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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of Franz von PAPAN

By: Mr. H. N. Howard (State Dept.), 24 October 1945, P.M. Nuremberg

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PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLICATED, AND SUBJECTS

1. Von PAPAN
  - a. Explanation of Turkish sovereignty over Straits (p. 3 - 5)
    - (1) Passage of German ships in 1944 (p.8)
  - b. Participation in German-Turkish Pact of 1941 (p.5 - 7)
2. RIBBENTROP
  - a. Negotiations with Russia for joining with Three Power Pact (p.2)

CONVENTION OF MONTREUX

Von Papen says he cannot indicate what the German attitude was towards the Convention of Montreux of 1936, he was not in any official position at that time and is not informed about it. Moreover, Germany had not been a member to that convention (p.1)

Germany's policy towards Turkey has always been friendly, thus if Turkey accepted that convention the Germans would have no objections (p.1).

He does not believe that the question of the Straits came up in Ribbentrop's negotiations with Moscow in August, 1939. But he, as an ambassador, was not informed about what happened in Moscow (p.2).

At the time of Molotov's visit to Berlin, in 1940, he was likewise not informed about the negotiations, but later Ribbentrop told him that one of the Russian conditions for joining the Three Power Pact was certain control of the Straits and changing the Montreux Convention. The Russians were opposed to the spirit of this convention and to Turkish sovereignty. This information was given to Papen by Ribbentrop when Hitler or Ribbentrop had declined to accept Molotov's conditions (p.2).

TURKISH SOVEREIGNTY OVER STRAITS

Germany's general policy throughout the last century, similar to that of England, was that the Straits were to be in the possession of the Turkish government (p.3). The Turkish government was - in Papen's opinion - quite willing to confer about changing the Montreux Convention, giving the Russians more right, such as the passing through of warships, etc. (p.3).

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Does not recall an Anglo-Russian declaration of August 10, 1941, (six weeks after the German attack on Russia) guaranteeing Turkish control of the Straits, etc. (p.3) Papen believes that every guarantee given to them by the British was welcome (p.3) but he was never told so intimately by the Turks.

When, the Germans approached the Turkish frontier in the Yugoslav campaign there was great excitement, so that Papen asked Hitler to write a personal letter to President Inonu, explaining there was no intention to attack the Straits, and that German troops would remain about 30 kilometers from the Turkish border (p.5).

#### GERMAN - TURKISH PACT OF 1941

Emphatically denies that the German-Turkish friendship pact of June 18, 1941, had anything to do with the attack on Russia. The attack on Russia had been kept very secret. Moreover, the friendship pact had been negotiated by Papen for almost one year.

Papen refers again to the memorandum of May, 1939, of which he sent a copy to Hitler, Brauchitsch, Keitel and Ribbentrop after his first visit to Turkey (p.5). At that time, the Turks saw a menace in Italy's occupation of Albania, a menace to the Straits and thus to Turkish security. In his memorandum, Papen first pointed out the dangerous situation in Turkey and, secondly, the danger of a general war because of the general European situation - Danzig, Polish question, etc. He came in it to the conclusion that Germany could not win such a war, from a military point of view (p.6). Thus he maintains that the German-Turkish friendship pact was the outcome of his own efforts since 1939 (p.7). The Turkish government told him especially - when the treaty was made - that it was signed with the consent of the Allies, the British (p.7).

#### PASSAGE OF GERMAN SHIPS THROUGH DARDANELLES

Asked to give some information about certain instances in June, 1944, of German ships passing through the straits, against which the British and maybe the Russians and Americans made protests, Papen describes the incident, as follows: The German Naval High Command asked the foreign office to instruct Papen to help in the passing through of certain German ships not prohibited by the Montreux Convention, because they were not armed, etc. He asked the Turkish foreign minister, and upon Turkish request, Papen asked his naval attache, who told him the ships were O.K. The examination of one of those ships proved the German statements to be false. This resulted in the dismissal of the Turkish foreign minister, Mr. Numan, early June, 1944 (p.8).

Papen left Turkey August 4, 1944, after the rupture of relations between Germany and Turkey (p.9).