

Schacht

TRANSLATION BY
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TO: General Donovan

FROM: Dr. von Schlabrendorff

SUBJECT: Evaluation of Schacht

I saw SCHACHT for the first time in September 1944 in the Gestapo prison in Berlin but was not able to speak to him. Later, i.e. in April 1945, I saw him in the concentration camp in Innsbruck. At that time I had several talks with him. SCHACHT was very nervous and self-conscious in the fear that the SS would liquidate him. In spite of that his demeanor toward the SS was dignified and sure of himself. He told me repeatedly that he had been an opponent of HITLER since 1937. Not only had he not gone along with HITLER's criminal policy, but he had done everything in agreement with Field Marshal von WIRZLEBEN, to overthrow HITLER. However he would not tell the Americans everything about his fight against HITLER in order to be released as quickly as possible. The most might be that he would be interned. After about a year the Americans would ask him how to rehabilitate Europe economically. He would be ready to answer this question.

I have the impression that in some respects SCHACHT is unusually clever. Added to this is civil courage. Two negative qualities are opposed to this. He is very ambitious, if not to say anxious to make his influence felt. He inclines towards outbursts of anger. In such moments he acts in an unconsidered manner and says things which he cannot justify. I am convinced that SCHACHT sought the connection with HITLER since his ambition did not let him rest. After a certain time he began to realize the aims of HITLER. From that moment on his resistance began. As soon as he saw that HITLER, was striving toward war, he resigned from his several offices. When during the war HITLER's policy no longer deserved the name "policy," but instead became pure crime, SCHACHT officially cut the ties which still bound him to HITLER.

In view of all this I do not believe that SCHACHT is a war criminal. He will defend his case with determination and skill. The impression will remain that SCHACHT is a peer politician who was driven by ambition.

/s/ von Schlabrendorff

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