

OFFICE OF U. S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of: GOERING, Hermann

By: Colonel Amen, 28 August 1945, a.m. and p.m.

Persons and organizations implicated, and subjects

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2. HITLER

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4. GENERAL BROMBERG

a. Czechoslovakia (p. 38)

SUDETENLAND

Goering still did not recall the special meeting in Berlin of 10 November, 1937. In 1937 Hitler said that the Lebensraum was insufficient and should be extended toward the east. Austria, Sudetenland and Danzig "have always been integral parts of the Fuehrer's policy" (p.1). Hitler said an annexation of Austria would have to come. In 1937 Hitler intended to exercise military pressure on Czechoslovakia. Regarding Czechoslovakia Hitler did not think of a diplomatic, but rather of a military solution (p.2).

RESERVE SUPPLIES

The Sudetenland would have to be returned to Germany and there should be liaison between Czechoslovakia and the Reich.

In 1937 the war production in Germany was increased and additional production of ore was foreseen in Salzgitter in Austria. The coal was sufficient in Germany. Additional iron supplies had to be procured by treaties with Sweden. Bauxite was lacking (p.3), also copper and tin was insufficient. Domestic use of these metals had to be reduced (Hitler said) and imports increased from Spain, where Goering bought a number of mines. For increased wood supply in Germany treaties were concluded with Finland and Sweden. Regarding food provisions, Hitler thought since Germany was overpopulated he would be in a better position to get an adequate supply for his people, through his expansion toward the East (p.4).

4-YEAR PLAN

When the war started there was a reserve of seven and a half million tons of wheat for bread (p.5). At the beginning everything was done for food by rationing and treaties with the Balkans within the 4-year plan, its purchase was given first priority to the use of foreign exchange. There was a formula in the 4-year plan to stabilize the good and bad harvests.

FOOD

Hitler did not intend to lower the standard of living to meet the food situation since he could not afford a set - back to the 1932 situation. Hitler did not see a solution through international commercial agreements because Germany was not able to fulfill her (barter) obligations, to which she would have been committed (p.6).

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AGGRICULTURAL LIVING SPACE

Therefore, the only solution was to obtain, primarily, agricultural living space (p.8):

RE ARMAMENT

Hitler ordered complete re armament of the army when no satisfactory answers from foreign powers, regarding reduction of armaments was forthcoming. Re armament was considered necessary when Hitler noticed other powers lead no intention of disarming.

He desired the greatest possible acquisition of bordering countries at the earliest possible time and at the lowest possible cost (p.9).

ENGLAND

Hitler thought he would obtain England's benevolent attitude to his expansion ideas toward the East because a strong Germany against Russia was of benefit to England with respect to her possessions in India. He was convinced that France would have to go along with England (p.10).

ALLY-RUSSIA

Hitler had two basic ideas as to acquiring living space; (a) the preferred one, as stated above, prevailing in 1937; and (b) the alternative one, to ally himself with Russia and acquire by diplomatic means former German colonies, as the Camercon and Boboga (p.11,12).

OPINION AND TREND OF THOUGHT

"Considering that it is 8 years ago ... it is almost impossible for me to pin down what the Fuehrer said in 1937. I can only give the Fuehrer's basic opinion and his trend of thought throughout many years, but I cannot pin down what was said in 1937."

ENGLAND

Goering admits that Hitler did not know the British mentality. He hoped, with the appointment of Ribbentrop in 1938 as foreign minister, to create a basis for understanding with England. It was clear that a strong armament of Germany was a necessary basis for negotiations with England since a weak Germany as a partner, would have been of no interest to England. The purpose and main sense of the meeting of the 10 of November was to impress the army men with the necessity of increasing rearmament in a speedy way (p.13).

INDIA

Hitler thought England could not defend its Indian colony by land attack (from Russia) and its far east colonies (from Japan) without outside help, whereupon Hitler's tentative plan was to put a few divisions at England's disposal and he would thus, help his own plans (p.14).

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Hitler further believed the constitutional disputes in India could be used as a basis for negotiation with England and ultimately as a weapon against it (p.15).

JAPAN AND ENGLAND

He was aware that Japan would be an interested party in case of a war between Germany and England or Russia and he knew that the cohesion of the British empire was not strong and that would be a suitable factor in reaching an agreement with Britain by negotiation, but in case of failure, he considered a declaration of war against England, provided a treaty with Russia would first be concluded (p.16).

NEGOTIATION WITH BRITAIN

A rise of Italian power (capture of Abyssinia), as well as a rise of Japan's power, constituted a threat to England and Hitler thought that would also be a basis for negotiation with Britain (p.17).

As to France, Hitler thought always, that it was entirely dependent on England (p.18).

ARMAMENT

Goering recalled that Hitler used the phrase "force with risk". At the time of 1937, the armament of Germany was not finished but was advanced in comparison to other powers. Hitler thought the then existing favorable situation of Germany would become worse as time went by, because the other powers would catch up with her with regard to rearmament, and the modern equipment might deteriorate in value and reserves would be limited to current recruiting age groups and an additional number of older trained groups would not be available (p.20, 21).