

Ribbentrop (49,01)

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of von RIBBENTROP, Joachim DATE: 5 October 1945

By: Mr. Justice Robert H. Jackson PLACE: Nürnberg.

Persons implicated and subjects:

1. RIBBENTROP

- a. Political positions (p.8).
- b. Nazi Party (pp.8,36).
- c. Relationship with Hitler (pp.10,11,12,13,14,15,40,41).
- d. Hitler's death (pp.1,2).
- e. Acquisition of territories outside 1918 boundaries
 - (1) Planning (pp.5,6,7,38,48).
 - (2) Memel (p.3); Austria (p.3); Sudetenland (p.3); Poland (pp.3,4); Norway, Denmark and Holland (p.7).
 - (3) Russia (pp.7,41,42,43,44,45,46).
- f. Plans against USA; (pp. 18,19,23).
- g. German representatives in USA, Manfred Zapp (p.20); Hans Thomsen (pp.21,22).
- h. Concentration camps (pp.16,17,18,22,23,26,27,28).
- i. Churches and Vatican (pp. 24,25,26,29,30,31,32,33,34,35).
 - (1) Concordat (p.34).
- j. Jewish question (pp.36,37,51).
- k. Deportation of slave labor (pp.48,49).

2. DIETRICH

- a. News Monitor (pp.19,20).

Ribbentrop declared that, given certain conditions, he was ready to assume "political responsibility". He declined "responsibility for criminal matters" (page 47 et sequ). He contended that though he was Hitler's Foreign Minister, it was the Fuehrer who actually conducted Nazi foreign policy. He claimed he did not know what the foreign policy was, although he admitted (a) his aim had been to "attain by diplomatic means the goals of Germany" (p.3-6); (b) he had been familiar with "a certain part" of Hitler's foreign policy (p.3), (c) "I was working between fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen hours daily, sometimes, at my foreign policy" (p.28). Among the goals to be reached by "negotiation and diplomacy", he listed specifically Memel, Austria, Sudetenland, Danzig, and the Corridor (p.3). Ribbentrop made much of "difficulties" he had with the Fuehrer, but admitted they were not enough to make him quit his job as Foreign Minister (p.14 et sequ). He became Hitler's Foreign Minister in 1938 (p.3).

Ribbentrop declined responsibility for a series of specific crimes (p.47-55). He admitted (a) "knowledge" of the deportation of slave labor and "agreements" to that effect with the several countries, Laval, Balkans etc. Strength through Joy to take care of other deportees; (b) he had

known of concentration camps (p.27), and through reports of his own diplomats, of the Maidanek Camp for Jews (p.16-18); (c) he had known of the persecution and incarceration of priests (p.26); (d) he had seen President Roosevelt's protest against concentration camps and the treatment of Jews and minorities (p.23); (e) he had had "a whole desk-full of protests from the Vatican" (p.29); (f) there was official talk about, and the actual "possibility" of, killing U.S. airmen as well as "the idea to do away with the Geneva Convention" (p.53-55); (g) his Government had not kept the Concordat with the Vatican (p.34).

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TREATIES, AGREEMENTS AND ASSURANCES

Denied any part in the preparation of wars of aggression (p.27). Said the war had become "terrible" to him rather late, ---"the exact moment" having been the Anglo-American landing in North Africa. A principal reason for "difficulties" with, and eventually for the German attack against Russia, was Germany's lack of oil. (p.26). As for taking responsibility for waging war in violation of Germany's treaties with other countries, Ribbentrop said he would like to "think it over", and indicated he was, under certain conditions, ready to admit "responsibility for the consequences". (p.48).