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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of: FRANZ VON PAPEN

By: Colonel C. Williams, 13 October 1945, AM

PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLICATED, AND SUBJECTS

1. VON PAPEN

- a. Knowledge of Murder of Dolfuss (pp 3-5)
- b. Relationship with Hitler (pp 8-9)
- c. Relationship with Schuschnigg (pp 1)
- d. Minister to Austria (pp 6-9)
- e. 11 July 1936 Agreement and the "Second Agreement" (pp 11-12)
- f. The Hapsburg Restoration (pp 27-29)

2. HESS

- a. Connection with Austrian Affairs (pp 21-23)

3. HABICHT

- a. Connection with Murder of Dolfuss (pp 3-4)

Von Papen

October 13, 1945, AM

NEGOTIATIONS WITH AUSTRIA. 1932 - 1938

Von Papen says he met Schuschnigg the first time in Berlin, when he was German chancellor, before 1932. (1)

Claims he was in favor of granting Austria the loan for which it negotiated with France and England. (2)

Met Theo Habicht the first time in 1934, at the time when Habicht was to be relieved of his post and was to go to Bayreuth. This had been demanded by Papen, since it was obvious that Habicht must have had a great deal to do with the Dollfuss murder. Cannot remember that Habicht had been broadcasting from Munich, demanding the death of Dollfuss. (3) Says he cannot believe that the death of Dollfuss could have been demanded over the radio (4).

Says it was believed that Major Fey had shot Dollfuss, though as a fact Major Planetta and Holzweber were executed for this murder. Holds he never concerned himself with these facts. Denies knowing the Austrian Brown Book. (5)

Denies ever having received a letter from Hitler that he had disowned Dr. Rieth, former minister at Vienna; says Hitler may have told him about it orally, stating as reason for the withdrawal the wish of the Austrian government (6-7). Says he was sent in Rieth's place as minister to Austria, but that he was not under the Foreign Office, because he had made this one of his conditions to Hitler. He reported to Hitler personally but the foreign office received a copy of each of his reports. His reason for wishing to work under Hitler's personal direction was to have more personal influence on Hitler. (8-9)

Maintains again that Hitler, unaccustomed to diplomatic methods, published Papen's appointment without asking first the Austrian government. (10) Admits that after making the tentative agreement with Schuschnigg, of July 11, 1938, he and Glaise-Horstenau went to Berchtesgaden and talked with Hitler. (11-12) The agreement was a written agreement, quite formal. Denies that there was a gentlemen's agreement besides, since the second agreement was likewise a written one and signed--whereas a gentlemen's agreement is ordinarily not written--the second written agreement, however, was not published. (13-14)

Papen concedes that this second agreement contained, in substance, the points read out to him, with minor differences (15-18). Maintains that the only man chosen as man of confidence was Col. Glaise-Horstenau (18).

Appointment of Seyss-Inquart as Chancellor of State came two years later. (18)

Papen claims that Hitler for a while abided by this agreement, until the time of Papen's recall, February 4, 1938. (18)

Contends that the German government did not interfere in Austrian internal politics, from 1936 to 1938; that men like Tavs, Dr. Jury, Seyss-Inquart, Kaltenbrunner, Globotschnik were Austrian Nazis who were free to act as they considered right as Austrians. Does not recall that either he himself or others connected with him gave orders to them for interference with Austrian policies. (19-20)

Von Papen

Says he never had a conversation with Ribbentrop prior to February 4, 1938, because Ribbentrop had nothing to do with Austria. Never had any business with Secretary of State Keppler, either. (20)

Admits there were many grievances about the agreement, especially the press agreement was violated by both sides. Still he maintains that, as far as he can recall, the German government as such did not intervene officially, that what interferences there were came from the party or press people. (21)

RUDOLF HESS

To his knowledge Rudolf Hess was not a cabinet member. He was the second man in the Party but never a minister. Says any handbook will yield information about him. Does not believe that Hess ever took an interest in Austrian affairs. (21-23)

Denies any knowledge of the contents of the Tavs plan; says the police in Austria who obtained the papers never made them public. Says he never knew that Hess, as Hitler's representative, came to sign this plan (24-26).

THE HAPSBURG RESTORATION

Reiterates his former statements with regard to the Habsburg restoration movement; that it was doomed to failure, Hitler and the Nazis did not approve of it and the neighboring countries never would have permitted it. (27)

When Papen arrived in Austria, the movement was already in full swing; Schuschnigg must have talked about it first. Contends that his conversation with Schuschnigg about this problem, in 1936, was of a purely theoretical character. (28-29)

(end)