further interrogations and other searches that partisans had been fed in the house of Anna Prokoffjewa. The house was burnt down on 8 August 1941 at about 21 hours, and its inhabitant arrested.

Shortly after midnight partisans set alight the house of the informer Jemeljanow. A detachment sent to Jachnowa on the following days ascertained that the peasant woman Ossipowa had told the partisans that Jemeljanow had made the report which had caused our action.

Ossipowa was shot and her house burnt down. Further two 16 year old youths from the village were shot because according to their own confession, they had rendered information and courier-services to the partisans. Obviously, it was on account of these punitive measures that the partisans left the forest camp near the village. The camp was found during this operation.

\* \* \* \* \*

Dr. Stahlecker  
ss Brigade Commander and Maj Gen  
of ,the Police.

(Second report)

The Commander of the Security Police and the Security Service  
Action-Group A.

Riga 29.9.1941

*Report on Experiences in Counteractions against the Partisan*

\* \* \* \* \*

Action detachment of Action Group A of the Security Police participated from the beginning in the fight against the nuisance created by partisans. Close collaboration with the Armed Forces and the Exchange of experiences which were collected in the fight partisans, brought about a thorough knowledge of the origin, organization, strength, equipment and system used by the Red partisans as time went on.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### *IV. Counteractions against the Partisans.*

As it was vitally necessary, though, to obtain hints and information concerning abode and direction of the partisans from the population, the latter had to be forced by the use of the most severe measures, to supply useful information and reports. In the knowledge that the Russian has been accustomed from old to ruthless measures on the part of the authorities, the most severe, measures were applied. He who helped the partisans to obtain food and shelter, rendered them information services or who have knowingly false information, was shot or hanged. Houses where partisans obtained food or shelter were burnt down. Where a larger number of villagers helped the partisans in such a way, the whole village was burnt down as punishment and in order to create terror.

\* \* \* \* \*

Escaped Red Armists who have found their way through the German lines procure civilian clothes as quickly as possible and get in touch with partisans. It has been ascertained that these Red Armies form the fighting back-bone of the partisan units. It does not seem, therefore, expedient to treat Red-Armists found in civilian clothing as prisoners of war without further ado and to collect them in prisoner-of-war camps. But an interrogation and survey has to be carried out as thoroughly as possible. It has further to be considered in each and every case, whether Red-Armists found in civilian clothes should be separated from regular prisoners of war, and should be brought into the assembly camps for civilian internees. It seems further suitable to exhort escaped Red-Armists by posters to give themselves up at the nearest Army units within a short time after the posting of such posters, say within 3 days. Should they not comply with this order they should be dealt with as partisans, that means that they should be shot, without making such exception dependent of proof that they actually know of the order.

To conclude, attention should be drawn to the necessity of interrogating captured partisans thoroughly before they are liquidated so that we increase our knowledge on organization, abode, strength, armament and plans of the partisans. Sometimes it may become necessary to take advantage of the opportunity to use third degree interrogation methods.

Signed: Dr. Stahlecker  
SS-Brigade-Commander

