

C O N F I D E N T I A L

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Dr. E. Lammers, describes himself as "one of the traitors of April 23rd" whose execution ordered by Hitler personally was only prevented by the sudden collapse of the Hitler Regime. Lammers fell, he claims, into 'the very highest disgrace', because:

- 1) he dared ask Hitler whether the time was not ripe for a possible transfer of the seat of the 'Reichsregierung' to Southern Germany. Hitler considered such a proposal nothing short of treason as he felt that it could only spring from a defeatist attitude. (Hitler: "This is out of the question, I shall not even permit preparations for such a step".)
- 2) Lammers proposed Goering to succeed the Führer; or so he claims. (Dr Walter Funk and Reichs Marshal Goering also claim to have been 'Traitors of April 23rd'.)

The Story of an Opportunist: Lammers originally belonged to the DNVP and joined the NSDAP in 1932. In the administration setup of the Weimar Republic he climbed up to the high position of "Ministerialrat" for "Staats- und Verwaltungsrecht" in the Ministry of the Interior. In 1933 Lammers accepted an appointment by Hitler as State-Secretary in the Reichs Chancellory. In 1937 he was raised to the position of a Reichs Minister and made Chief of the Reichs Chancellory by Hitler. His great experience in the field of legal matters pertaining to Government administration being considered indispensable for legalization of the various waves of Nazi laws, he originally enjoyed Hitler's favor. However, since 1937, he declares now, he has been condemned more or less to the status of a "Reichsnotar" (Notary of the Reich), whose only function consisted of presenting official documents to Hitler for signature, and to notarize them by adding his own. This development came about, says L., after members of the cabinet had repeatedly refused to countersign laws already signed by Hitler. "I cannot possibly risk this", said Hitler, and since then only Dr. Lammers' signature appeared below that of the Führer.

Dr Lammers likes to play with the concept of the "Rechtsstaat" (juridical State), and there is no doubt that he is fully aware what this concept entails. "I am a man of the Law", he says. It is therefore all the more despicable that he lent his talents for the initiating of laws which brought about the end of the "juridical State" in Germany. It was his task, similar to that of the former NS Minister of the Interior Dr Frick, to hold up the appearance of the "juridical State" in Germany. Lammers allowed himself to be used for the task of putting a cloak legality around apparent injustice.

How They Ruled: Dr Lammers, like so many others of his colleagues blame his misjudgment of the actual situation on the fact that the Nazi form of Government prevented the members of the cabinet of being properly informed. There had been no Cabinet meetings since 1937, he states. Events like the Polish Campaign, the war against Russia, came to most Ministers as a complete surprise. "I learned of the 'Anschluss' when I was spending my weekend. It was the same way with Prague and the Polish campaign. "The cabinet members knew as little about these decisions as the average newspaper reader in Germany. It was a principle that cabinet members were never called in to the Gauleiter meetings at which far reaching decisions were made. Only once had they been invited to attend a so-called information lecture given by Dr Goebbels which did not in any way differ from the famous 'Sportpalast' speeches, and which did not factually enlighten the cabinet members. When addressing the German people however, Dr L. declared, many untruths had to be said, and naturally, (sic) much that was true had to be omitted."

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Concentration Camps: While at the beginning, Lammers had to report to the Führer almost daily, he was hardly able to get in a word later on, and, particularly during the war. "I was merely a statistician when it came to official receptions." (Lammers) - He knew of the existence of concentration camps. He had received complaints by citizens which reached the Chancellory every once in a while. Early 1934 he visited a KZ in Breslau unannounced in order to get a picture about the conditions prevailing there. He found conditions there to be 'rather unfavorable' but added, that these could not be compared to the things one hears nowadays. He came across cases of mistreatment of inmates. L. claims to have submitted a report to Hitler, both personally and in writing, following his visit to the camp. This report was passed on to Himmler, but nothing came of it. He further states to have attempted to bring up similar cases later on, but was dealt with at the outer door of Hitler's office. Hitler either retained these files and reports or passed them on to Himmler. "If one made suggestions one was shouted at. If one asked for information on these matters, Himmler refused to grant such a request." The only thing left to him under these circumstances was "to take the edge off a number of completely nonsensical proposals".

Resignation impossible: To retire from such a degrading position of servitude was impossible. It was strictly forbidden to hand in requests for resignation. "I cannot resign either", was Hitler's principle. Active opposition was out of the question, for it would only have meant to lose one's own life. In this connection Lammers again points to his experience as a man condemned to die as a traitor.

The Responsibility: Lammers stated that the responsibility for the developments in Germany rests with Hitler, Himmler and Goering, and those who had left the cabinet members completely uninformed. It is their fault, he claims, that the highest officials of the Reich had become merely 'specialists in their respective fields' who no longer dared to go beyond their immediate assignments, and to intervene in political decisions. "Policies were determined at the Gauleiter meetings and not at all by the cabinet ministers. One risked being shouted at and therefore just stayed away. Any action on part of an individual was impossible."

The End: "When the Rhine defenses no longer held, and the Oder front collapsed, everything was lost. The defense of Berlin, continued resistance, all that was pure nonsense." On March 27, 1945, L. had his physician sign a statement declaring L. seriously ill, and in need of relaxation. He was to go Berchtesgaden. "This whole incident was quite welcome to me, for I had no desire whatever to remain in 'chaotic' Berlin any longer. You know, people once blamed the Kaiser for not having died a hero's death at the head of his division in 1918. Smart people said at the time, however, it would have been a pity indeed to lose this division. Hitler, I believe has committed suicide in Berlin and this has cost more than one division. He did not only plunge the German people into misery, but every single one of us".

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