

4901

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of Joachim von RIBBENTROP
By: Colonel H. A. Brundage, 8 October 1945, p.m. Nuremberg

PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLICATED, AND SUBJECTS

- 1. RIBBENTROP
 - a. The Yugo-slav- Axis Pact (p. 1-3)
 - b. Occupation of Rhineland (p. 4-8)
 - c. Resettlement Actions - Poland
 - d. Police Measures in Denmark (p. 15-19)
 - e. The Luther Incident (p. 20-21)
 - f. "Rationalization" of Policy of Aggression (p. 21-42)
 - g. Relations with the Vatican (p. 43-45)
 - h. Attempts to Negotiate a Peace (p. 46-57).
 - i. The French Occupation Costs (p. 51-52)
 - j. The Belgian Gold Payment (p. 51-52).
 - k. The arrest of Belgian Resistance Movement Members (p. 52-53)
- 2. HESS
 - a. Characteristics and Position in Party (p. 47-49)
- 3. WEIDEMANN
 - a. Status in the Party and Foreign Office (p. 55-56)

THE YUGOSLAV - AXIS PACT

Ribbentrop identified part of the contents of a newspaper clipping of 26 March 1941 (Exhibit A) (4), pertaining to a Yugoslav-Axis Pact (p.1). He does not remember having signed "German Guarantees" of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Yugoslavia, contending that the integrity of Yugoslavia was accepted as fixed German policy without the necessity of incorporating such a provision in treaty form (p.3).

THE RHINELAND

He disclaims knowledge of a plan "Schulung" for the reoccupation of the Rhineland (p.4) but he was always in favor of this action which had been under discussion for a long time (p.5,6) and for which Hitler himself gave the final order in a quick decision (p.7). Ribbentrop later represented the German viewpoint in a speech composed by Hitler, to the League of Nations in London (p.8).

Ribbentrop, 8 October 1945, p.m.

RESETTLEMENT ACTIONS

On the resettlement program in Poland, Ribbentrop claims to have had only superficial knowledge (p.10,10,11,12), but knows that "Germans were re-taking their farms" (p.13). However he immediately veers away when it is attempted to pin him down (p.14,15).

SS ACTIVITIES IN DENMARK

Ribbentrop attributes the arrest, deportation, and imprisonment in concentration camps of 1,200 Danish policemen, on orders of SS Fuehrer Pancke in 1944 (p.19), to an "unhappy situation" (p.15), which developed out of inter-departmental friction between political, military and police administration (p.16). After considerable wrestling in 1942-1943, the police (SS) prevailed with their policy of reprisals (p.17) with Hitler's assent evident (p.18).

LUTHER

Upon Ribbentrop's breaking with Under Secretary of State, Luther, Hitler put Luther in a concentration camp and Ribbentrop has not heard from him since (p.20-21).

RATIONALIZATION OF GERMAN AGGRESSION

The ensuing debate, at times off the record (p.41), deals with historical, political, moral, and ethical aspects of German invasion of a dozen countries with whom non-aggression agreements were concluded, usually in immediate precedence to the attack. Although Ribbentrop has to concede that "the result, of course, is disastrous" (p.33), he maintains his general trend of furnishing alibis, come what may, for what he calls Hitler's measures in self-preservation (p.21-42).

THE VATICAN

Ribbentrop states that Hitler prohibited investigating and answering protests by the Vatican (p.43) in regard to atrocities committed in occupied territories (p.44-45).

GERMAN PEACE EFFORTS

Ribbentrop tells about his various, but futile peace-feelers with and without Hitler's consent; all the time (p.54,56,57) especially in 1942-1943 (p.46), and in 1945 (p.48,49,50).

RUDOLF HESS

He classified Hess as a figure of prime importance (p.47) although "a little extra-ordinary" (p.48) and possibly "not quite normal" (p.49). His remarks about Hitler's mental status are made off the record (p.49).

