

OFFICE OF US CHIEF OF COUNSEL
APC 403, US ARMY
INTERROGATION DIVISION

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Brief of
Interrogation of SPERRLE.

by

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SPERRLE was questioned further regarding his private conversations with Goering but nothing further of interest to the case was developed. He was then questioned at considerable length regarding his activities as Chief of the 3rd Reich Air Fleet involved in the Battle of Britain and in subsequent operations against England. In this connection he testified that subsequent to the Battle of Britain, and at a time when the Germans were being heavily pounded in their own cities, Hitler began to issue orders for reprisal attacks on British cities. (This admission appears important to the case in view of the fact that the specific use of reprisals against the civilian population is here admitted by a person high enough in the Luftwaffe to know the purpose of these attacks). These orders came over the signature of the Chief of the General Staff of the Luftwaffe, but usually began "The Fuehrer Orders". These orders were separate and distinct from the orders usually received for ordinary operations. London was the city designated for such attacks and specific areas in the city were marked for destruction. He specifically admitted that these attacks were directed against the British population as well as against military and industrial targets. He was not able to recall details regarding specific orders.

He was then questioned in regard to his knowledge of the meeting with Schuschnigg at Berchtesgaden on 12 February 1938. He states that he and Gen Reichenau arrived an hour before dinner and that the two had been invited because they were the military commanders in the area. He stated that Schuschnigg was present at dinner and that the conversation was general in character until after Schuschnigg left, when Hitler, holding a paper in his hand, stated that this was the agreement which had been signed by Ribbentrop and Schuschnigg, and indicated that now all would go well because Schuschnigg had agreed to the demands of the German government. (This is of interest because Ribbentrop denies having signed any written agreement at this time. Sperrle states that the question of use of force was not taken up in any conversation which he had while at Berchtesgaden; he says that he received orders to send the planes of Luftkreis V into Austria no more than three or four days before the German invasion of that country. He does not have any knowledge of the meeting in November 1937 when Hitler is stated to have discussed plans against Austria and Czechoslovakia as alleged in the Indictment.

It is planned to interrogate Sperrle further with regard to the attacks on Czechoslovakia and Poland.