

Operational Situation Report USSR No. 17

The Chief of the Security Police and the SD Berlin,
July 7, 1941

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Einsatzgruppe C

Location: Minsk

First summary report of the activity of Einsatzgruppe C in the Polish and Russian sections of Byelorussia.
1) Organization and March Route

On June 23, Einsatzgruppe B met in Poznan in order to continue the march towards Warsaw the following morning. According to the order of RSHA, contact was established with Army Group Center and the commander of the Rear Army Group Area 102 in Warsaw. As was agreed, Sonderkommando 7a started the march on June 26 attached to 9th Army HQ and Sonderkommando 7b on June 27 to 4th Army HQ. Sonderkommando 7a marched via East Prussia in order to enter Vilnius with the troops. After being relieved by the Einsatzkommando 9, it proceeded on road 4, and turned south towards Minsk, the capital, and arrived on July 4.

Sonderkommando 7b marched via Brest, Kobrin, Pruzhany, Rushana, Slonim, Baranovichi, Stolpce, via Route 2 towards Minsk and arrived there with the Vorkommando on July 4.

Einsatzkommando 9: Proceeded towards Vilnius on June 29 according to instructions issued by the commander of the Rear Army Group Area.

Einsatzkommando 8 proceeded, according to orders of the commander of the Rear Army Group Area, to Bialystok on July 1, and marched on with the two commands towards Slonim, Novogrudok and Baranovichi. The staff continued towards Bialystok on July 3 with the advancing units of the Rear Army Group Area.

In conjunction with the commander of the Security Police for the General Gouvernement, six supporting units were set up for Byelorussia, who relieved the Sonderkommandos and Einsatzkommandos on July 3 and advanced from Warsaw to the assigned areas.

Based on these tactics, all towns in the Polish and Russian sections of Byelorussia are occupied as far as the fighting zone. A supporting unit is posted in Brest, one supporting unit in Pinsk and another in Slutsk with the aim of marching into Gomel after occupying the area. One supporting unit is posted in Bialystok

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with the task of also taking care of Bielsk. One supporting unit is in Vilnius, with the task of also taking care of Grodno and Lida. One supporting unit will be moved forward to Minsk in order to assume the work in Minsk after Einsatzgruppe C will march on Moscow.

Einsatzkommando 8

is stationed, until further notice, in Bialystok. Einsatzkommando 9 is stationed in Vilnius so that it can be moved via Minsk towards Moscow at a later time. The staff of Einsatzgruppe C (1) has been posted in Minsk since July 6 with its headquarters in the Soviet building of the USSR. (2)

Because of the encirclement and due to the highway system, a rear and a front line cannot be delineated. Thus the Sonderkommandos 4a and 7b, as well as their staff, are constantly in the fighting zone and have been exposed on the highways to Russian sniping. At this time, Minsk is still in the fighting zone. Army Group B HQ is located 150 km in the rear in Baranovichi.

After consultations in Minsk, Sonderkommando 7a was transferred from the 9th Army HQ, which is to march to the north of Moscow, to the newly formed 4th Armored Army HQ. Sonderkommando 7a is joined by a Vorauskommando with translators and persons familiar with Moscow, under the direction of SS-Standartenführer Dr. Six. The former army HQ 4 is now Army HQ 2, and Sonderkommando 7 has been put at its disposal.

In the course of further advances, the towns of Gomel, Mogilev, Vitebsk, Orsha, and Smolensk are to be bypassed.

2) Police Work

According to the instructions by RSHA, liquidations of government and party officials, in all named cities of Byelorussia, were carried out. Concerning the Jews, according to orders, the same policy was adopted. The exact number of the liquidated has not as yet been established. On June 22, almost all the officials of the Communist party has fled, probably following higher instructions, and had taken with them all well-prepared documents. It is likely that some of the officials will try to return.

Some will be identified with the help of the network of informants. The city of Minsk was an exception, although the officials had fled from there; surprisingly, the documentation remained intact in the sole government building - the house of the BSSR Soviet that had not been destroyed. On the other side, in destroyed Minsk, the NKVD and the internal party materials were destroyed by fire caused by the bombardment. Evaluating reports on Minsk follows.

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Special report on the political situation and activity in the area of Vilnius

Police Matters The Lithuanian police branches in Vilnius, subordinated to the Einsatzkommando, were given the task of drawing up current lists of names of Jews in Vilnius; first intelligentsia, political activists, and wealthy Jews. Subsequently, searches and arrests were made and 54 Jews were liquidated on July 4, and 93 were liquidated on July 5. Sizeable property belonging to Jews were secured. With the help of Lithuanian police officials, a search was started for Communists and NKVD agents, most of whom, however, are said to have fled.

A search was also started for hidden weapons of the Polish secret military organizations, of which the Lithuanian police has yet not made an accurate estimate. The establishment of a Jewish quarter is being prepared. Upon suggestion of the EK, the Jewish quarter will be declared to be out of bounds to military personnel by order of the Field Command HQ.

(1) Also called 3.

(2) Obviously, it is meant to be building of the Council of BSSR.

Sources:

NARA
Translations by Hermann Feuer