

STATEMENT OF GOERING

Q. What did you learn of the method Hitler intended to use?

*ans*

2. After Hitler was released from prison he was determined to make use of the forms of the law, because he feared his opponents would try to have the party suppressed for violation of the law.

Q. Did he follow that plan?

*ans*

2. When I came back from Sweden in 1928 I could tell personally from my experiences in that year as well as in 1929 and 1930 that it was Hitler's idea that so long as the Weimar government held the reins, he would use the forms provided by the government. If he could not succeed in obtaining power by this means, he would not then hesitate to employ revolutionary methods. During these years he did not wish to endanger the position of himself and of his party because he thought he had a good chance of winning in the elections. That he was right is shown by the fact that in the election of 1928 the Nazi party obtained only 12 out of 491 seats in the Reichstag. In 1930 107 out of 577. In July 1932, 230 out of 608 seats, and in November of the same year 196 out of 584 seats.

Q. What was the policy followed by the party?

*ans*

2. In lower levels of the party, especially in the SA, there was opposition to this idea of obeying the law. Von Pfeffer was chief of SA - openly opposed this method and as a result 1930 represented the first internal revolt in the party. Von Pfeffer was removed by Hitler and was replaced by Roehm. Street fighting in Berlin in 1928 and 1929 was immediately under the local Berlin leader Stinnes (?) with the overall direction of Goebbels.

Q. What was your relation with SA?

*ans*

2. At that time the antagonism in the SA was so strong against me that on one occasion Hitler advised me against going to a certain SA meeting, because it was unwise. The only time in that year I had any recognition by SA was at the Partei Tag in Nuernberg, when I was ordered to stand beside Hitler as an old leader of SA.

Q. Were not branches of the party suppressed from time to time by the government?

A. Yes. But the Weimar government made a grave error in not dissolving SA instead of just suppressing it in various provinces. It was suppressed periodically in Prussia, but would change from brown shirts to white shirts, or if put down in one province would pop up in another.

Q. What was the attitude of Hitler in this period in the use of SA versus the Jews?

A. During those years when he was trying to get control of the Reichstag, he did not want the SA attacks on the Jews. But this changed. I remember in 1938 in Munich on November 9 - Goebbels incited the Gauleiters to have their people attack the Jews and destroy their property.

Q. Was this the so-called program under Heydrich?

A. Yes. I had just been appointed head of the Four Year Plan, and I was urging the people to save everything, even rusty nails. I was not interested in the Jews, but I was interested in saving property from destruction.

Q. Was that the session when it was said that their destruction was directed from Berlin?

A. I complained to Goebbels and we had a disagreement because Goebbels was very anti-Semitic. He and Rosenberg and Streicher were always stirring up the people against the Jews. Streicher did it in a very dirty and lewd way. -- Rosenberg in a way to appeal to the intellectuals. But on this occasion Hitler sent for me and told me he did not want a split in the party over this question; that I must keep out of this; that Goebbels was right in his attack on the Jews; that the time had come to have a final solution.

Q. But long before this Hitler and the party had announced its ~~opposition~~ <sup>position</sup>?

A. Yes. The party had always had an anti-Semitic program. I did not feel so strongly about it as Hitler did. I always separated the anti-Semitic problem from ~~individual~~ the individual. I said that I would decide in my appointments who was a Jew. Nevertheless I agreed with the laws that finally put them outside the law.

Q. Why did you do that?

A. I saw Hitler was determined to do it, and that it was useless to resist his will.

Q. Do you believe that if you resisted you would have been eliminated from office or killed?

2. or did you conform because by your oath of obedience you had subordinate your will to his and regarded his word as the supreme law.

Q. Was it for this reason, because you had to show loyalty, that you presided at the conference 30 November 1928, which put the Jews entirely outside the law?

Q. Was that called the ~~N~~urnberg decree?

Q. Was it signed by you?

Q. Later, was there not a decree which was signed by the defendants Frick and Bormann, which provided that criminal acts done by them were to be punished directly by the police without judicial intervention?

It was the plan and purpose to get control of the government and then make out own kind of government. Hitler should decide what he wanted done. That was in accordance with the Fuehrer principle, in which I believed at that time. I thought it the only way to clean up Germany, but during the later years of the war I doubted the principle, especially during the Russian campaign, when I saw how the power of one man could send people to death.

Q. Did you doubt the wisdom of the principle when you saw the concentration camps?

In the later days when I saw that I might be obliged to take on the office I determined that I would have a council as independent to take on the task of checking on me on matters like protective arrests. But I would not want such a body to take on states business. I could do that.

When we first elected deputies to the Reichstag, we could only act in accordance with our numbers. But as we gained in numbers, we made use of every means of making a disturbance in the Reichstag. That was the method long employed in German meetings, and we made the fullest use of it.

Also we were in a political fight with the Communists, and the SA broke up their meetings as they broke up ours.

On the 30th of January Hitler became chancellor of the German republic. Before Hindenburg, as head of the Republic, accepted Hitler, there were several meetings with Hindenburg in which Goering represented Hitler. Von Papen had gone to the house of the banker Schroeder at his home in Cologne to meet Hitler, who was a guest of Schroeder. Von Papen said that he feared that von Schleicher might start a military dictatorship. I feared I agreed with von Papen at that time, because with the inflammable National Socialists and the equally inflammable Communists there might be a revolution - especially because the generals knew nothing about politics. Von Papen agreed to see Hindenburg and assist in obtaining his consent from Hitler. I went with von Papen and was present at the conference as the political deputy of the Fuehrer. Hugenberg, who was leader of the German National Party, was wanted by Hindenburg in the cabinet.

In addition Hitler asked through me that von Papen be made vice-chancellor as he wished von Papen, who knew Hindenburg well, should always be present when Hitler talked with Hindenburg. But this soon became ~~unecessary~~ unnecessary as Hitler rapidly gained the confidence of Hindenburg.

I led the conference for the uniting of the various nationalistic parties, and Ribbentrop acted for von Papen. That opened the door for Ribbentrop to get into politics.

*Q. As I understand, as a result of these conference  
So Hitler became chancellor. When? (On 30 January 1933.) - answer  
Hindenburg designated Hitler as Chancellor - When was this*

Q. Once he was in, what did you do?

A. Now that we had the position we intended to exercise the power. The first thing we did was to take advantage of that provision of the constitution which provided that "if public safety and order are disturbed or endangered", means could be taken to suspend as had been done before, that clause of the constitution called "Fundamental Rights", ~~dealing~~ dealing with guarantees of freedom of speech and of the press, the right of assembly, and privacy of communications.

I do not believe in the freedom of the press. It becomes too powerful. Forgive my frankness but I saw in my own experience in prison that the press is the real power in America. Before World War I <sup>the</sup> press was relatively free in Germany. After the war everyone attacked everyone else. On 28 Feb 1933 the decree suspending these rights was signed by Hindenburg, Hitler, Guertner, Minister of Justice, and Frick, the Minister of the Interior.

Q. And is that the defendant Frick who is here on trial?

Q. What were the duties of the Minister of the Interior?

*Q. You were made a member of the Reichstag*  
*At the first meeting of the cabinet we decided to obtain from the Reichstag authority from it to place its power in the hands of the cabinet. To do it we had to have two thirds majority of those present.*  
In order to be sure of the majority we had another election at which 288 National Socialists were elected out of 647 members.

Hitler wanted anew election because he knew he would gain in strength. Hugenberg did not want an election because he knew his party would be weaker. The discussions nearly broke up the cabinet, but Hindenburg called upon Hugenberg to stand by and Hitler told Hugenberg he could stay in the cabinet no matter how weak or how strong the party may be in the Reichstag.

Shortly before ~~becoming~~ <sup>became</sup> Reichstag president, a new set of rules, governing the Reichstag had been adopted, giving the president of the body full disciplinary power, even to the point of suspension ~~of~~ and ~~and~~ exclusion of the members for five sessions without pay.

This had been adopted in order to control in the Reichstag the Communist and National Socialist deputies. But there had been no time for its use before the new election. In order to be sure of a majority, I made fullest use of this power, and also of putting deputies in "protective custody" and preventing their attendance.

On the 24th of March the election was held and the Reichstag passed the proposed law, 441 deputies voting in its favor, and 94 Social Democrats being opposed. The following day the law was promulgated and as a result, Reich laws could be enacted by the Reich cabinet.

Q. What was the significance of the Reichstag fire?

A. After the fire, which took place of 27 Feb 1933, the Communist organization was destroyed, and on 26 May 1933 by decree and the defendant Frick, the party's property was confiscated.

Q. What is the true story about the fire?

A. I tell you truthfully I knew nothing of that fire, nor did Hitler, until the next morning. I had nothing to do with it. But when we saw the rumor had already started that the Communists had done it, both Hitler and I saw the chance to exploit the story and we took full advantage of the opportunity.

I cannot say completely, but I believe it was done by certain SA men on their own, and without consultation with Hitler and me. It was not a plan of mine, or of Hitler's. We did not need to burn the Reichstag. We would have burned another building.

The fire had a great effect in our fight against the Communists. *What was the political situation*  
Q. *as a result of Party action to that moment - 5 minutes*  
The National Socialist Party and Hitler was now in complete power of the government, but in order to establish full control we had yet to perform certain acts. First, we made it part of public law, that the party was to be the only political party in Germany, and the bearer of the concept of the German State, and was given special privileges. Second, the property of the Social Democrats was confiscated. Third, other political parties were dissolved or combined with the National Socialists. Fourth, the organization of any political party was prohibited.

Then we undertook to consolidate the position we had won.

Q. I want to ask you how you succeeded to effect that consolidation. But before doing so I want to say if I understand the picture and purposes the Party had in mind.

The task accomplished we had set out to do that is to obtain <sup>simple</sup> political power in our hands by means provided in the constitution, having done so we aimed to destroy the constitution & the democratic