

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of Wilhelm KEITEL

By: Colonel J.H. Amen, 28. September 1945 P.M. Nuremberg

PERSONS IMPLICATED AND SUBJECTS:

1. KEITEL

a) role in connection with the suicide of Rommel (p.1-25).

2. General BURGDORF and MEISEL

a) Relation to Rommel's suicide (p.1-25)

3. HOFACKER

a) Testimony concerning Rommel's treason (p.1-25).

THE DEATH OF ROMMEL

Keitel testifies that General Burgdorf was the successor of General Schmudt. Burgdorf was chief of the Army Personnel Office since August 1944, and also was chief adjutant to the Fuehrer. Keitel met him almost every day at headquarters, and saw him last in April 1945 in the Reichs Chancellory in Berlin, but does not know what has happened to him (p.1-3). Keitel knew General Meisel, who was deputy to Burgdorf since August 1944, but saw him rarely at headquarters. He saw Meisel last in September 1944. (p.2-3)

Keitel stated that he sent Burgdorf with a note to Marshal Rommel to inform him that he would have a trial for treason. He sent also a written testimony of Lt. Col. von Hofacker who was on the staff of General von Stuelpnagel in Paris and who was liaison man between Stuelpnagel in Paris and the Putsch Committee in Berlin. The testimony showed that Hofacker had contacted Rommel to interest him in the planned Putsch against Hitler and his government (20. July 1944) and that Rommel responded with the words: "they could count on him." Keitel told Rommel in his note to take consequences if this testimony was true.

The Fuehrer had ordered Keitel to inform Rommel about the mentioned testimony. Keitel directed Burgdorf to take poison and a pistol along with him and put them at Rommel's disposal.

Wilhelm Keitel, 28. September 1945
P.M. Nuremberg.

Burgdorf reported later to Keitel and the Fuehrer that Rommel was no longer alive. Keitel explains the reasons why he told the public that Rommel had died from a fracture of the skull. He did not want to prejudice Rommel's great reputation with the German people. Keitel claims that he believed the fact of Rommel's guilt of treason. (p.5). Keitel claims not to have known that Hofacker was hanged before his testimony was brought to Rommel. Keitel knows that 30 people were executed or committed suicide resulting from this affair. There were high officers amongst them, such as: Witzleben, Hoppner, Albrecht, Merritz, Stauffenberg, von Haften and von Beck.

Keitel claims not to have known either that General Meisel nor a group of SS men went along with Burgdorf to present the message to Rommel.

Rommel's view of existing conditions according to his last discretions with Keitel were pessimistic (p.3-25).