

Defendant KARL DOENITZ

More than any other man Doenitz was responsible for the reconstruction and development of the U-boat arm of the German Navy. In 1935, as the Nazi naval rearmament program got under way, he was appointed commanding officer of the Weddigen U-boat flotilla, the first German U-boat unit to be formed openly since the Versailles Treaty. With Nazi financing he personally directed intensive research in the development of U-boat warfare, rising rapidly in rank and prominence during the years 1935-1939; due to his untiring work the U-boat fleet had by 1939 been built to formidable proportions. At the outbreak of war he was Konteradmiral in command of the U-boat arm, and in the following years, when German submarines were taking heavy toll of Allied and neutral shipping, he was promoted to Viceadmiral (1940) and Admiral (1942). On 30 January 1943 he was appointed by Hitler to succeed Raeder as commander-in-chief of the German navy with the rank of Grossadmiral, retaining direct command over the U-boats. During the concluding years of the war Doenitz was in constant consultation with Hitler and to the end assiduously attempted to foster a fanatical belief in the Fuehrer's genius among members of the Navy. As the Wehrmacht collapsed in the spring of 1945, Hitler appointed Doenitz as his successor, and after Hitler's purported death Doenitz on 1 May 1945 took over the reins of the German government as the new Fuehrer.

Doenitz used his position as chief of the U-boat arm during the rearmament and during war operations and his subsequent position as commander-in-chief of the Navy and adviser to the Fuehrer in such manner that:

(a) He participated in the plans and preparations of the Nazi conspirators for wars of aggression and wars in violation of international treaties and materially aided in the execution of such plans, inter alia, by personally directing the rebuilding of the U-boat arm for purposes of aggressive warfare.

(b) He participated in the waging of wars of aggression and wars in violation of international treaties and materially aided in such moves, inter alia, by personally directing war operations of the German Navy and by serving as intimate adviser to Hitler and as his successor on his purported death.