

THE LEGITIMATION OF COOPERATION: A RHETORICAL CRITICISM OF THE DANISH
GOVERNMENT'S JUSTIFICATION OF COOPERATION, MARCH – AUGUST 1943

BY

FLEMMING SCHNEIDER RHODE

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Approved By:

Allan Loudon, Ph.D., Advisor

John Llewellyn, Ph.D., Chair

Thomas Mullen, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

The present project examines the public discourses of the Danish government from the end of March until the 29th of August, 1943. This period marks the end of the cooperation between the Danish government and the Nazi German occupying force, as the Danish government was unable to quell a domestic resistance movement. The government's statements addressed both the German representatives and the Danish population who were intractably at odds. To uncover how the government attempted to simultaneously appease multiple power differentiated audiences with mutually exclusive aims, the method of persona criticism is used to show the different ideal auditors to whom the government spoke. This thesis finds that rhetorical techniques of strategic ambiguity, minimization of harms, and the hiding the origins of the harms provided the cover the government sought.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Danish cooperation with Nazi Germany during the occupation of World War II is one of the most important controversies in modern Danish history. In 2003, the then Danish Prime Minister, Anders Fogh Rasmussen, denounced the Danish cooperation policy with the occupying Nazi German government from 1940-43 in a speech commemorating the 60th anniversary of the resignation of the Danish government on the 29th of August, 1943. Fogh Rasmussen, current (May 2011) Secretary General of NATO, was at the time the leader of the liberal party Venstre and the center right government coalition which participated with U.S. forces in the “coalition of the willing” against Iraq in 2003. In the speech Fogh Rasmussen dealt obliquely with Iraq, terming the decision to cooperate with Nazi Germany (henceforth Germany) a “moral and political desertion¹” because “there is no neutral position in the fight for democracy and against dictatorship” (Fogh Rasmussen, 2003).

Fogh Rasmussen’s political adversary in Denmark, the leader of the Social Democrats, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, defended the cooperation policy: “the Prime Minister . . . defiles the politicians of the past who had a great responsibility in a very difficult time” (Boding, 2007, para. 4). The use of the cooperation policy as a political tool in contemporary Danish politics testifies to the endurance and importance of the topic as a controversy. The continued contestation of the legitimacy of the cooperation policy more than six decades after the fact shows how central the issue still is to Danish national identity. The present Danish monarch, Queen Margrethe II (granddaughter of King Christian X), also expressed understanding for the

1 All texts are author (a native Danish speaker) translations from the original Danish. When ambiguities arose from difficulties in translation notes explaining the choice made are made. Different judgments may be made regarding suitable replacement words, word order as well as sentence and paragraph structure. I sought to convey the meaning of the discourses as I understood them, and on occasion offer alternative interpretations.

cooperation policy in her biography: “given the situation we got ourselves into, we could not have done differently” (“Denmark Apologizes for Aiding,” 2005, para. 8).

Study Framework

Historians have described the political decisions and their alternatives, that constitute the “cooperation policy,” but little attention has been given to the government’s discourse that at first helped to sustain, but ultimately could not prevent the collapse of, the national policy; this examination explores how the air of legitimacy for that policy was rhetorically constructed (and lost). A marked historical current in public opinion on cooperation changed, responsive to historical factors, but events confirmed meaning through mediated discourse. Moreover, the tide of public opinion on cooperation through the ten-month period from the appointment of Scavenius as Prime Minister in November of 1942 until the collapse of the government in the August 1943 rebellion was non-linear and has been difficult for historians to accurately map (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 180). This study seeks to remedy this gap in the literature by closely studying the relevant discourses through rhetorical criticism.

Statement of Purpose

As General Montgomery led the Allies to victory in the Battle of El Alamein in November of 1942 and German forces lost Stalingrad by February of 1943 the collapse of German hegemony appeared ever more inevitable. The ideological fault lines on the cooperation policy became increasingly apparent. Whereas cooperation and resistance were compatible in 1940 when a generation-long occupation was anticipated, by the election in March of 1943 the widely expected German defeat presented a competing either/or ideology – one could not both cooperate in public and oppose in private. The competing ideologies of

cooperation and resistance were increasingly seen as mutually exclusive, resulting from the process of public argument where each vision competed for adherence. The rhetorical situation required people to take a stand, whereas the early days of the occupation had allowed people to be both anti-German and cooperative.

This thesis examines the public argument concerning the cooperation policy supporting the government's legitimacy. Although public controversy about cooperation commenced with the cooperation itself, this study surveys discourses from only the last five months of the cooperation policy with Scavenius as Prime Minister. This period begins after the convincing electoral victory by the government in March of 1943 and ends with the culmination of public opposition to cooperation in the August rebellion. The contours and currents shaping and being shaped by the argument can add meaning to how a population in a few months transformed its opinion on the legitimacy of resistance and cooperation.

The present study is unable to examine those persuaded by the cooperation arguments. There were no polls and surveys cannot be retroactively sent out to a population now largely passed. This historical debate can inform communication scholarship through examination of historical factors and rhetorical artifacts which leave us with the inference that a transformation of public opinion occurred within a relatively short timeframe where cooperation became politically untenable, and through the public statements of a government unsuccessfully sought to legitimate the policy that defined it.

Two forms of government statements are analyzed in this thesis. First are proclamations by the government and King Christian X (hereafter Christian X) on the resistance movement. These were originally aired on public radio, but were widely available in print also. Second are

the circulars issued to government officials, but publicly accessible², in “Government Times” (*Ministerialtidende*). These are the only recorded public statements speaking directly³ to the issue of resistance versus cooperation.

Methodological Overview

The present analysis employs rhetorical criticism, a technique which seeks to uncover how people “use symbols to influence one another” (Campbell & Burkholder, 1997). Zhang and Benoit (2004) define the role of rhetorical criticism by contrasting it with another way to study discourse: “Unlike content analysis, rhetorical criticism examines the relationship of context and message” (p. 163). The rhetorical critic also considers the importance of specific elements of discourses based on historical and local factors, and their relationship to other discourses rather than just frequency (Fisher, 1981).

This study is informed by the work of Edwin Black and draws from his ideas both concerning the role of the critic and the conduct of a critical stance. According to Black (1978) the work of the rhetorical critic: “serves both to disclose the enigmas of an artistic product, and to sanction, implicitly or overtly, its own method of disclosure” (p. 2). More specifically, Kauffeld (2001) interprets Black’s view on the task of rhetorical critics as “to interpret specific transactions--persuasive discourses, sets of discourses, campaigns or persuasive movements-- which taken together have the aggregated shape of rhetorical genres and which can reveal the

2 *Land og Folk* cites a circular authorizing the police to kill, indicating the circulars were subject to public scrutiny.

3 More indirect sources such as court proceedings and sentences for sabotage can be found in same source material *The Facts of the Occupation Time – Documentary Handbook concerning the laws of 1945 on injuries to the State (Besættelsestidens Fakta - Dokumentarisk Haandbog med Henblik paa Lovene af 1945 om Landsskadelig Virksomhed)*, a work edited by Niels Akil (1945), High Court prosecutor. The work is an “Attempt at a complete, documentary illumination of the occupation. This is done to provide an apolitical and objective basis courts, defense and prosecution with the requisite process materials” (Akil, 1945, foreword). Contributors to the work included representatives of the ministries, politicians, the resistance movement, the prosecution, defense, and finally the legal and illegal press.

formation of human consciousness and the pull of ideologies.”

Black has consistently expressed skepticism of what he terms “methodological systems or programs” (1978, p. x) applied to discourses in the field of rhetoric. In Black’s defining work, *Rhetorical Criticism, A Study in Method* (1978), he concludes on the critic’s process that: “if his criticism is fruitful, he may end up with a system, but he should not, in our present state of knowledge, begin with one” (p. 177). This sentiment is so central to Black’s thought he reemphasized this view, adding a different reason for rejecting a systematic approach to criticism, in his foreword to the same work: “critical method is too personally expressive to be systematized” (1978, p. x). This view is based on the inevitability of personal decision making by the critic (e.g., which discourses should be considered relevant for the criticism). Kauffeld (2001) comments further on Black’s view on theory:

Exploration of the developmental powers of persuasive discourse requires that the critic be open to novelty in rhetorical techniques and to discontinuities in the sensibilities and appetites those techniques inculcate in audiences . . . refusing to impose on the discourse a pre-existing theory or conceptual framework.

The emphasis here is on sequencing of analysis, Black (1978) rejects what he terms “any *a priori* procedure” [italics added] (p. xi) because it limits the scope of the rhetorical critic to use his/her own thinking. However, a rhetorical critic influenced by Burke and consequently more likely to see discourses in a dramatic way is consistent with Black’s view of criticism since it still centers on the critic’s informed reading of the discourse.

It is helpful to study Black’s own scholarship for an alternative to a methodological system:

[Black’s] interpretation of a discourse typically draws on a wide variety of corroborating sources and on a wealth of data external to his critical object, and

his discussion of the functions of a discourse typically extrapolate speculatively to identify functions well beyond the response which Black claims the discourse immediately invites (Kauffeld, 2001).

Concordantly, this project relies on the extensive historical research on the period and the immediate rhetorical invitations made by the government on seemingly trivial issues serve as a basis for understanding cooperation as a whole.

Persona Criticism

Edwin Black's *Second Persona* has become an expedient tool for rhetorical critics examining the ideological underpinnings of persuasive political discourses. Black's (1970) choice of Robert Welch's use of the metaphor "cancer of communism," Janna's (2007) analysis of Hawaiian sovereignty rhetoric, and Williams & Marin's (2009) study of Putin's rhetoric of citizenship attest to the relevance of persona criticism in rhetorical study of political communication.

Black contends that critics too often focus on the primary persona, the characteristics of the author implied by the text, at the expense of the second persona. The second persona is Black's (1970) term for the totality of the "specific roles, actions, worldviews, and characteristics commended in the speech to describe the ideal audience's behaviors and traits" (Moody, 2009, p. 5). The ideal audience, or implied auditor, can be discerned through careful textual analysis of the rhetors' attitudes, values, and beliefs. The speech itself is thus adequate material for the attentive critic to uncover the meaning making process: "discourses are . . . external signs of the internal states" (Black, 1970, p. 110).

While the second persona is fictional in the sense that discrete discourse effects cannot be reliably discerned from the text alone, "Actual auditors look to the discourse they are

attending for cues that tell them how they are to view the world, even beyond the expressed concerns, the overt propositional sense, of the discourse” (Black, 1970, p. 113). A study of the ideological transformation of the public through media would thus focus not just on the direct references to the policy, but also the historical and social context.

The second persona provides a meaningful way for the persuasion to be critiqued: “The critic can see in the auditor implied by a discourse a model of what the rhetor would have [her or] his real auditor become” (Black, 1970, p. 113). Black suggests that the process of persuasion is not confined to having the audience only believe something, but also to be something. In the context of Denmark during 1943, government rhetoric encouraged people to be “responsible,” which is to say obedient to both national and German authorities. The Second Persona visible in the government's statements was mutually exclusive with Second Persona of the illegal press being in some form a part of the resistance⁴.

For Black the most important element in characterizing personae is neither temperament nor attitude, but ideology: “the network of interconnected convictions that functions in a man epistemically and that shapes his identity by determining how he views the world” (1970, p.

4 What constitutes “resistance” is also a disputed question. Kirchhoff (2001) distinguishes between the resistance as an attitude and an internal state of alert and as an illegal organization, a movement (p. 25). The latter type of organized resistance counted 45,000 individuals in May of 1945, up from as few as 10,000 in December of 1944 (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 187). These numbers reflect only those individuals who were in organized groups. Individuals acting alone existed to an unknown extent. Fishermen in the fall of 1943 provided safe passage for Jews across the Øresund strait to Sweden (for prices which have also been subject to public argument). Moreover there were those who provided shelter and safe passage to the saboteurs, and the 7,000 British Special Operations Executive (SOE) agents, while some provided intelligence and weapon storage. Kirchhoff suggests the best way of defining resistance is to take the definition of its enemies, the collaboration regime and the German authorities in Denmark. Some activities like protesting and strikes are considered civilian and passive resistance, and are contrasted with the active and military resistance which the Germans outlawed because it, unlike the passive resistance, was considered a threat to the governing system (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 25). While the distinctions between types of resistance are necessary to prevent misinterpretations, the two types were always interlinked: “The closed fists in the pockets, the cold shoulder, wearing the national colors and going to national meetings, listening to the BBC and reading illegal newspapers form a substantial part of the immune defense against the occupation power and Nazi ideology and could be a precondition for the development of the later armed resistance.” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 25).

112). In the context of this undertaking's relevant convictions would be those related to the outcome of the war and its effects on the rule of law in Denmark. Such convictions are more than an opportunistic maneuvering; as previously noted the early German victories were widely perceived as the final verdict on the inefficiencies of parliamentarism. As the velvet gloves slowly came off the German authorities in step with the failing German war efforts core moral questions were asked of the Danish populace concerning loyalty for the law versus the intrinsic rights associated with citizenship.

For Black discourses exert a pull of ideology on audiences, both through what they propose and the way the proposals are made, which cumulatively structure audience experiences. For Denmark, illegal newspaper articles concerning sabotage labeling informers "rats" force readers to decide on not just the policy of informing the Germans of sabotage, but also how to relate to informers and cooperation more generally. Kauffeld (2001) develops the effect of discourse on ideology further:

In modern and contemporary Western societies, where social identities are founded on the basis of shared convictions, a person's rhetorical sensibilities, Black argues, dispose that individual toward a corresponding ideology. Rhetorically developed sensibilities, in this view, are key determinates [*sic*] of an individual's consciousness, constituting a matrix of cognitive and perceptual proclivities which undergirds that person's ideology and commits that individual to a 'durable social unit . . . to whose laws a public submits and with whose fortunes they have bound their lives' (Black, 1992, p. 22).

Black notes that in the larger combat of ideologies, each ideology tends to generate its own idiom of discourse (1970, p. 122). It can thus be expected that the competing ideologies concerning cooperation would rely on different sets of idioms, each revealing underlying

assumptions and convictions. While the best evidence of ideology is substantive claims, such as what cooperation is and means, the most likely sources for Black (1970) are the stylistic tokens embedded in the idioms (p. 112). A stylistic token is a part of a discourse (e.g., “bleeding hearts”) that betrays an ideological commitment and cannot blend with a noncommittal discourse. A good model for how such construction of a second persona can be undertaken is Black’s (1992) criticism of President Johnson’s civil rights speech in March of 1965 (p. 24-29). Black historically contextualizes the discourses and creates, as Kauffeld notes, an:

evidentiary basis for his argument which is available to his reader independent of any prior theory or conceptual framework. Having situated his reader in a position approximating that of an ideal auditor, Black rests his case on what he can bring his reader to apprehend of the structure and function of the particular rhetorical discourse to which he directs the reader’s attention. (Kauffeld, 2001).

This evidentiary basis consists of analysis of the centrality of Johnson’s person in the speech and the representation of concrete suffering versus abstract condemnation. Black goes on to present an opposing view from Strom Thurmond to contrast and contextualize the public argument. Similarly, this project will draw on as evidence the stylistic tokens used by rhetors to justify cooperation and implicitly direct the rhetor's ideal audience toward an ideology.

The Danish government’s legitimation of the cooperation policy was constrained by the enormously different interests of the dissimilar audiences. The vast majority of Danes saw the German occupation as undermining their legal sovereignty and independence while the Germans saw the cooperation as a cheap and efficient way to sustain a geostrategically important occupation. Accordingly, the government had to legitimate the cooperation policy in a manner compatible with divergent ideological positions simultaneously. The divergent audiences constrained the rhetoric by precluding the overt framing of the policy as a bitter

necessity; this approach might have resonated with Danes, but undermined the credibility of the Danish cooperation with the Germans.

Morris' (2002) contribution of the fourth persona is relevant to the constraints placed on the Danish government's discourse. Morris' subject of J. Edgar Hoover's rhetoric surrounding his sexuality gave rise to what he termed the "fourth persona": "an implied auditor of a particular ideological bent . . . passing rhetoric must imply two ideological positions simultaneously, one that mirrors the dupes and another that implies, via the wink, an ideology of difference" (p. 230). For Morris, the fourth persona is characterized by silence as one part of the audience is not addressed directly. Whereas as silence is seen by Wander's (1984) discussion of the third persona as those individuals who are negated and the binary of the ideal audience; for the fourth persona silence is constructive of a collusion to avoid the issue. For the public argument concerning the cooperation policy, the government did need to imply two different ideological positions simultaneously. The government's rhetoric, especially during election season, did not discuss the cooperation policy directly, but more obliquely. In this sense silence is operating in a meaningful, but dissimilar, way from Morris' fourth persona, as Christian X's silence is meant to shift the focus of the debate rather than hide an obvious reality. Silence on cooperation strategically circumvents certain issues to avoid conflicts of interests, and even implicitly sanctions non-violent instances of resistance, not just to marginalize undesirable behavior.

Another factor determining how the fourth persona is shaped in the argument on cooperation is that the multiple publics discussed have different levels of influence. Both the Germans and the Danish public had vested interests in maintaining the policy, creating a form of interdependence, even if somewhat inequitable. The Danes were, because of their lack of military, at the mercy of the occupation government, but the Germans needed a civilian

population to maintain productive capacity, lest crucial resources have to be redirected to Denmark. Moreover, Denmark was to serve as the exemplar protectorate showing the benefits received by populations cooperating.

For Black, moral judgment of the discourses is an essential part of rhetorical criticism. With respect to the proposed study, it is naïve to think that a discussion of cooperation with the German government can exist in a moral vacuum, but that does not necessitate a moral evaluation of elected officials responsible for trying to represent their constituents in incredibly difficult circumstances. Such an evaluation would be a thesis in itself and there is no shortage of research addressing that particular issue (see e.g., Kirchhoff, 2001; Vilhjálmsón, & Blüdnikow, 2006). A rhetorical interpretation of the events would sidestep a part of the moral minefield, since the ideological shift is not seen in this undertaking as opportunistic, but a consequence of a constantly changing understanding of the cooperation. While the public's moral bearing shaped understandings of cooperation, moral judgment of the cooperation policy itself is outside the scope of the present project.

Specific questions asked of discourses can reasonably be expected to explain the ideological change in public opinion. How are the different ideologies visible in the texts in terms of different idioms, and what changes do they undergo? What structural characterizations can be made of the texts in terms of the tone and style? Is silence employed by rhetors to negate the third persona or to sidestep issues and implicitly collude with the public on what cannot be publicly said? How did the mutual exclusivity of cooperation and resistance develop? How was the transition of cooperation from a private to a public issue portrayed?

Study Importance

In his seminal work on *Mein Kampf* Burke (1989) keys on the import of apprehending

the Nazi rhetoric of Adolf Hitler: “[L]et us try also to understand what ‘medicine’ this man has concocted, that we may know, with greater accuracy, exactly what to guard against, if we are to forestall the concocting of similar medicine in America” (p. 211). Conversely, there is a similar need to understand the rhetoric of governments in countries under Nazi occupation that sought to justify cooperation with Germany. The question of how the killings of millions of people in the Holocaust had been achieved organizationally by so few people demands an answer. Adolph Eichmann, the architect of the Holocaust infrastructure, considered “cooperation . . . the very cornerstone” (Arendt, 1963, p. 104). While Burke is right to warn against the populist Nazi rhetoric, Arendt’s analysis of the Holocaust suggests that the rhetoric soliciting compliance and cooperation is even more central. While the monstrous inhumanity depicted in Hitler’s Nazi propaganda is more likely to cause uproar and raise attention, it is what Arendt terms “the banality of evil” which is the true cause of the Holocaust. It is the invisibility of the banal which enabled only a few thousand people, most of whom were office clerks, to murder millions in the concentration camps.

If studying the “medicine concocting atrocities” is important, so is the antidote, the rhetoric delegitimizing of cooperation. The resistance to Nazi forces in Denmark, once cooperation was established as unacceptable, was remarkably effective. Arendt (1963) commands our attention on why the case of the Danish noncooperation is of particular importance:

The story of the Danish Jews is *sui generis*, and the behavior of the Danish people and their government was unique among all the countries of Europe – whether occupied, or a partner of the Axis, or neutral and truly independent. One is tempted to recommend the story as required reading in political science for all students who wish to learn something about the enormous power potential

inherent in non-violent action and in resistance to an opponent possessing vastly superior means of violence. (p. 154)

While Arendt's praise of Danish resistance is flattering to a nationalist historical reading of the Danish relationship to the Nazi German occupation, it is the ambiguity and prevalence of rhetoric concerning cooperation which makes this particular public argument a productive avenue for critical inquiry.

The specifics of Danish cooperation are historically significant, but the issue of democratically-elected governments under occupation also has contemporary currency where addressing multiple and often opposed and power-differentiated audiences is prevalent. While the American military presence in Afghanistan is framed as consistent with the interests of the Afghan government, Hamid Karzai is faced with a situation not dissimilar to that of Scavenius: how should a democratically elected government, cooperating with an unpopular occupying force, justify that cooperation to both publics simultaneously. Karzai, unlike Scavenius, relies on the occupation for his regime's domestic security. Elections in other occupied territories, such as the Gaza strip and Iraq, provide other contemporary parallels as well. Even as critical differences remain between Denmark in 1943 and comparable modern political situations, the constraints by the government legitimation efforts may well produce comparable rhetorical strategies.

The study is presented in subsequent chapters in the following manner. The second chapter describes relevant socio-political historical details that situate the rhetors and their audiences. The third chapter outlines and interprets the public statements by the government. The fourth chapter describes the different persona in the government rhetoric based on the findings in chapter four. Finally, the fifth chapter concludes the project by contextualizing the findings in the larger field of persona criticism and outlines limitations and possible future

projects.

CHAPTER TWO: THE SOCIO-POLITICAL RHETORICAL SITUATION

This chapter described the socio-political context surrounding the cooperation, forming the exigence from which the rhetors speak. Hans Blumenberg (1987) outlines the prerequisites of the rhetorical situation citing “Lacking definitive evidence and being compelled to act,” conditions found in war-time Denmark. Contemporary criticism enjoys the benefit of a more thorough account of the war, where Scavenius and Christian X, even as the momentum of the war changed, acted amidst much uncertainty. In the government statements, both those generally about the necessity of non-confrontation and those addressing specific security concerns, the legitimacy of the cooperation policy is the image constantly being negotiated as a part of an ongoing conversation between the government and its audiences.

The Danish Cooperation Policy with Germany

The term “cooperation policy” is itself is a contested issue. Vilhjálmsson and Blüdnikow (2006) use the term “collaboration,” which has its origins in French occupation history and refers to a strategy of adapting to, rather than fighting, the enemy. The term “collaboration” was first applied in academic research to the Danish policy toward the German government in Hans Kirchhoff’s⁵ 1979 dissertation: “The August rebellion 1943 – the fall of the cooperation policy” (Augustoprøret 1943 – Samarbejdspolitikens fald). The policy was labeled “collaboration” by

5 Hans Kirchhoff is one of the leading historians on Denmark during World War II. I will cite Kirchhoff frequently as I consider him the authority on the cooperation/resistance aspect of the occupation. While his research has been criticized, he has published on the issue in domestic and international journals. Kirchhoff was a senior lecturer of contemporary history at Copenhagen University for 37 years. The most frequently cited work of his in this project is *Cooperation and resistance during the occupation, a political history (Samarbejde of modstand ...)* won the H.O. Lange prize in 2002 given by the Royal Danish Library for the most significant research dissemination. The work is an extension and update on the 1987 *Battle of Accommodation, the politicians and the resistance (Kamp eller tilpasning)*, indicating both a popular and academic seal of approval.

the Allies during the war, though representatives from both London and Washington repeatedly pointed to the difference between the reluctance of the Danish collaboration and the more eager form of the French (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 14-5). “Collaboration” is fraught with moral baggage, in particular with regard to collaborating countries of World War II.

Mainstream historians tend to use the term “cooperation.” The term was initially generated by the illegal media (the underground newspapers banned by the Danish government as well BBC radio broadcasts), implying that the Danish government was a help to the Germans, and that this help was not always forced, but offered voluntarily. The parties in the Danish government used the term “cooperation policy” as a label for the bipartisan cooperation on the issue of occupation among the parties represented in the government coalition. When discussing the relationship to the German government itself, the terms “negotiation policy,” “adaptation policy” or “concession policy” have been used by Danish government officials during and after the war (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 13).

The term “negotiation policy” was first advanced by Prime Minister Erik Scavenius after the war in his defense against charges of treason, and later appeared in early historical research (Kirchhoff, 2001). The term implies a negotiation mechanism and focuses on the Danish state interest, without revealing what that interest entails and the costs incurred. Moreover, the term frames the policy as being forced upon the government.

Nazi Occupation Policies

One way to assess the benefits from the cooperation policy is by comparing the occupation in Denmark to how other occupations were run by Germany. The German occupation during World War II was a collection of *ad hoc* solutions and improvisations following Hitler’s orders that any decisions on the future of occupied territories be postponed

until after a total victory. One reality formed was that of total German domination, suggesting a more predominant political or economic character; the aim was a new Europe (*Neuropa*) or the greater economic empire (*Grosswirtschaftsraum*). The ambitions of *Neuropa* which several German institutions questioned from 1943 onward, contrast sharply with the Japanese empire's decision to offer vassal-state-like partnerships to occupied governments. Though inconsistent with official policy statements, Hitler's decision was mad; "small state rubbish" (*das Kleinstaatengerümpel*) should be eliminated from his larger vision of a world dominated by the German empire (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 17). This ambition was not publicly declared by Hitler with relation to Denmark, but Germany's foreign policy generally is sure to have caused Danish concerns, even as the Danish government steadfastly maintained a confidence the occupation would end when the war ended.

Different branches of the German government controlled different occupied territories in what has been called "organized chaos" (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 17). In the occupations in the Slavic regions where the Holocaust was a more pressing consideration, the SS⁶ reigned supreme. In more strategically important areas such as France and Belgium, the *Wehrmacht*⁷ was in charge. In areas such as Poland, Ukraine, and the Baltics where expanding the German *Lebensraum*⁸ was important, the Nazi Party had control of the occupations. These strategies of occupation differed significantly from the more indirect approach toward occupation applied to Northern and Western Europe where the occupied to a larger degree were left to govern

6 Short for *Schutzstaffel*, German for Protection Squadron. The original purpose of this military unit was to protect Hitler, but it eventually it developed into a major paramilitary organization guided by Nazi ideology under the leadership of Heinrich Himmler. The SS was responsible for many of the German crimes against humanity during World War II.

7 The armed forces of Germany from 1935 to 1945, consisting of the air force (*Luftwaffe*), the army (*Heer*), and navy (*Kriegsmarine*). The SS operated as a standalone armed unit.

8 German for "living space" or "living room." The notion implied clearing out the European continent so the German people had room or space to live.

themselves. Dr. Werner Best, who became the Nazi plenipotentiary⁹ (*Reichsbevollmächtigter*) in Denmark in 1942, was a legal scholar in the SS who became a leading expert in the “large space” (*Grossraums*) theory, which came to dominate German policy in the occupied territories. Best advocated a difference between the colonial administration in the eastern territories and the control administration in the northern and western territories. The emphasis on cooperating with local governments in the northern territories elevated Best in status above the armed forces since they were under civilian administration. The eastern territories under the control of the SS were also more densely populated by Slavs, Jews, communists, and others with whom the Germans had no intention of cooperating.

The Special Status of the Danish Occupation

Even within the northern occupied territories, Denmark was a special case which Best characterized as an “alliance administration.”¹⁰ Denmark was officially occupied to protect the country from an Allied attack, and the occupation was termed the “peace occupation.” Hitler confided to his inner circle in the summer of 1941 that the justification of German invasions as being forced in order to ensure law and order was tactically sound to avoid unnecessary local resistance (Kirchhoff, 2001). The German interest in the iron ore in Kiruna and Malmberget of northern Sweden was the most important inducement for invasion. The Danish government signed a non-aggression pact in 1939, anticipating the German invasion. The technicalities allowed Denmark to maintain its official status of neutral, as well as what has been called a “fictional sovereignty” (Kirchhoff, 2001). The presence of the *Wehrmacht* forced the Danish

9 A diplomatic position in the German government granting full powers of representation.

10 Comparable to a vassal state, the Danish government was treated as an ally of Germany by the German foreign ministry.

government to abandon strict neutrality by recruiting for the SS, dismissing diplomatic representatives in Allied territories, and censoring the anti German press. For military purposes the distinction is irrelevant as the Danish government in reality was not neutral but aided Germany. However, the fictional status ensured that the Danish government was considered an alliance administration, thereby leaving the responsibility of the occupation primarily with the traditional German Foreign Ministry (*Auswärtiges Amt*).

As tensions mounted from the summer of 1942 to 1943, the *Wehrmacht* gained influence at the expense of the *Auswärtiges Amt*. While the *Wehrmacht* complemented Best's diplomatic role with a military one, the Danish government still dealt almost exclusively with the *Auswärtiges Amt*. The *Auswärtiges Amt* was thus the most direct, but not the only, German audience for the Danish government; it too had to negotiate a relationship among the Danish government, German leadership, and the military leadership it competed for leadership in Denmark with. The German government lost nothing by justifying their military presence in the guise of protecting Danish neutrality, and even gained military access with lower administrative costs while avoiding the risks of diplomatic complications with the then avowedly neutral United States of America¹¹ (Kirchhoff, 2001). By comparison, “Best was able to administer Denmark with four million inhabitants with a staff of 200, while Terboven needed 3,000 personnel to control 2.8 million Norwegians (Hong, 1997, p. 46). Hong (1997) summarizes Werner Best’s philosophy of cooperation as a means of saddling “the Danish state with maximal responsibility and independent action to the benefit of German interests in Denmark” (p. 46). The Danish benefits from the neutrality fiction included the largely sovereign legal administration of justice as well as the benefits of dealing with the German Foreign Ministry

11 The military might and special relationship between the United Kingdom and the U.S. made avoiding a *casus belli* with the U.S. critical to German plans of *Neuropa*.

which had an institutional interest in not making demands of the Danes that could not be met (Kirchhoff, 2001).

The strictly symbolic nature of the status as neutral and sovereign was made evident when the Anti-Comintern Pact, a vague declaration to fight communism, was required of Denmark in 1941. The German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop threatened the Danish government with the dissolution of the cooperation policy if they did not join (Kirchhoff, 2001). Scavenius was severely criticized by both the Danish public and Parliament as a response to Denmark becoming a part of the Anti-Comintern Pact, in part because of fears of Allied bombings as Denmark increasingly appeared to be a German ally rather than a neutral state.

Invasion and Early Occupation

The *Wehrmacht* invaded Denmark in the morning of April 9th of 1940. Less than two hours after the first Germans had crossed the border, the Danish government capitulated with the imminent threat of the *Luftwaffe* over Copenhagen airspace hanging in the air. In the span of the invasion, a mere 16 Danish casualties were incurred (Heuseler, 2010). The day of the surrender, a new coalition government was negotiated.

The cooperation policy included many different forms of cooperation by the government as well as the civilian population; these forms were constantly changing with circumstances. On the 8th of April 1940 Christian X appointed Erik Scavenius Foreign Minister; Scavenius was known as the magician of the Foreign Ministry during World War I for his ability to keep Denmark out of the war, and consequently thought German-friendly (Kirchhoff, 2001). Scavenius began his tenure by going to Berlin as an overture to strengthen the Danish – German relationship, a move designed to prevent future erosion of Danish sovereignty and territorial

integrity (Heuseler, 2010).

Economic Cooperation

The German Foreign Ministry proposed in its first meeting with Scavenius a customs and currency union which would economically incorporate Denmark into the greater German empire. Scavenius had to defend the policy to a Danish Parliament which refused the proposal, but a confrontation never arose because of opposition to the plan from Germany's Economic Ministry which had the support of Hermann Göring (Kirchhoff, 2001). Despite the failure of the customs and currency union, Denmark nonetheless became progressively economically dependent on Germany¹².

The greatest economic beneficiaries of the economic cooperation were the farmers, especially the medium- and large-scale farmers, who saw domestic prices increase by 100% with the *Wehrmacht* being able to use all the supply. Despite initial difficulties in redirecting production, by 1943 Denmark had become the second highest supplier of foodstuffs to Germany, only exceeded by Italy, and by 1944 provided the source of the majority of its supply of fish (Kirchhoff, 2001).

Danish industry meanwhile benefitted both domestically and abroad from German demand. While the Danish industrial contribution to Germany supplied them with just 3% of the *Wehrmacht* imports, it comprised 13% of Danish industry (Kirchhoff, 2001). Danish corporations also partnered with the *Wehrmacht*, using slave labor in Poland and Estonia to build infrastructure and run coal mines (Vilhjálmsson and Blüdnikow, 2006).

Carpenters and independent traders, particularly in the food industry, also did very well over the course of the occupation. The stock market rose steadily until 1944 and many small

¹² The increased interdependence should be considered in the context of the Danish GDP having fallen by 22% in 1940, largely the result of trading isolation before Danish export to Germany had fully developed.

businesses had a 10-12% profit margin. Unemployment fell substantially due to the large volume of sub-contract labor to build fortifications, airports, embankments, and radar stations. The building of bunkers on the west coast of Jutland provided employment for “100,000 workers at the peak of production” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 56). While the country benefitted from the very substantial fiscally expansionary investment made, all German purchases in Denmark were paid by the National Bank, a bill that totaled “\$ 1.2 billion by 1945” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 58). The economic gains made were not shared equally in society, the poorest were the hardest hit by the increase in the price of staple goods like fuel and made the lowest absolute salary gains across industries. Because of Denmark’s isolation from its surrounding trading partners, Germany became the only access point for essential imports such as fuel for the fishing cutters, coal, steel, and feeding stuffs for the agricultural sector.

The final verdict must be that the economic cooperation was an important factor in sustaining the cooperation policy, as it gave Germany an incentive to keep Denmark peaceful and productive, while buying off outrage over the German violation of Danish sovereignty. At the same time, it was not lost on the Danish public that Germany, as the aggressor of the war, was ultimately responsible for the economic hardships experienced. Kirchhoff (2006) claims there was no alternative to trading with, and producing for, the Germans without risking the starvation of the Danish people. For these reasons unions, employees, businesses, and labor market organizations were amongst the most eager to cooperate with the German government.

Military Cooperation

The Danish military support was negligible from the German standpoint, but significant enough to dispel any notion of neutrality. The Royal Danish Navy participated in minesweeping and patrols, but scuttled its fleet before it could be appropriated by the Germans on the day of

the Danish government resignation. Free Corps Denmark, a volunteer Danish military unit under Nazi command, recruited 7,000 Danes, a modest number compared to the “one million Soviet volunteers for German military service” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 22). Vilhjálmsson and Blüdnikow (2006) have found more recent evidence of Danish volunteers working at extermination camps and the Nordic volunteer division of Waffen SS - *Wiking*¹³. Generally, there existed “no fascist or Nazi movement in Denmark of consequence” (Arendt, 1968, p. 153). For the German government though, Denmark’s most important contribution was its gateway to Norway through Sweden. Danish police also cooperated with the Germans by arresting communists and saboteurs to the initial satisfaction of the SS (Kirchhoff, 2001) and censoring the public by arresting producers of illegal newspapers. The Germans did, however, find the police unwilling to fulfill their duties when the Danish Jews were to be deported to concentration camps. Out of a total of 7,000 Jews, only a few hundred were found and sent to concentration camps, of which 46 perished (Arendt, 1968). This was a tragedy in its own right but, in the context of the Holocaust, a remarkably low number, reflected in Adolph Eichmann’s evaluation of the “‘evacuation’ as a failure” (Arendt, 1968, p. 156).

Opposition to the Cooperation Policy

Early opposition to the occupation existed, but was restricted to right-leaning marginal voices of the antiparliamentary movement sweeping across the continent in 1940, the most obvious of which was the Danish Nazi party (DNSAP). DNSAP was opposed by the Danish

13 A Panzer Division led by Danish senior lieutenant of the Royal Danish Life Guard C.F. von Schalburg. Schalburg died in battle in 1942, and the corps was renamed the Schalburg corps. Several Danish companies existed in the regiment *Nordland* which fought on the eastern front. *Nordland* originated with Free Corps Denmark, by request of the DNSAP. The government sanctioned intensive recruitment efforts which cited “improved neighbor relations” in the advertisements. Recruiting meetings were repeatedly subject to attacks. As in other Waffen SS units, mass executions of Nazi victims occurred (Akil, 1945, p. 679-706).

government as well as the *Wehrmacht* (Kirchhoff, 2001). The ban on its publication *Danish Front* (*Dansk Front*) was also lifted on the 22nd of August 1943 (Kasler, 2010), a little more than a month after lifting a ban on an anti-German publication *The Storm* (*Stormen*)¹⁴. The Union of Farmers, which counted 35,000 members, joined an alliance with the DNSAP in June of 1940, strongly influenced by the large financial gains from the *Wehrmacht's* offering to buy all foodstuffs at a price substantially higher than the domestic price. The Conservative People's Party (KU) demanded a stronger role for business and capital in government, and saw the overthrow of the parliamentary democracy and a stronger bond with the German government as the most direct way to achieve its ends (Kirchhoff, 2001).

Lastly, the national populists who worshipped the King, and cultural icons such as the poet, playwright and Lutheran priest Kaj Munk and theology professor Hal Koch, attacked the cooperation policy from the angle of anti-parliamentarian Danish nationalism¹⁵ (Kirchhoff, 2001). Danish populists saw the cooperation policy as mistaken because it furthered what they considered to be the hopeless model of parliamentary democracy with its corruption and obstruction, as opposed to a more authoritarian regime.

When Hitler launched Operation Barbarossa¹⁶ on Sunday June 21st, 1941, it also became the end of the Hitler-Stalin pact which had pacified the communists in Denmark. The communists would eventually become the biggest internal threat to the cooperation policy (Kirchhoff, 2001). The Danish Communist Party (DKP) went underground and members became fugitives from the law and rank-and-file members were arrested and detained by the Danish police (Kirchhoff, 2001). Despite the persecution, DKP grew from 4,000-5,000

14 The ban was initially imposed in 1940.

15 Using this nationalist and anti-German sentiment, stories of Danish greatness (e.g., during the era of Valdemars) were retold through fictional literature with obvious anti-German symbolism.

16 Hitler's failed invasion of the Soviet Union, that culminated in the battle of Stalingrad.

members in 1941 to having 250,000 voters in 1945 and was considered the driving force behind the resistance and sabotage actions. The DKP was the biggest and strongest illegal organization during the occupation. From the cessation of the Hitler-Stalin pact until the spring of 1943 DKP was “almost single handedly responsible for the Danish resistance, in part by encouraging sabotage through the conduit of illegal newspapers” (Kirchhoff, 20001, p. 118). Moreover, sabotage and the fight against the cooperation policy were “two sides of the same coin” (Snitker, 1977, p. 62).

The cooperation policy was essential to securing Denmark’s relatively low rate of casualties, minimal involvement in World War II itself, and short term economic security. The price of attaining these goals became increasingly high as the war progressed and imminent German defeat appeared likely. While appeasements and concessions were secured from the Germans, outright double-dealing on the part of the Danish government did not occur. The proposition often presented in the “basic story,” that the “collaboration was an intentional screen for the resistance, has no basis in reality” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 23).

The Telegram Crisis and Government Transition

On Christian X’s 60th birthday on the 26th of September 1942, the monarch’s dismissive response to Hitler’s personal congratulations became the “last straw” of German patience with Denmark in what became known as the “Telegram Crisis.” Danish-German relations were thrown into the most severe crisis since the invasion, as evidenced by the decision to put the *Wehrmacht* on ready notice and to dismiss the Danish diplomatic delegation in Berlin (Kirchhoff, 2001). Judging by postwar interviews with the then Danish Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and the then *Reichsbevollmächtigter*, the real reason for the German affront was dissatisfaction with the Danish government's policies in a number of areas and in particular MP

Christmas Møller's secret departure for England, though Hitler was furious and inconsolable with the curtness of the telegram response. Specifically, von Rippentrop saw Danish anti-communist efforts as insufficient (the head of DKP Aksel Larsen was a free man), and the *Wehrmacht* was unhappy with the rise in sabotage incidents. Furthermore, Christmas Møller, via the BBC, consistently declared that the Danish government was playing the Germans for fools and that the Danish disposition toward Germany was very different from its outward appearance. These BBC statements by a former member of parliament were the beginning of the unraveling of the Danish government's rhetorical strategy. Hitler's fury provided the impetus for acting on perceived insufficient Danish cooperation.

According to *The Parliamentary Commission* (1945-58), as early as May 22nd, 1942 the Auswärtiges Amt expressed its concerns to the Danish government, Secretary of State Weizsäcker telling the Danish envoy in Berlin that the German government had “taken the relations to Denmark up to a kind of revision” (Vol. 4, p. 47). As it turned out, this was no bluff; serious doubts had emerged about the sincerity of the Danish government's policy during occupation. Four days later the German envoy approached the Danish Prime Minister and Foreign Minister to forward views from Berlin that certain necessary changes had to be made, and from then on:

the German envoy shows striking interest for statements made by Danish public personalities. In several cases complaints were made that contemplated radio speeches (where manuscripts in accordance with regulations were to be delivered in advance for censorship) did not have a sufficiently 'positive' content. (*The Parliamentary Commission*, Vol. 4, p. 48).

On August 10th the German envoy von Renthe-Fink¹⁷ approached the Foreign Ministry's director and let the Danish government's attention to the “necessity of a more energetic effort to fight the powers in the country opposing Germany” (The Parliamentarian Commission, Vol 4, p. 48). Moreover, von Renthe-Fink requested either the death penalty be applied by Danish courts to saboteurs or the jurisdiction of such cases be transferred to German military tribunals. It was made clear that Denmark was suspected of leading an opportunistic policy. The Danish government issued warning gesture, and then Prime Minister Uffe Buhl gave an infamous speech encouraging informing the police about saboteurs, but the death penalty was not introduced.

Scavenius was sent to Berlin for a meeting with von Rippentrop, who presented the Danish Foreign Minister with Hitler's demands. For the cooperation policy to continue, a new government had to be formed which should be led by Scavenius as Prime Minister, represented by the trade union movement, and include Danish Nazi members as cabinet ministers. Scavenius immediately rejected Danish Nazi ministers as fantasy and ruled out his own candidacy for Prime Minister on the grounds of having no domestic policy experience.

At the end of the meeting Scavenius was introduced to Dr. Werner Best, the new *Reichsbevollmächtigter*. Best was labeled “the bloodhound from Paris” by the illegal press for his participation in the Holocaust in France and role as organizer of an *Einsatzkommando*¹⁸. Werner Best was a career Nazi with a corresponding CV, but also “a diplomat and adroit politician” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 152).

By October, as a sign of a harder military line, Hermann von Hanneken replaced Lüdke as commander-in-chief of German forces in Denmark and Werner Best of the SS replaced von

17 Werner Best's predecessor as *Reichsbevollmächtigter*.

18 Mobile killing squads consisting of five subgroups (Einsatzgruppen), each of up to 5,000 men.

Renthe-Fink. On the new arrangement between von Hanneken and Best, Hong writes:

Both he and Plenipotentiary Best were given orders by Hitler on German policy toward Denmark, but they were given at different points in October and were contradictory. The 'hard' and 'soft' German policies, carried out through military and diplomatic means, struggled for ascendancy afterwards. (p. 46, 1997)

The Danish parliament struggled to find a solution to the problem of the diplomatic tension which threatened to undermine the cooperation policy. On the day of Best's arrival in Copenhagen the Danish government suggested the national bank director Bramsnæs as Prime Minister but without any Nazi representatives in government. Best surprisingly agreed to both conditions, but Bramsnæs declined the offer to be Prime Minister. Best finally put forth the ultimatum of appointing Scavenius as Prime Minister or ceding administrative power to the German forces. Scavenius was appointed Prime Minister by Parliament by a narrow margin of ten votes. While the new government was accepted as legitimate by both the Germans and the democratically elected representatives, the constitutional legitimacy of the votes sustaining the government would expire in April of 1943 as the term would end.

The Elections of Spring 1943

When addressed with the need for a new election to legitimate the cooperation policy, Werner Best was very forthcoming and an election was scheduled for March of 1943. Best's interests in the election were based on his own standing in relation to both the Danish government and Berlin. Best correctly predicted the electoral success of the governing coalition would legitimize the cooperation policy, continuing the legalistic line and securing his own future standing as the German point man in Denmark. Berlin was at first opposed to holding elections due to considerations of DNSAP, law and order, and the fear of the success of parties

hostile to Germany. Consequently, compromises were made and people and parties openly hostile to Germany, such as DKP, were barred from running. Moreover, “posters, voter meetings, and other public assemblies were banned in an attempt to stymie public debate, under the pretense of a law and order truce” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 181). Nevertheless, the propaganda effect from holding a reasonably free election was a success for Germany, in general, and Best specifically. Domestically, the propaganda effect was more limited. *Land og Folk* pointed to the obvious German agenda, “for by respecting the constitution's provisions on parliamentary election they [Germans] would veil their countless injustices against the Danish people and its rule” (Buschardt et al., p. 252). On the 24th of March, a “German comment on the election” was made public via the *German diplomatic-political correspondence*. In a glowing endorsement of the election, the statement begins:

In Denmark the elections have not just been carried through completely without frictions, but one is almost tempted to say as if under peace conditions.

Additionally, there has been an election turnout hardly ever seen before in this country. In any case the turnout has, after what has been established thus far, been between 85% and 95% as opposed to 79% in the 1939 elections. This fact has actually had great significance since the hostile propaganda first claimed that Germany would not even permit the holding of elections in Denmark. When this prediction turned out to be incorrect, it was claimed that the elections would be felt as a farce by the population. But precisely the large turnout has disproven these claims, since for a puppet system the Danish population would not have performed such a mass summoning. (Akil, 1945, p. 836)

The statement correctly identifies the criticism of the election, but answers the charge convincingly by warranting its claim that the majority of Danes do consider the election serious

enough to participate in it. The introductory paragraph also seeks to casually dismiss those who speak poorly of Germany as ill-informed.

The result of the election is predictably framed as a vindication of the cooperation policy:

The government Scavenius, which today carry the responsibility for the stewardship of Denmark's rule, received in the overwhelming majority obtained by the parties behind it the testimony that the Danish people stand behind it and its usefulness, the Danish-German relations promoted course. The only so-called Danish unity-group that wanted to oppose such an impending cooperation, has only achieved a very pathetic amount of votes. (Akil, 1945, p. 837)

The Germans not only attribute the victory by the Scavenius government to its “usefulness” and cooperative mentality, it also takes a swipe at Danish Unity's (*Dansk Samling*) failure to garner votes, labeling its electoral results “pathetic,” but makes no comment on DNSAP’s receiving 68 fewer votes, and only three out of 149 seats. Finally, the German statement closes with a promise of a better future for Danes:

The elections have outside their local importance shown the world public that the thought of and opportunity for a united cooperation with Germany despite the hostile powers' claims and intrigues is absolutely alive and effective in Denmark. While the hostile democratic powers – which the events in the countries they have occupied show – only on a pretense let the local governments continue, and this only for the purpose of being hated for the difficult and often unbearable conditions, Denmark's case shows that where conditions allow for it, in a German occupied country, life and constitutional conditions which plainly can be described as peace conditions are preserved. (Akil, p. 837).

While ostensibly addressed to Danes, the global publicity effect is mentioned, disclosing the ulterior German motives behind the election. Germany, unlike the “hostile democratic powers” actually allows for peaceful living and constitutional protections. However, in a last veiled threat, such privileges can only be extended “where conditions allow for it.”

Different illegal publications advised different courses of action; some advocated voting blank, while others encouraged people to vote for the government as a way of voting against DNSAP. *De Frie Danske's* March edition sarcastically opined that Dr. Best “in his silky ingratiation mercifully gave Denmark permission to hold elections” and encouraged voting “*not* for the Scavenius government, *but for the cooperating parties*” (original emphasis, Buschardt et al., p. 236-7). Similarly, Christmas Møller in his BBC broadcast asserted that Scavenius is not the government of the parliament, but of the Germans. Still, Christmas Møller concluded that Danish people had to vote for “democracy, majority rule, Danish freedom, justice, and truth” (Buschardt et al., p. 238). *The Danish Times* echoed the sentiment in their March publication simply titled “vote” with the subheading “not out of enthusiasm, but because it is a necessity, all good Danish women and men should vote for one of the five government parties” (Buschardt et al., p. 242). *Frit Danmark* opposed this line of argument, insisting that the election was a fraud and that “any blank vote is a powerful yes to Danishness and democracy” (Buschardt et al., p. 246). DKP, barred from participating in the election, also sent out their endorsement of a protest vote via *Land og Folk*: “vote Danish – vote blank” (Buschardt et al. p. 247).

Kirchhoff (2001) reports the “voter turnout for the March election was a record high

89.5%”. The five parties in the government coalition won 94.6%¹⁹ of the vote, while the election became the death knell for the DNSAP, which secured only 2.1% of the vote. Such an outcome was far from certain at the outset of the election where the government coalition feared reprisals from the voters because of the cooperation policy; only the Conservative Party expected to do well, as a reward for its public opposition to Scavenius. The opposition split their voting; DKP and *Free Denmark* encouraged voting blank while the Danish representatives in London, through the popular BBC broadcast, suggested voting for anyone who voted “no” in November (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 180). Some illegal newspapers, such as *The Free Danes* (*De Frie Danske*) objected to the practice of voting blank since such practices would relatively increase the weight of votes cast for the DNSAP (Buscharadt, Fabritius, Ruge, and Tønnesen, 1965, p. 236-7). Dansk Samling, a Christian nationalist party that had been part of the 1940-1 anti-parliamentarian movement, ran as the only party advocating a withdrawal from the cooperation policy as a symbolic protest. Dansk Samling got the endorsement of Kaj Munk whose anti-Nazi public sentiments cost him his life when the Gestapo executed him in 1944. Dansk Samling received three seats out of the 149 in the parliament. While the protest parties fared poorly, the Conservative Party gained five seats and individual politicians opposing the new government in November 1940 did well. Local elections followed in May where the Social Democrats who cooperated with the Germans suffered especially massive losses. Since the local election took place less than two months after the national election and the *Wehrmacht* was in only marginally worse shape than in late March, the results reflected an emerging opposition to the cooperation policy.

The meaning of the elections, was of course, contested, but the results of the

19 The same source on page 168 claims the number is 96.5%

parliamentary election in particular were effectively framed as “a vote for or against the democracy, and for or against Nazism rather than a vote for or against the cooperation policy itself” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 169). While the government enacted a rhetorical strategy centered on democracy to avoid having to address the core issue of the election, cooperation was nonetheless heavily covered in certain illegal newspapers, (e.g., *De Frie Danske*) (Buschardt et al., 1965, p. 236). The existence of protest parties and the prevalence of the criticism of the cooperation policy provided a real alternative to the cooperation policy. The election frame favored by both Scavenius and Best seemed to have won out: “The election . . . was waged over the abstract political ideal of democracy. Not only did the government parties assert this, but Danish-language BBC broadcasts and a significant portion of the illegal press did as well” (Hong, p. 253).

Despite underlying anti-cooperation sentiments and the existence of a possible avenue of electoral protest, this alternative was soundly rejected by the voters, suggesting continued support for the cooperation policy by the vast majority of Danes; or at least an acceptance of a working policy preserving some independence and national identity.

However, Best’s hopes that the election would be a “safety valve to allay public opinion” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 170) while controlling dissenting elements of Danish society were short-lived. The attempts to control and censor media during the election also backfired. The election in which the topic of cooperation was avoided by the ruling parties ironically became “a catalyst for the deliberation on the cooperation policy” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 188) and provided the basis for the ideological transformation culminating in the August rebellion and the successful sabotage of Jewish deportations. While Danish neutrality and sovereignty were fictional, they created space for the glimmer of light in the darkness of the Holocaust. By holding an election, Danes became more conscious of the legal rights afforded to them by the

status of Denmark as a neutral nation. Hannah Arendt points to the Danish democracy as essential to the comparatively modest Jewish casualties: “What in Denmark was the result of an authentically political sense, an inbred comprehension of the requirements and responsibilities of citizenship and independence . . . was in Italy just old fashioned humanitarianism” (p. 161). Leni Yahill (1965) supports this finding saying that, “for the Danes . . . the Jewish question was a political and not a humanitarian question” in what Kirchhoff (1995) calls the “standard work on the issue of Danish Jews during World War II” (p. 436).

Aftermath of Elections

Events post-election, during the spring and summer of 1943, were characterized by a marked upswing in acts of sabotage. The number of incidents during each of the months of 1943 before the government resigned was: “24, 38, 68, 80, 80, 47, 94, 213” (Hong, p. 49). An increasing number of sabotage acts used explosives, partly due to the SOE (Special Operations Executive) expertise (Kirchhoff, 2001). Amplified sabotage was not welcomed by Danish government authorities who not only decried it in public, but also invested all available resources to fight the sabotage, by guarding the railways and industrial centers, increasing criminal policing, and offering princely rewards for the apprehension of saboteurs (Kirchhoff, 2001). Still, people were typically unwilling to cooperate with the authorities and, as reported by a poll in the illegal newspaper *Ringen*, “approved of sabotage between 50-70%” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 178). Consequently, Scavenius asked rhetorically, “Who should determine this country’s policy, the voters, or the street gangs?” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 178). The extra effort to apprehend saboteurs was pushed by Best as well as representatives in Berlin, and was met with full cooperation by the Danish government. Christian X also publicly condemned the sabotage. The government effort to stop the sabotage was a failure, even as “150 saboteurs had been

arrested by early August” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 178).

In the summer of 1943 the public debate heated up with the right of revolt being a particular point of controversy. The right of revolt is the “right or duty of an individual citizen to resist a regime which breaks the laws of justice and morality” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 182).

While sabotage had become acceptable, the debate in the illegal papers centered on whether cooperation was mutually exclusive with resistance. The position of Hal Koch position, whose early stance against the government was grounded in nationalism and his Christian theology, absolved the government of treason, as their role should be to find a way out through cooperation, while individuals should become “the loyal opposition to the cooperating government” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 183). Fellow theologian Knud Ejler Løgstrup disagreed, writing “it is the street life which corrupts when foreign policy lines are crossed” (Kirchhoff, 2001, p. 183).

August Rebellion

By July of 1943 the Royal Air Force was bombing the German industrial heart of the Ruhr resulting in the return of Danish workers that had sought employment in Germany during the war. The Swedish press reported the attacks on Germany as a signal of an invasion of Denmark by the Allies in the near future. The *Wehrmacht* held an exercise on the west coast of Jutland, and people saw major convoys from Norway going south to Germany.

Strikes started happening across the country, which were ineffectively dealt with by the Germans. Since striking was a legal right and the Germans were under orders not to attack Danish workers, there was little the soldiers could do and the strikes continued. The military experience from Belgium was that while it was possible to make people show up to work, achieving the level of productivity necessary for the continuation of the German war machine

proved exceedingly difficult. In all of Europe major strikes were breaking out: in Italy 130,000 workers were striking from their factory jobs. Since the workers in the country had borne the brunt of the occupation and had the most experience organizing, it should not surprise that the August rebellion had its roots in worker uprisings. In the third largest city of Odense, the center for shipyards and railway, 3,000 workers stopped working until the armed guard towers had been removed (Snitker, 1977). As soon as work was resumed in Odense, machine workers in Esbjerg stopped working until the curfew had been lifted. What made the Esbjerg strike significant was that the strike spread to all stores and most white collar workers. Odense as a city stopped working by mid-August, following the deployment of soldiers to the streets. The troops were positioned as a consequence of public shaming of girls²⁰ who had slept with Germans and the violent attacks on collaborationists and German enlisted personnel. In Aalborg on the 23rd of August seven workers were shot to death by Germans, and many wounded to set an example for reprisals against revolt. The government and police reactions were based on the misconceptions that the provocateurs were communists and British agents who could be apprehended when, in fact, they numbered in the hundreds of thousands, a pervasive uprising with the moral power to demand an end to cooperation. A pattern emerged in all of the August rebellions. At first an act of sabotage or another event triggers German countermeasures which in the tense atmosphere at the time result in violent clashes and general strikes. A feedback effect can be seen contributing to a rapid rise of resistance.

The emergence of strikes in Denmark during 1943 might have occurred in the backdrop of the “summer of resistance” across Europe in 1943, but Snitker (1977) states “the background

20 The shaming of Danish girls who socialized with Germans was reported in the illegal media. *De Frie Danske* wrote in March that following unrests in Kolding, “no one was hurt other than 5 German girls.” (Buschardt et al., p. 235). An eyewitness account sent out as a flier in Odense in August wrote, “those who have suffered are the girls who have socialized with German soldiers. They have been undressed on the street, had their heads shaven, and covered in oil. Well – now it is enough.” (Buschardt et al., p. 292)

for these strikes was the hollowing out of worker's living conditions under the occupation by wage freezes and ban on strikes” (p. 64). Scavenius attributes the rise of sabotage and demonstrations to the “expectations of an imminent German collapse” (*The Parliamentary Commission*, 1945-58, Vol. 4, p. 59). Taken together, both claims have merit. A confluence of factors reoriented Danes' notions of what cooperation meant and how necessary it was.

On the 28th of August the German government on orders from Berlin imposed an ultimatum concerning the reintroduction of the death penalty, drumhead court martial²¹, public curfews, outlawing public assembly and strikes, censorship under German supervision, and the payment of one million kroner as well as the taking of hostages as security after the murder of a German soldier in Odense. The government refused and resigned the following day on the 29th of August, marking the end of the cooperation policy.

Christian X

Christian X's anti-German credibility and power as a nationally unifying symbol placed the monarch front and center during the war, despite his apolitical role. The statements made by Christian X and his actual sentiments only comprise part of his image in the eye of the Danish public.

Though the government and Christian X worked together without major conflicts during the occupation and the monarchy never obstructed Parliament, in May of 1940 the government felt compelled to issue a proclamation titled “denial of the rumor about the King and the Prime Minister” (Akil, p. 150). The statement broaches the topic by stating that it is “one of many rumors of the time” which has “its origins abroad.” The proclamation referenced the rumor

21 A court martial held in the field to hear urgent charges. The motivation was to swiftly punish saboteurs.

stating that Christian X had refused to accept the Prime Minister's resignation because he wanted to hold the Prime Minister to the disastrous policy course he had led in Denmark prior to the war. Finally the statement clarifies no such thing had taken place or been suggested. That the rumor was substantial enough for the government to feel compelled to answer it shows how ready the population was to believe that Christian X was a responsible leader above the fray, and the Parliament were to blame for the inability to prevent Denmark from being invaded.

Vilhjálmsón (2003) tracks down the origin of the myth that Christian X wore the yellow star in solidarity with Danish Jews, attributing, with his usual critical revisionism, the myth to an instance of Danish *realpolitik*. Vilhjálmsón (2003) contends the planting of the myth in foreign media was a deliberate public relations ploy by exiled Danes to justify the lack of aggression against Germany by Denmark:

The tale about the King and the Star was not just a fairy tale which can be analyzed in folkloristic terms. There were those who deliberately put this story, along with similar fabrications, into circulation, believing them to be beneficial to the interests of Denmark abroad. The story can be seen as a response to the criticism Denmark received in the Allied press between 1940 and 1943 . . . The legend of the King and the Star was most likely created to gain goodwill in America. (2003, p. 106)

While intended for consumption outside Denmark, the myth found its way to Denmark through the Swedish newspaper *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfartstidning*. The paper printed a cartoon that “shows Danish Prime Minister Stauning and King Christian. Stauning says: 'What are we to do Your Majesty if Scavenius succeeds in making our Jews wear yellow stars?' The King responds: 'Then we will probably all have to wear yellow stars'” (Vilhjálmsón, p. 105, 2003).

No stars were of course ever worn in Denmark, but there is some truth to the myth. First,

Christian X did say that in the event such a demand were made, everyone would wear the Star of David (Møller, 2007). Moreover, the myth is only persistent because it was credible and it struck at the larger truth that the people perceived Christian X to be anti-German and a symbol of Danish sovereignty. Vilhjálmsón (2003) claims, that while Christian X did not attend synagogue during the occupation, he was the first monarch to attend a synagogue in 1933 immediately after Hitler came to power (Bershteyn, n.d.). Finally, *Foreign Affairs* in 1943 published an article by stating: “At least once, after the Germans suggested the adoption of anti-Jewish laws, he [*King Christian X Ed.*] attended service in a synagogue in Copenhagen” (Leistikow, p. 352, 1943).

Christian X's symbolic representation of independence and sovereignty during the occupation is further strengthened by the King's Badge (*Kongemærket*), a commemorative badge produced for the occasion of Christian X's 70th birthday in 1940. While initially intended to be temporary, the sale of the badges continued until Christian X's death in 1947, at which point more than 1.1 million copies had been sold. For present purposes the badge was employed by the resistance movement in two ways. The illegal newspapers *The Danish Times* (*Danske Tidende*) used the badge as a logo on the front page of their paper. Secondly, after the liberation of Denmark, Field Marshall Montgomery was given a copy of the badge by the designer and producer, Georg Jensen, as a symbol of the Danish resistance movement (Engelbrecht, 1993).

Since the anti-German symbolic gestures by Christian X are complemented by his vocal support for the cooperation policy and his denunciation of sabotage and the resistance movement, the historical legacy of Christian X is open to interpretation. The decision by the surviving members of resistance movement to honor Christian X's coffin with the freedom fighter armband has been labeled “ironic” (Møller, para. 31, 2007). However, having almost certainly heard Christian X speak on the radio, the decision by the resistance movement ought

not to be dismissed as blind nationalism. The fact that Christian X was given the honor, despite his public condemnation of violent resistance, is testament to the rigidity of the public's understanding of Christian X as being a symbol of Danish resistance to Nazi occupation. Perhaps this imperviousness of the belief in the King also outweighed the public statements by Christian X, allowing for an implied consent to resistance. It also may have reflected a lack of genuine outrage and established anti-German sentiment.

Given the anti-German credibility of Christian X, the editorial decisions by the illegal press to avoid reporting or commenting on the meeting between Christian X and Werner Best in May of 1943 is understandable. Irrespective of the reality of what Christian X thought or said, the nationally constructed symbol of the King as the ideal anti-German force could only be hurt by his cordial meeting with Werner Best which functioned as a form of legitimation of the cooperation policy and detracting from the mythic quality of Christian X's anti-German credibility. Conversely, the meeting could have been a selling point for proponents of cooperation in the legal press, and while the meeting was cited in the oldest Danish newspaper *Berlingske-Tidende*, no article on the meeting was written.

To the political insiders²² who were aware of the source of the November government change, the Telegram Crisis clearly demonstrated the liability Christian X was to the cooperation policy, despite his overt sanctions of the policy. Christian X made his feelings known to the public by his “dignified, but reserved behavior towards the representatives of the occupation” (Christian X, para 3). An example of these reservations is his refusal to salute German soldiers on his daily rides through Copenhagen. Further, his New Year's address in 1942 noted a “longing for the day when a Danish flag again can fly over a free Denmark” (Akil,

²² The public were by and large not aware of the Telegram crisis (M. Jensen, personal communication, February 24, 2010).

p. 92), a comment which revealed his position on the legitimacy of the German occupation without directly opposing the cooperation policy itself.

Christian X's formal power as King was limited according to the Danish Constitution of 1920. The monarch's signature approving legislation is and was necessary for bills to formally become law, but is largely a formality. Had Christian X formally refused to approve legislation essential to the cooperation policy, the government could ultimately write the monarchy out of the constitution²³. In the Danish parliamentary system the Parliament (Folketinget) and Country Council (Landstinget) was the bicameral legislative branch appointing the government as the executive branch. During the time of the cooperation policy where the Germans negotiated the Danish government make-up, Christian X still had to approve the government.

German Censorship

German censorship of the Danish press and Danish politicians reveals in great detail how Germany wanted its policies mediated, and thus understood by the Danes, but also how Germany viewed its relationship to Denmark, and levels of Danish cooperation.

As waves of sabotage incidents increased during 1943, Dr. Best lifted the ban on articles mentioning sabotage on the 3rd of April, in hopes that public denunciation of the sabotage would reduce sabotage. Best justified the change in policy to the German places of employment:

[B]y the creation of rumors and illegal agitation publications these cases of sabotage are reported in an exaggerated and distorted manner. To inform the public . . . and to awaken the general interest in fighting sabotage, as well as to

23 Christian X had earlier attempted to become political during what has become known as the “Easter Crisis” of 1920, where he against the will of Parliament dismissed the Zahle II Ministry. Ultimately Christian X retreated from his political interference under pressure from Parliament and Citizen council protests.

make the precautionary rules imposed understandable, the latest incidents of sabotage have been emphasized in the press. (Snitker, p. 63)

The press were also advised how to frame sabotage: “Newspapers were encouraged by the Foreign Ministry to avoid the term 'sabotage' and instead employ words such as arson, assault, and vandalism, all the while stressing the domestic impact on lost working hours, production, and supplies” (Hong, p. 202). These “guidelines” no doubt also gave the Danish government insight into how the Germans preferred to hear the issue addressed by the Danish government. Best was, however, ultimately forced to give up his idea of attacking sabotage through the press as it caused him too much personal embarrassment in Berlin. The fact that the measure was attempted does show that the German representatives were both well informed about the illegal press and considered its reporting a significant threat.

Jurisdiction

Given the novelty of the “peaceful occupation” no international guidelines existed and the question of who should try saboteurs²⁴ and Danish members of German forces was legally ambiguous. Hong (1997) notes the “German policy of exercising control indirectly through Danish institutions made Danish jurisdiction in these matters desirable both in the interests of efficiency and the necessary appearance of normalcy” (p. 47).

However, as the rise in sabotage continued unabated in the face of Danish law enforcement, the Germans grew suspicious of the Danish legal system. A series of arson cases during July of 1942 prompted “new complaints from the German side, and the necessity the

24 These were not enemy combatants since Denmark was not at war with Germany.

introduction of German jurisdiction in Denmark for certain acts against German interests was now emphasized” (The Parliamentarian Commission, 1945-58, Vol 4, p. 48).

In the spring of 1943 a different political conundrum concerning jurisdiction emerged: whether Danish jurisdiction covered Danish employees guarding German property? The issue was bounced between the Foreign Ministry and the Ministry of Justice. In April the German envoy requested that German military tribunals have sole jurisdiction. The Danish Ministry of Justice had without success tried to compromise on conditions under which Danish or German courts would have jurisdiction, but the German counter proposal was simply that Danish jurisdiction would be applicable on “issues of minor significance and without military interests” (Akil, p. 796).

The Germans were well aware of the importance of perceived justice and national jurisdiction, and accordingly published the sentences for a sabotage fire in Aarhus handed down in May of 1943. After describing the crime labeling it a “planned assassination” with “4 quite young men arrested as perpetrators” the jurisdictional issue is explicitly addressed: “As a consequence of the sabotage fire on the stadium being directed squarely at the German Wehrmacht's property and intended to do the German Wehrmacht damage, a German court-martial has handled the case” (Akil, p. 837). The sentences ranged from one and a half years of prison to over eight years with hard labor. Keen not to end on a down note, the German legal magnanimity is highlighted:

It is furthermore informed, that the German side, taking into consideration that all convicted were very young people, have agreed that the sentencing will take place in a Danish facility, so that the convicted will not be transferred to German prisons. (Akil, p. 837).

The issue of jurisdiction is critical to the study of the cooperation policy in 1943 since

“the erosion of public support for the government's occupation policy stemmed in part from the naked illustration that it was Germans, not Danes, who were exercising control in the jurisdictional question” (Hong, p. 48). The issue of jurisdiction struck at the heart of the Danish fiction of sovereignty, since “the administration of justice in the final stages was not in Danish hands” (Kirchhoff, 1995, p. 170). Hong (1997) elaborates on the implications: “[P]olitically, the issue of jurisdiction was very sensitive, for it was an unambiguous indication of where real power was being exercised” (p. 48). The Danish special prosecutor Troels Hoff became especially anxious as early as 1942 over this question, which “became a constant worry within the coalition government through the spring and summer of 1943” (Hong, p. 48).

Criticism of Cooperation in the Illegal Press

Different types of criticisms were raised against the government's cooperation policy in different sections of the illegal press during the period examined in the present study. A comprehensive list of charges the government had to consider is thus outside the scope of this study. However, some accusations and allegations from the election until August recur in different media.

The general indictment of the Danish government was that it was functionally German. As a poster issued by *Orientering* in April summarized the skepticism toward Scavenius as “the government has shown that it wants nothing beyond what the Germans want. Consequently, the people must act themselves” (Buschardt et al., p. 259). *We will win*²⁵ expressed more understanding of the Danish government's predicament, but nevertheless dismissed it as naïve:

The indulgence line in Denmark's relations to Nazism is not to be mistaken by

25 An illegal publication.

explaining and occasionally apologizing for it as a short term policy – to keep it going, as if to save oneself from the large credit line another month, and then see if something emerges (Buschardt et al., p. 259).

On sabotage, *Free Denmark (Frit Danmark)* in April conceded and preempted the standard government line:

It is probably correct when the authorities emphasize that further sabotage can cause unpleasantness for us in terms of state of exception, reprisals, and worse productivity. But we have to be willing to pay the price. Why should we be able to escape free? (Snitker, p. 63)

While such an approach was deemed reckless by some newspaper readers, the argument challenges both the government and the Danish citizen to put the Danish situation into an international context. *Land og Folk* echoes this sentiment writing that “we also know that freedom and peace is not free” (Lauridsen, p. 177). Conceding that Danes would be hurt by the course of action advocated does potentially rhetorical damage to the government's standard response. While reprisals are still considered a disadvantage, the question at hand has moved into an area the government does not address.

On the issue of strikes, the illegal press universally approved. In response to the Esbjerg strikes in the beginning of August rebellion, *Free Denmark* released a flier:

commenting on the strike as 'a worthy answer to the recent German caused state of unrest' and encouraged all of Esbjerg's population to see the established strike as a 'national effort against the Germans and to give the strikers all possible sympathy' and help while distancing itself from earlier 'youthful incidents' (Snitker, 87-88).

In the flier the blame for the unrest is placed at the feet of the Germans, and it is only in response the strike is issued as a “worthy answer.” Next, nationalism or national pride is used as a rhetorical trope against the cooperation policy by labeling the anti-German strike a national action against the Germans. At the same time, the flier sheds responsibility for some parts of the strikes, while at the same time playing down their seriousness as mere youthful indiscretions. In Aalborg where Germans had killed several young members of the resistance movement, *Free Denmark* released on a flier a statement indicting not just the Germans and the Danish government, but the Danish people:

Niels Erik Vansted is dead, but his fighting spirit lives. The Danish people have risen to a new and higher level in the fight against the Germans. The time of cold shoulders is over, the time for warm beatings now. What a beating to the Germans to stop all work in these critical days, where every hour of labor is precious for their armament, what a cut into the German morale for them to see 4 years of protection and slavery has made them ten times as hated as when they came, and that the rebellion takes place in the country where they thought themselves most secure, what a blow to the government and the papers' useless anti-sabotage campaign that never thought the honor of the guardians of freedom worth a penny, that the whole population of the city gather around a saboteur's grave. Yes, now the people has finally, finally awoken. We now shake off the cowardice and doubt, now it becomes day in Denmark. (Snitker, p. 89-90).

Starting from the vantage point of a young man who died, the statement seeks to agitate the readers and in the process answers the argument that the protests are futile. Sabotage and attacks on Germans is presented as an expressive act, letting out the resentment and

in the process letting the Germans know they are not safe or welcome. Finally the statement predicts the emergence of “day” in Denmark, as people arise to fight the Germans, renewed light will be bestowed upon Denmark again. The statement concludes:

The core of the fight against the Germans is the striking workers. From Gedser to Skagen strikes are reported, some are won, others are lost – and yet they are not lost anyway. They shake people out of their indifference, and the allies no longer speak of Denmark with a shrug of the shoulder. (Snitker, p. 90)

Gedser to Skagen is an expression signifying the whole country from its most southern point (Gedser) to its most northern point (Skagen). Once more the statement addresses the claim that “failed” strikes do not matter, pointing to their international significance in the eyes of the Allies and their motivational impact.

As the government released its last statement on sabotage, *Land og Folk* released a point by point answer: “In recognition of its own weak position, the government has sought support for its proclamation from parliament's cooperation committee, the cooperating parties parliament groups, and the King” (Lauridsen, p. 177). The article mentions how the government abandoned labeling sabotage “youthful indiscretion” and the like reflecting: “the government has finally understood that the Danish people's resistance is serious” (Lauridsen, p. 177).

On the issue of jurisdiction, *Free Denmark* used the death sentence of a Dane on August 25th to further demonstrate the fictional nature of the Danish sovereignty. In Horsens a flier distributed to workers and businesses urged them to “join the demand from Aarhus that engineer Kjær Sørensen sentenced to death by Germans be delivered to Danish authorities and judged by Danish law. Thereby you support the Danish government's demand of non-interference in Danish affairs” (Snitker, p. 91). *The Danish Times* chimed in that:

with this death sentence, a whole new chapter in the occupation history begins, in that this is the first time Germans in this country have sentenced a Dane to death. In Denmark there is of course no legal death sentence. That is, not Danish, but German law is the basis of this sentence. (Buschardt et al., p. 257)

Similarly, an article titled “Wake up Mr. Jensen!!!” in the communist publication *Land og Folk* protested the arrest of the famous member of *Free Denmark* and surgeon Ole Chievitz: “even as there is no evidence against him . . . the truth is that all arrested are put in Vestre prison's *German* section” (Buschardt et al., p. 228-229). Not only was the government accused of caving to German jurisdiction, *Land og Folk* asserted it had done so voluntarily: the Germans, without protest from government or parliament, arrested Danes and dragged them to Germany” (Lauridsen, p. 119).

Following the election, the government proclaimed a success for Danish democracy, sovereignty, and jurisdiction. However, the illegal press held the government to that promise. Frit Danmark commented in April:

With sharpened vigilance the people will follow parliament and its acts, and strongly support it, if the people's representatives act in the spirit in which they are elected. But if it turns out that the elected men fail the trust the voters showed them on the 23rd of March, then the Danish people will feel deceived and find other ways to claim its will to freedom and majority rule! (Buschardt et al., p. 255).

The promise of genuine sovereignty and democracy was not fulfilled, and the August rebellion should be seen partially as a consequence of this failure. The uprisings were against Germans, but the perceived illegitimacy of the Danish government was a necessary prerequisite. A flier produced in late August by *Aarhus Ekko* worded the Danish public demand as: “[O]ur own

authorities have shown themselves to be inexcusably vague in their proposition of these demands [Danish jurisdiction], therefore citizens themselves must show the way and force the authorities to action” (Buschardt et al., p. 294).

Conclusion

The stasis of the initial period of occupation, where Danes accepted the cooperation policy as necessary to retain some amount of independence from an increasingly powerful German empire, had dissipated by March of 1943. Though the government won the March elections by a landslide, the turn of military fortunes for Germany gave confidence to a resistance movement that now had the end of the occupation in sight. The occupation which initially looked inevitable had come to appear fragile and dependent on continued German military success. The change in relative power between the Axis and Allied powers enabled Danes to think of cooperation as a choice which no longer seemed as strategic as it had been in 1940. From the German perspective, what was initially a cost-effective method of occupation had become a political and security liability. For the Danish government, the growing German skepticism meant that the rhetorical space in which it could move had become limited on two fronts: both Danes and Germans had come to demand more of it and tolerate less.

CHAPTER 3: THE PUBLIC GOVERNMENT DISCOURSES

This chapter presents an account of the government's public statements covering the period after the elections in late March until the government's resignation on the 29th of August 1943. The source for all texts is *The Facts of the Occupation Time (Besættelsestidens Fakta)*. The chapter concludes with an overview of the rhetorical patterns and trends.

Government Proclamations

Government statements were issued as Public Service Announcements for the radio, as fliers, and were available in print on newsstands. Six government statements in total were released from the end of the election in March until the government resigned on the 29th of August, 1943.

On the 12th of May the government announced a meeting at Amalienborg, the residence of the Danish monarch, between Werner Best and Christian X. The announcement was phrased as “The King receives Dr. Werner Best at Amalienborg” (Akil, p. 215). No information concerning the agenda of the meeting or what was discussed by either party was furnished. The terseness of the statement reveals that the meeting itself was all that the government wished communicated. Describing the purpose or agenda would risk conveying a depth of cooperation between the governments, rather than merely acknowledging the existence of a recognized diplomatic relationship.

Moreover, Werner Best is introduced as Dr. Werner Best²⁶, as opposed to his title of *Reichsbevollmächtigter*. This presentation emphasizes Best's role as a legal scholar, rather than

26 Dr. Werner Best was a Doctor of Law.

animperial agent²⁷. While the title *Reichsbevollmächtigter* signifies a person with full authority to act on behalf of the German government in a diplomatic role associated with the German Foreign Ministry, it also directly refers to the Nazi party and its imperial ambitions. The choice of doctor rather than *Reichsbevollmächtigter* thus avoids imperial and Nazi connotations, and emphasizes the legal and diplomatic role of the relationship.

Finally, the emphasis on the King receiving Dr. Best underscores the significance of being in the audience of the King. Dr. Best is presented as being a guest in the home of the King, Amalienborg, a great honor for Danes, as opposed to the King visiting Best at the German headquarters. This signifies two things. First, it is a symbolic statement of power, where the King at his discretion sees the German representative, implying Danish independence and sovereignty. Second, the host-guest presentation is a symbol of the fiction of neutrality, that the Germans are unwelcome guests in Denmark, but nonetheless received with dignity and patience, as one would someone from elsewhere, the outside guest.

On the 15th of May, the anniversary of the inauguration of Christian X, the Danish government issued two separate statements regarding Christian X. The first statement simply read: “The King again assumes the management of the government.” The English word “management” is chosen here, though the Danish word “førelse” can be translated as leadership as well as management. Despite Christian X's direct political involvement in the 1920's clashing with Prime Minister Zahle immediately before his resignation, his political role by 1943 was much more limited. After the confrontation with Zahle, Christian X never acted without the approval of the parliament (Christian X). Though his role in directing the policy of the country had become irrelevant, Christian X's voice in support of the parliament against the totalitarian

27 Reich is German for empire, the empire being the Third Reich or Das Dritte Reich. The translation of *Reichsbevollmächtigter* literally being imperial plenipotentiary.

uprising of the 1930's suggests that despite accepting his constitutional role, Christian X's leadership was more than pro forma ceremonial.

The word again in the proclamation title, indicating a period without the King's leadership, is explained by the King's absence caused by his illness after severe injuries sustained from falling off his horse in October of 1942 during one of his daily rides through Copenhagen causing him to only rarely appear in public after it (Christian X). While the ritual of riding his horse daily through Copenhagen might seem routine, Bülow (2011) writes: “The King made it his practice to ride his horse alone through Copenhagen every morning to underline his continuing claims for national sovereignty, unarmed and without escort. He became a national symbol for rich and poor alike” (para. 6).

The statement tersely informs the public about the restoration of Christian X as the formal ruler in a public announcement. No information on the health of the King was offered, letting Christian X's public statement speak for itself.

The second statement on the 15th of May 1943 was delivered by Christian X himself, via national radio. Further, the statement was his only public statement since his New Year's address on the 1st of January and the Danish government's resignation in late August of 1943. In his New Year's address, there was no mention of politics or sabotage, but merely a paragraph-long statement wishing for a better future, giving condolences to lost ones, and thanking for well wishes sent him during his period of illness. The public address, which was the last by Christian X during the occupation, was entitled “The King on the radio on the significance of peace and order” (Akil, p. 215). The Danish word *betydning*²⁸ can mean both significance and meaning, as

28 As with the German equivalent *Bedeutung* there is a polysemous meaning of both literal meaning and metaphorical significance. Etymologically the word consists of the intensive prefix 'be' followed by the verb 'deuten' and 'tyde' to 'interpret', 'explain', or 'point to' something.

in the literal meaning of the expression peace and order. The sentence can thus both be understood as why peace and order was an urgent political issue, and more generally what it means to contribute to peace and order. The title also indicates the focus of the address is the stability of the country, as opposed to addressing questions of political compromise. Framing the issue as a question of personal decency and temperance, rather than an unstable and challenged political allegiance, speaks to Christian X's influence as a role model and national ideal rather than politician.

The introductory paragraph of the statement was:

After I have once more assumed the management of the government I feel the need to thank you all from my warmest heart for the countless proofs of devotion and loyalty I have received during my long period of illness. Thank you for all intercessory prayer and for all the well wishes for my recovery (Akil, p. 215).

This paragraph reestablishes the rhetor's relationship to the Danish people in two ways. First, Christian X immediately confirms he has yet again assumed the management (*førelse*) of the government and thus his position as head of government for the country. Second, he twice thanks the Danish people for the support he received during his illness indicating a continuation and possible strengthening of his relationship to the people. Emphasizing his own popular support through an acknowledgment of gratitude establishes the legitimacy of the role of national leader he speaks from. Christian X's statement begins with a personal note of gratitude, similar to a manner which would be expected from a personal acquaintance writing a friend. The use of the word need (*trang*) also positions the statement as a requirement; Christian X has been put in a position where it is necessary for him to speak. The indebtedness implied by the twice mentioned gratitude indicates a relationship between the rhetor and the people that is not

exclusive to Christian X issuing proclamations from a position of power. Further, the Danish word *Dem* is a formal and polite way of expressing the English equivalent of you, as opposed to the more collegial and informal *jer*. This formality in addressing his audience is, however, precisely a formality, as it is still the standard use of Danish by current Danish royalty.

The next paragraph simply reads: “But thereupon I today wish to speak to all Danes under the consideration of the recent serious occurrences around the country” (Akil, p. 215). The civil unrest and sabotage are not termed as such, but merely serious occurrences, a term neither resistant members, nor the German representatives could easily object to. The statement changes in tone from friendly and courteous to gravely concerned. The line also makes it clear that he speaks to all Danish people, and only Danish people. Even if the statement was not meant to mollify German anger over the Danish resistance, the Germans were certain to hear the statement, and certain to deem the warnings an appropriate, if insufficient, counter measure. By addressing his statement only to Danes he also frames the issue as an internal matter of a sovereign state, pushing to the background the war being fought abroad and the occupation forces present in Denmark.

The statement continues:

From the very first day when the German occupation of Denmark took place I have encouraged all in cities and in the country to show a completely correct and dignified behavior. The preceding 3 years have also shown that the Danish people as a whole have understood that under the very grave conditions we live through, it is of crucial importance that peace and order prevails in the country (Akil, p. 215).

The first line repeats the proclamation of the 9th of April 1940, issued by Christian X

immediately after the invasion, calling for the Danes to “show a completely correct and dignified behavior” (Akil, p. 147). The repetition can be interpreted both as steadfast doctrine and a necessary reminder. The selection of the phrase “correct and dignified” as the only part of the original proclamation restated indicates its centrality to Christian X's rhetoric. Christian X represents what he considers correct and dignified behavior in his necessary public and private interactions with German authorities, curt, but not confrontational. The permutability of an implied expression of resentment toward the Germans and peacefully obliging the Germans as much as necessary was embodied by Christian X, whose rhetoric is an extension of that publicly expressed ideology.

Next, the rhetor continues the reflection of the earlier parts of the occupation era, contrasting the disturbances at the time with the largely peaceful prior three years of the occupation. By stating “The Danish people have largely understood” the issue is framed not as one of contested moral attitudes but whether one party can understand the issue properly. The assertion that “Danish people” largely understand peace and order excludes Danish saboteurs from Danes as a group who are presented as understanding and thinking in a certain manner.

The statement continues:

Certain events in recent times show, however, that there are persons who by the enactment of reprehensible acts set aside the considerations responsible Danes owe their mother country, if we are to get through these grave times in line with rules the government and parliament have determined in complete agreement.

These acts of irresponsible people can have the gravest consequences for individuals as well as the society as a whole (Akil, p. 215)

The next paragraph opens with another long sentence. The first part of the sentence is another

appeal to nationalism, asserting that the “persons” who commit reprehensible (*forkastelige*) acts are irresponsible and disloyal toward their social compact and their country. It is left up to the reader to judge what is and is not reprehensible, allowing for flexibility to appease different audiences. Secondly, the sentence stresses the undemocratic nature of the resistance movement, by charging them with threatening to violate the security which has been legally determined through the elective process. The tight political cooperation across party lines represented a consensus agreement of which the monarchy was always supportive. The perpetrators of “reprehensible acts” are seen as bullies, violating a consensus many people have peacefully negotiated. The final sentence substantiates the risk society is exposed to because of the “reprehensible acts”, framing the issue as about solidarity.

The proclamation continues: “Difficult and serious times we have lived through since the great war's effects broke into our mother land, difficult for our country's leading men as well as for the individual citizen. Perhaps we have the most difficult time ahead” (Akil, p. 215, 1943). This paragraph first acknowledges the distress felt by the country as a result of the occupation, while contextualizing the difficult decision by politicians but leaves out the source of the misfortune. The phrasing “the great war's effects broke into our motherland” (*den store Krigs Virkninger brød ind over vort Fædreland*) does indicate that the misfortune originated the from outside Denmark, and broke into and across Denmark's borders. On the other hand, it is also is ambiguous to arguably allow accommodation with the official German view of the British being the source of the conflict, and the present German forces as a peace occupation.

The statement concludes: “I then encourage all, old and young alike, each in one's place in society, to bear in mind the responsibility each Dane has, and to contribute to the work to carry our country through the difficult time ahead” (Akil, p. 215). The concluding statement neatly captures the statement's essence, an appeal to nationalist social responsibility with the

common purpose to avoid the effects of the war felt by its close neighbors. The term nationalist is applicable here because Danes, and only Danes, are the audience for a message about Danish security rather than the war, humanitarian interests or other contexts in which to place the Danish social responsibility as a nation.

On the 8th of April, another government statement was issued via the newspaper *Aarhus Stiftidende*. The Minister of Defense Søren Brorson issued a statement titled “on difficulties after the war's end.” (Akil, p. 215). The newspaper introduces the statement writing thus “Minister of Defense S. Brorson states in a conversation with 'Aarhus Stiftidende' as his understanding that new and great difficulties will appear when the war ends and he says:” (Akil, p. 215). The statement is labeled a “conversation”, though the article does not mention what the journalist's questions or interjections were. The end of the war is discussed as an outside action that Denmark ought to prepare in anticipation of, not participate in or shape in any way. Brorson is quoted as “First of all unrests must be feared, and it will be the government's duty with all available resources to maintain peace to the largest extent possible, even if regrettable episodes can hardly be completely avoided” (Ibid, p. 215). Peace (*roen*) is not the inverse of war, but a state of calmness which can be used to describe a state of mind as well as a setting or atmosphere. The statement issues a warning that peace is such a core interest that “regrettable episodes” is a justifiable byproduct of the government's resource deployment. This preemptive justification of the government use of force functions as a thinly veiled threat to the resistance movement and a signal of compliance with German requests.

The foreboding tone of the statement continues:

It must be predicted that the police will not always be capable of maintaining respect for the legal authorities. If Denmark at that time does not have an active government with the trust of the people, we must fear chaos and troubles caused

thereby which we fortunately have avoided thus far. (Akil, p. 215).

This section of the proclamation achieves several objectives. First, the paragraph is framed at the outset as a demonstration of the disadvantages to the resistance movement by “predicting” a scenario in which the police cannot protect the legal authorities. Secondly, “chaos and misfortunes caused thereby” (*Kaos og deraf følgende Ulykker*) is an ambiguous threat; what misfortunes could befall the nation is unclear, as is what level of unrest would force the government to resign. Thirdly, the relatively low impact of the war on Denmark is contrasted with the “chaotic” alternative. The Danish equivalents of the repeated use of misfortune²⁹ (*ulykke*) and fortunately (*lykkeligvis*) are largely, but not exclusively, indeterminate in origin outside luck or fate.

The proclamation concludes:

The government's goal is therefore above all to preserve peace in the first difficult months, but precisely thereby is also created the possibilities of a free formation of opinion on the future policy of Denmark, so that through elections a parliament and government can be created as the people want it. (Akil, p. 216).

The statement contains a promise that another democratic Danish government will form if peace can be preserved. The preservation of the peaceful conditions necessary for civil society is presented as outweighing the concerns of a short-term democracy deficit. The implicit bargain offered by the government is for the people to accept a government they can live with, in order that they can get the government they want when the war is over. The alternative is not just temporary chaos, but the risk of the permanent loss of Danish sovereignty and democracy. Peace under less than democratic conditions constitutes the prerequisite for democracy, as

29 Ulykke can also be translated as accident, that can be caused by an agent, but not on purpose.

Danes persevering under occupation would outlast the Germans losing the war without giving up its own government.

The Minister of Defense informs the national media on Danish national security concerns at the end of the war as if it is solely an internal issue to be resolved in Denmark, between Danes, so long as peace in Denmark is preserved in the immediate future. The “fiction of sovereignty” is at work in the silence on the obvious issue of Germany's plans for Denmark at the end of the war. The government and legal print papers articulate and report national security with no mention of Germany, publicly trusting that the German military presence is merely a peace occupation, minimally temporary if not peaceful.

On the 14th of August the Minister of Public Works issued a denial of reporting in the illegal press titled “Declaration from the Minister of Public Works (Gunnar Larsen) on the occasion of reporting in an illegal magazine” (Akil, p. 216). The title does not state that the reporting is incorrect or inaccurate, but only that the government responds to an illegal source. The illegal source is unnamed, avoiding both unintended publicity for subversive forces and providing a way for the government to undermine the illegal press as a whole. Gunnar Larsen begins by stating: “An illegal magazine has reported that I have sent the following hand written letter to the chief of 'Wehrwirtschaftstab'³⁰ in Copenhagen” (Akil, p. 216). The letter is reprinted in full, first in German and then in Danish. Gunnar Larsen comments:

Since I have never written such a letter the present case is forgery. Neither for me, nor for any Danish authority or the actual factory has it ever been the case that the factory in question should supply aircraft engines. It should furthermore be informed that the company in question is not capable of and has never considered

30 Military (or War) Economic Staff. These were small staffs or teams sent into the occupied territories to seize and exploit raw materials, food, manufactured goods, etc., for the benefit of the Reich.

manufacturing aircraft engines (Akil, p. 216).

The denial seeks to discredit the illegal press, not by directly complaining about unfair and incorrect allegations, but by stating the facts which plainly demonstrate the logical impossibility of the claim made by the illegal press. This enthymematic rhetoric lets the audience reach the conclusion that the illegal press has been trying to discredit the government by forgery. The wording “it should furthermore be informed” obscures the rhetor by simply establishing that *someone* ought to bring the following information to the public. Moreover, the choice of the word inform suggests a neutral counterweight to the reporting by the illegal press – there is a need for Danes to know the truth, and the government will provide it. It is not proper form for the government to go beyond its responsibility to inform the public; tendentious reporting and polemic is left to the press. Such a “less is more” approach simultaneously restores trust in the government and plants seeds of doubt in the public toward the illegal press. The illegal newspaper was not named, perhaps in order to not give it free publicity or to paint the illegal press with a broad brush.

The last proclamation by the government before its resignation was issued on the 21st of August amidst the prevalent strikes and sabotage operations. The title “Proclamation from the government and others to the Danish people” follows the established standard channel of communication – the government and unspecified others speaks to the Danish people and the Danish people only. The statement begins:

In the State's Council³¹ Saturday the Prime Minister presented the following proclamation which the government and the parliament's cooperation committee with support from the cooperating parties' parliament day groups direct to the

31 Meeting of Ministers of State, presided over by the monarch.

Danish people. His Majesty the King approves the release of this proclamation:

The introduction emphasizes the bipartisan and broad consensus across the government for the statement as an enactment of proper democratic processes. “His Majesty the King” - the full title of Christian X - gives his seal of approval to the politicians' consensus, lending even more legal legitimacy to the statement, which continues:

Under the German occupation, that now lasts on its fourth year, it has been unavoidable that occasional frictions have occurred. The duration of the occupation itself stirs up a greater receptiveness toward presumed insults and increasing impatience and irritation in the population. Lately events of alarming character have set in. Sabotage is practiced to an increased extent, demonstrations have occurred in different places, and attempts have been made to bring railways and public works to a halt. A continuation of such conditions would have a destructive effect on Danish societal conditions.

The term frictions (*gnidninger*) functions as a euphemism for the disturbances that at the time included fatalities, arson, and attempted murder. Frictions as well as *gnidninger* can both refer to the scientific reaction when two surface areas meet and disagreements between friends or coworkers. The understated nature of the term frictions is framed as something “unavoidable”, moderated by the word “occasional” despite the prevalence and frequency of protests, strikes and sabotage by this time, and finally as something predictable and natural as the friction the audience knows from science and their own social circles.

When the “frictions” are seen as unavoidable and to be expected, they are more easily forgiven and understood. Rather than being insurmountable obstacles to a workable relationship, frictions are transitory side-effects of a forced cooperative relationship. In this

light, there is less need to overreact by finding and prosecuting transgressors as there is reason for both parties to adjust to difficult circumstances. So far, blame is not explicitly attributed to any specific party, but implicitly frictions are reciprocal, not unilateral.

Next, it is made clear that it is the war itself – and the duration of the occupation specifically – that is the explicit agent causing the frictions. As per usual, the causes of the occupation and war by extension are unspecified ominous outside forces. The duration of the war is presented as a force slowly exhausting an existing reservoir of patience and good will. Such an excuse simultaneously strokes the nationalist ego of the domestic audience and provides an understandable excuse to the German audience. The word “presumed” insults also leaves open the possibility that perceived insults are little more than misunderstandings caused by shared stress.

Next, “events of alarming character” have only “lately” themselves “set in.” No agent is held responsible, rather as with the war itself historical circumstances are themselves at fault having been anthropomorphized into actors, letting human agents – of both sides - off the hook. The “events of alarming character” are then listed. It is acknowledged that the practice of sabotage has increased, but it is unclear how serious the sabotage is and how much it has increased. The prevalent nature of “demonstrations”, a term more legitimate and democratic than protests, mobs, strikes, is described as merely taking place in “different places” minimizing the ubiquity of the issue. The “attempts” to bring “railways and public works to a halt” refer, in a much less dramatic fashion, to the practice of detonating explosives on railway lines as was extensively practiced by saboteurs. Strikes at public works also turned violent on several occasions. While admitting that these “attempts have been made” it is left unsaid that they were

successful³². The examples given are thus understated and presented as factual occurrences of cohabitation, not acts necessitating reprisals or repression.

The statement's pithy second paragraph reads: “Supplies of foodstuffs and fuel will be restricted, and serious interruptions of the ordered production to the harm of the whole population will occur” (Ibid, p. 217). The rhetorical effect of a single line paragraph in between much longer paragraphs serves to isolate and focus attention to it. The convoluted and muddled structure of the English translation is a consequence of imperfect translation, and does not reflect rhetorical incompetence by the rhetor. Furthermore, the impact to the “alarming events” is framed as harming the Danish civilian population by withholding critical supplies. The implicit consequence of harming the German war effort is contrasted with the explicit unintended side effect of violating the solidarity of the social compact.

The penultimate paragraph reads:

For the Danish government it has always been the task to remove occurring difficulties and in the best way look after the Danish people's interests with respect to the German authorities. This will also be the case for the latest occurring events. If Danish democracy and societal life is to be safely led through the dangers and adversities of the war, the population's cooperation is necessary. With this deeply serious situation in mind, the government and cooperation committee with support of the cooperating parties parliament groups direct an urgent appeal to the Danish people to in no way provoke or be provoked to any rash acts, but maintain calm, sober-mindedness, and solidarity (Akil, p. 216).

In the first sentence the government presents its primary responsibilities as mediating

32 Though ultimately insignificant to the larger German war effort.

between the Danish people and the German government as well as the more nebulous task of “removing occurring difficulties.” The vagueness of what the difficulties are and who are responsible allows the different audiences to read in their own conclusions. For the Danish population, the “occurring difficulties” were inextricably tied, either directly or indirectly, to the Germans through either their aggressive warfare or direct occupation. For the German officials, the “occurring difficulties” were associated with the resistance movement and those seeking to delegitimize the cooperation policy. The government presents itself as a protector of the people as its primary role regardless of the difficulties faced, and reiterates that this is still the case for the “latest occurring events,” affirming its continued legitimacy despite the ongoing challenges. Next the statement warns of the “dangers and adversities of the war,” but claim that the Danes can safeguard their way of life and democracy by “cooperating” with the government. Conversely, the sentence can also be understood as a veiled threat, if the necessary cooperation by the population is not forthcoming, Danish societal life and democracy will perish. The word cooperation implies a reciprocal relationship between the government and population, but even though compliance would be a more apt description given the German undemocratic influence on prosecutions, cooperation fits the fiction of sovereignty and democracy. The implicit promise made is that by complying with the government and accepting a reduced level of democracy, the Danes can achieve the real democracy once the war is over. In making the request for the people to not resist the cooperation, the larger context of the war is once more referenced, as is the painstaking legal processes through which the government has properly formed its “urgent appeal.”

Finally, the appeal, once again explicitly directed to the Danish people only, is for Danes to cease provoking and being provoked. As Danish saboteurs, communists, demonstrator may provoke other Danes to join the chaos, the proclamation can be read as an exclusively internal

affair for and between Danes. However, given the “frictions” between Germans and Danes highlighted earlier in the statement, the call for Danes to not be provoked can also be read as an appeal for Danes to be patient with Germans and not retaliate with “rash acts.” This ambiguity allows for the Germans to be at least partially responsible for the provocation in the eyes of Danes while also being read as a compliant request by an occupied government that could be presented the German leadership. Rather than succumb to inflamed sensations, the appeal urges Danes to be calm, cool, and collected as responsible citizens. This alternative recommended approach of “sober-mindedness” helps unite the country and is an unselfish act of restraint to protect the nation.

The final paragraph reads:

Everyone who wishes that Danish rule in the country be preserved must feel it as a duty, in all circumstances to contribute to continued preservation of the legal state.

No-one may take it upon oneself to do justice. It is the legal authorities and the responsible leaders who must take the necessary steps for the protection of Danish interests (Akil, p. 217).

The citizen responsibility theme is elaborated and compounded in the conclusion. That it is a “duty” for those who wish to preserve Danish rule to “contribute” to the preservation of the legal state implies three assumptions. First, that there is legal state in the status quo to preserve. Second, not everyone wishes that Danish rule be preserved. Third, acts intended to preserve the legal states are “contributions” to the collective. The meaning of the following sentence “No-one may take it upon oneself to do justice” (*Ingen maa tage sig selv til rette*) states that no-one may circumvent the law to achieve justice. The word may (*maa*) refers to being “allowed” so the sentence merely states that people are not allowed to pursue vigilantism – an obvious point of information, and at most a weak demand. While the statement clearly prohibits vigilantism, it

is presented more as a rule violation than a threat to national security. Lastly, the statement concludes by once more emphasizing the legitimate role of the government in dealing with the security threats. The leaders are called responsible, which can be understood both in a legal sense, which the prosecutions after the war confirmed they were, and as a mark of self-approval.

Government Circulars

Government circulars were published in the “Government Times” (*Ministerialtidende*). The precise audience of the publication is unclear, but they were at a minimum mailed to relevant subordinate authorities such as police chiefs, judges, and keepers of a country jails (M. Jensen, personal communication, February 24, 2010). In other words, the publication was unrestricted and thus in the public record, but its readership was primarily within the government. Consequently, the publication reflected not just the government's official position, but its direct orders to be implemented by offices in the public administration. Given these different audiences, the rhetoric in the circular carries more direct legal responsibility and leaves less room for strategic ambiguity.

Of the 26 circulars distributed during the time period, seven concern meat prices in the export process. Two circulars refer to taxation on Danes joining the Wehrmacht or the Finnish army and benefits to Danes returning from Axis armed forces. One circular addresses the industrial council on those who perform “extraordinary” tasks for the German government in terms of “industrial deliveries” (Akil, p. 95).

Eight of the twenty six circulars relate directly to the resistance movement. On April 2nd in the immediate aftermath of the national election the Minister of Justice issued two circulars. The first titled “on acts of sabotage” notes that “the situation” mentioned in a prior circular is

“unchanged or if anything aggravated” (Akil, p. 94). The second circular titled “on avoidance of demonstrations the 9th of April 1943” contains the same wording as a circular issued on the 30th of March 1942. The 9th of April is the day of the German invasion and for this reason a powerful rallying point for the resistance movement. The prior history of demonstrations obligates the government to inform police how to act and the public what to expect. The circular begins:

Given the importance of avoiding any kind of demonstration on the 9th of April, and since any public meetings held on the day in question easily will assume the character of political or nationalist manifestations, which under current conditions should be avoided, one must request you gentlemen, like last year, to prevent the holding of public meetings on this day (Akil, p. 59).

The request, phrased precisely as a polite request to honorable “gentlemen,” is grounded in the context of earlier disturbances, “current conditions” - an opaque and flexible reference to either the war generally or the German military presence, and earlier requests made by the government in years prior. Wording the request in the exact same way as years prior, and thus taking no extra rhetorical precautionary measures despite the failure of the request to be met previously, is an implicit government understanding, hidden in an explicit disapproval. Moreover, the limited nature of the ban on public meetings is specified to “this day” and the political and nationalist nature of the demonstrations is only to be avoided under “current conditions.” Such limitations lend implicit legitimacy to the ideas of the protesters, even if vocalizing or acting on those ideas are discouraged. Taking Germany at her word that the occupation was temporary, the temporary nature of the suppression of anti-German protests by the Danes was entirely in line with the established diplomatic relationship.

Another recurring rhetorical phenomenon is at work in this statement, the effacing of the

causal agent. Rather than state that people in public meetings would become protestors, the meetings themselves will “assume the character of political or nationalist manifestations,” turning into something originally not intended, absolving the demonstrators of harboring any premeditated act of disturbance.

The use of the word 'one' is a result of there being no single idiomatic translation of *man*. In German it is said 'man glaubt' and in Danish 'man tror', the English translation is either 'they believe', 'one believes', or 'it is believed'. The Danish *man* is a specialized linguistic construction made for specific expressions in a way they, one, and it are not. The person behind the word “one” or man is thus left unclear. Most closely it can be understood as an expression of what the author presumes to be a norm of understanding in society, i.e. one should hold the door for the elderly or one shall not throw a stone when living a glass house. Man is gender neutral³³ and neither clearly singular or plural³⁴. This linguistic flexibility furthers the aim of effacing the specific agent of action, in this case the Ministry of Justice.

In the event of public meetings taking place despite the polite request in the first paragraph, instructions for law enforcement are detailed:

In case such meetings are reported pursuant to the Ministry of Justice departmental order no. 518 of 12th October 1940, or if the Police are made aware of such meetings being intended to be held, the organizers should be approached and informed that these meetings may not take place. If the organizers refuse to comply with this request, the meeting should be prohibited, and its holding forestalled (Akil, p. 59).

33 The Danish for a man, en mand and pl. mænd. In spoken Danish there is also a different emphasis distinguishing the mand from man.

34 Danish does not conjugate verbs.

Once again, emphasis is put on the proper legal background for the actions directed to be taken. It is interesting to note that despite making the same request in public three years running, and the dangers of not heeding it are presented, the minimal security precautions taken are explained in detail. Organizers will be reminded by police ahead of time that they “may not” hold their event, but no further action is taken. In other words, the police will take the organizers at their word they will not carry through their public meeting now that the police has informed them it is forbidden. Next, the scenario of civil disobedience, replete with instructions for the police, but without mentioning what if any punishment for the perpetrators is discussed. Further, the police are instructed to forestall the activities of individuals flagrantly disavowing the law, though there is no mention of arrest, detention, or a process by which that objective should be secured. The presumption of the circular is that once informed of the special ban on public meetings, people will comply or notify the police they intend to not comply.

Specific acts of demonstration are singled out as meeting the definition: “flying flags, flying flags on half mast, putting on special clothing and the like.” (Akil, p. 59). That flying the Danish flag should be illegal under a sovereign Danish democracy forces the government into an embarrassing admission of how fictional the sovereignty is. Moreover, the ban also plainly demonstrates the need to censor Danish expressions on the Danish-German relationship, even oblique non-discursive ones.

If such acts of demonstration take place: “The police are requested to, if informed, intervene and announce to the agitators they, if necessary, would be charged with violating the Ministry of Justice departmental order no. 254 of June 9th, 1941” (Akil, p. 59). It is once more underscored that for this event demonstrators are to be treated with kid gloves. First, only if informed by outsiders are the police instructed to intervene. Second, the intervention consists only of a warning that they would “if necessary” be charged with violating a departmental

order. Third, as usual the exact legal reference is outlined to maintain a facade of proper legal backing. Finally, the paragraph uses *man* twice in the paragraph, both times preceding the request directed at law enforcement.

While the efficacy of the policing given the instructions is questionable, the scope leaves no stone unturned: “Patrolling should take place on the day in question immediately from the early morning to as large an extent as possible” (Akil, p. 59). Whatever weight the scope of policing gives to the gravity of the threat as measured by the prepared response by law enforcement is moderated by the next seventy three word sentence:

Against flying the flag with single or scattered flags, there should be no intervention, but provided the flying of flags to a larger extent is established, the police officers should direct an approach to the concerned to request the flags be taken down, since in support of which should be referenced His Majesty the King's proclamation to exhibit calm and dignity and to the concerned expose him/her/themselves³⁵ to getting into trouble and for the country and its government (Akil, p. 59).

The sentence is only slightly pithier in the original Danish, but less convoluted in part because of the Danish word order. Seventy-three words in a sentence is between two and three times the average sentence in a newspaper article, reflecting the detailed exemptions and qualifications in the request. Contrasted with other public statements, this is more convoluted and presumably a more clear cut phrasing was possible, but not chosen.

While the English “the police officers should direct an approach to the concerned” conveys the meaning of the request, the literal translation of the original Danish “bør der af

35 The Danish pronoun “sig” can stand in for either a single person of either sex or a group of people.

Politibetjentene rettes Henvendelse til de paagældende” would be “should there of the police officers directed request to the concerned.” The police are not the focus of the clause in the Danish word order, the primary focus is on the task that ought to be done, and only then are the police introduced as the subject. The police are thus caught in the middle of exigent circumstances, literally subject to outside circumstances.

Many of the words chosen in the sentence are ambiguous in translation as well as in Danish. The word request (*henstilling*) can be understood along a continuum of voluntary to commanding, and thus mean a suggestion, recommendation, appeal or admonition. Discretion, in other words, is left to the police in determining how they wish to proceed with the anti-flag measure.

If a request is necessary, the same circular on the April 9th presents details for law enforcement what arguments to make and how. The first argument, the police are to proffer consists of a reference to Christian X's proclamation from the 9th of April, 1940, which itself would be repeated verbatim by the King a month later. The parts of the King's statement recounted frequently in the media and by politicians, are the direct requests to maintain “a correct and dignified behavior” and “law and order” (*ro og orden*), which combined give “calm and dignity” (*ro og værdighed*). While the significance of dignity and its polysemous qualities has been covered in Christian X's statements, calm or “ro” is indefinite as well. The phrase “ro og orden” as Christian X used it is equivalent to the English “law and order” even though “ro” can be translated as tranquility, peace, quiet, and calm but is unrelated to the law in any way. Further, these are not qualities the police are to instruct the public to possess, but merely exhibit (*vise*)³⁶. Before delivering this amalgamation of earlier royal proclamations, the author is

36 Alternatively show or manifest.

referred to by his full title “His Majesty the King,” trying to make the most of the royal stamp of approval of a policy restricting expressions of nationalism or national pride. The message is thus, feel what you wish, but please appear as if you are calm and behave with a dignity toward Germans – as Christian X did.

In addition to Christian X's request, the circular requests that police marshal a second argument “in support of the request.” The second argument is precautionary and advises the “concerned” could get more than themselves into trouble but also risk the larger social compact³⁷. This second line of arguing attaches a sense of selfish aggrandizement to what many considered heroic acts. The nationalists endanger not just their own lives, which might be justifiable, but the lives of others in society for whom they must take responsibility. In this instance as in others, the significance of the statement is what was not said. Nothing negative is said or implied about the nature of the acts themselves, their legitimacy, or the message they send – only the potential disadvantages from their reception. There is no revulsion, thus nationalist or anti-German acts are not labeled as immoral in and of themselves, but are to be discouraged because of potential German retribution.

Concluding the statement, the circular exempts “family ceremonies, funerals, and the like” (Akil, p. 59), and requires relevant officials to report to the public prosecutor on issues and report on the course of the day to the police precinct.

On the 22nd of June the Ministry of Justice circular issued a revised register on acts of sabotage, reporting that “some reduction in numbers since circular of 18. May 1943 is found” (Akil, p. 105). By the 16th of August, however, a new circular revised that estimate upward “the stated reduction turns out to have not held up, and the number was larger than in any previous

37 Literally face “unpleasantness” or “discomforts” - hardly dramatic fear inducing rhetoric.

period” (Akil, p. 104). While motivated to report progress in the quelling of sabotage, the government still corrected an overly optimistic earlier estimate - but offered no specifics for how much worse the number really was.

By July 14th the Ministry of Justice declared an end to the legal prohibition against the daily newspaper *the Storm (Stormen)* stating “one shall report that the Ministry of Justice at the same time has requested the commissioner of police in Copenhagen to lift...the disestablished ban on the publication of the daily newspaper 'Stormen” (Akil, p. 103). A reference is made to the notification of the ban in 1940, but no mention as to why the ban has been lifted is given. Since no explanation was attached to the end of the censorship, the government's motivation remains unknown. The removal of the ban on Stormen was complemented by a lifting of the ban on *Danish Front*. Lifting a ban on two politically diametrically opposed newspapers within a month of each other, in the midst of a crisis of legitimacy, appears to trade off, if not cancel out. If lifting the bans is not intended to shape the political debate in any uniform direction, the bans may well serve as countervailing olive branches to opposing political factions.

The last two circulars issued in late August were both issued by the Ministry of Justice and substantially longer at 790 and 928 words than the average circular. Both circulars were titled “The ministry of Justice's circular on disturbances in different cities” (Akil, p. 105). “Disturbances”, judged by its repeated use, is the preferred government nomenclature for the ongoing violent strikes, protests, and demonstrations. While the gravity of the situation might well be understood by the government, the discourses don't reflect the urgency or the seriousness of the situation. A national wave of protests is more difficult to defuse than a series of disturbances. Disturbances reflect an understanding of the event as temporary local events rather than collectively comprising a “people's strike.” There is no need for the Germans to micromanage individual instances of disturbances, but they would be concerned by a larger

unified opposition. Similarly, “disturbances” is dismissive of political expressions by large sections of the populace. The expression “different cities” as opposed to multiple cities, nationally, or across the country is a euphemistic interpretation of the prevalence of the problem.

The first circular, released on the 20th of August, begins by describing the scope of the problem taking place to contextualize the situation faced by law enforcement:

In July and in the beginning of the month of August disturbances of a larger scope have taken place in Copenhagen, Randers, Fredericia, and Esbjerg, under which it has come to clashes between the Danish population and the occupation troops. In the last days there has in the meantime occurred some further cases of such clashes, such as in Vordingborg, Svendborg, and Odense (Akil, p. 105).

The disturbances themselves “take place” and clashes “occur”, continuing the trend of anthropomorphizing events by attributing to them implicit agency. Not all of the cities are mentioned, in the end only some of cities on the island Funen are given. The actual originators of the clashes receive no mention. The circular goes on to describe a successful end to disturbances from forbidding all serving and indulgence of alcohol combined with Germans being denied public permits for three weeks. The circular clarifies that such a measure, restricting both Danes and Germans in an evenhanded manner, is no panacea:

The events in Odense have taken a development which must be described as disquieting. The cause of these disturbances is unsolved. Perhaps they can be connected to the rumor on events in Svendborg based tension between occupation troops and the population (Akil, p. 105).

The Danish Ministry of Justice, extraordinarily, takes the official position that it can solve the root cause of the tension between German soldiers occupying Denmark and the emerging

clashes. Since the government clings to a rhetorical vision of a sovereign Denmark cooperating with a German occupation respecting Danish neutrality, an intransigent resistance movement with broad national support cannot be the cause. While the cause of the clashes remains undefined, the circular report speculation that the clashes could be because of rumor exploiting a tension based on “events” in Svendborg. While not explicitly labeling the incident an unfortunate misunderstanding, by deflecting responsibility on to a combination of vicious rumors and an bad atmosphere, a world can exist in which properly informed Danes and Germans can peacefully coexist. This solution also obviates the need to place the blame on either the Germans or the locals.

The circular proceeds to describe events in Odense each of the preceding days, singling the victims as known national socialists and suppliers to the *Wehrmacht*. After German soldiers fired into the public, an ordinary traffic prohibition was imposed and German motorized patrols were eventually pulled back. The description culminates in the most recent events:

Fires were started and a general strike was implemented. Despite a strong force of police – the police force is currently at 500 man – it has been difficult to chase people off the streets. Also today, the 20th of August, there are disturbances, but the police believe that they restrain the situation (Akil, p. 105).

The problem, the actions taken in response, and the result are outlined. Even a “strong police force” is portrayed as impotent in solving the crisis. The end note is hopeful, though the government seems reluctant to take credit for the improved conditions. The difficulties are not so severe that the Danish authorities need to surrender authority to the Germans, but enough to warrant some level of Danish enforcement.

The next part of the circular is a 90 word sentence outlining the importance of police action:

Under consideration of the risk of similar situations arising in other cities under

the influence of moods in parts of the population, and since it is of critical importance for the question of the Danish authorities' maintenance of peace and order in the country that the events not elsewhere have a similar course and extent, one must request that you gentlemen to closely follow the events in the police district and as far as it is feasible take care that occurring episodes be limited, intervening at the earliest possible time. (Akil, p. 105)

Two separate long clauses are used to emphasize how critical the task of the police is. The original Danish is unclear, but the meaning of the first warning is that the disturbances can spread to cities that are subjected to moods of parts of the population. How parts of a population of a city can subject the city itself to its mood is unclear, but this version preserves the notion that a silent majority behaves correctly while an unspecified proportion of people foists its mood on the entire area. The circular is an earnest and polite appeal to law enforcement couched in grave warnings. The “care” (*omsorg*) police are asked to take should not be read as a standard instrumentalist request. *Omsorg* is most often concerned with a mother's loving care for a child, but also the English solicitude. Law enforcement is asked to not just enforce the law, but to do so with care and understanding of the extraordinary circumstances.

Next the police are instructed what to do in case of episodes “that are feared to have more extensive consequences” (Akil, p. 105). In accordance with the vision of Denmark as a state governed by the rule of law, the public prosecutor for special matters is to be informed immediately of precautionary measures taken, and should be included in negotiations concerning traffic prohibitions.

In case of potential clashes between Danes and Germans the circular instructs: As soon as serial clashes between German soldiers and Danish citizens appear brewing, the chief of Police should make an application to the German

commandant and with him seek an agreement on the measures that may be seen as suitable for securing the preservation of peace, if necessary recommend to the commandant to pull the German soldiers home from the streets, at least at night. (Akil, p. 105).

This quotation gives insight into the relationship between Danish law enforcement and German forces at the time. Communication between the two parties does exist, though Danish law enforcement only has the power to suggest the Germans be pulled back from the streets. The scenario of German forces being uncooperative is envisioned and prepared for: Danish law enforcement is to make a counter proposal of pulling back the troops at night. The rhetoric describing the relationship portrays a collaborative and consensus based relationship where parties together “seek an agreement” on “suitable measures” at the same time as independence of agency is established.

Six days later, on the 26th of August, the last circular was issued reporting some improvement following an end to the general strike and a new theory of the cause of all the disturbances: “The unrest has, however, spread to other Funen market towns and a few Southern cities. In any case it must be presumed that foreign agitators have spread the unrest further and encouraged strikes and demonstrations” (Akil, p. 106). The unrest has seemingly spread like a contagious disease into rural areas and the part of Denmark bordering Germany, continuing the anthropomorphic rhetorical theme. This statement does locate a responsible agent: “foreign agitators.” No space is devoted to why it must be presumed that traveling foreign agitators have managed to create such a groundswell national movement, or let alone exist. Foreign agitators are a useful scapegoat satisfying German demands for a perpetrators, and Danish suspicion of outsiders all the while exempting Danes from suspicion. The statement attempts to further induce fears of outside agitators repeating rumors: “From Sæby it is

informed that strange persons have by threats of sabotage to the city's shops managed to induce owners to close.” (Akil, p. 106). What makes the persons strange is left unsaid, but fits in nicely with the suspicious outsiders.

The circular develops the outsider threat theme:

A common denominator in all disturbances is that groups of troublemakers go around and shatter windows and destroy furniture and equipment at national socialists and persons presumed to be German friendly. Furthermore, one has to a significant extent assaulted women who socialize with German soldiers and cut their hair off and the like. These assaults often involve violent intervention on the side of the German Wehrmacht's side, such that German patrols are sent out that use firearms. (Akil, p. 106).

The troublemakers attack not just the equipment of national socialists, but also persons merely suspected of being “German friendly” and women who “socialize” with Germans. The assaults on women labeled “field mattresses” took place in public without protests, indicating a general public approval. It is in response to these assaults, according to the circular, that the German soldiers open fire. This argument simultaneously places the guilt of the disturbances on a minority of troublemakers, excuses German military actions, and tries to establish common ground between German soldiers and law-abiding Danes. As in previous statements, the criminal codes violated are referenced. In this statement, however, police are instructed to not just charge the criminals, but also put them under arrest.

Despite some effort at justifying German reactions, the circular nevertheless seeks to ensure that Danish police are seen nowhere near German forces “clashing” with Danes:

When conditions as in Aalborg go so far that the German military are deployed against the population, the Danish police should of course not side by side with

the German military fight the Danish troublemakers...Danish police, in the event German military patrols are deployed against the population, should immediately withdraw from the street or streets where the German troops are deployed (Akil, p. 106)

Why it is so obvious that Danish police should “of course not” fight Danes “side by side” is unclear given the necessity of stopping troublemakers and the seemingly justified actions by the Germans. The answer lies in the careful balancing act by the Danish government to cooperate enough with the Germans to stave off the ultimatum that would come days later, but not be identified with German force itself to the Danish people.

Conclusion

Several recurring rhetorical patterns emerge despite the different genres of discourses, rhetors, and audiences. One such rhetorical pattern is the use of strategic ambiguity. By crafting the discourses in ways that either allow for or spark different interpretations by the Danish people and the German representatives in Denmark the Danish government negotiates the mediation role in a way that attempts to satisfy all parties. Even if the different parties cannot be fully satisfied, an attempt was made to hold the different parties at bay, yielding just enough to stall the conflicts between the resistance and German forces.

The ambiguity is heightened by rhetorically effacing agency and responsibility from human actors and by anthropomorphizing situations or events. This rhetorical ploy obviates the need for human culprits, if the events or atmospheres are responsible and take on a will of their own, there is nothing the government can do. The use of luck and misfortune to describe the Danish situation also helps convey to the Danish people a sense of empathy with hardships experienced, without directly accusing the Germans of impropriety.

Another pattern is the use of the Danish State and people to shield government policy from criticism. Seemingly unnecessary references to Christian X, often by his formal title, serve to reinforce a national ideal of loyalty to Denmark as 'obedience' to the King. Woven into the royal fabric is the legal state itself. So long as a fiction of sovereignty and neutrality can be maintained, the Danish legal system is to be considered a legitimate authority and the proper recourse for disputes. The veneer of legal propriety covered for legal shortcuts and unseemly political compromise. The appearance of Danish sovereignty was evidenced by the continuity of government rhetoric. The government thus spoke of and from an imagined reality of Danish sovereignty that had been sustained since 1940. In support of this view Christian X did the lion's share of the ideological heavy lifting by continually supporting the government and demanding respect for the law, and hence what it meant to be Danish.

The government construction also placed faith in national responsibility. The framing of the violent resistance as not just an attack on Germany, but an act exposing fellow Danes and Danish society to risk seeks to reconfigure Danes' moral compass. Danish society's normal reliance on consensus, cooperation, and decision making through democracy is challenged by the vigilantism of the resistance movement. The violent resistance movement is thus not just foolhardy, but selfish and inimical to Danish culture. The other types of resistance such as flying the Danish flag and silent protests are discouraged, but not to be punished. The rationale behind holding the resistance at bay had everything to do with German countermeasures, though this was at no point publicized. Neither German interests nor the concept of cooperation between Germany and Denmark was ever mentioned in the public statements by the Danish government.

CHAPTER 4: THE PERSONAE CONSTITUTED BY GOVERNMENT

This chapter describes the different ideal auditors to whom the government spoke in issuing proclamations and circulars. Given the many audiences, inherently multiple invitations were tendered for hearers to become different personae. Because of the nature of the exigency, a third persona negated by the discourses as responsible for the “disturbances” is also a central feature of the government discourses. The personae in the text are directions the government wished to guide its audiences toward. Cumulatively, these personae constitute what the Danish government would have the Danish people and the German forces be and do.

The Danish Citizen

The Danish people are the audience explicitly addressed in the government discourses, creating an air of exclusivity at the outset. Danish people are tasked with solving problems in Denmark, even as triggered by outside agency. The themes of national solidarity and responsibility permeate and define the worldview of the ideal Danish auditor – what I will henceforth refer to as the Danish citizen.

The Danish Monarch, Christian X, was not simply a national icon, but also a leader and role model, his words affecting how the Danish citizen understood Danish citizenship and its requirements. The first announcement by the King during the time from the end of March to the end of August 1943 concerned his recovery and return to power. While not speaking to the people, hearing his return reassured the Danish citizen that though things may not be normal, one sense of normality has returned. Christian X as the holder of office, but the Danish monarchy more generally, represents national stability. It is a millennium old tradition that signifies a continuous process of adaptation. The war is a continuation of the Danish monarchy

stands in for the continuation of the nation, it is hard not to think the health of monarch would stand in for the health of the nation for the Danish citizen.

By representing all that is Danish historically and symbolically while still publicly tolerating the cooperation policy, Christian X presents a model for how the Danish citizen can be Danish without expressing that sentiment through insurrection. The reception of Werner Best exemplifies Christian X's directive for Danes to be "correct and dignified" toward Germans. Christian X sanctions polite but curt interactions, making it possible to cooperate without being German-friendly. The Germans are in other words to be dealt with as a necessary evil at arm's length, but with a friendly face. The subtle rhetorical maneuvering of Christian X allows for the Danish citizen to express national pride without jeopardizing the stability of the state towards Germany. This straddling of the line is achieved through silence, leaving room for the Danish citizen to attribute responsibility for the hardships to the German presence. The model then is for the Danish citizen to recognize that nationalism and anti-German sentiments can be expressed through silence on the issue of the origin of hardships – knowing that fellow Danes will understand who is responsible while ostensibly complying with the government line.

In Christian X's comment on sabotage, there is a paternalist tone as the rhetor sees a need (*trang*) to remind Danes to "obey the law." Moreover, the comment that "Danes have largely understood" is a new warning to those who have not understood. The Danish citizen understands the risks associated with sabotage, an understanding interwoven with nationalist appeals, underwritten by what "responsible Danes owe their mother country" - considerations saboteurs set aside. For the Danish citizen, patriotism is woven together with a sense of moral responsibility to preserve life – to be Danish *is* to be responsible for how one's actions affect the social compact. This moral responsibility, which the Danish citizen comes to understand as correct, is Max Weber's ethic of responsibility in which value conflicts are inevitable and ethics

are dictated by how choices mark those affected. Conversely, the ethic of conviction, held by the resistance movement, instead posits a hierarchy of values, such as the need to defeat Hitler, which must be upheld regardless of casualties (Starr, 1999). For the Danish citizen, the nationalist ethic of responsibility extends only to Denmark's borders. Defense Minister Brorson's rhetoric on how Denmark can peacefully transition through the post-war period clearly establishes that defense policy is a domestic issue; no other country or government should be involved. How others, civilians as well as Allied personnel, are affected by Denmark's inaction receives no mention. Germany's role at the end of the war also receives no mention. As far as the Danish citizen is concerned, the war exists outside of Denmark, without Denmark's involvement, and has nothing to do with Denmark outside of effects seen domestically.

The repeated use of Christian X's proclamations to endorse law enforcement policies seeks to impress upon the Danish citizen that cooperation has been royally sanctioned. Furthermore, the law enforcement policies have the backing of a unified Parliament and been validated through all the proper institutional channels and committees. Moreover, the legitimacy of the government and parliament had been validated by the democratic March elections. The totality of the bureaucratic rhetoric instructed the Danish citizen to become not just an obedient legal subject, but also sought to convince that law and order imposed on saboteurs was legitimate. The warnings issued by Brorson answers lingering doubts about the lack of genuine democracy – with the juxtaposition that only by maintaining peace through war can genuine democracy be preserved in the future. Cooperation, patience, and sober minded calmness are thus vehicles, the weapons of resistance, used to stay consummate with national character, the blueprint to guiding Denmark peacefully through turbulent times to peace and democracy. Deficiencies in the democratic system, (e.g. jurisdiction,) are overlooked by the Danish citizen

who instead focuses on the long term prospects for democracy in Denmark, perceiving the government's rhetoric to be a stalling tactic.

While nationalist sentiments were discouraged on April 9th, the government did the absolute minimum to enforce a Nazi agenda, for example the ban on flying flags. The police were not just instructed to enforce a policy, but also to persuade Danes of the reasonability of the policy by evoking a nationalist sense of solidarity. The Danish citizen understands the possibility of voicing dissent and protesting the German presence without risking German repercussions that would further undermine Danish sovereignty. The Danish citizen is thus not muted or censored, but nudged toward resistance with plausible deniability. The “frictions” between Danes and Germans, presented by the government as caused by the duration of the occupation and misinterpretations, is a non-issue for the Danish citizen determined not to be provoked into violent resistance.

German Representative

The Germans were not the stated audience of the government statements, but an important stakeholder in the cooperation policy, and sure to follow public statements. The German Representative refers to the imagined ideal German auditor sustained in the same texts as the Danish citizen.

The German representative differs from the Danish citizen on how to view the cooperation policy. The German representative sees the cooperation policy as a mutually beneficial pragmatic solution. Denmark served as the shining beacon of how beneficial compliance with reasonable German demands can be, exemplified by the comparatively large amount of sovereignty, reasonably free expression, and minimal German interference in domestic policy. The perception, rather than the reality, of Danish cooperation and compliance

was the more important issue. Anti-German expressions in the illegal press and in private did not threaten German interests, so long as a credible public face of compliance could be presented as the genuine expression of most Danes. The March elections exemplify this attitude, why Danes really voted for the government parties was immaterial, so long as it could be publicized as a victory for cooperation. Any real cooperation (on e.g. the crackdown on communists) was a net benefit to the Danish civilian administration. The public presentation of Denmark and Germany in concert fighting the same enemy was more important than actual cooperation. Since Denmark was a full-fledged member of the anti-Comintern pact and had banned DKP, the German representative could credibly present the Danish government as a useful ally.

Given how much the *Auswärtiges Amt* had invested in the notion of a cooperative Danish government and population, the German representative's incentive was to turn a blind eye to realities incongruous with the image presented to Berlin. The government proclamations and statements gave enough room for the German representatives to claim cooperation on the face of the discourse, since no overt or explicit anti-German was in the text.

The elections of March 1943 confirmed the long held view of the German representative that the vast majority of Danes were supportive of the cooperation policy and would work to sustain the relationship with Germany which had seen Denmark largely shielded from the harms of the war. Christian X's speech entrenched the view that "Danes have largely understood" that threats to peace and order were threats of the highest order. For the German representative, Danes as a whole across the whole period of occupation were cooperative and non-confrontational even as a small minority threatened the mutually beneficial Danish-German relationship.

As the incidence of sabotage, demonstrations, and strikes increased the German

representative understood these acts as manageable problems dealt with sufficiently by a cooperative Danish-German effort. As the Danish citizen, the German representative understands that “frictions” are a predictable consequence of a necessary peace occupation. These frictions are at the base level mere misunderstandings and misinterpretations of each others' noble intentions. Further, the incidents themselves are not very threatening to the German representative, as “bringing the railways to a halt” is an issue solved by repairing the railway lines. Similarly, demonstrations, while undesirable and poorly timed, are a byproduct of a functioning democracy. Finally, the German representative understands that to a very large extent the anti-German acts witnessed are not perpetrated by Danes, but a common enemy of Danes and Germans: traveling foreign agitators.

For the German representative, the Danish government's response to these events was to be seen as satisfactory. Public Danish nationalist expressions that could be misinterpreted as anti-German were met with prompt, explicit, and consistent discouragement by the government. Furthermore, the Danish government's law enforcement saw to it to remove the “occurring difficulties” in a manner reflecting both Danish jurisdiction and the *Wehrmacht's* security interests. In violent situations, contact is established between the *Wehrmacht* and Danish police in which an agreement is reached on proper response measures. The [perceived legitimacy of the crackdowns depended on an appearance of proper legal backing.

The totality of the German representative's view on Denmark is thus a useful and reasonably cooperative partner appreciative of the threats to a successful diplomatic relationship. The relationship is based on not just trust between two nations, but a trust in the diplomatic and legal agreements reached on the 9th of April. The fiction of sovereignty was a reality for the German representative – legal agreements are binding, and the legal processes in a sovereign democracy must be respected.

Third Persona

The third persona, the mirror image of the ideal auditor, is the persona negated by the text. The third persona of the government discourses examined is not negated through silence, but situated front and center as the paragon of what not to become.

The third persona is first and foremost an un-Danish minority within Denmark, by refusing to go along with what Danes do and understand. By jeopardizing not just the lives of others, but the Danish state itself, the third persona violates the consensus-based traditions of Danish politics. Such actions are more than just irresponsible and reckless, they are selfish and arrogant. The third persona has the conceit of thinking him/herself justified in “taking it upon oneself to do justice.” The selfish and undemocratic nature of the third persona is part and parcel of what makes it un-Danish. It is thus the means, and not the purpose of the violent resistance, that is negated.

Furthermore, by refusing to heed the warnings issued by the government the third persona does not understand the necessity of the considerations of the particular situation Denmark finds itself in. This lack of proper understanding combined with a selfish un-Danish attitude form the basis of the motivations for the third persona to become part of the resistance movement and perpetrate the irresponsible “reprehensible acts.”

Further, as the government denunciation of the incorrect illegal press article demonstrates, the third persona is dishonest. Seeking to agitate the public, the third persona relies on deceitful misconceptions about the nature of Denmark's cooperation with Germany.

Conclusions

The different persona addressed by the government illustrates the functionality and flexibility of the fiction of neutrality. The vision of a neutral sovereign Denmark cooperating in

a limited manner with Germany on issues such as sabotage contained within it enough room to sustain two very different second persona. As the incidence of sabotage and other methods of resistance grew prevalent, the exigence changed but the government's rhetoric largely did not. While more strict warnings and measures were taken the manner in which the government articulated its vision for cooperation changed only slightly in the degree in which resistance was denounced, the labeling of incidence changing from euphemisms such as youthful indiscretions to serious threats.

The overall defense of cooperation with Germany, as seen through proxy issues such as jurisdiction, did not change throughout the time period covered. The word cooperation never came up, neither did any explicit mention of Germany, Hitler, the progression of the war, or any other international issue. External affairs, even as they affected Danish domestic politics, were outside of what the Danish government could speak to without jeopardizing either or both of its stakeholders. Consequently, external issues were completely ignored or transformed into a domestic issue. The preemption of German demands by the Danish government framed the decisions as domestic and the Danish government as not beholden to Germany, upholding the fiction of neutrality.

The ideological transformation occurring in the streets and the minds of the actors did not spur adjustments in the personae to whom the government spoke. This lack of adjustment was not because of inaccurate perceptions of the popular demands, but because denouncing Germany explicitly for its violation of the 9th of April agreement would have forced the government to abandon the fiction of sovereignty. The constraints imposed by an increasingly powerless *Auswärtiges Amt* and a *Wehrmacht* uninterested in diplomacy forced the Danish government to stay within the rhetorical area defined by the illusion of sovereignty. The increased resistance exposed that jurisdiction was if not on German hands, at the very least

subject to German approval. An increasingly disillusioned Danish population demanding real democracy and rule of law was met with the same rhetoric heard throughout the occupation. The *Auswärtiges Amt* under pressure to produce actual results in terms of reduced resistance was also met with an unchanging ambiguous discourse. Slowly the masque had fallen off the government's cooperation policy exposing an inconsistent double game of reluctantly and selectively doing the German bidding – an arrangement neither audience was satisfied by.

Since the worldview of both parties, even if determined by changing socio-political conditions, had to be understood rhetorically the persona criticism shows where the discourses fell short. The government spoke to audiences which no longer existed. The Danish citizen, who had successfully constituted and matched the Danish view until the summer of 1943, no longer matched enough of the Danish populace to avert the popular uprising in August.

Similarly, the distance between the German representative and the actual Germans in charge in Denmark grew wide enough for the Germans to effectively end the cooperation policy by issuing an ultimatum the Danish government could not meet. As the resistance grew in tact with German dissatisfaction with Danish efforts to quell the force of anti-German forces, so did the German costs of diplomatic cooperation. Best's justification for the cooperation policy to the German leadership had been one of cost-effective expediency which was being undermined by the political realities on the ground. The resistance in Denmark forced a change in the power ratio between the *Wehrmacht* and *Auswärtiges Amt*, as military patrols were the preferred solution to sabotage, to which the Danish government's rhetoric did not adjust. Ultimately, both invitations made by the Danish government to the Danish and German audiences were rejected as the strategic ambiguities within the fiction of sovereignty could not cover the ideological gap between the persona and the actual auditors.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Persona criticism

Extending a theoretical concept as thoroughly developed and revisited as the Second Persona is a challenge. However, the complicated nature of the constraints in the rhetorical situation facing the Danish government challenges persona criticism.

Morris' (2002) introduction of the fourth persona marks the starting point for investigations into how rhetors speak to multiple personae in the same text. Whereas the discourses of J. Edgar Hoover silenced the fourth persona knowing Hoover's sexual proclivities, this thesis demonstrates that addressing multiple personas in the text does not necessitate one of them being silenced. While the German representative was never explicitly addressed, s/he was never silenced or negated. Special considerations of Danish Nazis, girls socializing with Germans, and suppliers to Germany as unjust victims were the rhetorical markers meant to appease an unmentioned audience.

Hoover's rhetorical strategy of passing rhetoric, maintaining two different ideological positions simultaneously, relied on a fourth persona constituted by silence leaving the second persona completely unaware of the existence of the fourth persona. Such successful differentiation of audiences was not possible for the Danish government since public decisions on e.g. jurisdiction had to be made displaying where the government stood in terms of policy. Hoover relied on the fourth persona colluding in silence; the Danish government could not rely on an audience outright colluding in silence with the government.

The personae of different ideological positions in the Danish occupation are not held together by silent collusion, but strategic ambiguity. The strategic ambiguity was achieved by ambiguous terminology, complex sentence structure and word order obfuscating the larger

meaning. Moreover, effacing the agency of actors and the source of problems by labeling issues accidents and misfortunes leaves enough room to sustain both personae. By leaving out the cause of the problems addressed by the government, chiefly the war itself, the Danish government can make its point without overtly stepping on any toes.

Notions of the Danish government engaging in outright deception and subversion by encouraging resistance while placating the Germans are unfounded in the texts examined in this project. While pleasing to a Danish national sentiment and romantic notions of resistance, Danish Nazi sympathetic minorities would be quick to relay any coded encouragement of resistance to the Germans. The fear of a totally Nazi controlled occupation and its effects on the protection of the Danish population ensured the Danish government attempted to avert the August rebellion. The relationship between the personae was thus not based on subterfuge, but very subtle hesitant compromise, ambiguity, and obfuscation.

Finally, this work considers the relationship between the personae. The compatibility of the personae was largely achieved by the overarching fiction of sovereignty, smoothing over conflicts by emphasizing the temporary nature of the fragile cooperation. As the fiction of sovereignty is exposed, so is the power differential between the personae. On issues such as jurisdiction where compromise is no longer possible and power is zero sum, the relationship between the personae is redefined through the lens of power. Consequently, the permutability of personae in the text is contingent on a stable political environment. Persona criticism should thus not only consider the possibility of multiple personae explicit in the text, but also how the compatibility is achieved, and the constraints it is subject to.

Future research

I studied the rhetoric of the Danish government's defense of its cooperation policy with

Germany during World War II. The complicated nature of the relationship between the rhetor and its audiences constrain both the rhetorical invention as well as the tools available to the rhetorical critic.

As I formulated my topic I was unaware that the spring of 2011 would be labeled as the “Arab Spring” by countless mass media outlets. As scholars attempt to explain how and why the massive uprisings occurred in quick succession in Arab and North African countries it is important to remember that there is a track record for regimes attempting to balance a discontent and protesting domestic public with an unpopular foreign policy. Each case study has its own socio-political context and history, and while rhetorical theories and patterns cannot be transplanted onto such dissimilar situations, world leaders are sure to take notice of how preceding comparable rhetors have tried to achieve similar aims.

Future research on the Arab Spring should thus be grounded in the history of how comparable crises were handled politically and rhetorically by prior governments, even as far removed as Denmark during World War II. For this grounding to be valuable, a more comprehensive approach to the Danish occupation, as well as other occupations is needed.

A limitation on the present study is the sample of sources used. The BBC radio addresses were popular and critical to the Danish understanding of the progression of the war. Many more illegal newspapers and fliers, as well as public service announcements on the war informed and misinformed Danes on the cooperation policy and were a critical component of the resistive counter public.

Further, the scope of this thesis covered only the time period immediately preceding the collapse of the government. The fissures in the government legitimacy may well have been exposed much earlier, even if the illegal press was less influential in the earlier stages of the occupation.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION

University of Richmond, Richmond, VA

Bachelor of Arts and Sciences, cum laude

Quadruple Major: Rhetoric & Communication Studies, Economics, Political Science, and International Studies

Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC

Candidate for Master or Arts in the Department of Communication Studies

WORK EXPERIENCE

Teaching Assistant: Wake Forest University

Weekly lab session leader

Lecturer in the absence of professor

SpeakFirst Coach: ImpactAlabama, July 2008 to present

- Debate teacher for students from three urban Birmingham high schools
- Debate team coordinator, organizing tournaments, debate camps
- Promotion work for SpeakFirst and ImpactAlabama

Debate lab leader: University of Richmond National Debate Institute, June-July 2007, 2008

- Debate instructor for policy and Lincoln-Douglas debate groups

ACTIVITIES

College Policy Debate team: October 2004 to May 2008

- Debater at Novice, Junior Varsity and Varsity levels

Graduate School Debate:

- Representative for Wake Forest in a public debate against the British Debate Union
- Representative for the Democratic Party in public debate initiative on the 2010 election

HONORS AND AWARDS

Shelby Davis Scholarship

Carole Weinstein International Student Scholarship

The Rhetoric & Communication Studies Leadership Award - 2008

Dr. David Thomas Coach's Award - 2008

Most Outstanding Junior Varsity Debater - 2007

Dean's List Fall 2005, 2007, Spring 2006, 2008

Lambda Pi Eta Honor Society

Phi Beta Delta Honor Society

Departmental Honors Program in Economics

Presented paper at the National Conference for Undergraduate Research in 2008