

38.02  
D

129

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of: ERNST KALTENBRUNNER

DATE: 28 September 1945, A.M.

BY:

Lt. Col. Brookhart

PLACE: Nuremberg

PERSONS IMPLICATED AND SUBJECTS

I. KALTENBRUNNER

- a. Position as Austrian State Secretary
  - (1) Police functions (8-10);
  - (2) Aggressive activities in Austria (9,11);
  - (3) Church problems (14);
  - (4) Coordination of Austrian and German laws (14).
  - (5) Jewish persecution (20-21).
- b. Relation to: Bormann (18); Daluge (3); Eichmann (19); Heydrich (3,9-10,13,15); Himmler (4-5,13-16,18); Hitler (1-2); The Gestapo (18); KRIPO (18); NSDAP (1-2); RSHA (10,16,20).

II. HEYDRICH

- a. Aggressive activities in Austria (11,14)
- b. Use of Gestapo, SD, and KRIPO (11).
- c. Persecution of Jews (14).
- d. Persecution of religious groups (15).
- e. Relation to: Himmler (16); Hitler (16); RSHA (17).

III. EICHMANN

- a. Jewish persecution (19)
- b. Relation to Mueller (19).

RELATIONSHIP WITH HITLER

Kaltenbrunner stated that he first met Hitler in 1939 as part of a reception committee in Vienna. During the period between 1938 and 1943, when Kaltenbrunner assumed office in the RSHA, he saw Hitler only three or four times in Austria and on no occasion had a personal audience (p.1-2).

RELATIONSHIP WITH HIMMLER

Keitel stated that he first met Himmler at a Party Conference in 1938. He could not remember the date. He denied the assertion that he had acted as liaison officer between Himmler and Seyss Inquart prior to 1938 (p.4-5).

POSITION IN NSDAP

Kaltenbrunner stated that he had never held a position of leadership in the Party; that he never had held any rank, ".... not even that of a director of a local group". He does admit, however, that he was a prominent member. He states that he gained prominence in Austrian governmental affairs "... not as much due to my standing in the Party, as to the reputation of my family..." (p.1-2).

AS AUSTRIAN STATE SECRETARY

Kaltenbrunner stated that his position was that of ".... liaison man to which the people from the Austrian police might come when they had complaints about especially harsh measures." (p.3). He denied that his principal

ERNST KALTENBRUNNER

- 1 -

28 Sept 1945 AM.

function was coordinating the Austrian and German police systems, claiming that such was done in Berlin by Heydrich and Daluge (p.3). Kaltenbrunner made periodic reports to Jost and Filbert regarding conditions in Austria, more particularly re Seyss Inquart's qualities of leadership and the quality of his work (p.5-6). Leopold, then Landleiter of Austria (1938) is described by Kaltenbrunner as an adversary (p.7).

When Kaltenbrunner first took the position as State Secretary he had no connection with police matters. When Skubl, State Secretary for Police resigned, he assumed his duties. Kaltenbrunner was directly subordinated to Seyss-Inquart — he was in no way connected with the Berlin Government. In this respect Kaltenbrunner and Heydrich were strongly opposed to one another. Heydrich was insistent that Kaltenbrunner serve as a direct subordinate to Berlin. Kaltenbrunner was steadfast in his demand that a policy of virtual Austrian independence be maintained and the intrusion of Berlin into Austrian affairs thwarted (p.8-10).

In this position Kaltenbrunner had no contacts with the RSHA office in Berlin (p.10). In violation of all accords which had been reached between Austria and Germany, Heydrich and Daluge, representing the Secret Police with HQ in Berlin constantly interfered in the affairs of the Austrian police. Heydrich sent personnel into Austria from the Gestapo, the SD and Kripo. Such persons were never under Kaltenbrunner's direction. (It is not clear whether this occurred before or after the Anschluss) (p.11). Kaltenbrunner stated that he opposed the intrusion from Berlin at every turn, trying to prevent a complete merger with the Reich. Many orders from Berlin were disregarded, or negotiations undertaken to prevent their enforcement. Kaltenbrunner states that he and Seyss Inquart collaborated to this end (p.11).

Kaltenbrunner stated that between 1938 and 1942 he corresponded with Himmler several times regarding matters of concern to Austria. (Kaltenbrunner also made two trips to Berlin). The matters discussed in the correspondence were: (1) Heydrich's refusal to recognize the Austrian Land Government; (2) The persecution of the Jews; (3) the reformation of Austrian law to make it conform with certain provisions of the German Law; (4) matters pertaining to the position of the church. In reply to these letters Himmler stated that Kaltenbrunner was obviously a federalist and that Heydrich was a centralist; that Kaltenbrunner was not to interfere with Heydrich's policy regarding the Jews (p.13-15).

#### ATTITUDE TOWARD JEWISH QUESTION

Kaltenbrunner stated that Eichmann, Department 4, was "responsible for the Jewish question". Kaltenbrunner stated that he was in no position to issue orders binding on Eichmann since the latter was under Mueller (p.19).

On p.20 Kaltenbrunner became confused in his testimony. He stated that he knew nothing of the Jewish persecutions when he took office in 1943 as Chief of the RSHA. However, he also stated that after the Anschluss in 1938, he "remonstrated with Hitler" regarding the persecution of the Jews (p.20). Kaltenbrunner tacitly admits that he knew it to be a fundamental policy of the Party to rid Germany of the Jews. "But I never thought that would mean any physical mis-treatment... to the Jews". (p.21).

#### AS CHIEF OF THE R.S.H.A.

Kaltenbrunner stated that after joining the RSHA in 1943 he gradually became familiar with the organizational structure in a general way; that he never became familiar with the Criminal Police; that he never visited the

Gestapo offices (p.18). If Kaltenbrunner was so ill-informed re the organization of the RSHA and was politically opposed to Himmler and Heydrich why was he selected to head the RSHA in 1943? Kaltenbrunner replied that it was probably because: (1) Himmler wanted someone with "political experience" to handle liaison with Bormann (since Bormann was gaining favor with Hitler over Himmler at this time); and (2) Himmler desired to retain the executive power over the Gestapo and Kripo to use as an instrument in opposition to Bormann. Himmler never chose a successor to Heydrich (p.18).