

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

INTERROGATION DIVISION SUMMARY

Interrogation of: SCHACHT, Hjalmar
By: Lt. Colonel Murray Gurfein, 17 October 1945 p.m.

Persons and organizations implicated, and subjects

1. SCHACHT

- a. Origin of his Party support (p. 58-60)
- b. Reaction in financial circles all over world (p. 60, 61)
- c. Knowledge of Hitler's intentions in the East (p. 69, 70)
- d. New Plan (p. 32,33,34)
- e. Knowledge of Mefo financing (p. 55)
- f. War Plans and aggression
 - (1) Cabinet meetings in 1936 (p. 24,25)
 - (2) Austria Anschluss (p. 4,5)
 - (3) Meeting with Bullitt in November 1937 (p. 5,6)
- g. Financing of Armament Program (p. 26-31)
- h. Diplomatic deals and Hitler intentions (p. 1,3,4,68)
- i. Termination of official relation with Hitler (p. 10)
- k. Approved:
 - (1) Racial Laws (p. 39-45; 52, 53)
- l. Proposed financial arrangements with England (p. 63-67)

2. WOHLIAT, WORBS AND DR. BADE

- a. In charge of mobilization (p. 57, 58)

3. GOERING

- a. Held cabinet meeting in 1936 for war preparation (p. 24,25)

4. RIBBENTROP AND FUNK

- a. Consulted on Schacht's trip to U. S. 1940 (p. 13-15)

5. WALDECKER (p. 19-21)

Hjalmar Schacht, 17 Oct. 1945, p.m.

Schacht met Goering in 1930, Hitler in 1931, became a supporter in 1931 and 1932 (p. 58,59,60). Schacht knows that his support of Hitler reassured financial and business circles all over the world (p. 60, 61). Schacht knew as early as 1931 and 1932 that Hitler's intentions were towards the East unless he was diverted (p. 69,70). Schacht took the position that the Wehrmacht was foremost a means to prevent the large powers from intervening with Hitler's negotiations with other countries (71,72).

Until April, 1936, Schacht had set up and carried out "The New Plan," a coordinated control system for the flow of foreign exchange, for the purchase of imports with the primary goal of rearmament (p. 32,33, 34). Schacht remembers that Wohltat was his plenipotentiary for the war economy, other men were Werbs and Dr. Bado. They were working under him for mobilization and in the case of war (p.57, 58), and he assumes responsibility for their actions (p. 61, 62). In 1936 Schacht was warned against the Mefo financing by colleagues in the Reichsbank Directorate, especially by Hülse (p.55). In 1936 Schacht attended cabinet meetings under Goering in which preparations for war were discussed (p.24,25). In 1937, knowing that one of Hitler's goals was Austria, Schacht agreed with him to furnish another 3,000,000,000 marks by way of indirect credit from the Reichsbank (p. 4, 5). In a conversation with Ambassador Bullitt in Berlin, November, 1937, Schacht stated Hitler's intentions both toward Austria and Sudeten Land (p.5,6) in order to induce the United States to influence Czechoslovakia (p. 7,8). In the face of armament and mobilization in Germany and of continued secret proceedings and diplomatic dealings, Schacht denies any consciousness of Hitler's intention to use force (p.9,10).

In March 1938, after expiration of the agreement with Hitler for a 3,000,000,000 Mark loan, Schacht continued financing armaments until 1939 by taking back Mefo bills that had become due, using the proceeds from the sale of Sola bills and other short-term commercial paper (p.26,27,28,29,30,31). He stated in November 1938 that the armaments were equal to those of any other country (p.35,36) and that he was pleased with the results, i.e., the acquisition of Austria and the Sudetenland (p.37, 38, 39). In October 1938, Schacht heard Hitler say in Berlin, in the presence of his entourage including Bormann and Himmler, that he, Hitler, was annoyed at Chamberlain for having deprived him of a military march into Prague (p.1). Schacht knew that Hitler was not satisfied with the Munich agreement at all (p.2); that his goal was to march into Prague (p.3). He also knew from the time of the dismissal of Fritsch that Hitler's intentions were not peaceful (p.4,68). When the pressure of the opposition on the Board of the Reichsbank became more and more urgent in 1938, he still stalled, until, finally, on 7 or 8 of January 1939, he presented Hitler with a memorandum of the directors of the Reichsbank drawn up by Vocke (p.54, 55, 56).

Schacht, 17 Oct. 1945, p.m.

Schacht had official business with Hitler up to 2 January 1938 (p.10); later saw him only on private affairs 1941 in Berlin but does not recall a visit in Munich as recorded by Hitler's office in 1941. However, he later admits that business matters were brought up by Hitler during the visit in Berlin (p.17). Another visit had taken place in Berlin in the beginning of 1940, after a correspondence with Ribbentrop and Funk, when Schacht volunteered to make a trip to and try to influence the United States (p.13,14,15). At a still later date when visiting Waldeck-ker, Schacht discussed business with Funk (p.19,20,21) and continued to receive figures from the Reichsbank.

Schacht agreed fully with Nazi program to discriminate against the Jews (p.39, 40, 41, 52, 53); he enacted laws himself to this effect, (p.42, 43) including imposition of the death penalty for violation of transfer laws (p.44, 45). He did not feel that a conflict of conscience on this subject was important enough to break with Hitler, as his objective was to stay in power (p.45). Even the "Nürnberg Laws" to which he objected in a meeting in Frick's ministry (p.48) did not make him leave the Cabinet (p.49). His main concern, as stated to Blomberg, was their irritation to the armament program (p.49, 50, 51, 53).

In the middle of December 1938, Schacht tried to make financial arrangements in England through Montague Norman with Lord Birsted and Mr. Rublee by which Germany was to receive a foreign loan for financing the emigration of the Jews then forced out by the pressure of events. This loan was to be secured by the properties the Jews were forced to leave in Germany. Only a nominal amount was to be paid to the individual emigrant, regardless of the size of his property, the balance of which was to be used to repay the loan (p.63, 64, 65, 66, 67).