

Goering

25.02

GOERING CASE

TRANSLATION BY
Herma Plummer

Full

Information supplied by Franz Peter WEIXLER

Krailling, near Munich
11 November 1945

Goering

In connection with the Nurnberg trials against/et.al., I would like to make the following statement with the express authorization that it may be used in the trial.

I was a prisoner of the Gestapo from January 16, 1944 to April 1945. I had been indicted for treason before the People's Court, and the only reason I was not executed was the fact that my files were destroyed once in Berlin, and once at the Gestapo office in Nurnberg. One of the reasons for my indictment was the fact that I had told friends the truth about the parachute enterprise in Crete in May 1941, and also that I had taken pictures there. I am attaching an "order" of the German Army, which I appropriated and kept, issued by the divisional staff of the Parachute Division, commanded by General STUDENT. I shall now describe the manner in which I was enabled to take the photos mentioned above.

On June 1 or 2, 1941, I was in my bill&t in the capital of Crete, Chania, when a young officer told me that that afternoon I would see something very interesting. In answer to my question, he told me that a punitive expedition would be sent against several villages since the corpses of parachutists, massacred and plundered, had been found. The supreme command of the Luftwaffe had been informed of this several days before, and an order had been received from Goering according to which the sharpest measures, i.e. the shooting of the male population between 18 and 50 years of age, was to take place. I told the young officer and a Captain GERICKE, that I had never seen a single massacred parachutist, but had seen dozens of dead comrades whose faces had partially decayed because of the tropical heat. I then went to see Major STENZLER who told me that a delegation of the German Foreign Office had left Berlin the day before in order to make an investigation concerning the alleged massacring of German soldiers. I told Stenzler that during the first days of the fighting I had seen vultures pick on the corpses of our comrades. I reminded the major that we had seen innumerable half-decayed comrades, but that we had never seen a single murder or massacre, and that I would consider it outright murder to execute Goering's order. I implored Major Stenzler not to send out the punitive expedition. When he told me that this was none of my business, I went to see Lieutenant Trebes, who was just making a speech to a group of about 30 men, to the effect that "the action would have to be carried through as quickly as possible, as a reprisal for our comrades who had been murdered". The punitive expedition consisted of Trebes, another lieutenant, an interpreter, two sergeants, and about twenty five parachutists of the Second Battalion. As a photographer assigned to my division I was permitted to accompany this Kommando. Near the village of Malemes, we stopped and Trebes showed us the corpses of several soldiers, obviously in the process of decay. He incited the men against the civilian population. We continued our drive to the village of Kondamari. The men got off, and ran into the few houses of the little community. They got all men, women, and children onto the little square. A German soldier brought out the coat of a parachutist which he had picked up in one of the houses, and which had a bullet hole in the back. Trebes had the house burned down immediately. One man admitted having killed a German soldier, but it was not possible to convict any of the others of any crimes or plundering, and I therefore asked Trebes to stop the contemplated action

and give us orders to return, taking with us only the one man. Trebes however, gave orders to separate the men from the women and children; then he had the interpreter tell the women that all of the men would be shot because of having murdered German soldiers, and that the corpses would have to be interred within two hours. When Trebes turned his back for a few moments, I made it possible for nine men to get away. Trebes had the men form a half circle, gave the order to fire, and after about fifteen seconds, everything was over. I asked Trebes, who was quite pale, whether he ~~was~~ realized what he had done, and he replied that he had only executed the order of Hermann Goering, and avenged his dead comrades. A few days later he received the Knights Cross from Goering for his "braveness," in Crete.

It was possible for me to get the negatives of my photos to a friend in Athens, who saved copies for me. In spite of the fact that the original film was taken away from me by my superiors, and that I had to sign a declaration to the effect that I had no copies, it was possible for me to save copies and use them later in my activity against Hitler and his regime.