OFFICE OF U. S. CHIEF OF COUNSEL
FOR THE PROSECUTION OF AXIS CRIMINALITY
INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of JOACHIM VON RIBBENTROP
By: Col. H. A. Brundage, 10 September, 1945, p.m.

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GERMAN-POLISH RELATIONS

The bad treatment, for many years, of German minorities by Poland was at the bottom of the "difficulties." The friendship Treaty with Poland of 1933, closed by the Fuehrer on his, 24
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Ribbentrop's advice, did not change the situation: "The Poles did not keep their contract" (p.1-2). In 1939, "we tried to come to an arrangement with Poland for several months about Danzig and the corridor", but Beck, whom "we all liked very much", was reticent and things got worse (p.3-4). Ribbentrop did not remember Hitler having made inflammatory speeches or that there was any planned creation of incidents to inflame the opinion of German minorities in Poland, though there was "a certain intercourse between the National Socialist Party and the people on the other side". For instance, Gauleiter Förster of Danzig had contacts (5-6). The Fuhrer told him, Ribbentrop, at the time to take 'a strong position' towards Italy to get her diplomatic support in the Polish matter (p.8). When he heard of the British guarantee to Poland he went to Hitler who told him that military operations against Poland had begun. Ribbentrop asked Hitler to stop operations since it meant war with England. Hitler said he would do so at once (p.9-10). Meanwhile, British Ambassador Henderson, had been told both by the Fuhrer and Ribbentrop that Germany did not want British mediation but would deal with Poland directly (p.11-12). Then the Fuhrer told him "things are moving, I have given the order" (p.14).

Denied knowledge of the following events just prior to the invasion of Poland:
- that Concentration camp inmates were put into German uniforms, brought near the Polish border and shot; the German radio story that Poland invaded Germany (p.24-26). There was a White Book on the Polish question prepared by the Foreign Office. The "excuse" for attacking Poland was "of course the corridor and the Danzig problem" (p.26). There were in addition reports of "outrages" committed by Poles, but he did not remember them (p.26).
- Denied there were incidents created prior to the invasion of other countries (p.29). Regarding the French attitude on the Polish question, it was his recollection that they appreciated the German viewpoint on Danzig and the corridor (p.30-31). Denied knowledge of restrictive measures against the Poles and Jews immediately after the invasion. With the establishment of the Government General, the Polish question was taken out of the hands of the Foreign Office (p.32-33).

**Relationship with Hitler**

Regarding his testimony of 29 August 1945, Ribbentrop said he meant to say: "I do not want to stand before the German people as being disloyal to the Fuhrer" (p.15). Ribbentrop added, in later years especially, he had "blindly carried out his orders" (p.15). The Foreign Office was generally looked upon as "negative and defeatist". The Fuhrer did not like that. Therefore he, Ribbentrop had always to present "a firm attitude toward his collaborators" (p.16). Ribbentrop denied he ever told Hitler "you can settle the Polish question by war. The English will not disturb you" (p.17).
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THE INNER CIRCLE.

Ribbentrop said there was no "inner circle", but if there was one, the following might have belonged to it: Hess, Goering, Himmler, Keitel, Brauchitsch (the latter only "up to a certain moment"), Lammers, Bormann. (p.18-20).

Himmler was no doubt responsible for the concentration camps. Himmler, Goering and Bormann "had ambitions to become the Fuehrer's successor and had their own foreign minister ready all the time". Rosenberg was the "doctrinal inspiring man of the party" (p.21). If there is guilt, the above named, "from the viewpoint of Germany's enemies, were guilty for the situation as brought about today". (p.22). As for himself, Ribbentrop, he was a party member but was sensitive to world opinion. To his representations Hitler would always reply; "we must have military success", and only after military victory would he be ready for negotiations (p.22-23). After the Anglo-American landing in North Africa, he asked the Fuehrer to make peace with Russia at any price "and get the Americans and British out of Africa again" and then make "a new offer to England and America", but Hitler would not have it (p.23-24).

HITLER'S DEATH.

Ribbentrop said he had no doubt that the Fuehrer was dead. (p.24)

Six weeks before the end, Hitler told him, Ribbentrop, that Germany was going to win the war, not because of VI and V2 but through new types of airplanes.

PLUNDERING OF PROPERTY

Hitler and he, Ribbentrop, did not acquire wealth thru office (p.25).

PERSECUTION OF JEWS

Ribbentrop remembered measures were taken against Jews in Poland. "I know there were measures taken against the Jews everywhere", including Hungary, where Ribbentrop's man, Vesenmcier, worked (p.34-35). The entire Jewish question was Himmler's province. He, Ribbentrop, proposed to let them emigrate to Switzerland, England and the United States, but Hitler thought these countries would not have them (p.35, 37). Hitler and Himmler's idea was to put able-bodied Jews into labor battalions (p.35, 37-38). He heard the name of, but did not know, one Dr. Grell, but wondered if he was the same that did "the rather insane business with the Weiss Armament Factory in Hungary". He may have been a man of Vesenmcier's. Vesenmcier had a hard time with the S.S. which wanted to do everything in Hungary (p.36).

Ribbentrop knew General Carl Wolff quite well. He came under
the influence of Himmler. Wolff tried to smooth out frictions between Ribbentrop and Himmler. Outwardly things were in order between Ribbentrop and Himmler, and frictions arose only because the S.S. always tried to expand its sphere. It began with Rumania (p.38-41). Did not know whether Wolff had anything to do with concentration camps or atrocities (p.41-42). He, Ribbentrop, at the Fuehrer's and Himmler's insistence, did "sometimes send a wire to Vesemoir saying: 'support these (anti)-Jewish measures there and the man who has to do it of the S.S.'" (p.43). Never heard any discussion of the legal phase of the treatment of Jews inside Germany (p.33). Between 1933 and 1935, Ribbentrop once had the idea of "letting all Jews out of Germany with a certain amount of money and so on" (p.43-44). In 1938, when he was Foreign Minister, after the burning of the synagogues, Ribbentrop remembered he went to Hitler and warned him of international repercussions, but the Fuehrer would not discuss it. The plan had come from Goebbels rather than from Himmler. Presented with photostatic copies of the original orders regarding the manner of arrest and incarceration of Jews, Ribbentrop asserted he knew nothing about them (p.45-48). As Foreign Minister he worked between 14-18 hours daily on his foreign policy, and knew nothing about what went on inside Germany. Denied knowledge of planning, or the fact, of mass arrest and extermination of millions of Jews. Merely heard that "some" were in concentration camps and killed, such as in Maidanek, and that there were "dreadful things" (p.48-58).