

16, 20
contd

SUMMARY OF INTERROGATION OF

Vice Admiral Leopold Buerkner

10 November 1945 PM

By: Colonel Amen

PERSONS CONCERNED: Keitel, Canaris, Weygand, Giraud, Westhoff

SUBJECT: Orders for the Killing of Commandos,
British Prisoners of War, Giraud and
Weygand

DOCUMENTS: None

Buerkner testified that he now recalled that his International Law Group had considered the question as to whether the commando orders violated international law and the Geneva Convention and had expressed the opinion that they did; that this opinion had been passed on to him (Admiral Buerkner) and he in turn had passed the opinion on to Canaris and assumed that Canaris had passed the opinion on to Keitel. He conceded that in spite of the numerous opinions expressed by his International Law Group that proposed orders were in violation of international law, they nevertheless had been put into effect. He conceded that the only such proposal which had not been put into effect was Hitler's proposal to abandon the Geneva Convention, as to which he had submitted a very strong opinion that legally there could be no such abandonment.

Buerkner was questioned about the incident of the shooting of twenty-five British prisoners of war and stated that when he had read of this alleged incident in the newspaper, which reported its discussion in the House of Commons, he personally had telephoned Westhoff and asked him what the truth of this incident was, to which Westhoff had replied that he (Westhoff) had received orders not to furnish Buerkner with any information respecting this incident. Westhoff has stated that he suggested to Buerkner that he inquire of the Gestapo, and Buerkner will be questioned as to this at his next interrogation.

Buerkner was next questioned about the orders for the execution of Giraud and Weygand. He confirmed almost verbatim the testimony of Lahousen, stating that such orders had been issued (presumably by Keitel) and that he personally had been present at the dinner party in Paris with Canaris, Lahousen and others, and also that he had been present at another meeting with Lahousen and a colonel previously named by Lahousen at which these orders were specifically discussed and Lahousen was told to discuss the then-existing situation with Keitel, which he did.