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SUMMARY OF INTERROGATION OF

General Von Falkenhorst.

24 October 1945 (AM and PM)

By: Col. Amen.

25 October 1945 (AM)

(NOTE: Keitel also participated in the interrogation on 25 Oct.)

PERSONS CONCERNED: Hitler, Keitel, Jodl, von Ribbentrop,  
von Brauchitsch, Raeder, Doenitz.

SUBJECTS: Aggressive warfare  
Crimes against Military personnel  
Crimes against Civilians

DOCUMENTS: C-63, C-65, C-115, C-119, C-174  
498 PS, 503 PS, 508 PS, 526 PS, 527 PS  
826 PS, 869 PS, 870 PS, 871 PS, 957 PS  
1006 PS, 1809 PS.

1. EVALUATION OF TESTIMONY - General.

Von Falkenhorst gave a straightforward, clear and detailed narrative of the Norwegian campaign, making several admissions, noted below, not previously made by Keitel or Jodl, when interrogated on the same subject. He claims to have disapproved of Nazi excesses in Norway and was highly critical of Keitel, against whom he made specific charges. When confronted with Keitel, however, he sought to modify his earlier testimony slightly, but not seriously.

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2. AGGRESSIVE WARFARE:

a) QUISLING. Falkenhorst gave a clear and coherent account of the preparations for the Norwegian campaign, sticking closely to the military aspects with one important exception. His testimony supports the suggestion which appears in the pertinent documents that Quisling had been promised by Hitler the Premiership of Norway. Falkenhorst states that when he arrived in Norway, the German Minister had succeeded in winning over the King, as was done in Denmark, on every point except that of Quisling's appointment. The Minister, with the approval of Falkenhorst, communicated with Berlin and recommended that the Quisling point be dropped. Berlin replied by immediately removing the Minister and rushing Terboven to Oslo where he forced the appointment of Quisling and precipitated the open resistance of the Norwegians.

b) HITLER'S AIMS IN THE NORWEGIAN EXPEDITION.

Von Falkenhorst testified to a conversation with Hitler in February 1940, in which the latter outlined three specific strategic reasons governing his decision to invade Norway and Denmark.

c) RELATIONS WITH OKW-OKH.

Norway was exclusively an OKW operation, based upon early OKW staff-work. Falkenhorst recalls a meeting with Brauchitsch at which the latter said he had assigned Falkenhorst the necessary divisions and wanted to hear no more of his plans.

d) RELATIONS WITH RIBBENTROP.

Falkenhorst maintained - until he saw the pertinent documents - that the Norwegian operation was planned in the utmost secrecy, even Ribbentrop being unaware of what was planned until at the very end. However, at the end, the political aim was coordinated with the military in a striking way. The time for attack was fixed at 0515 on the morning of 9 April 1940, to take advantage of the brief but useful quarter of an hour of dawn - an interval between Arctic blackness of night and brilliance of day. Included in the plan of attack was a diplomatic maneuver in Oslo and Copenhagen by the German Ministers. At exactly 0515 the troop carriers and battleships steamed into position and the German diplomats presented themselves to the Monarchs of Denmark and Norway. Falkenhorst was impressed by this example of timing on two fronts - political and military - and recalled talking to Keitel about the necessity of getting the messages off to the two capitals.

e) THE CONSPIRACY WITH QUISLING.

Falkenhorst claimed to be totally ignorant of the background of intrigue which prepared the way for the Norwegian campaign and seemed genuinely interested in, but unfamiliar with, a selection of the pertinent documents on the subject shown him, including: C-65, C-63, 957 PS and 1006 PS.

f) MILITARY STRATEGY. Falkenhorst corroborated some items in Jodl's diary (1809 PS), and commented briefly on Hitler's directive of 1 March 1940 (C-174). He identified as his own order the Special Instructions dated 13 March 1940 which provided an elaborate briefing for his officers and troops (C-119). He disclaimed any knowledge of the Naval instructions (C-115) for the campaign, asserting the Navy was super-secretive on its operations.

3. ATROCITIES AGAINST MILITARY PERSONNEL:

a) RESPONSIBILITY OF KEITEL.

Falkenhorst claimed to have been morally distressed by Hitler's Order to execute commandos, dated 18 October 1942 (498 PS). This distress became more acute when he found himself obliged to turn a group of British

glider troops, captured in uniform, over to the SD for execution. (See 508 PS and 527 PS). In an effort to exculpate himself, Falkenhorst testified that in October he had called Keitel after he had received the order and had tried to protest it, but Keitel cut him short. In November, he again called Keitel, after the British soldiers were caught but before they were executed, and tried to find if there was some way he could avoid having to execute them in compliance with the order. His recollection of the conversation is not precise. The documents (508 PS) made him believe that he had attempted to have the soldiers held by the Abwehr for interrogation and thus avoid sending them immediately to the SD to be killed. At any rate, Keitel told him, with a show of indignation, that the men were to be killed in accordance with the Hitler order; Falkenhorst so directed, and the men were killed. Falkenhorst spoke harshly of Keitel as a weakling and a tool of Hitler. He protested that the Army had no leadership to protect it from the savagery of the Nazis, etc. etc. When confronted with Keitel on 25 October 1945, Falkenhorst visibly shrank and modified his previous statements, but did not ultimately retract them. Keitel did not deny the conversation, but quibbled about it.

b) RESPONSIBILITY OF RAEDER AND DOENITZ.

Falkenhorst and Keitel both agreed the German Navy, under Raeder, was equally bound by the Hitler order of 18 October 1942 (498 PS). They both also stated that the Navy (under Doenitz) was institutionally responsible for the execution of ten Norwegian sailors in uniform, captured and shot in March, 1943. (See 526 PS). The document (526 PS) was verified as authentic by Keitel.

c) MISTREATMENT OF PWs in NORWAY.

Falkenhorst read a report on conditions in Norway made in April 1945 by a member of Jodl's staff, on the basis of a short trip (826 PS). His only comment was on the PWs who had been placed under control of the SS, while Falkenhorst was still W.B.N. (Wehrmacht Supreme Commander in Norway). He said the reason for the transfer had been that the Army had failed to act with sufficient brutality against the PWs.

4. ATROCITIES AGAINST CIVILIANS:

a) OSLO SHIPYARD TROUBLE - 1940.

Falkenhorst attempted to disengage himself from any responsibility for the trouble in the Oslo shipyards and the repressive measures then taken. (See 869 PS; 870 PS; 871 PS). He said it was the joint responsibility of the Navy and of Torboven.

b) TERBOVEN. Falkenhorst vigorously denounced Terboven, who, he said, was a "little Hitler", who insisted on killing people without trial, and had only one solution for civilian unrest - shootings and more shootings.