

he thinks and frets! My cell was next to his in solitary confinement and I had occasion to exchange a few words with him while in the yard and in the showers. He was a man of few words. But when he talks his words are well thought over...He is very much concerned over some of his old friends in the Norwegian Labor Union that he believes have been unfaithful to the union they belonged to. He hopes to be alive when the war is over and be able to return and confront these men. For Ludvig it has been a rough time physically speaking, more so than for us. He weighed one hundred and twenty kilograms when he was arrested, now he weighs sixty kilograms...it shows...

The prison has been informed by the prison administration to select prisoners that are over fifty years for "transport"...preferably people that do not understand German. Ludvig was selected. Josef was not taken...

There is something frightful about this "transport". We who remain have an instinctive feeling they are going from bad to worse...We do the best we can to console them...

Only a few weeks later I found a short sentence on one of the letters censored by Hiltgunt. She wrote in the margin - Ludvig gave up! Another good comrade that would not make it home...Farewell...

#### A COMRADE WITH EXPERIENCE

The place is getting crowded. We who have been in solitary confinement and work outside in the daytime have to be crammed together, three in every small cell. My two new roommates are veteran criminals, it is somewhat of an honor to share the cell with them. Hans is the usual hard core criminal. He is in for ten years; before he had fifteen years behind bars. But, compared with Lindemann this is child's play...He has spent thirty years of his life in prison...He is so respected he is always called by his last name! He is disgusted that he has to share his cell with fellow prisoners, after all these years he figures he is entitled to have a cell of his own. He is nearly seventy years old but in good shape. He has been in and out of prisons since early youth. Last time he was sentenced to five years in prison and ten years more if warranted...He is now at his "warranty" and is disgusted to be treated as a regular prisoner. His first crime was to pick the gold from the teeth of dead soldiers when he was in the army of the First World War! Since then he has become very knowledgeable with a series of paragraphs in the German Criminal Law. Lindemann is chewing all day long. He has arrangements with the prison doctor that he will get all of the "globoid tablets" that come to the prison. It appears that they give him a mild stimulus!

Lindemann is a strong individual, marked by the disciplined life in prison. He will not tolerate any nonsense when it comes to prison regulations. We become good friends, but he can't stand my small remarks against the establishment...It happens that he discovers that I turn my head and whisper a few words to a comrade in the yard. That angers him. A sunny warm spring day I dared to ask the guard if we might be permitted to open our stiff collars a little. To the surprise of all he said yes...

Lindemann registered this complaint as being the first sign that the world was going to "hell"!

Sloppy, he said...When we returned to the cell, he repeated his daily complaint with more fervor...

"Die verammten Norweger, sie haben gar eine Erziehung." (The damn Norwegians, they have no manners!)

We probably have some manners, but not according to Lindemann's standards.

We shared the cell for two months. During this time I was unable to write on toilet paper, this neither Lindemann or I would have survived!!

### THE EXECUTIONERS ARE COMING

In this prison the heads are chopped off in the basement...The death chamber is used every Thursday...The condemned prisoners are placed on the top floor and we have no personal contact with them. As far as we know most of them are German prisoners. Every Thursday at lunch time we can hear the axe fall. After lunch we can see the trail of blood at the basement entrance. But the ceremony starts early in the morning. We see two men dressed in black and with tight fitting masks come across the yard.

The Executioners have entered prison...

After the attempt on Hitler's life, July 20, more heads are falling every Thursday noon. It varies from three to four, sometimes as many as eight or ten.

We always know exactly how many...In our cells we can hear a loud voice calling out:

"Ink and pen for eight men!"

"Yes, Sir!"

We know then that eight men are writing their last letter in this life...Next in an equally sharp and official voice:

"Dinner for eight men!"

Their last meal....

The executioners cross the yard again, ramrod straight and in black...They will return next Thursday. Nobody will know who will be the next victim. Many things are happening these days...outside the prison walls.

### WE ARE PROMOTED!

No longer are we considered as "guests" in this prison...We are now accepted as legitimate

prisoners, in this prison it is called "knastologer"! (So far I have no translation!) In many ways this is an advantage, we are now familiar with the "rhythm" of the prison. What appeared to be very stupid to a newcomer no longer annoys us...The Norwegians eventually move into strategic positions in prison, as "kalfaktor" and other responsible work. We are now in our fourth year in prison and have no less status than any of the other colleagues - the criminal prisoners.

One day in the fall I get more liberty! I am going to be a "Typograph" (printer). That is a well recognized profession inside the walls as well as outside the walls. The print shop is located in the prison basement next to the shop for bookbinding.

For the first time in several years I am located in a cell with two other Norwegians..First Officer (Merchant Marine) Sigmund from Haugesund and Kristian that I was sentenced together with in Bergen. We've only had a glimpse of each other since we were cellmates in Bergen more than three years ago. These men shall be working together in the book binder shop.

None of us can sleep very much at first...Everything has suddenly changed.

We feel like a family in a way, in spite of the hunger and the dirty environment around us. It is true we do receive a neckerchief and an apron every two weeks. Otherwise we are more like a corpse in a mausoleum, behind the clean outer garments are undergarments that have been hanging on our bodies for months! The undergarment is a home for lice and fleas. Fortunately it is the fleas that are the energetic ones. The lice are not so bad. The fleas are something else, we have to hunt them down continuously.

Kristen with an interest in natural science has become an expert hunter. During the dark of the night I can hear the snap (crack) and in the morning the "catch" is neatly stacked under the pillow!

### THE PRINT SHOP

We spend twelve hours a day in the print shop, interrupted only by a short lunch period. The prisoners run the print shop. The guards lock us in and out...and will stick their heads into the half open door once in a while. We are three Norwegian here, editor Christian, printer Kristian from Oslo and myself, two Danes, of them, Tage, a young Communist and an apprentice printer from Aarhus. A German landowner is sort of a foreman over the place and three other Germans work here. Over us is the big chief. He is in charge of the print shop and the book binding. He is supposed to be the most talented business head that the prison ever had. His name is Fritz and he is sentenced to twelve years in prison because he belonged to the so called "Gregor Strasser-Fraksjonen" in the Nazi Party...in other words more of a Catholic than the Pope! Before he was arrested he was the leader of a large Nazi book establishment in München (Munich). He is really a moderate and is O.K., we do not see any signs of his old sympathy for his old Nazi Party. He has such an important position that now and then he is outside the gates to attend business meetings in regard to our "establishment"! We have a hand type setting machine, a flat printing press and a few single machines for printing. We print all the forms that are needed in a German prison from arrest orders

to the time you are let out of prison. We have all the printing for a medical clinic of the University of Rostock, prescription forms for "febercurves". We also print a small newspaper every week, "Natinalsocialistsche Rechtswaherband", a professional paper for the Nazi attorneys. It is made up almost entirely of death announcements and obituaries.

The apprenticeship for a printer is very short here. I was given a large book on Gutenberg and his art of printing. The next day I started setting type! It goes pretty well!

What counts is that we are in contact with people and are able to get news regularly. Practically every day we receive one or another newspaper between us and are able to follow reasonably well what is going on. Even if the news is looked upon through German glasses, it is apparent that it is no longer possible to hide the fact that big events are happening outside the walls...The attempt to kill Hitler and the invasion of Western Europe is the kind of news that cannot be censored. We notice a tougher climate in a few areas...we are not allowed to send out or receive a letter, nor can we receive visitors without a special reason.

## HANS AND ALFRED

My closest working colleagues are Hans and Alfred. Hans is a school teacher and is sentenced according to paragraph 175, for homosexuality, to seven years in prison. He has served most of his time and will soon be released. Hans is the first homosexual I have ever met in all these years in prison, that openly talks about his condition. As a matter of fact, he tries to work on us to get us to go over to "fiendens leir" (the camp of the enemy), that is what it is called here. For some time he was sitting in a concentration camp before he was put in prison, and according to what he told us, the first thing he did was to "become engaged"! I have become a good friend of Hans. He majored in history and during days he has worked through German history with me. Hans has a fine sensitive nature. He is happy when someone does him a small favor or gives him a good word. The other day I had a pail of water to wash the floor, and I happened to say "Hans, will you please move"? Saturday he came with a slice of bread because I had talked so nice to him.

I brought the slice up to the cell and made three pieces of it! The two others were highly surprised for the extra ration and I told them what had happened. "I will be damned," said Kristen, "If you are starting with prostitution, keep the bread to yourself!"

Alfred is the type of person you could call "a professional criminal". He is not quite thirty years old yet, but he has many years behind him in prison. But he is a great working companion. The last time he was set free he threw a pair of wooden clogs over the fence while he was out for the airing. In the evening when he came to fetch them he was caught by the police. So it was in again, another three years...

Alfred has gone over to the "enemy", there is no doubt about that. By the help of his personal connections, Hans has been able to get Albert in as his cell partner. The third person is old Posehl; he is nearly eighty years old and he sleeps well.

It went well for a long time, but then one night there had been a bombing attack in Wismar. Alfred had been taken out to pick up unexploded bombs. He was the only prisoner with a couple of soldiers and the soldiers gave him a couple of hours free by promising by honor that he would come back. Alfred came, after having tasted the liberty for one evening...He was the big shot when he came back to the printing shop....He told some fantastic stories about girls. We had fun, but Hans was terribly unhappy. I have never seen a person so full of envy. Hans soon made some arrangement to have Alfred transferred to another cell. The one that never understood was Alfred. He had a lot of fun, and he could not believe he could hurt anyone.

## THE VISIT SEPTEMBER 17, 1944

We experienced a big surprise Sunday afternoon. Kristen and I were in our bunks with a book each. Illegal of course, but what can one do on a peaceful Sunday? Suddenly the door is opened and Hiltgunt stands there in full life before us! It is the first time she has ever entered the cell to see a prisoner; we have always been called down to the visitors room. She looked excited and asked us

to come along to a room in the attic.

In the attic were all the old Norwegian prisoners sitting around a table. It reminded a little of the old well known painting of "Haugianerne", (religious sect in Norway) having a meeting. In the middle was Hiltgunt talking. She had really come with the Danish pastor to visit the Danish prisoners; but she wanted especially to have a little private visit with the Norwegians after she got through with the Danes.

It is a strange world. The interpreter takes the initiative to have a visit while her prime function is really to represent the police when the pastor is visiting!

The war has reached a dramatic climax, large Allied forces are standing on German soil both in the East and in the West. The whole German Reich is reverberating under colossal military pressure. Hiltgunt just arrived from visiting a prison located near the west front. She has talked with soldiers that say it is hopeless...and the war would soon be over...Her home in Hamburg has been bombed out. She has received news that her youngest brother has been killed.

The table is decorated with flowers, red, white and blue! Hiltgunt is excited, with hectic red roses in her cheeks and with fever shining in her eyes she talks to us. She appeals to us to hold out just a little longer, over the last hump...Her last words are "nailed fast in our mind"! "....The hour of freedom is near, boys, perhaps nearer than anyone realizes. It will not be many weeks before we will be able to meet as free people and work for the right to breath free air again."

We return very quietly to our cells. Will we ever forget this day ....September 17, 1944....

### SUPERSTITION

Life in prison, especially after solitary confinement, sharpens the feelings of a person. The instinct plays a large role....Suddenly one has the feeling in his mind that he has contact with people outside the prison world....It does not happen very often, but the feelings are very strong. Once in a while I thought it would affect my mind. Then...confirmation came later...that "my feelings" really had happened....

We lie on our bunks and discuss this subject. The two others are a little skeptical. I mentioned two examples that happened the last part of this year.

One night I was completely convinced that my dad had died. I told Christian in the morning when I came to the printing shop. He was unimpressed and did not think it was necessary to suffer unnecessary sorrow. I became more and more sure of myself, finally there was no doubt in my mind...

A few weeks later when the pastor visited, he told me as soon as I walked in the door. I told the

pastor I knew it and asked him not to say anything to the others. When we came out in the hallway after the visit, said Christian: "Certainly the minister would have told you if your dad had died!"

That is what he did.

The next episode came in September 1944. One night it became terribly clear for me that three of my best friends had been killed, Jens, Haakon and Thoralf...I also told that in the print shop. It did not stir any excitement...

Shortly afterward I learned that they went down with the ship Westfalen on a transport of prisoners to Germany...The most unbelievable thing happened...the body of Thoralf drifted all the way from Øresund to Langenes, near Kristiansand where he had his summer cabin....

### A BRAVE FELLOW

One day the guards came with a newspaper that had a picture of a young Norwegian in a German uniform. He volunteered to pilot a "one man crew" submarine across the English Channel. The guard said it proved there was still a Viking Spirit in Norway...We Norwegians felt rather poorly when we looked at this our, "brave" fellow countryman that had decided it was O.K. for him to venture for the German navy on such a special mission...

It didn't take too long before the young fellow "fell off his pedestal"! One day we saw him again in the prison yard out for an "airing"! It turned out that the "Viking Spirit" was rather mediocre! He had gotten into a brawl with some German "noncom officers". That led to prison instead of a submarine. That ought to be a fair exchange for him! But he would no doubt give a lot to be able to get rid of the German uniform he came in before he returns to Norway.

### HURRAH FOR HANSEN

We have a new guard in our "house"! He is so much younger than the others we are used to having. In this prison the discipline is strictly following the old time prison regulations and rights. They will not stand any deviations. The prison administration and the guards will not allow the SS or Gestapo to get involved in prison activities. They, of course, carry out all the orders and maintain a strict discipline over the prisoners. Often times it appears they are more afraid of the Gestapo than we are. They are afraid they might be transferred to a less comfortable job than they have now. Perhaps it also is a fear that all of the small type illegal business conducted inside the walls might be discovered.

We soon learned that the new guard is a former SS man that was wounded at the front. He was transferred to get an easier job. He sniffs and sniffs in such a way that both we and the guards detest...He is about to destroy peace in prison...It is as if a pact had been set up between the prisoners and the old guards against this stranger.

And it is the new guard that really shakes us up....It is the most fearful Sunday I have ever experienced!!!

It is our good friend Hansen that is involved. But we fear that this will lead to other complications. Hansen is "kalfaktor" for our section, a very nice and decent fellow, popular with every body. He uses the food ladle with a steady and professional ability.

Sunday morning we realize something is wrong. The alarm goes off while we are out for an airing in the yard. The director of the prison is called out. We are chased into the cells, but we hear loud voices in the hallways and one of the cells is searched. We believe it has to be Hansen's. We know for sure when the rations are served at noon. Another person has taken over the job. What really scares us is that Hiltgunt and the Danish pastor were here the day before. From experience we know that she always has items along to give to us.

It is really hard to sit locked up under such conditions. All day long we are waiting for the door to open up...We become more and more convinced that something has gone wrong with both Hiltgunt and ourselves. It is unbearable to live in this uncertainty.

It turned out to be better than expected although it could have been serious enough. We heard the story on Monday...in spite of all it also had a touch of humor...

Kalfaktorene have their assigned work in the hallway and their doors are open. In his work outside Hansen had an eye for one of the office girls in prison. She was engaged to a German pilot and she was a little lonesome. They fell in love! Hansen was to meet his new love in her office while we were having the airing. But the new guard kept his eye on them and smelled a rat....He surprised them in the act!

Fortunately the Norwegian Kalfaktor in the same hall was a man of quick action. While the guard went after the director, he emptied Hansen's cell of all illegitimate items. Thus Hiltgunt and the rest of us were saved!

But what about Hansen and his love? We are afraid for their lives...

But the people of Meklenburg live up to their slogan...take it easy! And we do! A group of prisoners that can work outside is to be sent to East Prussia. And who is to lead this group...the new guard...Fortunately he looks upon this as a promotion! The other guards are "smiling in their beards" when he is transferred away from the prison!

Hansen is sitting in solitary confinement until the group has left prison. He is back at his old job, dishing out the rations with his usual expertise! And the office girl ...is back at her job again!

..."Die Lage ist wieder hergestellt!!" In other words...everything is under control again!



## THE TINIEST SOLDIER

I was most surprised when I received word that the pastor wanted to see me. He came to inform me about my father's will! That really surprised me. I can hardly believe that my father had prepared a will! But, of course, I was happy to have a visitor.

We talked a little bit of everything, including the weather! Then he became serious. I am together with a boy from Finmark that I do not know. The pastor tells a tragic story that affected the whole family: about three sisters, their husbands and their children. Two of the men and one of the sisters were condemned to death. The third man received fifteen years in prison, the two sisters eight and ten years. The two men were shot, the women were spared...pardoned to eight years...The three sisters were in the same prison at first, but were separated as NN-prisoners in different German prisons.

Only once was the pastor able to visit the three sisters. While they were sitting in the same prison in Lübeck the youngest sister was pregnant and gave birth to a son in prison. The pastor can tell the father, who sits here with me, that he came to the prison right after the boy was born...his name was to be Torstein...Both mother and son were happy. A couple of weeks later the baby was to be baptized. Now...the situation was totally different...The mother had been sent away and the baby was dying...The pastor arranged the funeral.

..."The little baby was born and died under the saddest conditions possible...he was wrapped in a Norwegian flag and when I put the soil on him I had the feeling that I buried the youngest soldier of Norway," said the pastor...

The fine young fisherman remained silent...He was only listening...

When we were about to leave, I asked Hiltgunt about "the last will of my father...I was supposed to hear about?..."

"Haven't you learned yet, it takes all kinds of tricks to get permission for an extra visit!"

## WHEN THE WORLD GOES UNDER...

Bismarck is supposed to have said once "When the world goes under, I am going to Mecklenburg"...We console ourselves with this saying now...We know that a terrible war is all around us...But...here we have the impression we are living on the only peaceful place left! We hear the roar of the heavy "bombers" that pass over us on the way to and from Berlin every night...The guards are telling us that the British fliers have made small attacks nearby. One or two fishermen sitting peacefully with their fishing rods on a Sunday afternoon were machine gunned down...a cow had been shot while grazing on the meadow...

Our fourth Christmas in war becomes a glimpse of light in what is otherwise nearly complete darkness. Conrad and Hiltgunt have somehow overcome all obstacles, ignored all restrictions against visits...

They visited us "little Christmas Eve" (day before Christmas Eve). The risk was great and their suitcases filled with goodies...even cigars...It will be divided between us, but everyone will receive a gift. It is going to be a celebration...All pictures of "Nazi Glory" are removed from the walls. Hiltgunt has brought along a Christmas table cloth, candles and flowers.

The Germans have just started their attack in Ardennene, so our great optimism is somewhat subdued. We have heard about an all out attack by the German people and of "a new weapon" that will give the Germans new hope of winning the war. So this Christmas party is a morale booster for us. Again our friends are optimistic that the war will soon be over. This time we are convinced that this is the last Christmas we will have in prison...no matter whether peace finds us dead or alive....

After Christmas we begin to realize that the so called German Offensive was more of a bluff! The so-called "People's Offensive" and the "new weapon" cannot prevent the war from coming to an end...German soldiers are driven from the East by the Russians, fleeing German soldiers are chased from the West by the Britons. In the prison hallways are often soldiers seeking shelter for the night on the way to the unknown, toward the East or West....The German nation is getting choked by a superior military power...

During the last half of the year we have had a strong feeling with this power squeeze....The food rations have been reduced to half of the normal, one hundred grams of bread in the morning, one hundred grams for supper... at noon thin soup...This is much worse than the critical winter of 1941 to 1942. Many of the boys are not able to make it. They do not have enough strength to stand on their feet. We all realize that we cannot exist many more months this way....We struggle to mobilize our last strength to keep our spirits up...At the same time the Allied Forces are coming closer and closer from both sides...Our whole life is a battle between hope and despair. Will we survive until they reach us or are we to lose out in the final round? Are we in the courtyard of death or peace?

The shortage of coal is very serious. We have no heat, no water or light. There is no heat all winter long, the human skeletons are freezing...We have electric light two hours a day. It is depressing to attempt to set type in the dark.

A small jug of water is allowed for three prisoners to clean the room, dishes and washing the face...All showers were forbidden long ago. The clothes we have on are never washed. Our last change in underwear was last June. It is nearly April now....The fleas are no longer just a small nuisance....it is a plague...

The old guards give us no problems....They realize it is hopeless...They are also tired of the war and talk more openly about it. But they do not know what peace will bring them...All of them survived the First World War...and what came afterwards....

This is the end of the manuscript that Hiltgunt smuggled out of the prisons in Hamburg, Rendsburg and Dreibergen. The rest is written at different other locations during the transport towards home...with the ending in Oslo, May 19, 1945.

### IN THE NICK OF TIME

One day in April some of the prisoners are visited by Conrad. He tells us about Count Bernadotte's action to save us and get us out of Germany. In a few days we will be moved to a temporary camp, Neungamme near Hamburg, where many prisoners from different concentration camps have arrived. In this camp we will be permitted to move around relatively freely under the control of the Swedish Red Cross. But we are also aware of, this is our last chance...

Only a few have heard this from the pastor himself. But the news spread like fire in dead grass...within all prisons, throughout all corridors...Even the guards spread the news...

Most of us are still doubtful...Rumors have circulated since 1941 that we will be set free and go home...Every day in suspense...Will they come...or will they not arrive?

## FAREWELL

Only a few days go by...One morning white Swedish busses are rolling into the yard. We receive our civilian clothes. They hang loose on our bodies. What does it matter? What a joy! Conrad is here as the organizer. Most of the Norwegian and Danish prisoners left in Germany are gathered here. Five hundred sixty people to get ready for the transport...We are welcomed under Swedish protection by friendly Swedish "lotter" (probably volunteer women) and the Red Cross officers. We are all smiles when Fraulein Wolf...Hansen's little flame...dares to come out and give him a little hug!

One comrade is left behind. One more...the last one to die, was Haakon Guttormsen from Arendal. During these many years we have worn the same uniform and walked in the same heavy wooden shoes...It has been changed now....He lies in the coffin, wrapped in the Norwegian flag, while we are on the threshold of liberty...More than ever do we think back of all the comrades that we have lost along the way....They lost their lives for something as trivial as hunger and being cold....Haakon was a fine strong athletic person when he came to us in 1942 or 1943. We worked together in the "Chain Factory", he was always happy and optimistic. For many months his body was ravaged by tuberculosis, the last spark of life has died....

Conrad takes along thirty men for the burial service. The sermon is short. Conrad has difficulty controlling his emotions....

"When we say good bye to Haakon it is also a farewell of our people that we must leave in this country"...And he closes with: "Let us do Haakon the last act of friendship by taking part in refilling his grave. Let us turn around, dear friends, and go toward liberty! In Jesus Christ's name," he adds quietly...

## THROUGH THE GATES

We drive out the prison gates for the last time...we hope...The buses are filled with food, tobacco and other wonderful things. After many long years we are departing from a life we have never lived but had to exist with...It is a depressing landscape we are driving through. All roads have an endless stream of fleeing soldiers and civilians going in both directions...Along the roadside are wrecked cars and dead horses. We get the impression that every thing is breaking up. We try to sing a little. It sounds flat....We seem to have lost our voices...Most of us have enough with our own thoughts...and with the food....everybody is eating....The most popular item is one kilogram packages with lump sugar that the Swedes sent along. We haven't tasted sugar for several years and it gives one a comfortable feeling without filling the stomach too soon! Some go eagerly after the Danish canned ham...They suffer later...

I start to talk with a young man in a blue, rather unusual uniform. I am curious and ask him who he is and what is the significance of the uniform?

He says his name is Georg and the uniform is the Civilian Defense Uniform. He says he is so happy

to participate in this liberation and also because today he celebrates his twenty-fifth birthday!

During a little rest on the way our Seamen's pastor tells us that this is Prince Georg of Denmark!

### NEUENGAMME

A section of the concentration camp at Neuengamme outside Hamburg has been cleared to make room for the Norwegian and Danish prisoners that are under the protection of the Swedish Red Cross. The camp has horrible "backdrops"! On one side is the usual concentration camp where we see "muselmaenneskene" (probably horrendous skeleton individuals) move around slowly in their blankets. They barely have the strength to move...On the other side is an SS camp...

We that are from regular prisons are the last to come to this camp. Many formalities had to be taken care of before we could be transferred to this camp. Norwegians and Danes coming from other concentration camps have been here for some time and are already in good shape. The Norwegian university students have done a great job in cleaning up the permanent houses where we will live. The buildings were filthy with fleas, lice and other varmints ...In several of the beds were corpses...the prisoners kept them hidden to get the extra food rations....

Hard scrubbing and Swedish soap created miracles!

About four thousand Danish and Norwegian prisoners are here. Many of them ill and in poor condition came from some of the worst concentration camps. Legendary is the experience of "Evjegutten" Jon Klepp, (north of Kristiansand) that had been thrown in a large pile of corpses....Somebody saw that one of his fingers moved! It took a couple of cans of Danish ham to get permission to remove him from the heap. Thanks to the medical students he recovered to be counted among the "living" again....By special arrangement the sick have already been sent along to Sweden. Most of the remaining have for some time received packages from the Red Cross. We from the regular prison have never received any packages. We are at this moment in the worst physical condition.

Life in this camp is now completely different than it used to be in a concentration camp! Food and tobacco for all, packages from the Red Cross in Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland and the U.S.A. It is remarkable how short the distance is between a full and an empty stomach! Prisoners that came before we did, even permit a small joke about something "as holy as food"! They take bets, the one who is losing has to eat a Danish cheese! We have not reached that stage yet, to us it is pure blasphemy...The camp has its own style in clothing..."joppa". It is a half long Russian style jacket that our friends from Sachsenhausen, in one way or another, have been able to get in large quantities. We will never take a prize in a style show!!!

For us that came from more quiet surroundings, we notice that the language among our new friends has become rather tough during the years they were in concentration camps. They talk about people

being "strung up" and the prisoners that "went into the furnace", as naturally as other people talk about taking a trip with the boy scouts....

Sverre Løberg is the perfect leader of the camp. Anyone that saw Løberg take up controversial subjects with the Germans will never forget it. He is on the go at all times to clear up special problems. He has the complete confidence of all the prisoners.

The war front is getting closer. On April 19 we hear that British tanks have broken through the lines and are headed North. Neuengamme could be a new front in a day or two...It is a hectic time all around us. Løberg rushes through the camp from one conference to another. We know that the release and travel home hangs in a very, very thin thread! The suspense is tense at bed time with orders to be ready at four A.M., all packed and on our way...And yet, everything is still uncertain...Don't celebrate too soon is the word that we get...

Not much sleep that night...At four A.M. we are ready...Still a long time to wait...We receive the word that all the busses in Jutland have been mobilized, they were painted white during the night and are on the way to Neuengamme.

Later in the morning the busses are rolling in. There is a shortage of seats. Løberg decides that all of us from prison get into the busses first. All officials will be the last ones out of camp. No luggage will be allowed, the busses are to be filled to capacity (or more) with human beings. A few complain because they cannot take along some personal items...But, Løberg is adamant..."Do you want to live without a suitcase or do you want to die with your suitcase?"

A simple and clear statement, and absolutely correct. It was necessary to be firm and tough to be able to get room for all.

It is with a certain sadness we leave also....thousands of prisoners from other countries are left behind on the other side of the fence...they have fought for the same principles that we have...They are to be taken on a hopeless march along the highway...

April 20, Hitler's birthday, we drive through Germany and the ruins that once were cities of the country.... No flags anywhere... only hopeless people in despair.... and defeat...But this is not the day for us to worry about the needs of others. We are singing: "Better and better every day..." (once a popular song). For many people it will be just the opposite.

In the evening we cross the Danish border. The long line of white painted busses is familiar to the Danes...Hundreds of Danes are storming the busses, into the windows come flowers and Danish cream cakes....

### MØGELKAER

We are taken to a former youth work camp in Møgelkaer. Here are no fences and no bars. A few

miserable German soldiers will look after us. They are soldiers that were recruited outside Germany. At that time they probably volunteered their services. Right now they are totally disgusted with the whole war...With our lush food rations we are the aristocracy of the camp! A small band plays for us, the pay is American cigarettes! A few are forward enough to have the Germans shine their shoes...the pay...American Lucky Strike... The good hearts of the Danes "are running over". Pork and sauerkraut...this is too much for us...a serious epidemic of upset stomachs spreads all over the camp. After all these years to die because of a surplus of food!!!

The Danes are deserting in droves. They want to get away to be able to celebrate the freedom of their homeland. Why in the world should they go to Sweden first? The occupation of their own country is practically at an end...

The German officer in charge of the camp is beside himself. He counts and counts and he never gets the correct number of prisoners. We almost feel sorry for him when he says: "It is not for myself, but I am responsible for a certain number of prisoners to the Swedish Red Cross.."

Løberg gets the books to balance, with help of many tricks in the art of bookkeeping...

We remain here a week. On the last stretch on the way to Copenhagen all the German guards disappear! For the first time in many years we travel without guards!

We will be interned for fourteen days and we end up at Øranes Castle. I become the secretary for Halvard Lange and Gunnar Bøe. These men with another group are working on a political program for Norway after the war. We are in a new world...a thousand miles away from the war... We, of course, are eager to see what the end of the occupation will be in Norway, but there is nothing we can do about that. Our plans are for the future of Norway...

#### AMONG OLD FRIENDS AGAIN

Oslo is no longer a city that people move away from. On the contrary...It has become a "human flypaper"! Everybody is in a hurry to come back and go to work. Old friends meet. Per Monsen is returning from London in a captain's uniform, Willy Brandt has come from Stockholm, Inge Scheflo has returned from his hideaway where he was the editor of "Free Labor" the last part of the year. Eilert Eriksen was in charge of sabotage and wore the uniform of a major. All of us are old friends of the press corps.

This is the way friends met all over the country these days after many years of separation on several fronts...

It was a long night for us. Nobody related any dramatic incidents...about war or sufferings. A few amusing episodes spiced the conversation...

This is what occupied our minds...What is going to happen? What will we do about it? What is our