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**Transnational Police Networks and the
Fight against Communism in Germany and Denmark, 1933-1940**

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Abstract

This article explores the co-operative efforts of the German and Danish police in the surveillance of German Communists who sought refuge in Denmark during the 1930s. Because of the escalating and violent confrontation levels during World War II, postwar accounts have to a considerable extent regarded the relations between Nazi Germany and its neighboring Scandinavian countries in the 1930s in a conflict rather than a co-operation perspective. While in the prewar period there were fundamental ideological differences between Denmark and Germany, and Danish anxieties about Hitler's aggressive foreign policy were tangible indeed, there were points of mutual interest as well. During the social turmoils of the 1930s, the governments of both countries were working at strengthening social cohesion through different political schemes. They were also busy fighting political elements that threatened such cohesion. In Denmark measures were taken to protect democracy against subversive efforts of Communists and National Socialists, while in Germany, the Nazi dictatorship was ridding itself of the 'Marxists' – Communists, Social Democrats, Union activists etc.; in other words enemies that were considered a major threat to the state and the celebrated *Volksgemeinschaft*. In this way, in both countries, social engineering came to include the close monitoring of Communist activities.

Introduction

On 22 August 1941, following the German attack on the Soviet Union two months earlier, the parliament of occupied Denmark decided to ban all Communist activity in the country. While all other parties refrained from commenting the ‘Communist Law’, conscious of the fact that it meant a violation of the Danish constitution, the spokesman for the Conservative Party plunged into a frontal attack on the Danish Communists. Until now, he declared, Danish traditions of political tolerance had secured a legal platform for Communist activity in the country, but now the patience was exhausted. The Communists had proven themselves a mere tool for another power and a threat to society. There was no longer “fertile soil for such weed in the Danish garden”. Warming up to the conservative speech, the conservative press, likewise framing social engineering in an organic discourse, advocated a ban on Communism, ‘this illegal, insidious epidemic in society’s body’, which made up ‘an alien element, whose encapsulation and neutralization a healthy society must take care of’.¹

In fact, the Conservatives had on two previous occasions – in 1933 and 1939 – attempted a parliamentary ban on the Communist party, but failed. Until 1941, the containment of Communism was left with the Danish police, which had a long record of surveillance of political radicals and in the mid-1930s began collaborating with their German colleagues in uncovering illegal networks of Communists that had fled Germany during the months and years after Hitler’s accession to power.

What I wish to put forward in the following is the claim that collaboration between the Gestapo and the Danish State Police during the 1930s became the object of secret, political surveillance, approved and promoted by the highest police authorities. In both countries this co-operation served as a tool of social engineering. The driving force behind it was the wish to contain the threat to the social order that the exiled German Communists presented and at the same time prevent escaping German Communists from becoming a liability to the Danish-German relationship. This police work to a considerable extent relied on the personal network established between high ranking Danish and German police officials within the framework of the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC) during the 1930s.

If we are to assess the extension and consequences of German-Danish police co-operation in the 1930s in a transnational perspective, not only will we have to define the concrete scale and scope of those efforts. We must establish what kind of threat, in the eyes of the political élite, the exiled Communists posed to society. We shall also have to examine the overriding anti-Communist ideology of leading police officials in the two countries as well as the nature of the social network of the actors involved. Anti-Communist ideology and personal connections provided the scaffolding which enabled them to work together in confidence.

Our knowledge of the extent of control exercised by the liberal democratic police is still limited,² and the specific problem of interwar transnational police co-ordination between Denmark and Germany was not addressed in mainstream postwar accounts. In Denmark, the reason was twofold: first, the country had just resurfaced from five years of occupation, and the idea that Danish police had co-operated with the notorious Gestapo did not conform to the widespread view that Denmark had been on the right (i.e. winning) side in the conflict with the Nazi dictatorship. Second, and as a consequence, the critical position on Denmark’s

¹ *Rigsdagstidende* 1940-41, col. 2455-7. Copenhagen: Folketinget, 1941; Danish newspapers *Nationaltidende* and *Berlingske Tidende*, 21 August, 1941.

² Clive Emsley, ‘Control and Legitimacy: The Police in Comparative Perspective since circa 1800’, in *Social Control in Europe* vol 2, 1800-2000, eds. Clive Emsley, Eric Johnson and Pieter Spierenburg. The Ohio State University Press, 2004, 193-209.

policy during the occupation soon became the prerogative of the Danish Communist Party. In postwar Danish society, domestic Communists, along with survivors of the German left-wing resistance and emigration, forcefully accused Danish police for having shared their knowledge with the Gestapo.³ Because of its dogmatic Marxist-Leninist agenda, this literature was dismissed as propaganda, and the story of Danish police's actual co-operation with the Gestapo in the 1930s thus fell victim to the Cold War. After 1989, the picture has changed somewhat in favour of a critical stance towards Denmark's general policy of appeasement towards Nazi Germany. Later accounts, however, have paid little attention to police co-operation, focussing instead on the German emigrant environment in Copenhagen,⁴ the cross-border operations of Flensburg Gestapo,⁵ or individual Danish police officers in the roles of informers to German police during the subsequent occupation.⁶ The latest and most thorough investigation of the refugee question in Denmark did not address the question if high ranking police officials had worked together with the Gestapo but stresses the element of pressure applied by the Gestapo on the Danish judiciary system in the refugee question.⁷ Studies of the police in 'totalitarian' societies are more numerous. They have been little concerned with international co-operation, although this aspect has been taken up recently.⁸

Social engineering and foreign policy

³ This was primarily the work of Carl Madsen, a lawyer with a lifelong adherence to the Moscow controlled Danish Communist Party. Carl Madsen, *Vi skrev loven*, København: Stig Vendelkærs Forlag, 1968; Carl Madsen, *Flygtning 33. Strejflys over Hitlers Danmark*, Copenhagen: Stig Vendelkærs Forlag, 1974; also Leif Larsen & Thomas Clausen, *De forrædte. Tyske Hitlerflygtninge i Danmark*, Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1997. Carl Madsen's primary sources were made available to him by the archives of the SED and the Institut für Marxismus-Leninismus in Berlin. After 1990, these documents were included in the Bundesarchiv Abteilung R 58 at Lichterfelde. See also Michael F. Scholz, *Skandinavischen Erfahrungen Erwünscht? Nachexil und Remigration. Die ehemaligen KPD-Emigranten in Skandinavien und ihr weiteres Schicksal in der SBZ/DDR*. Stuttgart: Steiner, 2000, 291-2.

⁴ *Hitlerflüchtlinge im Norden. Asyl und politisches Exil 1933-1945*, Hans Uwe Petersen (ed.), Kiel 1991.

⁵ Gerhard Paul (Hrsg.), *Flensburg meldet: ...! Flensburg und das deutsch-dänisch Grenzgebiet im Spiegel der Berichterstattung der Geheimen Staatspolizei und des Sicherheitsdienstes (SD) des Reichsführer-SS (1933-1945)*, Flensburger Beiträge zur Zeitgeschichte 2, Flensburg: Stadtarchiv Flensburg, 1997.

⁶ Henrik Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938-47. Bekæmpelsen af spionage, sabotage og nedbrydende virksomhed*. Copenhagen: Gad, 1992; Henrik Skov Kristensen, 'I hemmelig tysk tjeneste – Hvis lille kat er du, Max Pelving?', in John T. Lauridsen (ed.), *Over strengen – under besættelsen*. Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 671-706.

⁷ Hans Kirchhoff, *Et menneske uden pas er ikke et menneske. Danmark i den internationale flygtningepolitik 1933-1939*. Odense: University of Southern Denmark Press, 2005, 197; Hans Kirchhoff, 'Udbringes af riget. Om udleveringen af den første tyske emigrant til Gestapo under besættelsen', *Historisk Tidsskrift* vol. 107/1 (2007), 102-48. The primary sources for the present article were mainly drawn from the Bundesarchiv R 58 (Reichssicherheitshauptamt). Official Danish archives do not appear to hold documents pertaining to Danish-German relations or negotiations in this matter; the relevant files are in the possession of the Danish Police Intelligence (Politiets Efterretningstjeneste; PET), and are not accessible.

⁸ Robert Gellately, *The Gestapo and German Society: Enforcing Racial Policy, 1933-1945*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990; Paul Mallmann and Gerhard Paul, eds., *Die Gestapo – Mythos und Realität*. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1995; Patrick Wagner, *Volkskommunität ohne Verbrecher. Konzeptionen und Praxis der Kriminalpolizei in der Zeit der Weimarer Republik und des Nationalsozialismus*. Hamburg: Wallstein, 1996; Patrick Wagner, *Hitlers Kriminalisten. Die deutsche Kriminalpolizei und der Nationalsozialismus*. München: Beck, 2002; Patrick Bernhard, 'Konzertierte Gegnerbekämpfung im Achsenbündnis 1933 bis 1943', *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 2 (2011), 229-62.

How can we regard anti-Communist policing as a case of social engineering? The following departs from the idea that there was a considerable element of social engineering in the deliberate attempts by the decision making élite to develop ways in which fellow citizens would increase their societal value and loyalty towards the state. As such, controlling Communism was a matter of influencing the direction in which the structures of society would develop. In their efforts to free society from unwanted elements, European governments and their policing were in this way ‘arranging and channeling environmental and social forces to create a high probability that effective social action [would] occur’, to refer to a classic concept of social engineering.⁹ And if social engineering would be concerned with managing and improving the performance of desired elements of society and thus provide the incentive for trustworthy or loyal conduct, it will often, too, be engaged in efforts to rid society of not so desired or loyal elements. In his political sociology, Norbert Elias considered social groups as ‘survival units’ who were basically engaged in the competition for access to resources of various kinds, be it political (power) or economic (markets; natural resources, etc.). The purpose of survival units is to defend the unit against outer enemies and avoid rebellion, and to secure vital necessities for the group.¹⁰ In this perspective, the eradication of undesired elements may be regarded as a response of a survival unit to a political challenge it considers a threat to its existence. In the case we are about to examine, the surveillance and, in part, persecution of exiled German Communists that was carried out by Danish police officials in co-operation with German Gestapo in the 1930s should then be interpreted as the defense mechanism of two states that were striving to protect the social order.¹¹

⁹ Jon Alexander and Joachim K.H.W.Schmidt, ‘Social Engineering: Genealogy of a Concept’, in *Social Engineering*, Adam Podgórecki, Jon Alexander, Rob Shields (eds.), Carleton University Press, 1996. The authors’ claim, ‘Only later did [social engineering] seriously invade democratic societies’, remains unsubstantiated. While social engineering has mainly been associated with Hayek and Popper’s critique of totalitarianism, the term easily applies to early democratic societies as well, as they built up their social welfare systems in response to the social effects of industrial capitalism. Karl Popper, in fact, did distinguish between ‘utopian’ (revolutionary) and ‘piecemeal’ (reformist) social engineering, although his definitions do not necessarily apply to interwar European societies. Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971.

¹⁰ Norbert Elias, *What is Sociology?* New York: Columbia University Press, 1978; Lars Bo Kaspersen and Norman Gabriel, ‘The Importance of Survival Units for Norbert Elias’ Figurational Perspective’. *Sociological Review* 56/3, 2008.

¹¹ It has been a matter of some discussion whether, in the interwar period, one can detect similarities in the way German National Socialists and Scandinavian Social Democrats cultivated ideas of a German *Volksgemeinschaft*, a Swedish *Folkhemmet* (‘the People’s Home’) and Danish Social Democrats’ 1934 political program *Danmark for Folket* (‘Denmark for the People’). While propagating the idea of a harmonious relationship between state and the nation (and reflecting a longing for Ferdinand Tönnies’ *Gemeinschaft*), the political goals were, of course, fundamentally different, as in Germany, the *Volksgemeinschaft* went hand in hand with authoritarianism and political suppression, while in the Nordic countries, democratic consensus increased during the 1930s due to stronger parliamentary traditions and the relative success of their governments in fighting the economic crisis. Nevertheless, Social Democratic and National Socialist concepts suggest a supranational co-existence of ideas of a society with a strong cohesiveness on one hand and a will to exclude elements that are not considered loyal and/or valuable to that society on the other. What those concepts did have in common was their anti-liberalist tradition, their promise of social reform and welfare, state intervention in the economy, greater economic equality, the perspective of ending the alleged class struggle of early industrial Capitalism which was considered devastating to society – and their efforts to exclude the political proponents of a continued class struggle. Norbert Götz, *Ungleiche Geschwister: Die Konstruktion von nationalsozialistischer Volksgemeinschaft und schwedischem Volksheim*. Baden-Baden: Nomos Verlag, 2001; Thomas Etzemüller, ‘Die Romantik des Reißbretts. Social engineering und demokratische Volksgemeinschaft in Schweden: Das Beispiel Alva und Gunnar Myrdal (1930–1960)’. *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 32/4, 2006.

Analyzed in the light of the concept of transnational social engineering, the unofficial police co-operation and knowledge transfer between Nazi Germany and democratic Denmark presents a challenging case and can perhaps at best be understood within the idea of epistemic communities, which stems from the study of international politics and describes communities of knowledge and perception that can sometimes be observed in established international networks.¹² It takes no great effort to depict anti-Communism as the overriding ideology that attracted democratic and right wing dictatorships to each other. Anti-Communism itself characterized the whole range of democratic parties throughout Europe.¹³

Political policing relied on efficient personal identification. The modernization of the European police forces in the beginning of the 20th century included new scientific methods, specialization among the detectives, and the establishment, maintenance and usage of card indexes of personal files.¹⁴ In Nazi Germany, with these new instruments in hand, the persecution of political opponents was a top priority within the police, and with Heinrich Himmler's takeover of German police in 1935-36, the racial definition of the German *Volk* became the very foundation on which the German police would exercise its power. In this view, in order to keep the German population strong, its 'blood' would have to be 'cleansed' of unhealthy elements, or enemies of the *Volksgemeinschaft*. In other words, crime, not least politically motivated crime, was now a matter of social engineering. When in April 1936 Werner Best described the purpose of the Gestapo as that of the 'inner Wehrmacht' of the Third Reich, he applied the biological terms so characteristic of the time. According to Best, the Gestapo was to become

‘An institution which carefully monitors the political health of the German people's body, recognizes every symptom of illness in good time, and identifies and eliminates by every suitable means the seeds of destruction – whether they originate in personal decay or deliberate poisoning from the outside.’¹⁵

Danish officials were not so colourful when describing police tasks: the biologisms so frequent in the Nazi discourse are absent in contemporary Danish police publications. And while modern, right wing dictatorships and traditional authoritarian regimes had their own, unsentimental way of dealing with the 'red menace' (prohibition, persecution, internment), parliamentary governments were obliged to officially safeguard basic democratic principles and constitutional freedom of speech, of assembly etc.¹⁶

¹² Nils Arne Sørensen, 'Den transnationale vending?', *Historisk Tidsskrift* (DK) 109/2 (2009), 468; *International Organizations* 46/1 (1992); *Global Networks: A Journal of Transnational Affairs* 1 (2001), iii.

¹³ In the French case, anti-Communism provided the platform for Vichy's collaboration with Germany during the war. See Andreas Wirsching, 'Auf dem Weg zur Kollaborationsideologie. Antibolschewismus, Antisemitismus og Nationalsozialismus im Denken der französischen extremen Rechten 1936 bis 1939', *Vierteljahreshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 41 (1993), Heft 1, 31-60.

¹⁴ Patrick Wagner, *Volksgemeinschaft ohne Verbrecher*, 87-93.

¹⁵ Ulrich Herbert, *Best. Biographische Studien über Radikalismus, Weltanschauung und Vernunft, 1903-1989*. Bonn: Dietz, 1996, 163-8; 176-7. 'Surgeons operating on the body of the nation' was the expression the German CID used when characterizing its detectives in a crime novel it published in 1944 for propaganda purposes: 'Everything which is rotten has to be cut out of this body mercilessly.' Patrick Wagner, 'Operating on the Body of the Nation: Racist Criminal Politics and Traditional Policing in Nazi Germany', in *Europe – Divided or United?*, eds. Franz Oswald and Maureen Perkins. Canberra: Southern Highlands Publishers, 2000, 383-94.

¹⁶ Simon Kitson, 'Political policing', *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés* vol. 3, no. 2, 1999, 95-102.

During the 1930s, the Danish police underwent some significant changes regarding its investigation methods, founded on personal identification. At the beginning of the 1930s, the criminal police included a 'Central Bureau for Identification', a technical laboratory, and the so-called General Register, which stored card indexes of finger prints, 'specialties' and more. In addition, local police headquarters throughout the country would keep records, not only of previously convicted persons, but also of car owners, commercial vehicles and lorry drivers, publicans and their staff, and even of dog owners.¹⁷ Danish police also managed to establish comprehensive records of people with Communist sympathies or affiliations. In 1927, Copenhagen Police established its own intelligence section, Department D, whose task was to monitor radical political environments. Headed by Andreas 'the Russian' Hansen, it infiltrated the Communist party, surveilled meetings, tapped telephone lines, secretly read letters and telegrammes, and searched local party offices at random. By 1931, Hansen had built up a card index of app. 13.000 names, which had by January 1939 grown to contain as many as 40-50.000, consisting not only of Communists but also of National Socialists.¹⁸ There was a constant risk that the restrictions on National Socialist activities would involve the risk of offending the Wilhelmstrasse. The ban on wearing a uniform in public in April 1933 and the so-called Riots Law the following year, which were primarily directed at local Nazis and other extreme right wingers but also targeted the Danish Communists, should therefore be regarded as exceptions to the rule. In general, the Danish state left it to the police to take care of the Communists, applying traditional methods such as surveillance, registration, and infiltration.¹⁹ And there were certainly things to be learnt from their German colleagues.

The impressions varied, however. In spring 1934, the weekly magazine of the Union of Danish Policemen praised the new German criminal code, which 'broke with the liberal, exaggerated humanity in the penal institutions and brought them back to the original: through harshness in punishment to have a deterrent and thereby healing effect on public morale.'²⁰ And the following year, a member of the criminal police brass band, touring Germany on an invitation from the Nordische Gesellschaft, reported how 'wonderful' it felt to compare the new conditions with the earlier [Weimar]: 'After the revolution, our Berlin colleagues could patrol at large in all parts of the city – alone. And, mind you, without risking their lives.'²¹ But there were critical voices too.²² While *Politibladet* featured a balanced yet sceptical portrait of Himmler in February, 1937, the magazine of the (Social Democrat) Criminal Police Union was not afraid to ridicule the Reichsführer and Chief of German Police in a strongly critical article the following year.²³

¹⁷ Aage Seidenfaden, 'Politiets Materiel og Udrustning', *Politiet* 1. Aarg. 1938-39 no. 1, April 1938, 11-13.

¹⁸ At that time, many cards were outdated; some even dated back to World War I. Den Parlamentariske Kommission bd. VII/2, doc. 237, 239 & 261, pp. 860-63; 912-62; Thune Jacobsen, *Paa en Uriaspost*, Copenhagen: Folmer Christensen, 1946, 77; Koch, *Demokrati – slå til!*, 65-66; Torben Jano, 'På sporet af kommunisterne. Politiets overvågning af DKP 1932-1941', *Arbejderhistorie* 1 (March 1996), 1-20; *PET-Kommissionens beretning* vol. 6, *PETs overvågning af Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti 1945-1989*. Copenhagen, 2009, 44.

¹⁹ Koch, *Demokrati – slå til!*, 97-136.

²⁰ *Politibladet* 13, 1934.

²¹ *Politibladet* 47, 1935.

²² A short exchange of views on the new Germany appeared in *Politibladet* 4, 8 and 9, 1937.

²³ *Politibladet* 8, 1937; *Kriminalpolitibladet* 14, 1938.

Still, the frequent study trips to Germany organized by the Danish state police between 1934 and 1938 attest to the Danish curiosity.²⁴ There was a long tradition of exchanging views with the Germans: in September 1932, former police president of Berlin Albert Grzesinski visited Copenhagen to give a talk to 1200 young Social Democrats on the fall of democratic rule in the German capital, and a few weeks earlier, a violent Communist demonstration in Copenhagen had called forth the creation of a 70 men riot squad within the Copenhagen police force, equipped with long truncheons, tear gas, and fire arms. The special squad was named ‘Overfaldskommando’, inspired by the German ‘Überfallkommando’.²⁵ When the first chief of the Copenhagen riot squad gave a talk on aggressive police tactics at the 2. Nordic Chief of Police Conference in Copenhagen in 1934, he partly read out a translation of a book written by a colleague in the German Schutzpolizei.²⁶

The Red Scare

Since spring 1933, many of Hitler’s political opponents had been on the move. In the mid-thirties, the Gestapo had registered close to 60.000 Germans in exile. According to Minister of Justice K.K. Steincke, in 1937 there were 1512 German refugees in Denmark, consisting of 118 KPD, 221 SPD, 156 intellectuals, 845 Jews, and 172 others.²⁷ The German political refugees carried with them the deep divisions of the Weimar years. Members of the SPD, among them Philipp Scheidemann, the prominent SPD fraction leader and Reich Chancellor in 1919, enjoyed the hospitality of Danish Social Democrats in Copenhagen.²⁸ Members of the KPD, on the other hand, sought refuge with their comrades of the Danish Communist Party and its *Rote Hilfe* (‘Red Aid’). They were not welcome in the eyes of the government, which regarded the Reds – be it Danish or foreign – with contempt and a certain amount of nervousness. Denmark’s Social Democrat prime minister,

²⁴ Preferred destinations were Berlin and Hamburg, including an excursion to the Olympic Games in 1936, and numbering as many as 36 participants (1937). *Politibladet* 47 (1934); 23 (1935); 47-51 (1935); 2, 36, 37, 43 and 46 (1936); 4 (1937); 12 (1938). In 1935, *Politibladets* correspondent was received in fluent Danish by Chief of Berlin Police 1933-35, Admiral Magnus von Levetzow and was astonished to learn that the admiral, who was born in Flensburg in 1871, had lived in Copenhagen for the first 14 years of his life. *Politibladet* 31 (1935). In 1934, eight members of the Criminal Police went on a combined trip to Germany and the Netherlands, receiving 15 German colleagues on a return visit in June. In 1935, a group of 14 Danish detectives went to Germany, one colleague staying in Berlin for four weeks. In 1937, two Criminal Police officers went on a two-week study trip to Cologne and were very impressed with their German colleagues’ methods. *Kriminalpolitibladet* 16 and 19 (1934); 22-24 (1935); 2, 4, 11 and 19 (1936); 17 and 19 (1938). In spring 1938, police officers from Denmark, Sweden, and Norway visited Stapo Hamburg, with Bruno Streckenbach acting as a host. Oula Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft. Die sicherheitspolizeiliche Zusammenarbeit zwischen Finnland ind Deutschland 1933-1944*. Darmstadt: WBG, 2010, 91.

²⁵ Compare also the linguistic resemblance to the Spanish Guardia de Asalto, which had been created in January 1932 with a similar purpose. See Jonathan Dunnage, ‘Policing Right-Wing Dictatorships: Some preliminary Comparisons of Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany and Franco’s Spain’, *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés* vol 10, no. 1, 2006, 93-122.

²⁶ Fritz Jacobsen also promoted ideas on police education based on the German system. Koch, *Demokrati – slå til!*, 72-74; 93-96.

²⁷ Graf, *Politische Polizei zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur*, 288; radio speech by K.K. Steincke in 1937, quoted in Barch R 58/2258, fol. 59-60. The playwright Bertold Brecht was perhaps the most prominent.

²⁸ Ludwig Eiber, ‘Richard Hansen, das Grenzsekretariat der Sopade in Kopenhagen und die Verbindungen nach Hamburg 1933-1939’, in *Ein sehr trübes Kapitel? Hitlerflüchtlinge im nordeuropäischen Exil 1933 bis 1950*, Hrsg. Einhart Lorenz u.a., Hamburg 1998, 181-193; Kirchhoff, *Et menneske uden pas er ikke et menneske*, 81-85; Irmtrud Wojak, *Fritz Bauer 1903-1968. Eine Biographie*. München: Beck, 2009, 113-54.

Thorvald Stauning, let there be no doubt as in 1931 he told his party comrades that ‘Any Communist seed that appears in this country should be destroyed immediately like weeds of society.’²⁹ Although the government was obliged to accept their presence because of Danish immigration laws, it was actively engaged in supplying the Communist refugees with entry permits to the Soviet Union. Since the establishment of the Danish Communist Party in 1920, the political establishment – Social Democracy in particular – had fought the Moscow-backed, revolutionary menace intensely. Never gaining more than 2.4 % of the votes during the interwar years, the Danish Communists did not pose any serious threat on the parliamentary stage, but the party openly declared its admiration of the Soviet Union, and in 1933, DKP chairman Aksel Larsen in a parliament speech declared that it was the party’s intention to overthrow society – by violence if necessary³⁰ – and he was backed by regular, violent party demonstrations. Furthermore, after 1933, a strong Communist environment in Denmark might put Denmark’s fragile political relations with Germany at stake, since the flow of German comrades into Denmark might mark the country as an international centre for Communist activities directed at the big southern neighbor. This would attract Berlin’s attention in a most unpleasant way.

The wave of Communist refugees from Germany was therefore followed closely by the Danish state and the Social Democratic government. The refugee laws were tightened already in 1934, as the border police was authorized to reject foreigners if they were considered a threat to the interests of the nation. Most travelers, however, were allowed to enter on a three-month visa if they were able to support themselves and were then expected to leave the country again.³¹ In 1937, however, entry became even more difficult, as this practice was cancelled. Political refugees at all times were obliged to register at the local police authorities, and were placed under surveillance from the day they crossed the border. Individuals, the central committee of the exiled, and the Rote Hilfe: their whereabouts, correspondence, contacts, and networks were closely monitored. The police were being constantly reminded of the problem. In 1935, for instance, a couple of illegal German Communist refugees who had distributed election propaganda were arrested in Copenhagen.³²

Potentially stirring up political unrest and provoking the Nazi neighbour, Communist emigrants thus posed a double threat to the Danish government. Concerned with foreign political radicals, the immigration police kept their own records,³³ and the Gestapo on its part was obviously eager to collaborate. Preventing support activities and propaganda dissemination from Communist emigrées was of its a central tasks.³⁴ During 1935-36, it became clear to the Gestapo that KPD exiles in Copenhagen were directing the reconstruction of the Communist party in Berlin, and that the KPD’s *Auslandskomitee* in the Danish capital was indeed

²⁹ Henning Koch, *Demokrati – slå til! Statslig nødret, ordenspoliti og frihedsrettigheder 1932-1945*, Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1994, 129.

³⁰ *Rigsdagstidende 1932-33*. Copenhagen: Folketinget, 1933, col. 4613-4615.

³¹ Bo Lidegaard, *Overleveren 1914-1945. Dansk udenrigspolitik historie vol. 4*, Copenhagen: Gyldendals leksikon, 2003, 113-4.

³² Lagebericht, Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, October 1935. Barch R 58/2039, fol. 269.

³³ Den Parlamentariske Kommission bd. VII/2, doc. 249, pp. 885.

³⁴ *Topographie des Terrors. Gestapo, SS und Reichssicherheitshauptamt in der Wilhelm- und Prinz-Albrecht-Strasse. Eine Dokumentation*. Berlin: Stiftung Topographie des Terrors, 2010, 29-39. Christoph Graf, *Politische Polizei zwischen Demokratie und Diktatur*. Berlin: Colloquium Verlag, 1983, 285-9; Herbert Reinke, ‘Policing Politics in Germany from Weimar to the Stasi’, in *The Policing of Politics*, 97.

responsible for the co-ordination of activities in the provinces bordering on the Baltic as well as and Hamburg.³⁵ At this time, the Gestapo had listed 97 German Communists staying in Denmark.³⁶

A few examples suggest the extent of the problem and how the Gestapo dealt with it. Like everywhere else, including the *Altreich*, where organized Communist resistance had been eradicated by 1936,³⁷ most of Gestapo's knowledge about conditions in Denmark was provided by a network of informers, sometimes even placed in central positions within the Danish police force. Directed from Copenhagen, members of the KPD in Denmark organized themselves with subgroups in the southern border area as close to Germany as possible, distributing printed propaganda in Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, Flensburg, Lübeck, and Stettin, and collaborating with local Danish Communists, with whom, according to the Gestapo, they had maintained close connections and personal ties for a long time.³⁸ Communist exiles helped refugees crossing the border, while their Danish comrades would provide shelter. According to one Gestapo *V-Mann* (*Vertrauensmann*; informer) in southern Jutland, one group consisting of a mixture of Danish and German Social Democrats and Communists had by June 1936 smuggled as many as 300 Germans into Denmark.³⁹

To be sure, the German police did not have to rely solely on its Danish collaborators. Gestapo would also place its own men inside the emigrant environment, and the fear of Gestapo agents permeated the KPD exile organization.⁴⁰ Moreover, the Gestapo's tight control of mail going in and out of the *Reich* sometimes produced remarkable results, making it possible to keep track of dissident groups and individuals and their plans, and hitting when it hurt the most.

Although the center of operations was Kiel, every Gestapo *Aussenstelle* was encouraged to make contact with willing Danish policemen, and it did not prove difficult to establish contact. Charged with the surveillance and persecution of political opponents in the border region, the Grenzpolizeikommissariat Flensburg, operating as a sub-division of the Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, undertook many operations across the border.⁴¹

³⁵ Horst Duhnke, *Die KPD von 1933 bis 1945*. Wiener Neustadt: Räteverlag, 1974, 189-94; Gestapa report, (no date). Barch R 58/2039. Staatspolizeistelle Kiel's Flensburg outpost has been thoroughly investigated; see Paul (1997); 'Auslandsleitungen der KPD nach dem Stande vom Mai/Juni 1936'; 'Bericht über den Aufbau, die Arbeit und die Verbindungen des A.K. (Auslandskomitees) der K.P.D.' (no date). Barch R 58/2212, fol. 1-7.

³⁶ Gestapa/Der politische Polizeikommandeur der Länder (Müller) to 'die Herren Leiter der Staatspolizeistellen', 23 July/11 August 1936. Barch R 58/2292, fol. 79-87.

³⁷ Horst Duhnke, *Die KPD von 1933 bis 1945*, 194-96; Ludwig Eiber, 'Unter Führung des NSDAP-Gauleiters', *Die Gestapo – Mythos und Realität*. Paul & Mallmann, *Die Gestapo*, 115-6.

³⁸ Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, 3 March 1938. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 18 and Barch R 58/2042, fol. 378; Report, Staatspolizeistelle Kiel; no date). Barch R 58/2211, fol. 25; Lagebericht, Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, October 1935. Barch R 58/2039, fol. 269. Communist activities in the border zone, which was named the 'Wasserkante' ('Waterline'), is described in Paul (1997). See also Barch R 58/2039; 2211; 2212; 2042.

³⁹ Memo, Dr. Hasselbacher (Gestapa), 12 February 1937. Barch R 58/2042, fol. 276-77.

⁴⁰ On possible Gestapo agents staying in the Emigrants' Home in Copenhagen, see 'Auf vertraulichem Wege beschafftes Material', 4 May 1938. Barch R 58/2211, fol. 36.

⁴¹ Stephan Linck, *Der Ordnung verpflichtet: Deutsche Polizei 1933-1949. Der Fall Flensburg*. Paderborn: Schöningh, 2000, 56-57. Surprisingly few staff members were connected to the party or the SA/SS organizations, which is interesting because Schleswig-Holstein is generally considered as one of the most 'Nazified' German provinces: a personnel report from 1935 records only one SA member out of 17 employees and not one member of the SS or SD,

In December 1936, Staatspolizeistelle Schwerin reported that it had a good relationship with the Danish colleagues across the Baltic, and that it maintained good and informative contacts in the Copenhagen police force,⁴² while Hamburg Gestapo reported that it commanded a connection in Copenhagen of such a quality that it could ‘even get information from the Copenhagen political police [i.e. Department D of Copenhagen Police], of course in such a way that nobody would suspect the Gestapo to be involved’.⁴³ Their colleagues at Lübeck Gestapo also enjoyed the collaboration of an employee in the intelligence service of Copenhagen Police. Since autumn 1936, under the cover name of ‘Aage’, he supplied his contact with all sorts of information that might be helpful in ‘the fight against Communism’, as he called it. ‘Aage’ also carried out numerous tasks for the Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, and among other things established the identities and addresses of Communist refugees in Copenhagen; on four occasions in November 1937 alone, he reported on 17 persons in all, who were affiliated with the Rote Hilfe in Copenhagen.⁴⁴

A handful of lower ranking Danish police detectives had indeed engaged themselves in the matter. Acting on their own accord, some of them went too far. In January 1939, Kaj Yttesen, a criminal detective at Copenhagen Police Intelligence – probably identical with the above-mentioned ‘Aage’ – was disclosed as an informer to Hamburg Gestapo and suspended, while his superior, Andreas ‘the Russian’ Hansen, was dismissed. During that same operation, the Copenhagen criminal police discovered that a well-known Nazi high court lawyer, Eiler Pontoppidan, had been collecting material on German refugees for the Gestapo.⁴⁵ In connection with this case, Max Pelving, a criminal detective at Copenhagen Immigration Police, was disclosed as another German agent. Pelving was subsequently dismissed from the police and received a prison sentence.⁴⁶ The legal procedures against individual half-baked or fully fledged Nazis in the police force obviously attracted public attention. But while informers such as Pelving and Yttesen were disclosed and punished by the legal system, what was not revealed was the fact that the highest police authorities had for some time been organizing the transfer of knowledge with the Gestapo themselves.

In June 1935, the actions of Flensburg Gestapo still came as a surprise to the Danish Foreign Service, which felt obliged to hand in an official protest to the Auswärtiges Amt and received the answer that such

which was highly unusual. Several employees in Flensburg Gestapo were former Social Democrats, predisposed to protecting SPD members who got themselves into trouble after 1933 (Linck, *Der Ordnung verpflichtet*, 105). The head of Flensburg Gestapo, *Kriminalrat* Hans Hermannsen, who played a key role in the KPD persecutions, was such a person. Hermannsen became a member of NSDAP in 1935, for what seems to have been tactical reasons. Hermannsen was, in fact, a Social Democrat, who had been with the political police in Flensburg since 1922. He was fluent in Danish and, from 1924 on, he directed the *Spionageabwehr*, targeted at the Danish minority in Schleswig-Holstein. Linck, *Der Ordnung verpflichtet*, 58; Gerhard Paul, ‘Hans Hermannsen – Flensburgs Gestapo-chef’, in *Verführt – verfolgt – verschleppt. Aspekte nationalsozialistischer Herrschaft in Flensburg 1933-1945*. Flensburger Beiträge zur Zeitgeschichte 1, Flensburg 1996, 101-127. At a conference in Flensburg in October 1937, attended by Gestapo officers from Gestapa and Stapodienststellen Kiel, Hamburg and Stettin, Hermannsen gave a thorough account of Gestapo operations in the region. Bericht über eine fünfstündige Besprechung in Flensburg am 28.10.1937. Barch R 58/2258, fol. 69-71. Also cited in Linck, *Der Ordnung verpflichtet*, 107-08.

⁴² Staatspolizeistelle Schwerin to Gestapa, 4 December 1936. Barch R 58/2042, fol. 267.

⁴³ Geheime Staatspolizei Hamburg to Gestapa, 16 December 1936. R 58/2042, fol. 269.

⁴⁴ Memo, Lübeck, 1 November 1937, Betrifft: V-Mann Aage aus Kopenhagen. Barch R 58/2042.

⁴⁵ Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938-47*, 108-11.

⁴⁶ For the Pontoppidan/Pelving case, see P. Munch, *Erindringer 1933-1939*. Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1966, 271; Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938-47*, 148-52; Skov Kristensen (2007).

operations were indeed taking place, but that no action had been undertaken without the approval of Danish authorities.⁴⁷ This raises the question to what extent leading Danish police officials were involved in knowledge sharing with the Gestapo at this early stage. In any case, 1935 would seem to be the turning point.

Transnational police networks and Anti-Communist ideology

The road to a concerted effort of German and Danish police was not without obstacles. The most delicate part was the fact that since 1929, Denmark's government had been dominated by the Social Democratic Party. Denmark's Social Democrats maintained close connections with their German associates of the 2. International, and watched to their dismay the persecution and dissolution of the German labor movement in 1933-34. In 1933, the Social Democrats' leading intellectual, MP Hartvig Frisch, published his book *Plague over Europe*, which was a frontal attack on the regimes of Hitler and Mussolini – and Stalin, to be sure. And the party's unofficial no. 2, party secretary Hans Hedtoft-Hansen, was a leading figure in the so-called Matteotti Committee in Copenhagen, which organized the aid programs for German Social Democrats who found a safe haven in Denmark during the 1930s. Hedtoft-Hansen, who was appointed chairman of the Social Democratic Party in 1939, had to resign after German pressure in 1941 because of his anti-Nazi rhetoric. If we are to explain how such differences could be overcome, it is necessary to emphasize the fact that in both countries, ideological differences were first and foremost played out on the domestic, political agenda. In the *Realpolitik* of the international stage, the wish for good relations dominated. During the 1930s, it was a key interest of the Danish government not to consider Denmark an enemy of Nazi Germany.⁴⁸

Transnational police co-operation was no novelty in the 1930s. Already in 1898, an international conference on the fight against Anarchist violence was organized in Rome; and the origins of the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC; later Interpol) can be traced back to the years preceding World War I and the International Congress of Investigation in Monaco in 1914.⁴⁹ Later on, anti-Communism serving as the ideological foundation, police co-operation between Nazi Germany and a democratic country such as the United States could function well.⁵⁰ Political policing is, indeed, not only a characteristic of dictatorships or authoritarian regimes; it is a trait of the modern nation-state, which will just as well seek to suppress subversive elements.⁵¹

⁴⁷ Barch R 43 I/62, * Evidence of this have not been found in Danish sources.

⁴⁸ In this sense, it would be questionable to conclude that Denmark was 'learning from the enemy'. In real politics, recognizing an enmity towards another country would require a certain degree of military, political or socio-economic symmetry which was never present in the relationship between the small state of Denmark and the German great power. See *Vom Gegner lernen. Feindschaften und Kulturtransfers im Europa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, eds. Martin Aust & Daniel Schönplflug. Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2009, 18.

⁴⁹ Cyrille Fijnaut, 'The internationalization of criminal investigation in Western Europe', in *Police Co-operation in Europe*. Cyrille Fijnaut and R.H. Hermans (eds.). Lochem: van den Brink, 1987; 33; Cyrille Fijnaut, 'The International Criminal Police Commission and the Fight against Communism, 1923-1945', in *The Policing of Politics in the Twentieth Century: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Mark Mazower. Providence/Oxford: Berghahn, 1997, 107-28.

⁵⁰ Mathieu Deflem, *Policing World Society: Historical Foundations of International Police Co-operation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

⁵¹ Clive Emsley, 'Introduction: Political Police and the European Nation-State in the Nineteenth Century', in Mazower, *The Policing of Politics*.

The establishment of the ICPC in 1923-1924 has been described as more or less the institutionalization of anti-Communist networks among senior police officers throughout Western Europe, although the fight against Communism was not ICPC's official purpose.⁵²

If the Nazis never utilized the ICPC directly in the fight against Communism, they instead built up a parallel system of bilateral police agreements with a range of friendly nations, which, in Himmler's view, should be regarded as a sort of Fascist ICPC. According to the explicitly stated German intentions behind this network, police work must be the chosen ground for an international, long term front against Communism.⁵³ Within this framework, Werner Best organized a couple of secret, international anti-Communist policing congresses in 1937 and 1938.⁵⁴ Although the three Scandinavian countries had neither signed any police agreement with Germany (whereas Finland had), nor participated in Best's congresses, in Denmark's case there ought to be no serious obstacles to a harmonious relationship. In 1938, at least, Heydrich considered German police collaboration with Denmark (and other co-operating countries such as the Netherlands, Poland, and Greece) just as fruitful as collaborations with officially participating countries and 'conducted in the same spirit'.⁵⁵ It was only a matter of mobilizing the informal networks. German and Danish police intelligence had a history of collaboration in the repression of subversive elements: already in 1904, Denmark and Germany had signed an agreement on mutual assistance in the fight against Anarchist terror, and during the politically unstable 1920s the contacts were intensified.⁵⁶ The key figure in Danish police work in the 1930s, Eigil

⁵² Fijnaut, 'The International Criminal Police Commission', 107-28. During the ICPC meeting in Belgrade in 1936, when the participants were taken on a cruise on the coast of Dalmatia, Count Helldorf, then police commissioner of Potsdam, discussed the Communist threat with the Chief of Police of Montenegro, who prudently tried the opinion that food and shelter were the best medicine against Communism. According to a witness, Helldorf replied that he knew of one good medicine only; the firing squad. Söderman, *Policeman's Lot*, 377.

⁵³ 'Zusammenarbeit der Geheimen Staatspolizei mit ausländischen politische Polizeien', Heydrich to Ribbentrop, 22 August 1938, cited in Patrick Bernhard, 'Der Beginn einer faschistischen Interpol? Das deutsch-italienische Polizeiabkommen von 1936 und die Zusammenarbeit der faschistischen Diktaturen im Europa der Zwischenkriegszeit'. *Themenportal Europäische Geschichte*, www.europa.clio-online.de.

⁵⁴ Sebastian Weitkamp, 'SS-Diplomaten. Die Polizei-Attachés und SD-Beauftragten an den deutschen Auslandsmissionen', in *Deformation der Gesellschaft? Neue Forschungen zum Nationalsozialismus*, eds. Christian A. Braun, Michael Mayer, Sebastian Weitkamp. Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2008, 49-74 (50); Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft*, 83.

⁵⁵ Bernhard, 'Der Beginn einer faschistischen Interpol?', 1. 'With these countries only direct and secret co-operation with individual officers would perhaps be possible'. Fijnaut, 'The International Criminal Police Commission', 120.

⁵⁶ In 1929, Andreas Hansen, head of Copenhagen police intelligence, approached the German legation and offered whatever information the German police might be interested in regarding Danish Communists. Memo by German commercial attaché Krüger, 28 March 1929, quoted in Madsen, *Flygtning* '33, 78; Koch, *Demokrati – slå til!*, 65-66; Morten Thing, 'Da politiet var lige ved at få et efterretningsvæsen', in *Historiens kultur*, Ning de Coninck-Smith, Mogens Rüdiger & Morten Thing (eds.), Copenhagen: Museum Tusulanum, 1997, 157-76. In March 1933, right after the Nazi takeover, chief of Copenhagen Police Fabricius Hansen wrote Berlin's police director and asked him if he knew anything of German Communists staying in Denmark, eagerly repeating his request a month later (Rüdiger & Thing, *Historiens kultur*, 78-80*). The preliminary contacts led to a (failed) attempt by Danish and German police agents to kidnap the German Communist Franz Vogel from his Copenhagen apartment in June, 1934. Madsen, *Vi skrev loven*, 98-108; Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938-47*, 109-10. For other examples of Gestapo kidnappings abroad, see *Nazi Refugee Turned Gestapo Spy: The Life of Hans Wesemann, 1895-1971*, James J. Barnes and Patience P. Barnes (eds.), Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2001, 85-92.

Thune Jacobsen, would take every opportunity to promote such international collaboration.⁵⁷ Denmark had joined the ICPC in 1923,⁵⁸ and Thune Jacobsen had been a personal member of the organisation since 1930, representing Denmark at the congresses of 1934, 1935, 1936, and 1938, the year when the ICPC came under Nazi control. In those years, he also served as the commission's vice president.⁵⁹

Thune Jacobsen's international network was substantial and included a wide range of German and Austrian senior police officials. Hosting the 11th regular ICPC meeting in Copenhagen on 17-20 June 1935 was his key to success. This was the first time the Nazis made their presence felt. The German delegation was headed by SS-Obergruppenführer and General of the Police Kurt Daluege, head of the police department in the Ministry of the Interior and future chief of the *Ordnungspolizei*, and also counted Arthur Nebe, head of Landeskriminalpolizeiamt in the police presidium of Berlin, future Chief of the German Criminal Police, ICPC director 1938-1944 and acting ICPC president 1942-1943. Daluege and Nebe were accompanied by Oberregierungsrat Karl Zindel, who had joined the ICPC the previous year representing the German Ministry of the Interior,⁶⁰ Graf von Helldorf, chief of police in Potsdam (and promoted to chief of police in Berlin the following month), and Dr. Johannes Palitzsch. As chief of police in Dresden, Palitzsch had been a founding member of ICPC in 1923, and was now president of the German Criminal Police Commission.

At Copenhagen, apart from technical issues regarding the detection of crime, the ICPC also discussed political aspects such as 'Fighting the Gypsy menace' and 'Fighting terrorism'.⁶¹ Zindel delivered a speech on National Socialism's fight against crime, and Daluege was elected vice president along with Thune Jacobsen and others. But the ICPC meetings 'served a more important purpose than to furnish opportunity for talk and eating at banquets', wrote one of its members afterwards. 'They fostered personal relationships between the police chiefs, and this is all-important.'⁶² The ICPC 'fostered the growth of personal relationships between the C.I.D. [Criminal Investigation Department] chiefs of police in different countries leading to mutual trust (...)', confirmed another.⁶³ This was also the opinion of Daluege, who in a 1935

⁵⁷ Thune Jacobsen was chief of the intelligence section of Copenhagen Police 1926-33, chief of Denmark's State Police (Statspolitiet) 1933, chief of Copenhagen Police 1936, again chief of the State Police 1937, and first chief of the National Police (Rigspolitiet) 1938. He became Minister of Justice in 1941 and was responsible for the police collaboration with the German police until 1943.

⁵⁸ *Die Internationale Kriminalpolizeiliche Kommission und ihr Werk*. Verfasst von Dr. Oskar Dressler, Generalsekretär der IKPK. Hrsg. von der IKPK, Berlin, 1942, 11.

⁵⁹ In 1935, the Austrian president of ICPC, Dr. Michael Skubl, was assisted by no less than seven vice presidents, among others from Denmark and Germany. W.H.D. Lester (FBI), 'Memorandum for Mr. Tolson regarding International Criminal Police Commission', May 15, 1935. <http://vault.fbi.gov/Interpol/Interpol%20Part%201%20of%2017> (accessed 23 June, 2011). In 1937, Denmark was represented by Ivan Stamm, Chief of Copenhagen Police since 1937 (Jacobsen, *Paa en Uriaspost*, 16).

⁶⁰ Zindel was *Vorsitzender* of the ICPC in 1941-44. Joining the SS in 1937, he became a Standartenführer in 1938 and was transferred to RSHA in 1939 as Gruppenleiter Recht (Ia). In 1940-41 he represented Heydrich at the *Corpo di Polizia dell' Afrika Italiana*, providing training for security police officers in colonial policing. He was also involved in the organizing of the Einsatzgruppen in occupied USSR (see Herbert, *Best*, 512).

⁶¹ Dressler, *Die Internationale Kriminalpolizeiliche Kommission*, 112.

⁶² Harry Söderman, *Policeman's Lot. A Criminologist's Gallery of Friends and Felons*. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1957, 374-5; *Inte bara brott. Erindringar*. Stockholm, 1956, 378. Söderman, a Swedish police official and famed pioneer of forensic science, worked for the ICPC both before and after the war.

⁶³ Ronald Howe, *The Pursuit of Crime*. London: Arthur Baker Ltd., 1961, 128.

interview stated that the success of the ICPC was very much due to the meetings, which ‘brought a “personal touch” to an otherwise purely practical (“sachlich”) matter’.⁶⁴ Thune Jacobsen was fully aware of this. On the evening of June 19th, he joined a formal dinner party in honour of the German delegation given by the German envoy to Copenhagen, Richthofen.⁶⁵ And after the Copenhagen ICPC meeting, he was on Christian name terms with both Zindel and Nebe. Despite the occupation in 1940, he upheld his private connections with them; Zindel’s daughter, Ingrid, even stayed with the Jacobsen family for a while during the war.⁶⁶ And the connections rubbed off: in spring 1939, after the establishment of the Danish Security Police, its newly appointed chief, Emil Strøbech, wished to go abroad to study the experiences of neighbouring security police organizations. But while Strøbech would have preferred to go to Finland or Great Britain, his superior, Thune Jacobsen, saw to it that was sent to Berlin on an eight days’ study visit at Gestapo headquarters, where he was hosted by Werner Best, head of Gestapo’s *Personalabteilung* (and later head of the German civil administration in Denmark).⁶⁷ The reason, Strøbech later recalled, was probably Thune Jacobsen’s excellent personal connections within the German police, some of whom Strøbech had met in Thune Jacobsen’s home. In Berlin, Strøbech acquired a first-hand knowledge of Gestapo’s card index and filing systems. In this way, the personal network of higher police officials provided the basis for transnational, socio-technical learning processes.⁶⁸ In his postwar apology, Thune Jacobsen remembered Nebe and Zindel as ‘decent Germans’ and ‘fervent anti-Nazis’.⁶⁹ His close connections with vice president of Berlin Police, SS-Brigadeführer Paul

⁶⁴ Quoted from Deflem, *Policing World Society*, 182. At the ICPC meeting in Copenhagen in 1935, Daluege lost a drinking contest with Söderman and had to be carried to his quarters. Söderman, *Inte bara brott*, 379.

⁶⁵ Richthofen to Auswärtiges Amt, 27.06.1935. Bundesarchiv R43I/62, fiche 6.

⁶⁶ Henrik Stevnsborg, *Politi 1682-2007*. Frederiksberg: Samfundslitteratur, 2010, 79. Compare Himmler’s professional and personal bonding with his Italian counterpart, Arturo Bocchini. Bernhard, ‘Konzernierte Gegnerbekämpfung’, 247-49.

⁶⁷ Stevnsborg *Politiet 1938-47*, 122.

⁶⁸ Den Parlamentariske Kommission bd. VII/3, sten ref. 680; Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938-47*, 122. Thune Jacobsen’s dealings with Germany were so extensive that when in September 1939, the British military attaché in Copenhagen Noel Craig reported that the Copenhagen Police Force was under heavy influence by the Germans, he did not forget to mention that a reliable source of his, a Copenhagen District Attorney, suspected that Thune Jacobsen might be on Gestapo’s payroll (Madsen, *Flygtning* ‘33, 77). While the allegation was probably without grounds, historiography has concluded that Thune Jacobsen’s activities were certainly bordering on high treason. See Stevnsborg, *Politi 1682-2007*, 79.

⁶⁹ Jacobsen, *Paa en Uriaspost*, 22-4. In his memoirs, Harry Söderman described Nebe and Zindel as ‘professional policemen’ and ‘very mild Nazis’ (Harry Söderman, *Inte bara brott. Erindringer*. Stockholm, 1956, 379). Like Helldorf, Nebe was executed in 1944 after his alleged participation in the Stauffenberg plot; Zindel committed suicide in 1945. Together with ICPC general secretary Dressler, they promoted Reinhard Heydrich’s appointment to ICPC president in 1940, after which the ICPC headquarters was moved from Vienna to Berlin. Deflem, *Policing World Society*, 192; Mathieu Deflem, ‘The Logic of Nazification: The Case of the International Criminal Police Commission (“Interpol”).’ *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* 43(1), 2002, 21-44. For Nebe, who ‘hated Himmler, Heydrich and Gestapo like poison’, see also Harry Söderman, *Skandinaviskt mellanspel*. Stockholm: Forum, 1945, 261-7. General accounts of the history of Interpol have nothing to add (Michael Fooner, *Interpol. Issues in World Crime and International Criminal Justice*. New York and London: Plenum Press, 1989; Fenton Bresler, *Interpol*. London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1992). The Interpol itself has not responded to this author’s approaches. Some basic facts, however, can be found in Dressler, *Die Internationale Kriminalpolizeiliche Kommission und ihr Werk*.

Kanstein, came in handy in 1940-1943, when Kanstein was posted at the German legation in Copenhagen as commissioner for the security of the German forces in Denmark.⁷⁰

Shortly after the Copenhagen ICPC meeting in 1935, the German-Danish connection was put to the test. In October, Staatspolizeistelle Kiel learned from its Danish sources that for fear of Gestapo infiltration among the exiled, Moscow had now ordered the Danish Communist Party to reorganize all German Communists living in Denmark. As main figures of the new organization, the report mentioned seven cover names, three of which the source had been able to identify by their real names with the aid of Gestapo's own card index *Verzeichnis flüchtiger Kommunisten*. When Gestapo made inquiries at the Copenhagen Police as to some personal details of the Communists involved, chief of Copenhagen Criminal Police Ivan Stamm supplied Gestapo with the required information *in persona*, which indicated that this was a matter of high priority.⁷¹

The stream of information continued. Gestapo would make regular requests regarding German individuals who were staying in Denmark and would then be provided with what information Danish police possessed. In May 1936, Kiel was able to provide Berlin Gestapo with a list of 169 names and addresses of exiled German Communists in Denmark, explicitly stating that the list was based on Danish police registers – card indexes (therefore it only concerned persons who were legally staying in Denmark).⁷²

Again, Flensburg Gestapo was particularly active. In August 1936, *Kriminal-Bezirkssekretär* Hans Hermannsen and *Kriminalsekretär* Bruns went on a fact-finding mission in Copenhagen.⁷³ Their enquiries revealed – and this had been confirmed both by informers and by Danish officials – that illegal couriers carrying written propaganda from Copenhagen to Germany avoided the Schleswig border and instead used the ferry from Copenhagen to Lübeck. The information also included very detailed personal data on a number of emigrants, among them the leaders of the Rote Hilfe. After this, Kiel described the continuing collaboration with Copenhagen as ‚basically good and trustworthy‘ and trusted future operations in the Danish capital to be carried out with success.⁷⁴

In February 1938, Kiel reported that Denmark's Communist Party was in the process of establishing a 'Red Workers' Defense' (Rote Arbeiterwehr), and that the Danish police had already embarked on an intensive surveillance of the new organization, which mostly consisted of Spanish Civil War veterans.⁷⁵ Between autumn 1937 and spring 1938, the Gestapo was able to establish the exact Copenhagen addresses of the Foreign Direction of the KPD and the Central Commission for German Communist Emigrants as well as the

⁷⁰ According to Thune Jacobsen, Kanstein himself had been installed as a result of the joint efforts of Nebe and Zindel because of their wish for a soft hand in Denmark.

⁷¹ Staatspolizeistelle Kiel to Gestapo, 23 October 1935. Barch R 58/2039, fol. 267; Københavns Politikammer/Chefen for Opdagelsespolitiet to Geheime Staatspolizeiamt, 23 January 1936. Barch R 58/2039, fol. 268.

⁷² Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, 27 May 1936. Barch R 58/2211, fol. 1.

⁷³ 'Sie haben bei dieser Gelegenheit umfangreiche Ermittlungen über die Tätigkeit der KPD in Kopenhagen angestellt. (...) Zunächst konnte (...) einwandfrei festgestellt werden, daß die beiden deutschen Kommunisten (...) nach Spanien gereist sind.' Staatspolizeistelle Kiel to SS-Sturmbannführer Müller (Gestapo), 26 September 1936. Barch R 58/2042, fol. 232-237.

⁷⁴ 'Die hiesigen Verbindungen nach Kopenhagen bestehen weiter und müssen auch als durchaus zuverlässig und gut bezeichnet werden. Es kann gesagt werden, daß Aufträge in Kopenhagen von hier aus mit ziemlicher Sicherheit erfolgreich ausgeführt werden können.' Ibid. fol. 236.

⁷⁵ Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, 18 Feb 1938. Barch R 58/2211, fol. 30.

Rote Hilfe. The intelligence included a complete list of the members of the Central Committee and their tasks within the committee, as well as the complete leadership of the Rote Hilfe.⁷⁶

Since any foreigner legally staying in Denmark had been registered by the immigration police, it was easy to extract the necessary information from their card index when asked by German colleagues. When in autumn 1938, the Staatspolizeistelle Kiel made some enquiries in Copenhagen regarding a subscriber to *Lübecker Tageszeitung*, who lived in Trørød north of the capital, Kiel received a large amount of personal data, including the information that the subscriber had in 1937 been married to a German emigrant 'who also had other German local newspapers at his address from which he cut and pasted articles of particular political, economic and military interest'.⁷⁷ Danish police had clearly paid his home a visit.

[Illustration: Gestapo's plan of the apartment in 24, Klosterstræde.]

Tightening the immigrant laws in 1934 and 1937, the Danish government had gradually taken on a more restrictive approach. Despite the intensified cross-border police co-operation, the problems with the Communists continued. In January 1937, as a centrally placed *V-Mann* in Denmark fell seriously ill, the Gestapo in Kiel decided to strike and subsequently rounded up two Communist cells, arresting seven people in Flensburg and fourteen in Kiel. Both groups maintained close links with comrades in Copenhagen.⁷⁸ In November that same year, a Danish Communist was followed by the Gestapo and the apprehended after having delivered anti-Nazi pamphlets at an address in Flensburg.⁷⁹ Such incidents were more than just embarrassments to the Danish government, and in the long run they were bound to burden political relations. When the German foreign minister von Neurath made a remark to his Danish colleague P. Munch in June 1937 that Denmark was letting in too many emigrants from Germany, it was sufficient to increase Danish anxieties,⁸⁰ and finally, on 17 November 1938, Minister of Justice, K.K. Steincke, called a meeting with Prime Minister Stauning and Social Democrat party secretary Hedtoft-Hansen, as well as representatives of Danish aid organizations for exiled intellectuals and Social Democrats and the umbrella organization 'Emigrant Aid Committee'. Philipp Scheidemann was also present. According to the minutes that were leaked to the Gestapo, Steincke let it be known that in the government, the immigrant question was a source for great concern, and that it had so far avoided a discussion in parliament, but only with extreme difficulty. The minister had adopted a policy of rejection towards Germans who wished to join their relatives in Denmark. The country had no more room for refugees.⁸¹

Meanwhile, Scandinavian police forces tried to preserve room for co-ordination ahead of their German colleagues. In March 1939, the Swedish security police was approached by the Gestapo in connection with the repeated sabotage against German ships committed by the Communist Wollweber Group. The Swedes

⁷⁶ Note, 22 September 1937 (Gestapa); Vermerk, 10 December 1937 (Gestapa); Staatspolizeistelle Kiel, 3 March 1938. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 11-16; Barch R 58/2042, fol. 374-76;

⁷⁷ Staatspolizeistelle Kiel to Gestapa, 13 September 1938. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 22-23.

⁷⁸ Staatspolizeistelle Kiel to Gestapa, 17 February 1937. Barch R 58/2042, fol. 277-86.

⁷⁹ Note (Gestapa), 27 December 1937. Barch R 58/2211, fol. 24.

⁸⁰ Peter Munch, *Erindringer 1933-1939. Paa Vej mod Krigen*. Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag Arnold Busck, 1966, 200; Kirchhoff, *Et menneske uden et pas er ikke et menneske*, 199.

⁸¹ 'Marxismus'. Lagebericht der Stapo Kiel für Nov. 38. Barch R 58/2043, fol. 38-45. Partly quoted in a report from Gestapa to Auswärtiges Amt, 19 December 1938. Barch R 58/2258, fol. 124.

immediately convened representatives of Finland, Norway, and Denmark for a meeting in Stockholm in order to discuss the German request. On that occasion, the chief of Copenhagen Criminal Police Eivind Larsen told his Finnish colleague that the Danish criminal police was already in 'very close contact' with the Gestapo. According to Larsen, one of his employees visited Berlin and Hamburg frequently, and Gestapo officers had been to Copenhagen. He expressed his wish to receive whatever information on the Wollweber Group could be obtained by Scandinavian police investigations, in order that he might pass it on to the Gestapo, so that the Germans in turn would put information at the disposal of Danish police.⁸² Now it was *quid pro quo*.

It may well have been Gestapo's Scandinavian initiative in March 1939 which caused Thune Jacobsen to request a meeting with Dr. Herbert Hensel of the German legation in Copenhagen, which took place on 20 March, immediately after the Stockholm conference. Thune Jacobsen wished to inform the Germans about his intentions of intensifying the surveillance of the German emigrants in Denmark, 'the Communists in particular'.⁸³ According to the Danish chief of police, the surveillance of German as well as Danish Communists had until then been the responsibility of 6-8 police officers; he would now increase this number. He paid particular attention to the individuals who had returned from the civil war in Spain.⁸⁴ The main task was to prevent the Communists from building a center in Denmark, directed by Moscow. During the talk, Thune Jacobsen mentioned the collaboration between the Danish police and their Norwegian and Swedish colleagues. He also asked for the legation's help in the matter and asked if the legation knew anything of illegal Communist organizations in Denmark. Hensel promised to make enquiries and confirmed that Germany was of course intent on preventing any Communist activity from abroad. Unable or unwilling to disclose any details on German police work, Hensel then turned the tables, asking if there was no collaboration with German police. This was indeed the case, answered Thune Jacobsen, but only when it came to combating sabotage and terrorist actions, not on a general level – which was, of course, not the whole truth. The German Foreign Ministry, which already supplied the Gestapo with information,⁸⁵ duly reported the talk with Thune Jacobsen to Gestapo.

Cecil von Renthe-Fink, head of the German legation in Copenhagen, commented that whether there were realities behind Thune Jacobsen's statements remained to be seen. So was the conclusion at Gestapo.⁸⁶ But Gestapo did not have to wait for long. In August that same year Kiel informed Gestapo that the Danish chief of police had now adopted new and harsh measures towards the Communist emigrants – and their Danish comrades as well. Every police district in the country had been ordered to intensify its surveillance. At any

⁸² Account of head of Finnish secret police, Bruno Aaltonen, of a journey to Stockholm on 15-19 March, 1939. Cited in Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft*, 86; 92.

⁸³ Aufzeichnung, Gesandtschaftsrat Dr. Hensel, 20 March 1939; Renthe-Fink (Deutsche Gesandtschaft Kopenhagen) to Auswärtiges Amt, 27 March 1939; Auswärtiges Amt to SS-Standartenführer Müller (Gestapo), 31 March 1939. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 29-33.

⁸⁴ Danish Communist who had fought in the Spanish Civil War did indeed pioneer the armed resistance in Denmark from 1942, applying their experience in handling weapons and explosives. See Esben Kjeldbæk, *Sabotageorganisationen BOPA 1942-1945*, Copenhagen: Frihedsmuseets Venners Forlag, 1997, 23-86.

⁸⁵ Auswärtiges Amt to Gestapo reg. Communist activity in the southern Danish town of Aabenraa, 8 November 1937. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 28.

⁸⁶ Renthe-Fink (Deutsche Gesandtschaft Kopenhagen) to Auswärtiges Amt, 27 March 1939; Auswärtiges Amt to SS-Standartenführer Müller (Gestapo), 31 March 1939; Gestapo to Staatspolizeistelle Kiel and Staatspolizeileitstelle Hamburg, 3 May 1939. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 29-30; 42.

sign of involvement in political activity, emigrants would be expelled. Indicating sources inside the Danish police, the report specifically stated that ‘these measures against all Communists and emigrants in Denmark are solely due to the initiatives of chief of police Thune Jacobsen’.⁸⁷ A Gestapo agent in Copenhagen confirmed this impression.⁸⁸

The community of knowledge and anti-Communist ideology proved an excellent point of departure as German and Danish police officials were thrown into the task of establishing a new kind of working relationship following the German military move against Denmark on 9 April 1940. Shortly after the German invasion, the German military intelligence reported that the Danish chief of the immigration police, Otto von Linstow, was someone to be reckoned on: having visited the Nazi party rallies at Nuremberg several times, they knew him to be an enthusiastic supporter of the new regime in Germany.⁸⁹ And when a German police delegation visited Copenhagen in July 1941, headed by chief of Hamburg Ordnungspolizei general Herbert Becker and Obersturmbannführer Josef Heischmann of Berlin Police, Thune Jacobsen, who had just been appointed Minister of Justice, in his welcome speech took the opportunity to thank his German colleagues for many years of ‘fruitful collaboration’. ‘Danish police has good reason to thank you for many a helping hand, and fortunately, we have had the opportunity to reciprocate your favors every now and then’, he said. He also thanked for an excellent and very close collaboration with the German police that had been stationed in Denmark since April 1940. Danish police looked upon them with ‘respect, esteem, and friendly feelings’.⁹⁰ Many of the 20 German police officers that were transferred to Denmark during 1940, where they were assigned to SS-Brigadeführer Paul Kanstein at the German legation, were in fact old collaborators.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Staatspolizeistelle Kiel to SS-Oberführer Müller (Gestapa), 4 August 1939. Barch R 58/2212, fol. 43.

⁸⁸ Barch R 58/492*

⁸⁹ Stimmungsbericht, Abwehrstelle beim höheren Kommando z.b.V. XXXI, 24 April 1940, cited in Carl Madsen (1974), 34.

⁹⁰ Niels Alkil (ed.), *Besættelsestidens Fakta* vol. II, Copenhagen: Schultz 1946, 1469; 187-88; Jakobsen, *Paa en Uriaspøst*, 39-41; Claus B. Christensen, Joachim Lund, Jakob Sørensen & Niels W. Olesen, *Danmark besat. Krig og hverdag 1940-45*, 3. rev. ed., Copenhagen: Informations Forlag, 224. Thune Jacobsen was the only cabinet minister to meet with Heinrich Himmler during his short visit to Copenhagen in May 1941. Jakobsen, *Paa en Uriaspøst*, 38-9.

⁹¹ Until the promotion of SS-Sturmbannführer Anton Fest in 1942, the German legation in Copenhagen had no police attaché. Since April, 1940, Fest, answering to Kanstein, directed German police officers attached to the legation. These included the above mentioned Hans Hermannsen from Flensburg Gestapo, who enjoyed numerous social relations with his Danish colleagues, arriving at the Copenhagen legation in April 1940 with instructions to carry on Gestapo’s *Gegnerbekämpfung* in Denmark. In 1943, he was put in charge of Referat IV-1-a (Communist surveillance). The legation’s Department D (Sicherheitsdienst) was directed by Hans Pahl, who came to Denmark in April 1940 from RSHA, Department IV, where he had conducted Gestapo’s Danish affairs. Hans Wäsche, a former teacher at the German school in Copenhagen, who had worked for the SD since 1936, joined him. In autumn 1943, after the SD and Sicherheitspolizei had established itself in Denmark under SS-Standartenführer Otto Bovensiepen, SS-Sturmbannführer Karl-Heinz Hoffmann was installed as head of Dep. IV (Gestapo), in which Hermannsen became chief of Referat IV-1-a (Communist surveillance). Henrik Lundtofte: *Gestapo! Tysk politi og terror i Danmark 1940-45*. Copenhagen: Gad, 2003, 23-29, 108-9; *Frit Danmarks Hvidbog* vol. II, Copenhagen: Thaning & Appel, 1946, 56-57. Earlier assumptions that the Gestapo did not arrive in Denmark until summer 1943 cannot be sustained (e.g. Robert Bohn, ”Ein solches Spiel kennt keine Regeln”. Gestapo und Bevölkerung in Norwegen und Dänemark’, Paul & Mallmann, *Die Gestapo*, 474-5; 476-7).

The fight against Communism became a main theme in the collaboration between Danish police and Gestapo in 1940-1943.⁹² A few days after the German invasion, Danish immigration police handed over their entire card index of foreigners staying in Denmark; including more than 20.000 people, it made up an excellent basis for the continuing surveillance of foreigners in Denmark, noted German envoy, Renthe-Fink, in June 1940.⁹³ It also cleared the way for a wave of arrests. Of the approx. 1550 German political refugees registered in Denmark in April 1940,⁹⁴ many were arrested by the Abwehr. 70 refugees were taken into custody by the Danish police on German request, and by autumn 1941, 48 of them had been handed over to Gestapo. Other 143 political refugees were expelled to Germany in this period, facing disappearance, death sentences or a concentration camp.⁹⁵

Card indexes continued to play a central part in the Communist hunt. In 1940 Danish police handed over to the Gestapo their card index of registered Danish Communists. The index was returned in June 1941, enabling Thune Jacobsen's police force to move swiftly on the 22 that month as the occupation authorities demanded the arrest of leading Danish Communists.⁹⁶ Instead of around 80 names that made up the German list, Danish police arrested 269 (of whom 153 were released during the summer). The group was interned in the Horserød camp, most of them to be deported to the Stutthof concentration camp in October, 1943, where 20 were lost during the following months.⁹⁷

During the political purges after the war, Thune Jacobsen and Ivan Stamm were relieved of their obligations. Meanwhile, Danish authorities continued their co-operation with former Gestapo and SD officers, who were arrested and interrogated by Danish and British intelligence after the liberation. In order to avoid criminal investigations of crimes committed during the war, they would put their extensive knowledge of Communist networks at Allied disposal. Again, former SS-Hauptsturmführer, *Kriminalrat* Hans Hermannsen of Flensburg Gestapo serves as an example: briefly interned in Copenhagen, he was released at the request of Danish military intelligence and moved to Flensburg, where he then lived under protection of British intelligence, successfully averting further interviews with Danish police.⁹⁸

⁹² In 1940-41, the uncovering of the Wollweber organization, which was responsible for the bombing of two Franco-Spanish trawlers in a Danish port in 1938, was carried out in close collaboration with three additional Gestapo officers who were placed in the Copenhagen police headquarters in February-April 1941. Gestapo also interrogated various imprisoned Danish Communists, among them Aksel Larsen, head of the Danish Communist Party, after his arrest in autumn 1942. Erik Nørgaard, *Krig og slutspil. Fra besættelsen af Danmark til idag. Gestapo og dansk politi mod Kominterns 'bombefolk'*, Lyngø 1986; Kurt Jacobsen, *Aksel Larsen – en politisk biografi*. Copenhagen: Vindrose, 1993, 297-321.

⁹³ *Den parlamentariske Kommissions Beretning* vol. XIII/3, 1263; Stevnsborg, *Politiet 1938-47*, 283-85.

⁹⁴ Petersen, *Hitlerflüchtlinge im Norden*, 56.

⁹⁵ *Den parlamentariske Kommissions Beretning*, bilag vol. VII, aktstykker 1, 187-88; Clausen & Larsen, *De forrådte*, 37-43.

⁹⁶ 'Danica i russiske arkiver', Rigsarkivet (Copenhagen), vol. 465.

⁹⁷ For a discussion on the role of the card indexes, see Ib Martin Jarvad, "Besættelsestiden og kommunistinterneringen," *Arbejderhistorie* 3, (Sep. 1995), 33-42.

⁹⁸ PET-Kommissionens beretning vol. 6, *PETs overvågning af Danmarks Kommunistiske Parti 1945-1989*. Copenhagen, 2009, 111-2; 114.

Conclusion

Co-ordinated German-Danish anti-Communist measures blend nicely with the emerging picture of northern Europe's police co-operation with Nazi Germany during the inter-war period, a time which is increasingly being recognized as the First Cold War. A recent investigation showed that the Finnish government considered the USSR such a menace to Finland's survival as a nation that one chose to collaborate with the Gestapo in order to contain Finland's domestic Communists. Thus, from 1937, after a visit by Werner Best and Heinrich Müller in Helsinki, Finland's secret police and the Gestapo would regularly swap lists of names of internationally active Communists.⁹⁹ In Sweden the Gestapo was actively recruiting citizens to operate as informers. Swedish police itself harboured strong sympathies for Nazism and, indeed, a relatively high number of real National Socialists.¹⁰⁰ From 1938 at least, in connection with the Gestapo's investigation of the Wollweber sabotage group, Sweden's secret police was in direct contact with the Gestapo – as were their Norwegian colleagues.¹⁰¹

At the end of the 1930s, as a result of years of collaboration with Danish police, Gestapo could boast of exact personal data and addresses of almost every German Communist staying in Denmark. The fight against Communism was one of the few, but important, areas, in which the German dictatorship and Danish democracy of the 1930s could establish a community of interests. Danish police systematically registered political refugees and their political activities in Denmark and then supplied the sensitive information to Gestapo in order to curb their potential strengthening of Denmark's active left wing as well as limit their embarrassing Denmark's official relations to Germany. In the political strategy of the governing Social Democrats, containing the Communist threat to democracy and the social order was a crucial task, and so the obligation to protect political refugees was set aside in order to achieve this greater good and, perhaps, even smooth the political relationship with Nazi Germany.¹⁰² Not only did Danish police share their knowledge with their German colleagues: know-how on police technique and card indexes was transferred to Denmark. In this way, transnational social engineering in the shape of mutual learning and information processes within the police forces of the two countries could succeed in spite of fundamental ideological differences between the two governments. Anti-Communism was strong enough to effectively set aside traditional divisions between Fascism and Social Democracy, and between dictatorship and democracy. In this respect, contrary to other studies, the case demonstrates that the transfer of knowledge and know-how between two competing political systems can in fact include much more than the mere emulation of 'technical and administrative innovations'.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft*, 83.

¹⁰⁰ Johan Perwe, *Svenska i Gestapos tjänst. VI40 Babs*. Stockholm: Carlsson, 2011; Klas Åmark, *Att bo granne med Ondskan. Sveriges förhållande till nazismen, Nazityskland och Förintelsen*. Albert Bonniers Förlag, 2011, 294-97.

¹⁰¹ Silvennoinen, *Geheime Waffenbrüderschaft*, 91-2; Lars Borgersrud, *Die Wollweber-Organisation und Norwegen*. Berlin: Karl Dietz, 2001.

¹⁰² For an analysis of the alliance between Denmark's governing Social Democracy and the Danish Police in the 1930s, see Koch, *Demokrati – slå till!*, 63-136.

¹⁰³ Cf. *Vom Gegner lernen. Feindschaften und Kulturtransfers im Europa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, hrsg. Martin Aust und Daniel Schönplflug, Frankfurt a.M./New York, 2007; Bernhard, 'Konzernierte Gegnerbekämpfung', 260.

Transnational social engineering thus transgressed not only geographical borders but also political and ideological boundaries.¹⁰⁴ In this, it resembled earlier historical experiences such as Berlin police's hunt for Karl Marx and other German Communists abroad after 1848, or the co-operation between the Tsarist secret police, the *Ochrana*, and Western police forces in the surveillance of Russian revolutionary opponents abroad from the 1880s onwards.¹⁰⁵ Studying the history of the early ICPC, Cyrille Fijnaut asks 'to what extent [ICPC] facilitated personal relationships among police officials which were used to the same end [anti-Communist work]'. 'Could it be that the Gestapo's activity in Western countries in particular was more effective than is commonly believed, precisely because of the personal and professional relationships built up among ICPC members, even in cases where attitudes at the governmental level were hostile to co-operation with the Third Reich?'¹⁰⁶ Fijnaut answers in the affirmative, pointing to sources surrounding the third secret international police conference in Germany in 1941. The Gestapo also cultivated contacts with leading police officials in France, Belgium and the Netherlands, who found it necessary to co-operate because of the need to contain the Communist movement.¹⁰⁷ Such co-ordination had taken place since the mid-1930s.¹⁰⁸ In German-Danish police co-operation in the 1930s, we can conclude that here, too, it was indeed the case.

In a contemporary comment, Bjørn Svensson, an influential Danish conservative publicist expressed this experience, when in 1934 he examined German Nazism. Svensson concluded that 'We can admire a great many things about Hitler's salvation deed, which eventually was to free his mother country from Communist drowning; we can learn quite a lot by studying German National Socialism; and we can expand our political horizon by adopting a thing or two from the new teaching that might be adapted to our conditions'. He explicitly warned against German Jewish fugitives, who, so he claimed, contained many radical Marxists: 'We have no need for those. Foreign nation, foreign language, foreign manners [alt.: nature or essence¹⁰⁹], and revolutionary minded, with no similarity and nothing in common with us'.¹¹⁰

Communists had no business in Nazi Germany. German Communists had no business in Denmark, either. Whether looked upon as 'seeds of destruction' (Best) or 'weeds of society' (Stauning), they could never be a part of German's national community or Denmark's social order. On the contrary: they presented a threat to both of them. During the 1930s, collaborating with the Gestapo, Danish police joined the fight to eliminate the danger.

¹⁰⁴ For the cases of Italy and Spain and the extensive use of knowledge transfer and *V-Männer*, see Bernhard, 'Der Beginn einer faschistischen Interpol?', 4-5.

¹⁰⁵ Fijnaut, 'The internationalization of criminal investigation in Western Europe', 33; Cyrille Fijnaut and Gary T. Marx, 'Introduction: The Normalization of Undercover Policing in the West: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives', in *Undercover: Police Surveillance in Comparative Perspective*, Cyrille Fijnaut and Gary T. Marx (eds.). The Hague: Kluwer Law International, 1995, 6-7; Fijnaut, 'The International Criminal Police Commission'.

¹⁰⁶ Fijnaut, 'The International Criminal Police Commission', 121.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 121-3.

¹⁰⁸ Eiber, 'Unter Führung des NSDAP-Gauleiters', 116.

¹⁰⁹ Danish: 'Væsen'.

¹¹⁰ Bjørn Svensson, *Den danske Nazisme i kritisk Belysning* (1934). Quoted from Carl Madsen (1974), 175.