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The conversations in this report were obtained at 200 Mobile Unit, CSDIC, CMF, at 15 Army Group.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Appointment</u>
WOLFF	SS Obergruppenfuehrer und General der Waffen-SS.	Military Plenipotentiary in ITALY and Highest SS officer.
HARSTER	SS Gruppenfuehrer und Generalleutnant der Polizei.	B.d.S. ITALIEN
DOLLMANN	SS Oberfuehrer	SS LO to C in C SOUTH-WEST.

If the information contained in this report is required for further distribution, prisoners' names should NOT be mentioned and the text so paraphrased as to give no indication of the methods by which it is obtained.

Rutnell ing Capt
for (W.S. VALENTINE.)
Lt-Col.
Comd, CSDIC, CMF.

C.S.D.I.C.,
C.M.F.

22 May 45.

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CONTENTS

This report contains conversations between WOLFF, the SS general who was largely instrumental in organising the negotiations which led to the unconditional capitulation of the German and Italian Republican forces in Northern ITALY, Col DOLLMANN, the SS Liaison Officer to the C in C SOUTH-WEST, and General HARSTER, the head of the Sicherheitspolizei and Sicherheitsdienst in ITALY. The subjects discussed are:-

1. Responsibility for actions taken by the SS and SD.
2. Heinrich HIMMLER.
3. The capitulation negotiations.
4. Events in ITALY after BADOGLIO's coup d'etat in 1943.
5. The decline of the SS.
6. A comment on SCHACHT.
7. The wives of some prominent Nazis.

Personalities mentioned in the text.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Appointment</u>
BORGHESE, Prince	Commander of 10 Flotilla MAS.
BRECKER Arno	Former Vice-President of the Chamber of Fine Arts.
DIETRICH Sepp	SS Oberstgruppenfuehrer. Former GOC 6 SS Panzer Army.
HOFER Franz	SA Obergruppenfuehrer. Gauleiter of Reichsgau TIROL-VORARLBERG.
KAPPLER	SS Obersturmbannfuehrer. LO to Italian Police. Formerly OC Sipo and SD Einsatzkommando ROME.
LEYERS	Major General. On Military Economics and Armament Staff ITALY.
SCHACHT	Reich Minister without portfolio. Former President of the Reichsbank.
STUDENT	Colonel-General. GOC Army Group H.
SCHUSTER Cardinal	Archbishop of MILAN
Von VIETINGHOFF	Colonel-General. C in C SOUTH WEST until shortly before the capitulation.
WENNER	SS Obersturmbannfuehrer. Adjutant to WOLFF.

Conversations held on 15-17 May 45.

1. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE SS AND SD.

WOLFF : I've already told these people that I'm ready to accept full responsibility, that I'm willing to be responsible for HARSTER's actions and those of his subordinates, as he has my complete confidence and I know almost all his men personally. There isn't one amongst them who has been guilty of any crime. HOFER is supposed to have been hanged because just at the very end he was foolish enough to have a number of people shot. That certainly happened without my knowledge and without any orders from me.

The orders I received towards the end were pure forgery, and clumsy forgery at that. On the 20th of April I received an order from Abwehr Abteilung III addressed to heads of Abteilungen, stating that all agents (V-Leute) were to be handed over to the SD or the Feld Police and shot by them. I went there and said "If you want to shoot anybody, do it yourself."

DOLLMANN : As the result of the order concerning organised man-hunts addressed by the Reichsfuehrer to VIETINGHOFF, a very serious quarrel broke out between them. VIETINGHOFF cancelled this order on his own authority.

HARSTER : Towards the end every senior officer wanted to be in supreme command, and all of them issued the most irresponsible orders to their subordinates. I once had to interfere myself in a case like that, where I cancelled an order, given by an Obersturmbannfuehrer, to move one thousand three hundred civilians to PARMA.

WOLFF : SCHOMM of the "Schwarze Corps" certainly brought us into disrepute. In a leading article he associated the SD with some "deed of valour", which caused a great deal of unfavourable comment among the people at the time, and would no doubt have the same effect on these people here unless we can prove that we had nothing to do with it.

The twelve thousand charred bodies and skeletons they've found in the concentration camps naturally speak against us, and are evidence which we will never be able to disprove. Yet I think that things could be found which speak in our favour, if the Allies only wanted to find them. But there is such hatred for us amongst these people that all we can expect is a terrible revenge.

DOLLMANN : I was asked when I had last been in a concentration camp. I had to think very carefully before I made my answer. I said in 1940. We had one in VERONA, but it wasn't nearly as cruel.

WOLFF : Did CARPI indulge in any dirty business of that sort.?

DOLLMANN : No. It's easy enough to bring up these negative points against us, but why don't they also look for the positive ones? It would have been quite easy for us to have blown the whole of FLORENCE into the air. It would have cost us nothing. But when this plan was discussed at a meeting in the Hotel EXCELSIOR, I turned it down.

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WOLFF : What I still can't understand is that responsible people like KESSELRING are sitting in GERMANY and going for walks in the sun with JODL and KEITEL. It's quite incredible. But I have to add that I too bear responsibility for the SS on my shoulders. But why don't these people sometimes draw attention to the good deeds as well ! For instance, I got quite a few of the old Social Democrats and Reichstag representatives out of concentration camps, merely because I was just and knew that they were there for no valid reason.

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2. HEINRICH HIMMLER.

WOLFF : The Reichsfuehrer is of course more to blame than anyone. It was his task not to lose his influence over the people working with him. It's only because of his half measures that the whole of the German nation is today guilty of bloodshed. The Reichsfuehrer never made a single unequivocal decision. His great mistake was that he didn't get rid of all the irresolute men in good time.

The Reichsfuehrer saw the whole gigantic war guilt and catastrophe inevitably coming towards us. But he didn't have the courage to say so. On the contrary, he even added to it. Oh hell ! If someone has gone mad and is leading the whole nation to utter destruction - surely the Reichsfuehrer had a higher duty to perform. He should have made use of his power and eliminated the FUEHRER.

DOLLMANN : Then at least he would have performed a truly historic deed. Where is it really that the fault lies in the Reichsfuehrer.? Surely in his lack of humanity. There's certainly no lack of personality. Because at one time he definitely had great ideas.

WOLFF : But even the ideas he had pilfered. He is a very intelligent man with a very keenly developed sense for picking out the right things, but there is nothing human about him. All his friendships went to pieces, every single one. He exploited everybody shamelessly, he stole everybody's best ideas and plans. He took some of ROSENBERG's ideas for instance, he picked the best out of everybody's work and then very cleverly put it together again. In the early days he led us with consummate skill, he preached beautiful, good and noble ideals. Throughout the years when we fought for power, and the following years, when he was still dependent on his men, he threw his whole heart and soul into it. And for that reason the hearts and the whole mental and physical strength, and the willingness to fight, of his men belonged to him. Later on that was too much trouble for him. He became too powerful, and just as he aped the FUEHRER in more or less everything, he then began to use force and take advantage of his power. From that moment onwards he was responsible for the most fantastic injustices and instances of ingratitude. While I was still there I somehow managed to smoothe things over. But then, when he broke even with me, it was all over. I told him, or rather I had him told by a third person, that even if we won the war, the Reichsfuehrer would find himself completely isolated - or at least only surrounded by a few desperadoes. Everybody who had an ounce of character preferred to break stones for the rest of his life rather than remain with him.

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During the twelve years that I stood beside the Reichsfuehrer I tried never to let a shadow fall over the things we undertook to do, I tried to remain honest and not to go the same way as all the others. But while I was having all sorts of difficulties with my family he made things as awkward as he could. I was in the Reichsfuehrer's headquarters one day. My wife was with the children at a place on the Baltic Coast near KOENIGSBERG. I wanted to go to my wife, but HIMMLER told me that I would have to stay at headquarters. I told him that from where my family was staying I could reach him in an hour and a half if he needed me. That immediately made him angry. On the next day I decided to tackle him on the subject once and for all. The Reichsfuehrer said: "You don't seem to understand the position you're in, you don't appreciate the situation in which you find yourself". I replied: "Oh yes, Reichsfuehrer, I know the situation I'm in even better than you do". Then I went up close to him and looked him straight in the eyes. He was sitting behind his writing desk. "I have to admit that I don't quite understand you", I said. "Even if you personally have changed your attitude towards me, don't you think that it might be unwise to undermine my authority so intentionally and publicly in front of everybody, when one day you may stand in bitter need of it". I looked straight at him! He changed his tune immediately. "Very well, what I said wasn't meant like that at all. I've done what I've done for perfectly definite reasons, please try to appreciate that". I said: "I don't expect any favours from you, but I do expect to be treated honourably. After all, I too played my part in the creation of the SS".

All those people who were always talking about honour and trying to educate us have let us down and now it is we who have to pay, we have to submit to bad treatment by the Jews. And why? Because everything was always done half-heartedly.

It was perfectly clear to the Reichsfuehrer what he ought to do - he was to jump from a plane and disappear for ever. I pray God that he may have found the courage for that last act. I shall always protect his family and the families of the others too. But if he still shows cowardice now, then I can't be held responsible if decent people have to go to PALESTINE and SYRIA to work in sulphur mines - all because certain gentlemen want to save their skins.

No, if the Reichsfuehrer's alive now, there's only one possibility left for him: not to sham dead now, but to step before the people and say that the SD and the Police, especially in RUSSIA, were carrying out orders which he had given.

DOLLMANN : He should have stepped forward and said "These men are guilty, and these performed such and such acts by my orders. It's absolutely contemptible and rotten that he has just disappeared.

WOLFF : He should have fallen in the fighting. Even a suicide would have been a manly way out, although it carries an admission of guilt. The question is whether he will give himself up or whether DOENITZ will hand him over.

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3. THE CAPITULATION NEGOTIATIONS.

HARSTER : During the interrogation I was repeatedly asked about my relations with General WOLFF. I said that he had been to see me several times and that I had been employed in various capacities since the beginning of the negotiations with the Allies. Naturally I did not know by name all the other people who were involved.

WOLFF : I described the difficulties of my work quite frankly and repeatedly mentioned the people who had been working with me - that includes you too, HARSTER, in order to make their position easier. During the several conferences of commanding officers I invariably suggested the easy way - no strikes, no shootings, no destruction, no ill-treatment. Unfortunately I could not always prevent these things, especially as I had to put up with a great deal of interference from the Reichsfuehrer.

One afternoon, the DUCE, GRAZIANI and a few others were in MILAN for a conference. The interesting thing was that the DUCE was in one room and the Committee of National Liberation in the very next one. The DUCE was very excited. He said that the negotiations had been carried on behind his back and that they had been kept secret from him. He wanted to do something quite incredible - he wanted to lodge a formal protest. But then he decided to go to COMO, he wanted to drive along the west side and go to his refuge. I did everything to dissuade him from it. If he had listened to my advice I could have got him and the PETACCI a plane to take them to SPAIN.

GRAZIANI went to LEYERS to ask for his advice and then he came to FUSO where I had a long talk to him. I explained to him how the negotiations had developed. I also told him that the Italians could not attend the discussions, as every Italian would be looked on as a traitor. I told him, and also the DUCE, that I guaranteed to get the same conditions for the Italians as for the Germans. I told the DUCE: "We helped you a year ago and we also helped every single member of your family. You can rely on me. We have two motives: firstly, to avoid any further damage to ITALY; secondly, to avoid further unnecessary bloodshed. Have you any demands to make or any wishes you would like to express?" This conversation took place in the presence of his foreign minister AMERUZZO (?)

DOLLMANN : You couldn't have been more loyal.

WOLFF : Then he said: "No, no, that's difficult to say just on the spur of the moment - I leave it to you". I then said, "Thank you, DUCE, I will let you have news as soon as possible". Well, I couldn't have acted more fairly or honourably. I said the same to GRAZIANI. He was deeply satisfied because he had been very depressed about this apparent or alleged betrayal. GRAZIANI said that he couldn't have imagined anything else, he had known me for so long and we had always treated them very honourably and put all our cards on the table. Cardinal SCHUSTER was definitely against consulting the DUCE at all. As a result GRAZIANI then gave me full powers to act on his behalf.

DOLLMANN : I didn't know that.

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WOLFF : He gave me a written document which said: "I, Rudolfo GRAZIANI, Marshal of ITALY, herewith empower the General of the Waffen SS and Police, etc. etc., - to conclude an armistice in my name, in my capacity as Italian Minister of War, under the same conditions as for the German Army and all units under his command".

DOLLMANN : I didn't know that.

WOLFF : It's quite a historic document.

DOLLMANN : Where is it now ?

WOLFF : It was taken from me. I gave one copy to GAEVNITZ and one to WENNER in which I quoted the text of the document and signed it, as I couldn't go to the negotiations myself. The executive power then passed to my adjutant. I never lied to the DUCE. I told him: "We can last at the most from two to four weeks". That was my opinion, and I also made it perfectly clear to BORGHESI.

4. EVENTS IN ITALY AFTER BADOGLIO'S COUP D'ETAT IN 1943.

WOLFF : BADOGLIO's putsch was on the 25th of July. On the 10th or 12th of August KESSELRING suddenly invited me to have dinner with him at FRASCATI. I got up there and found a swarthy, narrow-eyed general sitting there who called himself STUDENT, was very bad mannered, and generally got on my nerves in every way. After dinner KESSELRING excused himself, saying that he had some important matter to settle with the FUEHRER's headquarters. An important matter ! He came back, gave me a piercing look - you know KESSELRING yourself - and said that FUEHRER headquarters had important projects which were to come under our combined command. An order from the FUEHRER might arrive any hour, any day or any week to remove the entire Italian government, the whole cabinet, all the financiers, and all the most important members of the royal house, down to the smallest child and grandchild, from the town itself, to remove them to FUEHRER headquarters. "As I have known you for so long, may I ask you for your opinion ?" I said "My attitude from the political point of view will not be decisive - that isn't my job. Practically I think the plan impossible to carry out because BADOGLIO has already sent nine Italian divisions to the various places concerned. Also I must draw attention to the enormous damage such an act would do us in the eyes of the Catholic world. And I presume, sir, that when you spoke to the FUEHRER you declined to take any action". KESSELRING said "How do you know that ?" "I don't know, but I shouldn't think you capable of doing anything of the kind".

Later I and KAPPLER were called to a conference where the people concerned were discussed. The living quarters were photographed and the best photographs of the children, of the prince, and of Count BOLTICCI (?) were bought. I always told myself that we should never do it. But STUDENT told me that the matter was of such high importance that only the FUEHRER could make a decision On the 8th of August, HIMMLER, RIBBENTROP,

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KEITEL and AMERUZZO (?) were present at a conference. At four o'clock in the afternoon - it was a Sunday - the FUEHRER gave the order which arrived at six in the evening. In the meantime I met BETROLL (?) at KAPPLER's place. "Please come along at once, SEPP DIETRICH has arrived, he's seen KESSELRING and seems to be frightfully annoyed about something. It would be advisable to speak to him at once". We drove down and arrived at DIETRICH's place in the evening. DIETRICH said: "This thing isn't going to happen, we won't do it under any circumstances, it's absolute madness and can do no good at all. I can't imagine that such absolute foolishness is expected of us". Well, it went on like that:- the putsch will be tomorrow at five, the putsch will be at six on the day after tomorrow, the putsch will be at such-and-such a time - and that's how things remained. It would have done untold harm to our prestige if it had gone on like that. After the 8th of September STUDENT invited me to come and have tea with him at FRASCATI on the 15th of September. He was too damned friendly for my liking and said "I thank you for your help and your wonderful co-operation. The thing didn't come off because the Field Marshal sabotaged me everywhere. Because of him I did not succeed in becoming a historical figure". I said "Well, sir, sometimes one can become an even greater historical figure on the strength of a plan that was not carried out" ...

Everything was a great pity, for instance that the Reichsfuehrer would not allow me to go to BADOGLIO and talk to him. It was very foolish and wrong to forbid it. BADOGLIO might easily have had something interesting to tell me, or he might have wanted to ask me something - it was quite senseless not to have any communication with him.

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5. THE DECLINE OF THE SS.

WOLFF :

*What to
the man*

At the beginning we had very decent and gifted chaps in the SS, chaps who really could have become the nobility of a new society. Later, when instead of relying on willing obedience and devotion we changed over to orders and brute force, the whole thing became impossible. Even if we had won the war, the conception of a new society would have been sheer madness. The decent men in the SS, and also the many good lads in the Hitler Youth, have now got to suffer for these mistakes- things like the concentration camps and gas-chambers and incinerators. We should never have gone as far as that.

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6. A COMMENT ON SCHACHT.

DOLLMANN : What was the real reason why the FUEHRER dropped SCHACHT ?

WOLFF : He was very sarcastic and he played a certain part in the resistance movement. Besides that he was very plutocratic and belonged to the nobility. Strangely enough SCHACHT always showed a distinct liking for the SS and often said "the SS has remained incorrupt; the Reichsfuehrer is a good organiser - he worked his way to the top and yet remained a single man". SCHACHT's political opinions, however, were always a little beyond the pale.

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7. THE WIVES OF SOME PROMINENT NAZIS.

DOLLMANN : What sort of a woman was EVA BRAUN the FUEHRER's girl-friend ?
I know she used to work at PHOTO-HOFFMANN. Did she have charm ?

WOLFF : She was a very nice girl, and very charming too.

DOLLMANN : Did she stay unsophisticated, or did she too get exaggerated ideas ?

WOLFF : She stayed quite simple.

DOLLMANN : Did she have influence with the FUEHRER ?

WOLFF : Well, yes, but not in any way decisive influence - In questions affecting the choice of people, perhaps. She was fair, blue-eyed, of medium height, well built and careful of her appearance.

DOLLMANN : Frau GOEBBELS was very nice, too. She was a pretty woman.

WOLFF : Yes, attractive and intelligent. Frau BUHLER was nice, too.

DOLLMANN : But so common and vulgar.

WOLFF : I've always liked Frau SPEER. She always stood beside her husband, and had five children. The wife of ARNO BRECKER, the well-known sculptor, was quite impossible.

DOLLMANN : Wherever "Dame MARGA" (Frau HIMMLER) appeared something untoward happened.

WOLFF : And "PIPPY" was an abominable child. But you could never say anything to her father about her - that was dangerous.

DOLLMANN : What happened to the adopted child ?

WOLFF : I only know that it was given most unkind treatment.

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