

OFFICE OF US CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY
APO 403, US ARMY
OPERATIONS SECTION
INTERROGATION DIVISION.

13 November, 1945.

SUBJECT : Austrian Anschluss.
TO : Major General Wm B. Donovan.

After midnight, 0200 hours, 10 March 1938, Glaise-Horstenau, Minister without Portefolio in Schuschnigg's Cabinet, arrived in Berlin with Herr Buerckel from Stuttgart where Glaise-Horstenau had received from Buerckel a demand of Hitler to come to Berlin. He, Glaise-Horstenau, at the time last above-mentioned, went before Hitler in the Reich Chancellery. Present at this early hour with Hitler were Goering, Goebbels, Buerckel, and the Minister of Austria. Hitler informed Glaise-Horstenau that he had earlier that night heard Chancellor Schuschnigg's speech which Schuschnigg had delivered concerning the plebescite at Innsbruck, Austria; that he, Hitler, proposed now to settle the Austrian question once and for all, and that he further proposed to use force to do it. Hitler then dismissed Glaise-Horstenau, but first informed him that he would be summoned for another conference later the same day.

Later on, 10 March 1938, Glaise-Horstenau was called and requested by Goering to be in the Reich Chancellery at 2000 on the same day. When he arrived in the Chancellery, just before 2000, he noted lying on Hitler's desk a copy of a letter from Seyss-Inquart to Guido Zernatta (Copy attached, Exhibit 1), which letter Globocnik informed Glaise-Horstenau was brought to Berlin at Seyss-Inquart's request by Globocnik and delivered to Hitler. Present at the 2000 o'clock conference between Glaise-Horstenau and Hitler were Goering, Goebbels, von Neurath, von Papen, and Wiedemann. Hitler requested Glaise-Horstenau to carry with him to Vienna three documents, which documents were as follows:

1. Request of dismissal Ministers and high functionaries of the Chancery of Austria to be delivered to the Chancellor, Schuschnigg.
2. A radio speech Seyss-Inquart was to deliver after the dismissal of the Chancellor of Austria.

(These two documents were delivered by Hitler to Glaise Horstenau at 2000 hours on 10 March 1938.)

3. At 2100 hours, the same evening, Goering read aloud to Glaise Horstenau a telegram directed to Seyss-Inquart, which telegram was to be redirected to Berlin by Seyss-Inquart asking for help from the German Armed Forces in order to prevent rioting and bloodshed in Austria.

Glaise-Horstenau was asked to receive and carry these three messages to Vienna and there deliver them to the proper persons. He, of course, alleges that he refused to perform this task. This testimony of Glaise-Horstenau is corroborated by the statements of Fritz Wiedemann: "Goering dictated the 'Call for Help' telegram to Seyss-Inquart that was to be the signal for the invasion. Papen came to me and said: 'Why this invasion. Everything is clear already. The unnecessary military invasion will only turn the world against us!'" Wiedemann continues: "Neurath then said: 'Let us leave the fun to him; he has been dreaming of this invasion for years!'"

Goering, testifying about the same telegram, said: "I was then asked about the march into Austria; why we marched into Austria; and whether the telegram that had been fixed up was to give the external occasion, so to speak. At that time I counseled the Fuehrer very much against the sending of this telegram. On the one side, we could rightly say that the bulk of the Austrian people, and their movement, was on our side and thus it could not be said that their attitude would result in the necessity of sending this telegram asking us to come there in order to maintain quiet and peace, because we published the fact that the entire Austrian people wanted the Anschluss. On the other hand, I thought it absolutely necessary that the troops were to march in and I gave you the reason the other day. I was afraid that other States neighboring on Austria would occupy certain parts of the Country. Now, here comes the decisive thing which I forgot the other day but, talking about all these things in that connection, now I can remember it. At the occasion of the Dollfuss assassination, Mussolini mobilized five Italian divisions on the Brenner Pass. These five divisions always stayed in my recollection and I thought about that very much so I thought that if the question of the Anschluss came about again, it would be better if there were German divisions at the Italian border. In spite of all the friendship that we had with Mussolini, you could never know what kind of an effect the Austrian question would have on him. Then there was also the letter that the Fuehrer wrote to the Duce on the occasion of the Anschluss in 1938. Now, this letter was delivered during the night before the day of the march into Austria, and I believe that it was half-past eleven when I was called from Rome and I was told that the Duce had accepted the situation. On the day before, I had given a great dance for all of the diplomats and I thought it would be very practicable, because at this moment I could not tell them of the proposed plan for the Anschluss. At that time, the members of the Italian Embassy acted very strangely and

icy, so to speak, and I was glad that the decision to march in had already been taken, and when they finally got the news from the Duce during the night that he accepted the situation, the whole thing became very much less tense".

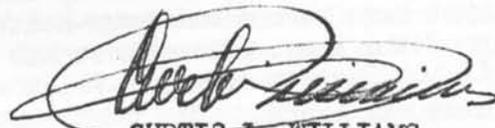
What transpired in Berlin, particularly in the Reich Chancery on the 10th and 11th of March 1938 concerning the invasion of Austria is well-known by Goering; his statement contained in his testimony illustrates the action that he, Goering, took to be sure the invasion was successful: "It is self-understood that the military leaders were informed about the necessity of the march into Austria. It was necessary because of the rapid developments of the day to inform the leaders of the Wehrmacht of just what had happened but I don't think this was done in the form of a meeting but they came in more or less one by one to get that information. The ones that must have been there were Keitel and also Brauchitsch, as Supreme Commander of the Army. Then there was Neurath I believe and I really don't know if the Fuehrer informed Frick of what was going on and it is possible that Hess was there. You must remember one thing here. The development of the Austrian situation accelerated very much in the last moments. In other words, I don't think it impossible that a few weeks before, it could be seen that things would develop so rapidly, and thus a long range plan, as such, could not exist. Then after Schuschnigg decided to hold the elections and under such conditions that it was practically impossible for the National Socialist to vote, and thus they only favored one side, the whole situation developed like an avalanche. It is quite possible however that the Fuehrer stressed the fact that it would be favorable if troops were to hold maneuvers and exercise near the Austrian border. Well, when events took this rapid course, it is certain that if troops were concentrated in Southern Germany and in Bavaria especially, certainly in Munich. I presume that the main part of the unloading took place in Munich because from there they only had a short march to the border."

"Glaise-Horstenau had a mission to go to Schuschnigg and tell him that these elections could not be accepted by Germany under any conditions whatever. I believe that this was the decisive thing. Maybe Glaise-Horstenau had a few directions for Seyss-Inquart too. I believe that he was to tell Schuschnigg that then the situation would become extremely critical for Schuschnigg's regime (if Schuschnigg didn't call off the plebe-cite). I emphasize again that the Fuehrer had a slightly wrong impression of Keppler's capabilities. He, as far as I remember, arrived in Vienna in the evening and then he actually could not do anything because everything was already done. The Anschluss had been effected by that time. In the morning, Seyss-Inquart had some instructions that the election should not take place and then, in the course of the afternoon, he received directives to demand the resignation of Schuschnigg and that he, Seyss-Inquart, was to become Chancellor. "

Goering testified that on the afternoon of the 11th of March 1938, that he personally took complete charge in Berlin of the official activities of the German Reich toward Austria, and threw his whole efforts in seeing to

its successful completion. He did the telephoning to Seyss-Inquart - demanding the resignation of Schuschnigg, and the appointment of Seyss-Inquart as Chancellor. He called for the "Help" telegram to be sent to Berlin as he and Hitler had previously planned that it would be.

Seyss-Inquart testified that the German troops crossed the Austrian/German border at 0030 hours on the morning of 12 March 1938, and he further stated that he did not send to Goering the "Call for Help" telegram, but that it was sent over his signature by either Keppler or Dr Vesemeyer.



CURTIS L. WILLIAMS
Colonel, IGD
Chief, Operations Section.