

Interrogation of --- JODL

BY ---

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In November of 1937 Jodl was Chief of the Section of National Defense in the old cabinet of the Wehrmacht. The first time that Jodl had ever been in the Reich Chancellery was at the beginning of the war and that was at the invitation of the Fuhrer. Any information which he received about the plans of the Fuhrer he received from Keitel. His main occupation in 1937 was the preparation of the maneuvers of the Wehrmacht. With reference to the foreign policy of the German government Jodl assumed that after our military power was established the Fuhrer would take the necessary steps to do away with or to amend those conditions which the treaty of Versailles had inflicted on us. He took for granted that Germany was going to recover her normal communication between East and West Prussia and recover her sovereignty and also her lost colonies. Germany thought that they could reestablish the line between the Eastern and Western Prussia to recover the city of Danzig and did not think at that time of any annexations of Austria to the German Reich. We only thought of the propagation of the Germans naturally only in connection with those spots which were adjacent to Germany (1937). Jodl presently was most interested in South Tyrol but it had never been mentioned. He considered it one of the gravest injustices against the German nation that Eastern Prussia was separated from Western Prussia. He had never given any thought to the Sudetan Germans. Nobody in the whole German Wehrmacht had any doubt that with the reestablishment of the German military power by Adolf Hitler the German government was going to have a very active foreign policy but nobody had any thought of any possibility of war, least of all Jodl. We thought the wrongs of the Versailles treaty would be done away with by political action. All of the people in Germany felt that a terrible injustice had been done by the treaty of Versailles. Jodl considered it only fair and equitable that these possessions of which we had been deprived wrongfully and which were populated by German people should rightfully come back to Germany. This also was the thought of the whole German nation. In answer to the question whether or not he engaged in any discussion about the possibility and of its dangers he replied "I take it for granted I had." The problem of the German people with the space is a very old problem perhaps older than National Socialism. The density of the population in Germany except for Belgium is the greatest in Europe and in that limited space such preparation as ours could not develop itself satisfactorily. This question may have been discussed by him socially but not officially. Discussion went on according to the social field in which one circulated but as to the question of taking certain pieces of territory by force, there was no such thoughts in our mind and least of all in the mind of the soldiers. In the Wehrmacht the opposition to any policy of rapid expansion was strongest because we were afraid we could not keep pace with it. The Wehrmacht as an instrument of power is of course interested in all political questions. Jodl reiterated that he did not deal with political questions but as a German was interested in the same. The main topic for political discussion was the attitude of England as the main problem and most Officers in the Reichwehr would have welcomed

the friendship of England. There was never a question or discussion concerning Bohemia, Moravia or over-running Poland or declaring war on Russia or marching into Norway. "All our faith, our hope in our conception of German foreign policy consisted in doing away with those heavy wrongs which had been done to us by the dictatorial treaty of Versailles." In as much as certain countries of German belonging, of German history and of German population are involved hence your question. Yes. Jodl did not remember the details of any speeches of Hitler "But I must say that those utterances agreed with our aspirations. If that had not been so we would not have been German Officers but minor subjects." The matter of economics for the welfare of the German people in the export business was dealt with by the economic department and advisors and not by the Wehrmacht. Jodl stated that my conviction was that we had in Germany enough raw materials except for some precious metals and he also thought that their natural resources if well developed were adequately contemplated with providing the German people with a sufficient standard of living. This standard of living for the German people between 1933-1937 had improved in a most extraordinary fashion and he thought that the development in that time within the 4 years, primarily the development of our natural resources such as oil (manufacture of artificial oil would induce time have given us self-sufficiency at that time). He further thought that if this production developed with the same progress and if the surplus of such production could be exported and in turn importing of foreign commodities might have been used, then we could have become self-sufficient. He could not recall that Hitler had expressed an idea to the contrary nor did he remember the speeches of the Fuhrer at that time but as an outsider he was sufficiently impressed with the impetus in economy to believe that Germany was developing to such an extent that it could hold its own. Such statements being only in reference to conditions existing before annexation of any other territories. During the war (when we were occupying certain territories) the question came up whether or not we were going to keep such territories, but not before the war. With reference to Austria he stated that Austria had nothing to do with this connection since Austria is practically a German country. Jodl stated that there never in the world has been such joy and jubilation as there was in Austria itself when it was annexed to Germany and as to the opinion expressed by a certain portion of people regarding annexation of territories outside the Versailles treaty, these people were in Austria itself. Jodl emphasized the fact that he could not reply to certain questions, such as the extent of the use of the military, since at that time he was a Colonel of the Staff and comparatively little known, his job being to build up the military organization such as the building up of the German Army from 7 to 36 Divisions. They were so busy that they had no time to give to any other problems. Jodl remembered that on the occasion of a visit of the English statesman to the Chancellery of the Reich the problem of colonies was mentioned but not in an unfavorable sense because his recollection from the time from 1939, 1940, 1941 and 1942 when every night he was at the side of the Fuhrer who told him many details of things he had done and people he had met and things which had been said. It was his recollection that the Fuhrer had said that neither England or France had definitely rejected the return of the colonies and not that England or France did look unfavorably on the return of the colonies but that the time might come when the situation might involve. He could not place the time of this remark since the war had been on some 2,000 odd days and the Fuhrer had made certain declarations repeatedly. Jodl stated that the Wehrmacht was simply a tool in the hands of politics and that he

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himself did not care to be mixed up with any politics or else he would not be a soldier or otherwise and within the Wehrmacht there was no political plan whatsoever. At that time Von Blomberg was the head of the Wehrmacht and that he would not be mixed up with any plans for future action except by order of the Fuhrer which if he had received the same would have been transmitted to Keitel or to me. Jodl recalled no conversation with Von Blomberg which indicated that he had received any information from the Fuhrer concerning any future actions on the part of the Wehrmacht. The first intimation of such a nature was in 1938 when we decided on the march into Austria. Usually he had no direct dealings with Von Blomberg with respect to his work because he usually reported to Keitel who used to go to Von Blomberg and only on any special occasion would he report directly in person to Von Blomberg. Von Blomberg had become acquainted with him after he had arranged and devised the maneuvers of 1937. Jodl doubts that Von Blomberg would have held a conference at which plans for the future were discussed without his knowing it.

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Colonel Heszbach was the first adjutant of the Fuhrer in his capacity of Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht and remained in that capacity until the withdrawal of General Fritsch and then was replaced by Schmund in the summer of 1938, who has been dead since the 20th of July. Since Heszbach was one of the youngest military men present at these meetings he may have jotted down some notes. Jodl remembered Von Blomberg stated that some action would have to be taken before the end of the year 1945 as concerns the rearming of the Navy.