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Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 436,
dated May 29, 1945, from Ambassador
Murphy.

BODENSCHATZ: CORRING said that I should report the GRAZIANI incident to the FUEHRER before MUSSOLINI (who was en route by train) arrived in SALZBURG. (Having described a difference of opinion with GRAZIANI about disarming an Italian division.) I did so at 1215 hours, telling him about the GRAZIANI incident, and the FUEHRER asked me to attend the conference on the military situation with him, which was scheduled for 1230 hours. I entered with the FUEHRER and after about five or six minutes the explosion occurred, which I will now describe in detail. I can only do that by making a sketch (see appendix). The FUEHRER was standing here--number one. General HEUSINGER, who was Deputy Chief of the General Staff and reported on the ground situation, number two, stood here; incidentally, he is still alive. Oberst BRANDT, his assistant, number three was here, and there was someone else here whom I don't recall. A stenographer, number four, was here. Between the man whose name I can't recall and here (demonstrating), looking over their shoulders, were five and six, that was we two, five was General KORTEN, Chief of the General Staff of the GAF and six, myself, General BODENSCHATZ. KRITEL was number seven and number eight was JODL. Standing at the back--number nine--was General SCHMUNDT. This is all I can remember. Nothing else. The bomb was under the table, and I was there listening for about five or six minutes when it exploded. I didn't see the bomb, but I was told it was a very small one, weighing something like 1 kg only. It was in a briefcase. My impression of the explosion was, there was first a very sharp crack accompanied by a tremendous flash, rather like the sort of flash you used to make when taking photographs at night. I collapsed and saw only smoke and fumes. I don't remember seeing a single person. I was completely conscious but heard no cries or groans, nothing. After picking myself up, unaided, I went out into the open and sat down in the grass about 30 paces away from the hut. General BUEHE was the second person to come running out. I asked him whether anything had happened to the FUEHRER, and he said "No." I hailed a car which happened to be passing and got into it with General BUEHE and drove to the nearest hospital, which was about 4 km away from the FHQ, still completely conscious. I was immediately operated on there. My wounds were: burns on the right side of my body, burned hands and the whole of my face burned, severe concussion and in addition to that both my ear-drums had burst so that my hearing was affected 50 - 60 per cent. And that's the story of the attempted assassination.

RAFO: How far away from the bomb were you?

BODENSCHATZ: One m away; I was the nearest to it. The stenographer, number four, had both legs blown off and died a few hours later. No one was killed outright. Those who suffered the worst injuries were the ones around the bomb, Oberst BRANDT, General KORTEN, myself, and General SCHMUNDT, i.e. three, five, six, and nine; of these, three, five, and nine died. Number three and number five died two days afterwards, General SCHMUNDT three weeks later; while I, the only one to get away with my life, was so badly wounded that I am no longer fit for service. Consequently, I've been released from

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the service since the Spring of this year. All the other officers, including HITLER, were only slightly burned, though they all had damaged ear-drums. The FUHRER's ear-drums were only slightly damaged and were completely healed in a few weeks. He also had slight bruising of his upper thigh or arm--I think it was of his arm. But he was so slightly wounded that two hours later, at three o'clock, he was able to meet MUSSOLINI at the station and then go into conference with him. GOERING, who heard about the attempted assassination, drove off at once and arrived there two or three hours later. The reason we escaped--so I heard--was because it was a wooden hutment, with the result that the roof and the side sections fell apart immediately. But the main thing was that under the floor of the hutment there was an air-space of 8m. Consequently the whole force of the explosion went out below. So I was told, all the blast passed under the hutment and landed on the room opposite. Had the conference been in the room where it always had been held before, none of the persons present would have survived.

RAFO: Which room was that?

BODENSCHATZ: The FUHRERbunker. At the time it was being reinforced with concrete and, as a result, the FUHRER had for several weeks held the conference in this hutment. I was in the hospital for three months, first 14 days at RASTENBURG and then in BERLIN in the GAF hospital, in the Zoo-Hochbunker. On GOERING's order a hospital with 300 beds and everything was installed in one of the large Flak towers. During air-raids you didn't need to go into the shelter in that hospital. I was looked after by Professor Dr. GORHAND, the best surgeon in that line. I owe my life to him.

RAFO: What was the intention of the attempted assassination?

BODENSCHATZ: The assassinator was Oberst von STAUFFENBERG, who was Chief of the General Staff of the Commander of the Reserve Army, General-oberst FROMM. Oberst STAUFFENBERG frequently visited the FUHRER's HQ because he was the man who, let's say ... those "Divisionen" which had to be formed quickly - the Russians had just broken through at the time and Adolf HITLER had ordered the quick formation of 15 new "Sperrdivisionen". He was in charge of that job, so that at that particular moment, when the situation on the Eastern front was critical, he was very important to the FUHRER. Consequently, he was frequently in the FUHRER's HQ and was well known there. Therefore, when STAUFFENBERG appeared in the FUHRER's HQ, came into the conference, and put down that briefcase, it was nothing out of the ordinary. He had free entry there, frequently came there, and no one thought that he would make an attempt on the FUHRER's life. I am ignorant of what his motives were; presumably he belonged to that clique--there were a great many officers on the General Staff of the Army who were implicated in the affair and who knew about it. The influential heads of sections in the General Staff were on STAUFFENBERG's side, and they knew about it and wanted the FUHRER assassinated. In some way or other they had been initiated into STAUFFENBERG's plan

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of killing the FUEHRER. Someone asked me: "Were you in favor of the attempt on the FUEHRER's life or were you against it?" I answered: "I was opposed to it as he intended killing me too." In the meantime I met a lot of officers in the camp at AUGSBURG, and it was their opinion that: "STAUFFENBERG isn't an assassin; his motives for doing it were probably noble ones; he may have done it in order to set the German people free." That's quite right. But if an officer perceives that the FUEHRER is 100 per cent wrong and wants to save the German people from him, then according to my conception of honor as an officer he should not do it by secretly placing a bomb like that and then rushing out and watching to see whether they would all be blown up, but he should also make the sacrifice himself. He had the opportunity of being with the FUEHRER a hundred times; all right, he could shoot him and then shoot himself. But if he places a bomb like that and thereby causes the death of his own comrades, we call that murder.

RAFO: The statement appeared in the English newspapers that it might not have been a real attempt against the FUEHRER's life at all.

BODENSCHATZ: Against whom then?

RAFO: It was thought that perhaps it was all arranged by the FUEHRER himself.

BODENSCHATZ: No, I consider that absolutely out of the question that the FUEHRER would murder his closest collaborators, viz., SCHUBERT and those people. What would be the point of it? Nor would he need to do it in such a way that he was in danger himself. And STAUFFENBERG confessed to it.

RAFO: What was the reaction of the German population to this?

BODENSCHATZ: I had the impression that the population did not approve of the way it was done.

RAFO: Did HITLER become more popular?

BODENSCHATZ: One cannot say that. When you see that the war--from STALINGRAD onwards there were always withdrawals; quite obviously that doesn't make you more popular. Because HITLER was such an extremely fascinating man he had the people's confidence to the greatest possible extent, and this confidence then kept decreasing. It was interesting for me; as I was always with GOERING and only saw the affair from that angle--if you are always in a certain circle you do become somewhat one-sided; you're not so much in touch with everyone, although I, personally, am of a very simple origin, which binds me to the common people--as a result I was interested in seeing things from a different angle, as I did during the last year when I was out of it all. It became apparent to me that the people's faith in the FUEHRER and the Party had declined considerably and that the little faith which remained disappeared completely during the last few months for the simple reason that a policy of senseless resistance was carried on. The German people said to themselves: "Now that the Americans are on the RHINE

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and the Russians on the ODER, it is high time we packed up. Anyone carrying on is crazy." That was the point of view of the German people. It was madness to carry on.

RAFO: What caused GOERING also to think you'd lost the war?

BODENSCHATZ: I saw very little of GOERING after July 20. Usually he would only inquire how I was getting on. It was very difficult to become my old self again, but I succeeded, thanks to my constitution and will-power. GOERING didn't like the war from the start. He always told me so. If GOERING had had a say in the matter, two things for certain would have been handled differently, viz., the Jewish question and the war. We should have solved the Jewish question in a different manner and there would have been no war. Six months before the war the REICHSMARSCHALL and I met some influential English industrialists. The conversation centered about the madness of waging war on each other. This meeting took place at SYLT; GOERING had a small seaside house there; and from there we went across to somewhere in NORTH SCHLESWIG. At any rate, it took place in SCHLESWIG-HOLSTEIN in 1938--a conference whose main theme was the lunacy of a war between Englishmen and Germans. I don't recall the various names of the people who were there.

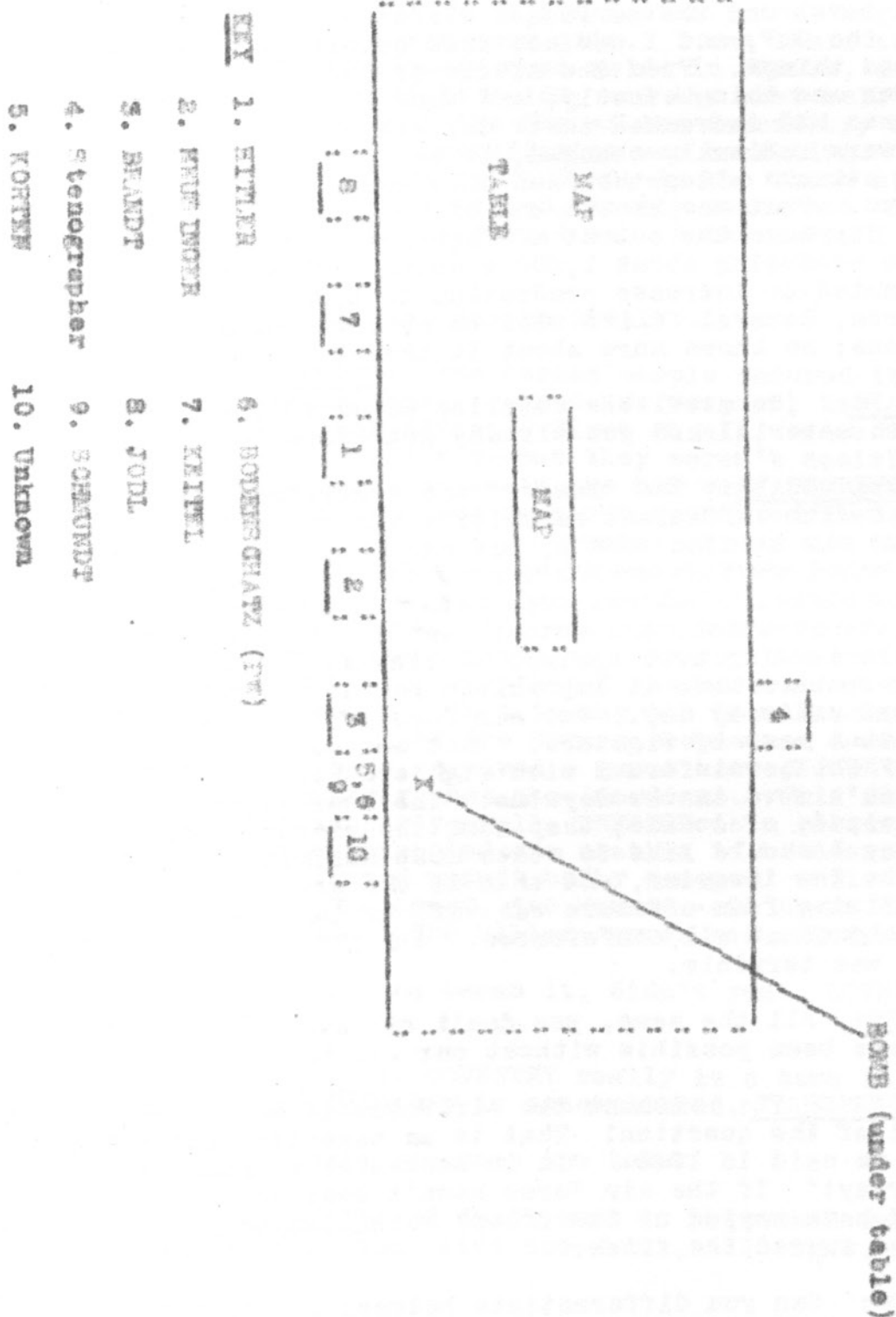
RAFO: Were the Englishmen friends of GOERING?

BODENSCHATZ: No, they weren't friends of his. Ministerialrat BOTTGER (?) who belonged to my department would be able to furnish particulars about that, for on that occasion he acted as interpreter and therefore knows all the details. Surely you've captured him too.

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RAFO: Just when during the war did our strategic air attack cause an alteration by the German General Staff of its tactical and strategic operational plans?

BODENSCHATZ: I wasn't on the General Staff of the GAF; I was only with GORRING, as liaison man, so to speak, within the GAF. So I never had anything to do with orders; all that was done by the General Staff of the GAF. I can merely tell you my view of it. My task was to level out the personnel differences, and so forth, within the GAF, and I was not kept continually informed of those things. From the middle of 1943 on--I can only remember one thing exactly, and that is that when the Americans had increased their day attacks so tremendously, plans were radically changed, it being decided to cease bomber attacks altogether and only continue to produce fighters. That was at the end of 1943, and the plan was to increase the output of fighters. At that time we were producing about 1,500 a month and by Autumn, 1944, they wanted to increase production to 5,000 a month. Of course, General KOLLER will be able to answer these questions; he knows more about it than I.

RAFO: (Re available supplies prior to invasion)
How much material had you already got there in FRANCE?

BODENSCHATZ: The "Bunker" and fortresses were provided with sufficient ammunition and provisions to last for six to nine months, but not with fuel. Fuel was so short that we couldn't afford to have dumps all over the place. That was even before the invasion began. During the invasion, the actual landing and the battles after the landing went against us because the enemy fighter-bombers made it impossible for us to move any motorized units by day. Our air force was too weak to combat that mass of fighters. That was Luftflotte 3, under SPERLE, reinforced with fighters from the REICH. We couldn't move in the daytime. The four-engined aircraft helped, of course; they took the place of artillery. One thing I should like to state most definitely in regard to the invasion, and that is the effect of the ships' firing from offshore was very trying indeed--this was mentioned at all conferences. All the troops reported that it was terrible.

RAFO: All the same, you don't believe the invasion would have been possible without our Air Force?

BODENSCHATZ: Without the Air Force it would have been out of the question! That is an essential condition, just as we said in 1940: "It is essential to gain air superiority!" If the Air Force hadn't been so strong we could have mopped up the troops which landed. Your Air Force turned the trick.

RAFO: Can you differentiate between the effect of night and of day bombing?

BODENSCHATZ: Yes, the chief results were gained by day. The disruption caused at night wasn't so great. Our troops could move at night.

RAFO: Was German industry and communications crippled by the American bombing of strategic targets?

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BODENSCHATZ: Yes, very much so, and I must tell you this quite frankly--it was the feeling among the German people too--and that is that we always had the impression that the Americans really did attack military targets, i.e., stations, factories, and so forth, whereas the English night bombers very frequently destroyed purely residential quarters along with these targets, and in this way the day bombers were, shall we say, more effective as regards our supplies; so we felt the Americans more, although your night raids were enough too. For instance, you continually made very heavy night raids on the hydro-generation plant at POELITZ, up near STETTIN, the shipyards in HAMBURG, and so on, but your results varied. Sometimes you only destroyed residential quarters; for instance, in DRESDEN there were 51,000 deaths in one night, women and children, it was very grim. I was there and saw the bodies. I experienced such raids in BERLIN, and the dangerous part of the night raids, and the most hellish for us, was not so much the HEs as the incendiary bombs. The effect of the incendiaries was appalling. I went through these raids on HAMBURG; in the three nights 28,000 persons were killed, mostly women and children, so the "Gauleiter" informed me. Personally, I saw thousands.

RAFO: And the German people....

BODENSCHATZ: The German people endured it in the hope of new weapons. We had new weapons, too, only they didn't come into effect. First of all, there were the V-weapons--V 1 and V 2--but they weren't decisive. The decisive factors for us in the GAF were the jet-propelled aircraft. If they had come out a year earlier, our situation would have been better. Secondly, there was the modern U-boat. For those reasons it was believed that the tide would turn--not that we should win the war as you have, but that we should have some basis for saying: "Now, let us discuss matters." As for the raids on GERMANY, I can only say that I saw several of them and they were dreadful; that is why the German people are so bitter. The bulk of the German people, as a result of these raids, have acquired a great hatred for the English race, particularly, not the Americans. This is because the RAF particularly--well, DRESDEN is a cultural center. One would have expected the station to be destroyed, but the station itself wasn't badly damaged, while the State Theater, the "Zwinger", the Museum--all those cultural monuments--and 51,000 killed--women and children.

RAFO: But you began it, didn't you? COVENTRY, GUERNICAT

BODENSCHATZ: COVENTRY really is a town in which the aircraft industry is concentrated.

RAFO: Have you seen the town?

BODENSCHATZ: I don't want to whitewash ourselves. It happened on your side too--well, all right, we started it.

RAFO: The terror raid by night doesn't have the same effect?

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BODENSCHATZ: With day raids the target is visible and the aim is more accurate. When these bomb carpets which the Americans laid were accurate, they destroyed everything completely.

RAFO: If the factories or means of communication were not crippled, what sphere of industry or the armed forces did suffer in the raids?

BODENSCHATZ: Actually everything industrial suffered; not only the aircraft industry suffered, but the other factories as well. For instance, the hydrogenation plants, all the factories producing armaments, as in CASSEL. The HEUSCHKE factory in CASSEL, where the tanks were manufactured, was severely damaged, and the cannon factories and weapon factories in BERLIN were also badly hit. In fact, all industry--there isn't a place in GERMANY which you haven't bombed. There are no factories left, there's nothing more to be done.

RAFO: Then one can say that German industry isn't only crippled, it is completely wiped out?

BODENSCHATZ: Yes. The show is over now, there's nothing left.

RAFO: Do you believe the industry is so completely destroyed....

BODENSCHATZ: I can't say. Later on a great deal of plant was dispersed, camouflaged, taken into the woods to huts, and so on. There will be something left. You can see that for yourselves, you have the right now to go everywhere. Herr SAUER, SPEER's right-hand man, would be the best person to refer to in all those questions; he has everything at his finger tips. He is an expert in that sphere and can tell you every factory in GERMANY, how it stands, where it stands, and how much of it still exists.

RAFO: If industry has gone underground....

BODENSCHATZ: We already had many factories underground. Near HEIDELBERG, in THURINGEN, there were factories in tunnels, and so on, which had 7,000 - 10,000 workers. That was all well under way. But it was no use, we were able to construct many aircraft, but we had no fuel for them! We'd reached the point where we could construct thousands of aircraft per month underground.

RAFO: How many?

BODENSCHATZ: Well, I can't say exactly, SAUER knows that; but I estimate that we could have built 1,500 to 2,000 per month underground. In addition, the engines, which is the most important thing in that business, but the hydrogenation plants - the production of petrol from coal below ground is a technical impossibility - that finished it. Finally those plants were systematically destroyed by you.

RAFO: Is the Allied Air Force mainly to thank for the fact that GERMANY has lost the war?

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BODENSCHATZ: The decisive point--that is, the most important factor--was the superiority of Allied air power. Another reason--a political mistake--was, of course, embarking on the Russian campaign and a war on two fronts. That was the beginning. There were other things as well. By reason of various occurrences in the GAF the appearance of new types, such as these jet-propelled fighters, was delayed by a year. If there had been someone really energetic behind it, these jet-propelled aircraft could have appeared a year earlier. It would have improved things for us. Thirdly, the Army generals weren't really in it heart and soul. After all, they made that attempt on HITLER's life. I know the set-up of the Officers' Corps of the Army so well because I was with the "Reichswehr" from 1919-1933, and all the generals who came to the fore then were people from the "Reichswehr". They couldn't understand modern warfare properly. In my opinion, the German Army General Staff was incompetent, because all the strategic plans were made by the FUEHRER and not by them. They always made a bloody mess of things. Some day, when you've time, I'll tell you how HITLER, for instance, built the WESTWALL, the opposition he met with from the Army, the genius with which he tackled the campaign in POLAND, how he made the strategic plans against FRANCE, etc. The Army wanted to do all that differently. The FUEHRER only erred in the case of RUSSIA. To my mind: "Errare humanum est."

HAFO: Then HITLER's plans of attack were better than those of the officers?

BODENSCHATZ: In my opinion, what the Army Chief-of-Staff said and the "General de Pioniere" said was just bloody nonsense. It was quite out of date. The chief reason for that was that the majority of the officers in the High Command of the Army were not commanders of forces in the field in the last war, but were in General Staff jobs and rose from them, whereas the FUEHRER knew what mattered at the front, for he was an ordinary soldier.

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