

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of Schacht

By: Lt. Colonel Murray Gurfein, 13 October 1945, p.m.

1. SCHACHT

- a. German colonies
  - (1) Schacht's advice to Hitler on colonial policy (2)
  - (2) Negotiations with Leon Blum, Dolbros, Spinasse and Anthony Eden (4)
- b. ~~Refo~~ Bills and arms expenditures
  - (1) Schacht's financial statement on war armament expenditures (9-10)
  - (2) Dealings with Goering re armament production (13)
  - (3) Safe-guarding inflation to speed up armament (15)
- c. Austria Anschluss
  - (1) Schacht's attitude toward the Anschluss and his efforts to make it possible (15-18)
- d. German strength in 1938 (19)
  - (1) Schacht's speech of 28 March 1938 before an Austrian audience (19-20)
- e. Schacht's membership in the Nazi Party and position he held (25)
- f. Plenipotentiary for War Economy (26-28)
  - (1) Control of German economy
  - (2) Economic war gains (29)
- g. Gold reserve (31-33)

SCHACHT AND GERMAN COLONIES

Schacht confirms his previous statement that he started as early as 1931 to win Hitler to a colonial policy in order to divert his attention from German expansion to the East, an intention he knew Hitler had already expressed in "Mein Kampf." (2) Schacht negotiated with Leon Blum, Dolbros, Spinasse and even Anthony Eden about the question of colonies. The *quis pro Quo* in these

negotiations was allusion to economic and social problems in Germany which might develop into trouble. (3,4). He very likely had a talk, 20 January 1937, with Davies on colonies. (4)

Schacht confirms his statement that Hitler's intention to expand to the East could not have been achieved without war, but he claims not to have been aware of actual bellicose intentions of Hitler's. (5,6)

#### MEFO AND ARMS EXPENDITURES

His only clear knowledge about expenditures for rearmament is the 12,000,000,000 RM Mefo. He considers Hitler's statement that some 90,000,000,000 RM had been expended "pure nonsense." Schacht claims he has ~~no actual~~ knowledge of the real amount that was provided in the budget, still he confirms his previous estimates of about 35,000,000,000 RM. (7,8)

Schacht's statements in regard to his knowledge of expenditures allocated for armaments conflict with statements of Krosigk and Blomberg. (9,10). His concern with the entire development was always along general lines and with banking principles in mind; and he did not interest himself in details. (12,13). To this end he tried to win Goering to slow up armaments for a short time in order to be able to increase them afterwards. (13). He always feels that if he was not solely responsible for building up an armament industry and Wehrmacht, at least he helped a great deal to achieve them. (14) In part, he accomplished this by not permitting a runaway inflation and by providing for proper price control. (15)

#### AUSTRIA

Schacht favored the Anschluss of Austria although he did not approve Hitler's "reckless" methods. After considerable evasion Schacht concedes his knowledge that the Anschluss was due to rearmament. (15,16,17,18) Schacht believes that by 1938 Germany had recovered what he considered its rightful position as one of the armed powers of Europe, was sufficiently strong to deter the Allies from taking preventive measures in respect to Austria. (19)

On 28 March 1938, eight days after the Anschluss Schacht delivered before an Austria audience a rousing speech of praise for everything Hitler had done. (19,20) Still he tries to reject the only possible inference- that this praise really constituted approval, even though he administered a solemn public oath to the Fuehrer upon the entire audience. All this outward performance, Schacht claims, was carried out with inward thoughts of Hitler's overthrow. Thus, it was ~~supposed to be~~ merely empty words because Schacht avers that he had changed his mind about Hitler and the whole National Socialist point

of view long before March 1938. (22)

#### NAZI MEMBERSHIP?

Although Schacht occupied a position in the National Socialist Government he thinks nobody ever took him for a Nazi. He maintains that he never wore the golden swastika bestowed on him but admits that he may have worn it on some official occasions. Still he concedes making the following statement: "The Reichsbank will always remain National Socialist or I shall no more be its leader." As to the discrepancy between his feelings toward Hitler and the words of this Vienna speech Schacht tries to show that he had to comply with a "general prescription." He concedes that he himself broke this oath of which he had said, "he who breaks it is a bad fellow." (25)

#### PLENIPOTENTIARY FOR WAR ECONOMY

On 21 May 1935 under the Law for the Defence of the Reich Schacht was appointed Plenipotentiary for War Economy (26); he appointed for liaison with other ministries one of the officials of his Ministry of Economics, Dr. Bart. (27). He has difficulty remembering the appointment of Wohltat as his Deputy Plenipotentiary for the War Economy. (28).

As Plenipotentiary it was his (Schacht's) duty to be prepared for the control of German economy in the event of war; in this task he was on a comparable footing with the Minister of War, Blomberg. Responsibility rested with:  
1. Minister of War and Chief of Staff of the Wehrmacht, and  
2. Schacht as Plenipotentiary for War Economy. (29).

Economic war games were conducted in Summer 1937 details of which Schacht claims not to remember, although on this occasion he gave a lecture at Godesberg. (29). Evasive on details, Schacht remembers having written a letter in January 1937 to the Ministers of Interior, stating that he (Schacht) was engaged in the preparation of a war economy in keeping with the principle that the economy must be so organized even in times of peace that it can be directly converted in case of emergency from this peacetime organization, and does not have to be set up at the outbreak of war, (30,31)

#### GOLD RESERVE

Schacht maintains that he does not recall the accumulation of a gold reserve of several hundred millions. However, he recalls his intention to build up a gold fund. (31). He cannot explain the discrepancy between Pahl's statement that enormous purchases of gold were made in foreign

markets, and the fact that the official gold balance of the Reichsbank remained constant at 70 odd millions. (33)

NAMES: HITLER, KROSIGK, BART, WOHLTAT, BLOMBERG, PAHL,  
GOERING, GEN. THOMAS, LEON BLUM, DELBORS, SPINASSE,  
ANTHONY EDEN, DAVIES, DODD