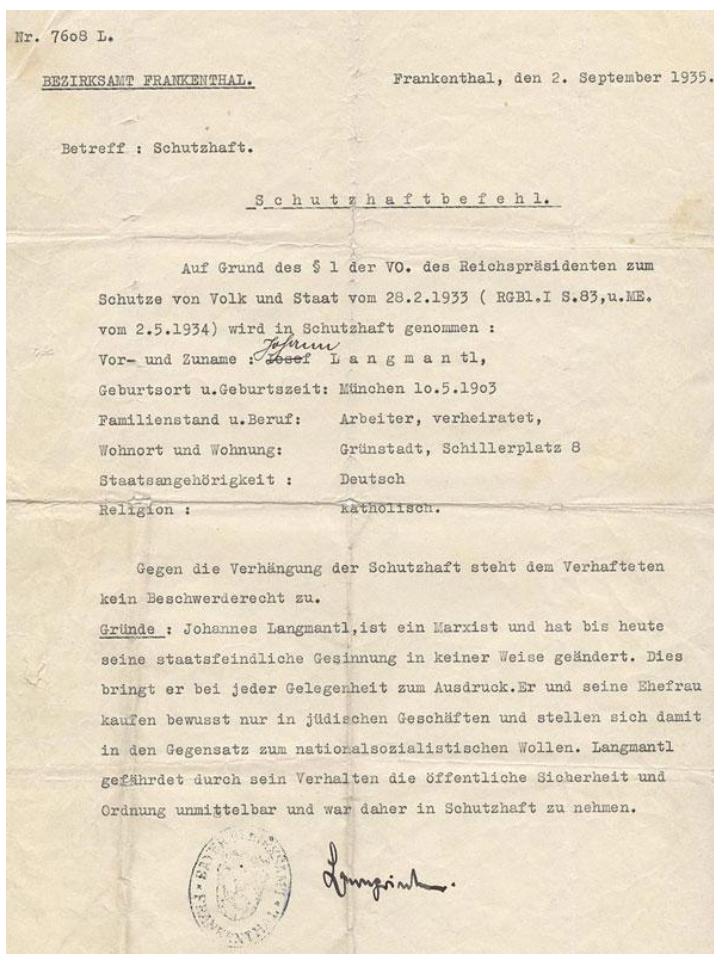


Transcript of Wolf Kaiser: “Protective custody” (Schutzhaft)

The first “protective custody” orders (“Schutzhaftbefehle”) were quite informal; they did not even mention the reasons for the incarceration. Later, they stated the charges and we can see how more and more individuals and groups were deprived of their freedom.



Originally, this instrument of terror was meant to intimidate political opponents and suppress all forms of opposition. Showing sympathy for Jews was also understood as a symptom of political opposition as this order against the 32-year-old Catholic labourer Johannes Langmantl of September 1935 demonstrates. It reads:

“The arrested person has no right of appeal. Reasons: Johannes Langmantl is a Marxist [the Nazi term for Social Democrat] and till this day in no way changed his hostile attitude towards the state. He expresses these views at every opportunity. He and his wife deliberately only buy in Jewish shops and thus oppose the National Socialist will. Through this behaviour, Langmantl endangers the

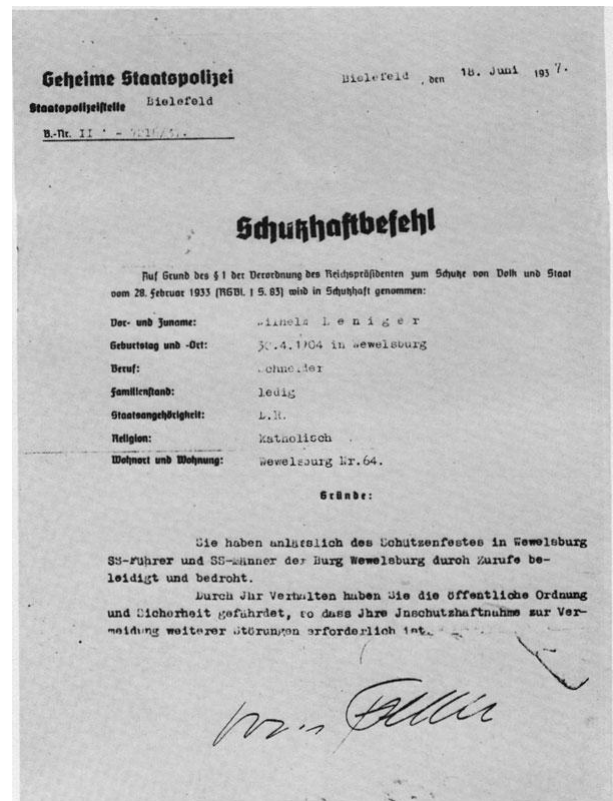
public security and order and therefore has to be taken into protective custody.”

You will have realized that this person is taken into “protective custody” for an unlimited time.

“Protective custody” orders were soon also used for other reasons. Take for example this order against a 33-year-old tailor who did not show the required respect for members of Nazi organizations when he visited the marksmen’s festival in a village called Wewelsburg in 1937, where the SS had established a cult centre in an old castle and the Niederhagen concentration camp.

“During the marksmen’s festival in Wewelsburg you have insulted and threatened SS-leaders and SS-men by shouting at them. You have endangered public security and order through your behaviour so that it is necessary to take you into protective custody in order to prevent further disorders.”

Racist ideology is clearly the motivation in the following case: In August 1941, the 17-year-old domestic help Erna Brehm was publicly pilloried on the market place of Calw and her hair was cut, because she had had a love affair with a Polish “foreign labourer”. These photos show a similar case in Altenburg in February 1941. Erna Brehm was put on trial afterwards and imprisoned for a year. When released from prison in April 1942, she was sent to the concentration camp of Ravensbrück. The reasons given in the “protective custody” order were that she *“lacked the natural reservation towards a member of an enemy nation and thus grossly violated the healthy disposition of the people”*. The camp ruined her health so that she died prematurely in 1951 at the age of 27.



Finally, I show an example demonstrating that “Aryan” German citizens could end up in a concentration camp simply because of loving the ‘wrong’ music. In January 1943, the 17-year-old Günter Discher, who was to become Germany’s most famous post-war jazz historian, was imprisoned in the Moringen youth concentration camp because of collecting and selling jazz records.


Schutzhaftbefehl

Vor- und Zuname: Günter Leonhard Johannes Discher
Geburtsort und -ort: 20.6.25 in Hamburg,
Beruf: Kfm. Lehrling,
Familienstand: ledig,
Staatsangehörigkeit: Deutsches Reich,
Religion: ev. luth.,
Klasse (bei Nichtangeben ausgeben):
Wohnort und Wohnung: Hamburg 19, Charlottenstr. 21,
wird in Schutzhaft genommen.

Gründe:

Er ~~ist~~ gefährdet nach dem Ergebnis der staatspolizeilichen Feststellungen durch sein ~~ein~~ Verhalten den Bestand und die Sicherheit des Volkes und Staates, indem er ~~er~~ durch sein vorsetzendes und staatsabträgliches Treiben erhebliche Schäden in die Bevölkerung trägt.

gez: B ü l l e r
Beigelegt:


Kriminalrat

“According to the findings of the Secret State Police he endangers the existence and security of the people and the state by causing considerable turmoil in the population through his behaviour that is subversive and derogatory to the state”.