

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of: Wilhelm KEITEL  
By: Mr. T. J. Dodd, 17 October 1945, A.M., Nuremberg

PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLICATED, AND SUBJECTS.

1. KEITEL
  - a. The Austrian Anschluss
    - (1) Preparations for (pp.1-6)
  - b. Sudeten Crisis
    - (1) Employment of Sudeten Storm Troops. (pp.7-10)
    - (2) Sudeten Border Incidents (pp.11-12)
  - c. The Polish Campaign
    - (1) Use of Polish Uniforms by the German Army (p.13)
  - d. Preparations for Aggressive War (pp.13-18)
  - e. Czechoslovakian Campaign
    - (1) Intimidation of Hascha at Berlin Conference in 1939 (pp.19-22)
  - f. Discussion of Documents: C-102 (p.4); C-29 (p.13).

THE AUSTRIAN ANSCHLUSS

Regarding the date on which the German troops were to invade Austria, Keitel stated that it was his recollection that the troops were to be ready as of the 13th March and if the plebiscite was not cancelled (on the 15th or 16th) the troops were to enter Austria. (pp.1-2) Keitel acknowledged his error as to the dates, stating that the 11th and 12th of March were the correct date rather than the 15th and 16th; that the hour was set for 6 AM.

With reference to Document C-102 relating to plans for the Anschluss, Keitel stated that it is merely a written confirmation of an oral order, the document is absolutely genuine. Keitel certified as to the signature of Hitler, the initials of General Jodl, Warlimont and Keitel. (p.4) The interrogator referred to the phrase in the document **operation to be carried out in the manner explained to me**". Keitel stated that this refers to the plan as explained to Hitler by Brauchitsch and Beck. (p.4) The final plans were made only three days prior to the order to march (p.5). The supreme command of the Armed Forces was assigned to General von Beck, Reichenau had the armored units (two armored divisions). (p.6) There were many technical details which had not been properly organized with the result that there was a great deal of confusion during the actual invasion of Austria. (p.6)

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#### SUDETEN STORM TROOPS

Keitel stated that he recalled a Lt.Col.Koechling. He was an extremely capable officer, formerly connected with the Hitler Jugend. Near the close of the Czechoslovakian incident Koechling was detached from the Hitler Jugend and assigned to Konrad Henlein, who, at the time of the Sudeten crisis, organized certain security troops as "... protection against the naturally hostile portion of the Republic". It was apparently Koechling's function to act in an advisory capacity in the sense of moderating some of the measures which Henlein was likely to employ in the suppression of "border incidents" and other disturbances which arose during the action. Henlein was not a soldier. It was a matter of concern to the Wehrmacht as to what Henlein was apt to do. (pp.7-10)

#### THE SUDETEN BORDER INCIDENTS

Referring to a document in which it was stated that prior to the attack on Czechoslovakia border incidents, political uprisings and assassinations were to be encouraged, Keitel stated that the Wehrmacht was never concerned with the creation of such incidents and was never informed of any plans for the development of such incidents. Keitel did state, however, ".... naturally, the discontinuation of such incidents would be bad, whereas the continuation was good". (pp.11-12)

#### USE OF POLISH UNIFORMS BY GERMAN TROOPS

Keitel stated that he recalled the request which was received by his office calling for Polish uniforms to be furnished to Heydrich prior to the Polish action. Keitel stated that he never really knew what they were to be used for--; that the Fuehrer had stipulated that the armed forces were to act only in accordance with the provisions of International Law. In the attack on Poland, the armed forces were charged with the matter of handling the sudden attack on Drischau B ridge. They had no connection with the use of the Polish uniforms. (p.13)

#### THE PLAN FOR AGGRESSIVE WAR

Regarding Document C-29 Keitel stated that it appeared to be a document which discussed the "...possibility of a common military policy between Italy and Germany for a Central European War."(p.13) Keitel acknowledged that his signature appears on the covering letter; that the document itself constitutes notes made by Hitler and later presented to the Leadership Staff for military digestion.(p.14) The plan provides for a concerted German-Italian combination against France and Britain-- strict neutrality to be taken with respect to

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Belgium, Switzerland, Holland and Spain. (p.15) The concentration of German troops in the West is called for Germany assumed responsibility in the attack against France between the Moselle and the Rhine through the Maginot Line. Keitel stated that these documents were to merely serve as the basis for conversations between Italy and Germany -- evidence, for example, the proposition that Germany attack directly against the Maginot Line. This was militarily not feasible. However, it's purpose was to impress the Italians with the military might and preparedness of Germany. (pp.15-16)

Keitel identified the comments on Naval strategy signed by Raeder. (p.16) And identified the signature of von Brauchitsch on another portion of the document. (p.17) Keitel acknowledged that the document in question must have been transmitted back and forth between the various commands -- and undoubtedly that such document in the course of communication passed through the offices of the OKW. Keitel again acknowledged his signature on the letter of transmission and apparently his full knowledge of the document's contents. (pp.17-18)

#### HASCHA'S VISIT TO BERLIN, MARCH 1939

Keitel stated that he was present at the time a meeting occurred between Hascha and German officials in the Reich Chancellory in Berlin in 1939. The occasion was his coming to Berlin to discuss the possibility of "avoiding military troubles". (p.19) Keitel stated that to his knowledge Hascha was not ill at the time. Military preparations had been completed in such a manner as to conform with Hitler's time-table. (pp.18-20) At the meeting a large circle of German military and diplomatic officials were present. Questioned as to whether he considered this assemblage as having been gathered to intimidate Hascha, Keitel answered, "I wouldn't exclude the possibility at all, for that was Hitler's way of working; that is, just the same way for instance as the visit of Schuschnigg, all these military men were around, which would kind of "support" the political conversations, that were taking place." (p.20) During the time that Keitel was present matters were discussed in a very informal manner. Only a small select circle remained to consider the important matters for discussion at the meeting. (p.21) Keitel stated definitely that had either England or France threatened to support Czechoslovakia at the time, Germany would not have marched. (pp.21-22)