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Defendant Hjalmar Schacht

Between the years 1930 and 1933 Dr. Schacht, who had adopted the tenets of Mein Kampf and of National Socialism, lent his prestige, personal knowledge and efforts to discrediting the Republic abroad, and to persuading financiers and government officials throughout the world of the desirability of recognizing the National Socialist party as the one offering the most hopeful program for the future of Germany. He was also influential in securing financial assistance and support for Hitler and the Party from German industrialists and others during this crucial period.

Shortly after Hitler became Chancellor in 1933, Dr. Schacht was appointed President of the Reichsbank, and in 1934 he was appointed Minister of Economics, a position he held for the next three years. As a result, Schacht became the economic Czar of Germany during the critical period from 1933 to 1937. He was the chief architect of the financial plans and devices which made rearmament in Germany possible, and kept the economy from going bankrupt. This was accomplished by means of a labyrinthine network of controls, including among others strict control of foreign exchange, careful earmarking of all exports, the allocation of imports for strategic purposes, blocked marks, and barter agreements and clearing agreements which resulted in the procurement of raw materials without any real intention of payment therefor. Dr. Schacht was also the author of the "New Economic Policy" in 1934.

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Simultaneously with his retirement as Minister of Economics in 1937, he was appointed Minister of the Reich Without Portfolio, and continued as personal economic advisor to Hitler. From his knowledge of the size and rapidity of German rearmament, and his close relationship to Hitler and the Party Leaders, he clearly understood that Germany planned to wage an aggressive war, and he assisted in laying the financial groundwork that made this possible.