

Doc. 4004 Evid.

Folder 11

(9)

INTERNATIONAL PROSECUTION SECTION

Doc. No. 4004

23 May 1946

ANALYSIS OF DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT.

Title and Nature: Top secret Note on Conference of Reichsminister for Foreign Affairs and OSHIMA.

Date: 11 Dec 1942 Original () Copy (x) Language: German

Has it been translated? Yes (x) No ()

Has it been photostated? Yes (x) No ()

LOCATION OF ORIGINAL: IMT (Nurnberg), Office Chief of Counsel

SOURCE OF ORIGINAL: IMT

PERSONS IMPLICATED: OSHIMA

CRIMES TO WHICH DOCUMENT APPLICABLE: Conspiracy; Aggression

SUMMARY OF RELEVANT POINTS (with page references):

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4. Confidential information that 7 million foreign workers work for Germany's war production (p 5).
5. Germany in position to remain aggressive, be it in Russia or in Africa. England, of course, remains final objective of aggression. (p 5).
6. Germany, Italy and Japan united in a solid "Community of Fate" (Schicksalsgemeinschaft). (p 7)
7. Operational plans of Tokyo are of great interest to German war leadership. Most effective help to ease the German burden of battle, more important than an attack on Russia, would be a sudden Japanese attack in the Indian Ocean (pp 7-8).

/A.N.: Nurnberg Doc. No. 3783-PS/

Analyst: C. J. Phelps

Doc. No. 4004

4354
OFFICE OF U. S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY
DOCUMENTATION DIVISION

Doc. No. 3783-PS

19 March 1946

STAFF EVIDENCE ANALYSIS *Photostat.*

DESCRIPTION OF ATTACHED DOCUMENT (under following headings):

Title and Nature: Photostatic copy of top secret note on the conference of the Reichs Minister for Foreign Affairs with Ambassador Oshima at Berlin re Military and Political situation (note not complete, ending and signature missing).

Date: 11 December 1942. Copy X. Language: German

LOCATION OF ORIGINAL (also WITNESS if applicable) as of 19 March 1946:
COPY IN OCC FILES, NURNBERG

SOURCE OF ORIGINAL: Marburg Document Center

PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS IMPLICATED:
HIRSCHMANN, GOERING, KEITEL

REFERENCES TO INDEX HEADINGS (key to par. nos. of summary below):

AGGRESSIVE WAR, STATEMENTS AND PLANS.
REICH GOVERNMENT AGENCIES. FORCED LABOR. OKW.

NECESSARY PROCESSING TO PUT IN EVIDENTIARY FORM: LEADS: OSHIMA

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ZUCKER.

3783-PS

P. 1

Top Secret.

Notes of the discussion between the Reich Foreign Minister
and Ambassador Oshima in Berlin on 11 December 1942.

The Reich Foreign Minister greeted the Ambassador by expressing his joy at being able to congratulate him, on the anniversary of the joint declaration of war of the Tripartite Pact Powers against the Americans and the English, on the mighty successes Japan had obtained up to the present. Ambassador Oshima replied in the same form to the congratulations of the Reich Foreign Minister and expressed the assurance that after further mighty war successes, Germany, Japan and Italy will gain the victory.

Passing to the discussion of the present military situation, the Reich Foreign Minister then told the Ambassador that since their last meeting some important events had occurred. First: Without doubt, the English had gained a tactical success in North Africa, due to the fact that they had been able to mass their air force at El Alamein, thus achieving superiority in the air. Moreover, some of our most important transports had unfortunately been torpedoed, in particular several tankers, which would have been absolutely necessary for our tanks. Thus, on the one hand we had suffered some material losses, but on the other hand the casualties were, fortunately, quite low. Rommel had succeeded in assembling again in new positions the larger part of his armored army. The greatest difficulty for us was just that we had to supply an army with everything by sea, without having secure mastery of the sea. Nevertheless Rommel had orders to carry on the fight and to prevent a further English advance toward the west.

P. 2

P. 2
(cont.)

Now, simultaneously with the attack against Rommel, the Anglo-American landing in French North Africa had taken place. The solution of this question also depended exclusively upon the possibility of securing the forwarding of supplies to our troops. But everything was being done to this end, and even Reich Marshal Goering was in Italy just recently in order to intervene personally. In this instance it is to our advantage that the sea route between Sicily and Tunis is so much shorter than the route hitherto utilized for the forwarding of supplies for Rommel. Although a multitude of small vessels, torpedo boats, patrol vessels, speed boats, etc., as well as a strong air force against the hostile bombers and torpedo planes, which proved to be particularly dangerous and effective, were necessary in order to secure this sea route, we nevertheless were of the firm conviction that the supply problem would be solved to our advantage.

P. 3

Second: About the battle of Stalingrad the Reich Foreign Minister stated that to our misfortune -and without trying hereby to lay the blame solely upon the Rumanians- a penetration had unfortunately occurred in the lines of our Rumanian allies, as the Ambassador knew. But German divisions had immediately been put into action at the point of penetration and had prevented a further Russian advance. Our troops encircled in Stalingrad itself were resisting splendidly, and it would be possible to reestablish the former lines. Besides, the fighting and driving force of the Russians was by no means as strong as we had assumed.

In the center the Russians had also tried to carry forward heavy attacks everywhere, but they did not succeed in breaking through at any point. Although the further Russian plans of attack could, of course, not be visualized yet, the definite impression already prevailed that, owing to the extremely heavy losses which

P. 3
(cont.)

the Russians had already had to suffer just here in the central sector, their operations in this sector could almost be considered as having failed already. One could of course not predict when Russia's final collapse would occur, but it was certain that it would occur. If the Russians -as had already happened- sent into action a battalion composed only of soldiers previously wounded and in other places untrained units from inner Asia formed partly of very young, partly of old age classes, these are serious symptoms of her weakness. The Finnish President Ryti was perfectly right when he pointed out that Russia collapsed in the World War after two and a half years, whereas the present war against the Bolshevists had lasted only five quarter years. In any case, we were already in a position to withdraw many units of our Luftwaffe from the Russian front and to commit them on other fronts. The Russian was weakening from month to month, and our forces in the East were less tied up.

P. 4

Third: Our military position in the West is such that we constantly improved our defenses from Norway down to the Spanish frontier, so that a landing by the enemy powers was made more and more difficult. One must take into consideration that we now had over 50 divisions in the West, while in 1940 with only 60 to 70 divisions we beat some 130 enemy divisions. How much easier would it be for us at present, then, to repel any landing corps.

Of course any attempts by our enemies to land, be it on the Iberian peninsula, be it on Italian soil or in Greece, would receive our special attention. We were prepared for them and well armed against them.

Our confidence in final victory was further strengthened by the news we received from England and America, according to which the food situation in England was exceptionally bad and was still deteriorating. Churchill was ruling by force, ruthlessly

P. 5

suppressing any expression of criticism or pessimism. On the other hand, the bluff of American armament figures could not shake us. One should not be influenced in any way by this illusion of mere figures (Zahlenwahn). If our sinkings should continue on the scale which they have now attained, this alone would compel our enemies to sue for peace. It was least possible, however, to carry out a decisive enemy landing on European soil. Furthermore, Germany's war production had been firmly assured, thanks to the successful organization of all available manpower. He could inform the Ambassador confidentially that at present 7 million foreign workers were employed in German war production in Germany. Thus we were still in a position, in any case, to remain on the offensive, be it in Russia or in Africa. Our final goal was still, of course, the attack on England. Concerning the moment when this could take place, it could be only said that if it should be possible to withdraw considerable forces from Russia, such an attack could become acute very quickly.

P. 6

Coming to the general political situation, the Reich Foreign Minister declared that the Americans were obviously pursuing the strategy of destroying Germany and Italy first and then eliminating Japan. Thus they were now fighting a delaying action against Japan in the Solomon Islands, having transferred their main effort to North Africa in order from there to attack the Axis at its weakest point, Italy. Of course the air raids were hard and horrible for the civilian population. We were trying to bring aid to the Italians by the delivery of flak and other defense materiel. If the enemy powers believed, however, that they could achieve anything by their propaganda of separate peace with Italy, they might be listened to by this or that neutral. Italy herself, however, particularly Fascist Italy, which the Duce had firmly in hand, could not be influenced by

P. 6
(cont.)

propaganda or by terror raids, and the reaction of the masses is only more intense hatred of the enemy. All propaganda about the mighty successes supposedly attained by the Allies so far was just as foolish, since our enemies had not in fact had any real successes against the Tripartite powers so far. Forcing Rommel back from the Egyptian frontier was only a tactical and in no way a decisive success. The landing of the Americans in North Africa took place without fight, as the French did not defend themselves at all. On the other hand, wherever the Americans and the English had to fight the armed forces of the Axis in a real battle, be it in the Philippines or in France, they were miserably beaten.
(following passage crossed out in the original:)

P. 7

(Even if some intellectual circles on our side unfortunately let themselves be influenced by such propaganda theses, it was the truth that hitherto, aside from the bombing of the civilian population, our opponents had had no success at all yet.)

As said before, it was the strategic plan of our enemies to fight a delaying action against the Japanese and to direct their strongest attack first against Italy. Russia, on the other hand, was to bind and consume the German forces as long as possible, whereby the Anglo-Americans wanted to husband their own forces as long as possible. Moreover, they intended to split up the Axis forces by creating as many theaters of war as possible. In this way they hoped to force Italy and Germany to their knees, and then to make a concentric attack on Japan with a united sea force, at the same time sending American air wings to Russia.

Germany, Italy, and Japan were now strongly united in a common fate, and Japan could rely absolutely on Germany and her power to resist. Our enemies made a great mistake if they thought they can wear out our Wehrmacht in Russia and decisively break our

P. 7
(cont.)

national strength there. In this the opponents would not and could not succeed, as he had stated before.

P. 8

For the German strategy it would now be of great interest to find out what Tokyo's further operational plans were and in what way Japan could relieve Germany which

(following passage crossed out in the original: after Japan had succeeded in driving the English and Americans out of their positions in East Asia,)

had to carry the main burden of the struggle. It is regrettable that Madagascar could not be occupied this spring, since this would have been a great handicap to the English generals in Egypt in getting supplies and reinforcements. Yet, in our opinion the most important thing and the most decisive factor for the further course of the war^{is} that Japan should advance in the Indian Ocean. This was more important than an attack on Russia, in our opinion, and as the Fuehrer had again emphasized only recently. Although it was naturally very hard for us when the Russians drew more and more new divisions from Sibiria to be used in Stalingrad, still, in the last analysis, the most effective relief for us would be a Japanese advance in the Indian Ocean.

Ambassador Oshima replied that the program for the transfer of the fleet to the West had already been decided on last June and the time had been set for October. Unfortunately, the Americans had started their attack on the Solomon Islands and New Guinea then, so that removal of the Fleet to the West had been postponed to the end of October or the beginning of November. Tokyo had assumed that the Americans would first withdraw their fleet for rest and repairs, and then attack again. This was not the case, however; the Americans immediately...

I, VIRGINIA VON SCHON X 046 318, hereby certify that I am thoroughly conversant with the English and German languages; and that the above is a true and correct translation of Document No. 3783-PS.

25 April 1946

VIRGINIA VON SCHON
X 046 318

I, GERARD SCHAEFER, being first duly sworn on oath, depose and say:

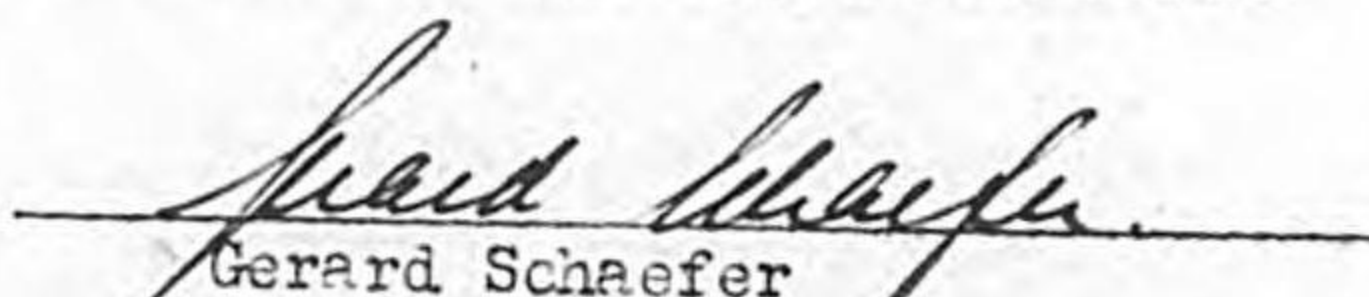
1. That I am Chief of the Documentation Division of the Office of the United States Chief of Counsel, Nurnberg, Germany, and as such have possession, custody and control of true and accurate photostatic copies of a certain original captured enemy document. That said photostatic copies have been numbered **3783-PS** by said Documentation Division.

2. That said above referred to original document was captured and obtained by military forces under the command of the Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Forces, from **the German Foreign Office Files and Archives.**

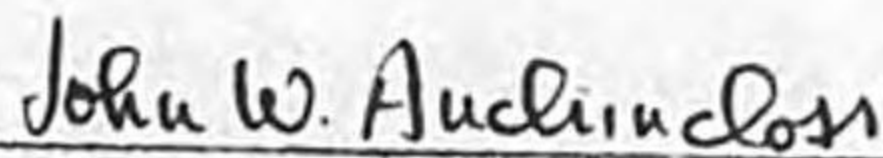
3. That said original captured enemy document after its seizure was retained by the United States Army Document Center at **Marburg, Germany,** and such above mentioned photostatic copies were delivered to, filed, numbered and processed by the Documentation Division of said Office of the United States Chief of Counsel at Nurnberg, Germany, in the manner set forth and described in detail by me in a certain affidavit made by me and dated the 15th of April 1946 captioned, "Affidavit Concerning the Capture, Processing and Preservation of German Documents", and which said affidavit I hereby verify, ratify and affirm and make a part of the herein affidavit by reference.

4. That the document to which this affidavit is attached is a true and correct photostatic copy of said original captured enemy document above referred to.

5. That said above referred to original captured enemy document is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, being held and retained by the United States Army Document Center Sub-Section in charge of captured German foreign office papers and now located in Berlin, Germany, for inspection by various authorized agencies, and that a photostatic copy of said original is hereby furnished and certified to because of the unavailability of said original document for the reasons above set forth.


Gerard Schaefer

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this **16th** day of **April** 1946.


John W. Auchincloss
O-2052152
Capt., JAGD.

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Folder 12

(7)

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25 April 1946

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Analyst: C. J. Phelps

Doc. No. 4004

Geheime Reichssache

A u t z e i c h n u n g
über die Besprechung des Herrn Reichsaussenministers mit Botschafter Ushima in Berlin am 11.12.44.

Der Herr Reichsaussenminister begrüßte den Botschafter, indem er seiner Freude darüber Ausdruck gab, ihn am Jahrestag der gemeinsamen Kriegserklärung der Dreierpaktmächte an die Amerikaner und Engländer zu den gewaltigen Erfolgen beglückwünschen zu können, die Japan bisher errungen habe. Botschafter Ushima erwiderte die Glückwünsche des Herrn RA in der gleichen Form und sprach die Versicherung aus, dass Deutschland, Japan und Italien nach weiteren gewaltigen Kriegserfolgen den Sieg erringen würden.

Der Reichsaussenminister erklärte dem Botschafter sodann, auf die Besprechung der jetzigen militärischen Lage übergehend, dass seit ihrem letzten Zusammensein einige wichtige Ereignisse eingetreten seien. Erstens: Zweifellos hätten die Engländer in Nordafrika einen taktischen Erfolg gehabt, was darauf zurückzuführen sei, dass sie in der Lage gewesen wären, ihre Luftwaffe bei El-Alamein ^{zu} massieren, wodurch sie uns von der Luft her überlegen gewesen wären. Uns seien ausserdem unglücklicherweise einige der wichtigsten Transporter torpediert worden, insbesondere mehrere Tanker, die für unsere Panzer unbedingt notwendig gewesen wären. So hätten wir

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sonerseits einige Materialverluste gehabt, andererseits aber seien zum Glück die Mannschaftsverluste recht gering. Rommel sei es geglückt, den grösseren Teil seiner Panzerarmee wieder in neuen Stellungen bei sich zu versammeln. Für uns sei eben die grösste Schwierigkeit, dass wir eine Armee auf dem Seewege mit Allem versorgen müssten, ohne dass wir dabei die sichere Seeherrschaft hierüber besässen. Rommel habe jedoch den Auftrag weiter zu kämpfen und den Engländer von weiterem Vormarsch nach dem Westen abzuhalten.

Gleichzeitig mit dem Angriff auf Rommel sei nun die Landung der Amerikaner und Engländer in Französisch-Nordafrika erfolgt. Auch die Lösung dieser Frage hänge ausschliesslich von der Möglichkeit ab, den Nachschub für unsere Truppen sicher zu stellen. Hierfür werde alles getan und so sei auch der Reichsmarschall Göring erst vor kurzem in Italien gewesen, um persönlich einzugreifen. Günstig sei für uns überbei, dass die Seestrasse zwischen Sizilien und Tunis um so viel kürzer sei als der bisher benutzte Weg für den Nachschub für Rommel. Wenn man auch zur Sicherung dieser Seestrasse unendlich viele kleine Boote, Torpedoboote, Bewachungsfahrzeuge, Schnellboote u.a.m., sowie eine starke Luftflotte gegen die feindlichen Bomber und Torpedoflugzeuge, die sich als besonders gefährlich und wirkungsvoll gezeigt hatten, benützte, so seien wir doch der festen Zuversicht, dass die Nachschubfrage zu unseren Gunsten gelöst

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Zeitens: Zur Zeit mit dem Stalinrad erklärte
auf sodann, dass zu unserm Unglück, ohne

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Bei den Rumänen die alleinige Schuld daran zugeschrieben zu wollen, leider ein Einbruch bei unsern rumänischen Bundesgenossen erfolgt sei, wie dem Botschafter ja bekannt wäre. Es seien aber dann an die Einbruchsstelle sofort deutsche Divisionen angesetzt worden, die ein weiteres Vordringen der Russen verhindert hätten. Unsere eingeschlossenen Truppen in Stalingrad selber hielten sich glänzend und es würde gelingen, die alten Linien wieder herzustellen. Die Kampf- und Stoßkraft der Russen sei ausserdem keineswegs so stark, wie wir angenommen hatten.

In der Mitte hätten die Russen ebenfalls überall starke Angriffe vorzutragen versucht, aber nirgends sei ihnen ein Durchbruch gelungen. Wenn man natürlich auch noch nicht die weiteren Angriffspläne der Russen übersehen könne, so herrsche doch jetzt schon der sichere Eindruck, dass bei den äusserst schweren Verlusten, die die Russen gerade hier jetzt schon im Mittelabschnitt hätten erleiden müssen, ihre Operationen in diesem Abschnitt fast schon als gescheitert angesehen werden könnten. Wann der endgültige Zusammenbruch Russlands erfolgen werde, könne man natürlich nicht voraussagen; dass er aber erfolgen werde, sei sicher. Wenn die Russen, wie es vorgekommen sei, ein Bataillon mit nur Kriegsverwehrteten einsetzten, anderswo Einheiten aus Innerasien mit unangebildeten, teils ganz jungen, teils alten Jahrgängen, so seien das bedenkliche Anzeichen für ihre Schwäche. Der

finnische

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Finnischer Staatspräsident Ryti habe durchaus Recht, wenn er darauf hinwies, dass im Weltkrieg Ausland nach zweieinhalb Jahren zusammengebrochen sei, während der jetzige Krieg gegen die Bolschewisten erst fünf Vierteljahr dauere. Auf jeden Fall seien wir jetzt schon in der Lage, viele Verbände unserer Luftwaffe von der russischen Front abzuziehen und an den anderen Fronten einzusetzen. Der Russe würde von Monat zu Monat schwächer, und unsere Kraft dadurch im Osten weniger gebunden.

Drittens: Unsere militärische Lage im Westen sei so, dass wir von Norwegen bis zur spanischen Grenze unsere Stellungen immer fester ausbauen, sodass eine Landung der Feindmächte immer schwieriger für diese werde. Man musste beachten, dass wir jetzt im Westen über 50 Divisionen stehen hatten, wobei wir im Jahre 1940 mit nur 60 bis 70 Divisionen etwa 130 Feinddivisionen geschlagen hatten. Um wieviel einfacher sei es hier jetzt für uns, ein Landungskorps wieder zu verpacken.

Selbstverständlich gelte unsere besondere Aufmerksamkeit irgendwelchen Versuchen unserer Feinde, sei es auf der Iberischen Halbinsel, sei es auf italienischem Boden oder in Griechenland, Landungen vorzunehmen. Wir seien darauf gefasst und dagegen gerüstet.

Unsere Siegeszuversicht werde ferner verstärkt durch die Nachrichten, die wir aus England und Amerika erhielten, nach denen die Ernährungslage in England außerordentlich schlecht sei und sich weiter verschlechtere. Churchill führe ein Gewaltregiment, indem

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er jede Ausserung der Kritik oder des Pessimismus in scharfster Weise unterdrücke. Andererseits könne uns der Bluff der amerikanischen Rustungsziffern nicht erschüttern. Man dürfe sich in keiner Weise irgendwie von diesem Zahlenwahn beeinflussen lassen. Wenn unsere Versenkungen in dem bisher gezeitigten Ausmass weiter fortschritten, dann würde allein dieses schon unsere Feinde zum Frieden zwingen. Am wenigsten aber sei es möglich, eine Entscheidung bringende Feindlandung auf europäischem Boden durchzuführen. Ferner sei Deutschlands Kriegsproduktion dank der gelungenen Organisation aller zur Verfügung stehenden Arbeitskräfte sichergestellt. Er könne dem Botschafter die vertrauliche Mitteilung machen, dass zurzeit 7 Millionen fremde Arbeitskräfte in Deutschland für die deutsche Kriegsproduktion arbeiteten. Wir seien somit in jedem Falle in der Lage, weiterhin die Angreifer zu bleiben, sei es in Russland oder in Afrika. Unser letztes Ziel bleibe selbstverständlich der Angriff auf England. Über den Augenblick, wann dieser erfolgen könne, sei nur soviel zu sagen, dass, wenn es möglich sei, von Russland erhebliche Kräfte abzuziehen, dann ein solcher Angriff sehr schnell akut werden könne.

Zur allgemeinen politischen Lage übergehend führte der Herr RAM aus, die Amerikaner verfolgten offensichtlich die Strategie, zunächst Deutschland und Italien zu vernichten, um dann Japan zu erledigen.

So

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So kämpfen sie jetzt hinhaltend gegen Japan bei den Salomon-Inseln und hätten ihr Schwergewicht auf Nordafrika verlegt, um von dort den schwächsten Punkt der Achse, Italien, anzugreifen. Selbstverständlich seien die Luftangriffe für die Zivilbevölkerung hart und grausam. Wir versuchten, den Italienern durch Lieferung von Flak- und anderen Abwehrgeräten jegliche Hilfeleistung zu stellen. Wenn aber die Feindmächte glaubten, mit ihrer Propaganda vom Sonderfrieden Italiens etwas zu erreichen, so fänden sie vielleicht damit bei diesen oder jenen Neutralen Gehör. Italien selber, jedenfalls das faschistische Italien, das der Luce fest in der Hand habe, sei weder durch Propaganda noch durch Terrorangriffe zu beeinflussen, und die Reaktion beim einfachen Volk sei nur ein umso grosserer Haß gegen den Feind. Alle Propaganda über die gewaltigen Erfolge, die die Alliierten bisher gehabt haben wollen, seien doch ebenso unsinnig, da unsere Feinde gegenüber den Dreierpaktmächten doch noch überhaupt keine wirklichen Erfolge gehabt hätten. Die Zuckorung Rommels von der ägyptischen Grenze sei ein taktischer, keineswegs entscheidender Erfolg. Die Landung der Amerikaner in Nordafrika sei kampflos erfolgt, da ja die Franzosen sich überhaupt nicht gewehrt hätten. Wo hingegen die Amerikaner und Engländer mit den Achsenstreitkräften in wirklichen Kampf verwickelt wurden, sei es auf den Philippinen, sei es in Frankreich, wären sie jämmerlich geschlagen worden. ~~Wenn auch einige intellektuelle Kreise auf unserer Seite sich leider von begartigen Propagandathesen beeinflussen~~

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~~einflüssen liessen, es sei doch die Wahrheit, dass
sicher, abgesehen von der Barbardierung der Zivilbe-
völkerung, unsere Gegner überhaupt noch keinen Erfolg
gehabt hätten.~~

Der strategische Plan unserer Feinde sei wie
gesagt der, sich gegenüber den Japanern hinhaltend zu
verteidigen, und zunächst den schärfsten Angriff gegen
Italien zu richten, zum anderen solle Russland mög-
lichst lange die deutschen Kräfte binden und aufzehren
wobei die Angloamerikaner ihre eigenen Kräfte mög-
lichst lange schonen wollten. Darüber hinaus beabsich-
tigten sie, die Kräfte der Achse durch Schaffung mög-
lichst vieler Kriegsschauplätze zu zersplittern. Sie
hofften, auf diese Weise Italien und Deutschland auf
die Knie zu zwingen, um dann mit einer vereinigten
Seemacht unter gleichzeitiger Verbringung amerikani-
scher Luftgeschwader nach Russland den konzentrischen
Angriff gegen Japan richten zu können.

Deutschland, Italien und Japan seien nun in
einer festen Schicksalsgemeinschaft verbunden, und
Japan könne absolut auf Deutschland und seine Wider-
standskraft vertrauen. Es sei eine grosse Täuschung
der Gegner, wenn sie glaubten, unsere Wehrmacht in
Russland abzunutzen und unsere Volkskraft dort ent-
scheidend brechen zu können. Dieses werde und könne,
wie er bereits ausgeführt habe, den Feinden nicht ge-
lingen.

Für die deutsche Kriegsführung sei es nun von
grossen Interesse zu erfahren, wie die weiteren opera-
tiven Pläne Tokios seien, und in welcher Weise Japan

Deutschland

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Deutschland, das, nachdem es Japan gelungen sei, die Engländer und Amerikaner aus ihren Positionen in Ostasien zu vertreiben, die Hauptlast des Kampfes zu tragen habe, entlasten könne. Leider sei es ja im Frühjahr d. Js. nicht möglich gewesen, Madagaskar zu besetzen, was den Nachschub für die englischen Generale in Ägypten ausserordentlich gestört haben würde. Unserer Meinung nach sei es aber immer noch das Wichtigste und für den weiteren Verlauf des Krieges Entscheidendste, dass Japan in den Indischen Ozean vorstosse. Dieses sei unserer Ansicht nach, und so habe es der Führer erst kürzlich wieder betont, wichtiger als ein Angriff auf Russland. Wenn es für uns natürlich auch sehr hart sei, wenn die Russen immer neue Divisionen aus Sibirien abzögen und nach Stalingrad warfen, so sei doch letzten Endes die wirksamste Entlastung für uns ein Vorstoss Japans in den Indischen Ozean.

Botschafter Oshima erklärte hierauf, dass bereits im Juni des vergangenen Jahres das Programm für die Verlegung der Flotte nach dem Meisten festgelegt und als Zeitpunkt der Oktober bestimmt gewesen sei. Leider hätten damals die Amerikaner aber dann mit ihrem Angriff auf die Salomon-Inseln und Neuguinea begonnen, sodass die Entsendung der Flotte nach dem Meisten für Ende Oktober / Anfang November zurückgestellt worden sei. Tokio hätte angenommen, dass die Amerikaner zunächst ihre Flotte zur Erholung und Reparatur zurücknehmen würden, um dann erneut anzugreifen. Dieses sei aber nicht der Fall gewesen, sondern die Amerikaner hätten gleich den Angriff gegen

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