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SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
ALLIED EXPEDITIONARY FORCE
Office of Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2

SUBJECT: Interrogation of ALBERT SPEER, Former Reich Minister of
Armaments and War Production.

4th Session - 15:00 to 17:30 hrs. - 29th May 1945

1. SPEER was asked to explain in greater detail the organization of chemical production, and in particular KRAUCH's position. He was obviously not too familiar with the details and gave the following general picture:

The Reichsamt fuer Wirtschaftsausbau was founded under KRAUCH in or about 1936 in order to direct the expansion of capacity for the production of chemicals, notably strategic products like synthetic oil and rubber, nitrogen and others. Government financing of expansion projects was carried out via the I.G., which in SPEER's words was an "I.G. promoted to governmental status" (verstaatlichte I.G.) and was almost exclusively staffed with IG personnel.

The Generalbevollmaechtigte fuer Sonderfragen der Chemischen Erzeugung under the 4-Year Plan (also KRAUCH) was created at about the same time and with much the same functions as RWA. The idea was to confer upon KRAUCH the additional authority enjoyed by a 4-Year Plan Commissioner-General. For all practical purposes, this office and the RWA were identical, and SPEER was unable to describe how their respective powers and functions were defined and divided.

The Wirtschaftsgruppe Chemie, also created at approximately the same time, was deliberately kept away from I.G. Farben influence and was intended partly to serve as a protective agency for the smaller independent chemical concerns against the I.G. This was part of an anti-trust policy emanating from the Ministry of Economics. However, the powers of the Wirtschaftsgruppe were strictly limited to "general questions" in the industry, and it had no production control jurisdiction. The leading positions were given to "neutral" individuals. UNGEWITTER, the Leiter, was not a chemical manufacturer in SPEER's knowledge. He was also Reichsbeauftragter fuer Chemie in charge of the Reichsstelle. This also provided some protection against I.G. to the small firms in the allocation of raw materials.

After SPEER's Ministry had taken control of chemical production, a Chemicals Section was built up in the Rohstoffamt, under KOLB of Degussa. This office took over the control of production and the allocation of raw materials, thus eliminating the Reichsbeauftragter who from then on was of no importance. KRAUCH was to receive directions from the Rohstoffamt and was never dissatisfied with this arrangement. The Wirtschaftsgruppe, in SPEER's time, had no significant functions.

2. Asked to outline his policy and measures in respect of the organization of industrial statistics, SPEER gave a familiar account of the situation which he found in this field on taking office - the multiplicity of forms and questionnaires addressed to industrial firms by various control agencies, the lack of co-ordination etc. The Statistischer Zentralausschuss, managed largely by the Statistisches Reichsamt, had no administrative powers and was unable to enforce its intentions of cutting down on statistical reporting. The Statistisches Reichsamt itself had no incentive for doing so, being interested in getting as many different data as it could. Apart from state control agencies, many questionnaires were sent out by Party organizations, especially the Labor Front which called for a multiplicity of labor data for its Arbeitswissenschaftliches Institut.

SPEER entrusted Staatsrat SCHNEIDER with carrying out a drastic simplification of this system, but admitted that his ideals of reducing statistics procurement to a very few standard questionnaires were not realized, and that generally his Berichtswesen organization failed to live up to his expectations and never was very efficient. He attributes this partly to excessive reliance on Hollerith methods, which in his view require careful organization, training of personnel and evolution of methods. For all this there was not enough time.

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Hollerith machinery was hastily collected from all occupied countries, and staff was recruited in a haphazard manner. The Maschinelles Berichtswesen, under Col. PASSON, provided the nucleus. SPEER took it over with the Rüstungsamt from the OKW. After the transfer, the Zentralstelle MB, although administratively entirely under the Speer Ministry, continued to do work for OKW and OKH, as otherwise its mechanical capacity would not have been fully utilized. The weaknesses of the expanded MB organization as described above resulted in general inefficiency, involving big time lags (up to two months) between completion of questionnaires and production of results, and sometimes in "appalling inaccuracies" (Ungeheure Fehler). The organization did not stand up at all well to bombing. From mid-1944 it became more and more difficult to obtain up-to-date Reich figures, as some of the raided Gaue would be late with their returns and the previous month's figures or estimates had to be used. Simplified reports (Eilmeldungen) based on returns from relatively few representative plants were increasingly used from that time onwards. SPEER is not familiar with details and technicalities of the statistical reporting system.

3. As regards evaluation and dissemination of statistical data, SPEER maintained that until fairly recently very little was done by way of producing digested and comprehensive regular statistical summaries for the armaments sector or industry as a whole. The keeping of statistics of output, etc. in each field was entrusted to the Main Committees, who were not required to report them to any central agency for collation in a general review. SPEER himself used to obtain a monthly report on armaments output through SAUR, whose personal referent, PRIEST, would spend a couple of nights on the telephone at the end of every month calling the Sonderausschuss leaders and getting from them figures for their respective products, which by the 1st of the month would be presented to SPEER in a summary. This kind of telephoning became impossible already in fall 1944. The figures thus obtained were subsequently confirmed in writing and checked. Production figures coming from industry were also checked against Heereswaffenamt acceptance statistics supplied by Col. JULIUS ROHM. The procurement of data on L/C production was complicated by the fact that a plane was officially counted as produced only after it had been test-flown and accepted. The average number of planes awaiting test-flight would be around 400, but weather conditions caused seasonal fluctuations and in the winter months the number would rise to 1,200 or so. These fluctuations originally resulted in errors in the monthly production statistics which later on were eliminated by statistical methods.

SPEER explained that statistical terminology was often muddled. He had always wanted to issue a glossary of administrative and production terms with standard definitions but had never got around to it. Thus, various concepts were current for production schedules. "Sollzahlen" based on reports from industry on prospective production were communicated to the Wehrmacht which used them in making its military plans. In 1942 SPEER was still able to furnish such figures for 1-1½ years in advance, but as from late 1943 the periods for which reliable forecasts of this kind could be made were steadily shortened until finally from mid-1944 onwards they were only able to commit themselves for one month ahead. So-called "Programmzahlen" were used in planning industrial production - placing of orders for products, components, materials etc. These changed frequently according to changes in the stated requirements of the Wehrmacht, who changed their mind too often for SPEER's liking, although he admits that the changes were sometimes SAUR's fault, who was a bit "unsteady". The programs were worked out in detail by the Hauptausschüsse but were fully reported to Technisches Amt which should have a full collection in its archives. SPEER mentioned a "bad habit" of the Hauptausschüsse to enclose with their reports graphic charts of past and future output which usually showed a gradual increase for the past months, a rising trend for the two or three coming months and then a steep increase. The same picture would be repeated month by month, with the curve gradually shifting to the right on the diagram.

Finally, there were the so-called Fuehrer Requirements (Fuehrerforderungen). These had mostly been stated by Hitler fairly early in 1942 or 1943 and were not modified afterwards except in a few cases. They were mostly very high and far in excess of actual output and capabilities, which was realised by everybody including Hitler himself. However, they retained force of law and were carried over as "target figures" although they were pretty meaningless. Hitler refused to cut them down officially.

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4. The comparative monthly reports on Ruestungsstatistik in Germany and Allied countries published by the Wissenschaftliche Beratungsstelle of the Planungsamt in 1944 were according to SPEER the only summary reports of this kind. The Beratungsstelle was not an office but a decentralised federation of working parties on various subjects, with one agency acting as secretariat in each working party, in this case the Feldwirtschaftsamt, which was responsible for economic intelligence on foreign countries. SPEER was not acquainted with its economic intelligence methods. He though very little of the monthly reports. The tables, in his view, were prepared by a layman and were generally badly laid out. In particular, they were unfair to his Ministry, e.g. by showing German output of tanks and assault guns separately as against one total for tanks in allied countries. As assault guns were made in Germany only, SPEER maintained that the comparison of the tank totals only made German production appear relatively smaller even than it was, as assault guns ought to have been included in a comparable total. SPEER thought that he had ordered that they were not to be distributed except in one copy addressed to him, and was surprised to hear that Copy No. 5 of one report had been found in the Statistisches Reichsamt, commenting that this was precisely the thing that this agency, with its statistical acquisitive instincts, would do.

5. In connection with the figures shown in these reports for Japanese war production in 1943, SPEER was questioned on the state of knowledge on Japan in Germany. He said that the Japanese were extremely incommunicative, and he thought that the figures mentioned above were Feldwirtschaftsamt estimates rather than figures officially furnished by the Japanese. It had been extremely difficult to get any kind of information out of them. On the German side there had been a general order to give them access to all information they wanted, but SPEER was not sure if this applied to weapons on the secret list, and doubted whether V-1 or V-2 had been given to the Japanese. Innovations like Panzerfaust, hollow charges and new ammunition types, however, were supplied to them by the Heereswaffenamt as a matter of routine. SPEER knew that samples of new equipment had gone to Japan by U-boat but knew little about the details of this traffic. Jet plane designs had been communicated and possibly samples despatched. Messerschmitt would know about this. No Japanese observers were in German industry and development institutions, and to Speer's knowledge few German technicians if any had been sent to Japan during the war. The information traffic was entirely one-way. SPEER himself once demonstrated a lecture with lantern-slides on German armaments production to OSHIMA, and OSHIMA also used to attend demonstrations of new German tanks and planes at Rechlin. On one occasion, as SPEER heard from MILCH, the Germans asked the Japanese to furnish information on their attacks on Allied warships. Some results were received but they were extremely disappointing.

Questioned on the blockade running in 1942/43 SPEER was unable to give particulars of the eastbound cargos. He remembered that shipplates were a conspicuous item, which surprised him at the time, but was in line with the concern about Japanese steel supplies repeatedly voiced to SPEER by OSHIMA. Aluminum was also included. Japanese requirements were registered with the Abteilung Ausland of the Wirtschaftsministerium, which would have details on this trade. SPEER did not know of any design or construction work on machinery and plant ordered by Japan in Germany during the War. Among westbound cargos, crude rubber was by far the most important item to SPEER. They managed to obtain 9 months' to one year's stock of crude (based on requirements for admixture to Buna). Other items were wolfram, tin, vegetable oils for food uses. Priorities and programs for imports through the blockade were determined by the Zentrale Planung itself which was then an active body. BLICKE was invited to these meetings, as the food supply requirements versus needs of the armaments industry was one of the chief issues at stake. The minutes of the Zentrale Planung should contain details.

6. Other periodical official reports which SPEER knew included a 10-daily report produced jointly by the Planungsamt and Rohstoffamt on the general industrial situation, chiefly analysing difficulties in the planning and allocation of materials, specific bottlenecks, etc.

SPEER knew that a lot of periodical reporting was done by the Ruestungsinspektionen to the Ruestungsamt, but thought little of these reports which
SPEER says that these were with his FLINSBURG documents and if they can be found he can repeat the performance.

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in his view were bad. They as a rule did not go beyond the Ruestungsamt, and SPEER dismissed them as "Wichtigkeiterei", like many other of the Ruestungsamt's activities. He attached much more importance to personal conferences in maintaining contact with the regional level. Up to May or June 1944 the chairmen of the Armaments Commissions used to come to Berlin every two or three weeks for reporting and discussing regional problems with SPEER. After that the transport situation made such meetings impossible. Wider meetings (the Ruestungstagungen) were held occasionally at which various regional functionaries as well as Ministerial officials and Hauptausschuss leaders got together, with a total attendance of 200 or so. These congresses were usually held at places like Rechlin and were combined with demonstrations of new weapons.

7. The Hauptabteilung Planstatistik in the Planungsamt was headed by WAGENFUEHR of the Institut fuer Wirtschaftsforschung. This Institute, as such had nothing to do with the Planungsamt. Its only function was to review the results of planning, while it was not concerned with providing statistical data for the planning activities of the Amt.

8. SPEER was vague as to the statistical procedures of industrial planning by the Planungsamt. In his recollection, the starting point was provided by the steel allocation plan. For every quarter, six weeks in advance, a table was produced on which the steel requirements claimed for armaments production by the Hauptausschüsse and other Kontingentsträger were shown on the left-hand side, and those for "indirect armaments production" - e.g. capital equipment, transport, and also the civilian section - on the other side. The figures were totalled up and usually found far in excess of anticipated steel supplies. Originally the balance between requirements and supplies was established after direct bargaining among the members of Zentrale Planung. Later on, when KEHRL's Planungsamt had become a going concern, KEHRL formulated proposals for the settlement which as a rule were quickly approved by the Zentrale Planung.

At a second series of meetings, the allocation of non-ferrous metals, and later of other materials, was settled on a similar basis, the previous iron program providing a yardstick. Non-ferrous metals were handled very skillfully by MUELLER-ZIMMERMANN, Reichsbeauftragter for metals. Procedures were different for a number of materials, including coal, where the proposed allocation was worked out by the Reichsvereinigung Kohle and submitted for approval to Zentrale Planung. This was originally done once a year, in fall, and later at more frequent and irregular intervals. For power, the "Abschaltlisten" or lists of plants to be cut off when in winter a small peak load could not be met (which was a regular feature) were decided upon at meeting held once yearly, also in autumn.

9. SPEER maintained that we would not find much retrospective analytical material in the archives of his Ministry, as he and his people were always too busy with immediate and future problems to have time to look back. The only exception is the Rechenschaftsbericht 1944, which he had prepared in early 1945, when he realised that things were nearing an end, and he wanted to have the performance of his Ministry placed on record.

10. On the relations between his Ministry on one hand and the Nazi party Hauptamt fuer Technik and NSBDT on the other, SPEER declared that he inherited the leadership of the Hauptamt automatically after TODT's death, along with his other offices. The Hauptamt did nothing during the war. Its regional representatives, the Gauamtsleiter fuer Technik were appointed Wehrkreisbeauftragte and worked for the Ministry only, but not for the Hauptamt. During his term of office, SPEER's only activity as chief of the Hauptamt was to sign two or three letters. The few efficient people in the Hauptamt were taken out by SAUR and installed in the Ministry. Its technical facilities in Munich, especially a good printing plant, were also utilised by the Ministry. The NSBDT, SPEER maintained, had been formed by TODT who wanted to save the technicians' and engineers' associations (vereine) from complete Gleichschaltung and merger in a vast single association, a plan which was being considered by the Party. TODT finally got the Fuehrer's approval to

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establish the NSBDT as a "holding company" for the Vereine which were formally to become corporate members of NSBDT but were to continue their activities as before. Speer's Ministry made use of some of the Vereine, especially the VDI and the Verein Deutscher Eisenhuettenleute, by assigning to them technical investigations and similar tasks. Contact between the Ministry sections concerned and the Vereine was made directly, and not via the Hauptamt fuer Technik of NSBDT.

11. Industrial standardisation had been regarded as virtually completed at the outbreak of war, and the Deutscher Normenausschuss, or standardisation committee under the Ministry of Economics had "gone to sleep" in the early years of the War. Standardisation as such was continued, partly by the Wirtschaftsgruppen and later by the Haupt- and Sonderausschuesse. Speer's policy of reducing drastically the number of types and variations produced worked in effect towards standardisation. In 1944 it was felt necessary to revive a body which could co-ordinate this decentralised activity, and also work out standards for various new products which had only been developed during the war. For this purpose, SPEER created the Kommission fuer Normung und Typung, under BENNERT, chairman of the VDI.