Enclosed I submit an expose "The German General Staff and National Socialism" as a contribution bearing upon the vital questions of to-day.

I seize this opportunity to renew my willingness to cooperate with the proper authorities in facilitating and elaborating all possible information with regard to the functioning of the military system in Germany coinciding with the interests of my country.

/ S / W. WARLIMONT

July 4, 1945
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THE GERMAN GENERAL STAFF AND NATIONALSOCIALISM

I.

INTRODUCTION.

After being arrested May 23, 1945, I learned from various sources that from the side of the western-allied powers, the German General Staff beside National-Socialism, is regarded as essentially guilty both of this war and its issue which is so utterly unhappy for Germany. The accusations are apparently founded on the German Gen. St. officer being reputed to be the authoritative exponent of German militarism; who urged the war, led it -- at least temporarily, in a masterly way therefore menacing way, and finally lost it because of his stubborn adhering to his one-sided kind of thinking, irresponsible even towards his own people. From this opinion the consequences are drawn which are to guide the special treatment of the German Gen. St.-Officer now and perhaps also in the future.

It may be regarded presumptuous that out of my present situation I will oppose this opinion that the Gen. St. is culpable of the war, its duration and method. I am moved however to do so not only by the facts which I experienced during almost 20 years with the Gen. St. -- interrupted several times by duty with troops -- often spent in the proximity of leading men, -- indebted as I believe to be for that confession to my comrades of the Gen. St.

The essential cause is my growing apprehension of the situation developing in Germany where, judging from what news comes hitherto, new dangers begin to appear to the preservation of peace in Europe. Generals coming here from their troops report confirmingly of the strongly attractive power exercised by the attitude of the Red Army on German soldiers in the whole and prevalingly on the young officers-corps in concentration camps in northwestern Germany. Also interrogating from the side of the Russians repeatedly raised the impression, as if they would not reprove the German Gen. St. Officer that way but were rather interested in his military knowledge and capability.

I also derive the right to express my opinion on this subject from my own standpoint to the events of contemporary history, since long being unmodified. For without knowing Russia, I feel most deeply belonging and obliged to the community of occidental people and their culture which I wish to value much higher than any actual political or military constellations. The U. S. A. however have occupied for a long time the position as the supreme power of the "Abendland" after their troops penetrated as deeply into the Reich, the historical center of the continent, and took over the Mil. Government of Germany. To fulfill this task they will in the long run not spare of those Germans who always felt attached to this culture. In my opinion the majority of at least the elder Gen. St. Officers, incl. generals who preceded from the Gen. St., belong to them. They even represent within the German people an account of their average origin and education as well as their proving true, an element of such a moral and mental potentiality and especially of social order that they might procure an extraordinarily valuable contribution to the further development in the territories occupied by the western-allied powers.

Finally I feel supported in my willingness and my opinion by the still very lively remembrance of my one year's detail in the U. S. Army in 29/30 and the
ever memorable impressions and relations won thereby, added still by the experience of my wife who grew up in the States.

The sources I use are mostly my own experiences. In case they are not sufficient I shall not complete them but from entirely reliable foundations.

II.

Position and Attitude of the Gen. St. in the 100,000 men Army.

The officer-corps of the 100,000 men Army combining about 4,000 officers selected by their military merits only, included an uncorrespondingly great number of officers out of the school of the old Gen. Staff. According to the restricted possibilities, inflected by the dictates of Versailles, to occupy them with Gen. St. work, they usually held all the leading positions in the high and middle command of troops beside those in the War Dept. They therefore determined the attitude of the entire off-corps.

Naturally selection and education of students for the Gen. St. was laid in their hands. The selection was founded on an examination which from about 1922, was not only accessible but obligatory to every young officer called "Wehrkreis-pruefung". It comprised the professional mil. provinces, knowledge of history and foreign languages and proceeded after a scoring system, names of applicants being kept secret till the issue. The education extended over 3-3 years covering the same provinces mentioned above and excluding completely any political influence.

When the young officer after a system of selection, applied in my times (1923-26) even at the end of each training period, was taken over in the Gen. St., it did not mean his being admitted to a military "order", living on a legislation of his own. Officially a perpetual changing of positions between Gen. St. and troops was to counteract such a possible development, the duty with troops being decisive rather of further rising. This principle applied especially to preferred promotion which in the rule was granted once only - from captain to major - to an equal number of Gen. St. and troop-officers. The confined special Gen. St. - education during active service in the Gen. St., was confined to a few written problems of operative kind during the winter period and to occasionally taking part in training-trips. During duty with troops it was still further restricted.

Out of office, it was the "SCHLIFFEN-community" only, in which once a year, the retired and active Gen. St. Officers assembled. At Berlin, in public, a Gen. St. uniform, outside of the EAGLLESTRASSE, and the hours of attendance, hardly was to be seen. Besides, the conduct of life generally was very modest, caused by pauperization on account of war and inflation. The retired Gen. St. Officer often acquired a new position in industrial and economical life and the social esteem of the active one was kept up in solid circles, that after general opinion, was mainly due to education in the Gen. St. school which formed the character to faithfulness, unconditional reliability and a selfdenying kind of working. SCHLIFFENS' word "To be more than to seem to be" ("Mehr sein als scheinen") still ruled as a standard the whole attitude of the Gen. St. officer.

The living model of their entirety however at that time was the man at
the top of the 100,000 men-army, General von SEECHT, who had well succeeded in leading both the Gen. St. officer and the offcorps in the whole to new aims when he replaced the extinguished monarchical idea by an unconditional devotion to the Reich. Thereby the idea of the Reich was gradually not only relieved of the ever changing currents of interior politics but often almost felt in contrast to them. The officers'-corps in its entirety became completely unpoltical.

Towards National socialism (N.S.) V. SEECKT had expressed this principle very pointedly on the occasion of the riot at Munich in November 1923. His wrath hit the few officers of the Tuf. school and of the garrison of Munich who had taken part in it, marking them as mutineers. (Nobody of its numerous Gen. St.-officers was involved!) The Tuf. school itself was transferred to a training-camp. General von LOSSOW, in command of the WEHRKREIS at Munich was discharged on account of his obscure attitude.

This principle of von SEECKT's guided also his successors, the generals Heye and von HAMMERSTEIN. It was the latter one who proceeded in the sharpest way leading up to a process on high treason before the REICHSGEricht in 30/31, against several regular army officers of the garrison at ULM who had got in touch with N.S. In consequence of this incident, he ordered several Gen. St. officers of the War Dept. (among them MARX, THEISEN, OTT) to speak to all officers of the army and give them warning explanations on this subject. -- Hammerstein also on the whole never made a secret of his outspoken declining attitude towards N.S. and therefore was dismissed early in 1933.

Under these circumstances it is not astounding that N.S. hardly touched at the attitude of the Gen. St. officer and likewise at the interior structure of the army until it came to power January 30, 1933. Even national endeavors as much emphasized as they were by N.S., seemed to be better granted in the hands of Hindenburg whose peaceable policy of revision then brought increasing success. Before all, his national policy was not accompanied by symptoms taken from and turned to the street as usual with N.S., The press of which I kept away from my home -- as many other Gen. St. Officers did likewise -- and personal connections hardly anywhere existed with. I for instance learned the "MACHTESTBERNAHME" (getting in power of N.S.) from a recruit in the early morning of January 31, when he answered "Adolf HITLER" to my question which the name was of the German Reichskanzler and I even tried to contest that he was right. In those days also I saw for the first time the uniform of the SS.

The very best witness of this attitude of the Gen. St. officer in the 100,000 men-Army however is Hitler himself. As he condemned von SEECKT and his biographer Gen. von RAENALL, and had condemned them by his own historian, Gen. SCHERFF, I often heard out of his mouth the sharpest and most disapproving remarks of the selection and education of the officers-corps of that time. Moreover all the distrust of Hitler against the leading officers-corps of the "National-socialistic" army later on, before all his generals and Gen. St.-Officers was most deeply founded on that time of the 100,000 men army and the attitude of its Gen. St. officers consciously turned off any policy. The "KAMPFHER" (fighters) he looked for and needed for his purposes in his book, had been assembled in the "FREIKORPS" of post-war-times and had been merged in his S.A. (assault guards), when the 100,000 men-army had rejected those turbulent elements. Nobody had recognized that clearer than the French historian Benoist Nechin who pictured it in his work of the "German Army after the World War" (vol. 2). Exactly as he described it, Adolf Hitler looked upon the leading men of the 100,000 men-army ( - in contrast to the men of the "FREIKORPS" - ) as the embodiment of cool and sober spirits,
averse to political ventures. He would not recognize the fact that this army also was out to restitute the rights of living of a people seized in an unworthy treaty, but in the peaceable, evolutionary way of Hindenburg, and that the unpoltical attitude of its officers was the fundament of its existence.

Looking for exceptions of this attitude of the then Gen. St. officer towards N.S. and its methods -- which is the only one familiar to me, no active Gen. St. officer stands before me but the then Colonel von REICHENAU, the same one who 1934 already was seen in front against ROEHM, -- who in fall 39 more and clearer than anyone else recognized the immense danger involved in beginning the war against Poland, -- who counseled later on (39) to the demarche of PAPPENHEIM and me at the Ring of the Belgians, -- who finally perceived earlier than others in fall 41 that it was without prospects beating Russia with military forces only.

HIEHL and HASLMAIR who also are to be taken as exceptions of the rule were dismissed already from the army before 1933 as then unknown men, and probably passed over to N. S. because they were annoyed of being discharged.

III.

DEVELOPMENT UP TO THE WAR.

The general reserve of the Gen. St. officer towards N. S., according both to my own experience at Berlin -- where I returned to another detail at the War Dept. April 1, 1933 -- and observations around me, continued unchanged also after the"MACHTÜBERNAHME". Hindenburg remained protector of the officer.

In the official field the getting in touch with the new men was restricted to several lectures on political subjects held by GOEBBELS, ROSENBERG and others in front of officers of the War Dept. in the usual winter programme. Although the tone used therein was remarkable adapted to the well-known spirit of the army and differed much from that in the N.S.-press and meetings, the wooing had little success but often provoked sharp critics, especially with regard to the claim of restricting the personal liberty of thinking and acting. The N.S. salute was not taken on earnestly and has not been effected in the officers-corps till the end. We did not-at-all stay off Jewish shops, even not in the uniform of the Gen. St. and kept to the "civil" press (Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung, Boersen Kurier), while we declined further on the N.S. press and their uncultivated language. When an official periodical (Arbeitsfront") of the War Dept. used the slogan then often heard "jews, jesuits and freemasons", I put in an official complaint to Gen. von FRITSCH which was corresponded to by an excusing declaration of the editors (1934). An attempt of several Gen. St. - officers undertaken on official suggestion in winter 35/36, to take part in a social event of a N.S.-club terminated in a report from me to Gen. von REICHENAU that the mental level and customs of this society were entirely unsuitable to the Gen. St. officer.

June 34 in the Roehm-riot, these earliest tensions between the officers-corps and N.S. led for the first time to a violent discharge. The leader-corps of the S.A. owing his origin and his existence to his political confession to N.S., only raised against the officers-corps of the army which it felt being as unpoltical and penetrated by the cool spirit of the Gen. St. as ever, and which it prosecuted both for unsatisfied ambition and growing distrust. If the defense of this riot found Hitler, who even was much indebted therefore to REICHENAU, and the officers-corps on one side, the mutual motives differed essentially from each-other. While Hitler at that time already might have recognized the army in its actual shape to
be the only useful military instrument for pursuing his political aims revealed to us much later, the Gen. St. officer, by his fundamental attitude obliged as ever to the Reich, found himself on the side which declined each uprising against the state as a principle. It may not be unimportant however to add that we Gen. St. officers at Berlin even had orders then to keep our weapons for all events beside the writing-table.

Though the common defense of those days could not give the foundation of mutual confidence. For the illegal measures carried through at the same occasion by the "legal" powers, hitting the Gen. St. above all by the murder of the generals von SCHLEICH and von BERLOW compensated by for any possible positive effect. In a commotional way the Gen. St. officer felt for the first time the notorious unlawfulness within the new state as it appeared also in the proceedings around v. PAPEN, v. KAHR, KLHUSNER, EDGAR JUNG and others. This impression could by no means be restored to us by the "declaration of right" pronounced thereafter by Hitler. We were the more repelled since the "SCHLEPPEN-community" — and that only! — took such pains before effecting a declaration of honour in favour of the murdered generals.

Thus the general reserve of the Gen. St. officer towards N.S. finally was further enforced by these events. Similar appearances in public life above all STREICHER'S "STURMER", the extortions ("voluntary tributes") and other interferences in the field of economics, then close to my military work (industrial planning), pushed the Gen. St. officer gradually in open opposition.

For these reasons I, together with General GEORG THOMAS many times arrested after July 20 — went to Gen. v. BLOMBERG trying to remind him of his partial responsibility of those proceedings as a member of Cabinet without however getting through.

In this situation the army and its officers-corps in summer 1934 were severely hit by the death of Hindenburg, followed within the next 24 hours by the nomination of Adolf Hitler as Supreme Commander of the German armed forces and the oath to be delivered to him. While the highest form of unconditional obligation for every German soldier was connected therewith, both the self-determination then obtained by Hitler in rearming ("WEHRFREIHEIT") and the measures to rearm, following it in an ever accelerated manner, could have proved rather suitable to pave the way for a shifting of the Gen. St. in favour of N.S.

Though it would be entirely wrong to take this consent of the Gen. St. to rearmament as consenting also to mutually increased instigation for war. It certainly shall not be contested that every Gen. St. officer felt taking leave from the wooden cannon and the pasteboard tank as a liberation from a shameful enforcement and that it was mainly the Gen. St. officer who asked for airplanes and heavy guns as a self-evident part also of the German armament. There are sufficient proofs however, that the Gen. St. not only disapproved of the method of rearming then started and especially its political effects, but even tried to guide it in other directions using all suitable means.

In the mind of the average Gen. St. officer, German foreign policy at that time ought to pursue as its main topic to restitute gravity and safe-feeling within Germany as foundations of a sound policy of peace. He believed in rearmament as an important means for Germany, in her central situation on the continent, to get back to the roll, finally obtained by BISMARCK, that is to keep and protect the
peace of Europe by a peaceful policy, supported by a sufficient military strength. Measures which had proved necessary thereto during the years after the French-German War of 1870-71 now seemed to get effected once more: The armament was enforced on the Reich in its central situation by the peripheric powers and even the size of this armament was determined by these more heavily armed powers.

In the military field generals and Gen. St.-officers, according both to this attitude towards foreign policy and to principles of their education, could not think otherwise but that rearmament would proceed in full accord with the responsibility and soberly calculating military way of thinking. It was self-evident to them also that the financial situation of the Reich and the economical requirements of the German people would be fully taken in consideration, as promulgated for instance by president SCHACHT, much estimated then by many Gen. St. officers, in a discourse at the WEHRMACHT-AKADEMIE, in 1936.

While on such a base-line the suppositions could have been originated for an increasing mutual understanding between Gen. St. and N.S., already the disposition thereto was always again broken off. A real confidence did not get up and has never existed, -- as I am able to affirm both for me and my contemporaries close to me (a.e. Gen. von REITZEN, von UHRWANK).

The replacement of the black-white-red flag shortly before regained, was a hit to the face for us, while it meant nothing that the same colours -- as Hitler used to underline -- were kept up in the Swastika-flag which we felt to be strange and non-German-like. -- we declined emphatically the ever repeated claims of N.S. to get the credit all by itself of rising a new WEHRMACHT and enjoyed it frankly when at last Gen. v. FRITSCH in a public discourse stood up and had the essential merit attributed to the 100,000 men-army and its officers -- who alone kept up military spirit and knowledge (Bremen, 1936). -- We took it without comprehension but with great regret when the consequences of the laws of Nuremberg ("NURMBERGER GESETZE") led to enforced dismissal of merited and popular officers resp. their sons. Everything else developing from those laws in press and public, i.e. the so-called "REICHES KRISTALLWOCHE" which inflicted unmeasurable damage to national fortune by destroying Jewish and other undertakings not in favour, made appear the methods applied by N.S. always more doubtful. Simultaneously it was learned that a widespread personal enrichment of the N.S. -- "BONZEN" was connected with those proceedings, which in our circles cut down the already low reputation of these men completely.

More and more the Gen. St. officer looked upon the Fuehrer himself wanting to picture him in contrast to his followers and their doings, in order not to loose one's steadiness. Next to the "WEHRFREIHET", the peaceably performed re-occupation of the one-sided demilitarized zone of the Rhineland was suitable to raise his personal reputation in the officers-corps essentially, since this measure corresponded to our fundamental opinion mentioned above of the Reichs' future policy. Opposite to that however, the rearmament by the promulgation of 2-years service, the precipitated increase of the number of army-divisions, the rising of war-industry, etc. proceeded in such a dynamic manner, that plans just agreed on were outdistanced already before their performance had begun, thus making it impossible to apply to them the objectivity and thoroughness known to the Gen. St. as fundamental principal of his working manner. The army-Gen. St. even was reproached -- as I later on often heard it from the Fuehrer -- because of its keeping to the fixed financial assignments for a certain period, whereas Goring, knowing better the true political aims, did his best to overdraw the budget of the air-force and in this way went round the public responsibility of the Reichs-chancellor, in still conformity with him. The means pumped this way into rearmament of the air force often enough barred the -- in spite of all -- still calm planning of the army and increased the tensions also to
Almost daily in those years, the Chief of the Army Gen. St., General BECK, and the Chief of his Central division, Gen. HOSSBACH, simultaneously Chief-aide-de camp of the armed forces at the Führer's, specially close to BECK, sat together in long conferences. I only am able to guess their tenor from occasional communications of HOSSBACH'S. This interrogating however would result without any doubt in establishing the fact that the Chief of the Army Gen. St. was most deeply concerned of this development and tried to advance his uneasiness on this way, because he himself hardly once was admitted to Hitler! The opinion of General BECK who was especially high estimated with all the Gen. St. officers corresponded completely to their own.

My personal attitude was affected once more when on my return from Spain in December 1936, I was ordered for the first and only time before the war to take part in a conference at Hitler's. I then succeeded, supportedly by FRITSCH and BLUMBERG, to win the decision of the Führer to my opinion, opposed to that of the then German ambassador to Spain (FAUPEN), against detaching several great units of the German army to Spain. My lasting impression however of Hitler's explanations at this occasion was that the German soldiers in Spain were not really called upon -- as they believed -- to put in their life in devotion to an idea, the combat against Bolshevism. They rather were there in order that German foreign policy by interference in Spain, should gain time for other political aims -- as I still thought for unprevented rearmament. I then looked upon that as a piece of great politics which I had by chance found out, but I could not help feeling shocked that German soldiers who died in Spain were deceived that way.

From summer 36 to fall 38 I am lacking of particulars in the further development because I was detailed outside of Berlin. But even there February 4, 1938 was regarded as the decisive turning point in the relations between the army, i.e. the Gen. St. and N.S. For the dismissal of the generals v. BLOMBERG and v. FRITSCH demolished altogether the dams which up to that time had protected the army from an unhindered acting of the political (N.S.) powers. The balance kept up till then troubleously, became definitively lost. At the same time and casually connected therewith, the evaluating of rearmament was started by a policy which exceeding all bounds, in this year and the next one, led several times to the sill of war and in fall 39 finally transgressed it.

This policy was not introduced with the leading men of the army and the Gen. St. but rather without, i.e. against them who in addition to that, were dismissed on the ground of pretender which -- especially with regard to FRITSCH -- we all felt as mean in the highest degree. -- Soon it became evident however, that some more army-officers had to be pushed aside or at least shaded, before this policy could be effected. It is significant that all of them held leading positions in the Gen. St., while troop-officers who were known as close to N.S. as Gen. DIETL were promoted the same time. -- General BECK before all, the Chief of the Army Gen. St., belonged to the first ones. He was discharged in summer 38, i.e. before the SUDeten-case and casually connected therewith. The same happened to General ADAM, former Chief of the Army Gen. St. then commanding the army-group at Frankfort A/M who in an officers' meeting had frankly discussed his opinion of the

living now at Germsich-Partenkirchen
relation between German and French military strength and the consequences to be
drawn therefore by German policy. The Generals v. WIERTSHOFEN, deputy Chief of
the Army-Gen. St. (O. Qu. 1), and FOERSTER, who as "Inspekteur of Engineers and
fortresses" built the "Westwall" in the style of the Gen. St. were shelved.

None of these men apparently felt liable to directly oppose this policy of
dangerous adventures and to preserve thereby in time the army and the Reich from
the most terrible defeat of its history. Traditionally bound in military obedience
and faithful to their oath, new men of the Gen. St. were found to replace the dis-
charged ones. But ably were just as little attached to N.S., as the highest rank-
ing among them, BRAUCHITSCH, still more HALDER and H.V. STUHLPHAGEL later on have
sufficiently proved. Conscious of their obligation they were led by the same
opinion probably as I myself, rather to keep up the influence of the Gen. St. by
holding out then by falling in open opposition, to run personally the risk of
"K Z-LAGER" or death and to leave the Reich completely to N.S. in its most radical
forms. The look on the "N.S.-airforce" which had also converted the army-Gen. St.
officers transferred to it to the N.S.-attitude of its O.I.C., may have added to
this opinion.

I do not know the attitude of the Gen. St. practically effected before the
ANSSCHLUSS of Austria. There can be no doubt however that the Gen. St. did neither
urge thereto nor had even thought at any time of putting in military power in order
to obtain this historic aim of greater German policies.

The SUDETEN-crisis was preceded June 38 by that problem worked out by the army-
Gen. St. and the concluding critic by Gen. BECK which I already described the roughly
in another place and which has to be valued almost as a demonstration of the Army-
Gen. St. against the plans of the F. BECK had therewith not only declined the
military proceeding against Czechoslovakia, supposedly planned already at that time
by N.S., but he repeated his opinion also often expressed that Germany not earlier
than 1943, could be sufficiently armed for a defensive war with France only. --
The incident led to the dismissal of BECK, which however could not modify the
attitude of the Gen. St., rather confirmed thereby.

It therefore was a logical consequence when Hitler in fall 38 demanded that
the partial responsibility should be abolished which the chiefs of Gen. St. in
every echelon of command, beginning with the Chief of the Gen. St. of the army
held to that time, in favour of exclusive responsibility of the commanding generals
themselves. HALDER, the new chief of the army Gen. St. had to give a written order
to comply with this demand.

In this period also the Gen. St. was eliminated in a stormy and reckless way
from the lead in building the "Westwall". Shortly before only the foundations of
these fortifications, to be put up opposite the tremendous "Maginot-Line" had be
laid down tactically and technically, taking all the care the Gen. St. used to
apply to his work. The performance had been calculated to last 15 years as I later
on heard Hitler often repeat in a contemptuous way. -- Now the O.T., a thoroughly
political N.S. organization took over the lead and had to accelerate the building
beyond all measures. That proves not only that Hitler pursued his own military-
political aims by the precipitating kind of building but as well that the O.I.C.
of the army resp. the Chief of the army-Gen. St. can hardly have been informed
thereof.

The occupation of Czechoslovakia in spring 39 was an almost purely political
matter. The military part in it was of a more or less organizational kind.

Nevertheless this moment is noteworthy because the warners of the Gen. St., dismissed in the meantime, seemed to have put in the wrong by the quick successes. Apart from the improved strategical foundations, the suppositions for N.S. and its leaders from a psychological point of view thus had become much easier to guide the Gen. St. further on this way against Poland. In addition to that, the regaining of Danzig and of the connection with East-Prussia really was the supreme national aim of all Germany, certainly of the Gen. St., as even Foch had foreseen after Versailles. For the unity of land and coast was taken from the Reich by driving in the "corridor". Thereby and by the "never", which Poland had opposed to a revision of German borders in the East, the Reich was put in a position of constraint without comparison in history.

On the other hand the Gen. St. officer felt exposed to an interior conflict, since he in his way, believed firmly in Hitler's word spoken after one of the preceding crises "Germany is saturated, no more conquerings." While good faith thus suffered, new interferences in the military field began when Hitler continued to intervene in operative and tactical questions with regard to the Polish campaign as he had already done in the preparatory stage against Czechoslovakia in 39, I learned later on. While the appeal to arms already was his own and nobody's but his own resolution taken without any consideration with the Army-Gen. St., these interferences-expending also on mobilization to restrict it in favour of surprise -- oppressed still more the readiness to follow him and the general mood. Besides in spring 39, it became evident for the first time that the "SS--disposition--troops", much to the anger of the Gen. St., was to have built up from 2 or 3 inf. rgts. to an inf. div. equipped with special heavy weapons.

Thus it was by no means a Gen. St. drawn away by enthusiasm for war which had to prepare the campaign against Poland, but an instrument only, obliged to the head of the state and the Supreme Commander by oath to serve his political resolution. When Hitler at the meeting on the "Berghof" about August 20, 1939, pronounced his definitive decision for war this fundamental mood came unmistakably in appearance. Before all, the assembled generals and Gen. St. officers hardly believed in his explanations eversofar fetched and comprehensively founded, that England and France in his opinion would not enter the war. General v. REICHENAU in a following private conversation expressed frankly the opposite conviction and confessed himself to be heavily stricken by the prospect on a new world-war of indefinite duration. Such a development however stood as a terrible phantom before the eyes of the Gen. St. feeling united therein with the German people. (Witnesses: Generals v. SALMUTH, FELMY, v. WUEHLISCH.)

IV.

POSITION OF THE GEN. ST. IN THE FIRST PERIOD OF WAR.

The fundamental view to restrict the war -- if deemed unavoidable by the Fuehrer -- at least to the lowest proportion of space and time, has decisively determined the attitude and the acting of the Gen. St. as long as it could preserve at all a certain ever so small influence on the great resolutions. As I look at it this period was concluded with the end of the campaign against France. Taking the extreme, one could count this period until the dismissal of BRAUCHITSCH when Hitler took over the command of the army also (Dec. 41). From this moment at the latest, the army-Gen. St. in H.Q. went down to a performing only and even therein often strongly restricted position, -- by N.S., Goring included, regarded as a necessary evil, affected with all defects of the generally despised intellectualism,
which to belong to - exactly as it is now, only for directly opposite reasons: meant a burden and a perpetual disadvantage with regard to promotion and distinctions, an opinion which seemed to get its last confirmation on July 20, 1944.

The campaign against Poland from the point of view of the Gen. Lt. changed little or nothing in its relations to N.S. and its leader. Since I with the staff of the Supreme Command was left behind at Berlin, I have no sure judgement whether the operative modifications demanded by Hitler in the preparatory stage proved successful, just as little if any further interference of Hitler's took place during the campaign and with which results.

In particular it may be emphasized that the Gen. Lt. had no part whatsoever in the provocations within the German population beyond the border which at last had to offer the cause to start hostilities. One learned that only out of the press just as the public and declined those methods likewise, apart from feeling ashamed of seeing them repeated for the third or fourth time within two years. A lasting persecution however was aroused by the death of General von FRITSCH, the former C. i. C. of the army, under the walls of Warsaw. The generation of the Gen. Lt. and the whole army towards this man forced ones more its way while at the same time indignation revived of his ignominious treatment when being dismissed. The pronouncement issued by BRAUCHITZ on that occasion was readily disapproved by Hitler, all further celebrations then in particular determined by H. himself. The German Gen. Lt. however mourned for a man whom life had never ceased to hope in. Gen. Lt. officers who had been specially close to Gen. v. FRITSCH were regarded as particularly suspicious in future as for instance Gen. v. FUNCK who at least two times during the war was eliminated out of important commissions (Africa, Avranches).

After conclusion of the campaign there was another collision of lasting effect, when Gen. BLASKOWITZ left behind in Poland as C. i. C. of the few remaining German troops, for reasons and in forms I do not know in particular, showed fight against the methods of the new German Governor-General of this area, Minister FRANK. Hitler never forgot this uprising of the general against N.S. which has influenced his further career in a most unfavourable way.

In the meantime, several branches of the Gen. Lt. which were little only taken up by the Polish campaign had made considerations of the further acting towards the western enemies. Thus I myself - without commission - had begun to collect data on the capacity of our arms-industry and the productivity of general economics in Germany, my intention being to prove this way that it would be impossible to continue war against the western powers, or at least that it would be necessary to be contented with protecting the borders. The Ind. Planning Dept. (WÄHRWIRTSCHAFTSTAB) of the OKW corresponded to my demand in form of a memoir resulting as desired. The ministry of economics however, which was asked for general data refused to give them, pointing to bad experiences made before the SUDeten-crisis with correlations of that kind, if apparently directed against intentions of the Fuhrer. (Witnesses: Generals GEORG THOMAS and RUDOLF HUNERMANN.) Thus my intention came to a dead stop in its beginning.

At the occasion of a call in the Army-H-An. about that time, I came to have a look in a memoir pick up there under the personal guidance of the deputy Chief of Staff, General HEINRICH v. STUMPFHAGEN, in which it was tried to prove, based on many figures, that an offensive war against France was impossible, but a defensive
character on the long run also must lead to the greatest risks. (Witness: General v. GREIFFENBERG.)

This memoir, as strong as its after-effect was on the Gen. Lt. had never been laid before Hitler. Though he never doubted a moment the attitude of the Ge. Lt. to his own offensive plans what is to be derived from various symptoms.

I learned of these plans for the first time from Fieldm. KEITEL when I about the conclusion of the Polish campaign paid an official call in Fuehrer-H. An., then at ZOPFOT. At that time it seemed to me that KEITEL himself was perplexed or at least very surprised.

After his return to Berlin the Fuehrer still in September 1939, assembled the C. i. C. of the three component forces and the Chief OKW together with their next advisers in the Reichs Chancellery and pronounced his resolution to attack and crush France, still in fall 1939. (Hitler used -- a few catchwords written on slips of paper which he burned thereafter in the open fireplace.) The preparations ought to be concluded within 6 weeks, i.e. in the beginning of November. His operative instructions which I can no more remember in particular, aimed at turning the Maginot-line and its strongest built parts in the North, by repeating the advance through Belgium and this time also in the Maestricht corner of Nether-
lands. No contradiction was hinted in this assembling.

The deployment of troops according to these orders had once more to be improved since plans did not exist. While the troops were being transported to the West and got there without any important interferences, the army Gen. Lt. had calculated that the final order to advance beyond the Franco-German border had to be given 7 days before x-day. On this day, related to the earliest possible date -- it was a Sunday in the beginning of November 1939 (Nov. 5 ?) and I, by chance, present in the Reichs Chancellery representing General JODL who was ill - General v. BRAUCHITSC\_ about noon appeared there and demanded to talk to the Fuehrer by himself. Hardly half an hour later he left the house while KEITEL was called to the Fuehrer. From him I learned later on that BRAUCHITSCH referring to conversations with his army-group-commanders on a trip to the West just concluded, and relying on a written memoir, had made the attempt to convince the Fuehrer that his intention of attacking France was unpracticable, at least at the time provided, fall 1939. When he however in his report had come to point out that the spirit of attack of German infantry during the Polish campaign pretently had stayed behind seriously in its perform-
ance in the world-war. Hitler - deeply offended in his pride of N.S. education of youth - had roughly interrupted him and declined him to continue his report.

The Fuehrer's indignation of these presentations of the C.i.C. of the army was so great and enduring that it was forgotten to decide whether the order of opening the campaign should be given. Only after the Fuehrer had gone I came to ask KEITEL for that, pointing out that the order had to have been released by 1 P.M. KEITEL then hastened after the Fuehrer and brought the decision that the order ought to be given at once determining presumably November 12 as x-day. When I then telephoned the order to Army-H. An. (General HUSINGER) I was asked for a written confirmation since the order there could not be understood -- as I was told -- after the presentations the C.i.C. of the army had just made.

In the Reichs chancellery however, after BRAUCHITSCH had withdrawn, one had been occupied looking through the list of generals and there chiefs of staff which BR. might have seen on his trip. Hitler then coming across the name of HUSSBACH, his former aide-de-camp, who also had been dismissed February 4, 1938, demanded in a
most rough manner that he was transferred to duty with troops at once. Hitler had added - as I learned later on - that HÖSSBAECH was "one of those definitistically minded Gen. Lt. officers" who should not be allowed to influence an able commanding general (General STRAUSS). This incident passing by under those circumstances caused a painful and lasting sensation with all the other Gen. Lt. officers.

When the order to march on to days later had to be suspended because of bad weather forecast, a new period of increased distrust began. Neither by the meteorological fact that the weather in central Europe and especially in the West nor by the most exact and ever more particularized weather reports coming in daily from the army command posts in the West, and supplemented still by the unsuspected airforce, Hitler could satisfy himself that it really was the weather situation and not the opposition against his places - openly outspoken by BRAUCHITSCH - which had the beginning of operations delayed further on. The system of intervals of firstly 3, later on 5 days from one decision to the next one led to a lasting restlessness diverted eye and work from more important problems and gnawed heavily at the small capital of confidence the Gen. Lt. had left to its Supreme Command. In addition to that there seemed to wish a shounce of treason out of which these decisions several times had been made known to the enemy.

It was about this time also that I made an attempt of my own to take influence on the course of things by setting in motion a lucidation with the Western powers by the way of the king of Belgians (which I described thoroughly in my "LEBENSLAUF").

In the middle of December only, when the system of postponing the day of attack every few days was abandoned finally, bigger considerations about the performance of the operations could take place. But again these proceedings got on under enduring heavy interferences between the Fuhrer and the army Gen. Lt. The starting point was the proposition of the F. founded probably on a written suggestion of General v. MANSTEIN, then chief of staff of RUNDSTEDT, to shift the point of gravity of troops-concentration in the west from the right wing to the center and to make the piercing through the Ardennes and over the NAAS at Sedan the fundamental line of the impending operations. The chief of the army Gen. Lt. whose relations to MANSTEIN were not the best ones did not follow these suggestions but reluctantly, whereas the Fuhrer adjusted himself ever more to them and finally decided them to be carried out. (In spring 1940).

Thus when the campaign against France began, the disagreements between the Fuhrer and the army Gen. Lt. covered almost all base elements of command, the necessity and expediency of the offensive war at all as well as plans of operation and personal dispositions in the high command posts.

The general mood heavily burdened thereby because little changed only where the Fuhrer in his usual discourse to the high ranking generals shortly before the campaign, seemingly justified, pointed to the fact that he and his policy had created much better foundations for this war then the imperial government of BERTHANN in 1914.

The bad frame of mind kept on in spite of unexpected successes all through the operations and increased the ill-humors on both sides at every occasion by personal distance from the acting men at that time however was much to great to learn cease and course of these ever repeated disagreements. There is only one incident I remem-
ber positively in which - contrary to the usual state of affairs - the Gen. Lt. urged to go on while the Fuehrer checked the advance. When the German armoured divisions had attained the Pas de Calais and the channel coast, the Fuehrer - pointing to the ground of Flanders as in his opinion not suitable for movements of tanks - prohibited the armoured drive to the north, intended and urgently demanded by the Gen. Lt. in order to push the British off Duenkirchen and thus to annihilate their army. The Fuehrer wanted the air force to fulfill this -------, which then has proved not equal of it. Discussions of the consequences these measures Hitlers' had on the later course of war, have never calmed down in the Gen. Lt.

By the quick and successful conclusion of the campaign against France, however, the authority of the Fuehrer, at least temporarily, for the first time was generally and more firmly founded within the Gen. Lt. Besides, his public acknowledgement of the highest ranking generals in the meeting of the Reichstag July 19, 1940, certainly caused a widespread feeling of personal obligation among them. In addition to that, the propaganda did its part to promulgate the picture of Hitler as strategist both in the public and the officers corps. It connected therewith a further aim which all through the war found N.S. on the alert. Military successes must by no means endanger the preponderance of the Party! No military leader and no soldier should come to think that his successes in the field and the thereby increased authority of the soldier within the German people should be ever used in shaping interior Germany in the future, i.e. against N.S.

The policy of reconciliation with France began then at Montoire, increased further still the authority of the Fuehrer, since it had the unanimous consent of the Gen. Lt. When it definitely broke down with the Anglo-American landing operation in French North Africa it just as usual was the Fuehrer who was heavily reproached by the Gen. Lt. because of a policy which seemed to deny any support to the soldiers' part in the war.

V.

The Displacing of the Gen. Lt. in the Second Period of War

If Hitler by his resolution to attack France had already hit the Gen. Lt. - including OKW - with complete surprise, the announcement of his intention to go to a preventive war with Russia can be marked only as still more unexpected, if possible. France and England - to be sure - had declared war in Sept. 1939 to Germany, battling - if of a small size only - had been going on since that time, the British had landed on French soil, collisions in the air and on the sea had already taken place. With Russia however there existed a treaty which during the ------- occupation of Poland had temporarily resulted in eventual military arrangements and further to had its effect in current settlements of questions with regard to the new borders and the economical deliveries. In spite of the striking Russian troop concentrations in the former East Polish area then probably known already of casual shooting along the line of demarcation and of hostile utterances from the Russian side, there was no cause whatever for the Gen. Lt. officer - who liked to take the victory over France as the end of the war - to occupy himself in any extensive way with Russia.

Besides, in full contrast to the proud announcement at the beginning of the
French campaign, no positive political background was to be seen to carry out these new military plans. The two-front war which the Fuhrer had then praised himself to have avoided, now was brought about by his own resolution. Even the primarily arising question how the war in the air or the air-defence only in home areas would be getting on against an increasing British air force, could not be answered satisfactorily.

At what time the resolution to attack Russia has originated with the Fuhrer I can not tell just as I do not know whether the old ideas put down in "Mein Kampf" have primarily guided him, or the uneasiness about Russian troop concentration in East Poland, or finally the assumption, more or less founded, of a secret understanding between Russia and England. There is no doubt however for me (having - as I may emphasize once more - a restricted possibility only to observe the course of things) that

(1) Hitler directly after the armistice with France i.e. end of June 1940 gave the order to dismiss elder soldiers having served already during world war in favour of agriculture and civil industry and thus seemed willing to introduce the 1. step to demobilization.

(2) his intention to address another offer of peace to England seemed to correspond to his profoundest conviction, that he therefore received very reluctantly all suggestions then of a German landing operation on the British Isles than put up to him from various quarters of the WEHRMACHT and that he demanded to restrict all further considerations thereof to the smallest circle.

(3) the announcement of his intention to enter upon Russia struck me and the officers of the staff present with me at the conference called in by Gen. JODL one of the last days of July 1940, as a lightning out of a seemingly clear sky. The intentions of an understanding with England had apparently already been checked during soundings which had taken place before Hitlers' discourse to the REICHSTAG on July 15. (Witness: Colonel von LOSSBERG).

It also became evident by the communications of JODL at this or a later occasion that Hitler had firstly planned to begin the campaign against Russia in fall 1940 already, but afterwards postponed it for military reasons correlated in a memoir signed by KEITEL which I once took a look in later on.

At which moment Hitler made known this intention to the Chief OKW and to the C.i.C. of the three component forces, is unknown to me as well as the attitude they took thereto. I do not believe however, that essential objections have been made by the army Gen Lt. because nothing of that kind got through from these quarters to me. The C.i.C. of the army with his entire staff remained at Fontainbleau till the beginning of November while Hitler after calling on Potsandin, Franco and Muscelini changed his stay during this period several times between Berlin and Berchtesgaden. January 1941 he moved there for several months taking with him KEITEL and JODL only. I with the staff was once more left behind at Berlin.

It may be mainly for this lasting separation that I do not remember any serious interferences between Hitler and the Gen. Lt. out of this entire period during which in the end of September, the landing on British soil - probably never seriously intended by the Fuhrer - corresponding to the progressed season was definitively quit, - a little later on, the campaign in the Balkans, on account of the Italian failure, was decided on and the preparations against Russia were getting on according to plans made. With regard to these plans there also seemed to reign unanimity.

Thinking back I therefore can not restrain the impression even today that for-
tune and success of the French campaign combined with the honours allotted thereafter to high ranking generals had temporarily silenced the opposition in the Gen. Lt., a fact which Hitler well might have been aware of when taking his resolution with regard to Russia. The C.I.C. of the army and his gen. staff had let themselves draw for the first time entirely on the level of performing organs of Hitler's end were now kept there. The final displacing of the Gen. Lt. had begun. The more it proceeded within the following years, the more unfortunate became the situation on the fronts, the more also degenerated the art of conducting the war, while the organization of Supreme Command gradually dissolved. In the Gen. Lt. standing powerless and without a leader face-de-face with this development, there now began, instead of the unanimous opposition of former times, the formation of opposing and ever more distrusting groups. The Party however proceeded to expand its power on the WERMACHT itself to leave it finally to its horrible fate happening but once in German history.

In the Russian campaign the periods of this decline may be specially well discerned since they almost correspond in time to the coming and leaving of the leading personages of the army. BRAUCHITSCHE as long as he was C.I.C. still succeeded - if with the heaviest disagreements - to somewhat balance both willing and means and to save the nucleus of the army from being annihilated. He however could not prevent the army from the heavy crisis of winter 41/42 growing up out of driving three attacking columns eccentrically into the depth of Russia. BRAUCHITSCHE therefore had to withdraw. The men however, who essentially had caused it, Adolf Hitler, seemingly mastered it by addressing himself directly to the German army in the East as the successful strategist of former campaigns. He thus averted probably an immediate catastrophe but began at the same time to waste the substance of the army in spite of all his interfering with particulars.

HALDER was not welcome to him as an assistant, but at first indispensable. Thus he succeeded in coming over the winter and in somewhat disentangling the situation, though with innumerable interferences, among them not at the least, dismissals of leading generals, sometimes then already performed in the roughest way (Gen. HELLFFER). SPEER took the place of TODT, one revelled in figures, but the German army in the East - then comprising at least 75-80% of the army in the whole - in summer 42, had by far not attained its original personnel or material strength in spite of all endeavors to "refresh" it. Nevertheless Hitler started his plans for the summer campaign 42, originated all by himself, in which he pursued in another eccentric driving to the south, far gaping targets between the Black and the Caspic Sea and beyond the Caucasus. Only the northern ring of the entire front was kept back at first for lack of forces. HALDER carried out what was ordered to him and struggled in vain against taking away from the East later on not only the C.I.C. of army groups (BOCK, LIST) but even the best armoured divisions which - following Driepe - were transferred to the west. An outburst finally overcoming him Sept. 42 led to his exemption from a task which was not to be performed and left the army anew in a situation critical beyond all measure.

He was followed by ZEITZLER, pushed to the foreground by SCHMUNDT for quite a while already - an especially efficient and energetic Gen. Lt. officer - he still had been my subordinate in the OKW from fall 38 to spring 39 - but without any greater form, without support in the army Gen. Lt., grown up only in post-world-war education and appointed only as performing organ of the Fuehrer's decisions. Simultaneously with his coming in, the Gen. Lt. crisis extended also to the officers directly attached to Hitler. KEITEL and even JODL temporarily fell utterly into
disgrace and were received only to deliver the most necessary reports, - no other cause being recognizable but the attempt of JODL to explain the dissatisfying development in the Caucasus by Hitlers' own orders.

In reality the causes of this uncommon crisis which led also to a complete modification of Hitler's customs of life in H. An. were much deeper founded. In any case I could explain this sudden change to myself only by figuring that Hitler recognized the war was lost and threw his impotent wrath on the exponents next to him of that organization which had always stood warning on or at least beside his way to war, the Gen. Staff.

Parallel to the heavy set-back beginning in the following month of fate November with ROMMEL'S retreat from ALAMEIN, (Nov. 2) continuing with the surprising Anglo-American landing in French Northern Africa (Nov. 8) and finally culminating in the encircling of STALINGRAD (Nov. 29), the organization of the Supreme Command began to break off more and more. GOERING stirred the fire, putting his hands in everything without scruple and responsibility. The misshapen "LUFTWAFFEN-FELDDIVISIONEN" originated at that time also "because he could not expect of his air force men to change their blue-grey uniform with the field-grey one of the army". - ZEITZLER saw himself completely concentrated to the east, the army-Gen. Lt. thereby restricted to a "High-Command of the East". THE WEHRMACHT-FUHRUNGSTAB (JODL) without any decided order thereto, gradually took over the task, strange to its character, of operative and tactical conduct on all the other theaters of war, though it remained dependent on the army-Gen. Lt. with regard to all base-factors as men, material, education, news of the enemy, etc. The peculiar position of the SS still increased the difficulties of command. The ever enlarging number of SS-divisions, in spite of its tactical subordination under the army, still had an echelon of its own and could rely upon everything brought up this way would be taken for granted. Whoever accused the army, before all the Gen. Lt. was right.

Thus the only person keeping up the survey of everything, as a matter of fact became Hitler himself who now more than ever pleased himself by shifting not only divisions but smaller units, especially of the trunk branch from one area to the other and by trying to arrange every particular to the last. All the less the important events were recognized in time and considered which were impending outside of this restricted perspective, O the armament of U.S.A., the annihilating war in the air, the dangers on the Balkan, the decay of Italian power, as in the whole the cooperation with our allies was much neglected. Of these proceedings, reports at least could still be given to Hitler where the repeated news of the ever increasing Russian forces could no more be laid before him even at Halder's time. He simply declined them as an expression of defeatistic attitude of the Gen. Lt. The method of self-deceiving extended gradually in all fields, figures should replace power, orders were given instead of the necessary means. "Fanatic" keeping to certain points should prevent from withdrawing out of an entire area, while the substance of the army was worn out in an ever accelerating degree. Thus everything was done in a way exactly opposed to the fundamental opinion and the education of the Gen. Lt.

ZEITZLER, temporarily growing above himself struggled in vain against this general confusion of command. Till his leaving office in consequence of July 20, he has not ceased to point to the dangers of this development, more than anyone else. According to his own words to me he told Hitler at the latest in spring 44,
that the war would be lost getting on this way. Naturally such presentations could not get through, coming from a man who was called only as a creature made my Hitler. They were not felt but troublesome.

The attempts of the Gen. Lt. to gain help by policy against super-powerful enemy in the east, begun already in fall 41 by REICHENAU and continued emphatically by MANSTEIN, KLEIST, HUBER — to mention only a few ones — were not only declined by Hitler, but treated with contemptuousness and often personal disadvantages for generals "muddling in politics". When the army had tried to get out the Russian general WASSOW as probably a suitable exponent of these endeavors, he was oppressed and not taken out of the trapdoor by "regular" politicians but all to late.

GUDERIAN when he in summer 44 was nominated as chief of the army Gen. Lt. to general surprise, could all the less modify the entirely confused situation since he was called upon simultaneously to root out of the Gen. Lt. those elements who towards N.S. were nothing but loyalists. Getting on this war he finally delivered the chief of his operation-division, Colonel v. BONIN, to a concentration camp as I learned here only. In the meantime the C.i.C. in the high echelons formerly proceeding from the Gen. Lt. as a general rule, had also been replaced by men who were without special reputation in the Gen. Lt. as MODEL or FRISCHER, or were not taken in because of insufficient result in the war academy as SCHERER or never had gone through the special Gen. Lt. training as HARPE. But the number of these men of strong hand was not sufficient. They were sent off from one focus to the other.

The development in the older theaters of war shows the same characteristic marks, though JOELL sometimes succeeded in his calm way, to prevent unperformable decisions or to guide Hitler to undesirable but necessary ones as for instance to evacuate Sicily in summer 43. He however remained powerless also in the decisive direction, namely to restitute an unitary Supreme Command, to withdraw in time from the wide areas no more to be kept up and to concentrate the remaining contracted forced of the Reich in order to preserve the necessary space of living for the German people.

It is specially remarkable that what was done instead to save the situation, came from the side of N.S. But it proved more suitably to muddle things further and to make them worse. Geulitzer KOGH of East Prussia was the first one who in summer 44 organized a public levy to fortify country borders without in any way taking in the Wehrmacht. Along this model later on fortifications at the other borders were built under the guidance of N.S. and O.T. though with cooperation then of army engineers. This numerous organs of the army, in its very own field of national defense were delivered to N.S. Similarly the mutual relation of army and N.S. was reversed in the operative zones where formerly both on own soil and in occupied territories the army and C.i.C. had dominated uncontestedly, supported by civilian employees as chiefs of administration. While during retreat in the east Hitler had repeatedly ordered already to reduce the operative zones to "battle" zones of smallest depth (20-25 km), the "GAULITTERS" were hardly expected at all to cut down their own power when fighting passed over to the home soil. That was caused not only by their prestige, but mainly by the fear of dangers proceeding from a Gen. Lt. administration to N.S. In the occupied territories still under military government, long ago so many parallel administrations of N.S., police and bureaucracy had been created that the unitary military command and therewith
the Gen. Lt. had been completely paralyzed. The "VOLKSTUERM" which originated only after my withdrawal from K. AN. has been resolved on and organized - as I understood - without any cooperation of the Gen. Lt. - About the originating and the lead of the "WEHRWOLF", I even here could nothing extract but that it is still unknown today to the formerly leading men of the OKW who has guided it, in any case not the Gen. Lt.

Instead the Wehrmacht had to take it that - commissions led by "Gauleiters" examined repeatedly the military organization at home up to the OKW, in order to discover superfluous tasks and to bring men occupied therewith to the front.

These actions had been preceded already by taking away such tasks from the OKW entirely which Hitler would not recognize any more as belonging to the Wehrmacht. For these reasons, the Industrial Planning Dept. (WEHRWIRTSCHAFTSTAB) already in 42, the Intelligence Dept. (AMTABWEHR) since beginning of 44 had been passed over to the Min. of Armament resp. to HIMMLER, while the leading officers (THOMAS, CANARIS) believed to be in opposition to N.S., had been set aside. From the lead in civil defense, the OKW had already been displaced in the beginning of war by the "Council of ministers for civil defense" under dominating influence of GOERING.

Fuehrer and Party however were not satisfied by disabling and displacing the Gen. Lt. this way. From 1943 on they rather began in an ever increasing manner to work on the officers' corps in the direction of a "positive" N.S. attitude. GOERING may have added to that when in fall 43 he spoke of the "generals' masonry in the N.S. state" which in his opinion I belonged to as a high ranking member beside MANSTEIN and other ones. BORMANN stood coaching in the background. It is remarkable that the new military organization founded there, the N.S.F.B. turned mainly to generals, concluding each course by a speech of Hitler which was received in an ever increasing cool way. Even promotions and nominations were steadily more influenced by the officers' attitude to N.S., the elder generals, i.e. about 50 being regarded generally as unreliable.

It therefore is unconceivable to me that recently the question or even the reproach has been brought up in many conversations why the Wehrmacht if not the Gen. Lt. had tolerated the infamy which the concentration camps meant to German culture. To this I may once more affirm here in lieu of an oath that I never came to know anything of what has been published now, until I came here as a prisoner of war. Except the word "DACHAU" which was generally used as a demonstrating and deterrent catch-word, I knew as little thereof as most of my comrades. Besides I believe to have proved herewith that there was only one kind of connecting the general or Gen. Lt. officer with this institution, namely if he was taken there himself. That is demonstrated emphatically by the names of the generals v. FALKENHAUSEN, HALDER, FROMM, THOMAS which have become known to me here and now. Every attempt of a soldier or even a Gen. Lt. officer, if only to collect data in order to proceed against "K.Z." - camps would have obtained but enlarge the number of convicts resp. deeds. What BLOMBERG was not able to touch in its beginning, that was entirely out of reach, even of observation of the German Wehrmacht in the progressed stage of war times.
CONCLUSION

I believe to be justified on account of the abundance of these facts, without anticipating the judgement of history, to turn with all determination against the thesis that the Gen. Lt. in league with N.S. had driven to war. While nothing is known to me in favour of this thesis, I could enumerate many facts to prove the contrary. The serious contrasts between Adolf Hitler and the Wehrmacht with regard to the general attitude to this war at all, to its ever extending tendency and its methods, in the very heart have not overcome at any time. Although Germany after the first world war seemed to have returned to the beginning of its history, the average Gen. Lt. officer was convinced that peaceful building-up only and - if necessary - defense of frontiers could regain the position to the German people which results from its central situation on the continent and which it has merited by its supreme actions in the service of human progress. There were added the contrasts in philosophy of life which excluded a relation of confidence to N.S., specially for the generation rooted in Christianity and in monarchy. These contrasts were and are so strong that their effect reaches until today and here, as the observation of associating of the soldiers in this camp would easily result in.

After war had be resolved on without taking in the Gen. Lt. it could neither be concern to decide the question left open by the first world war, whether war still had to be regarded as the last and most effectfull means of policy, nor could it withdraw from it. The offensive method of war also became then justified by the natural situation of the Reich which had already become its fate in the course of history, several times. In this condition therefore nothing was left to general and Gen. Lt. officer but to serve his country as best he could and thus to fulfill his obligation confirmed by oath. If his influence in decisive questions as I tried to prove, finally sank down to the deepest possible level, he even therefore can not be reproached of an irresponsible assistance in lengthening the war. Besides by July 20 it was emphatically proved that it was much too late to regain that influence by force.

It is not the Gen. Lt. either in which German "militarisme" - recently so often emphasized and pointed to - is incorporated. Whoever studies the figure of the Gen. Lt. in German history, will recognize it as an element of mental military lead and of stabilization, - exactly as Hitler felt it and marked it as "defaitisme wrapped in intellectualism". The German Gen. Lt. will rather be condemned by history because it proved too weak to put through his opinion before and during this war. It was however all but militaristic, in the usual sense of this word.

The German general and Gen. Lt. officer therefore, neither before the world war before their own people have forfeited the right to put in their efficacy for the Reich and its future. If an employment in his own profession as soldier has to be denied there will be many possibilities of employing him in building up public and economical life in Germany which he is especially fit to fulfill. The occupying forces will easily arrange to make it certain that this activity is nowhere directed against them. That will be obtained all the better if - as I picture it - in future a cooperation should result for the common aim to keep up and to further western civilization. Out of this cooperation alone the forces may grow up which will draw away the valuable German element of man from other bindings and will keep it up for a better future.