

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES
RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS BRANCH
BIOGRAPHICAL REPORT

53.033
General Donovan

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Index of Statements
in Report

Name: SCHWERIN von KROSIGK, Graf Johann
Ludwig ("Lutz")
Nationality: German
Region: Berlin W. 68, Wilhelmplatz 1
(business)
Berlin-Zehlendorf, Thielallee 89 (home)
Position: Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Reich Minister of
Finance, 2/

On Region: J I 2

On Occupation: 5 A

On Political
Affiliations: 13

Birth Date and Place: 23 August 1887, Rathmannsdorf, Anhalt

Religion: Protestant (attended services conducted by Niemöller) 5/

Family History: Krosigk is the son of Erich Adolf von Krosigk (1829-1911) by
his second wife, Luise Gräfin (Countess) von Schwerin (1852-1920) of the Göttingen
branch of the family.

Subject was adopted on 17 May 1925, at the age of 37, by his mother's brother,
Alfred Graf von Schwerin. Since that time Johann Ludwig von Krosigk bears the
name and title of Graf Schwerin von Krosigk.

He married his half-niece, Ehrengard von Plettenberg (born 1895) in Berlin
16 February 1919. They have eight children born between 1920 and 1936. 1/2/

Education and Work History: Schwerin von Krosigk attended the Klosterschule Ros-
leben. Upon graduation in 1905 he studied law and political science at the
Universities of Lausanne, Oxford and Halle.

1909 First state law examination at the Oberlandesgericht Naumburg

1909 Referendar (law clerk) at the district court in Stassfurt

1909-1910 Voluntary military service with the 2nd Pomeranian Uhlans Regt.

1910 Government clerk (Regierungsreferendar) in the District Admini-
stration, Stettin

1914 Regierungsassessor

1914-1918 Service in World War I as first lieutenant; wounded; decorated
with the Iron Cross Classes I and II.

1919 Regierungsassessor in the county administration (Landrat) in
Hindenburg, Upper Silesia

1920 Regierungsrat (Government councillor) in the Reich Ministry of
Finance

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Education and Work History: (cont.)

- 1922 Oberregierungsrat in the Reich Ministry of Finance
- 1924 Ministerialrat (Ministerial Councillor) in the Reich Ministry of Finance
- 1925 Generalreferent für den Reichshaushalt (official in charge of preparing and supervising the budget of the German Reich)
- 1 January 1929 Ministerialdirektor (division chief) and head of the Budget Division of the Reich Ministry of Finance
- 2 July 1932 to date Reich Minister of Finance in the Papen Cabinet and under Hindenburg
- 1933 Delegate to the London Conference 5/
Member of the Academy of German Law
- May 1945 Appointed German Foreign Minister by Dönitz

Political History: Although nothing is known about Schwerin von Krosigk's political affiliations under the republic, it may be assumed, on the basis of his origin, that he belonged to conservative circles.

According to source 7/, Schwerin von Krosigk was often a guest of the so-called Herrenklub (gentlemen's club) where Papen, Freiherr von Gayl, Herr von Helldorf, von Schleicher, and others met to prepare the overthrow of the republican Weimar government and the establishment of a conservative, semi-totalitarian Reich government. To what extent Schwerin von Krosigk participated actively in this planning is not known. But the fact that Hindenburg, at Papen's instigation, appointed him Reich Minister of Finance, indicates that the Reich President and Papen and his clique had full confidence in Schwerin von Krosigk.

In February 1933 it was said of him that he would serve any government because he had "seven children, no money and no business ability." 6/

The New York periodical Aufbau 9/ recalls that Schwerin von Krosigk, who, as Reich Minister of Finance, was responsible for the robberies committed against German Jews, had written numerous letters to British and American friends from 1933 to 1939 wherein he flatly denied all German atrocities. Especially significant is Schwerin von Krosigk's letter of 8 September 1933, quoted by source 9/, to the editor of the London Economist who had informed the British public of atrocities committed in Germany against political prisoners. Referring to this article, Schwerin von Krosigk says in the aforesaid letter: "Hindenburg assures law, order and employment in Germany. All other statements in Germany are only 'Emigrantenlügen'" (lies uttered by emigrants).

After he was appointed Foreign Minister by Dönitz in May 1945, he declared over the Hamburg radio that "Germany could have saved Europe from Bolshevism if its roar had not been threatened" 8/. A few days later Schwerin von Krosigk

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Political History: (cont.) told the German people over the Flensburg radio that Dönitz had ordered the unconditional surrender of all German forces 10/, adding that "in our nation justice shall be the supreme law and the guiding principle." In this radio speech he also demanded that Germany should recognize "law as the basis of all relations between the nations" assuring the listeners that "then Germany may hope that she will again receive the freedom without which no nation can lead a bearable and dignified existence." In another radio speech, delivered some days later over the Flensburg radio, he asserted that the Western Allies have virtually only the alternative between a Bolshevik Germany and a Germany ruled by the Dönitz government. 11/ When Schwerin von Krosigk became Minister of Finance in the Hitler government in 1933, he was not a member of the Nazi Party. But party membership was granted to him by Hitler on 30 January 1937 9/.

Evaluation (according to source 6/): Schwerin von Krosigk has demonstrated his willingness to serve any government. He served the German Republic as a conservative "loyal civil servant." He participated in the Papen government that put an end to the republican Prussian Government in July 1932. He was Hitler's Minister of Finance for more than 12 years and therefore shares responsibility for crimes committed by this government. After Dönitz had himself proclaimed the new head of the German Reich, Schwerin von Krosigk did not hesitate to join Dönitz' government as Foreign Minister. Of the non-Nazis who in 1933 accepted ministerial posts in the Nazi government, only Franz Seldte, Reich Minister of Labor, and Schwerin von Krosigk remained in office up to the day of unconditional surrender, and both joined the Dönitz government 11/. While Seldte is reported to have become a member of the Nazi party shortly after Hitler came to power, Schwerin von Krosigk was granted party membership by Hitler on 30 January 1937. Schwerin von Krosigk's position and attitude under the Nazi regime mark him as a Nazi.

Information up to May 1945

Sources: 1/ Taschenbuch der Gräflichen Häuser, 1938, p. 525; pp. 406-407.

2/ Taschenbuch der Adeligen Häuser, Teil A, 1937, p. 287

3/ Deutsches Führer Lexikon, 1934/35

4/ Wer Ist's, 1935

5/ Cuno Horkenbach, Das Deutsche Reich von 1918 bis Heute, 1935, vol. 1

6/ OSS Source T, 2 May 1945

7/ Friedrich Stampfer, Die 14 Jahre der Ersten Deutschen Republik, p. 574

8/ New York Times, 3 May 1945, p. 4 c

9/ Aufbau, New York, 11 May 1945, p 7 c 3 f

10/ New York Times 7 May 1945, p. 3, c. 1

11/ New York Times 15 May 1945, p. 5, c 1

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Sources: (cont.)

12/ New York Times 24 May 1945, p. 9 c. 4

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