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OFFICE OF U.S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of Karl WOLFF

By. Col. H. A. Brundage, 5Sept. 1945 A.M.

PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLICATED AND SUBJECTS

1. Karl WOLFF
 - a) Membership in NSDAP (p.1)
2. HITLER; HIMMLER, HEYDRICH
 - a) Roehm Putsch (p.4,8-9)
 - b) Powers of arrest and commitments to concentration camps (p.5,6-7,11,12-14,15)
 - (1) General Fritsch incident (p.10,11)
3. BORMANN
 - a) Unification of Government and NSDAP (p.3-4)
4. NSDAP
 - a) Early development (p.1,2-4,14)
 - b) Control of courts (p.12)
5. SS
 - a) Absorption of Gestapo and other police agencies (p.4)
 - b) As a military occupational force in Austria and Czechoslovakia (p.5)
6. GESTAPO
 - a) Early development under Goering (p.13)
 - b) Bavarian political police originally under Himmler (p.13-14)
 - c) Transfer of Prussian Gestapo to Himmler (p.13-14)
 - d) Commitment of persons to concentration camps (p.15)

MEMBERSHIP IN NSDAP

Wolff joined the Party and the SS in 1931. (1)

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF NSDAP

The Party at this time tried to gain people for Hitler's ideas, and the SS was mainly a protection for leading members; (1) later a force against anti-Nazi activities. (14) The immediate objective was to gain the power not by putsch like 1923, but on a legal basis.

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After this was achieved, 10 per cent of the best part of the population were to be gained as party members, with the SS never exceeding 10 per cent of the total membership. (p.2-3) All important positions in all branches of the government were occupied by Party members, and former Socialist officials were pensioned. (p.2-3) Some officials were Party members by necessity of circumstances, but in fact 30 percent of all officials were members. (p.3) Since the flight of Hess to England, Bormann tried to unite the government and Party (p.2-1)

DEVELOPMENT OF SS AND GESTAPO

In 1933, the SS became the protector of the whole state. (p.4) First the Gestapo was added to the SS in 1933. Then the Criminal Police, the General Police and Gendarmerie in 1936, and lastly the Weifen SS were incorporated in the SS, there by obtaining control of all key positions. (p.4)

Every disobedience was suppressed. When the institution of a radical SA state was attempted by means of the Roehm Putsch on June 30, 1934, all SA leaders, including Roehm, were arrested, and executed by decisions of Hitler, Himmler, and Heydrich. (p.4) About 77 were executed June 30th to July 2nd, in a Munich Jail by Hitler's Battalion without any court proceedings. (p.8-9) Many of them were homosexuals, or terrorists, but Himmler, merely using this occasion, added many of them to the execution list. (p.9) This all shows that the morale of the SS was still high. (p.9) During the invasions of Austria, Sudetenland and Czecho-Slovakia, the SS was used for the first time with the army, followed by the Party, to organize the population. (p.5)

POWERS OF ARREST

In important cases of disobedience or unfaithfulness, the chief of the security police, Heydrich, reported it to the head of the SS, Himmler, who made decisions in less important cases. (p.5) In very important matters Himmler submitted the records to Hitler. They decided whether to show the case to the public. (p.6) otherwise both made at once the final decision. Ordinary cases may have been turned over to the courts. (p.12-14) Only political matters and cases of significance reached Heydrich, Hitler, or Himmler (p.6-7) Experts were Keltenbrunner and Mueller. (p.7) If the average citizen was under suspicion, a party member informed the Gestapo, which questioned the subject, arrested him, and brought him before the proper court; in case of high treason, before the people's court. (p.7,11,12)

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An example of the procedure in an important matter was the case of Gen. Fritsch, who was an aristocrat and considered a reactionary by Hitler and Himmler and dangerous on account of his attitude against the Waffen SS. Heydrich learned in connection with a homosexual case that Fritsch was involved. He submitted the proof to Himmler, who took it to Hitler, who decided the destruction of all documents. (p.10) Before the Austrian invasion started, Hitler, wanting to get rid of Fritsch, ordered Dr. Best to reassemble all the evidence. But the evidence was not very convincing, and in view of the basic law still existing, Fritsch only retired. (p.11)

PARTY CONTROL OF COURTS

Wolff admits that during the war the Party's control over courts by sending confidential observers to the court section, but as far as he had heard, it was only toward the end of the war that judges were punished if the sentences were not agreeable to the Party (p.12).

DEVELOPMENT OF THE GESTAPO

Between January 1933 and April 1934, Goering as prime minister of Prussia, was responsible for the Gestapo and the creation of concentration camps. In Bavaria Himmler as police president of Munich since March 1933, appointed Heydrich as head of the political police of Bavaria. On account of the shortage of trained men, he was forced to keep everybody with the exception of known anti-Nazis and Jews. (p.13) Gradually he strengthened the Gestapo by adding members of other offices. Himmler added the surrounding provinces to his sphere, and finally Goering turned over to him the Prussia Gestapo. (p.13-14)

The Gestapo worked independently of all government or party branches. (p.14) The Gestapo could commit persons to a concentration camp only on the decision of Heydrich or Himmler, but Wolff insists he is not well informed on this subject because of his stay in Italy the last two years (15) He denied knowledge of the Gestapo committing persons to concentration camps without a trial (15).