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INTERNATIONAL PROSECUTION SECTION

Doc. No. 2188, 2189, 2190
2191, 2192, 2193

22 June 1946

ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT

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at Nurnberg

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SUMMARY OF RELEVANT POINTS

Doc. No. 2188 - 10 Dec - M-WAM-1

IMT - Transcript of 10 December 1945, 1000-1245.
Presentation of evidence by Mr. S. Alderman, attempting
to prove Germany planned to attack Russia.

Doc. No. 2189 - 20 Mar - A-GH-13-1

IMT - Transcript of 28 March 1946, 1425-1700.
Direct examination of Paul Schmidt, German Foreign Office
interpreter by Dr. Horn, concerning the von RIBBENTROP-
Neville Henderson meeting on 30 Aug 1939.

Doc. No. 2190

IMT - Transcript of 29 March 1946, 1400-1700

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IMT - Transcript of 29 March 1946, 1000-1300

Doc. No. 2192

IMT - Transcript of 3 April 1946, 1125-1300

Doc. No. 2193

IMT - Transcript of 3 April 1946, 1400-1700

Analyst: 2d Lt Goldstein

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29-Mar-M-NG-1-1

Official transcript of the International Military Tribunal in the matter of: The United States of America, the French Republic, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics against Hermann Wilhelm Goering et al, defendants, sitting at Nurnberg, Germany, on 29 March 1946, 1000-1300, Lord Justice Lawrence presiding.

THE PRESIDENT: Before the examination of defendant von Ribbentrop goes on the Tribunal desires me to draw the attention of Dr. Horn and of the defendant von Ribbentrop to what the Tribunal has said during the last few days.

In the first place the Tribunal said this: The Tribunal has allowed the defendant Goering, who has given the evidence first of the defendants and who has proclaimed himself to be responsible as the second leader of Nazi Germany, to give his evidence without any interruption whatever, and he has covered the whole history of the Nazi regime from its inception to the defeat of Germany. The Tribunal does not propose to allow any of the other defendants to go over the same ground in their evidence except in so far as is necessary for their own defense.

Secondly, the Tribunal ruled that evidence as to the injustice of the Versailles Treaty or whether it was made under duress is inadmissible.

Thirdly, though this isn't in order of the Tribunal, I must point out that the Tribunal has been informed on many occasions of the view of the defendants and some of their witness that the Treaty of Versailles was unjust and therefore any evidence upon that point apart from this being inadmissible is cumulative, and the Tribunal will not hear it therefore for that reason.

And lastly, the Tribunal wishes me to point out to Dr. Horn that it is the duty of counsel to examine their witness and not to leave them simply to make speeches, and if they are giving evidence which counsel knows is inadmissible according to the ruling of the Tribunal it is the duty of counsel to stop the witness. That is all.

.....

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Seidl, if you are going to refer to Gauss' affidavit the Tribunal will not deal with that matter now, it will be dealt with after the defendant von Ribbentrop has given evidence.

DR. SEIDL: (counsel for the defendant Hess) Mr. President, I spoke with Dr. Horn, counsel for the defendant Ribbentrop --

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Seidl, I don't care whether you spoke to Dr Horn or not or what arrangement you may have made with Dr. Horn; it is not convenient to the Tribunal to hear Dr. Gauss' evidence at the present moment, they want to go on with Ribbentrop's evidence.

JOACHIM von RIBBENTROP -- resumed.

DIRECT EXAMINATION -- continued.

BY DR. HORN (counsel for defendant Ribbentrop):

Q Yesterday at the end you were speaking about your political impressions in England and France. In connection with that I would like to put the following questions. Did you make efforts to tell Hitler your impressions and your views as you saw British and French politics at that time?

A Since the 30th of January 1933 I saw Hitler repeatedly, and of course told him about my impressions which I gathered on my frequent travels to England and France, and reported to Hitler.

Q What was Hitler's attitude toward France and England at that time?

A Hitler's attitude and position was as follows: He saw an enemy to Germany in France, arising from the policies and politics which France carried on with regard to Germany, beginning with the end of the First World War, and especially the position which she took in questions of equality for Germany. This position of Hitler's is brought forth in his book Mein Kampf.

I knew France very well, since for a number of years I had connections there. At that time I told the Fuehrer much about France. He was interested in hearing my opinion, and I noticed that he had a growing interest for things French in the year 1933. Then I brought him together with a number of Frenchmen, and I believe some of these visits, and perhaps my pictures as to the position taken by many Frenchmen, as well as all of French culture--

Q What kind of Frenchmen were they?

A They were French economic leaders, French journalists, and statesmen or politicians. The pictures I presented to Hitler were very interesting to the Fuehrer, and gradually he received the impression that in France there were men who would not reject an understanding with Germany.

Then, first of all, I presented an argument to the Fuehrer, an argument of my deepest conviction and of my experience of the prior years. It was the great wish of the Fuehrer, as is well known, to come to a definite friendship with England and to come to an agreement with England as well.

In the beginning the Fuehrer, as far as German-French policies are concerned, treated this separately or by itself. I believe at that time I succeeded in convincing the Fuehrer that an understanding with England would be possible only by having an agreement with France as well--an understanding with France as well. I remember very exactly some conversations I had with the Fuehrer. This made a strong impression on him. He told me then that since I had followed a rather personal course of understanding between Germany and France, I should continue on this task and report to him on the progress of my efforts.

Q Then, you were Hitler's Foreign Political Counselor, not the counsel of the Party. Can you tell me a little more about that?

A I have already said that I told Adolf Hitler about experiences on my journeys. The impressions I gathered, which I told him on my return from

England and France, were of interest to him, and without referring to special conferences or discussions, I was received repeatedly by Hitler. I spoke with him repeatedly and in that way it came about, more or less in a natural way, that outside and beyond the official channels or politics he was interested in having my opinion; and asked my advice on things which I had seen in the foreign countries.

He was ready to listen to my advice. Above all, he had a vital interest, of course, for questions English. I told him about public opinion and about personalities, and brought Frenchmen and Englishmen to him, and now he could do something which he loved to do, to exchange thoughts unofficially.

Q What was your personal co-operation in your efforts for an agreement with France in the years 1933 to 1935? What were your efforts in that direction?

A Even at that time I considered the solution of the Saar question and brought this question up for discussion. I tried through my own private channels to tell the Frenchmen in Paris that a reasonable and quiet solution of the Saar question in the spirit of the plebiscite as laid down in the Versailles Treaty would be and should be a good omen for relations between the two countries. I spoke with many numbers of people during these years in Paris and made connections with members of the French cabinet. I would like to add that I had discussions and conversations with the then French president Poincaré, with the then assassinated Foreign Minister Barthou, with Mr. Laval, and above all with Mr. Daladier.

I remember that with special reference to the Saar question, I met with complete agreement with Daladier on that. Then a little later I noticed that at those visits of Frenchmen with Hitler it was again and again mentioned, "Yes, now we have Mein Kampf to deal with, and your attitude and your policies toward France are established in that book." I tried to tell the Fuehrer to give forth an official revision of this chapter of Mein Kampf. The Fuehrer said, and I remember it verbatim, that he had decided, through his practical policies, to prove to the world that he had changed his view in this respect, that things which had been written down could not be changed, that they were historical fact, and his then view, or

his former view toward France, had been determined by France's attitude toward Germany at that time. But now one could turn over a new leaf in the history of the two countries and their relations to each other.

Then I asked Adolf Hitler to receive a French journalist, so that perhaps through a public announcement a revision of his view as expressed in his book Mein Kampf -- to change the view and to affirm his new view to the world.

He agreed with this, received a French journalist, and gave him an interview. I don't exactly recall just when; it was sometime in 1933, though. I believe this article appeared in "Le Matin" and created quite a bit of excitement. I was very glad, for with this article all doubts were removed and a tremendous step toward an understanding with France had been reached. Then I contemplated what could be done subsequently and how, from the simple matters now, a connection between French and German statesmen could be arranged.

Q At that time wasn't there an intermediary meeting between Hitler and Daladier? Didn't you contemplate a meeting of that sort and did you make efforts in that behalf?

As I was just going to turn to that point,

At that time Daladier was the Premier. I had suggested to him that he meet Adolf Hitler so that quite frankly, man to man, a discussion could be carried on, to see whether Franco-German relations could nor be put on an entirely new and different basis. Mr. Daladier was quite taken with this start. I reported this to Hitler and Hitler was ready to meet Daladier.

The meeting place was to be in the German Odenwald and was agreed upon. I went to Paris so that the last arrangements could be made with that.-

MR. DODD: If your Honor pleases, I am reluctant to interfere in any respect with this examination of the Defendant, but my colleagues and I feel that this particular part of the examination is quite immaterial and in any event much too detailed, and that we will never get along here. If Counsel would abide by the instruction of the Court given this morning, we could move along much more directly and much more quickly.

THE PRESIDENT: Dr. Horn, the Tribunal thinks that the objection is really well founded. The Defendant is dealing with a period between 1933 and 1935, and the efforts which he made for good relations with France. Well, now, that is very remote from any question which we have to decide in this case, and therefore to deal with it in this detail seems to the Tribunal a waste of time.

DR. HORN: Then I will put other questions, which concern his direct cooperation.

Q What caused Hitler to appoint you Plenipotentiary for Disarmament?

A I believe I was appointed the Plenipotentiary for Disarmament in April. The reasons are as follows:

Hitler was of the opinion that there should be equality of armament, and he believed that equality of armament would be possible only if and when negotiations could be carried on with France and England; and this, of course was my position also, at that time, in my efforts to establish good relations between Germany and England, since this was the pet wish of the Fuehrer. On this mission I went to London and while there made contacts with British political figures.

First of all I made connection with Lord Baldwin, with whom I spoke. I also spoke with the then Prime Minister Mc Donald. I mentioned the German desire for equality and sounded the opinion of these Ministers on the basis of a long discussion which I had with Lord Baldwin, I believe on the 1st of December 1933. I believe Lord Baldwin made a speech in Commons, in which he pointed out that somehow one would have to meet Germany half-way. Equality of armament had been promised to Germany and therefore it would have to be reached in some way. In this connection there were three possibilities: One, that Germany would arm up to the level of the other powers -- and that was not desirable; the second possibility, that the others would disarm to the level of the Germany -- and that could hardly be carried through; and, three one would have to make compromise and meet in the center and permit Germany a limited rearmament, and the other countries for their part would have to disarm to meet Germany on an equal basis. In that way Adolf Hitler at that was very glad for this British position and he appreciated it, for he considered it a practicable way to carry through equality of armament for Germany.

Unfortunately, then, in the course of events, it was not possible to put the suggestions of Lord Baldwin into practice. Adolf Hitler therefore subsequently took the view that a system --

(A slight pause.)

(Resuming) He saw that unfortunately in the system which was currently prevalent in international ideas, in negotiations the pleasant and agreeable thoughts of Lord Baldwin could not be carried through.

Q What practicable discussion of limitation of armament did you carry through -- or were you instrumental in carrying through?

A It is well known that Hitler left the League of Nations and the Disarmament Conference, for he deemed it impossible through channels of negotiation to carry through the German demands and desires. Hitler saw no other possibility, except through the power of the German people to achieve its aims from within -- through the power of the German people. He knew, of course, that this was a tremendous risk; but on the basis of his prior experience of the preceding few years he saw no other way out, so that then Germany decided to rearm.

Q (Interposing)-- ..

A I would like to finish the answer to your question.

As a practical result, these things took place. In the course of the year 1934 there was a closer contact between the German Government and the British Government. There were numerous visits of British statesmen in Berlin. Sir John Simon and Mr. Eden were among the visitors, and during these visits the suggestion was heard whether, as far as naval agreement was concerned, at least a pact, an agreement could be reached. Hitler was very much interested in this start, and in the course of the conversation between the British and the German Government it was agreed that I should go to London to discuss with the British Government, efforts to bring a naval agreement into existence.

It is rather needless for me to go into the details of this pact which later materialized. Hitler from the beginning -- and of himself -- was of the opinion that if a final agreement or understanding with England could be reached one would have to acknowledge the absolute naval supremacy of Great Britain for all time. Then the Naval Pact of 1935 was made and the agreements which were made in 1935 were different in every respect from those which existed before the first World War.

After relatively short negotiations, then, this naval agreement was concluded in London. This Pact was very important to future British-German relations, and at that time it was the first practical result of an actual armament limitation.

Q At that time did France agree to the rearmament and how did you personally function in that regard?

A I would like to say first of all that Hitler and myself were extraordinarily happy at the conclusion of this pact. I know and I can say it from personal experience -- that I had never seen Hitler as happy as I saw him at the time, at the moment when I told him personally in Hamburg of the conclusion of this naval agreement.

Q And what was France's attitude toward this pact?

A With France the situation was a little difficult. I had already noticed that while the negotiations were taking place, for the limitation of armaments had been deviated from. Then I told the gentlemen of the Foreign Office -- if I may mention their names, Sir Robert Craigie and the then British Admiral Little among them -- that I would go to France so that I could strengthen my ties to French statesmen and to tell them about the importance of an agreement between Germany, France and England and to show them all the ramifications for the future.

I would like to point out a few details. In this Tribunal sometime ago a film was shown in which there was a speech I made at the conclusion of this naval agreement and this film showed or allegedly showed that it was really a two-timing of Germany diplomacy. At that time I made that speech in London in order to document and to show in front of the whole world that we were not concerned with unilateral British-German matters but that it was a wish of Hitler -- and the naval agreement was in the spirit of this thought -- to bring about a general limitation of armament and that the naval pact would serve to further good relations between France and Germany. This wish was sincere and very real.

I went to France, spoke with French statesmen and, I believe, helped in a small way so that the first step in the limitation of armaments was considered reasonable by many Frenchmen, especially if you considered matters in the long run and with the thought that in the long run equality of rights would have to be granted to the German people.

Q Then you were made Ambassador at London. Can you tell me a little about the reasons for that?

A Things developed as follows: In the time subsequent to naval agreement, an agreement which was hailed in English circles, I made many efforts to bring Lord Baldwin and the Fuehrer together, and I would like to add in that connection that the meeting had been arranged through a friend of Mr. Baldwin, a Mr. Jones. The Fuehrer had agreed to fly to Chequers to meet Lord Baldwin, but unfortunately Lord Baldwin had to decline at the last minute. Just why Lord Baldwin had to decline at the last minute I do not know, but there was no

doubt that certain forces in England at the time did not wish a German-British understanding.

Then in the year 1936 when the German Ambassador, von Hesch, died, it was said on the part of Germany that one should make another last effort to come to a good agreement and good relations with England.

I would like to mention in this connection that at that time I had already been appointed State Secretary for the Foreign Office and has asked personally that that appointment be recalled and that I be sent to London as German Ambassador.

The following thought might have been decisive in the decision of Hitler Hitler had a certain, definite opinion or picture of the theory of equality of rights as far as England was concerned, but my view deviated somewhat from Hitler's. My conviction was that England would continue to support her own balance-of-power theory before and after -- that England would maintain that theory, whereas Hitler was of the opinion that this theory of the balance of power was rather obsolete and that from now on England would wish to see a much stronger Germany with reference to the changed picture in Europe and also taking into consideration the strength shown by Russia that Germany would in a way counterbalance the power of Russia. In order to give a definite and clear picture on the spot and to tell him how matters actually stood in England -- that must have been one of the reasons why the Fuehrer sent me to England.

Another reason was that at that time we hoped through relations with the circles in England who were very friendly to Germany, that connections between the two countries could be made friendly and that perhaps we could reach an agreement.

The aim of Hitler in the final analysis was a pact between Germany and England.

Q In what way was your ambassadorial activity hampered in England?

A I would like to say first that in the 1930's -- roughly 1935 and 1936. I made many trips to England, and while I was there, on instructions from the Fuehrer, had discussions for a German-British pact. The basis of this pact is known, and it was to make the naval ratio 100 to 35, to make it permanent

and that the integrity of the Low Countries and France was to be guaranteed forever. That was the thought of the Fuehrer and that Germany would be ready to keep and maintain the British Empire and to use its power if necessary and that in regard to Germany and England, they should recognize each other's power.

It has already been said, and I would like to repeat, that the efforts in the 1930's did not come to any concrete result. It was one of the Fuehrer's deepest disappointments, and I would like to say that at this point -- for it is very important for further developments -- that this pact upon which the Fuehrer had placed such a very great hope and which he had considered as the complete cornerstone of his foreign policy, that this pact never materialized. Just how and what forces operated so that it did not materialize I cannot tell for I do not know, but in any case we never got very far.

Then I remained in London as Ambassador. I referred to this question again and again while I was Ambassador, discussed it with circles who were friendly to Germany, and I must say that there were many Englishmen who had a very positive attitude toward Germany.

Q Did you receive any attitude that was negative?

A There were in England, of course, some elements who were against the thought of a close connection with Germany, who were against a close understanding on basic principles and perhaps traditional elements who were not inclined toward a pact of this kind, and I would like to say briefly, even though I have to dip back into the year 1936, that during the Olympic games in the year 1936 I tried to win Lord Vansittart to the thought we had in mind on the pact. I had a discussion of several hours' duration with him at Berlin. Hitler also received him and discussed the same matter with him. Lord Vansittart, even though our personal relations were excellent, met our proposals with a certain reserve.

In the year 1937 when I was in London I saw that gradually two trends were forming in England, one trend being very much inclined and very much in favor of dealing with Germany and promoting good relations and the second trend not wishing such an agreement or collaboration.

I believe that I do not need to mention names, for they are well known, but there were those gentlemen who did not wish close contact and connections with Germany. It was the later Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, and others,

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Then in London I made strenuous efforts in order to promote our thoughts but events occurred which made my activity there most difficult; first of all Spanish politics and policies. It is well known that civil war raged in Spain at that time and in London the Non-Intervention Congress was meeting.

As Ambassador to the Court of St. James I had a very difficult task. On the one hand, with all means at my disposal, I wished to further a German-English pact, and cement German-English relations but on the other hand I had the instructions of my government as far as Spain was concerned to maintain my attitude in that connection. These instructions were often contradictory. Certain efforts of the politics of the British were at cross purposes and this sort of League of Nations which the Non-Intervention Congress represented, and of which I was the authorized German member, represented a mortgage on the chief aim with which Hitler had sent me to London.

In order to give you a clear and definite picture of the times, I believe it is important for me to show that it was not only the Spanish policy or politics but that doubtlessly in these years, 1937, beginning of 1938, in England the trend of thought became increasingly obvious. That, of course, today is known as a historical fact, that is that trend which did not wish a pact with Germany. Why? The answer is very simple, very clear. These circles saw that through a National Socialist Germany a factor which might disturb the traditional British balance of power on the Continent.

I am of the opinion and of the conviction that Adolf Hitler in no way intended ever at that time to proceed against England or to undertake anything against England of its own accord; that he had sent me to London with the ardent wish to reach an agreement and an understanding with England. From London I reported to the Fuehrer the situation as I found it and before this Tribunal now I wish to set forth a point and explain that point, a point which is relevant to my own defense.

It has been claimed and asserted very frequently that I told the Fuehrer from England that England was degenerate and England would perhaps not fight. I may and must establish and assert here, from the beginning I reported exactly the opposite to the Fuehrer. I told the Fuehrer that in my opinion

the English leadership and the English people had a heroic attitude and position and that these people would be ready to fight for the existence of their empire to the last man. Later, in the course of the war in a speech in the year 1941, after I had talked with the Fuehrer, I made this view publicly known in my speech.

Conclusively and in summary, I would like to say as to the situation existing in London in the year 1937 and 1938, when I was acting ambassador, that I was fully cognizant of the fact that it would be very difficult to conclude a pact with England. But even so I reported that all efforts would be made so that peaceful negotiations and an agreement with England could be reached. That was to be a decisive factor in Germany's politics, that is, to reach an understanding with England. By that I mean the development of German power in accord with British tendencies and views so that these two views would not conflict.

Q During the time of your ambassadorship you made the so-called Anti-Comintern Pact with Japan. How was it that you, especially as ambassador, concluded that agreement?

A I would like to make a few preliminary remarks and say that in the year 1938 I was appointed Foreign Minister on the 4th of February.

On the 4th of February I was in Berlin. The Fuehrer had me summoned and said that he wanted to make me Foreign Minister. Were you talking of the Three Power Agreement?

Q No, you misunderstood. I meant to say that during your activity as Ambassador you concluded the Anti-Comintern Pact in the year 1936. Italy joined in 1937, then Spain as well as other countries. How was it that you, as ambassador, concluded this pact?

A Adolf Hitler at that time considered the ideological difference between Germany, that is National Socialism, and Communism one of the most decisive factors of his politics and policies. Therefore, there was the question as to how a way could be found to win additional countries to combat Communist efforts. We are concerned with ideological questions in this case.

Hitler first of all, I believe in the year 1933, spoke to me about this and as to whether in some way we could create closer contact with Japan.

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I replied that I personally had certain connections in Japan and would be glad to use my efforts in that behalf. As Japan had anti-Commintern thoughts as well as Germany, in the years 1933, 1934, 1935, I believe, the thought was raised and crystallized whether these neutral efforts might not be made the basis of a pact. I believe one of my co-workers then had the idea as to whether an Anti-Commintern Pact could not be concluded. I suggested this to the Fuehrer and the Fuehrer was in agreement and considered this a good thought. He did not wish, however, at that time, since it was an ideological question, that it should be made in line with German official policies and politics and therefore instructed me to prepare this pact which then, I believe, in the year 1936, was concluded in my office in Berlin.

Q If I understood you correctly, this pact was concluded by you since you were the leader of the Department Ribbentrop?

A Yes, that is correct. The Department Ribbentrop consisted chiefly of my own person and a few collaborators. But it is correct to say that the Fuehrer wished that I conclude this pact since he did not wish to emphasize it publicly.

Q Did this pact have real political aims or was it just for ideological aims?

A It is, of course, true as a matter of basic principle that it had an ideological aim. It was to combat the work of the Commintern in the various countries at that time. But this pact had political reasons and political background also and this political move was an anti-Russian one, since Moscow was the center for the Commintern. Therefore, it appeared to the Fuehrer and to me that through this pact a certain balance or counter-balance against Russian efforts or against Russia in a political sense, as such, was being created; that ideologically as well as politically --

THE PRESIDENT: Do you and the defendant really think it is necessary to take as long as the defendant has taken to tell us why he, as an ambassador in London was called upon to sign the Anti-Commintern Pact?

DR. HORN: It is very difficult for me to hear your Honor.

THE PRESIDENT: What I asked you was whether you and the defendant think it necessary for the defendant to make such a long speech in answer to your

question; why was he as ambassador in London employed to sign the Anti-Comintern Pact. He has spoken for at least five minutes about it.

BY DR. HORN:

Q On the 4th of February, 1938, you were made Foreign Minister. Give the reasons for the appointment.

A I have already said that on the 4th of February, 1938, I was at Berlin. The Fuehrer asked me to come to him and told me that because of a change in various high places he contemplated a change of Foreign Minister also; that the then Foreign Minister von Neurath had been made the president of another organization. I then replied to the Fuehrer that I, of course, would be glad to follow his suggestion.

Q At this opportunity did you receive a high rank in the SS? The Prosecution has claimed that this rank was not purely honorary. Can you give us the details on that?

A I must clarify this point, I believe. I had received a rank in the SS prior to this time and I do not recall whether it was at this appointment or at some other time when I was made SS Gruppenfuehrer. The Fuehrer granted me the rank and the uniform of an SS Gruppenfuehrer. That was a position I had formerly, or a rank a la suite, in the Army and at that time I agreed with the thoughts of the SS. My connections with Himmler were fairly good at the time. I saw in the aims of the SS at that time the possible basis for the establishment of an ideological fuehrer group, such as perhaps we find in England and then later the Waffen SS had shown its bravery in war. Later my position and relation to Himmler changed.

The Fuehrer granted me this rank as he wished that at Party rallies and at Party meetings I would have the Party uniform and would have rank in the Party.

I ask that I be permitted to state briefly my position toward the Party. Yesterday or the day before yesterday the question was raised whether I was a typical National Socialist.

I do not wish to judge in this connection, but it is certain that it was only in later years that I met Hitler. So far as National Socialist doctrines and the program were concerned, I did not concern myself with that too much. I did not know about their race theory. I was no anti-Semite; I did not understand the church question, although I had severed my church connections quite some time back, for my own spiritual reasons, in the early 20's, in the development of German church matters. However, I believe that I was a good Christian nevertheless.

What drew me to the Party were those things which I realized at that time. The Party wanted a strong, flourishing, and social Germany, and I wanted that too. For that reason, in the year 1932, I did, after full deliberation, become a member of the Party.

Q Before that time had you been in the service of the Party, as the prosecution claims, and especially since the year 1930?

A In 1930 the large Reichstag election occurred, in which National Socialism gained more than 100 seats in the Reichstag. I set forth yesterday, and perhaps do not need to repeat, just what the conditions in Germany were at that time.

However, in the year 1930, 1931 and 1932, I gradually approached the Party. I believe I entered the Party in August of 1932, and from that moment on, up until the end of this war, I devoted my entire power and strength to National Socialist Germany.

I would like to say frankly, before this Tribunal and before the world, that I was always interested and made every effort to be a good National Socialist, and that I was proud of the fact that I belonged to a small group of men, idealists, who did not want anything but to bring prestige back to Germany once more.

Q What foreign political problems did Hitler point out to you at your appointment, problems which had to be solved? What instructions did he give you for the carrying on of foreign policies?

A When I took over my office, the Fuehrer said relatively little to me. He said only that Germany had assumed a new position from that time on. Germany had once more entered the circle of nations and equality of rights,

and it was to be clearly seen that certain problems would have to be solved in the future. He also said this especially, as I recall. I believe he mentioned four special problems which, sooner or later, would have to be solved. He emphasized that such problems could be solved only with a strong Wehrmacht, not in the using of this Wehrmacht, but in the existence of the Wehrmacht, because a country which was not strongly armed could not carry on foreign policies, as we had experienced it in previous years. A country like that was really operating in a vacuum. He said we would have to enter upon a clear-cut relationship with our neighbors.

The four problems which he enumerated were, first of all, Austria; then he mentioned the solution of the Sudeten question; he spoke about Memel Land; he spoke about Danzig and the Corridor. He mentioned these as problems which would have to be solved in one way or another, and it was to be my task to assist him diplomatically.

From this moment on my efforts were always to assist the Fuehrer in the preparation of a solution of these problems, as he had expressed it to me, in a German sense.

THE PRESIDENT: I believe this would be a good time to break off.

(A recess was taken.)

Q In what way, after you were named foreign minister, did foreign policy continue?

A At that time I tried first of all to achieve a clear, over-all view of the business of the foreign office. German foreign policy, as I said before, had reached a certain point, namely, the point at which Germany had again achieved prestige in the eyes of the world. It was now a question of solving the important and basis problems that had resulted from the Versailles Treaty in Europe. This was all the more necessary as, for instance, the question of Volkstum led again to conflicts and thereby prevented peaceful solutions.

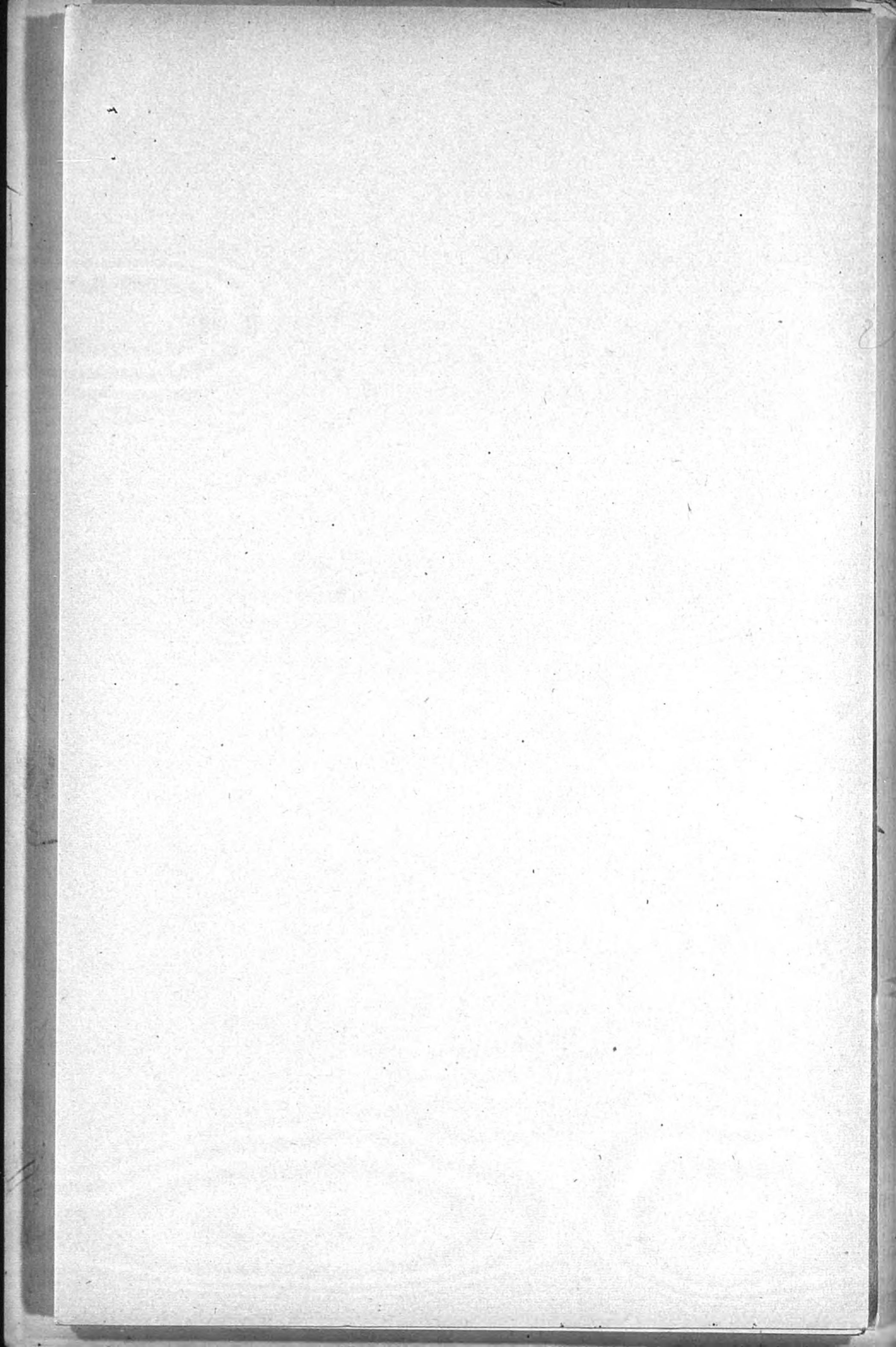
In the period following I familiarized myself with business of the foreign ministry. That was at first not easy, as I was dealing with altogether new men,

I should like to mention here that Hitler did not always have a positive attitude toward the foreign office, and in the further pursuance of my efforts and of the efforts of my predecessor I saw it as my most important task to bring the foreign office closer to Hitler and to strike a bridge between the two fields.

It was clear to me from the very beginning after I took over the ministry that I was working under a certain shadow and that certain limitations were placed upon me -- that is to say, that I would not be in a position to so conduct the foreign policy as a foreign minister might otherwise be expected to do who was responsible to a parliament in a parliamentary system. The enormous personality of the Fuehrer dominated foreign policy, of course. He concerned himself with it in all detail.

Things developed so that, on my hand, I gave him the most important foreign policy reports through a liaison man, and he in turn gave me certain tasks, etc.

In the course of these talks crystallized at first and foremost the problem of Austria, which had to find some solution or other. Austria was from the very beginning a matter very close to the Fuehrer's heart, because he was an Austrian himself -- had been -- and it was of course clear that with the growing power of Germany the efforts that had existed for a long time for a closer connection between Germany and Austria would be carried



out even more strongly than before. At that time I was not so familiar with this problem, since the situation was such that Hitler handled this problem personally.

Q When you took over your office, or later, did you know of a memorandum dealing with a conference that took place on the 5th of November 1937 that is here referred to as the "Hoszbach" document?

A This document, which has been spoken of here several times, I didn't know of. I saw it here for the first time.

Q Did Hitler say anything in the spirit of this document to you?

A I do not recall all the details of the contents of that document, but it was the Fuehrer's practice to speak with me very little about his goals and intentions. At any rate, he did so toward me very slightly. He did speak of the fact that Germany had to solve certain problems in Europe -- as I have already said -- and that for this reason it was necessary to be strong. He also spoke of the possibility that in this matter it could come to some sort of a showdown, but he told me nothing more specific about this. On the contrary, he always emphasized to me that it was his wish to solve these problems which had to be solved by way of diplomacy, and that once he had solved these problems he had the intention of creating what he called an ideal "Folk State" and that he would thereby create a model modern social state. In other words, to me he did mention the possibility of a military settlement, but he stated to me as his highest goal that it was his intention to achieve this solution of the impossibility of Versailles, as he called them, in a peaceful way.

Q After your appointment as foreign minister you were called to Berchtesgaden to speak with Hitler and Schuschnigg. What was discussed there and what was your role at this conference?

A I see that this is on the 12th of February 1938. Hitler then informed me that he was going to confer with federal chancellor Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden. I see from my notes that this was on the 12th of February. In the meantime he told me what the solution was that he was pursuing and that in some form or other the German National Socialists in Austria must be assisted.

Difficulties of all sorts had arisen there, the details of which I no longer recall. At any rate, there were a number of National Socialist in jail and as a consequence of the natural efforts of these people to bring about a social union between Austria and the Reich, these Austrian problems threatened to become a really serious source of difficulty between Germany and Austria.

Adolf Hitler told me then that I should be present at Berchtesgaden.

Then later discussions took place, and I have heard here that Adolf Hitler had asserted that he intended -- I believe this was in the year 1938 -- to achieve the rights of self-determination that these six million Austrian Germans had. I did not know about this personally.

At the meeting with Schuschnigg on the Obersalzberg I was present. Hitler received Schuschnigg alone and had a long conversation with him. Details about this conversation are not known to me because I was not present at it. I recall that Schuschnigg after this talk met me, and that I in my turn had a long conversation with him.

Q At that time did you, as the Prosecution asserts, put Schuschnigg under political pressure?

A No, My conversation with Schuschnigg -- I remember it very clearly whereas the other details of other meetings on the Obersalzberg are not so clear in my memory, since I was not present at either the first or the second meeting between Schuschnigg and Hitler.

During the talk that I had with Schuschnigg everything went along in a very friendly way. I felt that Schuschnigg had received a very strong impression from Hitler and the Fuehrer's personality.

I must say first of all that I do not know the details of what Hitler discussed with Schuschnigg, so that I could not speak to him about this matter -- or at least only very little. The talk confined itself to more general themes. I told Schuschnigg that in my opinion, these two countries must come closely together and that it was his historical task to assist in this.

Both nations were German by nature, and two such nations could not for long be held separate by artificial means.

Q. Was there any mention of the German-Austrian Treaty of 1936 at this conference?

A. I did not speak to Schuschnigg on this point.-- I believe also that the Fuehrer did not either, because according to what Schuschnigg said to me, the Fuehrer -- I don't know the details -- the Fuehrer talked to him to this effect: That certain measures would have to be carried out in Austria in order to obviate the reason for conflict between the two countries.

As I said, my talk with him was very friendly, and may I remark that I expressed to Schuschnigg the thought that the two countries should enter into closer relations. Schuschnigg adopted to me an altogether positive attitude so that at that time to a certain extent I was surprised by this positive attitude on his part.

There can be no talk of any pressure on Schuschnigg during our discussion. The discussion of the Fuehrer with him I believe was conducted in perfectly open terms, because the Fuehrer wanted, in the interest of obviating these problems between the two countries, to reach some improvement in relations; and if this was to be done then statesmen must be open and frank with one another.

I have heard here -- and I think this is based on an entry in Jodl's Diary -- that heavy military and political pressure was exerted. I believe I can testify here that I know nothing of any military or political pressure at this meeting between Schuschnigg and Hitler. I may reiterate, certainly the Fuehrer spoke perfectly frankly with Schuschnigg, but there can be no question of a pressure of a military nature or of a political nature, nor can there be any question of an ultimatum of any sort.

I also believe that Jodl's remark -- I don't believe he was present -- it was perhaps only a notation in his diary that he had from hearsay.

I should like to add that at that time -- and I have also stated this to many people, including the Fuehrer -- I had an altogether pleasant and positive impression of Schuschnigg's personality. Schuschnigg indeed spoke of the fact

that the two countries -- and I remember his words very exactly -- were fatefully bound together, and that he would have to assist in some way to bring these two countries closer together. There was no talk in this discussion of Anschluss or any such thing. Whether the Fuehrer mentioned that I don't know, but I don't believe so.

Q. At that time, or shortly after, did the Fuehrer speak to you about an intention to depart from the German-Austrian Treaty of 1936 and wished to find some other solution?

A. Hitler did not speak to me about this. On the question of Austria in toto I spoke very little with him. This may sound remarkable, but it can be understood from the fact that it was only on the 4th of February that I took over the foreign office, and I first had to work my way into all the problems. The Austrian problem was, as I already said, a problem with which Hitler concerned himself personally, which, consequently, was simply taken note of in the Foreign Ministry, and it was directed by him personally.

I remember also that von Papen then had the right to turn directly to Hitler, and the Foreign Office only received copies of his report. These reports were presented immediately to Hitler by the Reich Chancellery, so that the Foreign Office had nothing to do with them.

Q. You then went back to London in order to take your leave as Ambassador. What did you hear in London regarding the development of the Austrian question?

A. I may say the following in this connection: I personally could see a solution of the Austrian problem of this sort: That the two countries should have a customs union, as I personally believed that in this way the problem could be solved in its most natural way and close relations could be brought about between the two countries. I might remind you at this point that this thought of a customs union was already an old one and had already been proposed by governments before Hitler's, and I believe because of the interference of allied countries it was not brought about.

According to my notes, on the 8th of March I went to London. The situation then was this, as I have already mentioned. On the event of the celebration of the taking over of power on the 30th of January, I was in Berlin. Then on

the 4th of February I was appointed Foreign Minister. Because of this appointment I did not have opportunity to take official leave from London. On the 8th of March 1938, I returned to London.

Before taking leave I had a short conversation with Hitler, primarily about English matters. I remember that he remarked on this occasion that the Austrian problem was progressing very nicely in the direction that had been discussed at Berchtesgaden with Schuschnigg. I must say that I did not know of what agreements had been reached in all the details.

I remember a small detail which I was informed of by our Austrian liaison man. I reached London, and in the afternoon I heard, more or less by accident, over the radio in the legation building, a speech which the then Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg made in Innsbruck. I don't want to go into detail, that would take too long. I do know that the entire manner, and as it seemed to me, also the tone of this speech, was such that I immediately got the notion that the Fuehrer would not tolerate this; and that the entire speech, without any doubt, stood in contradiction to the spirit with which the conferences had been carried out on the Obersalzberg.

I, as I said before, was of the conviction that Adolf Hitler would undertake something, and I should like to say this also, perfectly openly, before this Tribunal. It appeared quite correct to me that the solution of this problem would take some form or other. We had to talk very openly with Schuschnigg in order to prevent things from coming to a catastrophe, even a European catastrophe.

Then on the next morning I had a long discussion with Lord Halifax. Lord Halifax had also received reports from Austria, and I attempted, without knowing very much about the situation, to persuade him that it would be better to solve this problem now in one form or another, and that it was precisely to the interest of German-English efforts toward friendship that this solution should take place now. It would be false to believe that the friendship between Germany and England that both of us were striving for would thereby be damaged.

Lord Halifax listened to me quietly and told me that I should later have the opportunity to speak with the Prime Minister Chamberlain the next morning at breakfast. Subsequently a breakfast was arranged with Chamberlain, and after this breakfast I had a long talk with Chamberlain. In this conference Mr. Chamberlain again emphasized his desire to reach an understanding with Germany. I was extraordinarily happy to hear this, and told him that I was of the firm conviction that this was also the Fuehrer's attitude. He gave me a specific message to the Fuehrer, that this was his attitude, and that he would do everything he could in this direction.

Shortly after this discussion telegrams arrived from Austria, I believe from the English consul. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax asked me -- I believe the breakfast was in 10 Downing Street -- to come to their office in order to discuss these telegrams. I told him of course I had no precise reports, no knowledge of an ultimatum, and then later of the entrance of German troops. We arranged that we would maintain connections and would meet later, and that Lord Halifax would come to the German Embassy later to discuss these things further.

I must emphasize here, too, Mr. Chamberlain had been very quiet and it seemed to me, had a reasonable attitude towards the Austrian question. In the afternoon, Lord Halifax visited me and we had a long talk. In the meantime, the entrance of German troops had become known. I should like to emphasize the fact that this talk with Lord Halifax was very friendly and that at the conclusion of it, I invited the English Foreign Minister to a visit to Germany again. He said that he would be glad to come and perhaps another hunting party could be arranged.

Q Did you on the next morning have a telephone conversation with the defendant Goering? This telephone conversation has been put in evidence by the prosecution, with the assertion that it is a sign of the double-tongued policy that you were carrying out?

A Reichsmarshal Goering has already testified that this was a diplomat conversation and diplomatic conversations are carried on all over the world in the same way but I may say here that through this telephone conversation, I found out for the first time the real details of this Austrian affair. Without going into details I heard, above all, that this vote did not correspond to the real will of the Austrian people and a number of other points which I asked Goering to mention in his conversations with the English ministers; but I should like to say that for practical purposes, these discussions did not take place later because as I was taking leave from official English circles, on the basis of the talks I had with Goering, I had no further talks with Goering but sometime after, a short time after my telephone conversation with Goering, left London and went to Berlin and later to Vienna. I might say that first I went to Karin Hall to visit Goering and spoke with him there regarding the Anschluss--not about the Anschluss but about the whole development of circumstances in Austria. He was just as happy about this as I was. We all were happy. I flew, then, on the same day to Vienna and arrived there at about the same time as Hitler. I heard, in the meantime, about the Anschluss and it was in Vienna that I first heard that the thought of the Anschluss occurred to Hitler only during his travels through Austria. I believe it was on the occasion of a demonstration in Linz that this thought came to him and then, I think, he

rapidly made up his mind to carry on the Anschluss.

Q What problems did Hitler define to you as those that had to be first solved in the question of the Anschluss?

A The first problem that Hitler outlined to me was the question of the Sudeten Germans but this problem was not a problem emanating from the foreign office or Hitler or any office -- it was a problem that simply developed from itself. I believe it was the American prosecutor who told me, who said here that with the annexation of Czechoslovakia, a chapter had reached its conclusion that was shameful in the whole history of the relation between people, namely the destruction of the small Czechoslovak people. I should like to state the following from my own knowledge of these matters. One may speak perhaps of a Czechoslovakian State but not of the Czechoslovak people. This was a State, a nationality State, that contained the most heterogeneous folk groups. There were, besides Czechs, Germans, Hungarians, Poles, Ruthenians, and Carpatho-Ukrainians. It was in itself a heterogeneous collection of elements that had been welded together in 1919 to form Czechoslovakia. It is certain, and a historical fact, that the efforts, of the different nationalities within the State were directed towards different aims and it was therefore necessary to surround the State with a so-called "iron ring". This pressure created counter-pressure on the part of the various peoples with the state and it is entirely clear that a strong Germany, a Germany of National Socialism at that time was interested in all the folk groups, for all the folk groups that bordered on Germany, and also had a great influence on these folk groups. It thus happened that the German minorities in the Sudetenland, who, since 1919, had been submitted to a considerable pressure on the part of Prague, now were submitted to an even greater pressure. I do not believe I have to enter into any details but I know, from my own knowledge and even from personal discussion that took place during my ambassadorship in London, that the question of the Sudetenland was a very clear concept of the Foreign Office in London and that it was precisely England that very often before 1936 had come out in favor of certain demands made by the Sudeten Germans, demands as expressed by Conrad Henlein.

After the seizure of power of Adolf Hitler, undoubtedly the suppression of these German minorities increased. I should also like to point out-- and I know this from having read the files of the Foreign Office--that the League of Nations' Committee for Minorities had collected the vast amount of material on the Sudeten question and knew something of the pressure to which Germans were submitted in their efforts to pursue their own cultural life. I do not believe it is too much to say that the manner in which the Sudeten Germans were treated by Prague was, in the opinion of the League of Nations' experts, in no way in accord with the provisions in the League of Nations' Charter regarding minorities. I, myself, say that it was absolutely necessary, in order that this problem should not result in conflict, that again, as in the case of Austria, we would have to reach some solution. I should like to emphasize that the Foreign Office and I were always concerned, from the very beginning, to solve the Sudeten problem by way of diplomatic negotiations with the main signatory powers of Versailles, and I may add that it was my personal conviction, which I also expressed to Hitler, that if we had time enough and treated it correctly, the Germany that we had in 1938 could have solved this problem in a diplomatic and peaceful way.

The Prosecution has charged me with having brought about disturbances in Czechoslovakia in illegal ways, and thus having brought about the culmination of this crisis. I do not deny that between the Sudeten German Party and the National Socialist Party there had long been connections which were directed to the preservation of Sudeten German interests. I also do not wish to deny, for example, what was here mentioned, that the Sudeten German Party was supported financially by the Reich. I believe that that was an open secret that was also pretty well known in Prague.

However, it is not correct that anything was done on the part of the Foreign Office and myself to so direct these efforts that from the direction taken serious disturbances would arise.

I do not want to go into further detail, but I should like to mention one point. Documents have been mentioned about mistreatment of Czech nationals in Germany as reprisals for Czech treatment of Germans. I can only say to that that these were measures that could only be understood in that context, but they were not brought about by us in the Foreign Office in order to make the situation more critical, but rather on the contrary.

In the further course of events, I attempted to understand the Sudeten German Party better, and also attempted to restrain it in its relations with Prague.

The documents that I found out about for the first time here also clearly demonstrate that. I don't have these documents here, so I cannot go into them in greater detail, but I believe that perhaps the Defense has the opportunity of seeing them.

Q How did the critical situation in the summer arise?

A Such a people had, as is natural, its own dynamic. This question of the German groups that bordered on Germany was often called by us in the Foreign Office "the mysterious problem." This problem could not so be solved by the Foreign Office as foreign policy would seem to demand. It was not a question here of world powers, but of living people who had their own dynamic. The situation was this, that the Sudeten German Party strove for greater and greater independence, and it cannot be disputed that a number of responsible leaders demanded absolute autonomy, if not, indeed, the possibility of joining

the Reich. This is entirely clear, and that was also the goal of the Sudeten German Party.

For the Foreign Office and for Hitler, of course, difficulties arose in this. But then, as I have already said, the attempt was made to restrain these efforts. At that time, I received Conrad Henlein once or twice -- I don't remember how often -- and asked him not to do anything in the pursuit of these political goals that might put German foreign policy under any obligation. This, of course, was perhaps not always easy for Henlein, and I know that the leaders of the Sudeten German Party were received in other offices of the Reich and that Adolf Hitler also interested himself in this problem and on occasion received Henlein.

The whole situation thus came to a more and more critical and crucial development because on the one hand the Sudeten Germans made their demands more and more strongly at Prague; the Czech Government opposed these demands, and in this way excesses took place, arrests and so on. Thus matters became more and more critical.

At that time, I often spoke with the Czech Ambassador. I asked him to be as generous as he could towards the efforts of the Sudeten German Party, but matters developed in such a direction that the attitude on the part of Prague became stubborn and the Sudeten Germans more demanding.

Q How did Chamberlain's visit then come about? What were the reasons for it and the role that you played on that occasion?

A I should like to interpolate here the fact that in the summer of 1938 things were moving more and more toward a crisis of some sort. Ambassador Sir Neville Henderson, with whom I had often spoken and who was making efforts on his part to improve conditions, undoubtedly made continuous reports to his government. I no longer know precisely, but I believe that it was through his initiative that Lord Runciman made his visit to Prague. Runciman undoubtedly acted in good faith, and he also received a recommendation which, as far as I recall, was to the effect that the right of self-determination of the Sudetenland could not fail to be recognized. Nevertheless, the crisis was there.

I don't remember exactly what the date was, but I believe it happened that through Ambassador Henderson, Chamberlain got in touch with the Reich

Government. In this way it happened that in the first half of September Chamberlain visited the Fuehrer on the Obersalzberg.

Regarding this visit, not very much can be said. The Fuehrer spoke alone with Chamberlain at that time. I do know, however, that we all felt that this was carried out in an altogether good and pleasant atmosphere. So far as I can now recall, the Fuehrer told me then that he had told Chamberlain frankly that the demand of the Sudeten Germans for self-determination and freedom would have to be met in some form or other. Chamberlain -- and this was the substance of that conference -- answered that he would inform the British Cabinet of these German wishes and would get in touch with Hitler later.

Q How did the second visit of Chamberlain to Godesberg then come about?

A So far as I recall, matters did not progress satisfactorily. The situation in the Sudetenland became more difficult and threatened to develop into a very serious crisis, not only within Czechoslovakia but also between Germany and Czechoslovakia, and into a European crisis. Thus it came about anew that Chamberlain took the initiative and in the middle of September visited Godesberg.

Q How, then, was the Sudeten question solved, and what was your part in this solution?

A I might first report regarding Godesberg. In Godesberg, Hitler, in view of the crisis that had developed, informed Chamberlain that now he had to have a solution of this question under any circumstances. I may emphasize that I knew nothing regarding details of a military nature at that time, but I do know that the Fuehrer concerned himself with the possibility that this problem might also be solved militarily. He said in Godesberg to Mr. Chamberlain that a solution of the Sudeten German problems would have to be found as rapidly as possible. Mr. Chamberlain was of the opinion that it would be difficult to persuade Prague to a quick solution, and finally things bogged down altogether in the conference.

Adolf Hitler dictated a memorandum which I was give to Chamberlain. Then Sir Horace Wilson, who was a friend of Chamberlain, visited me and I made arrangements for a new meeting.

During this meeting, which started with a rather cool atmosphere, the Fuehrer received a report of Czechoslovakia's mobilization. This was a most deplorable circumstance since Hitler felt that very strongly and both he and Chamberlain wanted to interrupt the conference.

I then had a short conversation with Chamberlain and Hitler and I know that negotiations were undertaken. After a few hours of negotiations the result was the Chamberlain told the Fuehrer he could see now that something would have to be done and he was ready, on his part, to submit this memorandum to the British cabinet. I believe he also said that he would recommend to the British Cabinet, that is to say his ministerial colleagues, that the memorandum should be recommended to Prague. The contents of the memorandum suggested, as a general solution, the annexation of the Sudetenland by Prague. I believe the Fuehrer stated in the memorandum his wish that in view of the critical situation there, it would be advisable that it should be decided upon within a certain period of time -- by the first of October, which was ten or fourteen days from that time.

Mr. Chamberlain then departed and a few days passed. The crisis did not improve but became worse. I remember that very well. Then, during the latter part of September, the French Ambassador reported to me and said that he had a report in regard to the Sudetenland question to bring to me, and later, the British Ambassador came. At the same time, Goering has already testified to this, Italy entered into the negotiations on the wish of Mussolini and offered to mediate. Mussolini proposed that a conference be held which should be attended by England, France and Germany, and this proposal was accepted.

The French Ambassador showed the Fuehrer and he showed them on a map the probable solution which could be reached between England, France and Germany, this being the solution that he had thought out for the Sudetenland problem. The French Ambassador stated this solution was not satisfactory and further discussions would have to be conducted regarding the question as to exactly how far Sudetenland extended and what the German population was in certain places.

It came then to the Munich conference -- I need not go into the details of this conference, I should like only to describe briefly the results of it. The Fuehrer explained to the statesmen, with the aid of a map, the necessity of the question and which part of the Sudetenland would have to be annexed to Germany. Discussions arose and the Italian Chief of State, Mussolini, agreed in general with Hitler's ideas. The English Prime Minister at first made certain counter-proposals and spoke of the fact that perhaps this could be discussed in detail with the Czechs. Daladier, the French Prime Minister, said, so far as I recall, that he thought that once these proposals had been entered upon the Four Great Powers could reach a solution and finally, at the conclusion of the four statements we were of this opinion and the Munich Agreement was drawn up in which the Sudetenland -- in which it was decided that the Sudetenland should be annexed to Germany as outlined on the map that was there.

The Fuehrer was very pleased at this solution, and I should like to emphasize that here particularly. I also was happy, particularly in view of other versions of this matter that I have heard during the Trial here. We were very happy that this matter had been solved in this way.

THE PRESIDENT: We will sit again at 2:00 o'clock.

(The Tribunal adjourned until 1400 hours.)