

TOP SECRET

Interrogation of Hauptmann Franz von Papen,
held at Rheims, France, 1515 to 1630 hours,
16 April, 1945.

Present:

Lt-General SUSLOPAROV, Russian Army;

Major-General DRAGON, Russian Army;

Brigadier General T. J. BETTS, D/A. C.
of S., G-2, Supreme Headquarters AEF;

Major I. MUNRO, British Army, Interpreter;

Two Russian Officers, Interpreters.

The interrogation was conducted in French.
A record of the interrogation is attached.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

INTERROGATION OF HAUPTMANN VON PAPEN

(General Betts) - "Please give us your service record."

(von Papen) - "I entered the army in April, 1940. First of all I was with the Fifth Armored Division in Belgium and France. In December, 1940 I went with the same division to Rumania, and then Bulgaria, and later entered Serbia. After the war in Serbia was over I was in Germany for three months. From September, 1941, I was in Russia until in April, 1942, I was transferred to the Headquarters of the Fourth Panzer Army. I was wounded at Stalingrad and sent back to Germany. After I left the hospital I was instructor and adjutant at the Panzerschule. From January to February, 1944, I took a course for battalion commanders in Paris. I then commanded a battalion in the 21st Panzer Division. In April, 1944, I was in a train accident and have since been in hospital or on sick leave, which I was enjoying when captured."

(General Betts) - "When you were at the Headquarters of the Fourth Panzer Army who commanded it?"

(von Papen) - "Colonel-General Hoth."

(General Susloparov) - "Where is he now?"

(von Papen) - "He was retired a year ago and is at home."

(General Betts) - "What do German officers think of the war now?"

(von Papen) - "Ninety percent think it lost."

(General Betts) - "Is this opinion stronger among the high ranking officers?"

(von Papen) - "I think the officers who are older know better how to judge these things. The junior officers are very young."

(General Betts) - "Do you know a German General who still thinks there is hope?"

(von Papen) - "For a year I have not seen any Generals so I am unable to answer this question."

(General Dragun) - "Can you give the exact time when German officers began to understand that the war was lost?"

(von Papen) - "I personally when I saw that the invasion of France had succeeded."

(General Dragun) - "You formed your own personal opinion then but when did German military circles reach this decision?"

(von Papen) - "When the Allies crossed the Rhine."

(General Dragun) - "What were the impressions and conclusions drawn by German officers after Stalingrad?"

(von Papen) - "There was a certain lack of confidence in Hitler's leadership."

(General Betts) - "Among officers of your rank is there much talk of surrender and armistice?"

(von Papen) - "No, I think not."

(General Betts) - "Do officers of your rank think that the senior officers will surrender or continue to fight?"

(von Papen) - "There is talk of surrender."

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

(General Dragun) - "How can you explain the atrocities committed by the German army against the peaceful civil population? Is that sort of thing contained in the education of the German army or is it due to bad types?"

(von Papen) - "I have never seen any atrocities committed by the army. The atrocities I have heard of were committed by the police and the SS. I have never seen anything myself however."

(General Susloparov) - "Do you think that there is present amongst the German Generals one strong enough to surround himself with other Generals who are against Hitler and overthrow the regime and end this unfortunate war?"

(von Papen) - "There may be such a person but there is no technical method of doing this."

(General Susloparov) - "Perhaps you can indicate personally a General who might undertake this task."

(von Papen) - "I am too little informed to say."

(General Susloparov) - "You can indicate how the German troops are disposed on the various fronts and their strength."

(von Papen) - "As I have been away for about a year I have no knowledge and in any case, as an officer, I could not tell you."

(General Dragun) - "Were you a member of the Nazi party?"

(von Papen) - "No."

(General Betts) - "What did you do before the war?"

(von Papen) - "I was a salesman in heavy industry."

(General Susloparov) - "Have you been with your sister since February?"

(von Papen) "Yes."