

TOP SECRET
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The following persons contributed to these conversations:

FRANZ VON PAPEN
REICHSMINISTER DARRE
General der Panzertruppen VON KNOBELSDORFF
Generalleutnant VON KLEIST
Generalmajor VON WALDENBURG
A BRITISH ARMY OFFICER

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1. Conversing in English, Herr von Papen gives a British Army Officer an account of the political events preceding the "Anschluss" and attempts to justify his policies in Austria and Turkey.

von Papen: ...at night at three o'clock, everything was quite unsafe. Hindenburg was at his estate and I was not allowed to see him. I could communicate with him, however. I was in the house. Then some people of the SS turned up and I said to my son, "Perhaps they want to get ahold of us and shoot us. Be careful and shoot first." We were both armed with pistols. The two SS men said that they came with orders from the Fuehrer. I should call him on the telephone. I thought that they wanted to jump on me from behind, but after some time, it turned out that it was true. I got on the phone. Hitler was there and said, "You know what has happened in Austria and I want you to go there as ambassador and save the situation." I said, "I have not the slightest idea what has happened and I certainly cannot decide over the phone whether to go there or not." He said, "Why, don't you know? Dollfuss was murdered last night." I said, "No, I do not know anything." "Then come and see me." I said, "Of course I can." "I'll send you a plane in the morning. Please come as quickly as possible to Bayreuth." He was in Bayreuth then. Next morning I went to Bayreuth and then I learned the whole truth about it. I saw that things were getting worse and worse in Austria with those Nazis there. I saw that things were at their worst.

I, that you understand my situation better, have always been an adherer of the idea that Austria and Germany belonged together. We have a common history of about a thousand years, we have been under a common rule for about a thousand years, the creation of the Second Reich by Bismarck would have been only an episode and it was in my mind quite natural that in one way or another Austria should join the German Reich. It was clear that Austria could not exist under the Versailles Treaty. Seeing this state of affairs, I thought I could be of some use to do something to set German history right. I had been absolutely opposed to having a new post in the government. I told the Fuehrer that I had made up my mind and said, "Good, under certain specified obligations." "What are these?" I said, "First of all, to turn out today the man who ... and the second obligation is that Austria will join the German Reich by peaceful evolution without the shedding of even a drop of blood because the way your people have done it is shameful, it is contradictory to everything that... If I can work on that line, I'll do it." The second obligation he agreed to. About the first one he hesitated very long, thinking perhaps, "I cannot do without this man and if I retire him just now it will look as if we instigated the Dollfuss murder and so on." I put my conditions in writing and signed it. Then a few days later I went there and worked along these lines and it was very hard work during four years. On very many occasions it was very near... Another of my conditions was that I depended solely upon him (Hitler). I was not to report to any foreign minister. I had to report to him personally. So I had the opportunity to see him very often. "Whenever something arose I immediately took a plane and flew to Berlin.

And so I was able to bring about - two years later, July '36 - the treaty between Austria and Germany, settling all these outstanding questions. A more peaceful atmosphere was created and then, in 1938, all was going on on these lines.

I convinced myself that if only I had had a little more help from Schuschnigg, I might have got it through in a peaceful way with some arrangement. Because first of all I was able to get these Austrian questions out of the exterior politics. I remember that on the day of the Dollfuss murder, Mussolini marched two army corps to the border and threatened; but to me it was a question that concerned only our two countries.

von Papen: On February 4, 1938, I received a telephone call, saying that I had been put out of office. That was the day on which Ribbentrop became Minister of Foreign Affairs. Evidently, as I had been an opponent of Ribbentrop all the time. I was opposed to his general way of politics and his general behavior. I was surprised. He said that I should be sure that the Fuehrer will want me in another very important place, that he did not know where, but, perhaps, somewhere something will be found that suited me. I said, "I am not asking for anything." That was the same thing they had done after the 17 June, after the murder. They sent Lammers to me to offer me the ambassadorship to the Holy See. I turned him out. "You're trying to bribe me."

Then I left Vienna the next day and went to Berchtesgaden. Schuschnigg, with whom I had one of my last conversations, had agreed to see Hitler personally at Berchtesgaden to have a free and frank conversation with him about the situation as I always thought was best for both sides. (The Fuehrer had never seen this man. "Well then, please return for a couple of days, retake your office, and try to get him here." I returned and said to Schuschnigg, "I happen to be here back again once more. The Chancellor invites you to see him one of these days at Berchtesgaden." Then, on the 13th of February, Schuschnigg and I traveled to Salzburg and went on to Berchtesgaden. The interview was very stormy and impressive on both sides. Schuschnigg laid down the principles of his government and Hitler expressed his desire to see the two countries together. Then they came to an agreement that Schuschnigg should take one or two persons who have the confidence of his government - Austrians. One I proposed, an old Austrian general I knew, and the other (was a) lawyer, and so it was done and Schuschnigg, who has always been very uncertain about his doings on that line, faced a very great opposition when he came home from the Heimwehr people and the Starhemberg people. They probably suggested the idea of the plebiscite, a plebiscite on two questions of which I only remember one: whether there should be an "Anschluss" or not. Hitler, seeing at once that this plebiscite would have a negative result, saw all his schemes go to waste, became aroused terribly and called it a betrayal of our engagement taken at Berchtesgaden some days ago and he had just made a speech in the Reichstag about the wonderful, wise statesmanship of Schuschnigg. It aroused his anger and he said, "What he is doing now is impossible." I was called home, my job was over anyway, and he decided to ask some questions, to inform his government to let the plebiscite and so on, and finally it came to the "Einmarsch."

Again, it had worked up to February 4th, just like everybody had wanted it to work. I am quite sure it would have worked that way peacefully and Austria would have become a federal state, like Bavaria, with all her own rights and her own local government and certainly no Party officials put in it; it would have gone wonderfully.

B.A.O.: Did you remain in Germany for long?

von Papen: Then I went to my country home and remained there from February '38 until March or April '39. In the meantime the Munich conference took place in autumn 1938. As I told you, I wrote a long letter of felicitations* for the way everything was arranged and smoothed down. But then this thing happened with Prague; it was clear that some explosion would have to come. Then, in April 1939 I was taking a cure at the "Weissen Hirsch" in Dresden. It was Good Friday. I was telling you that before, Ribbentrop had twice called on me and asked me to become ambassador in Ankara. I had no wish to be in public life again and I refused twice. The German ambassador in Ankara had been dismissed early in autumn 1938 and his place had been kept vacant up till April 1939, more than half a year. That was quite unusual and offended the Turkish government. I did not know about that and flatly refused both times.

* (to Chamberlain)

von Papen: And then it was Good Friday and I was called to the phone. He (Ribbentrop) said, "Did you hear what happened today?" I said, "No." "Well," he said, "this morning Italian divisions rushed into Albania and occupied her. I am aware that this step of the Italian Government might make even more difficult the situation of the Central Powers." (At that time you could hear a lot of talk about the political encirclement of Germany. Your negotiations with Russia went on at that time, too. Also at that time you had started your negotiations with Turkey; you, the French, and Turkey; and you understand that the occupation of Albania must hasten the Turks to join you, and the encirclement of Germany is completed.) He told me about that and said, "Now, in the name of the Fuehrer, I must ask you to give in; it is your patriotic duty which you have to fulfill." I said, "What for?" He said, "Try to prevent Turkey from joining the others. Because if she joins, the way is closed and our situation is hopeless." I said, "Well, I cannot decide that on the telephone. I'll come to see you." I rushed up to Berlin and we talked the situation over and he insisted that he had no other man to do it. Hitler, too, insisted and so I finally gave in. I said, "Well, you see, I should be convinced that all this is only the encirclement of Germany, thus preventing a general war." Because they set up the formula that once we are politically encircled, war is inevitable; we have to go through with it. If we can get it settled peacefully, that neither Russia nor Turkey go in, then we go on peacefully. So I said to myself, "I shall do everything in my power to prevent Germany from joining the ring." But I told them that when this task is done I want to go home. Perhaps it takes only a couple of weeks but certainly no more than six months. I go over there only for this job.

Then I started for Turkey. First, things were gone much too far to prevent the people from joining the Allies. They had not joined them officially but the negotiations had gone very far. There was only one way out in my opinion...

What the Turks feared, that was Attaturk's testament, that once the Italians (they hated the Italians as you know) that once Italy occupied Albania it was the first step to take the straits. That was the testament that he had put down. Ciano, boasting as he did - I have never seen a more clumsy minister of foreign affairs - that Italy would put up 30 divisions against Turkey. They said that there could be not the slightest doubt about it. That was certainly directed against our interests. When I came back to Berlin after the first look over the situation, I had a chance to meet Ciano.

At a reception that the Fuehrer gave, I took him aside and I told him that I could see only one way out of the encirclement of ours and that was to keep Turkey quiet. "If you can so pledge Turkey that you will only have a small police force in Albania, nothing else, and that you arrange the minor question of the Dodecanese (they are thousands of little rock islands with an average area of three miles) you should give them back to Turkey." He listened to me, seemingly horror-stricken, turned around to Ribbentrop, and said, "Your ambassador has had the insolence to ask me to do these things." Ribbentrop became red with anger and said, "Who is leading the German Foreign Policy, is it you or is it I?" I said, "You." "How can you tell Ciano these things, how dare you propose such things?" I said, "You sent me to Turkey in order to prevent Turkey from joining the Allies; that is the only means to achieve it. That is my conviction." Then there was a big noise.

I offered my dismissal. Then the next day, seeing Ribbentrop, I thought that that would be even worse and I tried to smooth things down by giving in.

I did my best to prevent Turkey from joining, but then when it turned out that the treaty with the Russians...

von Papen: I happened to be in Germany on the 15th of August...and then I sped up to see Hitler at Berchtesgaden. That was the same day that Ribbentrop took his plane to go to Moscow. Then I was overjoyed. I said that that was the first really good step we ever took. That was going back to that good old Bismarckian policy of being friendly with the Russians... The Polish question can be arranged in a friendly manner because the Poles have seen that it is quite hopeless for them to be stiff...from both sides. For some arrangement for the Corridor should be found. So, full of hope I sailed back to Turkey. Two days later the war broke out. Then I could not leave my post.

I tried to make the best of it, as I told you before, in the interests, certainly, of my own country; but I think that the policies that I followed were in the Allied interests as well. I am convinced that keeping Turkey out of the war was first of all in the interests of Turkey herself, because she was neither willing nor able to fight, but she was more than...and the danger to Vienna, when Hitler was at the border; and then the question arose, whether it would not be advantageous in order to get to Suez quicker...to march through Turkey into North Africa instead of marching around the Caucasus. I said, "No. I told you how difficult it was to make war against Turkey from old experience." I was in the Turkish Army in the last war so I was a sort of capacity on that line and that furnished my plans. I was glad about it. I think I was right because I never dreamed that they would go the other way and attack Russia.

Now, having given you a short story of my life, you can understand that I don't consider myself a war criminal.

B.A.O.: I appreciate your having told the story. It was most interesting. You must have had some very difficult moments.

von Papen: Certainly, very many people outside never understand why I took another job in that government, after all the sad experiences I had. That is, perhaps, not easy to understand, only of my consciousness that I had an enormous responsibility myself from the first moment in creating in this...a government, being Vice-Chancellor. I said that whatever I can do with my influence, anything good for Germany that finally leads to a good end, I must do. That was my duty. I never asked for jobs because, fortunately, I had been in a private position, I mean I certainly did nothing. I had a quiet life, a wonderful family life. I never asked to be separated from my family for years and bearing all that responsibility upon my shoulders.

B.A.O.: How did you get on with the Turks?

von Papen: Splendidly. You see, I was a member of their army and they trusted me. I had a real love for them. The Turks, especially the simple people in Asia Minor, are splendid people, excellent people, intelligent. They are certainly not up to our standards.

B.A.O.: Are they loyal?

von Papen: Loyal? Oh, absolutely! You can trust them.

Ha, that reminds me of a story. When I took up the Treaty of Mutual Friendship with Turkey just a week before the war with Russia started, I was negotiating for a rather long time and the Turks, very loyal in their obligations to the Allies, said from the first moment, "You understand that our engagement does not interfere in the least with our obligations to the Allies." I said, "Yes, understand that." So they wanted to make that clear in the preliminary paragraph of that treaty. Ribbentrop, at that time, did not understand either the feeling of honor or diplomatic possibilities. He was furious and said, "This is nothing worthwhile, I want the treaty with the Allies never mentioned in that pact." Then, after receiving that telegram, I wired back, "I see, Herr von Ribbentrop, that you did not understand up to now that the Turks are gentlemen who are always ready to meet obligations." Ha!

B.A.O.: Did you get a reply?

von Papen: Yes, ha, a furious one. I sometimes feel very proud of my exchange of telegrams with Ribbentrop.

2. Herr von Papen gives a British Army Officer some details concerning the "Anschluss."

von Papen: They phoned me in Vienna and told me to take a plane for Berlin at once. As a matter of principle, I never fly at night, so I took the plane the next morning. I spent the whole following day in the Chancellery. We were in session with Hitler. I was told that a new Austrian government was to be formed and that was the main subject on the agenda for the entire day. Every minute came a call from Vienna. Hitler wanted to march in. I then said to them, "You promised me not to do it. You promised me there would be no bloodshed." That afternoon came another message from Vienna that a new government had been formed. And then he (Hitler) issued the order that the mobilisation was to be called off. An hour later came another message saying that the last message had not been correct, that Schuschnigg had announced his acquiescence, but not the President. Now Hitler said, "Tomorrow morning at seven o'clock we march!" I observed the march from my post in Berlin. Thank God, there was no bloodshed there. Not a shot was fired. The jubilation was amazing. I had not expected it to be on such a scale. We were received with such rejoicing and such masses of flowers that it was hardly believable. The people behaved as if the Savior himself had arrived.

A day later came the march into Vienna. I was ordered by the Fuehrer to depart at once for Vienna. I then flew with Lammers to Vienna. There then occurred the parade of the Austrian and German troops. Millions of people crowded the city. I invited the entire diplomatic corps to view the scene from a tribune. After that was over, we went to the Hotel Imperial and there I introduced Cardinal Innitzer to the Fuehrer. B.A.O.: Hitler was present too?

von Papen: My idea was, now that the thing has come to pass, there must be a 'turn! Innitzer was the representative of Catholic Austria. So the two had a heart to heart talk, the Cardinal and the Fuehrer.

B.A.O.: How did the two get along?

von Papen: Very well.

B.A.O.: Did Hitler behave?

von Papen: Yes, he knew how to.

B.A.O.: But later they threw the poor Cardinal out the window?

von Papen: Yes, of course...

On our flight from Berlin to Vienna, Lammers said, "By rights, you ought to become Governor General of Austria now." I said, "Yes. But only under the condition that not a single Party man has anything to say." To which he replied, "Yes, of course, that's impossible."

3. Information from Herr von Papen.

von Papen: (Re: Espionage in diplomatic circles.) Now, this question about Berlin diplomats being spied on. That was the job of the SS. How were we being spied on? In the Foreign Office there was an organization which watched the personnel. In the embassies it was then this SS. That was the function of the R.S.H.A....

(Re: American Imperialism) I remember an article about the imperialism of the Americans. It was meant for the public and was attacked by the majority of the American press. "What a preposterous idea to accuse us of imperialism!" Probably the people hadn't grasped it yet. It was the big wirepullers and the masses were still imbued with the Monroe Doctrine. At the time I was participating in discussions about the neutrality of the Americas and maintained the viewpoint that, when

von Papen: America takes the stand, approves of, and encourages Canada in sending troops to Europe and fully participates in war, while America delivers war materials to Canada, that in itself creates implicitly a state of war. Consequently, the entire Continent, not just the U. S. A., should be kept out of European entanglements. In the present conference in Chapultepec it has been clearly shown how much the Monroe Doctrine has been discarded of late.

(Re: Mussolini) The only bad part about it is that such people can't die peacefully. They should pass away honorably, with a fine, long speech on the radio or something like that. (Laughs) But no - they have to kill each other. Mussolini allowed himself to be killed and most likely Hitler too. He obliged his generals to commit suicide and was furious when they did not do so at Stalingrad. He expects others to do what he himself cannot do. He no longer had the courage to place his pistol on his chest. It looks as if Goering got it too, and I hope the same is true of Ribbentrop. He deserves it.

(Re: occupation of Germany) The English will not yield to the French demands, giving up the Cologne-Aachen sector. The Americans would do such a thing quickly, but not the English. That is their communication zone.

Things appear to have been deadlocked already at the San Francisco Conference. Eden will discover some compromise or other.

The Americans will withdraw from Europe quickly. We shall be lost if we don't find support in the English. The Americans will be in for some big surprises.

The Russians are responsible for the present moves in Austria. They put in Renner. Renner was the last socialist president to be removed by the workers. He is most certainly a communist now. It's a rotten business. Yes, there will be a few nuts to crack. Communism represents the reaction now and it will be the same for us too. We can only hope for a long military occupation. That is the only means of maintaining order.

4. Herr Darre, General von Knobelsdorff, a British Army Officer, and later, Herr von Papen, discuss recent political changes in Germany.

B.A.O.: Ribbentrop has been dismissed and Schwerin Krosigk is his successor.

Darre: Schwerin Krosigk is no Nazi. He was brushed aside, was not altogether shoved into the background like me. He was allowed to play at being Minister, but he could no longer do anything, even in his own Ministry... Of those who remain in Germany, he is about the only one with a clear enough record to negotiate... He knows nothing of foreign policy... He was born a Krosigk and when he had two children, Graf Schwerin adopted him.

Knobelsdorff: I heard that Cramer is dead.

B.A.O.: You don't mean it! The same Cramer who was with us in England? What could be the reason?

Knobelsdorff: He was somehow involved in the 20th of July. I heard it second-hand. He supposedly was somehow in touch with Churchill. He formerly had a big position with Hitler. He was a political general... General Beck was accused of having, prior to the outbreak of war, connections with England...

(Herr von Papen enters and is informed about Krosigk.)

von Papen: I am sorry. Poor fellow! I thought he would show up here.

Darre: Doenitz has taken over.

von Papen: There is no longer anything to be negotiated.

Knobelsdorff: No, but Krosigk can negotiate better than Ribbentrop.

von Papen: There is absolutely nothing at all left to negotiate about. Herr Doenitz is wrong in believing that anybody is needed to negotiate. What's to be negotiated?

Knobelsdorff: But somebody has to be the mouthpiece for these people.

Darre: Any senior ranking official can do that.

von Papen: For thirty years Schwerin Krosigk has had a financial career and in '32 - he was then Director of Finance in the Ministry of Finance - I made him Secretary of Finance in my cabinet and later on he was taken over by Hitler's cabinet...

von Papen: If in 1940 we had carried out the English invasion, the war would have been decided in our favor. Most likely we could have made a landing, but the problem of supply! That was the reason why the project was abandoned: because the navy said it could vouch for nothing in view of the entire British Fleet...

von Papen: In this war America has made greater propaganda for entry into the war than in the first World War. I have always failed to understand why they entered the first World War. Even today I am still convinced that if America hadn't entered the first World War it would have come to a compromise peace, which would have been vastly better for all of us in Europe than what was later done in Versailles which led to all this. Then we would have been spared this war...

von Papen: I knew Grandi well. A very amiable fellow and a good partner in negotiations. As a matter of fact, he made a good name for the Italians in London... He was lucky, or he would no longer be alive. He is probably the only one of the Fascists who will get away... von Arnim was my administrative officer in the first World War...

Darre: Herr von Papen, General von Knobelsdorff has just told us a very interesting story: Seydlitz is supposed to stand with an army of 100,000 troops somewhere in the rear of the Eastern Front. This army has not been committed and von Paulus is slated for a governorship of the eastern provinces. Von Paulus had supposedly been condemned to death, which had been converted into a jail sentence, after which he was sent to Siberia, worked there for four weeks, and was then brought back.

von Papen: Well, yes. That is quite possible for it was quite late when he joined the Seydlitz Committee. He appeared publicly on the Russian radio for the first time, when Seydlitz was condemned to death in Germany.

(Note: Owing to conditions, it was impossible to determine each individual voice in the following conversation.)

5. Information from Herr von Papen, and Generals von Kleist, von Knobelsdorff, and Waldenburg.

General: The principal thing is for the German people to maintain the spirit of unity which National Socialism produced. We cannot use the party system such as it existed in Germany prior to 1933. What the German people need today is bread and work.

General: Herr Baron, do you think we are being overheard here?

von Papen: Oh no, we don't have any more secrets today. In my opinion the best thing one can do is to help the Americans, politically and economically.

Knobelsdorff: Yes, Herr Baron, at various times we have been asked who could be considered for the reconstruction. We named you and von Blaskowitz. But they aren't interested in you.

General: Herr Baron, we were told that all sorts of papers were found in your embassy in Ankara. You hadn't burned everything.

von Papen: What? That is impossible, utterly impossible! Such a thing never happened!

General: Yes, they maintained such was the case. We couldn't deny it.

von Papen: Who said so?

General: Interpreters, unimportant persons.

von Papen: Oh, that's only a story.

General: They asserted that you were the power behind the Fuehrer's foreign policy.

von Papen: Yes, I was always supposed to have been that.

General: Yes, the first thing I was asked was, "what do you think of Papen?"

von Papen: Really?

General: Yes, "He has the large Party medal."

General: Yes, that is a decoration. They refuse to understand that. There isn't much which they do understand; for example, the old, soldier's attitude.

General: I recommended you, but I said that you would be too old for them.

von Papen: It is quite obvious that they will reject persons who worked with heart and soul for the regime. And I believe that that is only right. The question, of the motives with which one worked, arises; whether one did one's duty during these years...

Has Blaskowitz been captured?

Knobelsdorff: We don't know. However, he permitted landings and the dropping of food. And if Himmler has made an offer, Blaskowitz will be the first one who must surrender with his army.

von Papen: He would certainly be a favorable person; I named him myself. In the first place, he is younger than Rundstedt and...

General: Rundstedt refused, by the way, because of his activities as judge on 20th July.

General: No one could say anything then. We couldn't even pass judgment, whether it was he or not; they might simply have used his signature. And we can't say whether the General's Court even existed.

von Papen: But Blaskowitz would be a good figure because he avoided the dirty dealing in Poland.

General: And he is a fine man.

von Papen: Is his heart trouble cured?

General: No, he is very ill... Mannstein, in my opinion, couldn't be considered...

General: If we generals are to collaborate in the reconstruction, we must be assured that the old eastern border will be restored.

von Papen: But common action with England against Russia is impossible. The only possibility is to assist with our good advice.

General: ...I don't know if the remnant can subsist under Germany.

von Papen: I don't necessarily agree with you.

General: The Americans against the Russians?

von Papen: They will be completely indifferent, whether a smaller or a larger part of Europe becomes Bolshevistic. They aren't the least bit interested in it.

General: But they do have interests.

General: What can they do?

von Papen: Not a thing. Their hands are tied, which ever way they turn abroad; and only later can that develop... The atmosphere is ruined by the publication of these atrocities with which we are confronted. That is the most frightful thing, that simply destroys a man's nerves...

There is nothing left, our Reich is destroyed, our history is destroyed, after many generations our reputation cannot be cleared. Frightful, frightful! And the direct results will be seen in the treatment of Germany. That is the worst thing that could happen and American and English commissions go to these camps and report on them and the propaganda will be spread all over the world. It is so inconceivable that such things could go on in a civilized country that one is completely mystified.

General: We stated that we knew nothing about these things and have had nothing to do with them.

von Papen: Certainly.

ORIGINAL

1. See pages 1 - 4.

2. Herr von Papen gives a British Army Officer some details concerning the "Anschluss."

von Papen: Die haben mich in Wien angerufen und haben gesagt, dass ich sofort mit einem Flugzeug nach Berlin fliege. Ich fliege ja prinzipiell nie waehrend der Nacht, so bin ich am naechsten Morgen dorthin-gefliegen. Ich habe den ganzen naechsten Tag in der Kanzlei verbracht. Wir hatten eine Sitzung mit Hitler. Man hat mir gesagt, dass eine neue oesterreichische Regierung gebildet werden soll. Darueber wurde nun den ganzen Tag verhandelt. Jede Minute kam ein Anruf von Wien. Hitler wollte dort einruecken. Da habe ich ihnen gesagt: Sie haben mir doch versprochen, dass das nicht gemacht werden solle. Sie haben versprochen, dass es kein Blutvergiessen geben wird." Am Nachmittag kam eine neue Meldung von Wien, dass eine neue Regierung gebildet sei. Da hat er den Befehl gegeben, dass die Mobilmachung abgerufen wird. Eine Stunde spaeter kam eine neuere Meldung, dass die letzte Meldung nicht wahr waere, dass Schuschnigg sich damit einverstanden erklaert hat aber der Praesident aber nicht. Da sagt der Hitler: Morgen frueh um 7 Uhr wird marschiert! Ich habe dann den Einmarsch von Berlin aus erlebt. Gott-seidank gab es dort kein Blutbad. Es ist ja kein Schuss geschossen worden. Der Jubel dort war erstaunlich. Ich habe es garnicht in solchem Masse erwartet. Wir sind mit einem derartigen Jubel, mit Blumen empfangen worden, es war unglaublich. Die Leute haben sich benommen als ob ihre Erloesung gekommen waere.

Ein Tag spaeter kam der Einmarsch von Wien. Ich bekam den Befehl vom Fuehrer mich sofort nach Wien zu begeben. Ich bin dann mit Lammers nach Wien geflogen. Dort fandt dann der Vorbeimarsch der deutschen und oesterreichischen Truppen statt. Da waren Millionen von Menschen in der Stadt. Ich habe das ganze diplomatische Korps dazu eingeladen die Sache von eine Tribuene zu besichtigen. Nachdem das fertig war sind wir in das Hotel Imperial gegangen und dort habe ich den Kardinal Innitzer dem Fuehrer zugefuehrt.

B.A.O.: Hitler war da ja auch?

von Papen: Ich habe gedacht: Jetzt ist die Sache gekommen, da muss es ein "turn" geben. Innitzer war der Vertreter des katholischen Oesterreich. Da haben die zwei nun eine Aussprache gehabt, der Kardinal und der Fuehrer.

B.A.O.: Wie haben die sich denn vertragen?

von Papen: Sehr gut.

TOP SECRET

B.A.O.: Der Hitler hat sich benommen?

von Papen: Ja, das konnte er ja.

B.A.O.: Aber spaeter haben sie ja den armen kardinal aus dem Fenster geschmissen.

von Papen: Ja, natuerlich.

Wie wir von Berlin nach Wien flogen, hat Lammers gesagt: Sie muessen jetzt ja Generalgouverneur von Oesterreich werden. Ich sagte: Ja, aber nur unter einer Bedingung, dass kein einziger Parteimann ein einziges Wort zu sagen hat. Da sagte er: Ja, das ist natuerlich unmoeglich.

3. Information from Herr von Papen.

von Papen: (Re: Espionage in diplomatic circles.) Ja, diese Frage ueber die Ueberwachung der berliner Diplomaten. Das war doch die SS. Wie wurden wir nur ueberwacht? Im Auswaertigen Amt war eine Organisation die den Betrieb ueberwachte. Bei den Botschaften war dann diese SS. Das war die Funktion des R.S.H.A.

(Re: American Imperialism) Ich erinnere mich an einen Artikel ueber den Imperialismus der Amerikaner, der war fuer die Oeffentlichkeit und wurde von der Mehrzahl der amerikanischen Presse angegriffen. "What a preposterous idea, uns den Imperialismus vorzuwerfen!" Wahrscheinlich haben die Leute das selbst garnicht begriffen. Das waren die grossen Drahtzieher und die Masse war noch in Gedanken des Monroe Doktrines. Ich habe damals mal an den Diskussionen ueber die Neutralitaet der Amerikas teilgenommen und habe den Standpunkt vertreten, dass wenn Amerika den Standpunkt annimmt, z.B. gutheisst, und unterstuetzt, dass Kanada Truppen nach Europa schickt und im Kriege mit allen Dingen teilnimmt und Amerika Kriegslieferungen nach Kanada ausfuehrt, es schon an und fuer sich ein vollstaendiger Krieg ist. Sodass also der Kontinent, nicht nur U. S. A. allein aus den europaeischen Verwicklungen herausgehalten werden soll. Die Konferenz jetzt in Chapultepec hat, das ja auch ausgefuehrt, wie man jetzt mit dem Monroe Doktrine abgetan hat.

(Re: Mussolini) Das Schlimme daran ist nur, dass solche Leute noch nicht mal schoen sterben koennen. Die haetten jetzt noch mit Wuerde abgehen sollen, mit einer schoenen langen Rede am Radio oder irgendso etwas. Aber nein, sie muessen sich nun noch gegenseitig totschiessen. Mussolini hat sich jetzt erschlagen lassen und wahrscheinlich der Hitler auch. Von seinen Generaelen hat er verlangt, dass sie Selbstmord begehen und war wuetend als sie es bei Stalingrad nicht taten. Er erwartet immer von Anderen, was er selbst nicht tun kann. Er hatte nun noch nicht mal den Mut sich die Pistole auf die Brust zu setzen. Goering hat es ja, scheint es, auch erwischt und hoffentlich auch den Ribbentrop, der verdient das.

(Re: Occupation of Germany) Die Englaender werden den Forderungen der Franzosen nicht nachgeben ihnen den Koeln - Aachen Sektor abzugeben. Die Amerikaner wuerden so etwas ja schnell tun, aber die Englaender nicht. Fuer die ist das die Verbindung.

Bei der San Francisco Konferenz scheint sich die Sache ueberhaupt schon festgefahren zu haben. Eden wird da schon irgendeinen Kompromiss finden.

Die Amerikaner ziehen schnell von Europa zurueck. Wenn wir nicht in den Englaendern eine Stuetze finden, sind wir verloren. Die Amerikaner werden noch ihre blauen Wunder erleben.

von Papen: (Re: Occupation of Germany.) Das jetzt mit Oesterreich haben doch auch jetzt die Russen gemacht. Die haben den Renner reingesetzt. Renner war der letzte Sozi Praesident den die Handwerker abgesetzt haben. Jetzt ist der bestimmt Kommunist. Es ist doch eine Schweinerei. Ja, da wird es noch einige Nuesse zu kracken geben. Der Kommunismus wird nun zunaechst mal die Reaktion sein, bei uns ja sicher auch. Wir koennen uns eine lange Militaerregierung nur wuenschen, das ist das Einzige was Ordnung halten kann.

4. Herr Darre, General von Knobelsdorff, a British Army Officer, and later, Herr von Papen, discuss recent political changes in Germany.

B.A.O.: Ribbentrop ist entlassen worden und Schwerin von Krosigk hat uebernommen.

Darre: Der Schwerin Krosigk ist gar kein Nazi. Der ist an die Wand getreten gewesen. Sie haben ihn nicht wie mich kaltgestellt. Er durfte noch Minister spielen. In seinem eigenen Ministerium konnte er aber auch nichts mehr machen... Er ist von den in Deutschland uebrig gebliebenen der einzige, der noch unbelastet verhandeln kann... Versteht von Aussenpolitik garnichts... Er ist ein geborener Krosigk und wie er zwei Kinder hatte, wurde er adoptiert von dem Grafen Schwerin...

Knobelsdorff: Ich habe gehoert, dass der Cramer tot ist.

B.A.O.: Ach was! Der Cramer, der bei uns in England war? Sowas - wieso denn?

Knobelsdorff: Der hatte etwas zu tun mit der Sache am 20. Juni. Ich habe das so unter der Hand gehoert. Er muss irgendetwas mit Churchill zu tun gehabt haben. Er war ein Mann, der frueher beim Fuehrer eine grosse Stellung hatte. War ein politischer General... Dem General Beck ist vorgeworfen worden, dass er schon vor dem Kriege mit England Verbindungen unterhielt...

(Herr von Papen enters and is informed about Krosigk.)

von Papen: Ach, das tut mir leid. Der arme Kerl. Ich dachte er taucht hier mal auf.

Darre: Doenitz hat uebernommen.

von Papen: Da ist doch nichts mehr zu verhandeln.

Knobelsdorff: Nein, aber Krosigk kann besser verhandeln als Ribbentrop.

von Papen: Es ist ueberhaupt nichts zu verhandeln. Es ist ein Irrtum von Herrn Doenitz zu glauben, dass irgend jemand noetig ist zu verhandeln. Was soll man denn verhandeln?

Knobelsdorff: Es muss doch aber irgend jemand sprechen fuer die Leute.

Darre: Das kann doch jeder dienstaelteste Beamte tun.

von Papen: Schwerin Krosigk ist in der Finanzkarriere seit dreissig Jahren und er wurde '32 - da war er Finanz Direktor im Finanz Ministerium - da habe ich ihn zum Finanz Minister in meinem Kabinett gemacht - und dann ist er uebernommen worden von dem Kabinett Hitler...

von Papen: Haetten wir in 1940 die englische Invasion gemacht, dann waere der Krieg zu unseren Gunsten entschieden worden. wahrscheinlich haetten wir auch die Landing gemacht aber das Problem des Nachschubs! Darum ist es ja aufgegeben worden, weil die Marine gesagt hat, sie kann es nicht garantieren gegenueber der ganzen englischen Flotte...

von Papen: Amerika hat in diesem Krieg eine groessere Propaganda fuer den Eintritt in den Krieg gemacht als in dem ersten Weltkrieg. Ich habe ueberhaupt nicht verstanden, warum sie in den ersten Weltkrieg gegangen sind. Ich bin heute noch der Ansicht, wenn Amerika nicht in

von Papen: den ersten Weltkrieg eingetreten waere, dann waere dieser erste Weltkrieg zu einem Kompromissabschluss gekommen, der fuer uns alle in Europa unendlich viel heilsamer gewesen waere als das was in Versailles nachher gemacht wurde und das dies zur Folge hatte. Dann waere uns dieser Krieg erspart geblieben...

von Papen: Den Grandi kannte ich gut. Ein sehr freundlicher Mann, mit dem man auch durchaus gut verhandeln konnte. Er hat eigentlich den Italienern eine gute Position in London gemacht... Der hat Glueck gehabt, sonst waere er heute auch nicht mehr am Leben. Was ist wahrscheinlich der einzige von den Faschisten, der herauskommt... Von Arnim war mein Ordonnanzoffizier im 1. Weltkrieg...

Darre: Herr von Papen, der Herr General von Knobelsdorff erzaehte vorhin eine hochinteressante Geschichte: Der Seydlitz soll mit einer Armee von 100.000 Mann hinter der Ostfront stehen. Die Armee soll aber nicht eingesetzt sein. Und von Paulus soll Gouverneur der Ostprovinzen werden. Von Paulus soll zum Tode verurteilt gewesen sein, zum Kerker begnadigt, dann nach Sibirien verschickt worden sein, haette vier Wochen dort gearbeitet und sei dann wieder geholt worden.

von Papen: So. Ja, das ist schon moeglich, denn er ist dem Komitee Seydlitz erst sehr spaet beigetreten. Er ist zum ersten Mal oeffentlich am russischen Radio hervorgetreten, als Seydlitz in Deutschland in contumaciam zum Tode verurteilt wurde.

(Note: Owing to conditions, it was impossible to determine each individual voice in the following conversation.)

5. Information from Herr von Papen and Generals von Kleist, von Knobelsdorff, and Waldenburg.

General: Die Hauptsache ist, dass vom deutschen Volk die Volksgemeinschaft aufrechterhalten wird, die der Nationalsozialismus gebracht hat. Wir koennen das Partei System, das wir vor 1933 hatten in Deutschland nicht mehr brauchen. Was das deutsche Volk heute braucht, ist Brot und Arbeit.

General: Denken Sie, Herr Baron, dass man hier abgehoeert wird?

von Papen: Ach nein, wir haben ja heute nichts mehr zu verheimlichen. Ich denke, das einzige, dass man jetzt machen kann, ist den Amerikaner helfen, politisch und wirtschaftlich.

Knobelsdorff: Ja, Herr Baron, man hat uns schon verschiedene Male gefragt, welche Leute fuer den Wiederaufbau in Frage kommen. Da haben wir von Blaskowitz und Sie Herr Baron, genannt. Aber man hat kein Interesse an Ihnen.

General: Herr Baron, man hat uns gesagt, dass man in Ihrer Botschaft in Ankara allerhand Papiere gefunden haette. Sie haetten nicht alles verbrannt.

von Papen: Was! Das ist ausgescholssen, voellig ausgescholssen, so was hat nie existiert.

General: Ja, sie haben es behauptet, wir koennen es ja nicht widerlegen.

von Papen: Wer hat denn Das behauptet?

General: Die Dolmetscher Offiziere, kleine Leute.

von Papen: Ach, das ist nur eine Geschichte, die sie behaupten da.

General: Sie behaupten, Sie waren der treibende Punkt vielfach in der Politik des Fuehrers dem Auslande gegenueber.

von Papen: Ja, so bin ich ja immer hingestellt worden.

General: Ja, die erste Frage, die mir vorgelegt wurde, war: Was halten Sie von Papen?

von Papen: So?

General: Ja, "Er hat doch das grosse Parteiabzeichen."

General: Ja, das ist doch ein Orden. Das wollen sie nicht begreifen. Sie koennen ueberhaupt nicht viel begreifen, z.B. den alten soldatischen Standpunkt.

General: Ich habe Sie empfohlen, sagte aber, Sie waeren jetzt zu alt fuer Sie.

von Papen: Leute, die mit Herz und Seele fuer das Regime gearbeitet haben, werden sie ueberhaupt ablehnen, das ist ganz klar. Das finde ich auch richtig. Es kommt auch darauf an, mit welchen Motiven man gearbeitet hat, ob man seine Pflicht getan hat, in diesen Jahren...

Ist der Blaskowitz eigentlich auch in Gefangenschaft?

Knobelsdorff: Weiss man nicht. Er hat aber Landungen und den Abwurf von Lebensmittel zugelassen. Und wenn Himmler das Angebot jetzt gemacht hat, ist ja Blaskowitz der erste, der mit seiner Armee kapitulieren muss.

von Papen: Der waere sicher ein geeigneter Mann, ich habe ihn auch genannt. Erstens ist er juenger wie Rundstedt und...

General: Rundstedt hat im uebrigen abgelehnt wegen seiner Taetigkeit am 20. Juli als Richter.

General: Da hatten alle nichts zu sagen. Ob er es ueberhaupt gewesen ist, koennten wir ja nicht beurteilen, denn es waere ja seine Unterschrift ohne weiteres irgendwo hinzusetzen. Und ob das Gericht der Generale ueberhaupt stattgefunden hat, koennen wir nicht beurteilen.

von Papen: Aber Blaskowitz hat ja schon eine gute Rolle, weil er schon damals in Polen der Schweinerei entgangen ist.

General: Und er ist ein feiner Mann.

von Papen: Ist er dann mit seinem Herzen in Ordnung?

General: Nein, er ist sehr krank... Mannstein kommt meiner Ansicht nach fuer so eine Sache nicht in Frage...

General: Wenn wir Generale mitarbeiten sollen an dem Wiederaufbau, dann muessen sie uns versprechen, dass die alte Ostgrenze wieder hergestellt wird.

von Papen: Aber eine gemeinsame Aktion mit England gegen Russland ist unmoeglich. Das einzige ist, dass wir mit unserem guten Rat helfen koennen.

General: ... Ich weiss nicht, ob der Rest unter Deutschland spaeter mal bestehen bleiben kann.

von Papen: Und das ist auch zu verneinen.

General: Aber die Amerikaner gegen Russland?

von Papen: Die werden voellig gleichgueltig sein, ob ein kleiner oder grosser Teil Europas bolschewistisch wird. Daran haben die kein Interesse.

General: Daran haben sie doch Interesse.

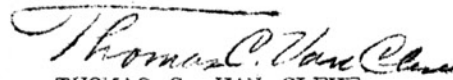
General: Was koennen die daran machen?

von Papen: Sie koennen gar nichts machen, da ihnen die Haende gebunden sind nach allen Richtungen, nach dem Ausland zu und das kann sich erst spaeter entwickeln. Das schoene ist ja nun, dass die...das Verderben der Atmosphaere durch die Schweinereien, die uns jetzt alle aufgelegt sind. Das ist ja jetzt das fuerchterlichste. Das macht nur die Nerven kaputt...

Es bleibt nichts uebrig mehr, unser Reich ist zerstoert, unsere Geschichte ist zerstoert, unser Ruf ist nach vielen Generationen nicht auszumerzen. Fuerchterlich, fuerchterlich! Und das wird auch seine Folge haben, gerade in dem Problem in der Behandlung Deutschlands, ist das das Allerschlimmste das uns passieren kann und amerikanische und englische Kommissionen bereisen diese Laeger und berichten darueber und das wird eine weltweite Propaganda, nicht wahr. Es ist ja so unbegreiflich, dass sowas in einem Kulturland passieren kann, dass man eigentlich voellig vor einem Raetsel steht.

General: Wir haben erklaert, wir wissen von den ganzen Sachen nichts, und haben mit den Sachen nichts zu tun gehabt.

von Papen: Gewiss.


THOMAS C. VAN CLEVE
Lt. Col. A.U.S.
Commanding,
6824 DIC (MIS)