

Army Headquarters,  
New Zealand Military Forces,  
Wellington, C. I.,

~~SECRET~~  
37/10/43  
POLICE DEPT. HEAD OFFICE

IN YOUR REPLY  
M. O. 16/22/M.  
please quote this number.

~~SECRET~~

14th November, 1939.

~~SECRET~~  
POLICE DEPT. HEAD OFFICE

MEMORANDUM for

The Commissioner of Police,  
Police Department,  
WELLINGTON.

Enclosed please find copy of letter forwarded to the Minister of Defence by Lionel H. Mollring of Wharanui, Blenheim, relating to the activities of, and his relationship with, the German Club in Auckland.

*G. E. Foster*

Captain  
GENERAL STAFF.

Encl.

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*Rec'd  
File*

*To Mollring  
index*

WHARANUI SCHOOL,  
Private Bag,  
BLENHEIM.  
6th September, 1939.

The Minister for Defence,  
House of Representatives,  
WELLINGTON.

Dear Sir,

Owing to outbreak of war between England and Germany I feel I must write and tell you about a German Club in Auckland which I had joined in 1935 while a student at the Training College. It was some months before I discovered that this "Language and Social Club" was by no means merely a social organisation, but a group of definitely Nazi tendencies.

However, it is more than likely that the Police or Defence Department are well acquainted with the Deutsche Verein (German Club) in Auckland, and with its personnel. Nevertheless in the circumstances, I felt I must give you a few facts, Sir, re this organisation to which I belonged, especially as I am sure that no New Zealander desires to be ignorant of such an Anti-British club in New Zealand during war time.

While a student in Auckland, 1935, I studied German as a hobby. Thus I became acquainted with the Deutsche Verein early in the year. At first, the meetings appeared quite harmless, other nationalities besides German being present, men, women and young people. The evening was usually taken up with language study, German newspapers, folk-songs (in German), and various musical items.

Although New Zealand born, and at present a recruit in the Marlborough Mounted Rifles, I am by blood three parts German or Austrian, though I believe my parents had since become naturalised. My father's destination (he was full German) has been unknown for eighteen years.

Anyhow, unbeknown to me, certain officials in the Deutsche Verein had traced my parents, and grandparents', birth and nationality. About five months after joining this club, I was informed of "other" meetings. These I think were by express invitation only, and turned out to be for "Germans only". These were not so harmless. The "Deutscheland Uber Alles" and the "Horsst Wessel" were regularly sung, and the Nazi badge, the Swastika, was openly worn. The German book "Mein Kampf" was occasionally in evidence. Films of Germany, German submarines etc., had been somehow "procured" and were shown. Open meetings were still held weekly, however.

By this time I began to realise that among the German element in Auckland, Nazi propaganda was being well disseminated. Fortunately, University and Training College exams. were rapidly approaching, and using this as an excuse, tried to withdraw from the Deutsche Verein. This I accomplished only after much difficulty, though the club officials always seemed to have knowledge of my whereabouts. Considering myself a loyal and enthusiastic young New Zealander, I had little sympathy with such foreign political propaganda, and the following year, when I continued my teaching training down in Christchurch, thought no more of the matter.

.....

However, conditions have changed, and I would very much appreciate knowing that the Auckland Deutsche Verein were "ear-marked" by the Government in connection with its National Emergency Scheme.

Re the Club, the only names I can remember are:-

Kapitan Grappengiesser  
Herr Schmidt  
Herr Fischer

Membership included lawyers and barristers, photographers, and certain other professional men.

I trust that in relating my very brief knowledge of this Nazi organisation in New Zealand, it has in some small way, proved of assistance. Also, I need hardly affirm that the above statements are strictly true in every particular to the best of my knowledge.

I beg to remain, Sir,  
Your humble and obedient servant,

LIONEL H.E. MOLLRING  
(Teacher)

NEW ZEALAND POLICE.

[Police-100A.

Police-station Detective Office, Auckland.

Date : 15 th October , 19 39

REPORT of Detective E.A.Stevenson , No. 2627

relative to Lionel Mollring - supplies information re  
German activities in Auckland.

I respectfully report that I have read Mollring's statement and have noted the fact that he may return in Auckland.

Judging from the statement it is doubtful if Mollring has ever had any first hand knowledge of the German Club.... He says that the Club is in a side street.. In fact, the Club is situated in Queen St., Auckland's main street, and it always has been.

He says that he cannot state the nature of the premises on the ground floor of the building. It is a perambulator shop and was so for years before the Club was commenced... To get to the Club rooms one has to walk quite close to the side window of the shop.

Other points in Mollring's statement were common knowledge.

The Chief Detective,  
Auckland.

*Insp Ward*  
*Sokal*  
*ekel*  
*16.10.39*

*E.A. Stevenson.*  
Detective.

*The Commissioner*  
*J. Cunningham*  
*Superd*  
*18.10.39*

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If any reply, please quote this number:

37/10/43.

~~SECRET~~

POLICE DEPARTMENT.

WELLINGTON, C. 1.

18th September, 1939.

MEMORANDUM for

The Superintendent of Police,  
AUCKLAND.

LIONEL MOLLRING SUPPLIES INFORMATION  
RE GERMAN ACTIVITIES IN AUCKLAND.

Mollring has not supplied any information which we did not already have, but the file is ... forwarded for your information in view of the statement that he may return to Auckland.

*D. J. Cummings*

Commissioner of Police.

*dy*

*The Inspector  
Detective Branch  
D. J. Cummings  
Superintendent*

*19. 9. 39*

*The Chief Clerk  
R. H. Ford  
19. 9. 39*

*W. Stevenson  
D. O'Hare  
E. H. W.  
19. 9. 39*

*The Chief Detective,  
Report attached.  
E. H. Stevenson  
15. 10. 39.  
Detective.*



**NEW ZEALAND POLICE.**

Subject: NAZI ORGANIZATION.

108,000/8/38-8709]

The Inspector of Police,  
NELSON.

For discreet inquiry from Mr.  
Mollring please.

*D. Summing*  
Commissioner of Police,  
8. 9. 39.

*Senior Sergeant Smyth.  
Please  
accompany Const. Byrne  
to Whararua interview  
Mr Mollring.*

*Parroll*  
Inspector of Police,  
11. 9. 39

*Forwarded to the Inspector  
Report herewith  
Smyth  
14/9/39 Senior Sergeant*

*The Commissioner  
Please see  
Mr Mollring's statement,  
also report of Senior Sargent  
Smyth. herewith.  
Parroll  
Inspector of Police.  
15. 9. 39*

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# NEW ZEALAND POLICE.

[Police—100A.]

Police-station : Blenheim

Date : 14th September, 1939

REPORT of Senior Sergeant J.Smyth, No. 1647

*relative to* NAZI ORGANISATION. German Club at Auckland.

I respectfully report that along with Constable D.Byrne,Seddon,I visited Wharanui today,and obtained the statement of Lionel Mollring,Sole Teacher of the School there,which has a roll of twelve pupils. Wharanui is as stated about 40 miles South of Blenheim and immediately on the East Coast. Mollring lives in a hut on the School-ground. He appears a decent young fellow,not financial and trying to improve himself in his path in life. In conversation he stated that his father managed to leave Germany before the outbreak of The Great War, went to England where he was joined by his mother and later came to New Zealand,During the Great War he was interned in this country.He is definite he does not know of his father's present whereabouts.He also stated that his father would pass for an Englishman,that he hated Germany.

If Schmidt is all that Mollring states him to be,and Grappengiesser is sufficiently educated to give lessens in German,then assuredly they would not communicate vital topics to such men as Mollring,even if he were,a German-born. Mollring would not be trusted by educated men as he is not the sort who could be trusted with information connected with a Nazi,or similar organisation,which may be expected to control their secrets.

While he is outwardly easily to approach and discuss such a subject as that handled today,and he appeared to be in most points honest,I cannot

The Inspector of Police,  
NELSON.

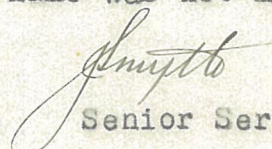
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accept his word that he is unable to disclose further names. I tried to get from him the name of the Scottish girl mentioned in his statement, but he said he did not know her name. Also he would be expected to know more by name than three, after one years association with the Club. At the close of 1936 he removed to Christchurch.

He states that he is endeavouring to return to Auckland. If he succeeds he is going to try and contact with the members of it and will disclose their activities. Nothing is sure that if he were to return to Auckland and resumed acquaintance with the members of the Club he would be easily approached and easily handled by those with a knowledge of the German Club and may be used to advantage. On the other hand he is at least three parts German, (his mother from an English mother to a German father) he may be safely left were he is at Wharanui.

I omitted to mention that he could not give any information of the movements of seamen from German or other ships at Auckland, I intended to include that in his statement.

I inadvertently wrote on the reverse side on one page of the statement. Mr Brockett's name was not mentioned.

  
Senior Sergeant.



Whararangi

14th September 1939

Lionel Malbring, Status.

I am sole teacher at Whararangi School. I am 33 years of age, I am a native of Hastings, my home address is 14 Craig Street, Napier.

During 1935 I was at Auckland Training College, I also took lectures at Auckland University. My father, a full German left ~~his~~ home when I was five years of age since then neither mother nor I have heard of him, my mother, Gertrude Malbring, a German-English extraction lives in Napier; my father Herman Malbring was of full German blood, he was a labourer, he would be now 55 years, I do not remember him. I have a younger sister living with mother, her name Hermione Malbring.

I never at any time have a party to the Communist element, I was not attending such meetings, at Auckland

Early in March of 1935 I joined the German Club in Queen Street, Auckland; it is in a side street, I think in the vicinity of Beresford St. West. St. Matthews Church is in the vicinity. The club is on the upper floor of a two story building, it was an ordinary club room entered from the footpath, I cannot state the nature of the premises on the lower floor.

My purpose in joining the club was to improve my knowledge of German Language. Weekly meetings were held either on Tuesday or Thursday. The club outwardly a social club, that part was quite compatible and not anti British. Folk songs of Germany, other ordinary popular items were sung including the British & German National Anthems.

The man who was president of the club was J. Molling

The feeling at these meetings, and the discussions, were the Return of German Colonies. War was not discussed; at the outset the position did not appear to be anti British, as I was overworked with study and did not give the necessary thought to the situation. Since I have had time to reflect, I can now see that if it was not an anti British atmosphere, it was certainly pro German. Nazi Badges were worn openly in the Club.

Correspondence from overseas or from Germany was never discussed at the club. I do not know of any other meeting place besides the club rooms. I cannot recall any other names than those already mentioned.

I was not in Auckland during any outstanding event in England such as Death of The King, the coronation, or abdication. I cannot state the feeling at that time.

I heard of the possible acquisition of Austria at the club and the benefit it would be to Germany. I read that when the Anschluss was accomplished that some of the Club went to sea, beyond territorial limits to swear allegiance to the Fatherland of Germany, some of that party were Austrians.

German newspapers were available at the club; "Mein Kampf" was also studied, Nazi songs were sung and the place fully Germanic for the time being.

I never heard of any action to be taken, I never heard of any action to be taken in event of war, I never heard of any selected element or committee to discuss subject not discussed in the Club.

Walter Schmidt was undoubtedly the most active member, he is a cultured man of 33 years, or I should say now, about 40 years of age, he would strike one as of good standing, well dressed, gentlemanly and level minded.

L. Molling

Herr Schmidt, who lived at Auckland, and who made frequent visits to Germany; another important man there was Herr Grappengüsser, he was known as "Herr Kapitän" he is well educated and gave the lessons in German, he lived in the suburb of Kingsland. Fischer also took a prominent part I cannot state his name fully, I think he was a labourer, of middle age, I think now he had grey hair. I think thick set but I cannot remember much of him for accuracy.

I do not know of Braunstark, that man is Grappengüsser who I have mentioned above.

I would say that the attendance would be at least fifty attending, <sup>including</sup> while the memberships would be one hundred. I cannot state the names of others who were there, I do not know their names. I attended alone, excepting that I ~~took~~ <sup>was taken there by</sup> a Scottish girl there; she belonged to the Training College, she lived somewhere in Dovenfront. I did not associate much with her apart from the Club's activity, she was not at all anti-British. I do not know her name.

There was another side to the club, a propaganda side; that was different from the social side.

It consisted of lectures by Schmidt, but I cannot remember the names of others. Slides were shown by a cinema, pictures of Germany, of Nazi Organisation, it never struck me of an anti-British nature. It ~~appealed~~ <sup>appealed</sup> to me to be an effort to link up all Germans with the Fatherland, it was not stated that similar activity was carried on in Australia or elsewhere, simply with the Fatherland, Germany. Pictures of a submarine ~~was~~ shown in Dack, <sup>was shown</sup> she was explained as a new type and superior to others, the impression was that great results were expected of this vessel.

L. Mollering

Herr Schmidt was the man who advocated the return of Colonies, he is married to a German woman.

Grappengrasser is married to a German he will be well known in Kingsland's Road where he <sup>did</sup> resides.

The "Hirn Kampf" at the Club was the German version, not the American production. The Club is known as the

"Deutsche Verein"

That means German Club. I have no correspondence connected with it from any source

L. Mollring

14/9/39.

Statement taken and  
signatures witnessed by

14/9/39 *[Signature]*  
Snr Sergeant

NEW ZEALAND POLICE.

[Police-100A.

Police-station : Detective Office, Auckland.

Date : 6 th September, 1939

REPORT of Detective E.A. Stevenson, No. 2627

relative to NAZI ORGANISATION.

"Vide attached"

I respectfully report that the German Club, Auckland and the Nazi organisation has been the subject of regular inquiry since February 1934.

There is nothing in the attached file that is not already known.

Lionel Mollring is not known in connection with the club's activities and he has not been a member.. It is quite likely that he visited the club occasionally without being a member and that he also visited the homes of some of the German members.

The club has, of course, now suspended operations and its affairs are in the hands of Kurt Wilhelm Schmidt and William John McMillan.

There is also no record of Mollring in connection with Communist activities.

In Mr Brockett's letter are mentioned the names of "Mr Schmit an Auckland solicitor" and "an ex German army officer named Graustchek or Braustchek".

These two are without doubt Kurt Wilhelm Schmidt and Max Grapengiesser, who have formed the subject of many reports.

*E.A. Stevenson*

Det. 2627.

*Insp Ward.*

*S. K. Hall.*

*Allen.*

*7. 9. 39.*

*No. 2627*  
*J. Cunningham*  
*Spencer*  
*7. 9. 39*

The Chief Detective,  
Auckland.

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97 10/143



NEW ZEALAND POLICE.

Subject: NAZI ORGANISATION.

100,000/11/30-14051

The Inspector,

Please arrange for Detective Sergeant Doyle to proceed to Masterton to make the necessary inquiries.

*J. Linn*

Supt. 29-8-39

THE CHIEF DETECTIVE

*J. Linn*

29 AUG 1939

498

*Det. J. Doyle*

*Penny Young*  
*Det.*

29-8-39

123/39

*The Chief Detective*  
*Report attached please*  
*Doyle*  
*1/9/39*

*The Inspector*

*Penny Young*  
*Det.*

1-9-39

*The Supt*  
*For information,*  
*Inquiry may now*  
*be deemed at*  
*Whararua, Nelson*  
*District.*

*J. Linn*  
*21 SEP 1939*

*The Commissioner,*

*J. Linn Supt.*  
*2. 9. 39*

The Superintendent of Police,  
AUCKLAND.

Is there anything known of  
this man at your office please?

*J. Linn*  
Commissioner of Police,  
4-9-39.  
*The Chief Det*  
*J. Linn*  
*1/9/39*

*Miss Stevenson*

*SO. Hall*  
*1/9/39*  
*6-9-39*

*Ch. Detective*  
*Report attached.*  
*E. Stevenson*  
*Det.*  
6-9-39

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## NEW ZEALAND POLICE.

Detective Office,  
 Police-station: Wellington.

Date: 1st September, 1939

REPORT of Detective Sergeant P. Doyle, No. 1337

relative to alleged Nazi Organisation in Auckland.

Vide attached letter from Mr F.C. Brockett.

I beg to report that I interviewed Mr Brockett at Masterton yesterday. He is the agricultural and science supervisor for the Wellington Education Board, with headquarters at Masterton, and in the course of his duties as such, he visits all schools under the control of that Board.

Mr Brockett informed me that about eighteen months ago he paid a visit of inspection to the Wharanui school which is situated on the Main Road between the Seddon and Kaikoura districts, and about 40 miles south of Blenheim and he there made the acquaintance of the sole teacher, a Mr Mollring, who is believed to be a native of Auckland, and a former Auckland University student, born of German parents.

Mr Mollring, in the course of conversation, mentioned that at one time he was foolish enough to become associated with certain Communists at Auckland, and attended their meetings out of curiosity, like many other students, but the doctrine did not appeal to him, and he very soon cut adrift from the organisation.

At some stage, he, Mollring joined the German Club at Auckland, with the object of attending their social functions and improve his education in regard to the German language and for some time was a regular member of the Club, and there made the acquaintance of many of the German Nationals, one of whom, he referred to as Shmit, an Auckland Solicitor, but he probably means Kurt Schmidt a director of Pacific Potash Ltd, who has been under notice for some time as an alleged German agent for the Nazi's.

Mollring informed Mr Brockett that he was invited to private meetings held at the residences of German Nationals, which were not of a social nature, but on the contrary only matters of an international nature were dealt with, and at many of these meetings voluminous correspondence from the Nazi Government was dealt with, and a particularly anti-British feeling was manifest.

Mollring said that the meetings were so frequent that he found it difficult to obtain permission from the organizer to attend lectures at the University, and finally he severed his connection with the organisation altogether.

Mr Brockett informed me that he had intended conveying this information to the Commissioner sooner, but thought that the Department was already aware of the position, and on that account refrained from doing so. There is nothing in addition to what he has already illustrated in his letter that he could convey to me, and I therefore deemed it inadvisable to take a written statement from him.

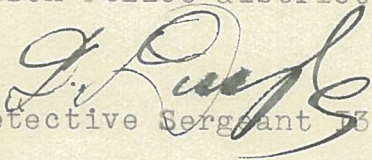
I made enquiries at the Wellington Education Board's office this morning, and was informed that Mollring was still sole teacher at the Wharanui school, and that his full name is Lionel Mollring.

The school has been closed for the August holidays, but will re-open on Monday next the 4th instant.

Mr Brockett informed me that he does not anticipate any difficulty by the Police in obtaining the true position from Mollring, who is a particularly decent young fellow, who apparently regrets having had any dealing with <sup>the</sup> organisation in Auckland, and it may not be necessary for the interviewing officer to make any reference to the information having been supplied from this source, but should any difficulty arise, Mr Brockett's name may be mentioned.

It will be necessary to obtain the fullest possible information concerning the members of the organisation, and where the meetings took place, those present, and the business transacted at every meeting, and the nature of the correspondence dealt with, and any other matters associated with it which may be of any importance.

Wharanui is in the Nelson Police district.

  
Detective Sergeant 1337.



37 / 10/39  
POLICE DEPT. HEAD OFFICE

~~SECRET~~

122 Cole Street  
Masterton  
29.8.39

The Commissioner of Police,

Dear Sir,

Certain information has reached me about German Nazi activity in Auckland, and for all I know, in other places as well, which I think I ought to pass on to you, though it is highly probable that you already know more about it than I do.

My information came from a young man of German extraction who became involved in the Nazi organisation and who had some difficulty in getting out of it.

The organisation is an offshoot of the perfectly harmless German Club, which appears to be purely a social concern, but private meetings are held by certain of the members who are more interested in the welfare of Germany than of Britain. I am informed that the inside members are in close touch with Germany and have their instructions in case of war between Britain and Germany. I doubt whether these people could do very much real harm but they could become a nuisance in war time.

The only names I know in connection with the business are a Mr Schmit (t) an Auckland solicitor, and an ex German army officer named Graustek or Braustek or some similar sounding name, who gives private lessons in the German language. It was through the latter that ~~the~~ my informant became connected with the organisation.

While not wishing to be thought an alarmist, I thought it best to pass on to you the little I know, particularly as the organisation is bound to be represented in other centres besides Auckland.

I am  
Yours Sincerely

*A. C. Brockett*

The Superintendent of Police,  
WELLINGTON.

Please have the writer of attached letter interviewed as early as possible and invited to supply any further information possible.

*S. Curran*  
Commissioner of Police, 29-8-39.

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